2023 E.R. BROWN SYMPOSIUM

ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AS A PUBLIC HEALTH EPIDEMIC

Monday, February 13, 2023
10 a.m.–3 p.m. PT | Zoom
10–10:10 a.m*  
**WELCOME**  
Ninez Ponce, Director, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research  
Professor and Chair, Health Policy and Management, UCLA  
Fielding School of Public Health

10:10–10:30 a.m.  
**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**  
Rob Bonta, Attorney General, State of California

10:30–10:35 a.m.  
**INTRODUCTION TO PANEL 1**  
Ninez Ponce

10:35 a.m.–Noon  
**PANEL 1 — EVIDENCE OF INTERSECTIONALITY AND EQUITY AMONG IMPACTED COMMUNITIES**

| Joan Asarnow  
Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, UCLA |
|---------------------------------|
| Kerith Conron  
Research Director, Williams Institute |
| Nicole Kravitz-Wirtz  
Assistant Professor, Violence Prevention Research Program, UC Davis |
| Jesenia Pizarro  
Professor, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Arizona State University, and Editor, *Homicide Studies* |
| George Tita  
Professor, Criminology, Law and Society, UC Irvine |
| **Moderator:** Michael Rodriguez  
Director, California Alliance of Academics and Communities for Public Health Equity |

Noon–12:30 p.m.  
**BREAK**

*All times listed in Pacific Time*
12:30–1:45 p.m.  PANEL 2 — PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIONS TAKEN TO FIGHT GUN VIOLENCE

Christian Heyne  
Gun Violence Survivor and Vice President of Policy and Programs, Brady

Chris Knoepke  
Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Colorado School of Medicine

Andrea Welsing  
Executive Director, Los Angeles County Office of Violence Prevention

Fernando Rejón  
Executive Director, Urban Peace Institute

Moderator: Brian Malte  
Executive Director, Hope and Heal Fund

1:45–1:50 p.m.  INTRODUCTION TO Q&A

Ninez A. Ponce

1:50–2:50 p.m.  DISCUSSANT AND Q&A

Julie Nagasako  
Deputy Director, Office of Policy and Planning, California Department of Public Health

Refujio “Cuco” Rodriguez  
Chief Equity and Program Officer, Hope and Heal Fund

Moderator: Mark A. Peterson  
Interim Chair, Department of Public Policy, and Professor, Public Policy, Political Science, and Law, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs

2:50–3 p.m.  THANK YOU AND CLOSING

Ninez Ponce

3:15–4:30 p.m.  EXCLUSIVE STUDENT SESSION

Featuring Gabriel Garcia, Youth ALIVE!; Wilson Hammett, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health; and Jason Madison, RYSE Center

Moderator: Cuco Rodriguez  
Chief Equity and Program Officer, Hope and Heal Fund
Ninez A. Ponce, PhD, MPP, is the Director of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research and Professor and Chair of Health Policy and Management at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health.

Ponce is the Principal Investigator of the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), the nation’s largest state health survey, recognized as a national model for data collection on race/ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), and immigrant health.

Ponce led pioneering efforts in multicultural survey research, including measures of racial/ethnic identity, acculturation, generational status, and discrimination. She also devised the rationale and implementation of Asian ethnic oversamples and the cultural and linguistic adaptation of the CHIS in Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin), Korean, Vietnamese, and Tagalog, the only large-scale population survey to do. Ponce champions better data, especially on social determinants of health, better inferences on communities of color, better population representation of data, especially for those that are typically invisible in administrative and surveillance data, and better care for overlooked groups.

Ponce currently serves on the board of directors for AcademyHealth; the AcademyHealth Advisory Group on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Health Services Research; and the editorial advisory board of the journal Milbank Quarterly. She was also elected as a member of the National Academy of Social Insurance and received the 2020 Inaugural Data Equity Award from the Asian Pacific Partners for Empowerment, Advocacy and Leadership (APPEAL).
On April 23, 2021, Rob Bonta was sworn in as the 34th Attorney General of the State of California, the first person of Filipino descent and the second Asian-American to occupy the position.

