

UCLA GOODMAN-LUSKIN MICROBIOME CENTER

3rd ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Thursday, April 23, 2026

Introduction and Welcoming Remarks

10:00 AM – 10:10 AM **Eric Esraillian, MD, MPH**

Chief, Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive of Diseases, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA; Director, Melvin & Bren Simon Digestive Diseases Center; Lincy Foundation Chair in Clinical Gastroenterology; Health Sciences Clinical Professor of Medicine, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

State of the Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center

10:10 AM – 10:25 AM **Elaine Hsiao, PhD**

Goodman-Luskin Endowed Chair in Microbiome Research; Director, UCLA Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center; De Logi Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, Department of Integrative Biology & Physiology; Division of Life Sciences, UCLA College of Letters & Sciences; Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive Diseases, Department of Medicine; Department of Microbiology, Immunology, Molecular Genetics, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Speaker Session I

Moderator: Gregory Donaldson, PhD

10:25 AM – 10:35 AM **Jonathan Jacobs, MD, PhD**

Co-Director, UCLA Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center; Director, Microbiome Core, UCLA Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center; Assistant Professor-in-Residence, Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive Diseases, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

“Causes and Consequences of Dysbiosis in Inflammatory Bowel Disease”

10:35 AM – 10:45 AM **Elaine Hsiao, PhD**

“Manipulating the Microbiome to Impact the Mind”

10:45 AM – 10:55 AM **Arpana Church, PhD**

Co-Director, UCLA Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center; Director, Neuroimaging Core, UCLA Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center; Director, Obesity, Metabolic Syndrome and Eating Behaviors Research Program, UCLA Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center; Associate Professor, Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive Diseases, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

“From Cravings to Control: The Microbiome’s Role in Eating Behavior”

10:55 AM – 11:05 AM **Elizabeth Marcus, MD**

Associate Professor and Fellowship Program Director, Department of Pediatrics, Division of Gastroenterology, Hepatology, and Nutrition, UCLA

“Helicobacter Pylori-Survival in the Stomach and the Quest for Targeted Therapy”

11:05 AM – 11:10 AM **Speaker Panel Q&A**

Speaker Session II**Moderator: Swapna Joshi, PhD**

11:10 AM – 11:20 AM **Andrea Shin, MD, MSCR**
 Director, Biorepository Core, UCLA Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center; Co-Director, Clinical Studies and Database Core, UCLA Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center; Director of Education, Walter and Shirley Wang Center for Integrative Digestive Health; Health Sciences Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine, Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive Diseases, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA
“When Microbes Miscommunicate: Insights into IBS”

11:20 AM – 11:30 AM **Lili Yang, PhD**
 Professor, Department of Microbiology, Immunology & Molecular Genetics, Department of Bioengineering; Eli & Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research; Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center; Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy, UCLA
“MAIT Cells at the Interface of the Gut Microbiome and Immunity”

11:30 AM – 11:40 AM **Aldons “Jake” Lulis, PhD**
 Professor, Medicine, Microbiology, Immunology & Molecular Genetics, and Human Genetics; David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA
“Gut Microbes and Cardiovascular Diseases”

11:40 AM – 11:45 AM **Speaker Panel Q&A**

Moderator: Arpana Church, PhD

11:45 AM – 11:55 AM **Yvonne Hernandez-Kapila, DDS, PhD, FACD, FICD, ELAM Fellow**
 Professor of Dentistry, Biosystems and Function and Periodontics; Felix and Mildred Yip Endowed Chair in Dentistry; Professor and Associate Dean For Research Biosystems and Function, Periodontics UCLA School of Dentistry
“Human Virome Program-New Capabilities and National Reach”

11:55 AM – 12:05 PM **Tiffany Ho, PhD**
 Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Brain Research Institute, Interdepartmental Graduate Program in Neuroscience, UCLA
“Barriers and Bridges: How the Microbiome Shapes Mental Health”

12:05 PM – 12:15 PM **Jennifer Fulcher, MD, PhD**
 Associate Professor, Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Medicine, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA; Infectious Diseases Section, VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System
“Beyond the Virus: How HIV and Substance Use Reshape the Gut”

12:15 PM – 12:20 PM **Speaker Panel Q&A**

Lunch

12:20 PM – 1:30 PM Covell Commons Grand Horizon Terrace

Poster and Networking Session

1:30 PM – 2:45 PM Covell Commons West Coast and North Ridge Rooms

Data Blitz**Moderator: Jonathan Jacobs, MD, PhD**

- 2:45 PM – 2:55 PM **Gregory Donaldson, PhD**
Assistant Professor, Department of Microbiology, Immunology, & Molecular Genetics, Vatche & Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive Diseases; California NanoSystems Institute; Goodman-Luskin Microbiome Center, UCLA
“Molecular Diplomacy in the Gut: Bacterial Signals that Reinforce Health”
- 2:55 PM – 3:05 PM **Courtney DeCan, MD, MPH**
Assistant Clinical Professor, Department of Medicine, Division of Clinical Nutrition, UCLA Health
“Microbiome–Immune Interactions in Acute Dengue: Insights from the Peruvian Amazon”
- 3:05 PM – 3:15 PM **Benjamin Macadangdang, MD, PhD**
Assistant Professor, Division of Neonatology, Department of Pediatrics, David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA
“Accelerated Protein Diversification in the Early Life Microbiome”
- 3:15 PM – 3:25 PM **Takahiro Ohara, PhD**
Postdoctoral Fellow, Integrative Biology and Physiology, UCLA Life Sciences
“A Hidden Sensory System Inside Your Gut”
- 3:25 PM – 3:35 PM **AJ Addae, PhD**
PhD Candidate, Justin Caram Group, Paul Weiss Group, NSF GRFP Fellow, Center for Diverse Leadership in Science Early Career Fellow, UCLA Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry
“Sunscreens and Your Skin Microbiome”
- 3:35 PM – 3:45 PM **Speaker Panel Q&A**

Microbiome Industry/Startup Round Table

- 3:45 PM – 4:45 PM **Moderator: Jeff Miller, PhD**
“Translation and Commercialization of Microbiome Science for Real World Impact.” A discussion with stakeholders on the potential for translation of microbiome science from startups and funding to clinical trials and regulatory approval.
Panelists:
- **Dayton Miller:** Managing Partner, BFG Partners
 - **Jeff Miller, PhD:** Director, CNSI; Professor, MIMG, UCLA
 - **Marcelo Pomeranz, PhD:** Senior Associate and Patent Attorney, Cooley LLP
 - **Christopher Reyes, PhD:** CEO, Director and Founder, Bloom Science
 - **Lili Yang, PhD:** Professor, MIMG, UCLA
 - **Yanxi “Steven” Yang, PhD:** Co-Founder, Paralos Bioscience

Poster Awards and Closing Remarks

- 4:45 PM – 5:00 PM **Elaine Hsiao, PhD**

Exhibitor Tables: Biose Industrie, Branchpoint Biosciences, Envivo Bio, International Foundation for Gastrointestinal Disorders (IFFGD), Nestle, New England Biolabs, Purpose Bio, QIAGEN, Sapient