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UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**

Arnold School of Public Health

Center for Research in Nutrition & Health Disparities

**Nutrition Center Newsletter : Fall 2015**

**Enhanced nutrition and health  
disparities research synergy**

## **University of South Carolina researchers [\(Back to Top\)](#) receive award to support new research on food choice**

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Two University of South Carolina Arnold School of Public Health researchers have been awarded a \$5.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK government to manage a competitive grants program that supports research aimed at understanding the drivers of food choice in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Associate Professor Christine Blake and Professor Edward Frongillo, from the Department of Health Promotion, Education and Behavior in the Arnold School, will manage the grant. The Drivers of Food Choice grants program will provide funding over five years for research that has the potential to guide programs and research activities to improve food and nutrition security in poor countries.

"A better understanding of the drivers of food choice would provide guidance for more effective nutrition-sensitive programs," says Blake, who will serve as principal investigator for the project. "Improving nutrition across the life course is essential for the long-term well-being of families and communities and for successful economic and social advancement."

The investigators will form an expert technical advisory group of international scholars with expertise in nutrition, agriculture and health promotion programming in the targeted regions. The team will design a request for proposals, solicit applications from diverse organizations, manage the review and selection of sub-grantees, facilitate the delivery of light technical assistance to sub-grantees to ensure project success, coordinate dissemination of findings, and synthesize findings from funded projects to inform the wider literature on food choice and provide directions for future work in this area.

## **In this Newsletter:**

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Gabrielle (Brie) Turner-McGrievy

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## **Welcome Nutrition Center Newly Affiliated Scholars**

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Mindi Spencer PhD  
Associate Professor  
Department of Health Promotion,  
Education, and Behavior  
Institute for Southern Studies

Beverly Y. Wilson, MPH  
Research Coordinator  
University of South Carolina School of

The program aims to fund research projects that provide a deep understanding of the drivers of food choice among the poor in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Funded studies will use qualitative or quantitative methods or both to examine key aspects of food choice in one or more of the 34 countries that account for 90 percent of the global burden of undernutrition. "Many countries experience the double burden of undernutrition and increasing prevalence of obesity which is related to recent rapid changes in traditional dietary practices," Blake says. Studies that have the potential to strengthen country-level leadership in nutrition to support future efforts will be prioritized for funding.

Evidence-based, nutrition-specific interventions with the most potential for improving nutrition outcomes have resulted in the identification of key challenges to success, included limited knowledge about drivers of food choice in low- and middle-income countries. Food choices are integral to social and economic expression of identities, preferences, and cultural meanings and ultimately influence nutrient intake and health. Understanding the drivers of food choice involves the study of interconnected biological, psychological, economic, social, cultural and political factors.

Christine Blake, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Department of Health Promotion,  
Education, and Behavior  
Arnold School of Public Health



Edward A. Frongillo, Jr. Ph.D.  
Professor and Department Chair  
Department of Health Promotion,  
Education, and Behavior  
Arnold School of Public Health



Medicine

## Upcoming Events

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Tommy Tobin, Harvard Law School &  
Harvard Kennedy School  
Food & Health: Food Law and Policy  
Perspectives  
Friday, October 30, 2015  
2:00-3:00PM  
Discovery I, Room 140

6th Annual Nutrition Symposium  
Friday, March 18, 2016

## Contact Details

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Center for Research in Nutrition & Health  
Disparities  
Arnold School of Public Health  
Discovery I  
915 Greene Street, 4th Floor  
Columbia, SC 29208

803-777-6363

[outingr@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:outingr@mailbox.sc.edu)

<http://nutritioncenter.sph.sc.edu>

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**Featured Affiliated Scholar:  
Gabrielle (Brie) Turner-McGrievy**

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Brie Turner-McGrievy received her Master of Science degree in Nutrition and Registered Dietitian credentials from the University of Alabama in 2000. She went on to work in the area of clinical research for four years before pursuing her doctoral degree. Brie completed her doctoral degree in nutrition and postdoctoral fellowship at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's School of Public Health. Currently, she is an assistant professor at the University of South Carolina in the Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior.

Brie's research focuses on behavioral interventions for weight loss and the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases. Brie has published research on the use of emerging technologies for weight loss and health promotion. In particular, her research has focused on the use of podcasting and social media to deliver behavioral weight loss interventions. Her research has combined this audio delivery method with other mobile enhancements including prompting and social support delivered via Twitter and use of diet monitoring apps for internet-capable mobile devices. Brie's work has also focused on plant-based dietary approaches for chronic disease prevention and treatment among adults. She recently completed two randomized trials examining various plant-based eating styles, one among women with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome and the other among overweight and obese adults.

She has received several awards during her nutrition career including the Recognized Young Dietitian of the Year award in 2004, the 2005 Lydia J. Roberts Memorial Scholarship in Public Health Nutrition from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the Society of Behavioral Medicine's Excellence in Research Award for 2007, and the Pat Simons Award from The Obesity Society in 2012.



Gabrielle (Brie) Turner-McGrievy

Assistant Professor  
Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior  
Arnold School of Public Health

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## New NIH Biosketch Format

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OMB No. 0925-0046 (Approved Through 5/31/2016)

The image shows the top portion of the NIH Biosketch form. At the top, it says 'NIH FORM 0925-0046 (05/2016)'. Below that is the title 'BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH (Form Approved For Use Under Executive Order 12958)'. The form includes fields for 'NAME', 'TITLE', 'ORGANIZATION', 'ADDRESS', 'CITY', 'STATE', and 'ZIP'. There is a 'NOTE' section with instructions for completing the form. The form is partially obscured by a watermark.

[LINK TO THE NEW FORM](#)

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