Biography

I am a mid-career **medical anthropologist** at UT Southwestern School of Public Health specializing in **health equity** and **health services research** in the U.S. Throughout my career I have used **qualitative and mixed methods** to elucidate how and why **underserved populations** experience suboptimal health outcomes and to identify strategies and interventions to enhance care. In the past 5 years, I have been the Principal Investigator or Site Lead on 6 studies totaling ~$1 million and Co-Investigator (and lead qualitative investigator) of multiple large interdisciplinary studies totaling >$20 million. Just as disparities in healthcare access and outcomes span multiple disease states and populations, so does my research portfolio, which includes: cancer prevention, HIV prevention and treatment, digital health (telehealth, patient portals, patient-generated health data), food insecurity, and adolescent health. I have extensive experience with **implementation science** and regularly pair qualitative and implementation science to evaluate programs and design interventions. I am most comfortable working in **team science** environments and am valued by my peers for my collaboration and communication skills.

In addition to my research portfolio, I am actively involved in **teaching and mentoring** clinical faculty and trainees new to qualitative and mixed methods research, including serving on their K (training) awards. My expertise is recognized at national and international venues. The methodological exemplars I use in my teaching and mentoring activities also serve to increase awareness of the challenges faced by hard-to-reach and stigmatized populations. As a woman of color with certified proficiency in written, verbal, and medical **Spanish**, I am committed to improving inclusion of diverse underrepresented groups. I am regularly invited to teach on the topics of engaging minoritized communities in research and using cultural humility in clinical practice.

Education

**University of California – San Francisco (UCSF)/Berkeley**

PhD in Medical Anthropology

**Stanford University**

BA in Psychology (Specialization: Health and Human Development)

Employment (Post-doctoral)

2021-present **Assistant Professor**, UT Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW), School of Public Health

2019-2021 Instructor, UTSW, School of Medicine, Department of Population & Data Sciences

2013-2019 Senior Staff Scientist, UTSW, School of Medicine, Dept Population & Data Sciences

2010-2013 Research Associate, Border Health Foundation (a non-profit organization in Tucson, AZ)

Summary of Skills & Experience

* Research & dissemination
  + Nearly 50 publications, ~40% first- or senior-authored
  + 1 book chapter in a text frequently used by Schools of Medicine, Public Health & Nursing
* Funding (past 5 years)
  + Principal Investigator or Site Lead on 6 studies, totaling ~$1 million
  + Co-Investigator (and lead qualitative investigator) on studies totaling >$20 million
* Leadership and project management
  + Director of Qualitative Research Program (2021-23)
  + Director of Spanish Language Resource (2019-2025)
  + Associate Editor for *Journal of General Internal Medicine*
* Teaching and Mentoring
  + National and international invited lecturer
  + Mentor to multiple physicians (including 5 K awards), postgraduate trainees, students
* Certified proficiency in Spanish (written, verbal, medical)

Peer-reviewed Publications (\*indicates mentee)

