

# CART Connection

News from the UCLA Center for Autism Research and Treatment

Dec 2019, Vol. 12

## CART Isn't Just for Kids - Services and Research Available for Adults



PEERS® Program

An estimated half million teens with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) will transition into adulthood in the next decade. Many will face what is often referred to as the services cliff, which is when young adults no longer have the daily support from their public school systems (AutismSpeaks.org). Recognizing that ASD is a lifelong disorder, the researchers and clinicians at CART are devoted to providing services across the lifespan.

## CLINICAL SERVICES

### CARING Clinic

The CARING (Care and Research in Neurogenetics) Clinic is a multidisciplinary team of experts in neurology, psychiatry, genetics, and psychology. The team evaluates and treats children and adults with genetic causes for their neurodevelopmental disorders (NDD). More than 30% of the patients are adults, speaking to the tremendous need for multidisciplinary

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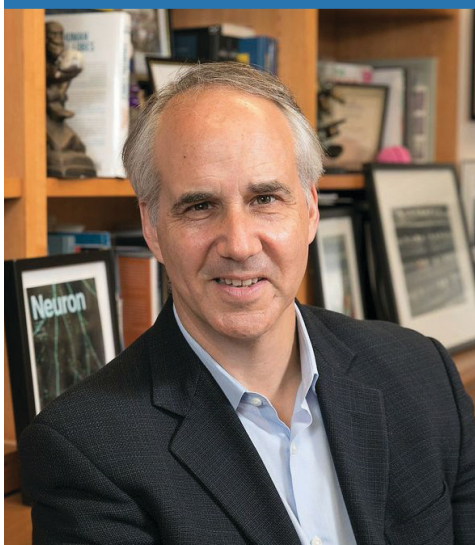
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## Donate to CART

As the end of the year approaches, please consider donating to CART. This year, CART's goal is to raise funding so that all patients can be treated regardless of their ability to pay. Visit the website to learn more and make a gift: [spark.ucla.edu/autism](http://spark.ucla.edu/autism). For questions, please contact: Lauren Bayans Development Assistant, Neuroscience UCLA Health Sciences Development, (310) 794-3913 or [lbayans@support.ucla.edu](mailto:lbayans@support.ucla.edu). Thank you for your continued support of CART.

# Reflections of the Year and Progress in Autism Research



*Dr. Daniel Geschwind*

I would take the opportunity to share some reflections of our progress at our center. It is just five years ago that we welcomed Dr. Amanda Gulsrud to reorganize our clinical programs by developing the Child and Adult Neurodevelopmental (CAN) Clinic. In that short amount of time, Dr. Gulsrud has transformed our clinical activities, building out leading diagnostic and treatment programs around which she continues to develop and innovate.

## Mission

The mission of the UCLA Center for Autism Research and Treatment (CART) is to elucidate the causes of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and to develop best practices for diagnosis and more effective treatments. We achieve these goals by fostering a strong collaborative environment for basic and clinical research, and a supportive environment for trainees from all disciplines.

You will read further in this newsletter about one great example of her leadership, which is her newly launched collaborative research program with Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson called, College to Career. This project has been funded by philanthropy, including continued support by a generous corporate partner, Northwestern Mutual. This innovative program is focused on developing an evidence-based framework for helping college students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) at UCLA transition to the job market. Dr. Gulsrud has also played a major role in the UCLA Autism Center of Excellence (ACE) and the genetics ACE Network (the latter focusing on improving diversity in ASD genetics research) by directing clinical recruitment and assessment. We have also been fortunate to recruit and retain an exceptional clinic staff, which we hope continues to grow so as to better serve our community.

In parallel to these efforts, Dr. Shafali Jeste has developed the Care and Research in Neurogenetics (CARING) Clinic, one of the few clinics in the country that focuses on the medical, neurological, and behavioral treatment of children and adults with known genetic disorders associated with autism, such as tuberous sclerosis, fragile X syndrome, or duplication of chromosome 15q11-13. In her laboratory, Dr. Jeste performs cutting-edge research on identifying biomarkers for autism. Earlier this year, Dr. Jeste, who came to UCLA nine years ago, was recognized with one of our nation's highest honors bestowed upon young scientists by the United States

government called the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/president-donald-j-trump-announces-recipients-presidential-early-career-award-scientists-engineers/>).

