

Dear Friends:

Just like that, the start of the academic year is already underway at UCLA – by the time you get this, the first semester will nearly be over! I look forward to the new year ahead. The start of the academic year also provides an opportunity to not only reaffirm our mission to deliver leading-edge patient care, research, and education, as well as our Bruin values of mutual respect, open-mindedness, compassion, integrity and inclusivity. These values may be of greatest importance in an election year like this one, when tensions can be particularly high and world-wide events are often disheartening. As we enter the fall and winter season, we refer you to the [UCLA Health Vaccine Info Hub](#), providing you with the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccinations for you and your family. CART continues to update our [COVID-19 resources](#) available on our website, as well as CART's [resources supporting Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#), approved by our expert clinicians and designed to help you feel informed and empowered.

Fall at UCLA is always exciting, and this year is no exception. We continue to be hard-at-work at CART with our researchers continuing to push the boundaries of scientific discovery for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). I highlight here a paper recently published in *Nature*. The Geschwind Lab team extended their original work showing that ASD impacts the brain at the molecular level by studying many regions from each subject. Changes were found in virtually all of the 11 cortical regions of the brain, and were not limited to higher cortical association regions involved in functioning such as reasoning, language, social cognition and mental flexibility, but impacted primary sensory regions. We now finally are beginning to get a picture of the state of the brain, at the molecular level, in individuals who had a diagnosis of autism. This provides a key starting point for understanding the disorder's mechanisms, which will inform and accelerate development of disease-altering therapies. Check out the following links for the media coverage on this important work: [UPI](#), [HealthDay](#), [Fierce Biotech](#), [BioWorld](#), [DocWire News](#), and [Spectrum News](#).

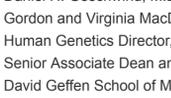
I am thrilled to announce two major awards presented by CART to outstanding faculty and undergraduate students at UCLA who are pushing the field of autism research to new heights. The CART Pilot Grant Program was first established in 2004 with the goal of funding one-year pilot or feasibility studies for biomedical, epidemiological, or behavioral research. The purpose of these awards is to foster interactions and interdisciplinary research projects in the basic and clinical areas of autism, and this year is no exception. This year, CART awards Pilot Grant funding to a seasoned and accomplished scientist, [Dr. Carrie Bearden](#), for her project looking at thalamocortical disruptions during sleep and wake as a biomarker for sensory sensitivity. The second award is presented to one of our newest members of the CART faculty, [Dr. Lucina Uddin](#), whose project will characterize the relationship between bilingualism, executive functioning, and brain functional organization in verbal 9-12 year-old children for the first time using behavioral and informant-report assessments combined with state-of-the-art neuroimaging approaches. You will find more information about these two remarkable scientists and their projects later in this newsletter.

For the 5th consecutive year, I am pleased to share that CART has named three exceptional undergraduate UCLA students the 2022 Sigman Scholars: Apurva Chaturvedi, Joshua Ceballos, and Sreen Wong. These students continue to demonstrate a superior work ethic and a strong and impactful commitment to the field of autism spectrum disorders (ASD). They are carrying on the legacy of our former colleague, Dr. Marian Sigman, whose impact transformed the field of autism research and clinical services at UCLA and the field as whole. I invite you to read more about these exceptional students later in our newsletter. Please know that we depend on the generosity of the community to continue to support this program. [Click here to learn how to support this amazing program.](#)

CART's goal is to change the world of families impacted by ASD by understanding its causes, improving diagnosis, and developing transformative therapies. There are so many ways you can get involved and partner with CART such as attending our monthly Distinguished Lecture Series, participating in CART's scientific research studies, acquiring clinical services, or donating to support CART's programs and services. Private philanthropy continues to be essential, especially in our efforts to support young researchers. No matter where your passion or interest lies, when you invest in CART, your gift has an outsized impact for CART and into the world. For more information on how you can become our partner and explore ways you can impact autism and CART, please contact Chris Carbado, Senior Director of Development for UCLA Health Sciences at 310-562-6488 or ccarbado@mednet.ucla.edu.

I wish you all a meaningful year ahead.

