

## COPH's Kacey Ernst Named 'Woman of the Year'

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Kacey Ernst, assistant professor in the UA Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health, was named Woman of the Year during the "**40 Under 40**" [1] awards ceremony held today.

"The College of Public Health is extremely proud of Kacey and all that she has accomplished," said Lynn Gerald, associate dean for research at the college and was one of Ernst's nominators for the "40 Under 40" honor. "She is an excellent scholar and teacher and provides extensive service to our local, national and international community."

Ernst is an infectious disease epidemiologist whose work focuses on understanding the factors associated with the emergence and re-emergence of infectious diseases such as malaria and dengue, as well as vaccine-preventable diseases. Much of her work also examines human and environmental influences that affect the transmission of diseases.

Ernst's research focuses on controlling the spread of malaria in Africa. Specifically, she looks at why some residents in Kenya choose not to use bed nets sprayed with insecticide ? a common strategy for malaria prevention.

She also is leading two studies focusing on dengue prevention in the Southwest and Florida.

In addition to national and international research, Ernst supports research in the local community as well. She partners with health departments, including the **Pima County Health Department** [2], to examine issues related to vaccine-preventable diseases. She also is examining whether dengue might develop in the Sonoran Desert and why an increasing number of Arizona parents choose to exempt their children from school entry vaccination requirements.

To date, Ernst has earned more than \$3 million in research grants to fund her research on preventing dengue and malaria spread from the **National Institutes of Health** [3].

It had been announced previously that Ernst and five others from the UA had been named to the list, which was released this summer. But Ernst's selection as Woman of the Year was not revealed under the awards ceremony. The awards were co-sponsored by the **Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce** [4] and the **Arizona Daily Star** [5].

The other UA winners were:

- Lydia Breunig, director of outreach and special projects, **College of Social and Behavioral Sciences** [6]
- Scott Koenig, director of development, **UA Alumni Association** [7]
- Amanda Kraus, assistant director, UA **Disability Resources Center** [8]
- Abra McAndrew, assistant director, UA **Terry J. Lundgren Center for Retailing** [9]
- Kelley Monahan Prust, director of membership, marketing and interactive media, UA

## Alumni Association

Read more about all the winners and their work in this [Lo Que Pasa article](#) [10].

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### Links:

[1] <http://www.tucsonhispanicchamber.org/40-under-40-awards.htm>

[2] [http://webcms.pima.gov/government/health\\_department/](http://webcms.pima.gov/government/health_department/)

[3] <http://www.nih.gov/>

[4] <http://www.tucsonhispanicchamber.org/>

[5] <http://azstarnet.com/>

[6] <http://web.sbs.arizona.edu/college/>

[7] <http://arizonaalumni.com/>

[8] <http://drc.arizona.edu/>

[9] <http://terrylundgrencenter.org/>

[10] <http://uaatwork.arizona.edu/story/ua-employees-earn-40-under-40-honors>