

Background



- Widespread health disparities persist in U.S. by race/ethnicity and other characteristics



- Academic medical centers can contribute to disparities reduction



- Diversification of research investigator workforce



- Conduct of equity-focused research

Objective

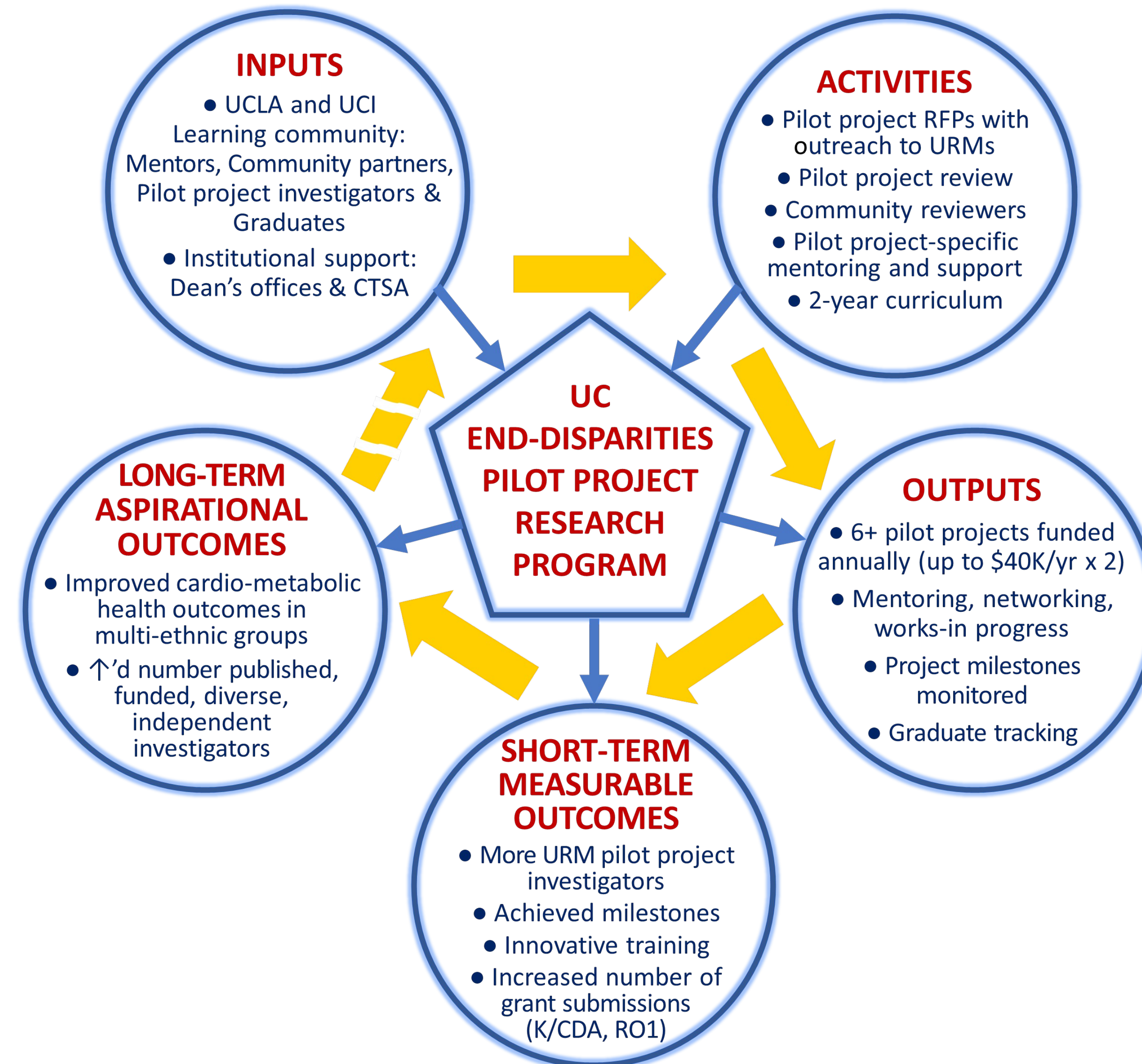
- Support career development of health equity researchers, particularly those from groups under-represented in medicine and other health-related sciences (URMs)
- Promote equity as a cross-cutting research approach

Collaborators, Mentors, Sponsors

- UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine
 - Arleen Brown, MD, PhD, Corresponding PI, UC END DISPARITIES Center
 - Dave McIntosh, PhD, MA, Vice Dean for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
 - Steven Dubinett, MD, Interim Dean
- Veterans Health Administration (VHA)
 - Naomi Tomoyasu, PhD, Deputy Director, Health Services Research & Development Service (HSR&D), VHA
 - Elizabeth Yano, PhD, MSPH, Director, VA Los Angeles HSR&D Center of Innovation

