

ALISON TOVAR
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EDUCATION

- 2009 Ph.D., Tufts University; Nutritional Biochemistry and Metabolism
- 2005 M.S., Tufts University; Nutritional Biochemistry and Metabolism
- 2005 M.P.H., Tufts University; School of Medicine
- 2001 B.S., Psychology. Northeastern University
- 2000 Professional Psychology degree program (6 semesters), Universidad de Los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia

POSTGRADUATE TRAINING

- 2009 – 2012 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Tufts University, Boston, MA
John Hancock Research Center on Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity Prevention; Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2024- present Interim Director, Center for Health Promotion and Health Equity
- 2023-present Co-Director, Community Engagement Core, Advance CTR-RI
- 2022- present Associate Professor, Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Brown University School of Public Health
- 2018- 2021 Associate Professor, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI
Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences
- 2020-2021 Director of the PhD for Health Sciences Program, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI
- 2012 – 2018 Assistant Professor, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI
Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences
- 2011 – present Adjunct Faculty, Brown University, Providence, RI
Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Public Health Program

2010 – 2015 Adjunct Faculty, Tufts University, Boston, MA
Public Health and Community Medicine, School of Medicine

2010 – 2013 Instructor, Tufts University, Boston, MA
Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy

HONORS

Expert Panel for Healthy Eating Research, a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This panel is developing evidence-based best practices and guidelines for promoting the development of healthy eating behaviors aligned with optimal nutrition and physical growth among young children, ages 2-8 years, March-December 2020

College of Health Sciences, Nutrition and Food Sciences Chair Award, May 2019.

Rhode Island Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Carrot Award recipient, May 2018.

University of Rhode Island Early Career Faculty Research Excellence Award in the Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, and Engineering. May, 2015.

Simon J. Simonian and Arpi A. Simonian Prize for Research Excellence in Nutrition Science and Policy, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, April, 2008.

OTHER AWARDS

Dean's Award for Excellence in Community Engagement, Brown University School of Public Health, May 2024.

Nominated for Excellence in Research Award, College of Health Sciences, University of Rhode Island, May 2017.

Participant, Summer Institute on Randomized Behavioral Clinical Trials, Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) and National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI), Warrenton, Virginia, July 2016.

Participant, NIH/NHLBI R25 “PRIDE” (Programs to Increase Diversity among Individuals Engaged in Health-Related Research) Summer Institute on Mentoring Researchers in Latino Health Disparities, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA. (J Elder & G Talavera, PI's). 2013 – 2014.

Built Environment Assessment Training Institute, University of Pennsylvania's Center for Health Behavior Research and Harvard Prevention Research Center, July 2012.

Physical Activity and Public Health Course, CDC/University of South Carolina, Hilton Head, SC, September 2011.

The National Institutes of Health and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research 3rd Annual Summer Institute in Reproductive and Perinatal Epidemiology, Quebec, Canada,

July 2007.

SERVICE

University & Department Appointments and Committees

January 2025-present	Health and Medicine Committee, Brown University
November 2025-present	Chair of Search Committee for Assistant Professor in Behavioral and Social Sciences, Brown University School of Public Health
September 2023-Dec 2024	Search Committee member for Behavioral and Social Sciences Chair, Brown University School of Public Health.
September 2023-present	Co-Director Community Engagement Core. Advance Rhode Island-Clinical and Translational Research.
May 2023-present	Chair of Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences seminar series Committee
Jan 2023-present	Community Engagement Committee. Brown School of Public Health.
April 2022- present	Online MPH Admissions Committee
January 2022-present	Dept. of Behavioral and Social Sciences Curriculum Committee
September 2022-present	Core Advisor, MPH Program, Brown SPH
January 2022- July 2022	Search Committee for Faculty in Nutrition and Food Sciences, Tufts University's Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy
January 2020-December 2021	Director of PhD, College of Health Sciences
January 2020- December 2021	Curriculum Committee, College of Health Sciences
September 2013- December 2021	Graduate committee, Department Nutrition Food Sciences
September 2015- December 2021	Health Studies Program, Internal Advisory Committee
January-March 2020	Search Committee Endowed Prochaska Position
January-March 2019	Search Committee Grants and Contracts Specialist for Sponsored Project Office
January-May 2019	College Committee for Research Collaboration Meetings

September-December 2018	Strategic Planning for College of Health Sciences
January- April 2017	Search Committee member for a NFS faculty position
January- April 2017	Search Committee member for a postdoctoral multicultural position.
January-December 2016	Academic Health Collaborative, Shared Services Committee.
September 2014-May 2016	College of the Environment and Life Sciences, Diversity Committee.
January-April 2015	Health Studies Program, Search Committee member for faculty position.
January 2015	Academic Summit, Planning Committee.

Professional and Community Outreach

October 2025	Panel Speaker. Latino Cancer Control Taskforce Conference.
August 2025	Invited Speaker. Swearer Center Community Engaged Teaching and Research Retreat.
December 2024	Panel Speaker. Rhode Island Life Index Launch.
August 2024	Panel Speaker. Swearer Center Community Engaged Teaching and Research Retreat.
May 2024	Panel Speaker Community Engaged Workshop Series Part 3. STAR COBRE.
September 2023- 2024	Securing Nutrition Equity Across the Food Environment Committee for the Texas A&M Institute for Advancing Health Through Agriculture and Chicago Council on Global Affairs to Support Study on Responsive Agriculture
September 2022- present	Rhode Island Food Access, member.
September 2022-present	New England Farm to Early Childhood Project Steering Committee, member.
January 2023-present	Pawtucket/Central Falls Food and Nutrition Task Force, member.

January 2022-December 2024	Advisory Board, Catalyzing Communities Project
January 2021-present	Board of Director Member, Rhode Island Food Bank.
January 2022-present	Pawtucket/Central Falls Health Equity Zone Member
July 2023	Humans in Public Health Podcast. Navigating Nutrition.
September-December 2023	Healthy Eating Research, Planning Committee for Annual Conference
February-May 2022	Member of the Leadership Accelerator Strategic Planning for Pawtucket/Central Falls
January 2022-July 2023	New England Farm to Early Childhood Project Steering Committee
April- June 2022	Leadership Strategic Planning Rhode Island Dept Of Health Physical Activity and Nutrition Strategic Plan Planning
March 2021	Podcast for East Greenwich Academy Foundation “Food for Thought”
January-December 2020	Expert panel Healthy Eating Research, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Program
March 2016-present	Training for navegantes/community health workers at Clinica Esperanza, Providence, Rhode Island
March 2020	Training on Infant Feeding for WIC Nutritionists. Rhode Island Department of Health.
January-May 2018	Created Online Modules for Home Health workers. East Connecticut State University
October 2016	University of Rhode Island, <i>Momentum Magazine</i> . Feature article.
May 2016	Featured in Opening Video for the Academic Health Collaborative. University of Rhode Island
March 2016	University of Rhode Island, College of Environmental and Life Sciences Big Thinker Featured Article.

Working Groups

I co-lead the Early Childhood Working group organized by Healthy Eating Research, a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program & the Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research and Evaluation, funded by the CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity. National multi-disciplinary network of researchers, leaders from academia, non-profit organizations, government, and other funding agencies, member. Organize and lead monthly meetings as well as two of the sub-groups within this larger group.
(<https://nopren.ucsf.edu/early-childhood>)

I lead a sub-working group of the larger Healthy Eating Research & Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research and Evaluation: BMI & Head Start sub-group.

Professional Societies

International Society for Nutrition and Physical Activity
Society for Behavioral Medicine
American Society for Nutrition

External Grant Reviewer

TrygFonden; Proposal for Danish Foundation on Obesity Prevention Grant for 1 million dollars (December 2025)

Reviewer for r21 study for mock NIH Review Panel, Advance RI-CTR (December 2025)

NIH Lifestyle Change and Behavioral Health study section. Ad-hoc Reviewer (February 2025)

NIH Biobehavioral Medicine and Health Outcomes study section. Ad-hoc Reviewer (June 2024)

NIH Lifestyle Change and Behavioral Health study section. Ad-hoc Reviewer (February 2024)

NIH Social and Community Influences across the Life course Special Emphasis Panel. Ad-hoc Reviewer. (July 2023)

Healthy Eating Research (HER), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, commissioned grant proposal review. (February 2024)

Healthy Eating Research (HER), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Round 13 grant proposals. (August 2023)

Irish Health Research Board

Editorial Board

Current Developments in Nutrition
Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
*Received the 2022 Outstanding Reviewer Award
Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior

Guest Editor

Frontiers in Nutrition
Nutrients

Ad hoc Reviewer

Nature Medicine
JAMA Open Network
Pediatrics
American Journal of Preventive Medicine*
Appetite
Behavioral Medicine
BMC Pediatrics
BMC Public Health
British Journal of Nutrition
Childhood Obesity
Evaluation and Program Planning
Frontiers
International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity
Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health
Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport
Journal of Women's Health
Maternal and Child Health Journal
Obesity
PLOS One
Preventive Medicine
Preventive Medicine Reports
Public Health Nutrition
The Journal of Obesity
* Given recognition as a top reviewer

PUBLICATIONS (117 Total Publications)

*Indicates a student or trainee for whom I was a mentor at the time the paper was written.
When I am listed last in a publication, I am the senior author

2025

Oddo VM, Leider J, **Tovar A**, Vadiveloo MK, Elenio E*, Powell LM. An evaluation of a state-level fruit and vegetable incentive's impacts on food and nutrition security among SNAP participants. *Front Nutr.* 2025 Nov 26;12:1706200.