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|  | **Higashi RT**, A Tillack, GM Harper\*, CB Johnston\*, MA Steinman\*. Elder care as ‘frustrating’ and ‘boring’: Understanding the persistence of negative attitudes toward older patients among physicians-in-training. *Journal of Aging Studies* 2012;26(4):476-83. PMID: 22939544. DOI: 10.1016/j.jaging.2012.06.007. |
|  | **Higashi, RT**, A Tillack, MA Steinman\*, CB Johnston\*, GM Harper\*. The ‘worthy’ patient: Rethinking the moral economy of clinical care. *Anthropology & Medicine* 2013;20(1):13-23. PMID: 23581400. DOI: 10.1080/13648470.2012.747595. |
|  | Makris UE\*, **RT Higashi**, EG Marks, L Fraenkel, JEM Sale, TM Gill, MC Reid. Ageism, fear, and competing co-morbidities – why older adults may not seek care for restricting back pain: A qualitative study. *BMC Geriatrics* 2015 Apr;15:39. PMID: 25887905. PMCID: 4392872. DOI: 10.1186/s12877-015-0042-z. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, SC Lee, T Leonard, EL Cuate, J Cole, SL Pruitt\*. Multiple co-morbidities and interest in research participation among clients of a nonprofit food distribution site. *Clinical & Translational Science* 2015 Oct;8(5):584-90. PMID: 26277918. PMCID: 4626299. DOI:10.1111/cts.12325. |
|  | Shay LA, RL Street, AS Baldwin, EG Marks, SC Lee, **RT Higashi**, CS Skinner, S Fuller, D Persaud, JA Tiro. Characterizing Providers’ HPV vaccine recommendations to undecided parents: a pilot study. *Patient Education & Counseling* 2016 Sep;99(9):1452-60. PMID: 27401828. PMCID: 5007181. DOI: 10.1016/j.pec.2016.06.027. |
|  | Pruitt SL, T Leonard, L Xuan, R Amory, **RT Higashi**, OK Nguyen, C Pezzia, S Swales. Who is food insecure? Implications for targeted recruitment and outreach, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2005-2010. *Preventing Chronic Disease* 2016 Oct;13:E143. PMID: 27736055. PMCID: 5063607. DOI: 10.5888/pcd13.160103. |
|  | Inrig SJ, **RT Higashi**, JA Tiro, KE Argenbright, SC Lee. Assessing local capacity to expand rural breast cancer screening and patient navigation: a decentralized hub-and-spoke model. *Evaluation and Program Planning* 2017 Apr; 61:113-24. PMID: 28011433. PMCID: 5323072. DOI: 10.1016/j.evalprogplan.1016.11.006. |
|  | Lee SC, **RT Higashi**, SJ Inrig, JM Sanders, H Zhu, KE Argenbright, JA Tiro. County-level outcomes of rural breast cancer screening outreach strategy: a decentralized hub-and-spoke model (BSPAN2). *Translational Behavioral Medicine*. 2017 Jun;7(2):349-57. PMID: 27402023. PMCID: 5526797. DOI: 10.1007/s13142-016-0427-3. |
|  | Makris UE\*, **RT Higashi**, EG Marks, L Fraenkel, TM Gill, JL Friedly, CM Reid. Physical, emotional, and social impacts of restricting back pain in older adults: a qualitative study. *Pain Medicine* 2017 Jul;18(7):1225-35. PMID: 27516362. PMCID: 5914385. DOI: 10.1093/pm/pnw196. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, SC Lee, L Quirk, T Leonard, C Pezzia, SL Pruitt\*. Family and social context contributes to the interplay of economic insecurity, food insecurity, and health. *Annals of Anthropological Practice* 2017;41:67-77. PMID: 30233917. PMCID: 6140792. DOI: 10.1111/napa.12114. |
|  | Lee SC, SJ Inrig, B Bala, CS Skinner, **RT Higashi**, K McCallister, WP Bishop, N Santini, JA Tiro. Identifying quality improvement targets to facilitate colorectal cancer screening completion. *Preventive Medicine Reports* 2018;9:138-43. PMID: 29527466. PMCID: 5840842. DOI: 10.1016/j.pmedr.2018.01.004. |
|  | Nguyen OK\*, **RT Higashi**, AN Makam, JC Mijares, SC Lee. The influence of financial strain on health decision-making. *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 2018 Apr;33(4):406-08. PMID: 29340939. PMCID: 5880778. DOI: 10.1007/s11606-017-4296-3. |
|  | Shay LA, AS Baldwin, A Betts, EG Marks, **RT Higashi**, RL Street, D Persaud, JA Tiro. Parent-provider communication of HPV vaccine hesitancy. *Pediatrics* 2018;141(6): e20172312. PMID: 29765009. PMCID: 6005174. DOI: 10.1542/peds.2017-2312. |
|  | Lee SC, **RT Higashi**, JM Sanders, H Zhu, SJ Inrig, C Mejias, KE Argenbright, JA Tiro. Effects of program scale-up on time to resolution for patients with abnormal screening mammography results. *Cancer Causes & Control* 2018 Oct;29(10):995-1005. PMID: 30140972. PMCID: 6162097. DOI: 10.1007/s10552-018-1074-4. |
|  | Nijhawan AE\*, **RT Higashi**, EG Marks, Y Tiruneh, SC Lee. Patient and provider perspectives on 30-day readmissions, preventability, and strategies for improving transitions of care for patients with HIV at a safety net hospital. *Journal of the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care*. 2019 Jan;18:1-13. PMID: 30760091. PMCID: 6748499. DOI: 10.1177/2325958219827615. |
|  | He B\*, S Prasad, **RT Higashi**, HW Goff\*. The art of observation: a qualitative analysis of medical students' experiences. *BMC Medical Education*. 2019 Jun 26;19(1);234. PMID 31242945. PMCID: 6595600. DOI: 10.1186/s12909-019-1671-2. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, SB Juengst\*. Patient-centered measure development and Spanish validation exemplar. *Health Literacy Research and Practice*. 2019;3(4):e243-e249. PMID: 31768495. PMCID: 6831507. DOI: 10.3928/24748307-20190925-01. |
