

## UCSF OEEM Newsletter



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### Content and news at a glance:

- Congratulations to our 2024 graduates
- Welcome to our new residents
- August Industrial Hygiene Course and Site Visit
- Northern California Silicosis Network
- Dr. Sheiphali Gandhi wins research awards
- Dr. Rupesh Patel wins WOEMA research award

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### Congratulations to our 2024 graduates

#### **Dr. Max Blumberg, MD, MPH**

Max was hired to stay on as an attending at UCSF. He is now working as Associate Medical Director of Occupational Health Services and

Assistant Professor in the division of  
OECM.



**Dr. Shamil Jugnundan, MD, MPH**

After graduating, Shamil moved back to Ontario, Canada where he is now working as both an Internist and Occupational Health Consultant at Bright Shores Health System.



**Dr. Ali Dehghani Firouzabadi, MD, MPH**

Ali was hired at Kaiser, practicing Occupational Medicine in San Rafael, California.



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**Welcome to our new residents**



**Aditiya Rajan, MD, MPH**

Aditiya Rajan, MD, MPH is from Dallas, Texas, and obtained his undergraduate degree in Neuroscience at University of Texas at Dallas. He went to medical school at Texas Tech Health Sciences Center in Lubbock, Texas, and started his Internal Medicine residency in Tyler, Texas.

[Read more here](#)

**John Bossalini, DO**



John Bossalini, DO from Albany, New York, and received his bachelor's degree in biology from the University at Albany. He attended medical school at the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine in Erie, Pennsylvania. He completed a Transitional Year Internship at Brooke Army Medical Center in Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

[Read more here](#)



### **Somayeh Fahim Nia, MD, MPH**

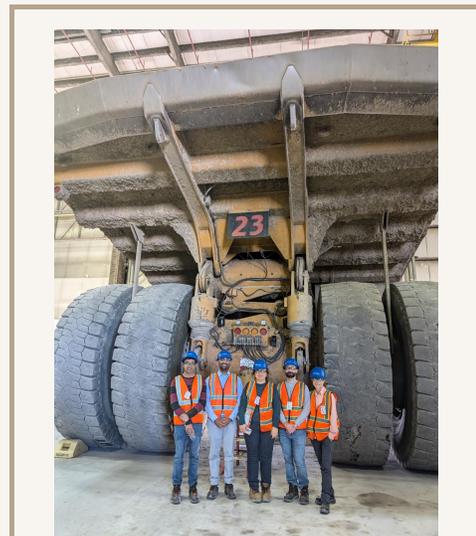
Somayeh Fahim Nia, MD, MPH is from Mashhad, Iran, where she attended medical school and worked for 6 years as a family physician. She earned an MPH from Mount Sinai in New York, and she completed a three-year Internal Medicine residency at St. Barnabas Hospital in Bronx, NY.

[Read more here](#)



Every August, the OECM residents spend most of the month doing workplace site visits. This year's visits covered 18 different workplaces spanning a wide range of industries. The residents visited sites that faculty have seen multiple times before, such as wineries, refineries, public utilities, pharmaceutical companies, etc. We also had multiple new sites this year, including Casa Sanchez Foods, the California National Primate Research Center, and the Maker Space at UC Berkeley.

A highlight of the month was the trip to Southern California for tours at three different sites in a quick forty-eight-hour period. We started with a visit to the Borax mine and processing facility in Boron, California. This



included a trip into the mine pit with the geologist and in-house paramedic, where borate crystals visibly littered the ground. With their health and safety lead and industrial hygienist we had tours of boric acid and borate processing facilities and packaging. We had ample opportunity to discuss a variety of chemical hazards as well as physical hazards including noise and heat.

The UCSF OEMC 2024-25 residents pictured with one of the large trucks that has replaced the 20 mules at the 20-Mule Team Borax mine in Boron, California.



OEM Resident at the SA Recycling facility passing a pile of flattened automobiles.

Our tour of the SA recycling facility at the port of Long Beach allowed us to see the processing and sorting of large metal items, including vehicles and large appliances, and their technologies for managing and treating waste, air emissions, and stormwater. Finally, we visited the shuttered Exide lead acid battery recycling plant in Vernon, CA, which provided an opportunity for residents to learn about the regulation of this toxic waste site and associated history. We spent time with American Integrated Services who are managing the clean-up of lead contaminated soil in residential properties surrounding the Exide facility, and learned about their workflow and processes, including unique safety concerns when working in residential worksites.

The course had a structural overhaul this year, thanks to the leadership of Dr. Stephanie Holm, with a renewed focus on industrial hygiene concepts. There were weekly lectures, readings and written assignments, grouped by chemical, physical and biologic hazards. To align with the new ACPM OEM boards blueprint, the written assignments focused on describing a hazard, writing a plan for measuring and mitigating a hazard, and emergency planning.

Resident travel to Southern California was sponsored by the Alumni fund, and we'd like to thank all the alumni who contribute to support this educational opportunity. We also want to express our appreciation to the seventeen different faculty (current and/or volunteer or emeritus) who participated in the course by lecturing, grading weekly assignments and/or accompanying the residents on visits.

[Donate to the OEM Residency Program](#)

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## Northern California Silicosis Network

We are significantly increasing our efforts to address the epidemic of silicosis among engineered stone kitchen countertop workers.



These workers - often young immigrant men - are at very high risk of serious disease, resulting in the need for lung transplantation, or in early death.

We are working to address this epidemic on three fronts: (1) *Education and outreach* to workers and shop owners to alert them to the hazard and inform them of best practices; (2) *Services* to diagnose, report, and connect these workers to services; and (3) *policy solutions* to address the problem and reduce or eliminate exposure.

Dr. Sheiphali Gandhi was named Director of the new Network. We have received some seed funding and are working to expand our efforts over the coming year.

[Visit the website](#)

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## Dr. Sheiphali Gandhi wins research award



### Dr. Sheiphali Gandhi, MD, MPH, Receives 2024 Irene Perstein Award

With the Perstein Award, Dr. Gandhi aims to start a **silicosis and vulnerable worker program** at UCSF to increase advocacy and create resources for workers with highly morbid occupational diseases.

[Read more here](#)

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## Dr. Rupesh Patel wins WOEMA research award

### OECM Resident Rupesh Patel, MD, PhD, MPH wins Best Original Research Award

Dr. Rupesh Patel, MD, MPH, PhD, has won the Western Occupational Health Conference (WOHC) 2024 best original research award. Dr. Patel's title of his poster and talk was: "The Effect of Acute Exposure to Ambient Air Pollution on Respiratory Function of Children in Fresno".



[Read more here](#)

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