Tovar A, Powell LM, Leider J, Elenio E, Oddo VM, Vadiveloo MK. Evaluation of a State-Level Incentive Program to Improve Diet. *JAMA Netw Open.* 2025 Nov 3;8(11):e2544215.

Vadiveloo MK, **Tovar A**, Elenio E*, Eickhoff C, Soucie JS, Ewing SF, Gans KM, Thorndike AN. Exploring Facilitators and Barriers for Personalized Dietary Incentives

Among Online Shoppers at Cardiovascular Risk and Key Informants to Inform an Automated Shopping Platform. *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2025 Dec;57(12):1154–1169.

Tovar A, Bouchard KL, Moore AM, Perry M*, Lurssen I, Arriola Carnicelli L, Sanchez Contreras A*, Risica P, von Ash T, Savage JS, Dunsiger S, Gans K. Strong Families Start at Home/Familias Fuertes Comienzan en Casa—Improving Child Diet Quality and Parental Feeding Practices: Protocol for a Randomized Controlled Trial. *JMIR Res Protoc*. 2025 Sep 10;14:e73923.

Purkait T, Dev DA, Koziol N, Franzen-Castle L, Stage VC, **Tovar A**. Combined participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Head Start is associated with healthy household dietary environments for young children in low-income families. *Public Health Nutr*. 2025 Aug 22;28(1):e139.

Hardy F*, **Tovar A**, Elenio E, Herrera YM*, Perry M*, Bauer KW, Vadiveloo MK. Food parenting stress among caregivers receiving government food assistance: a study from the United States. *Prev Med Rep*. 2025 Jul 27;57:103189.

Ramirez A, Vazquez E, **Tovar A**, Zimmer A, Carlos C, Carrillo D, Cheney AM. Understanding the role of mothers and other caregivers in the context of infant feeding using the family ecological model. *Appetite*. 2025 Oct 1;214:108205.

Hillburn C, Dev DA, Franzen-Castle L, **Tovar A**, Dzewaltowski DA. Multiple roles and children with mixed-age groups are primary challenges for adoption of responsive feeding for rural family child care home providers. *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2025 Jul;57(7):664–679.

Cheney A, Ramirez A, Vazquez E, **Tovar A**, Mujuru P, Ortiz G, Zimmer A, Carrillo D. Adapting an evidence-based infant feeding and nutrition program to promote healthy growth and development in Latinx families of low income. *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2025 Jul;57(7):572–587.

Elenio E*, **Tovar A**, San Soucie J, Vadiveloo MK. Population recruitment strategies in the age of bots: insights from the What Is on Your Plate study. *Curr Dev Nutr*. 2025 Apr 15;9(5):107442.

George RM, Dev DA, Miramonti A, Hasnin S, Hillburn C, Smith J, Sisson SB, **Tovar A**. Family style meal service is associated with reduced plate waste in Nebraska family child care homes. *Child Obes*. 2025 Apr;21(3):329–336.

Blau S*, **Tovar A**, Pearlman DN, Weeks HM, Ali J, Bauer KW. “It makes you feel worthless.” The lived experience of discrimination in the US food assistance system. *Soc Sci Med*. 2025 May;372:117959.

Gans KM, Chacon V, Warykas SW, Baird M, Esquivel V, Zhang S, **Tovar A**, Ray S, Inman N, McCauley P, Zambrano Rodriguez VC, Miller M, Stekler N, Markham Risica P. Exploring barriers and facilitators to water availability and accessibility, and potential

strategies for improving water accessibility and children's intake in family childcare homes: a qualitative study. *Front Nutr.* 2025 Mar 12;12:1442070.

Hasnin S*, Dev DA, Hillburn C, Sisson SB, **Tovar A**. Family child care home providers' perceived difficulty in serving vegetables to children: findings from a multi-method study. *J Nutr Sci.* 2025 Feb 24;14:e21.

Oddo VM, Leider J, **Tovar A**, Powell LM, Elenio E*, Vadiveloo MK. Food insecurity and risk of nutrition insecurity among Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program participants in Rhode Island and Connecticut, USA. *Prev Med Rep.* 2025 Feb 8;51:103002.

AyalaSomayajula S*, Melo Herrera Y*, Frank HE, Guzman LE, Fu ES, Martinez RG, Ramalho B, Blau S*, **Tovar A**. Leveraging implementation science to identify and address facilitators and barriers to WIC enrollment, participation, and retention. *J Nutr.* 2025 Apr;155(4):1246–1257.

Kracht CL, **Tovar A**, Gans KM, Lee RE, Tandon PS, von Ash T, Francis L. How to integrate and leverage digital health modalities for health promotion in early childhood education: opportunities to improve intervention access and engagement. *Transl Behav Med.* 2025 Jan 16;15(1).

2024

Hamdi N, Balestracci K*, **Tovar A**, Corcoran C, Watts DJ, Tobar F, Samson M, Amin S. Multi-Prong Formative Evaluation of a Pediatric Clinical-Community Food Access and Nutrition Education Intervention. *Am J Health Promot.* 2024 Nov 19.

Melo Herrera Y*, Vadiveloo M, Blau S, Oaks BM, Quashie NT, **Tovar A**. Feasibility and acceptability of a personalized, pre-filled online grocery cart to improve benefit redemption and diet quality of grocery purchases among participants of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). *Appetite.* 2024 Aug 23;202:107647.

Fox K*, Vadiveloo M, McCurdy K, Risica PM, Gans KM, **Tovar A**. Associations between child eating behaviors with eating patterns and diet quality in preschool-aged children. *Appetite.* 2024.

Ramirez A*, Fox K*, Melo Herrera Y*, Gans KM, Risica PM, McCurdy K, Jennings E, **Tovar A**. Goals, Barriers, and Facilitators of Caregivers Who Participated in an In-Home Intervention to Improve Food Parenting Practices and Child Diet Quality. *J Nutr Educ Behav.* 2024 Aug;56(8):521–531.

Vinitchagoon T*, Hennessy E, Zhang FF, Fauth RC, Must A, **Tovar A**, Choumenkovitch SF, Economos CD. A Dietary Pattern With More Fruits and Vegetables in Children of Mothers Who Immigrated to the United States From Latin America Is Associated With Healthful Nutrient Intake and Weight Status. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2024 Aug;124(8):947–956.

Tovar A, Fischbach SR*, Miller ME, Guseman EH, Stage VC, Wentzell B, Benjamin-Neelon SE, Hoffman JA, Beltran M, Sisson SB. Height and Weight Measurement and Communication With Families in Head Start: Developing a Toolkit and Establishing Best Practices. *Child Obes.* 2024 Apr 3.

Frank HE, Guzman LE, Ayalasomayajula S, Albanese A, Dunklee B, Harvey M, Bouchard K, Vadiveloo M, Yaroch AL, Scott K, **Tovar A**. Developing and testing a produce prescription implementation blueprint to improve food security in a clinical setting: a pilot study protocol. *Pilot Feasibility Stud.* 2024 Mar 23;10(1):51.

Chacón V*, Folta SC, Hennessy E, Leak TM, Macfarlane H, Roberto CA, **Tovar A**, Wilson N, Economos CD. Are Caregivers' Feeding Competence and Autonomy Associated with Healthier Restaurant Food Purchases for Their Child at Fast Food or Counter Service Restaurants? A Cross-Sectional Study in a Diverse Sample of U.S. Caregivers. *Nutrients.* 2024 Feb 7;16(4):479. doi: 10.3390/nu16040479.

Balestracci K*, Sebelia L, Greene G, Moore A, Baird G, Chappell K, **Tovar A**. Effect of a Technology-Integrated Curriculum on Sugary Drink and Snack Intake of Elementary-Aged Youth Experiencing Low Income. *J Nutr Educ Behav.* 2024 Apr;56(4):209–218.

Chacón V*, Chung M, Folta SC, Hennessy E, Macfarlane H, Roberto CA, **Tovar A**, Wilson NLW, Economos CD. The longitudinal association between caregivers' perceived competence and autonomy and children's dietary consumption before and 10 months into the COVID-19 pandemic. *Appetite.* 2024 Apr 1.

Owens BA*, Sabik NJ, **Tovar A**, Ward-Ritacco CL, Melanson K, Guerriero Z, Oaks BM. Higher morning cortisol is associated with lower intuitive eating in midlife women. *Psychoneuroendocrinology.* 2024 Apr;1.

2023

Jiang Q, Risica PM, **Tovar A**, Cooksey Stowers K, Schwartz MB, Lombardi C, Gans KM. Mediation of the association between social environmental characteristics of family childcare home and weight status in children by diet quality. *BMC Public Health.* 2023 Nov 21;23(1):2301. doi: 10.1186/s12889-023-17179-1.

Dev DA, Hillburn C, Luxa J, Bauer KW, Lessard L, Cotwright C, **Tovar A**. Illuminating Child and Adult Care Food Program Partnerships That Improved Food Access and Waiver Utilization for Feeding Young Children in Early Care and Education Programs During COVID-19: A Qualitative Study. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2023 Oct 11:S2212-2672(23)01596-4. doi: 10.1016/j.jand.2023.10.006. Online ahead of print.