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 at UCLA

UCLA CART HIGHLIGHTS

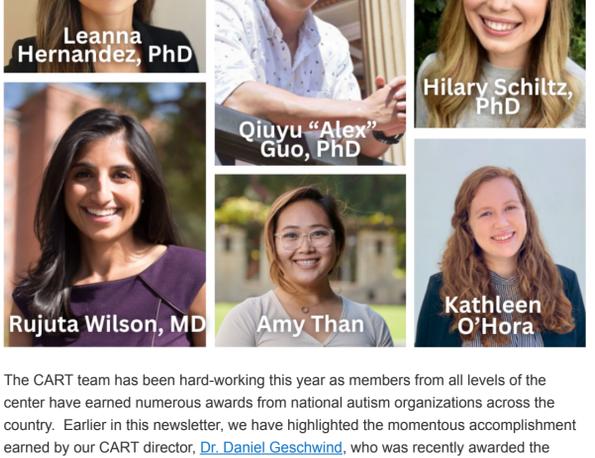


Dr. Daniel Geschwind

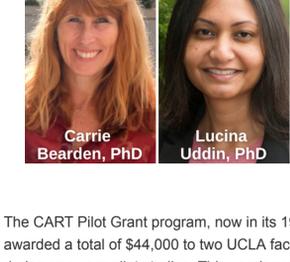
Dr. Daniel Geschwind, Director of UCLA CART, is Awarded National Academy of Medicine Prize for Work on Genetics of Autism

Dr. Daniel Geschwind, the Gordon and Virginia MacDonald Distinguished Professor of Human Genetics, Neurology and Psychiatry at UCLA, was awarded the National Academy of Medicine's (NAM) 2022 Rhoda and Bernard Sarnat International Prize in Mental Health in recognition of his pioneering research and leadership in autism genetics. [> Read more](#)

CART Team Earns Numerous Awards to Examine ASD



The CART team has been hard-working this year as members from all levels of the center have earned numerous awards from national autism organizations across the country. Earlier in this newsletter, we have highlighted the momentous accomplishment earned by our CART director, [Dr. Daniel Geschwind](#), who was recently awarded the National Academy of Medicine's 2022 Rhoda and Bernard Sarnat International Prize in Mental Health. Here we highlight additional accomplishments by members of CART, each pushing the boundaries of autism science and impacting the field in tremendous ways. [> Read more](#)



Researchers will Examine Sleep and Bilingualism in CART's Pilot Grant Projects

The CART Pilot Grant program, now in its 19th year, is pleased to announce it has awarded a total of \$44,000 to two UCLA faculty members who will examine autism during one-year pilot studies. This year's recipients, Dr. Carrie Bearden and Dr. Lucina Uddin, will each bring new insight into our understanding of autism by examining sleep and bilingualism (respectively) as it relates to autistic individuals. Grants awarded through the CART Pilot Grant program are intended to foster interactions and interdisciplinary research projects in the basic and clinical areas of autism as well as building upon CART's mission and current research activities. [> Read more](#)

CART Announces our 2022 Sigman Scholars



CART is pleased to announce this year's Sigman Scholars: Apurva Chaturvedi, Joshua Ceballos, and Sreen Wong. CART established the Sigman Scholars Research Program for UCLA undergraduate students interested in pursuing a career focused on autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The Sigman Scholars Research Program provides a rigorous 8-10 week summer research position for current UCLA undergraduates currently working with or who have plans to work with CART faculty. Fields of potential study include both basic and clinical research, across disciplines including genetics, psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience, and education. This summer research program is supported by the [Sigman Scholars Fund](#) at CART. [> Read more](#)

UCLA CART CLINICAL UPDATES

New CAN Clinic Psychologists Offers Additional Treatment and Services for Adults



Dr. Sara McCracken

The CAN Clinic is happy to introduce Dr. Sara McCracken, our newest clinical psychologist who joined our team this year. Dr. Sara McCracken is a Clinical Psychologist and Board Certified Behavior Analyst who specializes in the assessment and treatment of neurodevelopmental and psychiatric disorders in children, adolescents and adults. [> Read more](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS AT UCLA CART

December 2
9-10 AM PT

CART DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES
"Becoming a FDA Biomarker: Face Processing and Attention for Clinical Trial Improvement"

Guest speaker:

Sara Jane Webb, PhD
University of Washington

[Register](#)

January 20
9-10 AM PT

CART DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES
"Modeling Human Brain Development and Disease in Stem Cell Derived 3D Culture"

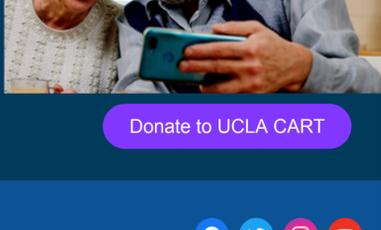
Guest speaker:

Jürgen Knoblich, PhD
Institute of Molecular Biotechnology of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (IMBA)

[Register](#)

GIVING TUESDAY
November 29, 2022

Join the GivingTuesday movement and reimagine a world built upon shared humanity and radical generosity



[Donate to UCLA CART](#)