On the research front, CART continues to make important discoveries that are improving our understanding of and treatments for autism. CART researchers have the unique distinction of having been acknowledged as making a major contribution to autism research in each of the last 10 years as identified by the NIH interagency autism coordinating committee, established by Congress to coordinate all efforts within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services related to autism. This includes work in our own laboratory using human stem cell-based models of brain development and animal models to develop novel therapeutics for autism. We are excited about the potential for the future, with improved understanding and treatment for autism and related disorders. A key component of this future is hiring and mentoring new faculty to develop the leaders for the next generation. Over the last few years, we have been able to hire several rising stars in the field, including Drs. Abigail Dickinson, Michael Gandal, Shulamite Green, Nicole McDonald, and Rujuta Wilson. Continued philanthropic support from our community is essential to continue on this trajectory. Developing new faculty and research is essential to provide the foundation on which we hope to transform the diagnosis and understanding of ASD, so

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that we can build new innovative treatments. We refer you to our website ([www.autism.ucla.edu](http://www.autism.ucla.edu)) for other updates and details about our ongoing studies by CART investigators, how to participate in research, and how to support CART. For more information about our clinical programs and the NIH ACE research programs please visit our website or call our office at (310) 825-9041. We invite you to join us and continue to be our partner, as we cannot achieve our goals without you. With best wishes, and many thanks for your support.

Best regards,



Daniel H. Geschwind, M.D., Ph.D.  
Gordon and Virginia MacDonald  
Distinguished Professor of Neurology,  
Psychiatry, and Human Genetics  
Director, UCLA Center for Autism Research  
and Treatment (CART)  
Senior Associate Dean and Associate Vice  
Chancellor, Precision Health  
David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA

## The Multidisciplinary CARING Clinic



The Care and Research in Neurogenetics (CARING) Clinic was developed five years ago to meet a critical gap in the field of neurodevelopmental disorders (NDDs). As genetic testing becomes the gold standard medical assessment for all children with NDDs, particularly those with autism, intellectual disability and global developmental delay, an increasing number of families receive a genetic diagnosis without adequate genetic counseling, clinical monitoring, prognostication or opportunities for entry into patient registries and clinical trials. CARING was developed to fill these gaps, and its vision is to optimize outcomes for individuals with suspected or identified genetic etiologies for their NDD by providing evidence-based, multidisciplinary clinical care, and accelerating research and education in NDD genetics. The vision of this clinic aligns perfectly with the Precision Health Initiative at UCLA. Over the last

three years, with specialists in genetics, neurology, psychiatry, psychology and social work, CARING has evaluated more than 300 patients with genetic syndromes, has introduced more than 100 patients to clinical research opportunities, and has supported two new clinical trials in syndromic NDDs. Moreover, this clinic has become a training hub for medical students, residents and fellows in NDD genetics and has promoted cross-talk between clinicians, scientists, and advocates through a monthly teaching conference called "Bench to Bedside." Over the next several years, the goal of this program is to expand its reach via telehealth and remote delivery of research methodologies and to promote more trials in targeted therapeutics for these genetic neurodevelopmental disorders. Contact CARING at (310) 206-7404.

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The CARING Clinic team



## Adults, continued from page 1

care for adults with NDDs. Areas of focus in the clinic include neurodevelopment diagnoses, challenging behaviors, comorbid psychiatric conditions, epilepsy, sleep impairment, as well as genetic testing and counseling. As 30-40% of patients with ASD have epilepsy and about 30-40% of patients with epilepsy have ASD, the CARING Clinic works closely with the Adolescent Epilepsy Center at UCLA, which provides services to both adolescents and young adults. This is a great example of care coordination between two multidisciplinary teams, which provides the absolute best care for our patients! For more information about CARING and its services, please contact us at [CMStephens@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:CMStephens@mednet.ucla.edu).

### **Child and Adult Neurodevelopmental (CAN) Clinic**

The CAN Clinic offers comprehensive assessment services for adults throughout the lifespan. Evaluations include the gold standard in ASD diagnosis, as well as neurocognitive, adaptive, and mental health assessment to provide comprehensive diagnostic conceptualization and treatment recommendations. The CAN Clinic also offers one-time consultations to adults of all ages and their families regarding concerns or goals related to their neurodevelopmental disorder or related challenges. This can include reviewing previous testing, determining appropriate treatment recommendations, and discussing community resources. Please contact the CAN Clinic at (310) 794-4008 to learn more.

