



Message From the Director



John Kirwan, PhD
LA CaTS Center Executive Director,
Pennington Biomedical Research
Center

The LA CaTS Center held our Annual Retreat for Core Leaders in New Orleans alongside the Southern Society for Clinical Investigation (SSCI) 2026 Regional Meeting.

Our core leaders from across our six-institution statewide network came together to begin planning our NIH IDeA-CTR-N renewal. The engagement was exceptional; candid, strategic, and forward-looking. We left energized and excited about the future of the LA CaTS Center as we move into our next phase.

Thank you to Dr. Joey Granger, Director of the Mississippi Center for Clinical and Translational Research (MCCTR), for being our guest speaker and sharing invaluable lessons from the MCCTR. In the afternoon, the LA CaTS Center co-hosted a Joint Scientific Symposium as part of the 2026 Southern Regional Meeting with colleagues from the MCCTR and the Louisville IDeA-CTR programs, which showcased outstanding work from the next generation of clinical and translational investigators.

We are grateful to our partners for their participation and engagement in our annual meeting: LSU Health New Orleans, Tulane University, LSU Health Shreveport, Xavier University, Ochsner Health, and Pennington Biomedical Research Center.

Event Highlights

Attention Investigators

The Community Engagement & Outreach Core invites you to attend a special talk at the LA CaTS Center Baton Rouge Community Advisory Board Meeting on April 15, 2026.



LA CaTS Center Baton Rouge Community Advisory Board Meeting

Special community guest presentation:

"2024 CHNA and the 2025 Community Health Implementation Plans"



APRIL 15, 2026



◆ 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Guest speaker

Dr. Coletta C. Barrett

Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing
Southeastern Louisiana University (SLU)

**Pennington Biomedical Research Center
6400 Perkins Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
Room M4063**

Note: This meeting is open to community organization leaders & PBRC/LA CaTS Center that may be interested

A light lunch will be provided for the attendees

Please RSVP to Andrea Pickett | Andrea.Pickett@pbrc.edu
by **April 7, 2026**



[Register Now for Translational Science 2026](#)

NISBRE 2026



10th Biennial National IDeA Symposium of Biomedical Research Excellence (NISBRE) on June 14 - June 17, 2026, at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center in Rockville, Maryland.

For more information: <https://www.nisbre2026.com/>

[Register Now](#)



✦ NIH Updates ✦

NIH requires a new biosketch format using the federal "[Common Form](#)" via [SciENcv](#), necessitating ORCID IDs for all Senior/Key Personnel. The new format splits into a standardized Common Form (Positions, Prep) and a separate NIH Supplement (Personal Statement, Contributions).

Access the New NIH Biosketch Format [here](#).



LA CaTS Center Leadership Honors the Clinical Research Resources Team as "Core of the Year"



Left-Right: Paul Fidel, PhD (LSU Dental School), Eva Lustigova (Tulane University), Judd Shellito, MD (LSU Health NO), Steve Nelson, MD (LSU Health NO), David Welsh, MD (LSU Health NO), Frank Greenway, MD (Pennington Biomedical)

Not pictured: John Vanchiere, MD, PhD (LSU Health Shreveport), Charles Hemenway, MD, PhD (Manning Family Children's), Vivian Fonseca, MD (Tulane University)

[Get the inside story](#)

👏 National Spotlight-Community Engagement & Outreach Core 👏



Stephanie Broyles, PhD
Pennington Biomedical
Research Center



Andrea Pickett
Pennington Biomedical
Research Center

Dr. Stephanie Broyles, CEO Core Co-Director, and Andrea Pickett, CEO Program Coordinator, stepped forward to assume leadership of the **IDeA CTR Community Engagement Special Interest Group (SIG)**—demonstrating a strong commitment to service and leadership within the national IDeA CTR community.

The **IDeA-CTR Community Engagement Special Interest Group (SIG)** brings together Community Engagement and Outreach leaders from across the IDeA-CTR network to share best practices, align strategies, and strengthen community-engaged clinical and translational research across IDeA states.