Attorney General Bonta's passion for justice and fairness was instilled in him by his parents, who served on the frontlines of some of America's most important social movements.
Justice movements. Instilling in him the lessons they learned from the United Farm Workers and the civil rights movement, Attorney General Bonta’s parents lit a fire inside him to fight against injustice — to stand up for those who are taken advantage of or harmed. It’s why he decided to become a lawyer — to help right historic wrongs and fight for people who have been harmed. He worked his way through college and graduated with honors from Yale University and attended Yale Law School.

In the State Assembly, Attorney General Bonta enacted nation-leading reforms to inject more justice and fairness into government and institutions. As the People’s Attorney, he sees seeking accountability from those who abuse their power and harm others as one of the most important functions of the job. In elected office, he has taken on powerful interests and advanced systemic change — pursuing corporate accountability, standing up for workers, punishing big polluters, and fighting racial injustice. He has been a national leader in the fight to transform the criminal justice system, banning private prisons and detention facilities in California, as well as pushing to eliminate cash bail in the state. He has led statewide fights for racial, economic, and environmental justice and worked to further the rights of immigrant families, renters, and working Californians.

Prior to serving in the Assembly, Attorney General Bonta worked as a Deputy City Attorney for the City and County of San Francisco, where he represented the City and County and its employees, and fought to protect Californians from exploitation and racial profiling.

Born in Quezon City, Philippines, Attorney General Bonta immigrated to California with his family as an infant. He is the son of a proud native Filipino mother and a father who taught him the value of public service to his community. He is married to Mia Bonta, and they are the proud parents of three children Reina, Iliana, and Andres, as well as their dog Legolas.
PANELISTS

Joan Asarnow, PhD
Professor, Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences
David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA

Joan Asarnow, PhD, is Professor of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at UCLA and a board-certified clinical child and adolescent psychologist. At UCLA, Dr. Asarnow directs the UCLA Center for Trauma-Informed Suicide & Self-Harm Treatment and Prevention (ASAP Center), which offers trainings and consultation on trauma-informed approaches to evaluation and treatment for reducing suicide and self-harm risk. She also leads the UCLA Youth Stress and Mood Program, focusing on suicide prevention and treatment for depression. Dr. Asarnow has led efforts to integrate care for mental health problems within emergency departments, pediatrics, and other medical settings, and to develop and disseminate evidence-based treatments for youth suicide and suicide attempt prevention and depression.

Kerith J. Conron, ScD, MPH
Blachford-Cooper Distinguished Scholar and Research Director, Williams Institute

Kerith J. Conron, ScD, MPH, is the Blachford-Cooper Distinguished Scholar and Research Director at the Williams Institute. She is a social and psychiatric epidemiologist whose work focuses on documenting and reducing inequities that impact sexual and gender minority populations. She is committed to altering the landscape of adversity and opportunity for LGBTQ communities, particularly through collaboration. Dr. Conron is co-principal investigator of the NICHD/NIMHD-funded Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity, Socioeconomic Status, and Health across the Life Course study. Her publications appear in the American Journal of Public Health, Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, and Psychological Medicine. Her expertise and commentary have been featured by The New York Times, the Associated Press, and National Public Radio.

Nicole Kravitz-Wirtz, PhD, MPH
Assistant Professor, Violence Prevention Research Program, UC Davis

Nicole Kravitz-Wirtz, PhD, MPH, is a population health sociologist and Assistant Professor with the Violence Prevention Research Program and the California Firearm Violence Research Center at UC Davis. Her research focuses broadly on understanding the social ecology of places in the service of fostering equitable, community-centered policies and practices for improving the health of people and communities who are impacted by violence. Her work has been published in JAMA, Health Affairs, Social Science and Medicine, Injury Prevention, and Preventive Medicine, and showcased in media outlets such as The New York Times, the Guardian, and NPR.
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**George Tita, PhD**
Professor, Criminology, Law, and Society, UC Irvine

