

# Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative Impact Report: 2022-2024



Penn  
Nursing  
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

Eidos LGBTQ+  
Health Initiative



## Message from the Founding Faculty Director

LGBTQ+ individuals face stark health disparities across various fronts, from accessing care to grappling with mental health issues, cancer, HIV, and cardiovascular disease—all amidst the backdrop of backlash, discrimination and historic stigmas. Yet, the sites of health care and innovation—community-based, academia, civic, and start-ups—find themselves underfunded relative to the scale of these disparities. Worse, they often operate in isolation, stifling the potential for collaboration that could spark transformative breakthroughs.

Enter the Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative, paving a path in the academic realm with a mission to foster a stronger innovation ecosystem. Unlike conventional research hubs driven solely by academic agendas, Eidos has developed a space where diverse sectors converge, forging partnerships that transcend intellectual and financial boundaries to drive LGBTQ+ health advancements.

Eidos is on a mission to accelerate the development and testing of approaches that could narrow the gap in LGBTQ+ health inequity. By working on projects across sectors, we aim to streamline the process of identifying, developing, and implementing game-changing solutions. Our inclusive approach fosters a collective dedication to LGBTQ+ health while attracting a broader spectrum of funding sources—from government to philanthropic to business to individuals—drawn to the value of our multidisciplinary, research-driven ethos.

Eidos endeavors to shrink the timeline—currently averaging a staggering 17 years—to translate evidence-based innovations into tangible practice. By uniting community activists, scholars, civic leaders, and businesses, we're pioneering a collaborative paradigm that breaks down the silos hindering progress.

Today, we proudly present our work over our first two years, a testament to our shared commitment.

Thank you for joining us on this journey.

*Dr. José A. Bauermeister, MPH, PhD*

# Contents

Opening Message	2
Mission & Vision	5
Our Challenge	6
Our Strategy	7
Our Eidos Team & Affiliated Faculty	9
Our Work	10
Our Approach	12
Discovery	13
Advising	14
Ensuring Impact	15
Evaluation	16
Education	17
Features	18
Included Health	19
Better Together: LGBTQ+ Health & Social Connection	20
Gaingels Partnership: Jake Prigoff, Executive in Residence	21
Connecting with The Next Generation	22
Making Women's Health Inclusive	23
The Eidos Research Portfolio	24 & 25
Making SOGI Data Count	26
Connecting Conversations	27
Headlines	28
Queering Design Thinking	31

**“An investment in knowledge  
always pays the best interest.”**

— Benjamin Franklin



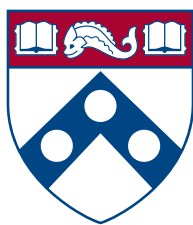
## Vision

Eidos sees a world where community experiences, diverse partnerships, thought leaders, and public health science join to advance the wellbeing of the LGBTQ+ community.

## Mission

The Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative at the University of Pennsylvania cultivates and engages emerging and experienced leaders from community, academic, civic, and business spheres to create innovative solutions for the LGBTQ+ community.

We use **social enterprise, community engagement, education, and research** to further the sustained well-being of the LGBTQ+ community.



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# Our Challenge

- Research documenting disparities across diverse health outcomes is growing, but the absence of population-based data limits the ability to understand LGBTQ+ health holistically and/or hinders generalizability of many studies' findings.
- Existing theories have not evolved to adequately account for the differences in disparity and inequity experienced across LGBTQ+ subgroups.
- There is a limited theoretical growth outside of minority stress hypotheses and the causes of inequities and disparities might differ among LGBTQ+ groups and need to be understood.
- There are insufficient evidence-based interventions and programs to address disparities in SGM health and/or racial/ethnic disparities among SGM populations.
- Efforts to address LGBTQ+ health disparities are siloed, with fragmented initiatives across academic, community, government, and non-profit sectors with limited engagement from business and enterprise.

## However, investments in LGBTQ+ populations remain meager:



**Within the NIH portfolio, a 2020 portfolio analysis found that less than 1% of funded projects focused on LGBTQ+ populations**

Yet the number of LGBTQ+ projects sponsored by NIH grew over 80% between 2015 to 2021.