Economos CD, **Tovar A**, Choumenkovitch S, Boulos R, Chui K, Gute DM, Hyatt RR, Metayer N, Pirie A, Must A. Results from “Live Well”, a randomized controlled community-based participatory intervention to prevent obesity in new immigrant mother-child dyads. *BMC Public Health.* 2023 Oct 2;23(1):1893.

Owens BA*, Sabik NJ, **Tovar A**, Ward-Ritacco CL, Oaks BM. Higher intuitive eating is associated with lower adiposity in midlife women. *Eat Behav.* 2023 Aug;50:101796.

Melo Herrera Y*, **Tovar A**, Oaks BM, Quashie NT, Vadiveloo M. Associations between Participation in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Maternal Diet Quality. *J Nutr.* 2023 Nov;153(11):3317–3326.

LoBuono DL*, Shea KS, Reed M, **Tovar A**, Leedahl SN, Xu F, Mahler L, Lofgren IE. The Facilitators and Barriers to Digital Health for Managing Nutrition in People With Parkinson's Disease and Their Caregivers: A Formative, Qualitative Study. *J Nutr Educ Behav.* 2023 Aug;55(8):553–563.

Jiang Q, Risica PM, **Tovar A**, Stowers KC, Schwartz MB, Lombardi C, Alhassan S, Gans KM. Effect of Applying Best Practices for Physical Activity and Screen Time to Family Childcare Homes. *Prev Chronic Dis.* 2023 Jul 13;20:E60.

Jiang Q, Risica PM, **Tovar A**, Cooksey Stowers K, Schwartz MB, Lombardi C, Gans K. Nutrition Practices of Family Child Care Home Providers and Children's Diet Quality. *J Nutr Educ Behav.* 2023 Jul;55(7):480–492. doi: 10.1016/j.jneb.2023.03.005. Epub 2023 May 26.

Tovar A, Fox K*, Gans KM, Markham Risica P, Papandonatos GD, Ramirez A, Gorin AA, von Ash T, Jennings E, Bouchard K, McCurdy K. Results from the Strong Families Start at Home/Familias Fuertes Comienzan en Casa: feasibility randomised control trial to improve the diet quality of low-income, predominantly Hispanic/Latinx children. *Public Health Nutr.* 2023 Jan 24:1–15. doi: 10.1017/S1368980023000174. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36691686.

Goldstein SP, **Tovar A**, Espel-Huynh HM, Stowers KC. Applying a Social Determinants of Health Framework to Guide Digital Innovations that Reduce Disparities in Chronic Disease. *Psychosom Med.* 2023 Feb 20. doi: 10.1097/PSY.0000000000001176. Online ahead of print. PMID: 36800264.

Bentil HJ*, Adu-Afarwuah S, Rossi JS, **Tovar A**, Oaks BM. Dietary magnesium intakes among women of reproductive age in Ghana—A comparison of two dietary analysis programs. *PLoS One.* 2023 May 2;18(5):e0284648. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0284648. eCollection 2023. PMID: 37130108.

Fox K*, Vadiveloo M, McCurdy K, Risica PM, Gans KM, **Tovar A**. Control and Chaos: Caregiver's Basic Psychological Need Frustration is Associated With the Socioemotional Climate When Feeding. *J Nutr Educ Behav.* 2023 Mar 8:S1499-4046(23)00025-8. doi: 10.1016/j.jneb.2023.02.002. Online ahead of print.

Economos CD, Calancie L, Korn AR, Allender S, Appel JM, Bakun P, Hennessy E, Hovmand PS, Kasman M, Nichols M, Pachucki MC, Swinburn BA, **Tovar A**, Hammond RA. Community coalition efforts to prevent childhood obesity: two-year results of the Shape

Up Under 5 study. BMC Public Health. 2023 Mar 20;23(1):529. doi: 10.1186/s12889-023-15288-5. PMID: 36941543.

2022

Hernandez E, Moore AM, Rollins BY, **Tovar A**, Savage JS. Sorry Parents, Children Consume High Amounts of Candy before and after a Meal: Within-Person Comparisons of Children's Candy Intake and Associations with Temperament and Appetite. *Children (Basel)*. 2022 Dec 26;10(1):52.

Ramirez A*, Mathis KJ, Moore AM*, **Tovar A**. Developing Motivational Interviewing Skills Among Undergraduate Nursing Students. *J Psychosoc Nurs Ment Health Serv*. 2022 Nov 7:1–8. doi: 10.3928/02793695-20221027-01. [Epub ahead of print]

Nieri T, Zimmer A, Vaca JM, **Tovar A**, Cheney A. A Systematic Review of Research on Non-Maternal Caregivers' Feeding of Children 0–3 Years. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022 Nov 4;19(21). doi: 10.3390/ijerph192114463. Review.

Dooyema CA, Hall K, **Tovar A**, Bauer KW, Lowry-Warnock A, Blanck HM. Leveraging Federal, State, and Facility-Level Early Care and Education Systems and Providers Toward Optimal Child Nutrition in the First 1000 Days. *Am J Public Health*. 2022 Oct;112(S8):S779–S784. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2022.307082.

Dev DA, Hillburn C, Luxa J, Lessard L, Bauer KW, Cotwright C, **Tovar A**. Implementation of Federal Waivers for Feeding Children in Early Care and Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2022 Oct;54(10):925–938. doi: 10.1016/j.jneb.2022.07.005. PubMed PMID: 36216442.

Bouchard KL*, Grigsby-Toussaint DS, Fox K, Amin S, Vadiveloo M, Greaney ML, **Tovar A**. Maternal Experiences with Discussing Complementary Feeding in Primary Care. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022 Sep 23;19(19). doi: 10.3390/ijerph191912061. PubMed PMID: 36231363.

Risica PM, Karpowicz JM, von Ash T, Gans KM, Cooksey-Stowers K, **Tovar A**. Feeding and Activity Environments for Infants and Toddlers in Childcare Centers and Family Childcare Homes in Southeastern New England. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022 Aug 6;19(15). doi: 10.3390/ijerph19159702.

McCurdy K, Gans KM, Risica PM, Fox K*, **Tovar A**. Food insecurity, food parenting practices, and child eating behaviors among low-income Hispanic families of young children. *Appetite*. 2022 Feb 1;169.

Tovar A, Miller ME, Stage VC, Hoffman JA, Guseman EH, Sisson S, Shefet D, Benjamin-Neelon SE, Swindle T, Hasnin S, Beltran M. BMI Data Collection and Communication Practices in a Multistate Sample of Head Start Programs. *Child Obes*. 2021 Dec 7.

2021

Gans KM, Qianxia J, **Tovar A**, Kang A, McCardle M, Risica PM. Physical Activity and screen-time practices of family childcare providers: Do they meet best practice guidelines? *Childhood Obesity*. 2021 Dec 7.

Bentil HJ, Abreu AM, Adu-Afarwuah S, Rossi JS, **Tovar A**, Oaks BM. Association between Dietary Magnesium Intake and Glycemic Markers in Ghanaian Women of Reproductive Age: A Pilot Cross-Sectional Study. *Nutrients*. 2021 Nov 19;13(11):4141.

LoBuono DL, Shea KS, **Tovar A**, Leedahl SN, Mahler L, Xu F, Lofgren IE. Acceptance and perception of digital health for managing nutrition in people with Parkinson's disease and their caregivers and their digital competence in the United States: A mixed-methods study. *Health Sci Rep*. 2021 Nov 11;4(4):e412.

Perraud E, Parker HW, **Tovar A**, Kaar J, Vadiveloo M. The relationship between maternal prenatal and postnatal vegetable intake and repeated measures of infant vegetable intake frequency in a national U.S. sample. *Appetite*. 2022 Jan 1;168:105781.

Jiang Q, **Tovar A**, Risica PM, Cooksey Stowers K, Schwartz M, Lombardi C, Kang A, Mena NZ, Gans KM. Ethnic Differences in Family Childcare Providers' Nutrition- and Activity-Related Attitudes and Barriers. *J Obes*. 2021 Oct 7;2021.

Tomayko EJ, **Tovar A**, Fitzgerald N, Howe CL, Hingle MD, Murphy MP, Muzaffar H, Going SB, Hubbs-Tait L. Parent Involvement in Diet or Physical Activity Interventions to Treat or Prevent Childhood Obesity: An Umbrella Review. *Nutrients*. 2021 Sep 16;13(9):3227.

Kang AW, Gans KM, von Ash T, Castagneri D, Dionne L, **Tovar A**, Risica PM. Physical Activity Levels among Preschool-Aged Children in Family Child Care Homes: A Comparison between Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Children Using Accelerometry. *Children (Basel)*. 2021 Apr 28;8(5):349.

Dobson P, Burney R, Hales D, Vaughn A, **Tovar A**, Ostbye T, Ward D. Self-Efficacy for Healthy Eating Moderates the Impact of Stress on Diet Quality Among Family Child Care Home Providers. *J Nutr Educ Behav*. 2021 Apr;53(4):309–315.

Moore AM*, Vadiveloo M, McCurdy K, Bouchard K*, **Tovar A**. A recurrent cross-sectional qualitative study exploring how low-income mothers define snacks and reasons for offering snacks during infancy. *Appetite*. 2021 Feb 18;162:105169.

Bauer KW, Chriqui JF, Andreyeva T, Kenney EL, Stage VC, Dev D, Lessard L, Cotwright CJ, **Tovar A**. A Safety Net Unraveling: Feeding Young Children During COVID-19. *Am J Public Health*. 2021 Jan;111(1):116–120.