George Tita, PhD, is a Professor of Criminology, Law and Society, and Urban Planning and Public Policy at the University of California, Irvine (UCI). He directs the Livable Cities Lab, which leverages the academic expertise of UCI faculty and students in order to engage policy makers and stakeholders around three important issues: providing dignified housing for all, creating and maintaining safe communities, and measuring the social impact of “good housing.” Tita’s research interests include the study of interpersonal violence with a focus on homicide, urban street gangs, and the community context of crime. He is currently co-PI on a National Institute of Justice (NIJ) funded project studying the changing social dynamics of gun violence in Los Angeles.

**Jesenia Pizarro, PhD**
Professor, School of Criminology & Criminal Justice, Arizona State University, and Editor, Homicide Studies

Jesenia M. Pizarro, PhD, is a Professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice in Arizona State University. Her research is transdisciplinary in nature and focuses on the proximal event and situational factors that result in violence, the processing of violent crime in the criminal justice system, and antiviolence strategies. Her research also explores correctional practices in the United States. Dr. Pizarro is a member of the Firearm Safety Among Children and Teens Consortium (FACTS) and the Homicide Research Working Group (HRWG). She has worked with police departments and agencies throughout the country in joint efforts to curb violence, and has managed federally funded grants that focus on urban violence and intimate partner homicide prevention. She currently serves as the editor-in-chief of Homicide Studies: An Interdisciplinary and International Journal.

**Michael Rodríguez, MD, MPH**
Director, California Alliance of Academics and Communities for Public Health Equity

Michael A. Rodríguez, MD, MPH, is the Director of the California Alliance of Academics and Communities for Public Health Equity, Special Advisor for the California Academic Health Department Project, and Professor Emeritus at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. He was a Professor of Community Health Sciences at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health and founding chair of the UCLA Global Health minor. He has led multidisciplinary collaborative initiatives to promote health equity, including as founding director of the Health Equity Network of the Americas, the UCLA Blum Center on Poverty and Health in Latin America, and the AltaMed Institute for Health Equity. Dr. Rodríguez’s policy-relevant research includes racial/ethnic and immigrant health equity, gun, youth and domestic violence prevention, and health workforce for underserved populations.
Christian Heyne
Gun Violence Survivor and Vice President of Policy and Programs, Brady

Christian Heyne is the Vice President of Policy and Programs at Brady, one of the nation’s oldest gun violence prevention organizations, where he leads all legislative and programmatic efforts at the federal and state level. Prior to assuming this position, he served as the legislative director at the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence (CGSV). Throughout his career, Heyne has worked to build consensus both at the state-level and in Congress to end the epidemic of gun violence in America. He has successfully developed, lobbied, and assisted with the implementation of a variety of local, state, and federal policies. Among legislative accomplishments, Heyne worked with legislatures in 17 states across the country to help develop, introduce, pass, and implement extreme risk laws, which allow families and law enforcement to work with courts to temporarily separate individuals at an increased risk of violent behavior from firearms. At Brady, he has helped oversee and grow the combating crime guns initiative, working on non-legislative solutions to stem the flow of illegal guns into vulnerable communities by holding irresponsible and negligent actors of the gun industry responsible for behavior that contributes to gun violence. Heyne began advocating for stronger gun laws after a man with a history of violence shot his parents in 2005, wounding his father and killing his mother.