### **AAIM at CAN Clinic**

Adults with Autism: Independence and Mental Wellness (AAIM), is one of CAN's treatment groups for young adults with ASD. Focusing on topics related to the challenges faced by young adults with ASD, as well as the strengths these young adults bring to achieve their goals, this group incorporates Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) components to support young adults in navigating early adulthood. A group for young women with ASD is nearing completion, and enrollment for the next group will begin in Spring 2020. For more information, contact (310) 794-4008.

**BEAR at CAN Clinic** The Bruin Evaluation for Autism with Recommendations (BEAR) assessment accepts UCLA student health insurance

(i.e. SHIP) and provides evidence-based evaluation for ASD, as well as targeted recommendations to support students in accessing needed services for academic, vocational, and social success. For more information, contact (310) 794-4008.

### **UCLA PEERS® Clinic PEERS® for Young Adults**

The Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relational Skills (PEERS®) for Young Adults is a 16-week evidence-based social skills intervention for young adults who are interested in learning skills to make and keep friends and develop romantic relationships. During each group session, young adults are taught important social skills and are given the opportunity to practice these skills. PEERS® may be appropriate for adults with autism and other social and behavioral challenges.



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## Adults, continued from page 4



### **PEERS® Boot Camps**

The UCLA PEERS® Clinic hosts quarterly two-day Boot Camps on weekends that are designed to give “crash courses” in social skills to anyone interested in learning more about developing and maintaining relationships! PEERS® Boot Camps cover a range of topics including conversational skills, friendship skills, handling bullying and other forms of conflict, and dating etiquette. Contact (310)-267-3377 or [peersclinic@ucla.edu](mailto:peersclinic@ucla.edu) for more information.

### **College to Career Program**

CART, CAN Clinic, and the PEERS® Clinic are working together to create new programs to support young adults with ASD in their transition to adulthood, including attaining employment! The College to Career Program encompasses multiple facets supporting young adults during this transition period. This UCLA research study examines the effectiveness of a 20-week College to Career Transition Program and 10-week internship for young adults with ASD currently enrolled in a post-secondary education program (ie. two-year or four-year University, junior college, graduate school). The College to Career Transition Program may help prepare young adults for the transition from post-secondary education to employment and independence. For more information or to enroll, please contact (310) 267-3377 or [peersclinic@ucla.edu](mailto:peersclinic@ucla.edu).



## RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

### **The Autism Genetics and Human Diversity Study**

The Autism Genetics and Human Diversity study aims to fill a significant gap in autism research by investigating genetic risk for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in families of African American descent. The study is actively recruiting families consisting of at least one African-American child age 3 or older with a diagnosis (or symptoms) of ASD and at least one biological parent. Siblings without ASD may also participate. The project is currently ongoing and is recruiting through 2023. For more information, please contact 310-794-4090 or [AutismGenetics@ucla.edu](mailto:AutismGenetics@ucla.edu).

### **Proof of Mechanism Study for the Treatment of Social Anhedonia in ASD**

This 16-week study is examining the combined effects of medication (L-DOPA or placebo) plus a specialized behavioral intervention (PEERS®) aimed towards increasing social skills. The study is actively recruiting participants between 13-30 years and a designated caregiver to participate in weekly groups and study visits. Participants receive PEERS® social skills intervention, a comprehensive diagnostic & cognitive evaluation, neurological testing, brain scan (pre and post), L-DOPA or placebo (inactive medication), questionnaires, interviews, psychological and laboratory testing, and compensation for participation. Contact (310)-267-3377 or [peersclinic@ucla.edu](mailto:peersclinic@ucla.edu) for more information.

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### **SPARK**

The SPARK research study is a national genetic study that is trying to speed up research and advance our understanding of autism. SPARK will provide researchers with medical and genetic information from tens of thousands of individuals and families affected by ASD. This data will provide important new research that aims to advance the understanding of ASD and provide meaningful information and resources to participants. Our goal is to recruit 50,000 families across the nation! Individuals with ASD and their parents are invited to participate. All ages are welcomed. The only requirement is to have a preexisting ASD diagnosis. To sign up or learn more visit [www.sparkforautism.org](http://www.sparkforautism.org).

### **The oRBiting Study**

The purpose of this 15-week study is to examine a combination of different tests, questionnaires and scales for the assessment of ASD. Eligible participants are between 5 - 45 years and must have a parent or designated support person available. Participants will receive comprehensive diagnostic & cognitive evaluation, a smartphone and device to wear at home, and compensation for participation.