2020

Cheney AM, Nieri T, Ramirez A*, Garcia G, Vaca L, Valencia E, Versteeg C, Molina A, Castillo M, **Tovar A**. Grow well/Creceer bien: a protocol for research on infant feeding practices in low-income families. *BMC Public Health*. 2020 Sep 21;20(1).

Ramirez A*, Vadiveloo M, Risica PM, Gans KM, Greaney ML, Mena NZ, Cooksey Stowers K, **Tovar A**. Dietary Contributors to Food Group Intake in Preschool Children Attending Family Childcare Homes: Differences between Latino and Non-Latino Providers. *Nutrients*. 2020 Nov 29;12(12).

Kang AW, Ash TR, **Tovar A**, Gans KM, Minkel J, Mena NZ*, Risica PM. Exploring Parenting Contexts of Latinx 2-to-5-Year Old Children's Sleep: Qualitative Evidence Informing Intervention Development. *Pediatr Nurs*. 2020 Sep–Oct;54:93–100.

Hasin S*, Dev DA, **Tovar A**. Participation in the CACFP Ensures Availability but not Intake of Nutritious Foods at Lunch in Preschool Children in Child-Care Centers. *J Acad Nutr Diet*. 2020 Oct;120(10):1722–1729.e1.

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Book Chapter

Handbook of Obesity, Vol. 1, Epidemiology, Etiology, and Physiopathology, Third Edition
Editors: George A. Bray and Claude Bouchard. Updated 2022 by CRC Press.

Chapter 41. The influence of culture on obesity. Alison Tovar, MPH, PhD and Aviva Must, PhD

Handbook of Obesity, Vol. 1, Epidemiology, Etiology, and Physiopathology, Third Edition
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Chapter 41. The influence of culture on obesity
Alison Tovar, MPH, PhD and Aviva Must, PhD

Conference Presentations

*Indicates a student or trainee for whom I was a mentor at the time of presentation.

V Oddo, J Leider, A Tovar, L Powell, A Pipito, E Elenio*, M Vadiveloo. Impact of the Statewide *Eat Well, Be Well* SNAP Nutrition Incentive Program on Food and Nutrition Security. APHA 2025 Annual Meeting and Expo

J Leider, E Elenio*, V Oddo, A Pipito, L Powell, M Vadiveloo, A Tovar
Evaluating the impact of a statewide fruit and vegetable incentive program on SNAP participants' dietary intake: Short-term findings from the Eat Well, Be Well Program. APHA 2025 Annual Meeting and Expo

Perry M*, Tovar A. Associations between food parenting practices and children's fruit and vegetable intake among Latine caregiver-child dyads. International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. New Zealand. June 2025.

Gans K., Esquivel V, Warykas, Tovar A, Risica P. Increasing water availability and accessibility in family childcare homes to improve young children's water intake: Results from the "Drink Well/Bebe Bien" Study. Society for Behavioral Medicine conference, San Francisco, CA, March 2025.

Tovar A, Elenio E, Powell L, Leider J, Pipito A, Arriola Carnicelli L, Oddo V, Byker Shanks C, Reale H, Parker H, Vadiveloo M. Methods and Baseline Characteristics of “Eat Well Be Well”, an Evaluation of the Rhode Island Retail SNAP Incentive. International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity Conference. Omaha, Nebraska. May 2024

Gans K, Tovar A, Esquivel V, Warykas S, Zambrano V, Miller M, Markham Risica P. Barriers, facilitators and strategies to improve water access and young children’s water intake in family childcare homes: Baseline Results from the Drink Well/Bebe Bien study. Oral presentation at International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity Annual Meeting, Uppsala, Sweden, June 16, 2023

Ramirez A, Fox K*, Melo Herrera Y*, Gans K, Markham Risica P, McCurdy K, Jennings E, Tovar A. Goals, Facilitators, and Barriers Identified by Caregivers in an In-Home Intervention to Improve Feeding Practices and Child Diet Quality. Oral presentation at International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity Annual Meeting, Uppsala, Sweden, June 16, 2023.

Melo Herrera Y*, Vadiveloo M, Oaks BM, Quashie NT, Blau S, Tovar A. WIC-Tailored, Pre-filled Online Shopping Carts Influence WIC Food Benefit Redemption. American Heart Association Epi Lifestyle 2024 meeting. Chicago, Illinois, March 2024.

Melo Herrera Y*, Vadiveloo M, Oaks BM, Quashie NT, Tovar A. Associations between WIC Participation and Women’s Diet Quality, NHANES 2011-2018. *Ann Behav Med.* (2023) 57 (Suppl 1):S1-S646. Abstract citation ID: kaad011.0586

Melo Herrera Y*, Vadiveloo M, Oaks BM, Quashie NT, Tovar A. Improving the Diet Quality of WIC-Participating Women Using Digital Food Environments: Study Protocol. *Curr Dev Nutr.* 2023;7(Supplement 1). DOI: 10.1016/j.cdnut.2023.101740
Version 2:

Melo Herrera Y*, Vadiveloo M, Oaks BM, Quashie NT, Tovar A. Associations between WIC Participation and Women’s Diet Quality, NHANES 2011-2018. Society of Behavioral Medicine’s Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions. Phoenix, Arizona, April 2023.

Melo Herrera Y*, Vadiveloo M, Oaks BM, Quashie NT, Tovar A. Improving the Diet Quality of WIC-Participating Women Using Digital Food Environments: Study Protocol. American Society of Nutrition’s Nutrition 2023 meeting. Boston, Massachusetts, July 2023.

Francis L., Kracht C., Tovar A., Chen W., Perrin N., Lee R., Von Ash T., Gans K. Examining the Routine Use of Digital Technology to Create Opportunities for Active Play in the ECE Setting, International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA), Uppsala, Sweden, June 14-17, 2023

Francis L., Kracht C., Chen W., Tovar A., Gans K., Lee R., Von Ash T., Perrin N. Examining the Use of Digital Technology for Nutrition Training in the ECE Setting Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA), Uppsala, Sweden, June 14-17

Mena N, Risica P, Gorman K, Lofgren, I, Gans K. Tovar A. “Facilitators and barriers to

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Tovar, A, Risica, P., Karpowicz, J, Ash T, Cooksey-Stowers, K, Gans, K. Nutrition and Physical Activity Environments for Infants and Toddlers in Family Childcare Homes and Centers. Part of Seminar on Research gaps and opportunities related to obesity prevention in early childcare settings. International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Pheonix

Fox, K*, McCurdy, K., Vadiveloo, M., Risica, P. M., Gans, K. M., & Tovar, A. (2022). Dimensions of Caregivers’ Feeding and Associations with Children’s Eating Behavior. International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity Annual Meeting. Phoenix, AZ

Bouchard, K*. L., Grigsby-Toussaint, D. S., Fox, K., Amin, S., Vadiveloo, M., Greaney, M., & Tovar, A. (2022). Maternal Experiences of Discussing Complementary Feeding in Primary Care. International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity Annual Meeting. Phoenix, AZ

Tovar A, McCurdy K, Gans KM, Risica PM, Fox K*, Gorin A, Papandonatos G. Results from the Strong Families Start at Home Trial to Improve the Diet Quality of Low-income, Ethnically Diverse Children. (Oral presentation) Society for Behavioral Medicine. Baltimore, MD. April 2022.

Jiang, Q., Gans, K., Atoloye, A., Risica, P., Tovar, A., & Cooksey-Stowers, K. Food swamps moderate the effect of the Healthy Start child obesity intervention in ethnically diverse family childcare homes. Abstract will be presented as a poster at the Society of Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting & Scientific Sessions in April 2022, Baltimore, MD.

Oral: *Jiang Q, Risica PM, Tovar A, Kang A, Gans KM, Nutrition and Physical Activity-related Attitudes of Family Childcare Providers and Differences by Ethnicity. Paper presentation at the Agents of Change Summit conference, San Diego, CA. Feb. 11, 2020.
Oral: Kim M. Gans, Examining the Nutrition, Physical Activity and Screen-Time Practices of Family Child Care Providers and the Diet Quality and Physical Activity of Preschool Children in Family Child Care Homes. Paper presented at Healthy Eating Research conference, Denver CO, March 5, 2020

Poster: *Jiang Q, Risica PM, Tovar A, Kang A, Gans KM, Nutrition and Physical Activity-related Attitudes of Family Childcare Providers and Differences by Ethnicity. Poster presented at Society for Behavioral Medicine, San Francisco, CA. April 4, 2020 (not presented due to Covid-19 conference cancellation)

Oral: *Ash T, Gans K, Tovar A, Risica PM. An Observational Assessment of the Sleep Environment in Family Child Care Homes. Oral presentation at Society for Behavioral Medicine, San Francisco, CA. April 4, 2020 (not presented due to Covid-19 conference cancellation)

Andrea Ramirez*, Maya Vadiveloo, Mary Greaney, Patricia Risica, Kim Gans, Nooreem

Mena, N, Tovar A. Dietary Contributors to Food Group Intake in Preschool Children Attending Family Childcare Homes. Presented at American Society for Nutrition conference. Published in Current Developments in Nutrition, Volume 4, Issue Supplement_2, June 2020, Page 268, https://doi.org/10.1093/cdn/nzaa043_119.