**In the world of private philanthropy only \$0.28 cents out of every \$100 goes to LGBTQ+ causes**

Yet LGBTQ+ non-profits were able to increase donations 20% more than non-LGBTQ+ organization from 2015-2019.



**And in the start-up sector only 0.5% of 2.1 trillion invested went to LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs**

Yet LGBTQ+ founders created 36% more jobs than the average founder (with 16% less funding).

**Without meaningful commitment and investment from all sectors, equitable advances to improve the health and well-being of LGBTQ+ communities will lag and stagnate.**

# Our Strategy

## A Social Innovation Hub for LGBTQ+ Health and Wellness Solutions

Our team is re-energizing a siloed healthcare system with action, optimism, and collaboration. We support high-quality research, propelling it out of academia and applying it to real-world LGBTQ+ use cases, connecting startups and Venture Capital with vital expertise, building pathways between the public and private sector, and more.

**Our goal: to get more actionable, evidence-based healthcare solutions to market and in service of LGBTQ+ communities.**

1

### Turning Academic Ideas into Real-World Solutions

We identify and support the development and commercialization of LGBTQ+ health products and services at the University of Pennsylvania.

2

### Connecting Entrepreneurs with Academic Credibility

We offer comprehensive services to businesses including founders and VC companies as a mechanism to accelerate the evidence pipeline and mitigate investment risks

3

### Creating a New University Model Designed for Collaboration

We establish partnerships with business, healthcare, and community sectors to invest in an LGBTQ+ innovation pipeline ecosystem.

### Powered by a Growing Innovation Community

Shaking up a siloed healthcare system, Eidos builds connections across academic, business, non-profit, and policy sectors. Through engaging programming, expert speakers, and relevant content, we create an active community through in-person, virtual, and social media platforms.

By acting as a connector and convener, we propel not only a consistent pipeline of our own LGBTQ+ healthcare projects, but also spur collaboration for initiatives beyond our walls.

**“Eidos leverages the best Penn has to offer to make our vision a success:  
our students, staff, and faculty’s commitment to social justice  
in principle and practice.”**

*José Bauermeister, PhD, MPH, FSBM*

Albert M. Greenfield Professor of Human Relations

Professor of Psychiatry, Perelman School of Medicine. Director, Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative

Senior Fellow, Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics



## HEALTH EQUITY

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair wages, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care. For the purposes of measurement, health equity means reducing and ultimately eliminating disparities in health and its determinants that adversely affect socially marginalized groups.

Braveman et al. (2017). *The Solid Facts*

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# Our Eidos Team & Affiliated Faculty



