CHPD work showcased at NHSN Annual Conference

The National Hispanic Science Network (NHSN) held their 17th Annual International Conference in Phoenix October 4-6. The theme of this year’s conference was, “Hispanic Drug Abuse Pipeline: Bridging Diversity, Interdisciplinary Training, and Translational Science.”

The conference began with an interactive and stimulating panel discussion titled “The Phoenix Footprint,” consisting of local community, social and health service providers, as well as scientific investigators from Arizona State University. The CHPDP had a strong representation with long-time community partner Yolanda Konopko, from the St. Vincent de Paul Family Wellness Program discussing prediabetes and diabetes in the community and CHPDP Director, Dr. Gabe Shabi, presenting ideas for how scientists can partner with community agencies to close the health disparities gap. Dr. Felipe González Castro, a CHPDP faculty member, served as the moderator for the scientific panel discussion.

“The NHSN Phoenix Footprint was a wonderful opportunity to discuss the benefits of academic-community partnerships in order to better understand and address the needs of the local community while advancing the state of the science,” stated Dr. Shabi.

Dr. Castro was one of the original members of NHSN and had four research lab trainees present three posters and an oral presentation at the conference. This included ASU CONHI PhD students Tara Bautista and Bin Suh, recent CONHI graduate Jamie Karch, BSN, and ASU undergraduate Christopher Dilli.

“The NHSN brings together behavioral neuroscientists who conduct animal research on the addictions with social and behavioral scientists who conduct human research on the addictions. These scientists range from early-career investigators to senior scientists, all of whom share and critique animal and human research models, also providing mentorship to a new generation of students and early-career investigators,” stated Castro. “This integration of basic and applied science creates a stimulating venue for new discoveries and health care approaches aimed at reducing and eliminating health disparities and inequalities.”

The NHSN is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and aims to increase interdisciplinary translational research to improve the health equity of underserved minorities and foster future underrepresented scientists. This conference was a key opportunity to showcase CHPDP’s work within the local Hispanic community, discuss their successes and challenges, and provide advice to early career researchers on how to build relationships and help communities. For more information, visit [the-nhsn.org](http://the-nhsn.org).