

*Greetings* from the UConn Health Graduate School!

We hope to regularly share information and news across our many and varied programs, which include the Biomedical Science PhD and Certificate; combined MD/PhD and DMD/PhD; Clinical and Translational Research Masters and Certificate; Dental Science Masters; Public Health PhD, Masters, and Certificate; and the Young Innovative Investigator Program (YIIP).

### Academic Calendar

#### FALL 2025

**11/24-11/28-** Thanksgiving Break

**Fri., 11/28-** Last day for Master's/Doctoral degree candidates to upload final thesis/dissertation to Submittable & submit related paperwork to [degreeaudit@uconn.edu](mailto:degreeaudit@uconn.edu) for Fall 2025 degree conferral

**Fri., 12/5-** Last day of Fall classes

**12/8-12/12-** Final Exams for Fall semester

**Sun., 12/14-** Conferral date for Fall 2025 degrees

**Wed., 12/17-** Semester grades due by 4 PM

#### SPRING 2026

**Tues., 1/20-** First day of classes for Spring semester

**Mon., 2/2-** Last day to withdraw from courses without a W; last day to add/drop courses w/o permission

**Fri., 2/13-** Deadline to apply for graduation & submit Final Plan of Study (Master's/Certif. students only) for Spring 2026 conferral

**Sun., 3/1-** Deadline to apply for Summer 2026 graduation & be included in the 2026 Commencement Book

**3/16-3/20-** Spring Recess

**Mon., 3/23-** Fall 2026 registration opens in Stu. Admin.

**Mon., 4/13-** Last day to withdraw from courses

**Fri., 4/24-** Last day for Master's/Doctoral degree candidates to upload final thesis/dissertation to Submittable & submit related paperwork to [degreeaudit@uconn.edu](mailto:degreeaudit@uconn.edu) for Spring 2026 degree conferral

**Fri., 5/1-** Last day of Spring classes

**5/4-5/8-** Final Exams for Spring semester

**Sun. 5/10-** Conferral date for Spring 2026 degrees

**Mon. 5/11-** UConn Health Commencement ceremony

### International Office Walk-In Hours

The UConn Health International Office holds weekly walk-in advising for intl. students/scholars in the main bldg. on **Thursdays from 2-3 pm in Walker Conf. Rm. (AG-070)**. Walk-in advising is for **quick questions** (5-10 minutes) such as travel advice, I-20/DS-2019 signatures, document drop-off, etc. If you have an issue requiring a more in-depth discussion, please contact Kaitlin Dornenburg to make an appointment: [dornenburg@uchc.edu](mailto:dornenburg@uchc.edu); 860-679-4472.

### Student Behavioral Health Service

For info. & confidential assistance, visit SBHS [here](#).

### >>Registration Reminder<<

#### **Spring 2026 registration is now open.**

Register NOW and avoid these common errors:

>>Check [Student Admin](#) for *registration holds* and address asap if you have one; some holds do not clear immediately.

>>*Professors may cancel classes not meeting the minimum enrollment*—register asap so you aren't left scrambling to meet credit requirements!

>>Unenrolled or underenrolled students will be *automatically discontinued from their program* on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of classes.

If this happens, you must apply for reinstatement AND pay a **\$65 reinstatement fee** that is the student's responsibility (not your program/the Grad School).

#### **Graduate assistants (GAs)**

>>must enroll in *at least 6 credits* to be considered full-time

>>students supported on federal fellowship awards (individual or institutional) must enroll in *at least 9 credits* to be considered full-time.

Additionally, *the tuition waiver will not post to the fee bill until a GA is registered for at least 6 credits.*

Not registering in a timely fashion can result in a Bursar Hold on the account, blocking enrollment and other services, *as well as incurring late fees.*

UConn's [Knowledge Base](#) provides step-by-step instructions on managing your enrollment through the Student Administration system.

### **REMINDER:**

UConn Health campus students should go to <https://health.uconn.edu/registrar/forms/> to find the following forms *specific to our campus*:

- >Laboratory Rotation registration (for YIIP, certificate & combined degree students **only**)
- >Independent Study registration
- >Schedule revision
- >Course Audits

These forms can also be found on the [Students webpage](#) under *For All Graduate Students>> Forms for Graduate Students*. Questions? Contact the UConn Health Registrar's Office at [registrar@uchc.edu](mailto:registrar@uchc.edu).

## -Diversity Corner-



The Grad School DEI Committee's entry into UConn Health's Pumpkinpalooza 2025 was "Diversity Strengthens Our Pack!" Our dog-themed display included 'scary' twin pups ala *The Shining* created by DMD/PhD student Trish Hare, representing how sameness can be frightening! UConn Health Grad School Office staff Lana Angelo and Stephanie Rauch completed the 'strength of diversity' side with a variety of painted pumpkins representing a small sampling of breeds of our canine pals, including (of course!) a fantastic Husky! The display included custom paw print buttons with the phrase "Stronger Together" for visitors to take and show off their Husky Pride.