F Tobar, K Balestracci, A Tovar, H Hetzler, M Samson, K Gans, M Read, Amin S. *Preliminary Analysis from Statewide Stakeholder Interviews Around the Impact of Food Access During COVID-19*. Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior 53 (7), S46

D Dev, S Hasnin, S Sisson, VC Stage. **Tovar A.** (July 2020) *Validation of an Observational Measure to Capture Feeding Practices in Child Care Centers*. Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior.

A Ramirez*, M Vadiveloo, M Greaney, **Tovar A.** (June 2020) Dietary (June 2020). *Contributors to Food Group Intake in Preschool Children Attending Family Childcare Homes American Society for Nutrition*. Online.

A Moore*, M Vadiveloo, K McCurdy, **Tovar A.** (June 2020) *Availability and Pricing of Infant Snack Foods in Low-Income Communities Across Rhode Island*. American Society for Nutrition. Online.
D LoBuono*, S Dobiszewski, F Xu, **Tovar A.**, Lofgren. (June 2020) *Diet Quality, Swallow Function, and Health-Related Quality of Life Among People with Parkinson's Disease*. American Society for Nutrition. Online.

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DL LoBuono*, SS Dobiszewski, **A Tovar**, Lofren I. (June 2019) *Change in Physical Function, Swallowing and Nutritional Risk in people with Parkinson's Disease over 4 years*. Innovation in Aging.

DL LoBuono*, K Shea, SS Dobiszewski, **Tovar, A**, Lofren. (June 2019) *Dietary intake and self-reported nutrition concerns of people with Parkinson's and their informal caregivers*. Innovation in Aging.

Oral: Mena N, Tovar A, Risica P, Dionne L, Mello J, Gans K (presenter). Family Child Care Provider Predictors of Child Diet Quality Among 2-to-5-Year-Olds. Paper presented at ISBNPA, June 5 2019, Prague, Czech Republic.

Oral: Risica PM, Tovar A, Dionne K, Mena NZ, Mello J, Gans K. Comparing the family child care provider food environment with dietary quality of children in their care. ISBNPA, June 6 2019, Prague, Czech Republic.

Tovar A, Kang,A,Dionne,L, Mena,N,Gans,K, Risica, P. Exploratory Factor Analysis of Observed Feeding Practices Among Family Child Care Home Providers. Oral Presentation. American Society for Nutrition. June 8, 2019, Baltimore, USA.

Oral: Participation in an Obesity Prevention Intervention Improves Diet Quality of 2-5 Year Old Children Cared for in Family Childcare Homes: Results from the Healthy

Start/Comienzos Sanos Trial. Author(s): Kim M. Gans, PhD, MPH1, Alison Tovar, PhD2, Nooreem Mena, MS2, Kristen Cooksey Stowers, PhD3, Qianxia Jiang4, Laura Dionne, MS5, Jennifer Mello, MPH1 and Patricia Risica, DrPH6 . American Public Health Association conference, Philadelphia PA, November 5, 2019

Oral: Associations between food swamps, foods served by ethnically diverse family child care home providers and diet quality of 2-5 year old children. Kristen Cooksey Stowers, PhD1, Laura Dionne, MS2, Kim Gans3, Patricia Markham Risica, DrPH4, Alison Tovar, PhD5, Jennifer Mello, MPH4, Qianxia Jiang6 and Nooreem Mena, MS5, American Public Health Association conference, Philadelphia PA, November 4, 2019

Poster. Abstract ID# 440874 Title: Examination of ethnic differences in accelerometer-measured physical activity levels among preschool-aged children in family child care homes. Author(s): Augustine Kang, MSc1, Kim Gans, PhD, MPH2, Tayla Ash, SD3, Danielle Castagneri, BA4, Shelby Flanagan, BA1, Laura Dionne, MS5, Alison Tovar, PhD6 and Patricia Markham Risica, DrPH1, November 5, 2019

Fox K.*, **Tovar A**, McCurdy K, Risica P, Gans K. (May 2019) A qualitative study of parental beliefs, goals and practices in feeding their children: a self-determination perspective. Poster presentation at: The 7th Self-Determination Theory Conference, Egmond aan Zee, Netherlands.

Tovar A, Vaughn A., Burney R., Fede J., Østbye T., & Ward D.S. (June 2018) *Predictors of Feeding Practices among Family Child Care Home Providers*. Poster presentation. American Society for Nutrition. Boston, MA.

Tovar A, Vadiveloo M, Østbye T, Benjamin-Neelon S. (June 2018) *Prevalence of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption among Infants: Findings from the Nurture Observational Birth Cohort*. Poster presentation. American Society for Nutrition. Boston, MA.

Mena NZ*, Risica P., Gans K., Lofgren I., Gorman K., & **Tovar A**. (June 2018) *How Parents Communicate with their Family Child Care Home Provider Regarding Foods Young Children Are Eating*. Oral presentation. American Society for Nutrition. Boston, MA.
Young Minority Investigator Oral Competition Finalist

Mena NZ*, Risica P., Gans K., Lofgren I., Gorman K., & **Tovar A**. (June 2018) *How Parents Communicate with their Family Child Care Home Provider Regarding Foods Young Children Are Eating*. Student poster presentation. American Society for Nutrition. Boston, MA.

Mena NZ*, Risica P., Gans K., Lofgren I., Gorman K., & **Tovar A**. (April 2018) *Parent reported factors that influence foods and beverages served to young children outside of the child care setting*. Oral Presentation, Session Title: Child Health and Nutrition Outcomes, Tufts University School of Nutrition Science and Policy 11th annual Future of Food and Nutrition Graduate Student Research Conference. Boston, MA.

Mena NZ*, Tsai M., Risica P., Gans K., Lofgren I., Gorman K., & **Tovar A**. (July 2017).

Are children who attend family child-care homes meeting dietary recommendations at home? Student poster presentation, Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior. Washington, DC. Nutrition Education for Children Division poster finalist

Gans K., Risica P., **Tovar A.**, Dionne L., Gettens K., & Mena N*. (June 2017). *Family Child Care Home provider attitudes and practices related to feeding, physical activity and screen time of the 2-5 year old children in their care.* Poster presentation, International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Victoria, Canada.

Hennessy E., Korn A., Appel J., Fullerton K., Hammond R. A., Hovmand P., Andrus S., **Tovar A.**, & Economos C. (June 2017). *Shape Up Under 5: Using systems science to engage communities in obesity prevention.* Poster presentation, International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Victoria, Canada.

Tovar A., Vaughn A., Burney R., Fede J., Østbye T., & Ward D.S. (June 2017). *Validation of an Observed Feeding Practices tool among Family Child Care Home providers.* Oral presentation, International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Victoria, Canada.

Vadiveloo M., Kaar J., Field A.E., McCurdy K., Dabelea D., & **Tovar A.** (June 2017). *Diet quality during and after pregnancy: Do maternal factors matter?* Short oral presentation, International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Victoria, Canada.

Mena NZ*, Otterbach L. *, Moore A. *, Tsai M. *, Corbeil C., & **Tovar A.** (June 2017). *Does food fussiness moderate the association between parental feeding practices and BMI among low-income Hispanic children?* Poster presentation, International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Victoria, Canada.

Tsai M. *, Mena N. *, Carter T. *, Gans K., Risica P., Lofgren I., & **Tovar A.** (May 2017). *Fruit and vegetable consumption in family child care homes.* Student poster presentation, Childhood Obesity Conference. San Diego, CA.

Tsai M. *, Mena N. *, Carter T. *, Gans K., Risica P., Lofgren I., & **Tovar A.** (April 2017). *Are meals and snacks consumed by preschool-aged children in family child care homes meeting the dietary guidelines?* Student poster presentation, Experimental Biology. Chicago, IL.

Tovar A., McCurdy K., Kaar J., Field A., Dabelea D., Van Rompay M., & Vadiveloo M. (October, 2016). *Frequency of new food introduction during infancy and reported servings of fruits and vegetables in the first year of life.* Poster presentation, Obesity Society Conference. New Orleans, LA.

Kaar J., Sauder K., Shapiro A., **Tovar A.**, Vadiveloo M., & Dabelea D. (September 2016). *The role of diet quality on metabolic health outcomes during adolescence.* Abstract for the National Conference on Women's Health Research: Sex Differences Across the Lifespan: A Focus on Metabolism. Denver, Colorado.

Fallon M. *, Halloran K. *, Gorman K., & **Tovar A.** (April 2016). *Exploring self-reported and observed feeding practices of Rhode Island Head Start teachers.* Student poster session, 37th Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions of the Society of Behavioral Medicine. Washington, DC.

Otterbach L. *, Greene G., Redding C., **Tovar A.** (April 2016). *The Impact of the Healthy Children, Healthy Families Curriculum on Maternal Food Parenting Practices.* Student poster session, 37th Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions of the Society of Behavioral Medicine. Washington, DC.

Moore A*, Melanson K, Clair-Michaud M, **Tovar, A.** (April 2016). Can Motivational Interviewing and Meal Recording Modify Food Parenting Practices?: A Feasibility Study. Student poster session, 37th Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions of the Society of Behavioral Medicine. Washington, DC.

Tandon P., **Tovar A.**, Jayasuriya A., Welker E., Schober D., Copeland K., Dev D., May-Murriel A., Amso D., & Ward D. (April 2016). *The relationship between physical activity and diet and young children's cognitive development.* Healthy Eating Research. Durham, NC.

Harper S., Greene G., McCurdy K., Mulligan K., & **Tovar A.** (August 2015) *Process evaluation of a modified nutrition education curriculum for parents.* Student poster presentation, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo. Nashville, TN.

