Message from the Director

The Magical CCREC Crew

CCREC is always a work in progress, with some projects just getting underway, others accelerating their motion, and still others slowing down or even stopping because completed. We are a complex, multi-faceted enterprise whose overall aim is to help coalesce the field of collaborative research.

As our newsletters and website detail, we support “best practices” projects developed by UC engaged scholars and their community and policy partners, provide training for early career scholars, and incubate strategic regional-scale long-term “signature projects” designed to impact multiple domains. We also convene gatherings of researchers, democratic and social justice activists, and policy makers to examine ways of making research matter in creating a more equitable society.

But even all these substantial endeavors do not tell the whole story of who we are and what we do, because we also pursue active research and policy agendas that are designed to provide more solid foundations for the field. These agendas explore the ethics of collaborative research, the ways that data can serve democracy, and the challenges and contradictions that emerge in pursuing equity-oriented collaborative community-based research.

None of this incredible work would be possible without an enormously dedicated and talented “CCREC Crew.” They are the people who make it happen, who breathe life into the Center, and generate the force that powers CCREC’s state-wide, national, and international impacts.

(In the photo: Mike Kim, Delphine Foo-Matkin, Ron Glass, Natalie Baley, Emily Borg, Sam Foster, Saugher Nojan, Sheeva Sabati, Rebecca London, Ethan Chang)

The daily constant has been CCREC Assistant Director, Samara “Sami” Foster, Ph.D., who built from scratch the infrastructure that sustains CCREC. She has had a key role in virtually every CCREC pursuit: managing all the details of logistics and planning, contributing to program design, facilitating our Governance Council and Advisory Board meetings, developing our communications, and guiding our undergraduate and graduate student researchers. She has also found time to improve our research productions with her critical analytic thinking. Perhaps her most difficult duties have revolved around directing the Director, but even here, she manages to keep a positive spirit and keep things moving with firm demands and a gentle good humor.

Our stellar doctoral students – currently Emily Borg, Ethan Chang, Saugher Nojan, and Sheeva Sabati – are seemingly tireless. Their attention to detail, commitment to excellence, and creative resourcefulness mark everything they do, from taking care of the most mundane small tasks to investigating the most complex theoretical and empirical problems in our research. They inspire both our seasoned Faculty Fellows and our battle-tested community partners. All I can do is say “WOW!” and try to stay out of their way.

Our newest members of the CCREC Crew – Delphine Foo-Matkin, our Administration and Communications Coordinator, and Rebecca London, Ph.D., our Assistant Director for Research and Policy – stepped right up to that high bar and leaped over it to take us all to yet higher levels. Delphine’s eye for design immediately improved our event flyers and project brochures, and her careful budget tracking is enabling us to stretch our limited resources for greater impact.

Continued on Page 2.
Message from the Director

Continued from Page 1.

Rebecca’s deep experience as a research leader has already helped us focus our signature project investigations and prepare funding proposals that would not otherwise have been possible. With Rebecca on board, Sam will now be able to concentrate more of her attention on our training programs and communications as we increase our support of early career engaged scholars and reach out to wider audiences to grow the field. In addition, Natalie Baloy, Ph.D., joined us this summer as a CCREC Post-Doctoral Scholar, and her background in de-colonial anthropology is bringing an infusion of new insights into our study of ethical issues in collaborative community-based social science research.

These are the people who make CCREC the unique and impactful resource that it is. As you read through this newsletter (as well as our past newsletters available on our website: http://ccrec.ucsc.edu/newsletter), filled with the stories of CCREC events and activities, of CCREC Fellows, Advisors, and Affiliates, know that the magic of CCREC is in this Crew.

Ron Glass

Ron Glass, Ph.D., CCREC Director/PI
Professor of Philosophy of Education University of California at Santa Cruz

CCREC Highlights

CCREC continues to support and improve the practice of equity-oriented collaborative research. This summer, CCREC convened a training opportunity for graduate students and early career scholars.