Our display also supported diversity in multiple ways:

Pumpkins were purchased from West Hartford United Methodist Church (the "pumpkin church") on New Britain Avenue. Their annual pumpkin sale helps support their summer youth mission trips, when they travel to towns in the northeast to assist elder citizens and disabled veterans who need help maintaining their homes. The church purchases the pumpkins for their sales from Native American growers.



### Did you know? ODI is now OICR

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) and the Office for Institutional Equity (OIE) have merged to form [the unified Office for Inclusion and Civil Rights \(OICR\)](#). The merger brings together subject matter experts from both units, fostering deeper alignment across initiatives, programs, and services.

### Upcoming events from OICR:

**Dec. 1: Know Your Rights Virtual Workshop**  
*specifically for UConn Health Grad, Med, and Dent students*

Facilitated by Junta for Progressive Action in collaboration with New Haven Immigrant Coalition, the workshop aims to empower individuals with the knowledge needed to protect themselves and their communities.

**RSVP [here](#); link to the workshop will be sent out on Dec. 1.**

**Bi-Weekly Coffee Breaks:** Noon Thursdays in Onyiuke Dining Rm  
(adjacent to the cafeteria, near the registers)

**Remaining Fall Dates:** Dec. 4 & 18

Coffee breaks are open to all members of the UConn Health community, including faculty, staff, postdocs, and students. Whether you'd like to talk through how stressors are affecting you, celebrate each other's wins, or simply enjoy good company, you are welcome. Come as you are; stay for a bit or the whole hour.

Questions? Require accommodations?  
Please email [diversity@uconn.edu](mailto:diversity@uconn.edu) for assistance.

**UConn Health Grad School DEI Committee:** For more info, contact committee Chair, Dr. Jenna Bartley, [jbartley@uchc.edu](mailto:jbartley@uchc.edu).

### Upcoming Heritage Celebrations, Observances, & Holidays

#### November

National American Indian and Native Alaskan Month  
2<sup>nd</sup> [Dia de Los Muertos](#)

#### December

1<sup>st</sup> [World AIDS Day](#)  
10<sup>th</sup> [International Human Rights Day](#)  
14<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> [Hanukkah](#)  
25<sup>th</sup> [Christmas](#)  
26<sup>th</sup>-Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> [Kwanza](#)

#### January

16<sup>th</sup> [National Religious Freedom Day](#)  
19<sup>th</sup> [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day](#)

#### February

Black History Month  
17<sup>th</sup> [Lunar New Year](#)  
20<sup>th</sup> [World Day of Social Justice](#)



# Student Kudos!

## Student Awards and Achievements



**Rachel Godek** (Biomedical Science Ph.D. student, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry AoC; PI: Rebecca Page) was honored as a finalist in the 2025 Women of Innovation in STEM in the category of *Collegian Innovation and Leadership* at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Women of Innovation Awards, hosted by the Connecticut Technology Council on Tuesday, October 28<sup>th</sup>. Her work uses a multidisciplinary approach to understand the type 2A phosphoprotein phosphatases which are dysregulated in multiple cancers and neurodegeneration.



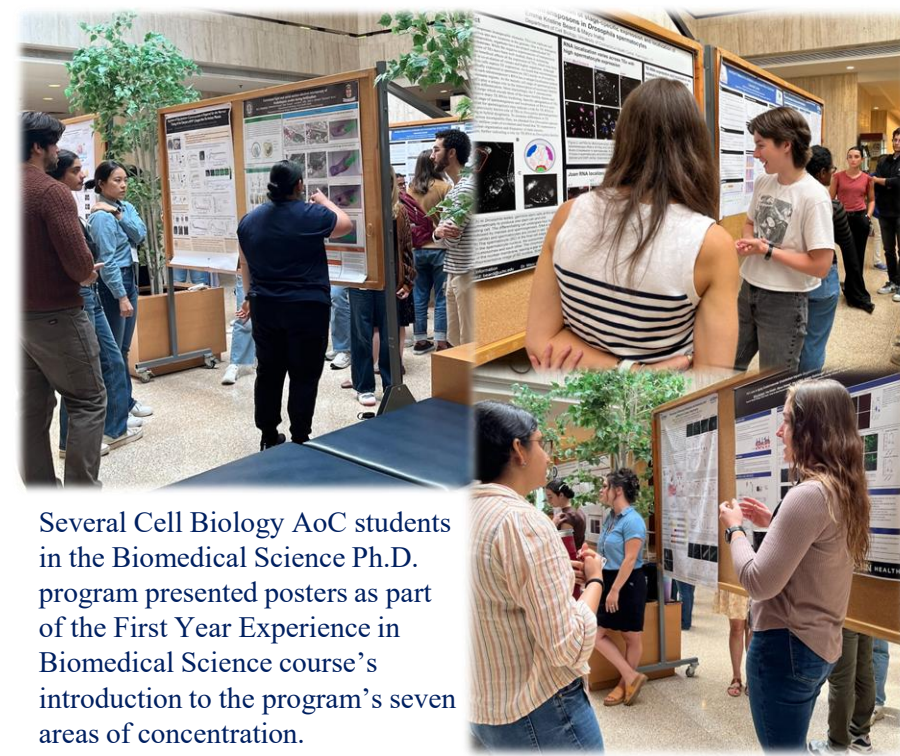
**Mevlana Iljazi and Laura Contreras** (pictured above) are the Masters of Public Health program's 2025-2026 Segal Scholars. The scholarship for incoming students recognizes 40+ years of service to UConn by the program's founding Associate Director, Joan Segal. Learn more about Mevlana and Laura [here](#).

