



Cardiovascular Wellness Program

Four Pillars of Health
Physical fitness
Healthy nutrition
Mindfulness
Social Connections



Program Staff

Medical Director

Radhika Nandur Bukkapatnam, M.D.

Dr. Nandur Bukkapatnam has served as the medical director of the Cardiovascular Wellness Program since 2015. She actively participates with the program and provides at least one educational seminar each month.

Her Philosophy of Care:

“I believe in taking time to explain to the patient, the scientific basis of each cardiovascular condition, so the patient has a better understanding and invests in their own health. I believe in prevention of cardiovascular illnesses and by encouraging a partnership with the patient, help them build a sustainable plan for prevention. I strongly believe in hope, and in this era of cutting edge medicine, empower my patients so they can better control their cardiovascular conditions.”



She has clinical practices at UCDavis, with schedules in Folsom and at UC Davis in the Ambulatory Care Center.



Javier López, M.D.

Medical Director, UC Davis Cardiac Rehabilitation Program

Dr. López has long-standing involvement with the Sac State Wellness Program, sending clients over from UC Davis when they have graduated from their cardiac rehab program. He is also an active member our teaching program. He brings in grant connections and his passion for preventive cardiology bolsters our program. He has varied research interests, including a lab at UC Davis where he studies how cardiovascular genes and body organs interact using PET imaging and also community-based health promotion.

Linda Paumer, MA, Program Coordinator

Linda has served as the coordinator for the Wellness Center since its inception in late 2013. Retired after 30 years as an exercise physiologist with the UC Davis cardiac rehabilitation program, she brings a depth of knowledge regarding exercise training for older adults as well as organizational and communication skills. She now serves as a lecturer in the Sac State gerontology program and uses those organizational skills to coordinate well-balanced activities for both the older adult program participants and the undergraduate interns doing field placement with the program.

**Debbie Lucas, RD**

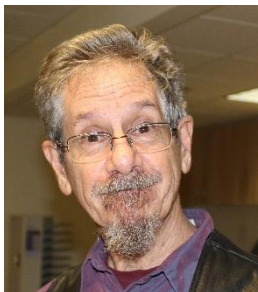
Debbie has been involved with the Wellness Program since its inception and has developed a robust plant-based eating education program. She sets the tone for healthful eating and is always interested in helping groups and individuals meet their dietary needs. She has a 20+ history at UC Davis with the Coronary Heart Disease Reversal and then Preventive Cardiology Programs. She ended her working career as a diabetes educator with Sutter Roseville. Her enthusiasm and compassion are valued additions to our program.

**Mary Sheikh**

Mary calls herself our “Mother Hen” and she is a vital force during our exercise training sessions. She watches over every participant and also helps keep students on track. She retired from UC Davis after a 30+ career as an EKG and pacemaker technician so those with heart rhythm issues should be on notice to be aware she’ll know!

David Sady

David started with our program at its inception when he gave his dad rides to our classes. He has engrained himself as a vital member of our staff now, leading Tai Chi sessions, being an all-around handyman (he fixes everything!) and also giving guitar lessons to those interested. We value his involvement greatly.

**Sharon Myers, RN**

Sharon joined our staff spring semester 2023 and her warmth and depth of knowledge are a huge boon to our program. She has a 30+ year history of nursing at UC Davis, working in Preventive Cardiology with the rest of this team and then finishing her career as a consulting heart failure nurse. She is adding significantly to our teaching program, bringing in elements of behavior and health that are greatly appreciated.





Cari Shulkin RN

Cari has been a great asset to our staff, retiring from UC Davis July 2024 after a 25+ year career in Preventive Cardiology. She served as a health educator and tobacco treatment specialist for many of those years, and can claim responsibility for helping hundreds of people become non-smokers.

She has been involved with the Wellness Program since its inception in 2013, and has been a big part of the teaching program, from general health education to enhancing community skills, and also playing brain games with us.