|  | Murphy CC\*, SJC Lee, DE Gerber, JV Cox, **RT Higashi**. Patient and provider perspectives on delivery of oral cancer therapies. *Patient Education & Counseling* 2019; 102(11):2012-2109. PMID: 31239181. PMCID: 6777994. DOI: 10.1016/j.pec.2019.06.019. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, MK Jain\*, L Quirk, NE Rich, BJ Turner, AK Waljee, SC Lee, AG Singal\*. Mixed-methods evaluation of a hepatitis C screening and treatment program. *Journal of Viral Hepatology.* 2020 July;27(7);680-689. PMID: 32048397. PMCID: 7299760. DOI: 10.1111/jvh.13278. |
|  | Kennard B\*, A Moorehead\*, S Stewart\*, A El-Behadli, H Mbroh, K Goga, R Wildman, M Michaels, **RT Higashi**. Adaptation of group-based suicide intervention for Latinx youth in a community mental health center. *Journal of Child & Family Studies,* 2020;29(4):2058-2069. DOI: 10.1007/s10826-020-01718-0. |
|  | Rodriguez SA\*, **RT Higashi**, AC Betts, C Ortiz, JA Tiro, AE Luque, A Barnes\*. Anal cancer and anal cancer screening knowledge, attitudes, and perceived risk among women living with HIV. *Journal of Lower Genital Tract Diseases*, 2021;21(1), 43-47. PMID: 33149011. PMCID: 7750264. DOI: 10.1097/LGT.0000000000000578. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, SA Rodriguez\*, AC Betts, JA Tiro, AE Luque, R Rivera, A Barnes\*. Anal cancer screening among women with HIV: provider experiences and system-level challenges. *AIDS Care*, 2021 Feb 17;1-7. PMID: 33594934. PMCID: 8368076. DOI: 10.1080/09540121.2021.1883512. |
|  | Balasubramanian B^, **RT Higashi**^, SA Rodriguez, N Sadeghi, NO Santini, SC Lee (^joint first authors). Challenges and opportunities in care coordination for underserved cancer survivors with chronic conditions. *JAMA Network Open*, 2021 Aug 2;4(8):e2119080. PMID: 34387681. PMCID: 8363913. DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.19080. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, JW Sweetenham\*, AD Israel, JA Tiro. COVID-19 Communication to English- and Spanish-speaking cancer patients: a website analysis of seven healthcare systems in North Texas**.** *JMIR Cancer*, 2021 July 28;7(3):e30492. PMID: 34346886. PMCID: 8409500. DOI:10.2196/30492. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, A Sood, AB Conrado, K Shahan, T Leonard, SL Pruitt\*. Experiences of increased food insecurity, economic and psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic among SNAP-enrolled food pantry clients in a southern U.S. city. *Public Health Nutrition* 2021 Dec 6;1-27. PMID: 34865672. PMCID: 8712963. DOI: 10.1017/S1368980021004717. |
|  | Jain S\*, **RT Higashi**, R Bonnema, J Albin. Empowering medical students to provide dietary counseling. *The Clinical Teacher* 2022 Sep 7;e13521. PMID: 36072998. DOI: 10.1111/tct.13521. |
|  | Juengst SB\*, M Vega\*, A Holland, S Herrera, **RT Higashi,** MB Braga, A Khera, CL Kew, V Silva. Development and content validity of the multidimensional health perceptions questionnaire in English and Spanish. *Journal of Patient Reported Outcomes*, 2022 Sep 24:6(1):104. PMID: 36153417; PMCID: PMCID: 9509514. DOI: 10.1186/s41687-022-00512-4. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, G Kruse, J Richards, A Sood, PM Chen, L Quirk, J Kramer, JA Tiro, L Tuzzio, JS Haas, MF Gray, SC Lee. Harmonizing qualitative data across multiple health systems: a methodological framework for analysis using the PROSPR cervical cancer as exemplar. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2023:22. DOI: 10.1177/16094069231157345. |
|  | Kruse GR, JM Lykken, EJ Kim, JS Haas, **RT Higashi**, SJ Atlas, AM McCarthy, JA Tiro, MI Silver, CS Skinner, A Kamineni. Provider beliefs in effectiveness and recommendations for primary HPV testing in 3 health-care systems. *Journal of the National Cancer Institute Cancer Spectrum*, 2023 Jan 3;7(1):pkac086. doi: 10.1093/jncics/pkac086. PMID: 36469348; PMCID: PMC9825247. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, JA Tiro, RL Winer, IJ Ornelas, P Bravo, L Quirk, LG Kessler. Understanding the effect of new U.S. cervical cancer screening guidelines and modalities on patients’ comprehension and reporting of their cervical cancer screening behavior. *Preventive Medicine Reports,* 2023 Mar 3;32:102169. doi: 10.1016/j.pmedr.2023.102169. PMID: 36922960; PMCID: PMC10009194. |
|  | Durante JC\*, **RT Higashi**, M Lau, JA Tiro, JKR Francis. Parent perspectives about initiating contraception conversations with adolescent daughters. *Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology*, 2023 Aug;36(4):399-405. doi: 10.1016/j.jpag.2023.02.008. Epub 2023 Mar 7. PMID: 36893850. |
|  | Cano, MA, FG Castro, AD Benner, MM Molina, SJ Schwartz, **RT Higashi**, M Lee, EL Vaughan, Z Bursac, A Cepeda, A Valdez, P Rojas, M De La Rosa, B Alonso, MJ Zvolensky, & MA de Dios. Ethnic discrimination and self-rated health among Hispanic emerging adults: examining the moderating effects of self-esteem and resilience. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations. 2023* Sep;96:101846. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2023.101846. |
