

## U54 Hawai'i COMMUNITY OUTREACH CORE (COC) TEAM

### What is the U54 Community Outreach Core (COC)?

Since 2003, the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center (UHCC) and the University of Guam (UOG) have worked in partnership to explore the reasons behind significant cancer health disparities among Pacific Islanders in Hawai'i, Guam and the neighboring U.S. Associated Pacific Islands (USAPI). UHCC COC team members play a vital role in cultivating relationships between and among the U54 researchers, UOG partners, AND the community. The COC has access to the latest cancer information along with experience in cancer control, communications, outreach, and training. They, along with UOG COC team members, are a well-rounded team and work as the liaison among the U54 researchers, partners, and community to identify areas of need, and to develop, adapt, and disseminate health promotion/cancer education materials that are culturally tailored to Pacific Island Populations (PIP). The COC's long-term goal is to reduce barriers leading to cancer disparities in Guam and Hawai'i, specifically among Micronesians and Filipinos, to achieve health equity .

### The Specific Aims of the COC are to:

- 1) Provide an essential resource to the Pacific Island Partnership for Cancer Health Equity (PIPCHÉ) research projects and the Partnership.
- 2) Implement evidence-based cancer prevention outreach, resources, and promotion of PIPCHÉ research.
- 3) Assess the Partnership's capacity to design and implement culturally relevant research in Hawai'i and Guam.

### What is the role of the COC?

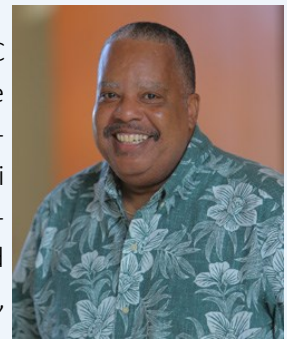
The Hawai'i COC team serves a threefold role: first, they serve as the liaison between the UHCC , UOG, and both communities; second, they develop and conduct community outreach activities to address and reduce the specific cancers and cancer health/education disparities in their communities; and third, they serve as a resource to help the research team to meet the goals of their research using community based participatory and community -engaged strategies. The work of the COC is designed to engage communities in the reduction of cancer disparities in incidence and mortality in the PIP groups of Hawai'i and Guam .

### What are the COC's research and community outreach activities?

- Assist in the planning and implementation of community education/outreach activities.
- Increase awareness and foster adoption of NCI research findings on cancer prevention, early detection, and treatments adapted for Pacific Islander and Filipino audiences/communities.
- Assess baseline information on community's health needs and resources, and share findings with the researchers and community.
- Develop an education/outreach plan to address local cancer health disparities.
- Disseminate culturally appropriate, evidence-based information and educational materials on cancer prevention and treatment.
- Use new and innovative social media technology to increase exposure of NCI messages to the community.
- Partner with community-based, civic, and faith-based organizations to extend the outreach and dissemination of cancer information and advances to underrepresented communities.
- Bring the community voice to the research enterprise.

## Who are part of the COC Team?

- Kevin Cassel, DrPH, MPH: Assistant Researcher of Epidemiology, serves as the UHCC COC Co-Leader and is directly involved in the leadership of Aim 2. He brings more than 24 years of extensive experience working with medically underserved communities in Hawai'i and the Pacific. He has been an active member of the Hawai'i Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition for over 19 years. Dr. Cassel has collaborated with many healthcare organizations and communities in Hawai'i and throughout the USAPI. He has participated as a Co-Investigator during the U54-2, leading work to address cancer related disparities within Hawai'i's communities. He also serves as a Co-Investigator for the U24 Indigenous Samoan Partnership to Initiate Research Excellent (INSPIRE), currently working to build research capacity in American Samoa. Dr. Cassel provides guidance towards achieving Aims 1, 2, and 3.



- Angela Sy, DrPH: Assistant Professor of Medicine (UHCC), Dr. Sy is a qualitative researcher who has worked extensively with Dr. Cassel on colorectal and cervical cancer as well as HPV immunization projects involving USAPI populations. Dr. Sy has had extensive research collaborations with Hawai'i's Filipino community through her ~10 years of work with the NCI-sponsored Asian American Network for Cancer Awareness Research and Training (AANCART). She works with the COC investigators to develop the FGD discussion guides, train community leaders and translators to facilitate FGD in-language, and assist with FGD and key informant analysis for Aim 1. Dr. Sy is of Filipino descent.



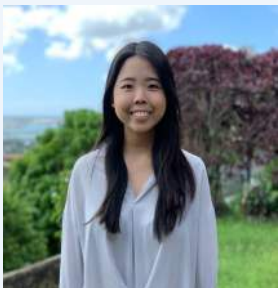
- Munirih Taafaki, MS: (UHCC), recently completed a MS in Biomedical Sciences with a focus on clinical and translational research. As part of her master's thesis, she conducted a pilot study funded by the Guam Cancer Trust Fund, which explored knowledge and attitudes of Guam residents towards cancer clinical trial participation. She has been part of an effort organized through PIPCHE and the UHCC to support the initiation of clinical trials on Guam. She serves as a Co-Investigator and provides support for Aim 3. Ms. Taafaki is of Tuvaluan descent.



- Mark L. Willingham, MS: Community Health Educator (CHE) with a Master's degree in Applied Criminology. Mark is a PhD student in the department of Sociology with a focus on Medical Sociology and Social Psychology. He has worked with Dr. Cassel for 4 years on projects ranging from Native Hawaiian and Micronesian health behaviors, practices, and information seeking to skin cancer detection utilizing artificial intelligence. He has years of experience working with non-majority communities and health disparities/inequalities analyzing social networks and ethnic identities.



- Alyssa Kameoka, BA: Research Associate with a Bachelor's degree in Neuroscience from Boston University is new to the COC having joined the team in July 2020. She has had previous research experience in women's health studies with the University of Hawaii JABSOM Department of OBGYN Division of Family Planning.



### Resources:

- Our website: <https://www.uhcancercenter.org/u54> , <http://u54.guamcrc.org/>
- UOG Cancer Research Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/uogcancerresearch](http://www.facebook.com/uogcancerresearch)
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
  - National Cancer Institute: [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