Tovar A., Fallon M. *, Vaughn A., & Ward D. (June 2015). *Modifying the Environmental Policy Assessment and Observation tool to better capture feeding practices of Family Child Care Home providers.* International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Edinburgh, Scotland.

Mena N. *, Gorman K., Greene G., & **Tovar A.** (April 2014). *Contextual and cultural influences on parental feeding practices among Hispanics.* Student poster presentation, Experimental Biology. San Diego, CA.

VanAsch P. *, Melanson K., Gorman K., & **Tovar A.** (April 2014). *Parental perception of the Rhode Island Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program.* Student poster presentation, Experimental Biology. San Diego, CA.

Curtin A., Martins D., Schwartz-Barcott D., Yekta S., **Tovar A.**, I Maria L., & De Groot A. (November 2013). *Development of a community-academic partnership in patient centered outcomes research.* Oral presentation, American Public Health Association. Boston, MA.

Tovar A., Hennessy E., Shewchuk R., Hughes S., & Economos C. (May 2012). *Validating the Caregiver Feeding Styles Questionnaire for use with Immigrant mothers.* International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Houston, TX.

Tovar A., Hennessy E., Must A., Gute D., Hyatt R., Pirie A., Hughes S., & Economos, C. (November 2011). *Feeding styles among Immigrant mothers.* Obesity. Volume 19, Supplement 1

Tovar A., Chui K., Chasan-Taber L., & Must A. *Patterns of gestational weight gain among Latina women.* (June 2011). Society for Epidemiologic Research. Boston, MA.

Tovar A., Must A., Metayer N., & Economos C. (November 2010). *Factors associated with overweight and obesity among recent Latina, Haitian and Brazilian Immigrants to the United States*. Obesity. Volume 18 Supplement 2

Lividini K., **Tovar A.**, Must A., Economos C., & Goldberg J. (November 2009). *Patterns of activity and care in urban children during summer months: The Summer Activity Study of Somerville Youth (SASSY)*. Volume 17 Supplement 2

Tovar A., Chasan-Taber L., Bermudez O., & Must A. (November 2009). *Acculturation and gestational weight gain in a predominantly Puerto Rican population*. Obesity. Volume 17 Supplement 2

Tovar A., Must A., Economos C., Lividini K., & Goldberg J. *School's out: What are children doing? The Summer Activity Study of Somerville Youth (SASSY)*. (June 2009). Oral presentation, International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Lisbon, Portugal.

Tovar A., Chasan-Taber L., Hyatt R.R., Bermudez O.I., & Must A. *Perceptions of weight gain during pregnancy among Hispanic women*. (October 2008). Annual Scientific Meeting of the Obesity-Society, Volume: 16 S168-S168. Phoenix, AZ.

Tovar A., Chasan-Taber L., Bermudez O., & Must A. *The role of diet in glucose disturbance during pregnancy in Latina women*. (June 2008). American Journal of Epidemiology. 167 (11) S29-S29. 41st Annual Meeting of the Society-for-Epidemiologic-Research. Chicago, IL

Tovar A., Chasan-Taber L., & Must A. *Gestational weight gain and abnormal glucose tolerance among Hispanic women*. (October 2007). Oral presentation, The Obesity Society Meeting. New Orleans, LA.

Tovar A., Chasan-Taber L., & Must A. *Measures of gestational weight gain among Hispanic women*. (June 2007). Abstract, Society for Pediatric and Perinatal and Epidemiologic Research. Boston, MA.

Hyde J., & **Tovar A.** *From research to advocacy: Assessing the local public health infrastructure in Massachusetts*. (November 2006). Abstract and oral presentation, American Public Health Association. Boston, MA.

Tovar A., Ameho C., Blumberg J., Peterson J., & Booth S. *Effect of dietary Vitamin E on Vitamin K tissue concentrations in rats*. (April 2005). Experimental Biology. San Diego, CA.

Butler D., Zuehlke J., **Tovar A.**, Moreland E., Milaszewski K., Anderson B., & Laffel L. *Family factors related to glycemic control in youth with type 1 diabetes (T1DM)*. (June 2003). American Diabetes Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Moreland E., **Tovar A.**, Zuehlke J., Laffel L. *Comparison of psychosocial and physiologic challenges during puberty in T1DM*. (June 2003). 63rd Scientific Sessions of the American-Diabetes-Association. New Orleans, LA.

Kumar S.V., Connell A., Kapoor A., Khatri D., Lacika J., **Tovar A.**, Vangsness L., Zuehlke J., Pentland S., & Laffel L. *Learning and predicting blood glucose results to optimize glycemic control.* (November 2002). Second Annual Diabetes and Technology Meeting.

Laffel L., Loughlin C., **Tovar A.**, Zuehlke J., Moltz K., Miller M., & Brink S. *Sick Day Management (SDM) using blood - hydroxybutyrate (OHB) vs. urine ketone testing significantly reduces ER visits & hospitalizations in youth with type 1 diabetes (T1DM): Results of a randomized clinical trial.* (June 2001). American Diabetes Association Conference, San Francisco, CA.

Invited Interviews and Talks

Health Equity Research In Practice: Centering Equity in Early Childhood to Improve Nutrition and Food Security among Young Children. March 2025. Organized by Brown University Medical School and Human Behavior and Psychiatry.

Community Engaged Research Panel. April 2025. RI Public Health Conference.

NOPREN–RWJF Healthy Eating Research Summer Speaker Series on Policy, Systems and Environments Impacting Young Children. June 2025.

Presenter. Community-Engaged Research and Teaching Retreat. The Power of Purposeful, Creative Collaboration in a Challenging Time. August 2025.

Invited Seminar. Cornell Maternal and Child Nutrition Program. Barriers and Facilitators to WIC Participation and Retention: Insights from Clients, Providers, and Interactions Through the Health Equity Implementation Framework. October 2025.

Panel Speaker. [Rhode Island Life Index Launch](#). December 2024.

Presentation at Bloomberg Foundations' Annual U.S. Food Policy Evaluation Project "Overview of What's on Your Plate Sub-Study". (Online) November 2024

Panel Speaker. Swearer Center Community Engaged Teaching and Research Retreat. August 2024.

Panel Speaker Community Engaged Workshop Series Part 3. STAR COBRE. May 2024

Development of a Quality Improvement Toolkit for Measurement and Communication of Obesity Risk in Head Starts. Healthy Eating Research Conference. Denver, Colorado. March 2024.

Panel Moderator. Produce Prescription Programs within the Wider Food as Medicine Context. Growing Produce Prescription Programs in RI. Expanding the Impact of Fruit and Vegetable Prescriptions in the State. Summit. Feb. 28, 2024

Empowering Families: Bridging the Communication Gap in Head Start for Childhood

Health and Wellness. Presentation to Brown Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America. November 23, 2023

What's on Your Plate Study: Design and Baseline Results. Presentation to Bloomberg Philanthropies Food Policy Internal Advisory Board. November 15, 2023.

Food insecurity as a social determinant of health. Keynote Presentation for the Rhode Island Food Bank Annual Meeting. October 30th, 2023.

Navigating Nutrition. Humans in Public Health Podcast. Episode 16. July 25, 2023.

National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS) Be Healthy, Be Safe, Be Well Health and Mental Health Leaders Institute (HMHLI). Keynote Talk: What Early Care and Education Providers Can Do to Improve Nutrition and Food Security Among Young Children. Followed by remarks from the Deputy Secretary for Health and Human Services in the US. May 25, 2023

Webinar for Early Childhood Working Group. Results from a Healthy Eating Research Project - Development of a Quality Improvement Toolkit for Measurement and Communication of Obesity Risk in Head Starts. Webinar Date: Monday, February 27, 2023

Catalyzing Communities Learning Collaborative Keynote: Centering Equity in Early Childhood to Improve Nutrition and Food Security among Young Children. Invited Keynote talk. November 2022.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Webinar Series: Advancing Equity in Early Childhood. Head Start and Obesity Risk. Invited Talk by Nemours Children's Health and Healthy Eating Research, a program of Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Virtual Webinar. June 2022.

Temple Social Determinants of Health Course: Guest Speaker Invitation. Development of a Quality Improvement Toolkit for Measurement and Communication of Obesity Risk in Head Starts: HER Commissioned Research Project. September 2022.

University of Georgia. Nutrition Education Methods: Guest Speaker Invitation: Lessons Learned from the Strong Families Start at Home Study. March 2022.

Interview on Release of the RWJF HER Healthy Eating Guidelines for children 2-8 years. Telemundo News Channel. October 25, 2021.

Interview on Release of the RWJF HER Healthy Eating Guidelines for children 2-8 years. Spanish Radio Fresno, CA 1 KHIT-FM and Radio Bilingue.