Approach, Planned Outcomes, Future Steps

- Develop & Lead **Investigator Development Core (IDC)** of UCLA-UCI Center for Eliminating Cardiometabolic Disparities in Multi-Ethnic Populations (UC END DISPARITIES Center)



- Conduct **PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS OF VA EQUITY-FOCUSED RESEARCH** to inform VA research program strategic planning

APPROACH

- Obtain local and national VA research leadership and stakeholder feedback & buy-in

EVALUATION STRATEGY

- Administrative database analysis
- ClinicalTrials.gov analysis
- Investigator survey

Outcomes To Date

UC END DISPARITIES CENTER IDC

- UC END DISPARITIES Center funded by NIH-NIMHD 9/2021 – 5 years, \$17 million
- Secured institutional support including \$150,000 annual supplemental funding
- Disseminated pilot project program request-for-proposals 11/2021 – 12/2021

Applicant characteristics:

- ✓ 54% Women
- ✓ 31% URMs

- Pilot proposal review in progress (4/2022)
- Initiated curriculum development

VA Equity Research Portfolio Analysis

- VA Los Angeles HSR&D Center of Innovation presentations and briefings: Leadership committee; Executive steering committee; Principal Investigator retreat
- National meetings: National VA HSR&D Deputy Director; VA HSR&D Center Directors national conference workshop
- VA Office of Research & Development (ORD) FY2022 funding secured

Discussion

- Project will facilitate career development for investigators from under-represented backgrounds, fund 30+ innovative pilot projects to address cardiometabolic disease disparities, and provide data to support VA strategic planning to fill gaps in health equity research
- IDC lessons learned may be scalable to VA

ABSTRACT: 2022 ELAM Institutional Action Project

Project Title: Developing Health Equity Researchers and an Equity Cross-Cutting Research Approach

Name and Institution: Donna L. Washington, MD, MPH, UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine (DGSOM) and VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

Collaborators, Mentors and Sponsors:

UCLA DGSOM: Arleen Brown, MD, PhD, Corresponding PI, UC END DISPARITIES Center, Dave McIntosh, PhD, MA, Vice Dean for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Steven Dubinett, MD, Interim Dean;

Veterans Health Administration: Elizabeth Yano, PhD, MSPH, Director, VA Los Angeles HSR&D Center of Innovation, Naomi Tomoyasu, PhD, Deputy Director, HSR&D, VHA

Topic Category: Research

Background, Significance of project: Despite general recognition of racial/ethnic inequities in health and healthcare in the U.S., widespread disparities persist. Academic medical centers can contribute to disparities elimination through diversification of their research investigator workforce, and conduct of equity-focused research across the translational research spectrum.

Purpose/Objectives: This project has the dual purpose of supporting career development of health equity researchers, particularly those from groups underrepresented in health-related sciences, and promoting equity as a cross-cutting research approach. Objective 1 is to develop an Investigator Development Core (IDC) at UCLA and UC Irvine, to support a pilot project program on cardiometabolic disease disparities. Objective 2 is to expand the scope of VA-funded equity research, by addressing gaps in VA's equity research, leveraging non-equity projects by adding equity-focused aims, and in the future, identifying strategies to diversify the research investigator workforce.

Methods/Approach/Evaluation Strategy: Develop and lead IDC of UCLA-UCI Center for Eliminating Cardiometabolic Disparities in Multi-Ethnic Populations (UC END DISPARITIES Center). Planned activities are to: (a) provide research training and mentoring to early-career investigators; (b) fund 6+ pilot projects annually, for up to \$80,000 over 2-years per project; (c) provide guidance to pilot project program graduates as they pursue NIH R01, VA IIR, or other independent funding. Activities incorporate outreach to enhance diversity, a community of practice, and community engagement to enhance innovation for addressing health disparities. Conduct portfolio analysis of VA-funded research to inform VA research program strategic planning. Planned activities include administrative database analysis, ClinicalTrials.gov analysis, and investigator survey.

Outcomes/Results: UC END DISPARITIES Center funded by NIH-NIMHD 9/2021 – 5 years, \$17 million. Received commitments from UCLA and UCI CTSI's for pilot project program matching funds of \$150,000/year. Developed and disseminated IDC pilot program request for proposals – applicant characteristics: 54% women; 31% under-represented minorities. Pilot proposal review and IDC curriculum development is in progress. VA equity cross-cutting research approach presented to local and national VA research leadership and stakeholders for feedback and buy-in: VA Los Angeles HSR&D Center of Innovation executive steering committee; national VA HSR&D Deputy Director; VA HSR&D Center of Innovation Directors national conference. The funding request to conduct the VA portfolio analysis is under review.

Discussion/Conclusion /Potential Impact: This project will facilitate career development for investigators from under-represented backgrounds and fund 30+ innovative pilot projects to address cardiometabolic disease disparities. We will also have data to contribute to VA evidence-based strategic planning to fill gaps in health equity research. IDC lessons learned may be scalable in VA.