|  | Rodriguez SA^, SC Lee^, **RT Higashi**, PM Chen, RL Eary, N Sadeghi, N Santini, BA Balasubramanian (^joint first authors). Factors influencing implementation of a care coordination intervention for cancer survivors with multiple comorbidities in a safety-net system: an application of the Implementation Research Logic Model. *Implementation Science*, 2023 Dec 4;18(1):68. doi: 10.1186/s13012-023-01326-8. PMID: 38049844; PMCID: PMC10694894. |
|  | Jain S\*, **RT** **Higashi,** C Salmeron, K Bhavan. The intersection of childcare and health among women at a U.S. safety-net health system during the COVID-19 pandemic: a qualitative study. *Health Equity* 2024 Jan 12;8(1):32-38. doi: 10.1089/heq.2023.0068. PMID: 38250304; PMCID: PMC10797167. |
|  | McDowell A, M Rieu-Werden, SJ Atlas, CD Fields, RH Goldstein, GD Gundersen, JS Haas, **RT Higashi**, SL Pruitt, MI Silver, JA Tiro, A Kamineni. Characteristics of clinicians caring for transgender men and nonbinary individuals and guideline concordance of clinicians’ cervical cancer screening counseling for cisgender individuals vs. transgender men and nonbinary individuals with a cervix. *LGBT Health* 2024 Oct;11(7):563-569. doi: 10.1089/lgbt.2023.0067. Epub 2024 Apr 22. PMID: 38648535. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, B Etingen, E Richardson, JA Palmer, MS Zocchi, FR Bixler, B Smith, N McMahon, KL Frisbee, J Fortney, C Turvey, JA Evans, TP Hogan. Veteran experiences with a mobile health application to support measurement-based mental health care: results from a mixed-methods evaluation. *JMIR Mental Health* 2024 May 10;11:e54007. doi: 10.2196/54007. PMID: 38728684; PMCID: PMC11127133. |
|  | Etingen B, M Zocchi M, **RT Higashi**, JA Palmer, E Richardson, FR Bixler, J Patrianakos, N McMahon, BM Smith, IO Kale, J Fortney, C Turvey, JM Lipschitz, JA Evans, KL Frisbee, TP Hogan. Mental health provider perspectives on a mobile health application to support remote measurement-based care: challenges and impacts. *Psychological Services* 2024 Aug 22. Epub ahead of print. doi: 10.1037/ser0000884. PMID: 39172403. |
|  | Dang, TH, ML Rieu-Werden, SC Kobrin, JA Tiro, C Werner, JM Lykken, J Chubak, SJ Atlas, **RT Higashi**, SC Lee, JS Haas, CS Skinner, MI Silver, S Feldman. Association between clinician confidence and making guideline-recommended decisions in the management of abnormal cervical cancer screening results. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, 2024 Dec;39(16):3217-3224. Epub 2024 Jul 25. doi: 10.1007/s11606-024-08943-z. PMID: 39060782; PMCID: PMC11618551. |
|  | Eichenwald C\*, **RT Higashi**, TP Hogan, J Naeem, JL Marcus, D Krakower, AE Nijhawan. Supporting access to pre-exposure prophylaxis in a shifting financial and insurance landscape: experiences from the frontlines of a Southern US city. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine Focus* 2024 Dec 5;4(2):100311. doi: 10.1016/j.focus.2024.100311. PMID: 40061154; PMCID: PMC11889952. |
|  | Zhao A\*, **RT Higashi**, S Edmondson, C Wong, N DeSilva, M Gribbons, JA Tiro, JR Francis. Provider perspectives on education and training for inpatient adolescent sexual health services including long-acting reversible contraception initiation. *Hospital Pediatrics* 2025 Apr 1;15(4):325-333. doi: 10.1542/hpeds.2024-008016. PMID: 40112885. |
|  | Nijhawan AE, J Kholy, JL Marcus, TP Hogan, **RT Higashi**, J Naeem, L Hansen, B Torres, BL Harris, S Zhang, D Krakower. A Multicomponent strategy to improve HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis in a Southern US jail: protocol for a type 3 hybrid implementation-effectiveness trial. *JMIR Protocols*, 2025 Mar 18;14:e64813. doi: 10.2196/64813. PMID: 40100263; PMCID: PMC11962320. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, B Thakur, EC Repasky\*, A Casillas, BD Steitz, TP Hogan, CU Lehmann, ED Peterson, AM Navar, RW Turer. Digital health technology use among Spanish-Speaking individuals in the United States: a scoping review. *JAMA Network Open*, 2025 May 1;8(5):e2510386: doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2025.10386. PMID: 40372754; PMCID: PMC12082372. |
|  | Turer RW, SA McDonald, **RT Higashi**, B Thakur, AP Bain, AM Navar, BD Steitz. Who uses patient portals? A national cross-sectional study using Epic Cosmos. *J General Internal Medicine*, 2025, PMID: 40329035. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-025-09585-5. |
|  | Lee J\*, **RT Higashi**, TP Hogan, J Marcus, E Repasky\*, MB Torres\*, D Krakower, AE Nijhawan. Linking criminal justice-involved individuals to HIV preexposure prophylaxis: a qualitative analysis of multiple stakeholder perspectives. *J International Association of Providers of AIDS Care*, 2025 Jan-Dec;24:23259582251341940. doi: 10.1177/23259582251341940. Epub 2025 May 11. PMID: 40350581; PMCID: PMC12066857. |
|  | Bain A, R Heslin, L Matthews, H Ji, C Moore, **RT Higashi**, J Louissaint, S McDonald, AM Navar, D Willett, B Steitz, RW Turer. Patient portal use among admitted surgical patients: impact of the 21st Century Cures Act. *JAMA Surgery*, 2025, in press. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, E Repasky\*, A Gupta\*, M Lee, C DesRoches, A Israel, SL Pruitt. Key factors affecting attitudes and experiences of portal and telehealth use in an underserved community. *JMIR Formative Research*, 2025, in press. |