Chris E. Knoepke, PhD
Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Colorado School of Medicine

Chris Knoepke, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Cardiology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. A social worker by training, he applies a social ecological and systems-based approach to issues in patient-healthcare provider communication, health equity, and violence prevention. In addition to being supported by grants from the NIH, American Heart Association, the Ludeman Family Center for Women’s Health Research, and the Fund for a Safer Future, Dr. Knoepke has helped in the development and evaluation of several tools meant to reduce access to firearms among people at acute risk of suicide or other violence, including Lock2Live, the Firearm Life Plan, Safety in Dementia, and others.
Fernando Rejón
Executive Director, Urban Peace Institute

Fernando Rejón serves as executive director of Urban Peace Institute (UPI) after building the Urban Peace agenda for more than a decade. He leads UPI efforts to transform systems and the lives of individuals to create community peace and safety and end the devastating cycle of mass incarceration. In 2008, he began his work to build the Urban Peace Academy as a platform to train gang intervention/street outreach workers, law enforcement, community stakeholders, and public officials on implementing violence reduction strategies focused on redefining community safety and health. In 2019, Rejón co-created the National Street Outreach Partnership as a platform for frontline intervention organizations and advocates dedicated to shaping and strengthening the field of violence reduction to serve the most violence-impacted communities in the nation. He is a current and founding advisory board member of the National Gang Conference in Los Angeles and has presented at universities across the country on gangs, violence reduction, and non-adversarial policing strategies.

Andrea Welsing, MPH
Director, Office of Violence Prevention, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Andrea Welsing is a public health leader with over 25 years of experience working collaboratively with multiple sectors and community partners to develop, implement, and evaluate public health programs, including more than 20 years managing violence prevention efforts. Her work has addressed violence in all forms, starting with oversight of a hospital-based sexual assault and domestic violence program and leading to her role as Director of the Injury and Violence Prevention Program for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, where she provided oversight and strategic direction for the county’s participation in the Violent Death Reporting System and the Trauma Prevention Initiative. In September 2019, Welsing was appointed to serve as the Director of the County Office of Violence Prevention, where she is responsible for coordinating a comprehensive approach to violence prevention across multiple sectors and government agencies to ensure an effective countywide response to violence and trauma.

Brian Malte
Executive Director, Hope and Heal Fund

Brian Malte is a nationally recognized leader in the gun violence prevention movement. Over the course of his 25-year career, he has led community-based movements as well as strategic political campaigns for sensible gun reforms. In 2001, Malte joined the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, first as National Field Director, then Political Director, and lastly as National Policy Director for Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, and became a key voice in the gun violence prevention movement. While at Brady, Malte worked with dozens of state legislatures, members of Congress, and White House officials across all parties. He also oversaw the strategic growth of Million Mom March chapters across the country. In 2016 he returned to his California roots to helm the Hope and Heal Fund, where he now spearheads the philanthropic movement to increase support to local violence prevention organizations and to community advocates working to end gun violence.
Refujio “Cuco” Rodriguez
Chief Equity and Program Officer, Hope and Heal Fund
Refujio “Cuco” Rodriguez is the Chief Equity and Program Officer at Hope and Heal Fund. Prior to joining Hope and Heal Fund, he served as a program officer for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and was a member of the foundation’s Racial Equity and Community Engagement team, where he was responsible for developing and coordinating strategic grantmaking activities aimed at addressing racial equity, community engagement, and nurturing opportunities for positive systemic change for historically marginalized communities and vulnerable children. Prior to joining the field of philanthropy, Rodriguez served as division chief and ethnic services manager with the Santa Barbara County Department of Behavioral Wellness, where he was responsible for the implementation of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and established Santa Barbara’s first Latino Mental Health Consumer and Family Advocacy Network in order to engage Latino stakeholders in the implementation of the MHSA. Rodriguez has worked with communities on issues including teen pregnancy, reproductive health, youth violence, gang intervention, rites of passage facilitation, mental health, father involvement strategies, and community engagement.

Julie Nagasako
Deputy Director, Office of Policy and Planning, California Department of Public Health
Julie Nagasako currently serves as the Deputy Director for the Office of Policy and Planning at the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). She joined CDPH in 2013, contributing to a wide range of public health initiatives addressing state health improvement priorities and equity. Nagasako is originally from Hilo, Hawaii, where she worked for more than 10 years in leadership of community-based organizations; including serving as regional and county director for a nonprofit social services agency supporting programs addressing homelessness, immigration services, and youth development.