Julie Harvey, RN

Julie teaches first-semester nursing students and brings an energetic, positive personality to the classroom. With an athletic background and 16 years of nursing experience in critical care, she is passionate about helping students build confidence and succeed in clinical practice. She leads a popular glutes and core class on Fridays to promote healthy aging backs and building strength.



Cynthia Wright, RN

Cynthia is a retired GI nurse from UC Davis and a traveling companion of Cari's. She fills in whenever she can and adds strength and professionalism to our staff.



Sandy Pon, RN

Sandy comes to us from the Betty Moore graduate nursing program at UC Davis and she is a former faculty member of the Sac State nursing program. She also fills in whenever she can and we are blessed to have her help generally ~ once/month.

Linda Goode LCSW

Linda is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and a Graduate School Alumni from CSUS School of Social Work. She has had the privilege of working with clients for more than 20 years in various healthcare and community settings. Linda joined us in 2025, contributing to the Psychosocial Wellness portion of the program, and adds educational talks monthly with tips to improve mental wellness. She enjoys working with individuals, empowering them with information, resources and educational tips to improve their mental well



being. Additionally, she enjoys working with students entering the healthcare and social work fields.

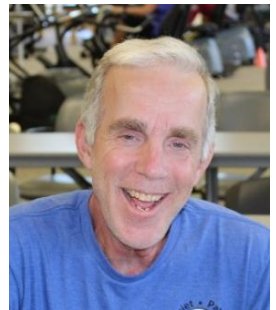


Linda Larsen, RN

Linda currently gives monthly active yoga/mindfulness practice classes for the Wellness Program, coming from UC Davis with a 10+ year history in Preventive Cardiology. Her philosophy: *“My ongoing goal is to provide evidenced based mindfulness tools necessary to end the reign of heart disease being the leading cause of death in the U.S. Research has shown that a regular practice of moment-to-moment mindfulness gives people the necessary tools to reduce their risk of heart disease as well as enhance their well-being. To this end, I provide evidence-based, positive, professional and courteous service.*

Robin Mitchell, RN (former)

Rob was part of the CSUS nursing faculty when we first came back from the pandemic until 2026. We were blessed to have a small percentage of his time to help with our program. He has a long history as a neuro nurse and currently teaches both at CSUS and also with the Betty Moore graduate nursing program at UC Davis. He was a big part of our teaching program and he has added considerable depth to our health library.



Dianne Hyson, Ph.D.

Dianne is important part of our past and our future as a program. She was the dean of SSIS and fundamental in getting us a presence in Folsom Hall. She is now semi-retired, serving as a continued liaison for our program to administrative operations. She has a mission of creating a sustainability plan that will keep of program viable into perpetuity.

Student Assistant Staff

Tim Nguyen (former)

Tim has a long history with our program, starting his 2nd year at CSUS and continuing for 3 years after he graduated. He was terrific in the kitchen and sorely missed. He graduated in 2020 and finally got a “big-boy” job with the Sacramento County Dept Public Health in 2023.



Ryan Uchi (former)

Ryan was with us during the pandemic and thanks to COVID money helped us learn that a paid student assistant is a important part of our program management. He brought our webpage up-to-date and did valuable data management; he graduated in 2020.



Marilou Ruiz (former)

Marilou not only kept up with the administration details Ryan got started, but she also was a huge asset leading some of our resistance exercise sessions. She graduated in 2023 and is indeed missed..



Ivan Starovoytov (former)

We had a mantra -- “TGFI – Thank Goodness for Ivan.” He kept the webpage up-to-date, did data entry, and was tremendously helpful with our Zoom presence and other IT needs. He graduated 2024, and is sorely missed.



Leanne Dawson (former)

Leanne took over from Ivan in fall 2024 semester. She graduated with a gerontology major Fall 2025. She continues now as a paid program assistant and we are so grateful for her work horse ethic and dedication to our proram.



Mikelle Fernandez (current)

Our current student assistant is Mikelle Fernandez. She will continue with the webage and data management and we are very appreciative of her artistic talents.

