

RARC DIGEST

Dear RARC Community,

Please see below for our weekly round-up of addiction-related news and events across Rutgers. Have news or events you'd like us to highlight in an upcoming digest? Send the details to RARC Communication Specialist, Ricki Arvesen (ricki.arvesen@rutgers.edu).

RARC News

- **RARC Welcomes New Assistant Professor of Psychiatry in RWJMS, Marilyn Piccirillo, PhD:** We're thrilled to welcome Dr. Marilyn Piccirillo as a new hire and core member. On May 1, 2024, Dr. Piccirillo joined Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School as a Tenure-Track Assistant Professor of Psychiatry. Her research focuses on expanding initiatives for measurement-based and person-centered care, utilizing smartphone-based methods to enhance the scope and precision of clinical assessments and treatments for individuals with co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. For more information, [click here](#).
- **RARC Distinguished Guest Presentation with Jeff Brown, Executive Director of the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission (NJCRC) (May 9th at 1:00 p.m. EST):** Please join us in room D201/D203 at the University Behavioral Health Care to hear from Jeff Brown, who will provide insights into NJCRC initiatives and explore avenues for research and collaboration. Following the presentation, there will be a networking session for attendees to exchange ideas, expand connections, and explore opportunities. For more information, [click here](#).
- **RARC Year in Review and Social Event (May 10th at 4:00 p.m. EST):** Please join us for an evening of food and drinks at the Rutgers Addiction Research Center's annual Year in Review and Social Event, held at the Rutgers Club. This gathering presents a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow colleagues from Rutgers engaged in addiction research, as well as our clinical and community partners. For more information, [click here](#).
- **Training in Addiction Research Program (TARP) Hybrid Presentation with Mackenzie Hofmann (May 17, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. EST):** Please join us for the Rutgers TARP Monthly Meeting in room 258 in the Rutgers School of Public Health or on zoom. This event will feature Mackenzie Hofmann, a Senior Scientist at Merck. All TARP and RARC faculty and trainees, as well as collaborators are invited. Food and drinks will be provided. For more information, [click here](#).
- **2023-2024 Spring BHI Trainee Travel Award Winners Announced:** Congratulations to the winners of the 2023-2024 Spring Rutgers Brain Health Institute Trainee Travel Award. This opportunity aims to facilitate the sharing of trainee research with a broader audience and foster collaborations with scientists in their field. BHI will award them \$500 to help offset travel costs to attend national and

international scientific meetings. For more information, [click here](#).

RARC Resource Spotlight

- **Looking for helpful resources for grant writing?** The RARC hosts a list of possible facilities and resources that you may wish to incorporate into the Facilities & Other Resources page of your grant application. To view this resource, [click here](#). To check out our other addiction-related resources, [click here](#)!

RARC DEI Spotlight

- **Rutgers Health-IDEA Grants program** for innovations in inclusion, diversity, equity, and advocacy. Faculty, staff, students, and trainees are encouraged to apply. The mission of the RH-IDEA innovation grants is to support action-oriented projects that promote an inclusive, diverse, and cohesive culture at Rutgers Health. **Proposals are due on May 24th**. For more information, [click here](#).

Rutgers News

- **Dr. Lewis Nelson**, Director of the Division of Medical Toxicology at **Rutgers New Jersey Medical School**, discusses the term "functioning alcoholic" with *TODAY* in response to Taylor Swift's song lyrics. While the term isn't medically recognized, it commonly refers to individuals who heavily consume alcohol while maintaining daily functioning. However, Nelson highlights that this can be misleading, as alcohol use disorder often results in negative consequences despite outward appearances of normalcy. He stresses the importance of recognizing alcohol addiction and seeking help, as it can have serious health and social repercussions. For more information, [click here](#).
- Rutgers researchers, led by **Kymberle L. Sterling** from the **Rutgers School of Public Health**, found that despite decades of deceptive marketing, Black adults who smoke menthol cigarettes are often unaware of tobacco companies' targeting tactics. The study highlights the industry's predatory marketing methods aimed at Black communities and the lack of awareness among consumers. As federal plans to ban menthol cigarettes remain stalled, Sterling emphasizes the need for state and local leaders to address the issue, calling for community-engaged, culturally tailored communication efforts to educate the public. For more information, [click here](#).
- The Camden Coalition and **Rutgers Law School** launched a medical-legal partnership (MLP) in late 2017. In early 2022, the Camden Coalition MLP entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the **Center for Healing** to take direct referrals for patients in its Addiction Medicine program with legal needs. Early findings indicate that the MLP model is a promising approach for addressing health-harming legal needs facing substance use disorder patients. For more information, [click here](#).