N3C Reopening – Priority Access for Current Members



**National
Clinical
Cohort
Collaborative**

Reopening Details

When: Monday, March 2, 2026
Who: All current N3C community members
Access: <https://unite.nih.gov>
Instructions: [N3C Getting Restarted Guide](#)
Support: [N3C Support Desk](#)

HATS OFF TO OUR RESEARCHERS



Candida Rebello, PhD
Pennington Biomedical
Research Center

[Secured \\$3.7 Million NIH Grant](#)



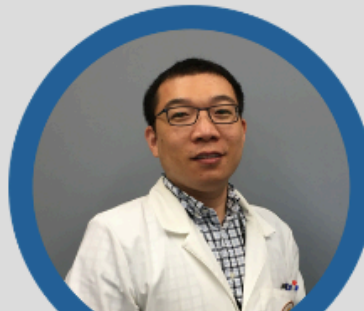
John Apolzan, PhD
Pennington Biomedical
Research Center

[Published Editorial in Leading American Heart
Association Journal \(Science X\)](#)



Crystal Zheng, MD
Tulane University

[SSCI Tinsley Harrison Scholar Award- 2026
Southern Regional Meeting](#)



Zhipin Liang, PhD
LSU Health New Orleans

[Awarded one-year seed funding from
Louisiana Cancer Research Center \(LCRC\)](#)



Erin Peacock, PhD
Tulane University

[SSCI Mentor of the Year in Student Category-
2026 Southern Regional Meeting](#)



Leanne Redman, PhD
Pennington Biomedical
Research Center

[Recruited to Lead the Charles Perkins Centre
at the University of Sydney](#)

LA CaTS Center's Participation in the 2026 SSCI Southern Regional Meeting



Behind the scenes

Shout-out to our Investigators!

2026 Poster Session



We're proud to recognize our investigators who represented the LA CaTS Center at the 2026 SRM by presenting posters that showcased innovative research, collaboration, and scientific impact.

Poster presentations are a vital part of advancing our field—sparking conversation, sharing new findings, and building connections across disciplines. The work highlighted at the 2026 SRM reflects the dedication, creativity, and expertise of our research community.

Professional Development Core 2026 Retreat & Plenary Talk



On March 13, 2026, the LA CaTS PD Core hosted their Annual Retreat for the Roadmap Scholars and their mentors in New Orleans. The plenary talk by Dr. Cliff Rosen, open to the public, was attended by over 200 attendees.

Get the scoop [HERE](#).

Catch the Replay on our PD Core's Plenary Talk



LA CaTS Professional Development Core Presents

"The Evolution of Parathyroid Hormone: Beyond Bone!"



Guest speaker
Clifford Rosen, MD

Director, Clinical and Translational Research
Maine Medical Center's Research Institute

This talk focuses on the evolution of the parathyroid hormone.

Funding & Training Opportunities



LA CaTS Grant Development Award Program supports investigators with sufficient preliminary data to support collaborative grant-writing teams. Awards are up to \$5,000 in total costs.

[More details](#)

Open enrollment until the maximum numbers of awards are met.



LA CaTS Visiting Scholars Program supports training opportunities for junior investigators to enhance skills or learn new technique. Awards are up to \$5,000 in total costs.

Open enrollment until the maximum numbers of awards are met.

[More details](#)



Short Experiences in Clinical Trials support junior investigators in clinical or translational research, and to link them with clinical trial mentors to assist their development in the field. Each award may be up to \$5,000 in total costs.

Open enrollment until the maximum numbers of awards are met.

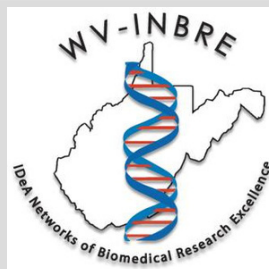
[More details](#)

Calendar of Events



[University of Alabama's 25th Annual Rural Health Conference: "AI Rural Resilience: Empowering Rural Healthcare"](#)

Apr 9, 2026
Birmingham, AL



[2026 IDeA State Cancer Trainee Research Conference](#)

Apr 13-15, 2026
Morgantown, WV



[LA CaTS Baton Rouge Community Advisory Board Meeting](#)

Apr 15, 2026
Baton Rouge, LA



[All of Us Science Day](#)

Apr 15, 2026

Virtual



[11th Annual LA CaTS Level 2 Coordinator Training](#)

Apr16, 2026

Baton Rouge, LA



[ACTS 2026 Translational Science \(TS26\)](#)

Apr20-23, 2026

Milwaukee, WI



[LA CaTS New Orleans Community Advisory Board Meeting](#)

May 1,2026

New Orleans, LA



[UAB CCTS: 2026 AI Summit](#)

May 4,2026

New Orleans, LA



[LA CaTS Roadmap Scholars Graduation Ceremony](#)

May 15,2026

New Orleans, LA



[National IDeA Symposium of Biomedical Research Excellence \(NISBRE\)](#)

Jun14-17, 2026

Bethesda, MD



[LA CaTS Baton Rouge Community Advisory Board Meeting](#)

Jul15, 2026

Baton Rouge, LA



[LA CaTS New Orleans Community Advisory Board Meeting](#)

Jul 24,2026

New Orleans, LA



[LA CaTS Baton Rouge Community Advisory Board Meeting](#)

Oct14, 2026

Baton Rouge, LA



[LA CaTS New Orleans Community Advisory Board Meeting](#)

Oct 23,2026

New Orleans, LA

[See full calendardetails](#)

Recent Publications

[Validity of the PortionSize App for Assessing Children's Dietary Intake: Results From a Pilot Study Conducted in Controlled and Free-Living Settings.](#)

Saha S, Diktas HE, Lozano CP, Staiano AE, Broyles ST, Apolzan JW, Martin CK. *Pediatr Obes*. 2026 Mar;21(3):e70102.