Dolores  
Albarracin,  
PhD, MS



Dani Bassett,  
PhD, CPGS



Cedric  
Bien-Gund,  
MD



José  
Bauermeister  
MPH, PhD



Stephen  
Bonett, PhD,  
MA, RN



César  
Briceño, MD



Ed  
Brockenbrough,  
PhD, MEd



Robert  
Carpick,  
PhD



Seul Ki Choi,  
MPH, PhD



Ron Collman,  
MD



Katharine  
Baratz Dalke,  
MD, MBE



Ryan Dew,  
PhD



Nadia  
Dowshen,  
MD, MSHP



Dalmacio Dennis  
Flores, PhD, RN,  
FAAN



Ian Frank,  
MD



Teddy Goetz,  
MD, MS



Robert Gross,  
MD, MSCE



Jessica Halem,  
MBA



Holly Harner,  
PhD, MBA, MPH,  
RN, WHCNP-BC,  
FAAN



Abby  
Howe-Heyman,  
PhD, CNM, RN



John B.  
Jemmott III,  
PhD



Jonathan D  
Katz, PhD



Willey Lin,  
MBIoT, PMP



Heather  
Love, PhD



Olivia  
McPherson,  
MSc



Steven  
Meanley,  
PhD, MPH



Raina  
Merchant, MD,  
MSHP, FAHA



Marley  
Molkentin,  
MA



Desmond  
Patton, PhD,  
MSW



Sarah  
Rottenberg,  
MA



Kevin Schott,  
MA



Luis E. Seija,  
MD



Andy Tan,  
PhD, MBA,  
MPH, MBBS



Jennifer Tran,  
PhD



Beans  
Velocci,  
PhD



Dovie  
Watson, MD,  
MSCE



Annie  
Wilson, PhD



James Wolfe,  
MS, NCC



Sarah Wood,  
MD, MSHP



Julia Votto,  
MIPD



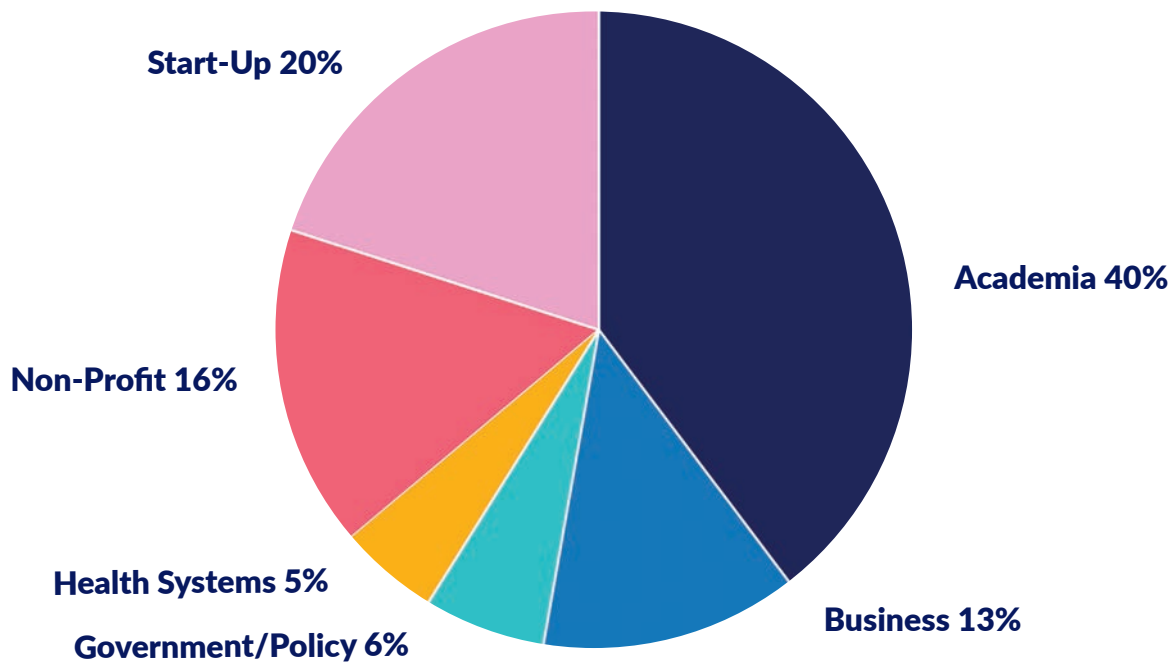
Hyunmin (David)  
Yu, PhD, MSN,  
RN

# Work by Services

We have been inspired by the positive response from every sector that we set out to convene and collaborate with.

Our team built impactful relationships within the Penn academic community, with budding LGBTQ+ health start-ups and growing companies, and with media and thought leaders in healthcare and beyond.

## Projects by Sector



Since 2022, Eidos has initiated every conversation with potential partners with one question: “How can we help?”

From this starting point relationships grew, resulting in connections ranging from finding expertise for programming to evaluation needs to securing clinical and research placements for Penn students. This approach has opened a window on community needs as well as created a pipeline for future development opportunities.



Initial Meetings: **107**

Active Projects: **37**

Completed Projects: **27**

**78**

Media, Papers,  
Talks

**191**

Connecting  
Conversation Attendance

**238**

Penn Student  
Attendees

**973**

Attendance for  
all Eidos Programs

# Our Approach

Five key services ensure we are achieving our mission.