Annual Graduate Faculty Summit Presenter "Strategies to Promote Professional Development and Career Readiness." University of Rhode Island. March 30, 2021

Moderator Healthy Eating Research Annual Conference. Nutrition in Early Childcare and Education during and post COVID-19. March 26, 2021

The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Access in Rhode Island, Keynote speaker, Rhode Island Food Summit. January 19, 2021

Moderator Healthy Eating Research, The Nutrition and Obesity Policy Research and Evaluation Network. Summer Speaker Series for Students USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. Recorded July 15, 2020

Invited Talk to National Guard on Obesity Prevention. University of Rhode Island. March 2018

Workshop Presenter: Assessing nutrition and physical activity environments in Early Care and Education (ECE) settings: A workshop on using the Environment and Policy Assessment and Observation (EPAO) Tools. International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Victoria, Canada. June 2017

Research to policy in a new frontier: Family Child Care Homes. Feeding practices of Family Childcare home Providers. Childhood Obesity Conference. San Diego, CA. May 2017

University of Rhode Island, Food Summit. "Food Insecurity and Obesity." January 2017

Invited speaker to Brown University, Rena Wing Research Seminar: "Early Prevention of Obesity: Importance of Feeding and Community-Based Interventions among Minority Populations." April 2016

Invited speaker to University of Connecticut, Department of Nutrition: "Early Prevention of Obesity: Importance of Feeding and Community-Based Interventions among Minority Populations." April 2016

Invited speaker to Dartmouth University, School of Medicine: "Early Prevention of Obesity: Importance of Feeding and Community-Based Interventions among Minority Populations." February 2016

Symposium speaker. "Children's influence on home child care provider's feeding practices: Exploring bi-directional influences". International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Edinburgh, Scotland. June 2015

Invited webinar speaker, Disparities in early childhood obesity: Risk factors and possible solutions. Part of American Psychological Association Ethnicity and Health in America Series and in recognition of National Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month. October 2015

Invited webinar speaker, Modifying the Environment and Policy Assessment and Observation (EPAO) tool to better capture feeding practices of family childcare home providers. Early Care and Education National Call. April 2015

Symposium speaker, Nutrition practices in family child care homes: Does participation in CACFP and ethnicity of provider matter? Society for Research in Child Development. Philadelphia, PA. March 2015

Research panel presenter. Healthy Summers Summit. National Learning Association. Washington DC. May 2012

Symposium presenter, Early prevention of obesity in Immigrant populations. “Trends and Determinants of Weight Gain in Recent Immigrants” symposium, International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity. Austin, TX. May 2012

Symposium presenter, Adhering to gestational weight gain guidelines: From clinic to the community. Community of Scholars Symposium: Predicting, Altering and Optimizing the Cardio-Metabolic Health and Weight of Mothers and Children, Pregnancy as a Crystal Ball. University of Massachusetts, Worcester, MA. May 2011

GRANT FUNDING

Funded Extramural Grants

Principal Investigator

1. National Institute of General Medical Sciences (PI: Rounds)
5U54GM115677: Advance Clinical and Translational Research (Advance CTR)
Core Lead 09/01/2023-06/30/2026/
Community Engagement and Outreach Core
Total Award: \$19,943,465; Subaward: \$88,184

2. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), through a cooperative agreement with USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) (Barone, PI- Department of Health & Tovar, PI Brown)
Rhode Island State Department of Health WIC CIAO Project. 5/1-23-10/31/24
Total Award: \$855,200

3. NICHD, NH (Tovar, Co-Investigator)
1R01HD115951-01 09/17/24-05/31/29
Total Award: \$692,557

Effectiveness of a Multilevel Rural Community Engagement Model for Improving Children’s Dietary Intake in Family Child Care Homes

4. NICHD, NIH (Tovar, PI)
1R01HD108832-01A1 3/8/23-2/28/28
Total Award: \$2,878,013.

- Strong Families Start at Home/Familias Fuertes Comienzan en Casa: A novel Video and Motivational Interviewing Intervention to improve diet quality of low-income, ethnically diverse children
5. University of Illinois Chicago/Bloomberg Foundation (Tovar, MPI)
12/01/2022 to 11/30/2024
Total Award: \$352,914
Evaluation of U.S. Food Policies - Nutrition Evaluation of the Rhode Island Retail SNAP Incentive Pilot Program
 6. NIDDK, NIH (Tovar, MPI)
R01 DK131940
07/01/23 - 03/31/26
Total Award: \$973,346
Healthy Start: An Innovative, Multi-level Intervention with family childcare providers and families to improve the dietary behaviors of pre-school children
 7. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, (Co-I)
07/01/2024 - 06/30/2026
Total Award: \$455,240
Expanding & Advancing a Structural Racism Database to Include Food Justice Legal Domains
 8. Center for Disease Control, (Consultant with RI Department of Health)
09/30/2023 - 09/29/2025
\$57,226
Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Program's Early Care and Education Initiatives
 9. Healthy Eating Research, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Tovar, PI)
2/1/22-04/30/23
Total Award: \$30,600
Development of a Quality Improvement Toolkit for Measurement and Communication of Obesity Risk in Head Starts
 10. Peter G. Peterson Foundation (Tovar, MPI)
8/31/22-9/1/23
Total Award: \$100,000
Developing and Testing a Produce Prescription Implementation Blueprint to Improve Food Security in a Clinical Setting
 11. NHLBI, NIH (Tovar, PI)
R34 HL155685-01A1
7/1/2018-6/30/21
Total Award: \$730,661
A Home-based Video and Motivational Interviewing Intervention to Improve Preschoolers Diet Quality and Parental Food Parenting Practices
 12. Executive Office of Health and Human Services, RI (Tovar, MPI)
500-2416-0000-0008104
7/1/19-6/30/21
Total Award: \$200,000

Developing Simulations and Training to Enhance Motivational Interviewing Skills in Behavioral and Primary Health Care among Nurses

13. Executive Office of Health and Human Services, RI (Tovar, PI) 7/1/17-6/30/18
Total Award: \$66,683
Nurses for Obesity Prevention: A need for Education.
14. NHLBI, NIH (Ward PI; Tovar, PI of Early Career Investigator Supplement)
5/1/14-4/30/17
3R01HL108390-03 Total Award: \$354,230
Understanding Child Care Providers Feeding Practices
15. Blue Cross Blue Shield of RI (Tovar, PI) 6/1/15 – 5/31/17
Total Award: \$55,000
Niño’s Activos y Sanos (NASA): Healthy Active Children in Rhode Island,
16. Rhode Island Foundation, (Tovar, PI) 4/1/13-3/31/14
Total Award: \$15,000
Tailoring the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program to Obesity and Chronic Disease
17. NICHD, NIH (Economos, PI; Tovar, PI of Postdoctoral Diversity Supplement)
7/1/10-6/31/12
5R01HD057841 Total Award: \$116,782
Understanding the Parent–Child feeding Relationship among New Immigrants
18. NIDDK, NIH (Chasan-Taber PI; Tovar, PI of Doctoral Diversity Supplement)
7/1/07-6/31/09
R01DK064902 Total Award: \$62,864
Weight Gain during Pregnancy in Latina Women: Gestational Diabetes, Diet, Eating Behaviors and Acculturation

Co-Investigator

1. NHLBI, NIH (Dev, PI) 09/17/2024 - 05/31/2029
Effectiveness of a Multilevel Rural Community Engagement Model for Improving Children's Dietary Intake in Family Child Care Homes
19. NIAID, NIH (McQuaid, PI) 09/05/25-8/31/2027
1R21AI190745-01
The Context of Food Allergy Management for Latino Children: Identifying Drivers of Health Disparities.
2. NHLBI, NIH (Phelan, PI) 05/05/2022- 01/30/2023

- Healthy Hearts/Corazones Saludables: Partnering with US home visiting programs to promote cardiovascular health in Hispanic and non-Hispanic mothers and children
3. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, (Gans, PI) 4/1/21-3/31/23
Understanding & increasing water availability and accessibility in family childcare homes to improve young children's water & sugary beverage intake
 4. NIMHD, NIH (Cheney & Nieri, MPI) 3/1/19-2/28/24
5U54MD013368-03
Addressing Early Childhood Obesity in Low-Income Families
 5. Rhode Island Foundation (Amin, PI) 5/1/20-4/30/23
Addressing Low-Income and Food Insecure RI Families at Primary Care Clinics: A Pilot Study, Rhode Island Foundation
 6. NHLBI, NIH (Gans/Risica, MPI) 7/1/14-6/30/18
R01 HL123016
Improving nutrition and physical activity environments in home-based childcare
*Diversity Supplement Funded for my doctoral student Nooreem Mena
 7. NHLBI, NIH (Gillman/Economos, PI) 9/1/13- 5/31/18
1R01HL115485
Systems Science to Guide Whole-of-Community Childhood Obesity Interventions: Shape Up Under Five
 8. CYFAR, USDA (Sebelia, PI) 10/1/13-9/30/18
Integrating Nutrition Education into Providence Full-Service Community Schools

Funded Intramural Grants

1. Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Program's Early Care and Education Initiatives (1NU58DP007551-01-00) 12/23 - 11/28
Center for Disease and Control
2. URI Proposal Development Program (Tovar, PI) 7/1/20-6/30/21

Total Award: \$20,317
Informing the Feasibility of an Infant Feeding Intervention in a high-risk Pediatric Clinical Population
3. National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Multistate Research Project (RI0018-1001894)
Total Award: \$150,000

4. URI Multicultural Enhancement Fund 9/1/12-6/30/13
Create Culturally Appropriate Content and Activities for Introduction to Public Health Nutrition Course

Consultant

1. Produce-ing Potential: Expanding the Impact of Fruit and Vegetable Prescriptions in Rhode Island. (RI Food Policy Council) 06/1/23-05/31/25
2. Kellogg Foundation (Bauer, PI) 1/1/22 12/31/24
Feeding MI Families
3. NIDDK, NIH (Savage, PI) 7/1/19-6/30/24

R01 DK120754-01
ONE PATH: Optimizing Nutrition Education for Parents and Teacher for Healthy Growth
4. Department of Health, Health Resources and Services Administration RI 6/1/19-5/31/22
Grants to States to Support Oral Health Workforce Activities Program
5. Office of Early Childhood. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Innovation grant 11/1/17-10/1/18
UH4MC30743
Developed online learning modules for home visitors working with expectant mothers and high-risk families with children birth to age 5.