[Relationships Among Activity ,Motor SkillPerformance and Executive Function in Preschool Children: Observational Report.](#)

Button AM, Abbenante E, Beyl R, Webster EK, Okely A, Staiano AE. *Child Care Health Dev*. 2026 Mar;52(2):e70263.

[Trends and risk factors of hypertension in US Children and Adolescents, 1999-2023.](#)

Ouyang D, Cao W, Shen Y, Chen L, Hu G. *J Hum Hypertens*. 2026 Feb;40(2):118-126. doi: 10.1038/s41371-025-01102-9.

[Dietary Protein Restriction Ameliorates Cardiac Inflammaging via AMPK-ULK1-Mediated Mitochondrial Quality Control.](#)

Dantas WS, Zunica ERM, Heintz EC, Hoppel CL, Hill CM, Morrison CD, Axelrod CL, Davuluri G, Kirwan JP. *Agıng Cell*. 2026 Feb;25(2):e70386.

[Medication Adherence in the Glycemia Reduction Approaches in Diabetes: A Comparative Effectiveness Study \(GRADE\).](#)

Gonzalez JS, Wen H, Butera NM, Uschner D, Krause-Steinrauf H, Gramzinski MR, Wexler DJ, Petrovitch H, Hoogendoorn CJ, Crespo-Ramos G, Presley C, Fattaleh B, Lagari V, Walker EA, Cherrington AL; GRADE Research Group*. *Diabetes Care*. 2026 Feb 1;49(2):335-343.

[Family, social, and built environment: examining associations with physical activity and sedentary time in adolescents](#)

Suárez-Reyes M, Button AM, Beyl RA, Katzmarzyk PT, Staiano AE. . *Front Sports Act Living*. 2026;8:1709140.

[Interleukin-6 blockade does not impair exercise-induced glucose uptake and insulin sensitivity in rheumatoid arthritis.](#)

Casale AR, Lemes ÍR, Smaira FI, Astley C, Oliveira-Junior G, de Sá Pinto AL, de Medeiros-Ribeiro AC, Godoy-Santos AL, Lima M, Carneiro CG, Buchpiguel CA, Dantas WS, Axelrod CL, Javadi P, Ghosh S, Kirwan JP, Roschel H, Gualano B. *Am J Physiol Endocrinol Metab*. 2025 Dec 1;329(6):E849-E860.

[Long-term impact of newly-proposed clinical obesity on autoimmune disease incidence: insights from the UK Biobank.](#)

Xu M, Li M, Zhang Y, Li L, Shen Y, Hu G. *Int J Obes (Lond)*. 2026 Mar;50(3):558-567.

[Differential Longitudinal Effects of Glucose-Lowering Medications on Glucagon and C-peptide Responses in the Glycemia Reduction Approaches in Diabetes: A Comparative Effectiveness Study \(GRADE\).](#)

Kahn SE, Tripputi M, Lachin JM, Balasubramanyam A, Banerji MA, Barzilay J, Cohen RM, Garvey WT, Gramzinski MR, Rasouli N, Rhee M, Seegmiller JC, Singh V, Sivitz WI, Steffes MW, Utzschneider K, DeFronzo RA; GRADE Research Group*. *Diabetes Care*. 2026 Feb 1;49(2):325-334.

[Handgrip Strength and Trajectories of Preclinical Obesity Progression: A Multistate Model Analysis Using the UK Biobank.](#)

Xu M, Li M, Zhang Y, Li L, Shen Y, Hu G. J Clin Endocrinol Metab. 2026 Feb 20;111(3):e746-e757.

[Longitudinal analysis of body compositions following Roux-en-Y gastric bypass.](#)

Nor Hanipah Z, de O Lemos G, Ramirez S, Dhulipala VSNAK, Popuri K, Beg MF, Yang S, R Schauer P, L Albaugh V, B Heymsfield S. Langenbecks Arch Surg. 2026 Feb 21;411(1):86.

