

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Provide the following information for the Senior/key personnel and other significant contributors. Follow this format for each person. **DO NOT EXCEED FIVE PAGES.**

NAME: Wayne Kepner

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login): N/A

POSITION TITLE: Postdoctoral Fellow; Stanford Medicine

EDUCATION/TRAINING *(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)*

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE <i>(if applicable)</i>	Start Date MM/YYYY	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)	B.A.	09/2006	05/2017	History
San Diego State University (SDSU)	MPH	09/2018	05/2020	Health Promotion and Behavioral Science
University of California San Diego (UCSD)	PhD	09/2020	June 2024	Interdisciplinary Research on Substance Use
Stanford University	T-32 Postdoctoral Fellowship	06/2024		Interdisciplinary Research on Pain and/or Substance Use

A. Personal Statement

I am Postdoctoral fellow at Stanford Medicine’s Interdisciplinary Research on Pain and/or Substance Use T-32 postdoctoral program, and my research is focused on managing chronic conditions among vulnerable populations with substance use disorder (SUD). My work primarily focuses on substance use, recovery science, and public health, with a strong emphasis on integrating diverse methodologies – from qualitative analysis to sophisticated data science techniques. My personal lived experience as an individual in long-term recovery from opioid use disorder has served as a catalyst for my dedication to this field and provides me with a unique, empathetic perspective that enriches my research. My personal experience and academic expertise position me uniquely to contribute to the T32 training program, where I aim to develop innovative, evidence-based strategies that address the complex and personalized nature of SUDs.

My doctoral research under the mentorship of physician scientists (Dr. Alison Moore, Dr. Benjamin Han, and Dr. Carla Marienfeld) has provided me experience about the clinical and health services aspects of substance use among diverse populations, including older adults and those living with HIV. This experience has been instrumental in shaping my approach to the practical application of research findings in clinical settings. My involvement in various research projects, from analyzing the discussion of cannabis use in primary care settings to examining methamphetamine use among those living with HIV, reflects my interests in health services research among individuals who use substances. Crucially, this work has also involved elements of dissemination and implementation science, emphasizing the translation of research findings into actionable, evidence-based practices and policies.

Finally, in my dissertation, titled "Delivering Harm Reduction Interventions for Middle-Aged and Older Adults within Opioid Treatment Programs in San Diego County," I address the growing issue of OUD in older adults. My research specifically examines the lack of harm reduction services and tailored strategies for those 55 and older. Through a mixed-methods approach, I evaluate the knowledge of harm reduction in this population and

assess the feasibility and acceptability of implementing tailored interventions and care models within opioid treatment programs (OTPs). My study innovatively highlights the urgent need for age-appropriate harm reduction services especially among those with chronic conditions which aligns with the T32 programs emphasis on health disparities.

My academic journey thus far has been characterized by a passionate desire to improve the physical/mental health and treatment outcomes of those with SUDs. My personal lived experience with OUD has served as a guiding force for my research, and I continue to tackle problems that I personally faced that I know others still do. My hope is to contribute substantively to the field of SUD research, particularly in addressing the complexities of managing chronic conditions and designing integrated harm reduction interventions for individuals receiving MOUDs. Through the T32 training program, my objective is to further develop my research skills, form relationships with experts in this field, and ultimately become an independent NIH-funded researcher.

B. Positions, Scientific Appointments and Honors

2022 – Present Graduate Research Assistant, School of Medicine Department of Geriatrics, UCSD
2021 – 2022 Graduate Research Assistant, School of Medicine Department of Psychiatry, UCSD
2020 – 2021 Graduate Research Assistant, School of Medicine, UCSD
2018 – 2020 Graduate Research Assistant, Human Dynamics in the Mobile Age, SDSU
2018 – 2019 Graduate Intern, Well-Being and Health Promotion Center, SDSU
2019 – 2020 Field Interviewer, Advocates for Human Potential
2018 – 2019 Health Analytics Research Assistant, City of Hope- California Teacher Study

Honors and Awards:

2023 AMERSA's Growing a Diverse Workforce Award
2021 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation – Health Policy Research Scholar Semi-Finalist
2020 SAMHSA - Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center Strategy (BRSS TACS) Building and Sustaining a Thriving Collegiate Recovery Program
2020 Frontiers in Addiction Research and Pregnancy (FrARP) Advanced Training Program
2020 Society for Epidemiologic Research (SER) Mentoring Pilot Program
2019 Una Davis Scholarship
2019 Stop the Addiction Fatality Epidemic (SAFE) Project Leadership Academy and Fellowship
2019 Walter Koppelman Memorial Scholarship for Social Justice

C. Contributions to Science

Substance use and public health: My early career contributions focused on exploring the intersection of substance use and race/ethnicity among college-aged young adults. This included examining the density of vape shops around schools and investigating the associations between vape shop locations and various socioeconomic factors. My master's degree thesis explored racial/ethnic disparities in alcohol related consequences among college students at a Hispanic serving institution. My work in this area highlighted the importance of considering the environmental and social factors in public health strategies related to substance use.

