

SOUTHERN CA BURN MODEL SYSTEM Quarterly Newsletter



Happy Holidays!

The Southern California Burn Model System (SCBMS) wants to wish everyone a joyous and healthy holiday season.

As we reflect on 2024, the SCBMS is grateful to the multi-disciplinary burn unit team from the Los Angeles General Medical Center, for the continued support and everything they do for the patients in the burn unit (page 4 to “Meet Our Nurses”). To our collaborative partners, including The Wellness Center (page 3), thank you for connecting the patients in the burn unit with free community resources throughout the year.

This has been a defining year for our research team with several accomplishments that include: (1) the successful completion of our 2nd year as a Burn Model System, (2) presenting in the American Burn Association annual meeting on topics like, “Engaging with the Teenage Burn Survivor,” and “Redefining Burn Disability: Current Challenges and New Concepts,” (3) seven published manuscripts in the past three months, (4) head lining the filming of the Hot Topic video “Returning to School After a Burn Injury” available in 2025, and (5) the development of the “Laser Therapy for Burn Scars” factsheet from Dr. Yenikomshian and other collaborations.

As we close 2024, we open 2025 with great excitement with projects that will bring meaningful contributions for the burn community. To learn more about our SCBMS projects, and to contact our team, visit our website www.scbms.usc.edu

Enjoy our Winter Edition newsletter and see you next year!



Our Team:

- **Dr. Haig Yenikomshian,**
Project Director, Associate
Professor of Plastic Surgery
- **Dr. Sarah A. Stoycos,**
Clinical Psychologist, Assistant
Professor of Clinical Psychiatry &
Behavioral Sciences at USC,
Keck School of Medicine
- **Marientina Gotsis,**
MFA, Professor of Cinematic
Practice at the Interactive Media
& Games at the USC School of
Cinematic Arts
- **Elizabeth Flores,**
Project & Research Coordinator
- **Elizabeth Mojarro-Huang,**
Research Coordinator

Sarah Stoycos, PhD

Clinical Psychologist, Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry and the Behavioral Sciences, Co-Investigator on BMS



Dr. Stoycos is a clinical psychologist who specializes in working with clients who have experienced a traumatic injury or burn and are experiencing symptoms of traumatic stress or changes in their mood and functioning.

Dr. Stoycos joined the LA General Burn Center's attending staff 1.5 years ago as our first-ever Burn Unit Psychologist, with the goal of building comprehensive mental health services for hospitalized and outpatient burn patients and their loved ones given the impact of emotional and mental health on physical recovery and community reintegration. Currently, services are still being developed and implemented, working towards universal mental health screening and referral to services for both hospitalized patients and outpatients.

As part of her commitment to improving overall burn care and advocating for increased mental health resources for patients who have experienced burns,

she conducts research examining posttraumatic stress and depression after traumatic injury, is a co-Investigator for our Burn Model System Site, and works with national organizations on several initiatives related to improving research, clinical practice, and access to mental health care for individuals who have experienced a burn injury.

The following are examples of the publications Dr. Stoycos has contributed as Co-Author:

- "Single and Unhoused Population at Risk for Self-Inflicted Burn Injury: A Retrospective Analysis of an Urban American Burn Center's Experience"
- "Rare but Relevant: Characterizing Self-Inflicted Burn Injuries in the United States"
- "A Scoping Review of PTSD and Depression in Adult Burn Patients: A Call for Standardized Screening and Intervention Research"

The Wellness Center



The Wellness Center is a one-stop shop destination for health and wellness. Patients can connect to services and/or participate in healthy activities for FREE.

On November 1st, 2024, we hosted our yearly Movie Night for families to congregate while enjoying the Disney movie, Coco. We had a health fair, petting zoo, Folklorico dancers, and a performance by students from Bravo Medical Magnet High School jazz band. We provided complimentary popcorn and champurrado during the movie. More than 200+ community members and 20 exhibitors attended our event, including the Los Angeles General Medical Center Regional Burn Unit.

Additionally, every year for Thanksgiving, we nominate families to receive a turkey and additional help to celebrate a nice meal with their family members. This year, we nominated three families from the burn unit to receive a turkey, gift card, and groceries. In addition, we served a total of 49 families with fresh fruits and vegetables, turkey, and/or gift cards. Based on the count of each family size, it was concluded that roughly 172 individuals benefited from this assistance.

On December 13, 2024 we hosted our Annual Posada celebration that included the distribution of hundreds of toys, dinner for those in attendance, and other fun activities. We had over 500 in attendance from various communities!

Upcoming events and new programming include:

- Hybrid Burn Support Group every Wednesday at 2:30 PM
- Fresh and Healthy food vouchers (please contact our office to see if you qualify)



For more information, call
(213)784-9191 or visit
www.thewellnesscenterla.org

Meet Our Nurses



Mary Malloy,
Registered Nurse, CCRN



When I was a little kid, all I ever wanted to do was to be like my mom. My mom was a L.A. County nurse. She trained and worked at our historic general hospital; she was my superhero. I made it my goal to train and work at the same place. Upon completion of my nursing training, I was recruited by a highly respected nurse to the Burn Center.

I couldn't wait to share the news with my mom. "Hey mom, my future chosen path of nursing is The Burn Unit!" She said, "WOW," and told me that I had picked the most challenging unit in the hospital to work.

My first days on the Burn Unit were very daunting. Those early years of learning this burn specialty were intense. I learned from the best as all staff took me under their wing, teaching and mentoring. What impressed me the most with our Burn Unit was the high caliber staff, their strong work ethic, and professionalism. I especially appreciated the multidisciplinary approach to patient care where all staff is focused to provide the best individualized burn care.

We do such great important work at our burn center. Not only do we save lives, we help people get back to their life. To be a part of this dynamic is incredibly rewarding. It is a true honor and privilege to be a part of this dedicated and talented Burn Team. I love the work, as intense and challenging it is, there is never a dull moment.

The burn unit turned out to be the perfect fit for me as I continue to live the dream as a L.A. County nurse. Now, I'm about to start my 38th year of burn nursing. I am grateful that I'm still strong and healthy enough to do so. I wouldn't have it any other way.



Samantha Lai,
Registered Nurse

Hi, I'm Sam Lai, one of the new grad nurses in Burns! I became a nurse in honor of my grandmother, who was a public health nurse and nurse educator at Glendale Community College. I first got a glimpse of the unit when I was at CONAH, the County's nursing school. I was able to spend a few days in Burns during my pediatric and ICU rotations, and since then, I knew this was where I wanted to work. Participating in dressing changes was such a unique experience and I loved the holistic approach for each patient. I'm very excited to continue to learn and provide excellent patient care in such an amazing place!

Resources for the Burn Community

Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC)

Website: www.msktc.org

Email: msktc@air.org



Children's Burn Foundation (CBF)

Mailing Address:

5000 Van Nuys Boulevard, Suite #210
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Contact Numbers:

(818) 907-2822

Website: www.childburn.org

Email: info@childburn.org

Social Media: @childrensburnfoundation

Phoenix Society

Mailing Address:

525 Ottawa Ave. NW, FRNT
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Contact Numbers:

(800) 888-2876/
(616) 458-2773

Website: www.phoenix-society.org

Email: info@phoenix-society.org

Social Media: @phoenixsociety

Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation (AARBF)

Southern CA Region:

Mailing Address:

44 Montgomery Street,
3rd floor, San Francisco, CA 94104

Contact Numbers:

Toll Free: (800) 242- BURN/
(818) 848-0223 ext. 130

Website: www.aarbf.org

Email: mbanks@aarbf.org

Social Media: @aarbf