[Weight change mediates the effect of lifestyle intervention on postpartum diabetes in women with prior gestational diabetes: a secondary analysis of a randomized clinical trial.](#)

Li W, Liu H, Feng L, Wang L, Zhang S, Li W, Liu G, Leng J, Shen Y, Gao R, Zhu Y, Yang X, Yu Z, Hu G. BMC Med. 2026 Jan 21;24(1):97.

[Zero Dollar Copay Pharmacy Benefit Decreases Healthcare Expenditures Among Members With Type 2 Diabetes of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana.](#)

Tang T, Stoecker C, Winberg D, Liu M, Nauman E, Cong M, Price-Haywood E, Mohundro BL, Bazzano AN, Shi L; Louisiana Experiment Assessing Diabetes Outcomes (LEAD)-ZDC Working Group. Value Health. 2025 Dec;28(12):1835-1842.

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[A mixed-methods investigation of race, income, food insecurity and maternal and infant health.](#)

Dickey MS, Goynes KO, Kracht CL, Jones B, Simeon E, Butler J, Kebbe M, Shen Y, Hu G, Harville EW, Sutton EF, Redman LM. Public Health Nutr. 2026 Feb 2;29(1):e36.

[Validity of the PortionSize and MyFitnessPal Smartphone Applications for Estimating Dietary Intake: A Randomized Crossover Clinical Trial.](#)

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[Household Food Insecurity Is Associated With Higher Adiposity Over Time Among Adolescents in Louisiana.](#)

Fenton A, Staiano AE, Celestin M, Ferguson T, Myers CA, Tseng TS, Broyles ST. Pediatr Obes. 2026 Feb;21(2):e70084.

[HIV Status and COVID-19 Treatment Disparities in the US National Clinical Cohort Collaborative.](#)

Essam Nkodo EN, Maheria P, Hurwitz E, Anzalone AJ, Li D, Islam JY, Sun J, Varley CD, Butzin-Dozier Z, Safo SE, Kirksey K, Hassan SA, Camacho-Rivera M, Patel RC, Fadul N. Open Forum Infect Dis. 2026 Jan 15;13(1):ofaf731.

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Zhou H, Abdulnour-Nakhoul S, Hamm LL, Nakhoul NL. J Physiol. 2026 Mar;604(5):2302-2335.

[Effect of a Pragmatic eHealth Behavioral Gestational Weight Gain Intervention on Household Chaos in Pregnant People of Lower Socioeconomic Status: Randomized Controlled Trial.](#)

Kracht CL, Falkenhain K, Flanagan EW, Altazan AD, Cabre HE, Kebbe M, Woolf EK, Beyl R, Hsia DS, Apolzan JW, Redman L. JMIR Ment Health. 2026 Jan 8;13:e74146.

[Biological Mechanisms of Strength Preservation During Calorie Restriction-Induced Weight Loss Among Young- to Middle-Aged Adults without Obesity.](#)

Moore N, Bareja A, Ross LM, Collins-Bennett KA, Racette SB, Redman LM, Martin CK, Das SK, Kraus WE, Huffman KM. bioRxiv [Preprint]. 2026 Jan 30:2026.01.29.702632.

[Improving Assessment of Vaccine Effectiveness by Coupling Test-Negative Design Studies with Survival Models.](#)

Song S, Hitchings M, Yang Y, Longini IM Jr. medRxiv [Preprint]. 2026 Feb 21:2025.11.30.25341323.

[Zero Dollar Drug Copay program improves antidiabetic medication adherence and medication use patterns among Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana members with diabetes in Louisiana.](#)

Tang T, Stoecker C, Winberg D, Cong M, Liu M, Nauman E, Shen Y, Hu G, Shao H, Li J, Bazzano AN, Price-Haywood E, Mohundro BL, Ouyang J, Carby M, Shi L. BMJ Open Diabetes Res Care. 2026 Jan 20:14(1):e005146.

[Predictors of Redemption among Low-Income, Pregnant Women, Infants, and Children Participants: A Secondary Analysis of a Multicomponent eHealth Behavioral Intervention Study.](#)

Falkenhain K, Flanagan EW, Cabre HE, Kracht CL, Apolzan JW, Redman LM. J Nutr. 2026 Feb 17;156(4):101421.

[Strategies and challenges for the recruitment of young healthy participants in the dietary approaches to longevity and health \(DiAL health\) pilot trial.](#)

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[Gestational diabetes and life course cardiometabolic health in an American Indian cohort: The Strong Heart Study.](#)

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[Consensus spectral clustering with weighted similarity functions for single-cell RNA sequencing data.](#)

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