## DISCOVERY

Explore where LGBTQ+ health research and innovation intersect to create transformative tools and programs.



## ADVISING

Collaborate on program design highlighting key priorities, aid in capacity building, and offer technical expertise to produce high-impact solutions across sectors.



## ENSURING IMPACT

Turn evidence-based strategies into economically sustainable solutions while prioritizing those in need.



## EVALUATION

Examine how existing programs and interventions improve care and well-being to assess their effectiveness and impact.



## EDUCATION

Provide training that builds tangible skills in LGBTQ+ healthcare through a wide array of speakers and workshops.



# Discovery

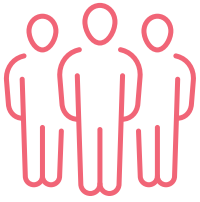
Eidos supports the generation and leveraging of high-quality research to support evidence-based solutions. Through research and partnerships, we seek to share knowledge across silos and advance a shared understanding of LGBTQ+ health.

## ProChange

Last year, representatives of ProChange Behavior Solutions joined the Summer Innovation Institute organized by Eidos. This relationship has blossomed and Eidos is partnering with ProChange Behavior Solutions who was awarded a \$324,381 small business grant from the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

Together, we will develop *Bridges*, a messaging intervention to address thwarted workplace belonging for LGBTQ+ workers. Leveraging insights from behavior change science and expertise in LGBTQ+ engagement from Eidos, this advanced Learning Management System will break new ground in job satisfaction impacting the economic stability and therefore the health of LGBTQ+ professionals.





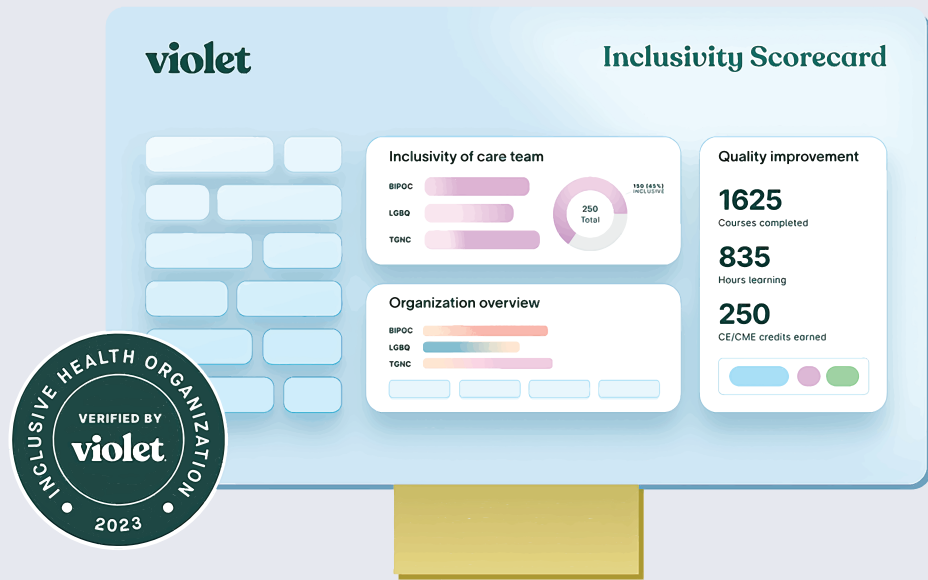
# Advising

Eidos is defining new best practices for identity-informed health care through the incorporation of sexual orientation and gender identity into clinical practice and developing new standards of training for students and clinicians.



## Violet

Violet is a start-up bringing cultural competency training to scale. Eidos created learning modules on screening for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer as well as gender affirming care for transgender and nonbinary patients in both medical and behavioral health settings.



## Penn Dental Medicine

Eidos is working alongside Penn Dental Medicine to improve Penn Dental's practices for LGBTQ+ patients. Eidos created an in-depth plan for the rationale and best practices for collecting sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) information from patients. Eidos is also developing an interactive training to teach Penn Dental Medicine faculty, students, and staff affirming skills for engaging LGBTQ+ patients in care.