Increasing Capacity for Collaborative Research and Developing the Next Generation of Engaged Scholars

In August 2014 at UC Santa Cruz, CCREC hosted its first Collaborative Research Training Institute for graduate students and early career scholars. Twenty-five participants from across the nation attended the intensive three-day training that provided opportunities to grapple with the theories, methods, ethics, and democratic aspects of equity-oriented, collaborative, community-based research. Topics explored included:

- Why collaborative research?
- Epistemologies & Collaborative Methodologies
- Equity & Collaborative Research
- Ethical Issues in Collaborative Research
- Building Collaborative Relationships
- Competencies & Guiding Questions for Conducting Collaborative Research
- Publishing & Dissemination
- Engaged Careers & the Academy
- Public Learning Processes/Building Democracy

Participants had opportunities to engage with their peers and experienced collaborative researchers to receive feedback on their own projects and ideas.

Based on positive participant feedback, CCREC plans to host two similar summer training institutes and an advanced special topic seminar in the summer of 2015. Check the CCREC website (ccrec.ucsc.edu) in March for more details.

CCREC is building the field of equity-oriented community-based collaborative research in part by providing opportunities for interdisciplinary dialogue and engagement.

Exploring the Intersections of Digital Media, Collaborative Research, and Democracy

On November 14 and 15 in Santa Cruz, CCREC hosted an invitational conference for about 100 community-based researchers and activists for discussions of praxis and theory.

“Generating Knowledge and Building Democratic Power with Community-Based Research and Digital Media” was structured around a series of “Provocations to Wide Awakeness” meant to provide insights, questions, and challenges to help us engage deeply in the themes of the conference. The notion of “wide awakeness” comes from Maxine Greene, a theorist and activist who was always searching for ways to create experiences that would wake people up to both the realities of oppression and suffering and to the transformative possibilities of human being. Only when we are “wide awake” can we hope to mitigate the negative effects of dominant ideologies and see more clearly the potential spaces for interventions that create a more just society.

The conference proceedings were recorded graphically in real time to capture ideas as they were expressed, which helped with identifying themes, patterns, and relationships among the ideas of the group.

With support from a second major grant from the Spencer Foundation, CCREC is continuing its work to examine ethical and epistemological issues unique to equity-oriented collaborative community-based research.

Examining Ethical Issues in Equity-Oriented Collaborative Community-Based Research

CCREC’s new Postdoctoral Scholar, Natalie Baloy, is working on developing a casebook resource to guide students, researchers, community partners, and research administrators in their deliberation of ethical dilemmas that emerge in collaborative research projects. She is currently interviewing researchers and community partners to assemble anonymized ethical cases that reflect actual experiences conducting community-based research. Natalie welcomes CCREC community members to participate in this research; email her at nbaloy@ucsc.edu to get involved or learn more.

In addition to the casebook, Natalie is working with CCREC Director, Ron Glass, and graduate student, Sheeva Sabati, to review professional codes of ethics and make recommendations for revisions that provide more appropriate guidance for collaborative research projects. Meanwhile, Ron Glass continues to work with Anne Newman, formerly with CCREC and now at the Stanford Center for Ethics in Society, to produce philosophical analyses of ethical and epistemological issues. Together, the CCREC ethics team has already published two articles in top-tiered journals, another is in press, and two more are being prepared for publication. Additionally, CCREC ethics research continues to be presented at a range of philosophy, education, and social science conferences.

Continued on Page 6.
Research for Equitable and Dynamic Urban Policies

Victor Rubin is the Vice President of Research at PolicyLink, a national research and action institute that promotes equitable social and economic policies rooted in “the wisdom, voice, and experience of local residents and organizations” (visit PolicyLink’s website by clicking here). We recently sat down with Victor to deepen our understanding of PolicyLink’s community building and policy change efforts and to learn more about Victor’s involvement with equity oriented community-based research projects.