- A majority of New Jerseyans are at least “somewhat” familiar with storage and disposal of opioids and other medications, and less than 3 in 10 report that they or a loved one has been prescribed an opioid as pain medication in the past two years, according to the latest **Rutgers-Eggleton Poll** collaboration with the **Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey**. For more information, [click here](#).

Opportunities

- **Request for Applications (RFA): Learning Health System Scholars Training Program:** The LHS Scholars Training Program aims to cultivate a new generation of leaders in Learning Health Systems (LHS) Science by providing comprehensive education, training, mentorship, and career development opportunities tailored to the professional interests of embedded investigators, clinicians, and health system personnel. Their goal is to nurture LHS Scholars who will contribute to academia, industry, and government. To learn about the program, [click here](#).
- **Innovations for Substance Use Disorders: Application for the 2024 cohort is now open!** I4SUD is an executive education certificate program offered to select applicants for free through Johns Hopkins Carey Business School (JHU CBS). The program will enroll 30 researchers who are motivated to solve challenges related to substance use disorders (SUDs). During the program, participants will work individually or with their team to assess if their pharmaceutical, digital health, or medical device-related inventions can be transformed into innovations to address challenges in SUDs. Applications are open now until **June 30, 2024**. For more information, [click here](#).

Funding Opportunities

- **Call for Applications: \$50,000 Prizes for Immigrant Scientists:** The Vilcek Foundation is accepting applications for the 2025 Vilcek Prizes for Creative Promise in Biomedical Science. In 2025, the Foundation will award three prizes of \$50,000 to immigrant and foreign-born research scientists living and working in the United States. To be eligible candidates must hold a PhD, and be employed full time in a research capacity as a principal investigator. Candidates must have been born outside of the United States to non-American parents, and must have lived in the United States for at least 4 years. Prizewinners are selected for the scientific rigor of their work, and for the impact of their work in their respective field of study. Eligible scientists are encouraged to apply by **June 10, 2024**. For more information, [click here](#).
- **PAR-23-244: Population Approaches to Reducing Alcohol-related Cancer Risk:** This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) aims to support research on interdisciplinary population approaches to increasing awareness of the relationship between alcohol and cancer risk, understanding and changing social norms related to alcohol consumption, and developing and/or evaluating alcohol policy approaches. Further, it calls for the development, testing, and implementation of population-level interventions to reduce alcohol-related cancer risk. For more information, [click here](#).
- **PAR-23-122: Research With Activities Related to Diversity (ReWARD) (R01 Clinical Trial Optional):** This program's overarching goal is to enhance the breadth and geographical location of research and research-related activities supported by NIH. The ReWARD program provides support for the

health-related research of scientists who are making a significant contribution to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) and who have no current NIH research project grant funding. The next application for this program is **June 5, 2024**.

- **RFA-DA-24-038 R41/42 STTR: Developing Regulated Therapeutic and Diagnostic Solutions for Patients Affected by Opioid and/or Stimulants use Disorders (OUD/StUD):** This NOFO encourages Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) applications from small business concerns (SBCs) proposing research projects, directed towards commercialization, for the development of novel, evidence-based, FDA-regulated medical products addressing the needs of patients suffering from opioid use disorders (OUD) and/or stimulant use disorders (StUD). **Due dates: August 13, 2024; February 14, 2025.** For more information, [click here](#).
- **RFA-DA-25-053 R41/42 STTR: Harnessing Artificial Intelligence and Polypharmacology to Discover Pharmacotherapeutics for Substance Use Disorders:** This NOFO encourages Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) applications from small business concerns (SBCs) proposing research projects directed towards commercialization to harness artificial intelligence (AI), including machine learning (ML), tools, and polypharmacology to identify pharmacotherapeutics with lower toxicity and higher efficacy to prevent or treat substance use disorders (SUDs). **Due date: July 25, 2024.** For more information, [click here](#).
- **PAR-20-249: NIDA Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Program Award in Substance Use and Substance Use Disorder Research (K12 Clinical Trial Optional):** This NOFO encourages applications for institutional research career development (K12) programs that propose to support intensive, supervised research and career development experiences leading to research independence for clinician scientists (Scholars) conducting substance use and substance use disorder (SUD) research. For more information, [click here](#).
- **RFA-DA-25-032: NIH Mechanistic Studies on Social Behavior in Substance Use Disorder (R01 Clinical Trial Optional):** This NOFO is to solicit applications proposing mechanistic, transdisciplinary research on social behavior and its relationships with the onset, trajectory, and impact of Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) and comorbidities. LOI due July 14, 2024. For more information, [click here](#).
- **RARC Funding Opportunities:** The RARC keeps a running list of funding announcements from multiple organizations, including the NIH, that may be of interest to Rutgers addiction researchers. To view this resource, [click here](#).