Under Review

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|  | **Higashi RT**, L Quirk, G Kruse, PM Chen, TH Dang, JS Haas, SJ Atlas, S Feldman, S Kobrin, SC Lee, NO Santini, JA Tiro. Process mapping to compare gaps in cervical cancer screening delivery in two U.S. healthcare systems. *Cancer, Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, revision under review. |
|  | Etingen B, BM Smith, SL Shimada, SA Robinson, **RT Higashi**, N Ndiwane, KL Frisbee, JM Lipschitz, E Richardson, D Irvin, TP Hogan. What matters most to Veterans when deciding to use technology for health? *JMIR Formative Research*, revision under review. |
|  | **Higashi RT**, B Etingen, J Lee\*, S Cole, J Mansour, A Zhao\*, TP Hogan. Remote cancer care for older patients: patient and clinician perspectives on telehealth utilization across the cancer care continuum. *JMIR Cancer*, under review. |
|  | Durante JC\*, **RT Higashi**, P Brady, A Six-Means, K Stone\*. Health literacy in foster care transition planning and barriers to care. *J Public Child Welfare*, under review. |

Book Chapters

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| 1. | **Higashi RT**, A Tillack, MA Steinman, M Harper, CB Johnston. “Elder care as ‘frustrating’ and ‘boring’: understanding the persistence of negative attitudes toward older patients among physicians-in-training.” In: *The Social Medicine Reader*, Third Edition, Volume 1: Ethics and Cultures of Biomedicine. Oberlander J, M Buchbinder, LR Churchill, SE Estroff, NMP King, BF Saunders, RP Strauss, RL Walker, eds. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, May 2019. |

Published Abstracts – Past 5 years

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| 1. | **Higashi RT**, JW Sweetenham, AD Israel, JA Tiro. “COVID-19 communication to English- and Spanish-speaking cancer patients: a website analysis of seven healthcare systems in north Texas”. *American Society of Clinical Oncology*. Published Abstract #e18515. June 2021. |
| 2. | **Higashi RT**, B Etingen, S Cole, J Mansour, JL Lee, TP Hogan. “Provider and older patient responses to rapid expansion of telehealth in an urban cancer center: a mixed-methods critical incident evaluation” *Iproceedings* 2023;9:e39289. doi: 10.2196/39289. |

