

**CURRENT FUNDING PRIORITIES**

**Recruitment and Retention of Research Scientists .....\$65,000-\$135,000 annually**

The growth of the program depends on the continued research and educational activities of the lab’s junior and senior reproductive scientists, whose annual salaries are \$62,000 and \$135,000 respectively.

**Laboratory Support .....\$35,000 annually  
Equipment .....\$87,500**

The WRHRP’s ongoing research requires funding for lab materials (\$35,000 annually) and additional equipment, such as 3D ultrasound machine (\$65,000), PCR thermal cycler (\$20,000), and computer/printer (\$2,500).

**Administrative Infrastructure .....\$72,500 annually**

The program’s efficiency depends on administrative support, including a full-time administrative coordinator (at an annual salary of \$68,000) and consultant who will evaluate and monitor the program (a \$2,500 annual fee). The cost of travel for the program’s senior scientist to present his findings at an annual conference will also be covered out of the administrative budget (\$2,000 per year).

**Student Education .....\$60,000 annually**

The cost of training a student in the lab over a two-year interval is \$10,000, which covers lab materials, conference travel for presentations, publication costs, book supplies, and parking. At any one time there will be six students engaged in training.

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*I am fortunate to be one of Dr. Dumesic’s patients. He is the fifth doctor I saw on my journey to getting properly diagnosed and treated—there will not be a sixth! In addition to his incredible understanding of PCOS, Dr. Dumesic is kind, thoughtful, and patient. Thanks to his insight and care, I have been symptom-free and feeling like myself again for the past seven years. I cannot imagine a more supportive, brilliant physician and UCLA is lucky to have him at the helm of the Women’s Reproductive Health Research Program. — Patient*

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**HOW YOU CAN HELP**



With increasing awareness that women’s healthcare constitutes the highest priority, the WRHRP seeks to secure ongoing staff, resources, and program funding to continue advancing clinical care for women through leading-edge research and education of the next generation of physician-scientists committed to women’s health.

The WRHRP at UCLA depends on private philanthropy to be able to offer research training to undergraduates and advance women’s healthcare through leading-edge investigations and patient care. The program invests in human capital in two ways:

- By introducing students to women’s health research early in their careers so as to develop specialists with lifelong commitment to this field
- By creating a home for women’s reproductive health research as a powerhouse for the future of medicine

Visionary donors can help the WRHRP build on UCLA’s expertise and state-of-the-art resources, grow the program, and make it sustainable by creating a long-term pipeline of physician-scientists working to improve women’s health and well-being.

If you would like more information or to make a donation to support WRHRP, please contact:  
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**WOMEN’S  
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH  
RESEARCH PROGRAM  
AT UCLA**



Women’s Healthcare:  
A Time for Change

[obgyn.ucla.edu/wrhrp](http://obgyn.ucla.edu/wrhrp)

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## WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH RESEARCH PROGRAM AT UCLA

Women's healthcare is a top priority in today's society. A woman's physical and emotional health, reproductive fulfillment, and self-esteem affect her ability to achieve her personal and professional aspirations. A woman's welfare, in turn, influences that of her family and those connected with her.



**Daniel Dumesic, M.D.**, Professor of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, is a world leader in women's reproductive issues who treats the most complicated cases. In 2013, he founded the Women's Reproductive Health Research Program (WRHRP) at UCLA with the goal of enhancing women's lives by providing them with the highest level of care through leading-edge research and education of the next generation of specialists in the field.

The WRHRP conducts multidisciplinary clinical and scientific investigations, with a particular focus on polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), the most common hormone disorder affecting women of reproductive age. PCOS impacts six to 10 percent of women in the United States. Characterized by excess ovarian production of the male hormone testosterone, it impacts fertility; leads to obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease; and affects woman's psychological well-being. The annual economic burden of treating PCOS-related issues—including diabetes, menstrual problems, and infertility—amounts to billions of dollars, not counting pregnancy-related complications and quality-of-life concerns.