### **The VIADUCT Study**

The purpose of this study is to compare the safety and effects of balovaptan versus placebo (a tablet that looks like the drug but has no drug in it) in people with ASD. Participants may be eligible if they are ages 18 and up and have a designated study partner available. The total time you

will potentially be in the study will be about three years (if participating in both the main and the open-label extension periods). Compensation is provided for participation.

### **Longitudinal Study**

The primary aim of this project is to accurately describe ASD in adulthood and to identify mechanisms that contribute to positive and negative outcomes. The transition to adulthood is being examined in longitudinal sample of children. Initially referred for possible ASD at age two, most participants have been followed for two decades. The current study is following these participants as they transition to adulthood. As such, we are not actively recruiting for this study. Findings will inform best practices for the care and support of adults with ASD and ultimately lead to improvements in the quality of life for individuals affected by ASD and their families.

### **BOSCC (Brief Observation of Social Communication Change)**

The BOSCC is a 16-minute social interaction between an examiner and participant involving conversation and table-top games (e.g., Jenga, Mini-Cornhole). The BOSCC is designed to help us learn more about how we can detect changes in social communication over a brief period of time. To learn more, contact Alison Holbrook: [aholbrook@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:aholbrook@mednet.ucla.edu).

## The Early Childhood Partial Hospital Program



Nestled high on the 7th floor of the Jane and Terry Semel Institute, in bright, child centered therapeutic preschool classrooms, the Early Childhood Partial Hospitalization Program (ECPHP) provides state-of-the-science individualized assessment and treatment. The program is short-term, intensive, and multidisciplinary. Children ages 2 to 6 with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and related developmental disabilities attend for 30 hours per week over the course of approximately 10 weeks. It is directed by UCLA Health Sciences Clinical Professors Stephanny Freeman, Ph.D. and Tanya Paparella, Ph.D.

ECPHP draws thoughtfully from validated therapeutic approaches to optimize treatment outcomes for each child. Families receive emotional and social support as well as specialized education to assist them in understanding and managing their child's needs. We partner with other UCLA medical specialties (e.g., genetics, neurology) as needed. The clinic also works closely and collaboratively with school districts and community providers to facilitate optimal continuity of care for the children in the community upon discharge.

Although ECPHP's primary focus is

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# Research Advances in 2019



*Faculty at the CART All-Faculty Retreat*

This has been an exciting year at the UCLA Center for Autism Research and Treatment (CART) as the campus celebrates its centennial year. With the generosity of a community of friends, we are spearheading several initiatives that will improve the early detection, intervention, and treatment of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Each day, our doctors, researchers and staff carry on a tradition of excellence as they change the way we understand autism and treat those in our care.

CART presents a truly unique, active collaboration of experts across a wide range of disciplines, from basic neuroscience and neuroimaging to clinical care and intervention. In our clinical programs, we care for individuals throughout the lifespan, from

early infancy to adulthood, with specialists in neurology, psychiatry, genetics, and psychology. Our research is inspired by and informed by our patients with the goal of translating scientific discoveries into clinical practice. Highlighted here are some of our research advances:

**1** Innovative studies of brain and behavioral development in early infancy have led to clinical trials of early intervention for autism, with the goal of improving developmental outcomes and brain development in early childhood (Principal Investigators: Shafali Jeste, Mirella Dapretto, Connie Kasari).

**2** Transformative discoveries in autism genetics have identified new genes that cause autism, prompting the development of treatments that might alter the effect of these genetic changes on brain function and ultimately improve development. We have several clinical trials for these genetic conditions, and over the next few years we expect a rapid acceleration in clinical trials that are informed by genetics (Principal Investigators: Daniel Geschwind, Michael Gandal).

**3** By following children diagnosed with autism across their lifetime, we have been able to learn about autism at each life stage, with particular interest in the many challenges faced by adults on the spectrum (Principal Investigator: Catherine Lord). These types of studies have motivated the development of educational and support programs for adults on the spectrum to assist with challenges such as job placement and independent living (Principal Investigators: Amanda Gulsrud, Elizabeth Laugeson).

**4** Neuroimaging studies using techniques such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and electroencephalography (EEG) have shed light on the neurological neurodevelopmental basis of autism and have identified biological markers (biomarkers) that could be used to predict outcomes, measure of response to treatment, or guide the selection of patients for clinical trials (Principal Investigators: Mirella Dapretto, Shulamite Green, Shafali Jeste).