“At the center of the action”

Located at the corner of 15th and Webster, PolicyLink’s location in the heart of downtown Oakland is emblematic of the organization’s emphasis on promoting equitable social and economic policies that draw on community-based sources of knowledge and ongoing activism. Through research, policy advocacy, and capacity-building approaches, PolicyLink aims to “lift up what works” and supports a vast range of equity issues, focused on economic, health, and infrastructural equity.

As the Vice President for Research, Victor guides and shapes research projects that promote “dynamic urban policies that benefit local residents.” Extending beyond his background in education, youth development, and job training, Victor’s work focuses on developing infrastructure to create healthier communities, improving access to healthy foods, and advancing economic development in major cities across the nation.

I asked Victor what he found most satisfying in his work at PolicyLink. He responded, “What I find most satisfying is that the organization as a whole has an impact on some important policy arenas—that we’re right in the center of the action, that it’s constantly a source of new issues and new ideas. The variety and the closeness to the policy action are very rewarding.” Victor expanded on two such policy arenas that exemplify PolicyLink’s efforts in California: the Alliance for Boys and Men of Color (BMOC) and the Community Equity Initiative (CEI).

BMOC is a statewide coalition of youth, community leaders, policy researchers, and advocates working to ensure young men of color have access to the tools and supports needed to develop into healthy, successful adults. Reflecting on the successes and promise of BMOC, Victor commented, “When people, when young people themselves particularly, get to organize themselves and to speak up…to see that level of assured, self-confident, well organized engagement from all these young men is very, very rewarding.” In addition to BMOC, PolicyLink’s Community Equity Initiative (CEI) works with the residents of unincorporated communities of the San Joaquin Valley and aims to ensure such communities are included in county planning processes and receive equitable infrastructural expenditures. One example of CEI’s success pertains to its partnership with the unincorporated community of Matheny Tract, which resulted in a return of almost $30,000 in water user fees to the community and helped to facilitate the development of an improved sewer system and secure safe drinking water.

The BMOC and CEI initiatives reflect a fraction of the ongoing work at PolicyLink, yet even these snapshots of PolicyLink’s work demonstrate how their efforts create new possibilities and new conditions for inclusion. Forecasting potential new directions for PolicyLink, Victor noted, “We’d like to develop more areas of equity-oriented policy in California. There will be more opportunities for community-based participatory research (CBPR) as we do that. It’s an area of growth for us.” Victor finds continuity between his research and early work experience, and we discussed how and why Victor has remained committed to the ideas of CBPR and community-university partnerships.

A ‘Crooked Path’ to Community Based Participatory Research

Victor’s interest in CBPR began during his education and training at UC Berkeley. While pursuing his Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning, Victor conducted research for local political campaigns and advocacy groups. These experiences formed the foundation for Victor’s commitment to local grassroots organizing.

Continued on Page 5.
Featured Fellow: Michael Montoya
Power, Privilege, and the Possibilities of Community Generated Knowledge

~ By Ethan Chang

Michael Montoya is Associate Professor of Anthropology, Chicano/Latino Studies, Public Health and Nursing Science at the University of California, Irvine. He is a member of the CCREC Governance Council and the director of the Community Knowledge Project—a collaborative that understands community as a practice and draws on the knowledge and values of community partners to address structural inequalities. We had a chance to speak with Michael about his current research and community-building efforts.

Ethan: What would you want readers to know about your particular approach to research?

Michael: I’m interested in equity—power and privilege and the way that power and privilege can maintain systems and relations of inequality right beneath our noses. That’s why I created the Community Knowledge Project. I learned that power and privilege operate everywhere—in universities, in clinics, in the corridors of Sacramento and Washington D.C.—and it too often reproduces inequality.

E: Where did your interest in power and privilege originate?

Michael: As somebody who grew up on the east side, and it doesn’t matter what city that is, I didn’t know anybody who had gone to college. So growing up, I didn’t really know that I was “working class” that there was such a thing as “class.” It was in my very first quarter as an undergrad at Lewis and Clark that we read a book about working culture, and it hit me: I’m working class. Suddenly, all these things in my life began to take deeper sociological meaning for me. The more I learned about what I grew up with, the inequalities, inequalities, differences and violence, the more I realized that there was a problem. It seemed to me that there wasn’t really anybody asking “why?”