Non-Peer-Reviewed Publications & Media – Past 5 years

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| 1. | **Higashi RT**, AD Israel, R Barber, JA Tiro. “HPV ‘Enviroscan’ Project.” White Paper for the Office of Community Outreach, Engagement, and Equity at Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center, 2020. <https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/utsw-patientcare-web-production/documents/COEE_HPV_EnviroScan_Infographic.pdf>, accessed 6/19/2020. |
| 2. | **Higashi RT** et al. 2021 *Public Health Nutrition* publication was picked up in several media outlets:   * *Dallas Morning News* (online January 5, 2022 and in newsprint January 10, 2022): <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/2022/01/05/covid-19-brought-economic-hardship-anxieties-to-many-north-texans-facing-hunger-utsw-study-shows/> * *Telemundo* (Spanish language TV), February 10, 2022: <https://www.telemundodallas.com/videos/videos-noticias/revelador-estudio-sobre-efectos-socioeconomicos-de-la-pandemia/2219327/?fbclid=IwAR0Z_OrzlzKn1BMRnIfZVQLq1RcQYtBCuobTWsJLhNXJ-2bBcbki9qVLKBw> * *Today’s Dietician* (online March 29, 2022): <https://www.todaysdietitian.com/news/032922_news.shtml> |
| 3. | **Higashi RT** and TP Hogan. “Technology Needs and Preferences among Older Adults: A Survey Assessment of Participants from The Senior Source.” White Paper for The Senior Source, funding from Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center, 2023. |
| 4. | **Higashi RT.** “Digital Health Literacy in DFW.” White Paper for Community Organizations in the Redbird area of Dallas, funding from The Cary Council Foundation, 2024. <https://online.fliphtml5.com/uqxus/dcpr/> |

Current Grant Support

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| *Grantor:* **Texas Health Resources (THR)** Clinical Scholars Program |
| *Title of Project:* Facilitating patient portal enrollment and use among Spanish-speaking patients |
| *Role:* Multi Principal Investigator (Higashi/Turer) |
| *Study goal:* Identify and address barriers to awareness, enrollment, and use of the portal among Spanish-speaking patients in 3 Dallas-area health systems. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $750,000 (12/1/2022-11/30/2026) |
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| *Grantor:* **National Institutes of Health,** National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), 1R61DA064030-01 |
| *Title of Project:* RESTORE (Recovery and Engagement for STimulant users On RE-entry) |
| *Role:* Co-Investigator (PI: Nijhawan) |
| *Study goal:* Provide treatment for stimulant use disorder and contingency management, delivered on participants’ mobile phone and paired with a personal patient navigator. to reduce relapse to stimulant use and improve initiation of PrEP for those at risk of HIV and uptake/ retention on ART for those living with HIV. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $8,584,541 (07/01/2025-06/30/2030) |
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| *Grantor:* **National Institutes of Health,** National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), 1R01MH129185-01 |
| *Title of Project:* Hybrid implementation-effectiveness study to optimize HIV testing and PrEP in a southern jail (HOTSPOT) |
| *Role:* Co-Investigator (MPI: Nijhawan/Krakower) |
| *Study goal:* Develop, implement and evaluate a multicomponent PrEP implementation strategy for the Dallas County Jail, the 8th largest jail in the nation and located in an HIV hotspot. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $639,117 (4/5/2022-1/31/2027) |
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| *Grantor:* **National Institutes of Health,** National Cancer Institute (NCI), R01CA28242 |
| *Title of Project:* Actionable categories of avoidable hospital care among adults with cancer |
| *Role:* Co-Investigator (PI: Hong) |
| *Study goal:* Validate and improve on existing measures of avoidable hospital care; Prospectively validate revised measures of avoidable hospital care with patients and emergency clinicians; Survey national cancer provider groups to assess feasibility and applicability of new definitions for avoidable hospital care |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $3,773,432 (9/1/2023-8/31/2028) |
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| *Grantor:* **Gilead NOVA** |
| *Title of Project:* Integration of peer health navigation into comprehensive re-entry services: improving PrEP implementation for justice-involved individuals |
| *Role:* Co-Investigator (PI: Nijhawan) |
| *Study goal:* Increase PrEP awareness and uptake for individuals with a history of justice involvement by integrating a peer health navigator into a community-based organization focused on re-entry services. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $114,285 (10/1/2024 – 3/31/2026) |
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| *Grantor:* **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** |
| *Title of Project:* eHealth Partnered Evaluation Initiative (PEC 15-470) |
| *Role:* Co-Investigator (PI: Hogan) |
| *Study goal:* Evaluate the contextual factors and implementation determinants relevant to the adoption and use of connected care technologies to better understand how patient-generated health date can be leveraged by researchers throughout the VA. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $170,586 (9/30/2021-9/29/2025) |
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Grant Support – Past 3 Years

