



UCSF PRETERM BIRTH INITIATIVE

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN FRANCISCO



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2015 POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

One of the guiding principles of the Preterm Birth Initiative (PTBi) is to mentor and promote scholarship among new/early-stage investigators from multiple disciplines through community-engaged research opportunities. The PTBi Post-Doctoral Fellowship is a tailored, non-accredited fellowship that provides mentored research, training, and career development opportunities with the ultimate goal of building capacity in this field. The PTBi is proud to introduce the five talented fellows who have been selected for the fellowship program's inaugural class of 2015-2016:



PATIENCE AFULANI MB.ChB, MPH, PhD

Dr. Patience Afulani just finished her PhD in Public Health at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health, Department of Community Health Sciences. She is a medical officer from Ghana, where she obtained her MB.ChB from the University of Ghana Medical School. She also has an MPH, with a certificate in Global Health, from UCLA. Her research interests are in reproductive, maternal, neonatal, and child health, and quality of health care and health systems strengthening in sub-Saharan Africa. Her current work examines sources of disparities in the use and quality of maternal health services and in maternal and fetal outcomes in sub-Saharan Africa. She will be extending this work as part of the PTBi fellowship to identify scalable interventions to reduce preterm births and improve survival for premature babies as well as reduce the disparities in these outcomes.

MOLLY ALTMAN MN, CNM, MPH, PhD

Dr. Molly Altman brings her experience as a nurse-midwife and training in nursing research and epidemiology to the PTBi as a post-doctoral fellow. After graduating from the University of Vermont with a BS in Nursing, she completed concurrent degrees at the University of Washington—a MN in Nurse-Midwifery and a MPH in Maternal-Child Health Epidemiology. She brings ten years of clinical practice experience in the obstetric setting as a nurse-midwife, both in the US and in developing countries such as India, Haiti, and South Sudan. Molly completed her PhD in Nursing at Washington State University, examining the comparative effectiveness of certified nurse midwives (CNMs) to obstetrician/gynecologists in the hospital setting. Her post-doctoral research will focus on improving health care delivery for women and families, using comparative effectiveness research designs, cost effectiveness analyses, and interpretive qualitative research methodologies. Molly lives in Petaluma with her family and spends any free time outside, either hiking or outrigger canoe paddling in the Bay.



The Preterm Birth Initiative (PTBi) is a multi-year, transdisciplinary effort led by the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), and jointly funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Marc and Lynne Benioff.

Complications of preterm birth are the leading cause of death among children under five years worldwide. Over 15 million babies are born prematurely (before 37 weeks of pregnancy) each year, and nearly 1 million die within the first 28 days of life. Among survivors, many are at significant risk for short- and long-term morbidities.

Preterm birth is a complex syndrome caused by the interplay of multiple biological, social, and environmental factors. For women across the world, chronic stress and disempowerment are major drivers of preterm birth. In California, women of color who are economically disadvantaged are disproportionately affected by prematurity and poor birth outcomes.

The PTBi aims to contribute to the reduction of the burden of preterm birth in selected sites in Northern California, Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda. By taking a human-centered design approach that is driven by local context and community partners, the PTBi will focus on two specific long-term outcomes: the reduction of preterm birth rates, and the increased survival and wellbeing among babies born prematurely.

The PTBi is committed to aligning the best of discovery and implementation sciences in a transdisciplinary way to increase uptake of existing interventions, create new solutions, and better understand the nature of prematurity in mothers, newborns, and their communities. Two additional programs, Benioff Community Leaders and Benioff Global Scholars, will be announced at a later date.



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DAWN GANO MD, FRCP(C)

Dr. Dawn Gano is a pediatric neurologist who specializes in neonatal neurology. She obtained her undergraduate degree in Microbiology & Immunology from McGill University, and medical degree at McMaster University. She completed her residency in pediatric neurology at the University of British Columbia. Dawn pursued her fellowship training in neonatal neurology and a Master's degree in clinical research methodology at UCSF. During her fellowship, she developed an interest in brain-focused care for the fragile preterm newborn and neurodevelopmental follow-up of preterm newborns from infancy to adolescence. Her research focuses on the promotion of brain health in preterm newborns through the identification of modifiable risk factors for brain injury, abnormal brain development, and adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes. She is enthusiastic to be joining the UCSF Post-Doctoral Fellowship in Preterm Birth, and to develop new collaborations locally and globally. Her other areas of interest include reducing health disparities, public radio, travel, and taking her dog on urban hikes throughout San Francisco.

MELISSA MORGAN MD, MSc



Dr. Melissa Morgan is a Clinical Fellow in the UCSF Division of Neonatology. Her career goal is to become a leader in neonatal global health, performing research and transforming evidence into policy for neonates in low-income countries. She received a MSc in Global Health Science from Oxford University and a MD from University of Texas Houston. She completed her pediatric residency at UCSF as a participant in the Global Health Clinical Scholars Program.

Dr. Morgan's current fellowship research aims to determine the prevalence of hypoxemia and measure the efficacy of training nurses to provide tailored oxygen therapy to sick neonates at Pumwani Hospital, the largest maternity facility in Kenya. In 2013, Dr. Morgan received a UCSF Resource Allocation Program Global Health Policy Award to support this study. Dr. Morgan was a member of the PTBi Global Implementation Working Group during the 2014-2015 planning year. As a PTBi Fellow, she plans to investigate the effect of Kangaroo Care initiated within the first 24 hours of life on mortality in clinically unstable preterm infants.



JOSEPH WANGIRA MUSANA MB.ChB, M.Med (O/G), DIP-SRHR

Dr. Joseph Wangira Musana is a Full-Time Faculty and Senior Instructor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Aga Khan University in Nairobi, Kenya. He received his MB.ChB and M.Med degrees from the University of Nairobi and a diploma in sexual and reproductive health and rights from Lund University in Sweden. For the past six years, he has been involved in offering care to women with complex pregnancies in a specialized multi-disciplinary "One-Stop-Medical-Antenatal Clinic." He has also been building research collaborations—local, regional, and international—and has been involved in writing research grants and a publication of a review article on preterm birth in *The Maternal and Child Health Journal*. Dr. Musana lives in Nairobi, Kenya, with his wife, Margaret, and daughters, Barbara (13), Laura (8), and Elizabeth (3). Since his teenage days he has been a fan of the National Basketball Association (NBA), and he is glad that finally one of his childhood dreams has come true: "The possibility of watching a live NBA game!"