E: Could you describe how these experiences informed your early research topics?

M: I wanted to study how poor people are pretty damn smart and are doing the best they could do. This was at the height of a period that is on us again, where poor people are blamed for being poor. I was asked to be a part of a study funded by the National Institute of Health to look at the social and political implications of the human genome project. Genetics was a wildly popular frame for explanations of everything from disease, crime, poverty, even bad driving. For example, in the late 90s–2000s, if a geneticist said that a Mexican or a black person has asthma because of their genes, it was reported in the papers. It was the “truth.” Scientists were like modern day priests and that fascinated me. “How is it that somebody can have that much power?” That someone can say, “You have an illness because of something in your body” and that’s all you need to know.

E: Could you talk a bit more about your current research?

M: So 10 years ago, I arrived at UC Irvine on the heels of my dissertation project and began to get out into neighborhoods through people who knew me, knew my sensibilities. Orange County is fascinating because there are two OCs—there is the super wealthy OC, which we know about from Disneyland and the Housewives and then there’s incredible poverty. And the one neighborhood where I work now and where I’ve been working for about eight years has shown up in multiple research studies as among the hardest places to live in the United States. So I got to learn about a special kind of consumptive capitalism, a special swagger of power and privilege that only comes from extreme wealth, but also of a special kind of thriving, of working two or three jobs and doing the best you can.

E: And where does your specific approach to research fit into this picture?

M: My research is on all the ways in which we—all of us—find ways to thrive. I’m trying to lift up those ways. And I liken it to a pearl. Pearls, as you know, are developed by this digestive motion. They are being polished and polished and ground and ground and created through these processes, and they become this brilliant thing that wouldn’t happen were they not going through this grinding. So the stuff that happens in these neighborhoods is way cooler than analytics that are coming out of the academy right now. Because it had to be developed through rigors of reality that most thought experiments from ivory towers don’t even come close to.

E: Could we turn to the Community Knowledge Project (CKP) now, perhaps as it relates to the contrast you set up between ivory tower research and community-based research?

M: I join with people in their daily struggle. My “research” is whatever I learn by hanging out with people and doing whatever I can to support them in what they’re working on. I don’t impose a research footprint—that is one of the principles of CKP. At CKP, we feel that your success as a researcher must be linked to the community members’ success. So if they’re failing and flailing, you are failing and flailing, not where you can come in and do your little experiment and never go back to that neighborhood. Make a long-term commitment and trust—this is why it’s called “community knowledge”—trust that there is something awesome here and when you leave people should feel sad, not happy, or indifferent.

Another principle that I use that I got from CCREC Governance Council colleague, George Lipsitz, is the idea of accompaniment, developed by Archbishop Romero from El Salvador. You can think of it as accompanying somebody on a trail, where together you are hacking away the brush, you’re smoothing Continued on Page 5.
Researchers for Equity

Victor Rubin

Continued from Page 3.

and capacity-building efforts, and upon completing his degree in the late 1980s, Victor sustained an intimate connection to communities through his role as Research Director of the University-Oakland Metropolitan Forum and his subsequent role as the Director of the Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Office of University Partnerships. It was at HUD where Victor encountered what he described as, “scores, if not hundreds of university-community partnerships around the country, many of which had engaged scholarship at their core and many of which, the ones I tended to like the most, partnerships with community-based organizations.”

Lifting Up What Works

PolicyLink

When Victor joined PolicyLink in 2000, community-university partnerships were not a central aspect of the organization’s work. However, three research and evaluation projects offered an opportunity for Victor to learn more about CBPR. The first two opportunities involved fellow CCREC Advisory Board Member, Meredith Minkler, who partnered with PolicyLink to document cases of CBPR projects, mostly in environmental and community health, which had an impact on public policies. The first such review was national in scope, while the second was specific to California. Reflecting on his experiences working with Merry, Victor noted, “That’s what solidified my understanding of the field, my opportunity to work with her. She is, of course, tremendous, just unparalleled in both her breadth of understanding and commitment to the details and fidelity to partnerships.”