# Ensuring Impact

We cannot take it for granted that progress for one group translates into gains for all members of society. Eidos is committed to supporting Women, Black, Latinx, Asian, Native American and LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs as they design, launch, and expand their solutions.

## TRACE

Eidos advised TRACE, a gender transition tracking app, in growing its relationships with investors and improving services. In addition to commissioning a report on cybersecurity from Carey Law School, Eidos invited TRACE to join the Summer Institute, sparking a transformative collaboration. Fruits of this engagement include a high-impact user study, yielding innovative platform features like voice capture, and gamified habit tracking. This research also informed their upcoming shift to a paid subscription model, marking a significant milestone in the TRACE success story.





# Evaluation

Eidos leverages science-backed expertise, community engagement, and implementation science to assess the impact and effectiveness of programs and interventions on LGBTQ+ care and well-being.

## imi

A team of scientists at Eidos worked with Hopelab to test *imi*, a free digital mental health tool designed to support LGBTQ+ youth explore and affirm their identity. They conducted a randomized controlled trial of 270 teens, 78% of whom identified as BIPOC, and 60% of whom identified as transgender and/or gender expansive genderqueer, or gender non-conforming.

The findings showed the *imi* was effective in supporting the well-being of LGBTQ+ youth, by helping them better cope with stress.

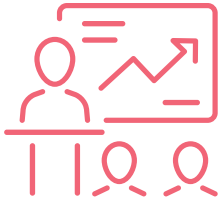
## CONGRATULATIONS!

José Bauermeister and Eidos win a gold Anthem Award for their work with Hopelab on the imi app



penneidos.org  
@penneidos

GOLD WINNER  
2ND ANNUAL  
ANTHEM  
AWARDS



# Education

Eidos builds on the educational mission of the University of Pennsylvania by creating co-learning opportunities that benefit all.

## Summer Innovation Institute

The Summer Innovation Institute is a week-long, in-person, intensive workshop giving participants the opportunity to explore design thinking, equity centered design, and strategies for collaboratively putting them into practice. Eidos invites small teams from startups and non-profits engaged in LGBTQ+ health solutions to spend the week deeply engaging on concepts and designs for new or improved offerings. The result? Innovative approaches to address LGBTQ+ health disparities that are ready to be fully developed. Our cohorts include projects from across the country and as well as Philadelphia local groups. We have been honored to host teams from the following organizations: **Cancer Support Community, Colours Organization, DiscovHER Health, LGBTQ+ Health Directory, Movement Genius, Plume, ProChange Behavior Solutions, SAGEVenture, TRACE, Therapy Center of Philadelphia, and You:Flourish.**



# Features

***The Connections we Make.  
The Silos we Break.***



# Included Health

**Included Health is a digital health company that integrates virtual care delivery with healthcare navigation.**

LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation is the company's solution for LGBTQ+ members and their families. The cornerstone of this service is a team of Care Coordinators, a diverse group of LGBTQ+ people and allies trained to provide concierge advocacy and guidance for members to find inclusive medical providers and utilize insurance benefits.

From June 1 to December 15, 2023, Eidos collaborated with Included Health to prove the scientific efficacy of LGBTQ+ Health Care. By analyzing survey satisfaction data and chat conversations between members and care coordinators, we uncovered both quantitative and qualitative insights.

Studies highlight the value of successful LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation by illustrating how it helps individuals overcome barriers to quality and inclusive medical care. The impact of LGBTQ+ Health Care Navigation is evident and has the potential to diminish health disparities within LGBTQ+ communities.



**Jaclyn Marshall**  
Senior Health  
Service Research,  
*Included Health*

**Seul Ki Choi**  
Research  
Assistant Professor,  
*Eidos LGBTQ+  
Health Initiative*

# Better Together: LGBTQ+ Health and Social Connection

Responding to the U.S. Surgeon General's May 2023 advisory, "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation," which named social disconnection a national public health emergency, Eidos developed a call to action, highlighting the outsized impact of disconnection on LGBTQ+ people.

