

North Carolina Research Campus team receives major NIH award for precision nutrition research

KANNAPOLIS, NC, UNITED STATES, January 27, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded a \$19.2 million 5-year grant, pending the availability of funds, to a consortium of North Carolina university researchers who will apply cutting-edge analytical techniques to nutrition research. The team will be led by Susan Jenkins Sumner, PhD, at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Nutrition Research Institute (UNC NRI), located on the North Carolina Research Campus (NCRC). The Sumner team award will fund the Metabolomics and Clinical Assays Center for the NIH Common Fund's [Nutrition for Precision Health, powered by the All of Us Research Program](#) (NPH), to inform more personalized nutrition recommendations.

Overall, NIH has awarded approximately \$170 million dollars over five years, pending availability of funds, to clinical sites and data generation, technology, and analysis centers across the United States. One of the clinical sites will be led by UNC-Chapel Hill's Elizabeth Mayer-Davis, PhD, chair of the Department of Nutrition. This site will engage communities surrounding the Chapel Hill and Kannapolis areas to participate in determining optimal nutrition for precision health.

The team award involves researchers co-located on the NCRC from UNC NRI, North Carolina State University, and The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, as well as collaborators at the McLendon Clinical Laboratories at UNC School of Medicine, and the Duke Molecular Physiology Institute, Duke School of Medicine. The researchers will employ a unique suite of capabilities and broad experiences in the burgeoning field of "metabolomics," which will be applied to derive a deeper understanding of the impact of nutrition on the chemistry of the human body. This award exemplifies the value of collaboration across public and private universities within North Carolina.

Sumner, the grant's principal investigator, emphasizes the significance of strong community partnerships and collaboration among the NPH study to inform personalized nutrition needs in North Carolina and across our country. "My family comes from the Stanly, Rowan, Montgomery, and Cabarrus counties of North Carolina for many generations, so I am particularly excited about the opportunity for my own laboratory and the NRI to serve and engage our community in ways that will help to improve nutrition for future generations in North Carolina," said Sumner. "We know that individuals respond differently to dietary intake, and our center will use advanced technologies to reveal new biomarkers of dietary intake and determine links between an

individual's response to dietary intake and health. An overall goal of our work and the NIH NPH study will be to inform the development of personalized nutrition for individuals in NC and across the United States." The Sumner team is supported by the NIH Common Fund's Nutrition for Precision Health, powered by the All of Us Research Program grant U24 CA268153-01.

Investigators in the Metabolomics and Clinical Assays Center include:

- Susan Sumner, PhD, Professor, UNC Nutrition Research Institute, NCRC
- Yuanyuan Li, PhD, Assistant Professor, UNC Nutrition Research Institute, NCRC
- Blake Rushing, PhD, Assistant Professor, UNC Nutrition Research Institute, NCRC
- Katie Meyer, PhD, Assistant Professor, UNC Nutrition Research Institute, NCRC
- Susan McRitchie, MA, MS, program manager, UNC Nutrition Research Institute, NCRC
- Steven Cotten, PhD, Associate Professor, UNC Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, and Director of clinical assays, McLendon Laboratory, UNC-Chapel Hill
- Martin Kohlmeier, MD, PhD, Professor, UNC Nutrition Research Institute, NCRC
- Colin Kay, PhD, Professor, Plants for Human Health Institute, NC State University, NCRC
- Christopher Newgard, PhD, Professor and Director, Sarah W. Stedman Nutrition and Metabolism Center and Duke Molecular Physiology Institute, Duke University Medical Center
- Olga Ilkayeva, PhD, Director, Duke Molecular Physiology Institute Metabolomics Core Laboratory, Duke University Medical Center
- Aleksandr Smirnov, PhD, Assistant Professor, College of Computing and Informatics, UNC Charlotte, NCRC
- Xiuxia Du, PhD, Professor, College of Computing and Informatics, UNC Charlotte, NCRC

To learn more about the Nutrition for Precision Health, powered by the All of Us Research Program, view the [informational video here](#).

All of Us and Nutrition for Precision Health, powered by the All of Us Research Program are service marks of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

About the North Carolina Research Campus

The North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis, NC, is a 350-acre research center located just north of Charlotte. The campus is a scientific community that collaboratively works to empower human health through nutrition and clinical research. <https://ncresearchcampus.net/>

About the UNC Nutrition Research Institute

The UNC Nutrition Research Institute's mission is to understand how nutrition affects individual health through our leadership in precision nutrition research, establishing how differences in our genes, gut bacteria, metabolism, and environment shape our individual disease risk.

<http://www.uncnri.org/>

About the McLendon Clinical Laboratories

The laboratories assist in providing the best possible care for patients while contributing to the education and research activities of the UNC Medical Center.

<https://www.uncmedicalcenter.org/mclendon-clinical-laboratories/>

About the UNC Charlotte Department of Bioinformatics and Genomics

The department's mission is to turn biological data into knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

<https://cci.charlotte.edu/bioinformatics/47/3>

About the Plants for Human Health Institute

The Plants for Human Health Institute's mission is to provide a global center for discovery and translation of plant and food innovations for disease prevention and health benefits..

<https://plantsforhumanhealth.ncsu.edu/>

About the Sarah W. Stedman Nutrition and Metabolism Center and the Duke Molecular Physiology Institute

The Stedman Center at the Duke University Medical School performs leading edge research in human nutrition and metabolic regulation. The DMPI applies sophisticated capabilities in genomics, proteomics, and metabolomics technologies to investigate mechanisms underlying chronic human diseases and conditions. <https://dmpi.duke.edu/sarah-w-stedman-nutrition-and-metabolism-center>

Susan J. Sumner

UNC Nutrition Research Institute

+1 919-622-4456

susan_sumner@unc.edu

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