MODERATOR
Mark Peterson, PhD
Professor and Interim Chair, Department of Public Policy, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs
Mark A. Peterson, PhD, is Professor of Public Policy, Political Science, and Law, and Interim Chair of the Department of Public Policy in the UCLA Meyer and Renee Luskin School of Public Affairs. He is a specialist on American national institutions and the policy process, with specific attention to health care policy and health care reform. He also studies the factors that shape the influence of research evidence in policy decision making. Dr. Peterson was a founding team member of the Blue Sky Health Initiative to transform the U.S. health and health care system. Over the course of his career, Dr. Peterson served in a wide range of leadership roles: editor of the Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law, chair of the National Advisory Committees for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Scholars in Health Policy Research program and its Changes in Health Care Financing and Organization program, president of the American Political Science Association’s Organized Section on Public Policy, and a founding member of the Organized Section on Health Politics and Policy.
EXCLUSIVE STUDENT SESSION

Gabriel Garcia
Policy and Advocacy Director, Youth ALIVE!
Gabriel Garcia currently serves as the Policy & Advocacy Director for Youth ALIVE! (YA), a community-based organization in Oakland, California focused on preventing and helping people heal from violence. In building out Youth ALIVE!’s policy and advocacy work, Garcia seeks out the expertise of YA’s pioneering violence prevention professionals, as well as the stories of the agency’s youth and clients who have been directly impacted by violence, to develop policies that improve California’s ability to heal trauma survivors and treat violence like the public health crisis that it is.

Wilson Hammett
PhD student, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health
Wilson Hammett is a third year PhD student in Health Policy and Management at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. Her research interests include the relationship between firearm injury/mortality and policy and issues surrounding access to mental health and substance use services. Hammett received an MPH from the University of Washington, where she worked on global mental health and implementation science projects in Mozambique. She is a member of the American Public Health Association’s gun violence prevention advocacy and policy workgroup and works as a graduate student researcher for the California Department of Public Health’s Injury and Violence Prevention Branch.

Jason Madison
RYSE Center
Jason Madison is a storyteller from Richmond, California, and a seventh year RYSE Youth Center member. A fixture in RYSE’s Speak Poet workshop and Performing Arts Advanced Media Producer internship, among many others, Madison has a deep passion for expression and inspiring others to open up by way of telling their stories; stories spanning identity, healing, trauma, and self-love.

MODERATOR
Refujo “Cuco” Rodriguez
Chief Equity and Program Officer, Hope and Heal Fund
The E.R. Brown Symposium, named after UCLA Center for Health Policy Research Founder E. Richard "Rick" Brown, is an annual event that honors the life of Rick Brown, who spent his life advocating strongly for a health-care-for-all system that would ensure health services for every Californian.

We thank his wife, Marianne Brown, for her unwavering support of the Center, this symposium series, and continuing Rick Brown's legacy. You will always be part of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research family.

To support the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research and honor Rick Brown, please consider making a gift to the E. Richard Brown Health Policy Impact Fund.

http://giving.ucla.edu/ERB2021
ABOUT THE UCLA CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY RESEARCH


The UCLA Center for Health Policy Research (CHPR) is one of the nation's leading health policy research centers and the premier source of health policy information for California.

UCLA CHPR is the home of the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), the nation's largest state health survey, and is affiliated with the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health.

MISSION

The UCLA Center for Health Policy Research improves the public's health through high-quality, objective, and evidence-based research and data that informs effective policymaking. We advance this mission through policy analysis, policy-relevant research, public service, community partnership, media relations, and education.

VISION

Our vision is a health policy process driven by credible and comprehensive evidence, leading to equitable, impactful, and cost-effective laws, policies, and programs. We also believe data should be democratized and put into the hands of the public in ways that inform, educate, and result in grassroots-driven policy change. Ultimately, we aim to develop crucial evidence to support the elimination of persistent disparities in health and health coverage.
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Wife of the late Rick Brown
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