Currently, **healthcare for women with PCOS falls far short.** In a recent worldwide survey, 34 percent of respondents had their diagnosis delayed by more than two years and 47 percent saw three or more doctors before their diagnosis was confirmed. Common problems faced by women with PCOS include:

- continued and uncontrolled weight gain, often despite proper diet and exercise (54 percent)
- irregular menses (51 percent)
- infertility (45 percent)
- excessive hair growth (39 percent)

Yet, of the 630 members of the American Society of Reproductive Medicine and/or the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, 28 percent did not know what criteria should be used to diagnose PCOS, and only 41 percent used proper standards. Less than 20 percent of physicians evaluate PCOS women for diabetes or lipid abnormalities, and medical schools devote less than 10 percent of their curriculum to reproductive disorders.

### WHY SUPPORT THE WRHRP AT UCLA

UCLA is an ideal setting for advancing research and developing new treatment options because of the institution's multidisciplinary resources: its outstanding specialists in a wide range of medical fields; the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, ranked No. 4 in primary care and No. 8 in research by the latest *U.S. News and World Report* survey; and several affiliated hospitals, where discoveries made in the university's laboratories are translated into therapies for patients. The WRHRP is uniquely positioned to improve women's healthcare through its combination of research, clinical care, and education. The program's students and future physician-scientists are making crucial advances in treating women with PCOS by understanding and minimizing their risk of pregnancy complications, and optimizing the long-term health of their offspring.

### Research

Dr. Dumesic's research suggests that certain preventable diseases affecting women, particularly those that worsen during pregnancy, could have adverse long-term effects on their children (a phenomenon called "transgeneration effects"). This transformative discovery gives the doctors an opportunity to improve the mother's health before she conceives so that she can give birth to a healthy baby. Such revolutionary approach to family planning, involving screening for problems and their timely treatment, offers great promise for significantly improved women's healthcare.

Equally important, Dr. Dumesic's latest research shows that abdominal stem cells from normal-weight, healthy PCOS women develop into fat cells that contain excess fat, which could explain why some PCOS women do not readily burn fat and gain weight despite diet and exercise. These findings set the stage for new directions in healthcare for women, focused on personalized medical strategies for preventing

weight gain from starting in adolescence and continuing throughout a woman's life.

### Clinical Care

Dr. Dumesic is an internationally renowned specialist in women's reproductive health in general and PCOS in particular. He treats the most difficult and high risk cases that could not be helped elsewhere. In addition to his expertise, the highly trained physicians at the UCLA OBGYN Clinic offer patients an interdisciplinary approach to both primary care designed for individual patients and specialty consultations in such areas as family planning, reproduction, pregnancy, oncology, urogynecology, and menopause. Further improvements in medical care will require rigorous clinical studies so that women can benefit from the latest research and innovative therapies.

### Education

Developing the next generation of specialists in women's healthcare is a vital part of the WRHRP. The program offers individualized training in science and medicine to students interested in exploring careers as physicians and/or scientists and learning the highest standards of research in women's reproductive health. Since the program's inception in 2013, participating students have:

- published 15 peer-reviewed papers
- given 24 regional, national, or international presentations
- received three awards

Nurturing future physicians and scientists is vital to improving healthcare for women. Physician-scientists comprise an ever-decreasing number of medical doctors (less than two percent); as this specialist workforce ages and retires, it is not being replaced at the rate necessary to sustain crucial research. Between 2006 and 2015 the number of grant applications for PCOS research submitted to the National Institutes of Health—the largest single funding agency in the world—has decreased by more than 40 percent.

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*If I had not joined Dr. Dumesic's lab, I doubt that I would be even considering the medical profession. He teaches with a passion and a patience that inspires confidence in all of his students, and equips them with the skills and experiences necessary to build their resumes and stand out among their peers. Every single thing/experience that I learned/had in Drs. Dumesic and Chazenbalk's lab I still use every day and plan to use for the rest of my career. — Erica Keller, Duke University Physician's Assistant Program*  
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