This year, we also celebrate recognition of the work of Dr. Shafali Jeste, who received the Presidential Early career Award for Scientist and Engineers, the federal government's highest honor recognizing scientists (<http://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/ucla-scientists-honored-with-presidential-early-career-awards>).

# Community Conferences Bring Together Experts and Families

A fundamental goal of CART is to ensure that the scientific knowledge gained about autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is disseminated to the communities, with a focus on underserved and underresourced communities in Los Angeles. Here are some highlights of CART's community conferences from this past year.

## ***Autism Unplugged: Contemporary Issues in ASD***

The 5th annual Autism Intervention Research Network on Behavioral Health (AIR-B) conference, "Autism Unplugged: Contemporary Issues in ASD," was once again hosted at the Holman United Methodist Church in South LA in March of this year. The conference highlighted topics that are current and relevant to communities of color affected by autism – AIR-B's community-partnered research, neuroscience updates, disability and the juvenile justice system, evidence-based treatments, developmental trajectories in autism, and experiences of fathers and self-advocates representing African American, Korean, and Latino communities. Speakers included autism experts: Dr. Connie Kasari, Dr. Catherine Lord, Dr. Sheryl Kataoka of CART; and Dr. Aubyn Stahmer of UC Davis; fathers of children with autism; and self-advocate.

## ***Making Sports and Dance Fit for All Kids***

In April of this year, Drs. Rujuta Wilson and Shafali Jeste of CART, in partnership with Professor Nicole Rinehart of Deakin University and sponsored by the generous contribution of Moose Toys, hosted the two-

day "Making Sports and Dance Fit for All Kids" conference, highlighting the importance of creating inclusive environments for children with developmental disabilities in organized sports, dance, and physical activities. The

conference created a forum to discuss the importance of bringing research, sport, dance, and education together so that kids of all abilities can participate. The discussion is being translated into a policy paper to advocate for increased access to organized adaptive sports and dance programs. The final day of the conference consisted of a free, one-day tennis program with ACEing Autism to provide play-based physical activity programs to as many children with autism as possible.

## ***International Approaches to Autism: From Research to Practice***

The Lancet Commission on the Future of Care and Research in Autism and Dr. Catherine Lord held a full-day conference at UCLA in September, sponsored by journal, *The Lancet*. "International Approaches to Autism: From Research to Practice" allowed a rare and unique opportunity for the local community to hear an exceptional group of leading international scientist and advocates discuss the current and future state of autism research and care from around the world. Speakers covered topics ranging



*The Lancet Commission on the Future of Care and Research in Autism*



*Making Sports and Dance Fit for All Kids*

from assessment and diagnosis in Canada and the United Kingdom; early intervention in South Africa and India; families, schools, and co-occurring problems in Argentina, Germany, Norway, Australia; public schools and transitions to adulthood in the United States; and presentation and discussion with a self-advocate. The Lancet Commission on the Future of Care and Research in Autism is a collection of more than 20 autism researchers, clinicians, and self-advocates from around the world who are meeting with the goal to review research and make concrete suggestions on health care and policy worldwide.



# Research at CART



## Are you interested in participating in a research study?

Research studies advance our knowledge of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), leading to earlier diagnosis and better treatment. Research at CART focuses on a variety of topics surrounding ASD, including early identification of brain and behavioral signs underlying autism and effective treatments and intervention practices for people with ASD. Participation in research studies is free! To learn more about our research studies and how to enroll, please visit the CART website: [www.autism.ucla.edu](http://www.autism.ucla.edu), contact the study coordinator directly, or call our general information line at (310) 825-9041.

### TREATMENT RESEARCH:

#### **Joint Engagement in Infants at Risk for ASD: Integrating Treatment with Biomarkers (Baby Bears)**

(PI: Connie Kasari, PhD)



JASPER intervention to improve social and communication skills in children who have early signs of autism.

**Age range:** 12 - 36 months

**Contact:** (310) 825-4775

#### **JASPER Early Intervention for Infants with Tuberous Sclerosis Complex (JETS) (PI: Shafali Jeste, MD)**



JASPER intervention to improve social communication for children with clinical diagnosis of TSC.