Following his work with Merry, Victor then served as an evaluator for the Engaged Institutions Cluster, a grant sponsored by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to support state and land-grant universities in promoting innovative research in partnership with community-based organizations and public agencies. The Engaged Institutions Cluster Evaluation project brought Victor to UC Santa Cruz, where he met a recently arrived, energetic, Ron Glass, who through the Kellogg award to UCSC had received a mini-grant to conduct a community-based project on education in the Pajaro Valley. At UCSC, Victor evaluated Catherine Cooper’s Bridging Multiple Worlds Alliance (BMWA) and Manuel Pastor’s Center for Justice, Tolerance and Community (CJT), which Victor noted, “were doing great work with educational equity, community-based research, and empowering community organizations.” The Engaged Institutions Cluster ended much too quietly, however. Although the participating universities had taken some important steps to support engaged scholarship, Victor described a frequent lack of deep institutionalization of such innovative community-based approaches, and the end, soon after the grant, of several valuable projects. Victor felt a sense of “unfinished business.” That community-driven research efforts could be documented and supported further by PolicyLink and that lending his support and guidance to CCREC was an important way to advance the field.

“Where you see some progress, it is good to help it along”

Victor described CCREC as “the best thing I’ve seen in terms of long-term encouragement of university-community partnerships and community-based participatory research.” When asked what prompted him to join CCREC as a member of the Advisory Board, Victor remarked, “It was partly because of this belief that I have that the University of California ought to make this type of work a very high priority and to create a reward system for it. So I thought that this [CCREC] is a natural attempt to do that with people that I knew and respected. I liked the idea that it was statewide and system-wide, and I liked the issues they picked up, several of which were close to the substantive issues that PolicyLink was working on. Those were all reasons to pick up on some unfinished business.”

(Photograph above from 2013 PolicyLink publication, “California Unincorporated,” [http://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/CA_UNINCORPORATED_2.PDF])

Victor subsequently teamed up with CCREC, where in addition to his capacity as an Advisory Board member, he actively serves on both of CCREC’s signature projects: the Growing Equity from the Ground Up (GEGU) project based in Oakland and the Young Adult Civic Engagement (YACE) based in the Central Valley. For this project, Victor and his PolicyLink colleagues provides a critical connection to BMOC, which has overlapping aims with YACE and shared the partner organization MILPA (Motivating Individuals for Leadership in Public Advancement) in East Salinas.

When asked what he hopes to see CCREC accomplish in the coming years, Victor responded, “There’s a lot more to be done to raise the profile and appeal of community-based scholarship and community-engaged scholarship and research within the university, and CCREC should continue to create incentives and peer review for that kind of work. To keep the internal campaign viable and vibrant—make it an interesting, appealing, rewarding connection for more faculty in more fields.”

We are buoyed by the important equity-oriented work of our Advisory Board members like Victor, who remind us of the broader struggle in which we all partake and whose efforts help to sustain the “internal campaign” for a more just and inclusive society.

Featured Fellow: Michael Montoya

Continued from Page 4.

M: out the path, and you’re with people as they are making the trail. Note, you’re not leading the efforts, you are deeply joined in the efforts. The other way I think of accompaniment is in terms of a musical accompanist. Somebody has a song they’re doing and you come in and you’re the accompanist. You’re not leading, you might have a chance for your riff in jazz, your solo piece to add to the gestalt of the music, but your job is to lift up what’s going on there. You’re not holding the melody line all the time—sometimes you might, sometimes you might play the baseline, but you are accompanying and together you are making the song better than it would be if you played alone. Together it is a much richer piece of art.