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| *Grantor:* **National Institutes for Health (NIH)**, UL1TR003163 |
| *Title of Project: UT Southwestern Center for Translational Medicine – UL1* |
| *Role:* Director, Spanish Language Resource (PI: Toto) |
| *Study goal:* Engage interdisciplinary research teams in a national effort to translate new scientific discoveries into clinical practice to improve health. The Spanish Language Resource uses evidence-based best practices to provide translation and cognitive interviewing services to improve access and inclusion in research among Spanish speaking populations. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $5,040,003(5/26/2021-4/30/2026) |
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| *Grantor:* **UT Southwestern Medical Center**, Trauma Research and Combat Casualty Care Collaborative |
| *Title of Project:* Financial Toxicity Associated with Upper Extremity Trauma |
| *Role:* Co-Investigator (PI: Billig) |
| *Study goal:* Understand the financial ramifications of upper extremity trauma and explore the barriers to medical coverage and financial assistance after trauma. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $100,000 (7/1/2024-6/31/2025) |
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| *Grantor:* **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**, National Cancer Institute (NCI), UM1CA221940 |
| *Title of Project:* Multi-level optimization of the cervical cancer screening process in diverse settings and populations (METRICS) |
| *Role:* Co-Investigator (MPI: Tiro/Skinner/Haas/Kameneni) |
| *Study goal:* Collect, harmonize, and document >10 years of high-quality, comprehensive cervical cancer screening process data at the patient, provider, clinic, and system levels using a rich array of electronic clinical information systems and novel data sources. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $12,906,390 (4/10/2018-3/31/2024) |
|  |
| *Grantor:* **Cary Council Foundation** |
| *Title of Project:* Telehealth for underserved populations: Assessing digital literacy, needs, and strategies for cancer care |
| *Role:* Principal Investigator |
| *Study goal:* Assess the needs and perceptions toward telehealth among an underserved Dallas-area population to identify an intervention strategy. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $50,000 (4/1/2023-3/31/2024) |
|  |
| *Grantor:* **Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center**, Office of Community Outreach, Engagement, and Equity |
| *Title of Project:* Digital health literacy and cancer communication: A survey assessment of Simmons patients and the Redbird area of Dallas |
| *Role:* Principal Investigator |
| *Study goal:* Measure the digital health literacy and assess attitudes towards telehealth and portal use among Simmons Cancer Center patients and community members who reside in the Redbird neighborhood of Dallas. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $50,000 (1/1/2023-12/31/2023) |
|  |
| *Grantor:* **National Institutes of Health**, National Cancer Institute (NCI), P30CA142543 |
| *Title of Project:* Strengthening linkage to care and treatment along the South Texas border |
| *Role:* Study Lead (PI: Arteaga) |
| *Study goal:* Characterize capacity of referral pathways for diagnosis and treatment between clinics and community organizations that offer cancer prevention or screening to under-, uninsured or undocumented persons along the Texas-Mexico border. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $246,826 (10/1/2021-7/31/2023) |
|  |
| *Grantor:* **Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center**, Community-Engaged Research Pilot #23001008 |
| *Title of Project:* Implementing video telehealth in the era of COVID-19: Best practices for cancer care among older adults |
| *Role:* Multi Principal Investigator (Higashi/Hogan) |
| *Study goal:* Assess COVID-19 era barriers and facilitators to telehealth cancer care delivery; and inventory older patients’ and providers’ skills and preferences for future telehealth engagement |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $50,000(8/1/2020-1/31/2023) |
|  |
| *Grantor:* **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**, National Cancer Institute (NCI), 5R01CA20385602 |
| *Title of Project:* Care coordination for complex cancer survivors in an integrated safety-net system |
| *Role:* Co-Investigator (MPI: Lee/Bala) |
| *Study goal:* Implement a system-level EMR-driven intervention for 1000 complex cancer survivors at Parkland, combining three evidence-based care coordination strategies. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $2,228,214 (5/18/2016-4/30/2022) |
|  |
| *Grantor:* **National Institutes of Health (NIH)**, National Cancer Institute (NCI), 3R01CA240375-03S1; Kaiser Foundation Research Institute |
| *Title of Project:* Validity and reliability of survey measures for cervical cancer screening in the redesigned National Health Interview Survey |
| *Role:* Site Lead (PI: Buist) |
| *Study goal:* Using cognitive interviews with a sample of diverse screening-eligible adult women, refine questions assessing cervical cancer screening history to ensure comparable, valid, high-quality measurement by public health professionals and healthcare systems. |
| *Total amount of award and dates:* $99,997 (7/1/2021-6/30/2022) |

Other Funding/Awards

* NIH Loan Repayment Award for Health Services Scholars, 2014-16
* UCSF Fletcher-Jones Dissertation Award, 2008-09
* UCSF Graduate Dean’s Excellence in Health Services Award, 2007-08
* UC Berkeley Mentored Research Award, 2005-06
* University of California, President’s Minority Fellowship, 2003-04
* Stanford University, meritorious grant, 1993-96