**Age range:** 12 - 36 months

**Contact:** (310) 825-8738

#### **Treatment with Aripiprazole and Behavior Intervention for Children with Autism who have Low Language Ability**

(PI: James McCracken, MD, Connie Kasari, PhD)

Language intervention and the combined effects of medication (Aripiprazole or placebo), aimed at improving communication for children with low language ability.

**Age range:** 5 - 11 years

**Contact:** (310) 825-6170

#### **Proof of Mechanism Study for the Treatment of Social Anhedonia in ASD (PI: James McCracken, MD)**

Behavioral intervention (UCLA PEERS®) examining the combined effects of medication (L-DOPA or placebo), aimed at increasing social skills.

**Age range:** 13 - 30 years

**Contact:** (310) 267-3377

### Labs at CART:

**Gandal Lab:** <https://gandalab.dgsom.ucla.edu/pages/>

**Geschwind Lab:** <https://geschwindlab.dgsom.ucla.edu/pages/>

**Golshani Lab:** <https://golshanilab.neurology.ucla.edu/>

**Jeste Lab:** <http://jestelab.org/>

**Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior:** <https://www.iddrc.ucla.edu/iddrc/>

**Kasari Lab:** <http://www.kasari.org/>

### BIOMARKERS AND GENETICS RESEARCH:

#### **SPARK: Simons Foundation Powering Autism Research and Knowledge (PI: Amanda Gulsrud, PhD)**

**SPARK** Examines genetics of individual diagnosed with ASD.

**Age range:** All ages

**Contact:** (310) 206-7478

#### **Baby Brain Imaging and Behavior Study (Baby BIBS)**

(PI: Shafali Jeste, MD, Co-I: Carrie Bearden, PhD)

**Baby BIBS** Examines early brain development in infants at high-risk for ASD to identify children for early intervention.

**Age range:** < 6 months

**Contact:** (310) 825-3478

#### **iMove: An Infant Movement Study (PI: Rujuta Wilson, MD)**



Examines motor development in infancy to identify early predictors of ASD or other developmental delays. Visits can be conducted at UCLA or at home.

**Age range:** 6 months +

**Contact:** (310) 825-1746

#### **Motor Skills in Autism Spectrum Disorder**

(PI: Rujuta Wilson, MD)

Examines motor function, social communication, and behavior in children with ASD.

**Age range:** 10 months - 17 years

**Contact:** (310) 825-1746

#### **Brain and Behavior in Genetics Syndrome (B-BIGS)**

(PI: Shafali Jeste, MD)

**BBIGS** Examines cognitive and social communication of children with intellectual disability or global developmental delay using EEG.

**Age range:** 1 - 18 years

**Contact:** (310) 825-8738

## Research at CART, continued from page 9

### **Tracking Health in Kids (THiNK) (PI: Catherine Lord, PhD)**

Compares behavioral response to health and life events. Parents/ caregivers record child's health over 3 months using a smartphone app.

**Age range:** 2 - 7 years

**Contact:** (310) 794-9899

### **Project Play: Extending the Usefulness of the Brief Observation of Social Communication Change (BOSCC)**

**(PI: Catherine Lord, PhD)**

Examines the BOSCC's sensitivity for children who can speak in simple sentences (2 word phrases containing a verb) or who communicate in complex sentences.

**Age range:** 2 - 16 years

**Contact:** (310) 794-9899

### **Autism Genetics and Human Diversity Study**

**(PI: Daniel Geschwind, MD)**

Examines genetics of African American families.

**Age range:** 3 + years

**Contact:** (310) 794-4090

### **The oRBiting Study (PI: James McCracken, MD)**

Observational study examining different scales that measure restricted and repetitive behaviors.

**Age range:** 5 - 45 years

**Contact:** (310) 825-6170

### **Autism Biomarkers for Clinical Trials (PI: Shafali Jeste, MD)**

Examines social function and communication in children with autism, involving EEG, eye tracking, and behavioral measures.

**Age range:** 6 - 11 years

**Contact:** (310) 825-0180

### **Sensory Over-Responsivity in Autism Spectrum Disorder and Early Adversity (PI: Susan Bookheimer, PhD)**

Neuroimaging and behavioral assessments for children interacting with their sensory environment.

**Age range:** 7 - 17 years

**Contact:** (310) 825-5326

### **Sensory Over-responsivity in Children with Anxiety, ASD or in Typically Developing Children (PI: Shulamite Green, PhD)**

Examines brain and psychological responses of children with ASD sensory-over-responsivity (SOR), and anxiety using brain scans.

