

MEET C.R.A.A.W.L.

BUILDING A COMMUNITY FOR RESEARCH, OUTREACH, & IMPACT!



WHAT IS C.R.A.A.W.L.?



The **Collaborative Research on African American Wellness and Longevity (CRAAWL) Lab** was established in 2024 by Dr. Courtney Thomas Tobin to advance health equity for Black communities through rigorous research, community engagement, and research justice principles.

"Our research doesn't just study communities—we work with them to create real impact!"

OUR SIGNATURE PROJECT

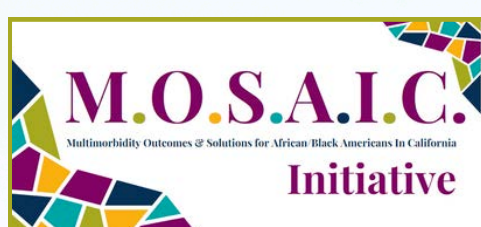
THE M.O.S.A.I.C. INITIATIVE

The **Multimorbidity Outcomes, Solutions, and Interventions for African American Communities (M.O.S.A.I.C.) Initiative** is a three-phase, community-engaged research collaborative in partnership with the **South Central Prevention Coalition (SCPC)** and other local organizations to advance health equity by addressing multimorbidity in Black communities.

Multimorbidity means having two or more chronic health conditions at the same time, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart disease. It can make managing health more complicated and increase the risk of poor health outcomes.

Co-led by Dr. Tobin and Dr. Ángela Gutiérrez (Western University), this initiative brings together community members and advocates, clinicians, policymakers, and researchers in Southern California to:

- Understand and address multimorbidity patterns across the lifespan
- Translate findings by blending arts-based approaches and technology to create compelling health communication materials and innovative tools like the MOSAIC Virtual Toolkit with our Risk and Resilience Calculator
- Develop culturally relevant, reproducible methods for bridging the gap between research evidence and real-world impact in Black communities



Members of the MOSAIC Community Advisory Board (CAB) and research team smile after a productive project meeting.

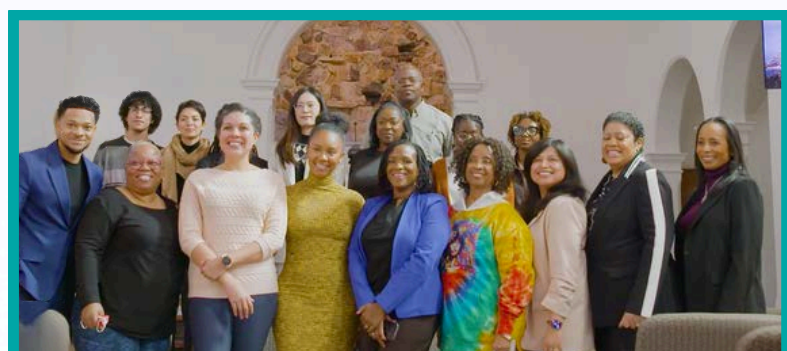
EXPANDING OUR REACH

C.R.A.A.W.L.'S COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH HUBS

CRAAWL is expanding into a broader campus-wide initiative that fosters multiple collaborative community-academic partnerships dedicated to addressing Black health. We are developing several CRAAWL Research Hubs, each focused on a specific area of Black health through interdisciplinary collaboration and community-driven solutions. Our goal is to establish collaborative spaces that connect faculty, staff, students, and community partners to drive impactful research and solutions. The first of these hubs is the **Black Brain Health Network (BBHN)**.

B.B.H.N.

Black Brain Health Network



At CRAAWL's first community event at Normandie Church of Christ in February 2025: [Top] Drs. Deters, Tobin, and Adrissi introduce BBHN; [Left] BBHN pose with community partners; and [Below] Dr. Tobin's interview with UCLA Strategic Communications.

BBHN is a collaborative initiative between CRAAWL, the Deters Lab (Dr. Kacie Deters), and the Parkinson's Core Collaborative (Dr. Jennifer Adrissi), focused on advancing research on Black brain health—including Alzheimer's, dementia, neurological conditions, stress, mental health, and well-being—while fostering community engagement to bridge research with real-world solutions.

In February 2025, CRAAWL, through BBHN, partnered with Normandie Church of Christ to host its first community event in South Central L.A. This event spotlighted the MOSAIC Initiative while providing critical education on Alzheimer's disease and the importance of Black Americans participating in research. Our work was recognized by the UCLA Strategic Communications **[WATCH HERE!]**, highlighting the significance of these efforts in advancing Black brain health through research and community engagement.



As the first of CRAAWL's expanding research hubs, BBHN is just the beginning—our vision is to develop additional hubs tackling other critical areas of Black health equity, creating a broader network of interdisciplinary collaboration and impact.

INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION OF CHANGEMAKERS

C.R.A.A.W.L.'S STUDENT AFFILIATES

Students are at the heart of CRAAWL's work. Through collaborative workgroups that meet weekly and monthly community meetings, students engage in mentorship, research, and community-driven initiatives. Through these experiences, **CRAAWL Student Affiliates** engage in meaningful work, build valuable skills and connections, and contribute to impactful projects in a variety of ways:



Gain hands-on research experience and mentorship from faculty and graduate students



Build professional and leadership skills in research, communication, event coordination, and outreach



Foster connections with community organizations, advocates, and local leaders



Contribute to publications, research dissemination, and strategic outreach



Be part of a collaborative, supportive, and fun environment—the C in CRAAWL stands for collaborative, and that's what we're all about!



HOW TO GET INVOLVED:



Interested in collaborating, joining, or learning more about CRAAWL? Email us at CRAAWL@ph.ucla.edu



Follow us on Instagram for updates, events, and opportunities! [@ucla.craawl](https://www.instagram.com/ucla.craawl) [@m.o.s.a.i.c._initiative](https://www.instagram.com/m.o.s.a.i.c._initiative)

Let's build a healthier, more just future together—come be part of the CRAAWL community!