Teaching Activities – Past 3 Years

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| Year(s) | Activity |
| International | |
| 2024 | Monash University, “Qualitative Approaches in Clinical Research” (virtual presentation) (Melbourne, Australia) |
| 2024 | EUROGIN International Disciplinary Human Papillomavirus Conference, “Anal Cancer Screening in Women with HIV” (Stockholm, Sweden) |
| 2023 | Canadian and American Anthropological Association Joint Meeting, “Collaborating with Clinical Investigators New to Qualitative Research: A Workshop” (Toronto, Canada) |
| 2023 | University of Waterloo, Department of Anthropology, “Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research: Contributions of a Medical Anthropologist in the Clinical Research Environment” (Toronto, Canada) |
| National | |
| 2024 | American Medical Informatics Association, “Who’s Using the Portal and for What? Spanish Speaking Patients’ Portal Message Use across 3 Health Systems in North Texas” (San Francisco, CA) |
| 2024 | Society for Applied Anthropology, “Anthropologists working in Schools of Medicine and Public Health: Best Practices and Lessons Learned” (Santa Fe, NM) |
| 2022 | American Society of Clinical Oncology, “Responses to Telehealth Expansion for Older Adults with Cancer” (Chicago, IL) |
| 2022 | American Medical Informatics Association, “Provider and Older Patient Responses to the Rapid Expansion of Telehealth Care in an Urban Cancer Center” (Washington, DC) |
| Regional/Local | |
| 2023, 2024 | “Communicating effectively with Spanish-speaking populations in clinical and community-based research” (CTSA Texas Regional Symposium, Dallas, TX) |
| 2022 | “Using language validation and cognitive interviewing to meet ethical standards and enhance scientific research with Spanish speakers” (Children’s Health “Research Week”, Dallas, TX) |
| Institutional | |
| 2023 | “Qualitative Methods in Clinical Research” required methods course for students receiving Masters in Clinical Science (UT Southwestern, Center for Translational Medicine) |
| 2022-present | “Mixed methods study design in clinical research” (UT Southwestern School of Medicine, Department of Cardiology; School of Public Health) |
| 2022-present | “Cultural humility and biomedicine as culture.” (UT Health, School of Public Health – Dallas Campus; UT Southwestern School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry) |
| 2022-24 | “Contributions of narratives in medicine” (UT Southwestern School of Medicine, undergraduate elective) |
| 2022 | “Working with low-literacy patients in clinical research” (UT Southwestern School of Medicine, IRB “Research Matters” and “Multicultural Week”) |

Mentoring – Past 3 years

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| Physician trainees | |
| 2024-present | Sheena Knights, MD  Mentor on NIH K08 (submitted 2025) |
| 2024-present | Puja Umaretiya, MD  Advisor for NIH K08 (award pending) |
| 2023-present | Jessica Billig, MD  Co-Investigator on TRC4 grant (awarded); advisor for NIH K08 (submitted) |
| 2022-present | Andrew Day, MD, MPH  Co-Investigator on R03 (submitted) |
| 2021-23 | Julia Durante, MD, MPH  Member of Scholarly Oversight Committee for Adolescent and Young Adult Training Program, from which we published 2 peer-reviewed articles; Dr. Durante took a Physician-Investigator position at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia |
| 2021-23 | Seema Jain, MD  Member of MPH Thesis Committee, from which we published 2 peer-reviewed publications; Dr. Jain took an Associate Director position at Honors Health |
| Postdoctoral trainees | |
| 2022-24 | Meera Muthukrishnan, PhD.  1 peer reviewed publication under review; Dr. Muthukrishnan took an Instructor position at Washington University in St. Louis |
| Medical student trainees | |
| 2023-present | Jenny Foster  1 peer-reviewed publication under review |
| 2023-present | Alice Zhao, MPH  Mentor for School of Medicine Scholarly Activity (undergraduate MD), from which we published 1 peer-reviewed article; Dallas Women’s Club Grant Awardee; 1 more peer-reviewed publication under review |
| 2022-present | Jessica Lee, MPH  Mentor for School of Medicine Scholarly Activity (undergraduate MD), from which we published 1 peer-reviewed article; 1 more peer-reviewed publication under review |
| Dissertation committees | |
| 2025-26 | Alice Zhao, MPH  Chair, Dissertation Committee: “Inpatient Adolescent Sexual Health Services and Long-Acting Reversible Contraception: Guiding Principles, Logistical Barriers, and Clinician Training” |
| 2020-22 | Alexandra Moorehead  Member, Dissertation Committee: “Developing an Intervention to Promote Lethal Means Safety in Suicidal Adolescents”; completed residency at University of Washington |

Professional Societies and Activities

* Associate Editor, *Journal of General Internal Medicine*
* Member, Medical Anthropologists and Social Scientists in Health (MASSH), Society for Applied Anthropology (2022-present)
* Member, Health & Healthcare Equity Committee, American Medical Informatics Association (2023-present)

Service

* Member, Strategic Planning Committee, School of Public Health, UT Southwestern (2023-24)
* Interviewer, Student Admissions Committee, School of Medicine, UT Southwestern (2021-present)
* Grant reviewer, SOAR Mock Study Section, CTSA Pilot Program, and Community-based Research Award, UT Southwestern (2022-present)
* Mentor, Emerson High School, Students of Color, Public Health Independent Study