1

## **Social connection is vital to LGBTQ+ health**

LGBTQ+ health disparities are rooted in social dynamics of marginalization and discrimination. Eliminating those disparities requires social solutions that create greater social belonging.

2

## **Intersectionality matters**

Risk of social disconnection compounds across marginalized identities. Addressing these disparities fully requires prioritizing intersecting aspects of identity including age, race, disability, sexuality, and gender identity.

3

## **Shift from individual to social solutions**

Meaningful progress requires moving away from individualizing approaches and instead prioritizing social solutions aimed at creating relational change.

4

## **Promote prosocial opportunities**

Invest in prosocial solutions that foster social inclusion, empathy, trust, and altruistic action within and across communities.

5

## **Maximize impact through bridging and scaling**

Shifting these paradigms will require scalable change across cultural settings. Prioritize coalition building and replicability to maximize your impact.

# Gaingels Partnership: Jake Prigoff, Executive in Residence

This year Eidos had a special guest in residence, Jake Prigoff, MD, general partner at Gaingels.

He spent a year working with Eidos infusing healthcare projects with a business perspective. Over a year, Dr. Prigoff collaborated with Eidos, providing insights on projects and facilitating introductions to businesses.

*“Since joining Eidos as an Executive in Residence, I’ve been impressed with the team’s ability bridge the divide between academia and industry. Eidos has shown a unique ability to help companies validate and expand their reach through evidence-based practices, and in doing so, those projects help amplify the mission of Eidos. What has impressed me most is the team’s ability to think outside the box and align academic and mission-oriented objectives with the goals of for-profit companies. These are valuable relationships that I believe will help Eidos in its mission to improve the lives of LGBTQ+ people.”*

- Jake Prigoff



# Connecting with the Next Generation

Eidos collaborates with students all across the University of Pennsylvania including Wharton, Weitzman School of Design, Carey Law School, and Penn Nursing.

These partnerships facilitate connections between students and real-world businesses and non-profits, offering invaluable learning. Student organizations have drafted legal memos, developed LGBTQ+ health products, consulted on market research, and hosted events from Eidos speakers.



**Stuart Weitzman School of Design:**  
Investing & Inclusivity Panel Discussion

**Perelman School of Medicine:**  
Queer in STEMinar

**Leonard Davis Institute:**  
SUMR Scholars

**Carey Law School:**  
Legal Memo on SOGI Data Collection and the 21st Century Cures Act

**School of Engineering and Applied Sciences:**  
Evolution of HIV/AIDS Treatment Panel Discussion

**Penn School of Nursing:**  
Dissertation Support – Unveiling the Path to LGBTQ+ Inclusive and Culturally Competent Healthcare.

**Wharton School:**  
Declaration of Workplace Equality

**School of Social Policy & Practice:**  
SAFELab

# Making Women's Health More Inclusive

Eidos has connected with health systems and startups to expand the women's health category to be more inclusive of sexual and gender minorities.

Eidos worked with the [Massachusetts Division of Insurance](#) on re-writing the assisted reproductive benefits to use more gender inclusive language. Later, Eidos began working with [Penn Medicine's LGBTQ+ Reproductive Health Program](#) to improve their patient education materials.

Eidos also built relationships with the business community. Through the Summer Innovation Institute, we consulted with [DiscovHER Health](#), an intimate wellness clinic, and provided expertise on market strategy and human-centered design approaches.

Eidos has also developed a partnership with [Seed Health](#), a health and life sciences company, most known for developing probiotics. As Seed prepared for expansion into the vaginal health category, they reached out to Eidos to ensure inclusivity and precision in their communication. To assist Seed with the launch of their new vaginal health suppository, Eidos first provided educational opportunities for Seed staff on the topic of inclusive language and practice. Following up on this, Seed and Eidos developed an educational and inclusive language primer and presentation. These documents support Seed's work across a range of human health needs—especially their current launch into the women's health category. They demonstrate important context and nuance to the discussion of inclusive language, and deliver specific guidance on inclusive, anatomy-first language to shape brand voices.