## Student Grant and Fellowship Awards

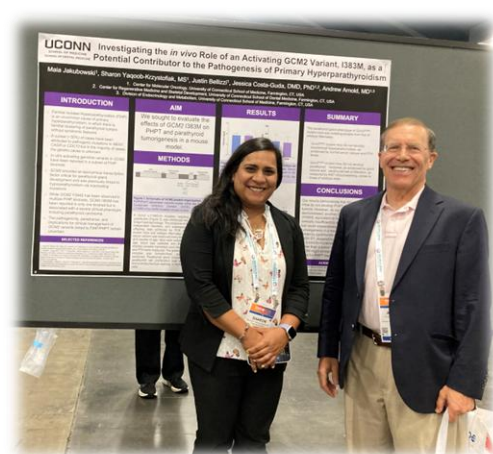


>>Biomedical Science Ph.D. student **Tvesha Parikh** (Molecular Biology and Biochemistry AoC; PI: Rebecca Page) was awarded a fellowship from the PPP3CA Hope Foundation for her work on PPP3 missense disease variants.

## Student Conferences & Presentations



Several Cell Biology AoC students in the Biomedical Science Ph.D. program presented posters as part of the First Year Experience in Biomedical Science course's introduction to the program's seven areas of concentration.



>**Sharon Yaqoob-Krysztofiak** (Biomedical Science Ph.D. student, Skeletal Biology and Regeneration AoC; PI: Andrew Arnold) presented her joint first-author poster at the ENDO 2025 meeting this summer in San Francisco (pictured left above with Dr. Arnold).





After their student advisory session during their 12<sup>th</sup> Week Enrichment series, students, faculty and staff in the Applied Public Health Sciences programs participated in Relational Dance for Professionals, a dynamic learning program designed to cultivate emotionally intelligent, relationship-centered professionals across diverse fields.



The GSO held two October events for UConn Health campus graduate students. Early in the month, the competition was fierce at AoC Jeopardy! where Team Neuroscience (pictured above) took home bragging rights and the gold (tone) trophy. And for a spooktacular finish to the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the year, students participated in a ghostly scavenger hunt, paranormal paint party, and creepy costume contest.

A terror-riffic time was had by all 😊



## What's (Been) Goin' On?

Students have been out and about over the past few months! Here's a peek at some of the things they've been up to!



In October, Applied Public Health Sciences served as sponsors for ***The Power of Pause Celebration: A Menopause Equity Event***. The event brought together advocates, health professionals, and community members to discuss the unique challenges individuals face during midlife, especially those from marginalized and underserved groups. Conversations centered on how social determinants of health—such as access to care, income, race, and gender identity—shape experiences of menopause and overall well-being. Public Health program students and faculty attended and participated in the event.



## ~Recent Faculty Honors~

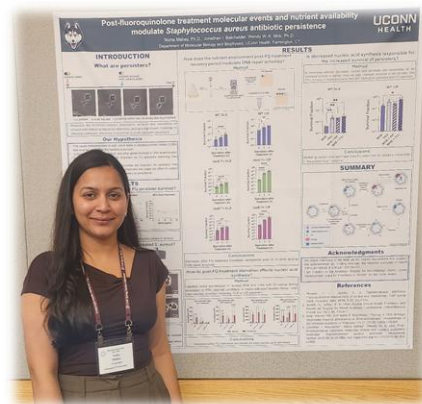
Assistant Professors **Dr. Madison Doolittle** (Skeletal Biology & Regeneration and Cell Biology AoCs, *pictured right*) and **Dr. Sasan Jalili** (Immunology AoC; Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine, *pictured far right*) were recently named 2025 UConn Pepper Scholars. UConn's Pepper Center champions advancements of aging research, along with the education and training of the next generation of geriatric medicine experts and scientists, to help more older adults maintain and restore their function and independence. A key component of the UConn Pepper Center is the Research Education Component (REC), awarding grant funding and training to Pepper Scholars showing promise as independent research investigators. Read more about the UConn Pepper Center and these awards [here](#).