- a. **Kepner W.**, Satybaldiyeva N., Oren E., Tsou M. (2020). Vape shop locations and proximity to schools in San Diego County. American Public Health Association (APHA) 2020 Annual Meeting (San Diego CA).
- b. **Kepner W.**, Satybaldiyeva N., Lange J.E. (2020). Correlates of Electronic Cigarette Use Among College Students In A Hispanic Serving Institution: Gender Race/Ethnicity Smoking Marijuana Use and Alcohol Consumption. Annual meeting of the Society for Research on Nicotine & Tobacco (New Orleans LA).
- c. **Kepner, W.**, Ayala, G. X., Lange, J., & Elder, J. (2022). Alcohol related consequences and disparate outcomes in college students at a Hispanic Serving Institution. medRxiv, 2022-12.

Clinical research on geriatrics and substance Use: My graduate research contributions at UC San Diego focused on substance use among older adults and those living with chronic conditions such as HIV. I conducted qualitative interviews and thematic analysis in primary care settings, contributing valuable insights

into the health services and challenges faced by these populations. I also performed quantitative analysis on population level data on cannabis use and binge drinking among older adults that received national attention on CNN; findings of our study suggest that binge-drinking and cannabis use among US older adults increased by 450% between 2015-2019. [CNN Link](#)

a. Nguyen N., Cruz Rivera P., **Kepner W.**, et al. (2023). Older Adults' Cannabis Discussions with Healthcare Providers (HCP): Preliminary Qualitative Findings. American Geriatrics Society (AGS) 2023 Annual Conference (Long Beach CA).

b. **Kepner, W.**, Han, B. H., Nguyen, D., Han, S. S., Lopez, F. A., & Palamar, J. J. (2022). Past-month binge drinking and cannabis use among middle-aged and older adults in the United States, 2015-2019. *Alcohol*. [CNN Link](#)

Psychiatric research and health services utilization: During the 18 months of my PhD program at UCSD, I contributed to research in the field of psychiatry, focusing on health services utilization and the development of measurement instruments for assessing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) among people with opioid use disorder. This work involved extensive data analysis using electronic medical records and offered critical insights into the intersection of psychiatric conditions and health services.

a. Asheh A. M., Courchesne-Krak N., **Kepner W.**, & Marienfeld C. (2023). Adverse Childhood Experiences Are Associated with History of Overdose Among Patients Presenting for Outpatient Addiction Care. *Journal of Addiction Medicine* 10-1097.

b. Courchesne-Krak N., **Kepner W.**, Rubano A., & Marienfeld C. (2022). Differences in outpatient emergency and inpatient use among pregnant women with a substance-related diagnosis. *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology* MFM 100559.

c. Courchesne-Krak, N. S., Marienfeld, C. B., & **Kepner, W.** (2023). Focus: Big Data: What Brings You in Today? Sex, Race, Substance Type, and Other Sociodemographic and Health-Related Characteristics Predict if Substance Use is the Main Reason for a Clinical Encounter. *The Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine*, 96(3), 277.

Data Science and substance use: My work also encompasses the application of data science techniques in substance use research. This included web-scraping text from online forums, natural language processing sentiment analysis on COVID-19 related Tweets and geospatial analysis for health studies. Additionally, I utilized ArcGIS Pro to examine census tract correlates of vape shop locations and conducting geospatial analysis for breast and digestive cancer rates using longitudinal data from the California Teacher Study.

a. Fernandez G., Maione C., Zaballa K., **Kepner W.**, et al. (2021). The Geography of Covid-19 Spread in Italy Using Social Media and Geospatial Data Analytics. *The International Journal of Intelligence Security and Public Affairs* 1–31.

b. **Kepner W.**, Meacham M. C., & Nobles A. L. (2022). Types and Sources of Stigma on Opioid Use Treatment and Recovery Communities on Reddit. *Substance Use & Misuse* 57(10), 1511-1522.

Complete List of Published Work:

[Google Scholar](#)