2013 Distinguished Keynote Speakers

Christina Chambers, PhD, MPH

Dr. Chambers is a reproductive and perinatal epidemiologist specializing in the impact of environmental factors and prenatal exposure on adverse pregnancy outcomes, including birth defects. She is on the faculty at UC San Diego in the Departments of Pediatrics and Family and Preventive Medicine and also serves as Co-director of the Center for Promotion of Maternal Health and Infant Development. She is the Primary Investigator of the largest study of child and human health ever conducted in the United States. Her international research activities are focused on the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, including studies in Ukraine, Russia, South Africa, and collaborations in Australia and Poland.

Kathryn Hirst, MD

Dr. Katie Hirst graduated from UC San Diego School of Medicine and completed residency training in Family Medicine and Psychiatry. She founded the UC San Diego Maternal Mental Health Clinic in 2007 and continues to provide mental health care to women who are pregnant or postpartum. Since joining the UCSD School of Medicine Faculty, she has overseen the rapid expansion of the clinic, including the opening of the Southwestern U.S.’s first Perinatal Intensive Outpatient Program in September 2013.

Gretchen Mallios, LCSW, RYT

Gretchen Mallios has a background in child and family services and family mental health. She is a longstanding supporter of the San Diego Postpartum Health Alliance, an organization whose mission is to raise awareness about Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders and increase the capacity of service providers to respond to these issues sensitively and effectively. Gretchen is currently in private practice as well as serving as the Education Chair for Postpartum Health Alliance.

Ira Chasnoff, MD

Dr. Ira J. Chasnoff, an award-winning author, researcher and lecturer, is President of the Children’s Research Triangle and a Professor of Clinical Pediatrics at the University of Illinois, College of Medicine in Chicago. He is one of the nation’s leading researchers in the field of child development and the effects of maternal alcohol and drug use on the newborn infant and child. Dr. Chasnoff’s most recent work focuses on community approaches to the integration of behavioral health services into primary health care for women and children and the occurrence of co-occurring mental health disorders in children who have been exposed to alcohol, methamphetamine, cocaine, and other drugs. Dr. Chasnoff received his medical degree from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, which in 1991 awarded him its first Distinguished Alumnus Award. He is the author of numerous articles on the effects of drug use on pregnancy and on the long-term cognitive, behavioral, and learning outcomes of prenatally exposed children. Dr. Chasnoff has authored seven books, the most recent of which, The Mystery of Risk, explores the biological and environmental factors that impact the ultimate development of alcohol- and drug-exposed children and presents practical strategies for helping children reach their full potential at home and in the classroom.