Systems Biology and Cell Biology Areas of Concentration Assistant Professor **Dr. Abhijit Deb Roy** (*standing center in picture left*) was selected for the Interstellar Initiative which is a program organized by The New York Academy of Sciences (NYAS) and The Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) to promote international and interdisciplinary collaborations.

## Postdoc News

Postdoctoral fellow **Dr. Nisha Mahey** (Molecular Biology and Biochemistry AoC, PI: Wendy Mok) presented her work on DNA repair in *S. aureus* at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Meeting from September 8 -12, 2025 on Microbial Pathogenesis & Host Response. Nisha's participation in this meeting was supported in part by the American Society for Microbiology's Career Development Grant for Postdoctoral Women.



## Timely Topics for Faculty & Students

UConn Grad School's *Timely Topics* series offers educational tracks to engage with subject matter experts on topics relevant to graduate students and those supporting/advising them. All sessions are held via Webex. Visit the [Timely Topics webpage](#) for this Fall's Faculty/Staff and Student offerings. You'll also find Archived seminars of past semester's topics from both learning tracks.

## UConn Health Off-Campus Housing Website

Did you know the new off-campus housing resource for the UConn Health campus launched last year? This site can be used by **any UConn Health community member, including students, postdocs, staff, and faculty**, to search for housing, post rentals and available apartments, or look for roommates. The Roommate Finder feature is **password protected** using your NetID and password.

<<Use the QR code to the left or the URL to check it out! At

<https://offcampushousing.uconn.edu/>, campus specific features include a map-based housing search, sublet options, and renter need-to-know resources.

**IMPT:** This housing site is supported by Off-Campus & Commuter Student Services.

\*\*\*Please **do not use** the old Google Group for housing, as *this is not a secure resource!*\*\*\*



# UConn

OFF-CAMPUS AND  
COMMUTER STUDENT  
SERVICES



# World Kindness Day

In addition, **Patricia Hare** (D.M.D./Ph.D. student; Molecular Biology & Biochemistry AoC, PI: Wendy Mok) and **Andreia Cadar**, (Biomed. Sci. Ph.D. student, Immunology AoC, PI: Jenna Bartley) along with Assistant Professor **Dr. Vanessa Scanlon** (Skeletal Biology & Regeneration and Cell Biology AoCs) and her family, Graduate School Student Affairs Officer **Stephanie Rauch**, and Biomed Science Program Coordinator **Lana Angelo** created over 60 kindness stones which were left all around campus for the taking to encourage spreading kindness within our community and beyond.

In addition, **Patricia Hare** (D.M.D./Ph.D. student; Molecular Biology & Biochemistry AoC, PI: Wendy Mok) and **Andreia Cadar**, (Biomed. Sci. Ph.D. student, Immunology AoC, PI: Jenna Bartley) along with Assistant Professor **Dr. Vanessa Scanlon** (Skeletal Biology & Regeneration and Cell Biology AoCs) and her family, Graduate School Student Affairs Officer **Stephanie Rauch**, and Biomed Science Program Coordinator **Lana Angelo** created over 60 kindness stones which were left all around campus for the taking to encourage spreading kindness within our community and beyond.



## No Pain...

Members of The Orchestra of University of Connecticut Health (OUCH!) got audience members in the *spirit* at their October 30<sup>th</sup> Halloween Concert in Keller Auditorium. Conducted by faculty member Dr. Howard Gutstein, the orchestra (*pictured below*) is comprised of faculty, staff, and student musicians at UConn Health.

Graduate School student participants in the October performance included **Clement Ojo** (M.D./Ph.D. student) and **Sarah Rizvi** (Biomed. Sci. Ph.D. student) on the cello, **Jinhong Dong** (M.D./Ph.D. student) on the violin, **Cara Bartlett** (Biomed. Sci. Ph.D. student) on the flute, and **Sophia Bizink** (Biomed. Sci. Ph.D. student) and **Stephen Li** (M.D./Ph.D. student) on the clarinet (*both pictured left*).

Missed the performance? UConn Health members with intranet access can catch the video on The HUB (search “OUCH”).

And mark your calendars: the upcoming OUCH! Holiday Concert is *Thursday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> at 6pm in Keller Auditorium.*



**Thoughts? Comments? Contributions for consideration in future newsletters?**

Email Stephanie Rauch, UConn Health Grad School Newsletter Editor, at [PhdBiomed@uchc.edu](mailto:PhdBiomed@uchc.edu)