The logo for Seed Health, featuring the word "Seed" in a bold, dark green, sans-serif font. A small, dark green dot is positioned above the letter "d".

Seed



# The Eidos Research Portfolio

The Eidos research portfolio encompasses a variety of projects that actively involved researchers across Penn.

This work aims to understand and address the health needs of sexual and gender minority populations through cutting-edge science and community-engaged approaches. The Eidos research portfolio leverages public health methods and interventions to tackle persistent health disparities and promote equity in healthcare access and outcomes.

## Key Areas of Focus

- Aging
- Adolescent Health
- Cancer Prevention and Care
- Cultural Competency
- Family-Focused Programs
- HIV Prevention and Care
- Mental Health Disparities
- Primary Care Access
- Suicide Prevention
- Transgender Health



Consistent with our mission to improve health by bridging silos, Eidos research projects center the experience and wisdom of collaborative partners in communities, health systems, non-profits, businesses, and academia.

## Notable highlights from the research portfolio include:



**Parents ASSIST** Led by Dr. Dennis Flores, this intervention is designed to assist parents in navigating their children's coming out process. As part of his clinical trial, Eidos is supporting the development of implementation toolkit to facilitate the wider adoption of Parents ASSIST.



**STARS** The Supporting Transitions to Adulthood and Reducing Suicide program (STARS), co-led by Drs. Lily Brown and José Bauermeister, is testing the effectiveness of a digitally-assisted suicide prevention model for LGBTQ+ emerging adults at risk for suicide.



**SEEN** Sexual and gender minority Emerging adults Eliciting Narratives (SEEN), co-led by Dr. Jennifer Tran and José Bauermeister, is testing the feasibility of a creative narrative intervention for LGBTQ+ emerging adults of color experiencing mental health issues.



### **Juveniles para la Salud Mental**

Eidos is supporting this community-focused research project led by Stoneleigh Emerging Leader Eduardo Burgos Quezada. This project aims to identify and address the behavioral health challenges and service gaps for Central American and Mexican immigrant youth in Philadelphia through engagement with community members, culminating in actionable recommendations for improving the local behavioral healthcare system.

# Making SOGI Data Count

The use of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data in healthcare is necessary for understanding the unique health needs of LGBTQ+ populations and equipping providers to address those health needs.

Eidos provides evidence-based best practices and tailored implementation recommendations to organizations both at Penn and across sectors, supporting our partners in using SOGI data to inform quality care provision. Eidos has developed best practice and training recommendations to support the integration of SOGI into Penn Dental Medicine's clinical training and practice. We have also developed implementation guidance for local health departments troubleshooting common problems that arise in patient record management and medical billing.

*Read more about our project with Penn Dental Medicine on page 14.*

## SOGI Data Collection

What best describes your current gender identity? [Select one]

- Woman
- Man
- Nonbinary
- If not listed above, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to answer

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation? [Select one]

- Straight/  
Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Gay or Lesbian
- Queer
- If not listed above, please specify \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to answer

# Connecting Conversations

Recognizing that siloed knowledge stifles innovation, the Connecting Conversations speaker series offers interdisciplinary events that unite LGBTQ+ health leaders from across sectors of research, entrepreneurship, design, and healthcare.

Eidos has featured over 20 speakers mapping a network that connects Penn, Philadelphia, and an audience around the country.

## Topics covered include:

- Protective power of social connection for LGBTQ+ youth
- Queering healthcare offerings with a community care lens
- Experiences of queer researchers and academics
- The importance of culturally competent care
- Belonging and connection in the workplace
- LGBTQ+ family formation
- Pursuing LGBTQ+ research topics in graduate studies