**Age range:** 7 - 17 years

**Contact:** (310) 825-5326

### **Neural Basis of Social Cognition in Youth with Autism and Schizophrenia (PI: Susan Bookheimer, PhD)**

Examines social cognition differences in youth with and without ASD or schizophrenia spectrum disorder (SSD), using brain scans, surveys, and behavioral and IQ testing.

**Age range:** 12 - 18 years

**Contact:** (310) 794-4042

### **Measuring Brain Inflammation in Autism**

**(PI: Michael Gandal, MD, PhD)**

Examines brain inflammation and cognitive and behavioral symptoms of ASD. Involves a treatment of minocycline and PET scans for males.

**Age range:** 18 - 35 years

**Contact:** (310) 794-2164

### **The V1ADUCT Study (PI: James McCracken, MD)**

Compares the safety and effects of balovaptan versus placebo for people with ASD.

**Age range:** 18 - 35 years

**Contact:** (310) 825-6170

## ECPHP, continued from page 6

treatment, an important part of our mission is to disseminate knowledge and best practice beyond the clinic. Research and training underscore ECPHP's philosophy. Research is conducted both within the clinic and in collaboration with CART colleagues. Clinical training is offered at several levels. Undergraduates receive an intensive internship experience through courses and hands-on service learning. Pediatric residents and child psychiatry fellows participate in year-round didactic

observation and training in assessment, treatment and continuity of care. Speech, occupational, recreational, nursing, and social work interns benefit from extensive rotations through our program. We also recently developed an innovative lecture and clinical specialization for pediatric dentists on successful procedures for children with ASD.

Beyond on-site clinical training, CAN REACH (founded by ECPHP and provided

in collaboration by the CAN Clinic) is a year-round training program designed to provide community professionals and parents with pro-bono best practice and treatment information regarding individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). CAN REACH provides free clinical workshops, educational lectures, intensive summer teacher trainings on evidence-based practices, and accessible parent lectures.

Website: <https://www.semel.ucla.edu/ecphp>



# Clinical Services at CART

## All Ages

### Child and Adult Neurodevelopmental (CAN) Clinic

The UCLA Child and Adults Neurodevelopmental Clinic (CAN Clinic) is our outpatient clinic located at UCLA's Westwood Medical Campus. The CAN Clinic provides multidisciplinary assessments and evidence-based treatment for individuals with suspected disorders of social, cognitive, language, and motor development, including ASD. The services provided at the CAN Clinic include:

- Evaluation
- Treatments
- Long-term medical and psychiatric care
- Referrals for genetic testing

**Contact:** (310) 794-4008

**Web:** [www.autism.ucla.edu](http://www.autism.ucla.edu)

### Care and Research in Neurogenetics (CARING) Clinic

The Care and Research in Neurogenetics (CARING) Clinic is a multidisciplinary clinic that evaluates and treats children with neurodevelopmental disorders (including autism, global developmental delay or intellectual disability) and a known genetic syndrome or variant. Directed by Dr. Shafali Jeste, a pediatric neurologist, the clinic provides comprehensive evaluations and care for children with complex needs, with the team of specialists including neurology, genetics, psychiatry and psychology.

**Contact:** (310) 206-7404

**Web:** [www.autism.ucla.edu](http://www.autism.ucla.edu)

## Children

### Early Childhood Partial Hospitalization Program (ECPHP)

ECPHP is a short-term integrated day treatment program for young children who have been diagnosed with, or may have, autism, developmental disabilities, and behavior disorders. ECPHP is a five-day a week, six-hour a day program. All aspects of the program are fully integrated and coordinated to create an individualized, comprehensive, consistent, interdisciplinary, and therapeutic environment.

**Contact:** (310) 206-2695

**Web:** [www.semel.ucla.edu/ecphp](http://www.semel.ucla.edu/ecphp)

### Expressive Movement Initiative

Expressive Movement Initiative (EMI) - UCLA is a new program on campus that aims to teach children with developmental disabilities how to dance! Through dance movement therapy and mentorship from dance volunteers, their goal is to provide a fun and creative outlet while making dance accessible to all! If you want to make a difference in these children's lives or know anyone who may be interested in the program, email [contact.emiucpla@gmail.com](mailto:contact.emiucpla@gmail.com)

**Contact:** [contact.emiucpla@gmail.com](mailto:contact.emiucpla@gmail.com)

**Web:** [www.emiucpla.org/](http://www.emiucpla.org/)

## ABC Partial Program

The Achievement, Behavior, Cognition (ABC) Child Programs in the Neuropsychiatric Hospital at UCLA provides psychiatric services through the Partial Hospitalization Program and the Intensive Outpatient Program. ABC Child Programs are time-limited, integrated programs dedicated to assisting children ages 6-12 and their families to promote positive emotional and behavioral health.