E: Last, regarding your involvement with CCREC, could you talk about why you have chosen to serve on the Governance Council?

M: I saw in CCREC a possibility for furthering work in ways that no other institutional space could. CCREC is a space where we have a kind of power sensitivity that is deeply informed by popular education, by new social movements, by feminist movements, by critical race movements, the civil rights movements, and the highest ideals of what it means to come together and be academics who are trying to enact and make research that changes and transforms inequities. And CCREC really does it for me. And the more I am involved with CCREC, the more I realize that I was right.

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For more information about Michael and the CKP, please visit his website at [www.communityknowledgeproject.org](http://www.communityknowledgeproject.org).

(Photograph above from Michael Montoya)
CCREC Highlights

Continued from Page 2.

CCREC Welcomes New Staff

Rebecca London joins CCREC as Assistant Director of Research & Policy.

She uses collaborative research to study issues such as K-12 and post-secondary education, after school programs, welfare reform, health and wellness, the digital divide, and children’s living arrangements. Before joining CCREC, Rebecca was Senior Researcher at the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities at Stanford University. She earned her Ph.D. in Human Development and Social Policy from Northwestern University’s School of Education and Social Policy.

Natalie Baloy is CCREC’s new Postdoctoral Scholar working on the “Ethical Issues in Equity-Oriented Collaborative Community-Based Research” project, funded by the Spencer Foundation.

Natalie recently completed her PhD in Anthropology at the University of British Columbia. For her dissertation research, she utilized critical ethnographic methods to explore settler colonial and Indigenous relations in Vancouver, Canada.

Saugher Nojan joins CCREC as a Graduate Student Researcher.

Saugher is a doctoral student in the Education Department's Social and Cultural Contexts of Education program. She is interested in critical pedagogy, critical multicultural education, educational equity, and collaborative research. Saugher is a graduate of California State University, Sacramento’s Honors Program and holds a B.A. in Sociology with a minor in Psychology.

CCREC Fellows make a difference across the state through collaborative research

Creating Frameworks for Collaborative Research for Health, Equity, and Sustainability


Read more about Jon’s work by clicking here.

CCREC Welcomes New Fellow: Diane Fujino

Diane Fujino (pictured below) joins CCREC as a Fellow. Diane is the Director of the UCSB Center for Black Studies Research and a Professor in the Department of Asian American Studies at UC Santa Barbara.

Her research interests include Asian American social movements, Japanese American radicalism, Afro-Asian solidarities, race and gender studies, and biography and oral history. Last Spring, Diane was one of a handful of grant applicants to receive one of CCREC’s seed-grants for her project, “New Politics and New Polities: Equity-Oriented, race-Conscious Social Movement Mobilization in California Communities.”
CCREC Mission

CCREC is a University of California multicampus research program and initiative that engages university researchers, community-based organizations, and policymakers in Equity-Oriented Collaborative, Community-Based Research projects to achieve creative solutions to the interrelated challenges in the economy, education, employment, environment, food systems, housing, and public health.

CCREC is committed to incubating and supporting ethically informed collaborative research, preparing a new generation of engaged scholars and community leaders, and creating institutional capacity to build this emergent field.

Join CCREC

CCREC is currently accepting applications for Fellows, Affiliates, and Partners. Join us in making a difference in California’s communities and beyond!

Check out our website for more information at ccrec.ucsc.edu/join-CCREC.

Become a CCREC Funding Partner

Please help us continue our important work by becoming a funding partner. Contact Ron Glass at rglass@ucsc.edu or 831-459-5188 or visit ccrec.ucsc.edu/donate for more information.

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Ellen Reese  
UC Riverside

Contact Us

Ron Glass, Ph.D., Director  
Samara Foster, Ph.D., Assistant Director  
f: 831-459-1989  
email: ccrec@ucsc.edu

http://ccrec.ucsc.edu

CCREC  
University of California Santa Cruz  
Mail Stop: Education Dept.  
1156 High Street  
Santa Cruz, CA 95064