## Speakers:



**Beck Bailey**  
Global Chief Diversity Officer,  
Accenture



**Luna Gayeski**  
Program Manager,  
Plume



**Jennifer Tran**  
Postdoctoral Fellow,  
School of Nursing



**Kellan Baker**  
Executive Director,  
Whitman-Walker Institute



**Joshua Lavra**  
Creative Lead,  
Hopelab



**Beans Velocci**  
Professor,  
School of Arts and Sciences



**Robert Carpick**  
Professor,  
School of Engineering and  
Applied Sciences



**Jasper Liem**  
Executive Director,  
Attic Youth Center



**Dovie Watson**  
Instructor,  
Perelman School of Medicine



**Gaurang Choksi**  
CEO & Founder,  
Violet



**Daquise Montgomery**  
Assistant Vice-President,  
M&T Bank



**Zachary Wilcha**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Independence Business Alliance



**Audrey Davis**  
Cancer Support Community,  
Senior Director



**Desmond Upton Patton**  
Professor,  
School of Social Policy  
& Practice



**Bianca Wilson**  
Senior Scholar of Public Policy,  
Williams Institute



**Dennis Flores**  
Assistant Professor,  
School of Nursing



**Emma Schwartz**  
Founder,  
Y'all



**David (Hyunmin) Yu**  
Predoctoral Fellow,  
School of Nursing



**Andre Ford**  
Executive Administrator ,  
Colours Organization



**Patrina Sexton-Topper**  
Lecturer,  
School of Nursing

# Headlines

Click on the text to go to the article



This Nursing 'Idea Factory' is Leading the Way in LGBTQIA+ Innovation



UPenn's 'Eidos' Project Tackles LGBTQ+ Health Inequity, Discrimination



Investing in Queer Futures and Health with Eidos: Interview with Jessica Halem



An LGBTQ health initiative at Penn just launched a 5-year partnership with investing group Gaingels



Featured Investigator:  
José A. Bauermeister, MPH, PhD



Top 50 in Digital Health



Healing the LGBTQ community's loneliness epidemic



Lesbian, bisexual women have worse heart health compared to heterosexual counterparts



Celebrating Pride Month with mental health in mind



Business of Pride: Penn professor leading efforts to scale startups aimed at helping LGBTQ+ community



Eidos LGBTQ+ Health Initiative Connects Community



Symposium at Penn aimed at improving healthcare for LGBTQ community



Accelerating LGBTQ+ Health Solutions



Penn Nursing hosts first Summer Innovation Institute focused on design, health equity



How the "next phase" of LGBTQ+ student support is stirring at this Ivy League



The Private Sector Can Help Fill the Void in LGBTQ+ Healthcare



Breaking Down Silos to Accelerate Innovation in LGBTQ+ Health



The Best Condoms are Safer and Sexier Than Ever

# Nephrology Event: *The Kidney has a Heart*

Eidos hosted an event at the American Society of Nephrology Annual conference to ideate on equity-centered approaches for community engagement.



# Engaging with the Community

Eidos hosts cross sector events bringing experts together to discuss LGBTQ+ health equity.



# Queering Design Thinking

Design thinking is an essential part of all our endeavors at Eidos.

We believe that queer communities, marked by perseverance through decades of stigma and trauma, have a culture of resilience and innovation—qualities that are not only pivotal to the Design Thinking Process but also essential in addressing lingering health disparities. Building off of the strengths of LGBTQ+ innovation we published *Finding a Way Forward*, a guide to human-centered design through an equity centered lens.

Using this approach to design thinking, Eidos partnered with AG Group, a consulting group that works with large retailers to help brands implement inclusive brand practices. In support of this work, Eidos collaborated with graduate students from Penn's Integrated Product Design program. The team used design thinking principles to research consumer behaviors around gender-neutral clothing. The team developed a toolkit with research and recommendations for AG Group to use in retailer meetings.





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## Advisory Board



Asha Collins



Tam Ho



Elli Kaplan



M Dru Levasseur



Aiyshen Padilla



John Rydzewski



Martín Sepúlveda



Michelle Tat



Patrina Sexton  
Topper



Antonia M. Villarruel

## Contact Eidos

[penneidos.org](https://penneidos.org)

[eidoss@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:eidoss@nursing.upenn.edu)

[@penneidos](https://twitter.com/penneidos)

Claire M. Fagin Hall

418 Curie Boulevard Philadelphia, PA 19104-4217