TEACHING

Sep 2022-May 2025 Community-Engaged Research in Public Health (PHP 1810).
Providence, RI. Sole Instructor

This course provides an overview of theories, principles, and strategies associated with Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) through students' own participatory learning. CBPR is a collaborative approach to research that draws on the expertise of all partners to address health equity and justice. CBPR combines methods of inquiry with capacity-building strategies that strive to make research meaningful and relevant to specific communities. CBPR supports action-oriented and community-partnered approaches to public health research that recognizes and promote community assets and expertise. CBPR calls on researchers to engage in anti-oppressive practices, which requires researchers to tap into their embodied experiences of research. Contemplative practices such as mindfulness and critical reflection are powerful tools to support researchers in this work

Sep 2023-Dec. 2025 Public Health Nutrition. (PHP-1998). Providence, RI. Sole Instructor.

The goal of this interdisciplinary seminar is to introduce the concepts and basic principles of public health nutrition with a focus on the United States. Students will gain an understanding of the science behind government-issued dietary recommendations and learn about methods of dietary assessment, determinants of food intake and nutritional status, and individual-level and environmental-level interventions to improve diet. The course will emphasize the ways in which environmental factors and public policy can influence the nutritional status of diverse population groups. Through discussions and debates, students will explore and critically discuss current public health nutrition controversies, such as taxation of less healthful foods, nutrition restrictions on food stamp purchases, federal agricultural policy, and school food policy among other contested topics

Sep 2020 -Dec 2021 Graduate Seminar (NFS 512), University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI. Co-instructor.

This seminar is designed to expose graduate students to different areas of research in nutrition and to offer a forum for discussing this research, including the different methodologies, research findings and implications for public health and policies. It will offer students an opportunity to practice their presentation skills, learn how to ask appropriate and engaging questions, provide and receive constructive criticism/feedback from each other and from faculty on ways to improve their presentation.

Jan 2014 – Dec 2020 Public Health Nutrition (NFS 212), University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI. Sole Instructor.

The goal of this interdisciplinary course is to provide an introduction to the concepts and basic principles of public health nutrition and to explore one of the greatest public health challenges the U.S. faces: the obesity epidemic. This course has a special emphasis on multicultural learning through examples of health disparities and vulnerable populations. Through multiple assignments and discussions, students have an opportunity to critically think about a challenge in their own environment that hinders their own health and come up with their own solution to this problem.

Sept 2013 – Dec 2021 Community Nutrition (NFS 506), University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI. Sole Instructor.

This course provides presentations, readings and activities related to the broad range of community-based nutrition research, programs and policies in the US today. Students become familiar with community-based research and programs focused solely on nutrition as well as those in which nutrition is one of several components. Students engage in skill-building and participatory activities, as well as solving case examples using creative and innovative approaches to community nutrition.

Aug 2009 – June 2011 Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Boston, MA. Postdoctoral Fellow and consultant for Childhood Obesity 180, under supervision of Dr. Christina Economos. Co-instructor Community/Public Health Nutrition (Nutr 228).

Jan 2006 – Aug 2009 Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Boston, MA.
Doctoral dissertation, under the supervision of Professor Aviva Must. Teaching assistant nutrition in the lifecycle (Nutr 301) and principles of biostatistics (PH 206). Co-instructor research methods in public health (PH 221).

Mentoring

Major Professor, Doctoral Students

September 2024-present Emily Elenio
September 2023-present Michelle Perry
September 2022-present Ellis Silva*
January 2021- June 2024 Yarisbel Herrera Melo+
September 2018- May 2022 Katelyn Fox
September 2016- May 2020 Amy Moore**
September 2015- May 2019 Noereem Mena***
September 2016- September 2018 Kate Belastracci

+Nutrition & Obesity and Policy Evaluation Network Summer Stipend Award.

*Community Engaged Research Fellow

**URI Diversity Fellowship

***NIH Diversity Supplement: 3R01HL123016-02S1 & Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Award

Major Advisor Master Student Thesis

September 2024-May 2025 Blaine Ramahlo
September 2024-May 2025 Zoe Maxwell
September 2023- May 2024 Faith Hardy
June 2023- May 2024 Nour Abaherah
January 2023- May 2024 Shivani Ayalasonmayajula*
January 2023- May 2024 Emily Elenio
January 2023-May 2024 Leonardo Arriola Carnicelli*+
September 2022-May 2023 Sarah Blau**
September 2020- May 2023 Jordan Young
September 2020- May 2022 Kelly Bouchard
September 2018-May 2020 Margaret Samson
September 2018-May 2020 Andrea Ramirez
September 2017-May 2019 Taylor Berlinksi
September 2016- May 2018 Jessie Boukarim***
September 2016- May 2018 Tayla Carter
September 2014-May 2016 Maggie Tsai***
September 2014-May 2016 Amy Moore
September 2014-May 2016 Laura Otterbach
September 2014-May 2016 Megan Fallon
September 2013-May 2015 Patrick Vanash
September 2013-May 2015 Sarah Harper
September 2013-May 2015 Noereem Mena

*Hassenfeld Summer Scholarship or Community Engaged Research Award
**Selected as Brown Research Matters Finalist
***Recipients of URI Diversity Fellowships
+Recipient of Yat K. Tow Prize to highlight outstanding community engagement

Supervisor for Master Applied Public Health Students

January 2023-December 2023 Shivani Ayalasomayajula
January 2023-December 2023 Emily Elenio
January 2023-December 2023 Hannah Reale
Summer 2022 Huy Tran
June 2022-June 2023 Sarah Fischbach

Master and PhD Thesis Reader

Rashi Patel
Cecy Granados
Jadis Chen
Rehan Aslam
Sarah Fischbach
Sammy Amkieh

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Mentor

Sept 2025-current Leeah Chang
Sept. 2024- May 2025 Zoe Maxwell
June 2023-May 2024 Michael Calixto

Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate students are included in our research team and obtain experience working on a research project.

Fall 2025-Spring 2026 Cecilia Cheng, Leeah Chang, Elena Hurtado Solbert, Virginia He, Alejandra Mineo-Levitsty, Coco Huang, Caroline Kelly
Fall 2023-Spring 2026 Alexia Sanchez Contreras
Fall 2020-2022 Emily Browne
January 2019 -2021 Ivonne Sical*
January 2019-2021
September 2019-Fall 2020 Catherine Rall
September 2018- June 2020 Rachel Oliva
September 2018- May 2019 Claudia Desantis
September 2018- May 2019 Jamie Froment
September 2018- May 2019 Lauren Oliveira
September 2018- May 2019 Kelly Bianco
September 2018- May 2019 Bailey Slocum
September 2015- May 2019 Carly Ellis
September 2016- May 2019 Carolina de Araujo
September 2016- September 2018 Fatima Tobar
September 2016- May 2017 Laurel Scott
September 2015-May 2016 Margaret Garcia

September 2015-May 2016 Lais Duarte
September 2015-May 2016 Tayla Carter
September 2015-May 2016 Blaire Cutler
September 2015-May 2016 Mariaelisa Castillo
September 2013-May 2014 Megan Fallon
January 2013- May 2013 Ashley Hebert

*Recipient of URI Research Diversity Award

Visiting students

June 2018- October 2018 Juana Esther Cuadrado, Departamento de Nutrición, Facultad de Farmacia. UCM, Madrid, Spain

External Reviewer for PhD Thesis, University of New Castle Australia

Graduate student Committees

September 2019-September 2023 Bridget Owens, Nutrition
September 2018-May 2023 Helena Bentil, PhD, Nutrition
September 2017-May 2021 Dara LuBuono, PhD, Nutrition
September 2016-May 2018 Haley Parker, MS, Nutrition
September 2015-May 2017 Silvia Lepe, MS, Nutrition
September 2015-May 2017 Flavia Cattaneo, MS, Nutrition
September 2015-May 2017 Jennifer Goodwin MS, Nutrition
September 2013- May 2017 Kate Halloran, PhD, Psychology
September 2014-May 2016 Kelsi Chappell, MS, Nutrition
September 2014-May 2016 Jennifer Nobles, MS, Nutrition
September 2012-May 2016 Lisa DiMaria, PhD, Nursing
September 2014-May 2016 Anna Lubiner, MS, Psychology
September 2013-May 2015 Victoria Shores, MS Nutrition
September 2013-May 2015 Donna Kelley, MS, Nutrition

External Graduate Committees

January 2021-May 2023 Violeta Chacon, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, Boston

September 2018-2024 Saima Hasin, Child, Youth and Family Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

September 2018-2024 Jasmin Smith, Child, Youth and Family Studies, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

External reviewer for Kristy Sowards Thesis. University of Newcastle, Australia.

Faculty

Robert Rosales
Anna Yeo (K-award)
Kristine Durkin (K-award)
Julia Shinnick (K-award)

Maya Vadiveloo (K-award)
Kristen Cooksey Stower (K-award)
Tany Benitez (K-award)
Karen Jennings Mathis

Languages

Fluent in Spanish and French