News from the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs, a publication of the Center of Alcohol & Substance Use Studies:

Just Accepted in JSAD:

- [Environmental Suppression Mediates the Relationship between Posttraumatic Stress and Cannabis Use Among Trauma-Exposed College Students](#)
Michael Gawrysiak, Daniel Loomis, Sebastian Ehmann, Sam Wayne, and Mikaela Armao

- [A qualitative assessment of blunt smokers' perceptions and receptivity to non-tobacco blunt wraps](#)
Jacob Paredes, Laura D'Anna, Lesly D. Ramirez, Kevon T. Mayhan, Joshua U. Rhee, and David S. Timberlake
- [Preliminary Efficacy of a Web-Based Alcohol and Emotion Regulation Intervention on Sexual Risk Behaviors Among College Women](#)
Julia F. Hammett, and Cynthia A. Stappenbeck

- Follow JSAD on LinkedIn and on Twitter/Facebook/Threads/Instagram: **@JSADjournal**

-For JSAD's free photo database of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug images, visit:

<https://www.jsad.com/photos>

Save the Dates!

- **CPDD Webinar: Researchers with Lived/Living Experience Involving Substance Use**
Monday, May 6th at 12:00 p.m. EST
The *College on Problems of Drug Dependence Communications Committee* is hosting a virtual webinar to engage CPDD researchers in considering how to incorporate perspectives of those with lived or living experience of substance use and/or SUD. Several CPDD researchers with their own lived or living experience will share about their careers in research and perspectives on the benefits and barriers to engaging people with lived or living experience in research. For more information, [click here](#).
- **Addiction Policy Forum Webinar: How to Build Opioid Data Dashboards for Community Decision-Making**
Thursday, May 9th at 2:00 p.m. EST
Join the *Addiction Policy Forum* webinar to learn how data dashboards can facilitate evidence-based decision-making by providing insights into effective approaches, gaps in substance use disorder services, and opportunities to address challenges within communities. Presenters will provide a step-by-step walkthrough of the undertakings to develop the HCS dashboards, including the process of accessing, displaying, and explaining data; co-designing dashboards with state and local partners; implementing and using dashboards in the community; and best practices for using and sustaining them. For more information, [click here](#).
- **I4SUD Webinar: A Personalized Virtual Reality Environment Tool to Mitigate Opioid Use Disorder**
Thursday, May 23rd at 2:00 p.m. EST
Join Dr. Lola Akintola, I4SUD Alum and NIH \$100K Challenge Winner as she talks about her innovation to mitigate the opioid crisis and her experience with the I4SUD program. Following her presentation, Dr. Supriya Munshaw will discuss the I4SUD program and how it can help researchers bring their ideas to market. For more information, [click here](#).

- **2024 Cannabis Clinical Outcomes Research Conference (CCORC)**

Thursday, May 30th at 9:00 a.m. EST

The Cannabis Clinical Outcomes Research Conference (CCORC) focuses on learning and sharing latest research findings, advancing medical marijuana research and promoting the dissemination of scientific evidence on the effects of marijuana, drug-drug interactions and safety. CCORC connects researchers, physicians, and medical marijuana industry leaders to promote the understanding of medical marijuana use on health. For more information, [click here](#).

Addiction in the News

- [Justice Dept Plans To Reschedule Marijuana as a Lower-Risk Drug](#) (CNN Business)
- [FDA Approves Generic OTC Naloxone Nasal Spray](#) (Drug Topics)

RARC Resources - Don't forget the RARC has collated addiction-related resources for Rutgers addiction researchers.

- **Do you need administrative support?** – The RARC would be happy to work with you to budget part of the RARC Program Assistant, Priscille Myrthil-Harder's efforts into your grants as a project coordinator. If you are interested in exploring this option, please reach out to RARC Program Manager, Emily Balcke (emily.balcke@rutgers.edu).
- **Rutgers Communications and Marketing** (R-Comm) provides direct support to Rutgers-New Brunswick and RBHS researchers seeking to publicize their research through various media channels, aiming to reach new audiences, advance their careers, and promote their departments, schools, and centers. R-Comm has developed a series of Media Training slides; you can access them [here](#).