MEDICAL STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN UCSF FRESNO’S SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAM

FRESNO - Two medical students, Casey Fox and Jose-Rafeal Zuzuarregui, both from the San Joaquin Valley, were selected to take part in the UCSF Fresno Summer Research Program. The program provides medical students with an opportunity to work along side UCSF Fresno faculty members during the summer for eight weeks as they conduct research involving health issues significant to Valley residents. The students gain hands-on clinical research experience, and the potential exists for their work to be published in a medical journal.

UCSF Fresno faculty and residents are engaged in a broad spectrum of research, from clinical studies to basic sciences with an emphasis on improving health outcomes in high prevalence diseases such as asthma, diabetes, and other health issues unique to the Valley's diverse population.

"I am excited to have the opportunity to work with the excellent faculty at UCSF Fresno as well as experience their new home in Community Regional Medical Center," said Fox. "Clinical research is such an important aspect of medicine, enabling scientists to examine previously unquestioned practices and discover new, more effective treatments."

“My friends and family reside in the Fresno-Clovis area and I plan on returning to practice medicine here,” said Zuzuarregui. “Participating in this program offers an excellent chance to grow in my knowledge of issues facing the Central Valley patient population while spending quality time with my family.”

Fox is working with Brian Chinnock, MD, associate clinical professor of emergency medicine at UCSF Fresno. They will examine how ascitis, excess fluid in the abdominal area, is managed in patients with liver disease, and will consider the effectiveness of antibiotic treatments on patients’ health. The findings will present physicians with new information to help manage the condition in the future. Originally from Tollhouse, Fox completed his bachelor’s degree at California State University, Fresno and is a student at the Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Zuzuarregui is teaming up with Jerome Murphy, MD, an associate clinical professor in pediatrics at UCSF Fresno. They will analyze patient data to determine whether overweight youngsters have longer than average kidneys. This research will likely generate a new renal-length measurement curve specifically for overweight children and will help physicians implement appropriate treatment options when caring for children with large kidneys. After graduating from Buchanan High School in Clovis in 2002, Zuzuarregui earned his undergraduate degree at Stanford University. He is in his second year of medical school at Boston University School of Medicine.
Fox will perform his research duties at Community Regional Medical Center in the emergency department and Jose Zuzuarregui will work at Children’s Hospital Central California. Both students have access to the UCSF Fresno Center for Medical Education and Research for study time, data compilation and library services.

Each student will receive a $2,500 stipend for their eight weeks of work. Housing is also available to students, though students have the option of staying with friends or family in the area.

For more information, please contact Kasan Jones, program manager with the UCSF Fresno Office of Undergraduate Medical Education at (559) 499-6523 or kjones@fresno.ucsf.edu

UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program plays a substantial role in providing healthcare services to residents of California’s San Joaquin Valley and training medical professionals in the region. The medical education program has trained approximately one-third of Valley physicians currently practicing in one of the seven specialties in which it provides training. Since its inception more than 30 years ago, UCSF Fresno has graduated more than 2,000 resident physicians. UCSF Fresno faculty and medical residents care for the overwhelming majority of the area's underserved populations. The program currently trains about 200 medical residents, nearly 200 medical students and a number of fellows in cardiology, critical care, minimal invasive surgery, and pulmonary medicine. UCSF Fresno also provides academic preparation programs for middle- and high-school students interested in the health professions through the Doctor's Academy and Junior Doctor's Academy. UCSF Fresno is a key partner in the proposed UC Merced School of Medicine and will play a significant role in the training of medical students at the planned school.