**Contact:** (310) 825-0415

**Web:** [www.uclahealth.org/Resnick/abc-](http://www.uclahealth.org/Resnick/abc-)

## Preschool, Teens & Young Adults

### Program for the Education and Enrichment of Relationship Skills (PEERS®)

PEERS is a manualized, social skills training intervention for preschool aged children, adolescents and young adults. It has strong evidence-base for use with preschool-aged children, teens, and young adults with autism spectrum disorders, but is also appropriate for teens and young adults with ADHD, anxiety, depression, and other socioemotional problems.

**Contact:** (310) 267-3377

**Web:** [www.semel.ucla.edu/peers](http://www.semel.ucla.edu/peers)

## Young Adults

### College to Career

This new program aims to support young adults with ASD in their transition to adulthood, including attaining employment. The College to Career Program includes multiple facets supporting young adults during this transition period. The program will include evidence-based social skills intervention focused on employment-related soft skills, group treatment for young adults with ASD focusing on self-advocacy, and problem-solving and diagnostic services to help young adults and their families understand their strengths and weaknesses and identify a path forward.

**Contact:** (310) 794-4008



# Upcoming Events at CART

## UCLA CART Distinguished Lecture Series

UCLA CART offers the distinguished scientific lecture series on the first (\*or other) Friday of each month from October through June. This lecture series brings scientific experts from around the country and internationally to present and discuss multidisciplinary topics of autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The lectures are free and open to the public. This lecture series is sponsored by the UCLA Brain Research Institute, the UCLA Tarjan Center, and UCLA IDDRC.

**Location:**

UCLA Gonda (Goldschmied) Neuroscience & Genetics Research Center  
1st Floor Conference Room  
695 Charles E. Young Drive South  
Los Angeles, CA 90095

**Time:**

Doors open and coffee served: 8:30AM  
Lecture: 9:00AM–10:00AM  
Questions & Discussion: 10:00AM–10:30AM

**January 10, 2020\*****Speaker: Jacob Ellegood, PhD**

The Hospital for Sick Children, Canada

**Title:** *Animal Population Imaging – Linking Molecular Pathways to Autism Clusters in the Mouse Using the Neuroanatomy*

**February 7, 2020****Speaker: Beth Malow, PhD**

Vanderbilt University

**Title:** *Sleep and Autism—Contributors, Consequences, Treatments, and New Directions*

**March 6, 2020****Speaker: Marsha Mailick, PhD**

University of Wisconsin

**Title:** *Mining Electronic Health Records for Phenotypic Discovery in Autism and FXS*

**April 3, 2020****Speaker: Antonio Harden, MD**

Stanford University

**Title:** *TBA*

**May 1, 2020****Speaker: Petrus de Vries**

University of Cape Town, South Africa

**Title:** *TBA*

**June 5, 2020****Speaker: Sarkis Mazmanian, PhD**

Caltech

**Title:** *Human Microbiomes from Autism Spectrum Disorder Induce Behavioral Symptoms in Mice*

**FEB  
9th**



## CART and UCLA Women's Gymnastics Team Up

It's time to get sporty! Join us at the start of 2020 for games and snacks before cheering on the UCLA Women's Gymnastics Team! UCLA CART will be partnering with the Bruin gymnasts on February 9th at Pauley Pavilion as they take on the Arizona Wildcats and we would love for you to attend! Come enjoy cheerful activities fit for all ages and see your favorite Bruins compete all while learning more about the current ongoing efforts that CART is putting forth in the world of autism research and treatment. The event will be dedicated to the families of individuals with autism within the greater Los Angeles area. Additionally, admittance to the gymnastics meet will be included for all attendees. *More details coming soon! Be on the lookout to secure your spot in time because availability is limited.*

## SAVE THE DATE



### *Advances in Autism 2020*

*Save the date for CART's full-day annual scientific symposium with renown researchers and clinicians from CART. Details to come.*

**April 24, 2020**  
**Ronald Regan UCLA Medical Center**