

# EPIDEMIOLOGY NEWS

Vol. 6

Department of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, UNC

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## EPIDEMIOLOGY ALUMNI ORGANIZE

In 1994, Dr. Carl Shy began to explore the process of establishing the Department's own section of the School of Public Health Alumni Association (SPHAA). He felt that the alumni population had become sizeable enough to warrant the development of an active section which would benefit both current and former members of the department. Thanks to Dr. Shy's inspiration and efforts, the Epidemiology Section became a reality on September 27, 1996 when the by-laws were approved by the SPH Alumni Association governing board.

Some of our local alumni graciously allowed themselves to be volunteered by the Department to implement the plan for the Epi section. The Department extends its gratitude to the current slate of officers for their hard work and dedication to this endeavor:

Sara Ephross, PhD, 1994, President  
Glinda Cooper, PhD, 1993, Secretary  
Dan Caplan, PhD, 1995, Treasurer  
Bobbie Lubker, PhD, 1982, Board of Directors  
Karen Copeland, MSPH, 1977, Board of Directors  
Pam Schwingl, PhD, 1992, Board of Directors  
Will Maier, PhD, 1995, Board of Directors  
Pamela Marcus, PhD Candidate, 1997, Epidemiology Student Organization Representative  
Bill Saunders, PhD, 1994, Ex-officio  
Alice White, PhD, 1987, Ex-officio  
Andy Olshan, PhD, Faculty Advisor  
Nancy Colvin, MS, Student Services Manager

Plans are currently underway for the 1997 SPHAA Conference. Information about specific plans for the Epidemiology Section, including the election of officers, will be mailed to alumni early in March.

We are excited by this new opportunity for enhancing professional and interpersonal relationships among our faculty, staff and students, both current and former. It is our hope that all of our alumni, local and distant, will contribute to, and benefit from, the formalized association.

If you have any questions about the Epid Section, contact Nancy Colvin (ncolvin@unc.edu; 919-966-7459) or Sara Ephross (sae46162@glaxo.com; 919-483-9120).

## FACULTY

### Changing of the Chairs

After serving the Department of Epidemiology as Chair, Dr. Carl Shy stepped down from this position in August, 1996. The department's new chair is Dr. David Savitz. Dr. Savitz is no stranger to our department. He has been a member of the faculty since 1985.

### Epidemiology Welcomes New Faculty Member

The Department of Epidemiology welcomes a new member to the faculty. Dr. James Pankow, Assistant Professor, joined us on March 1. Dr. Pankow comes from the University of Minnesota and is working with the CVD program. He is located at NationsBank in Suite 303.

### Fulbright Award Received

Dr. Dana Loomis received a Fulbright Award. He will be working in Mexico and affiliated with the National Institute of Public Health working with Victor Borja. They will study air pollution and mortality in Mexico City. Dr. Loomis plans to develop an assessment of exposures to pesticides among Mexican agricultural workers, and teach a short course on exposure assessment or epidemiologic methods.

## STAFF

### Second Annual Employee Excellence Award

The recipient of the Second Annual Employee Appreciation Award is Ms. Phyllis Johnson. This award is for excellence in Leadership, Productivity, Teamwork or Creativity and Innovation.

The nomination of Phyllis for this award is based on her role at NationsBank. Her ability to observe problems and respond to the requests for changes in the facilities at NationsBank has improved the physical and emotional working environment. It was also noted that she has improved communication by serving as the liaison between staff at McGavran-Greenberg and NationsBank.

As recipient of this award, Phyllis will also be nominated for the School of Public Health Employee Appreciation Award and for the University's Chancellor's Award. The departmental award will be presented in the Fall during the State Employees Appreciation Week. *Congratulations!!*

### Employee Forum Update

The Department of Epidemiology Employee Forum elected two new co-chairs for 1997, **Phyllis Johnson** and **Betsy Seagroves**. In its third year, the Forum will continue to work towards improving communication between staff, faculty and students, as well as encouraging staff in having a voice in the Department.

### Staff Changes

Over the past year a number of staff changes have occurred. Four staff members have left the STEP (Sexually Transmitted Epidemic Prevention) project to pursue other interests. **Debra Weiner** (Statistician) is employed with Family Health International in Research Triangle Park; **Ans Janssens** (Programmer) is enrolled in UNC's School of Nursing; **Jerry Salak** (Research Assistant) is pursuing his own business and **Tammie Carlton** (Research Assistant) received a promotion with the Comprehensive Cancer Center as a Social Research Assistant II. **Darrah Degnan** came on board this year with the STEP project as the Research Project Manager after completing the Health and Environment Study. **Minna Wiley** (Research Assistant) from Health and Environment Study is now Data Technician at Duke University.

One other departmental staff change is **Heather Bergen** who is a newcomer to Dr. Lola Stamm's lab. She replaced **Natalie Barnes** who left to accept a position at Bowman Gray.

## STUDENTS

### Research Briefs

**Bill Miller**, a MPH student and Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar, is working on a state-funded project to evaluate screening criteria for chlamydial infection.

**Amy Sayle**, a PhD candidate, is assessing the effect of sexual activity during late pregnancy on the risk of preterm delivery. Her research is part of a larger study of causes of preterm delivery entitled the "Pregnancy, Infection, and Nutrition (PIN) Study".

**Pamela Marcus**, a PhD candidate, is using data from the Carolina Breast Cancer Study to examine the association between exposures during adolescence and development of breast cancer.

### Intramural Sports

The EPID intramural basketball team finished regular season with a 3-0 record. We advanced to the elite eight of our championship tournament where we lost in a close game. Our team was sparked by tenacious defense and some outstanding female jumpshooters. Overall it was a great season.

The team, EPID-O-ME, consists of Jennifer David, Katy Gesteland, Gayle Shimokura, Keith Berry, Ted Johnson, Neal Simonsen, D. J. McFadden. Two other non-epid individuals, LaToya and Julie, played with us this season.

**Lesley Butler**, a 1st year Ph.D. student, took second place in the IM-REC badminton singles.

### Student Awards

**Tamera Coyne-Beasley** recently received the following three honors: (1) The Jessie Ball Dupont Fund Fellowship in Early Adolescence; (2) selected as a Regional Finalist for the White House Fellowship; and (3) the 1997 Editor's Choice Award by the National Library of Poetry for a poem published in an anthology entitled "Best Poems of the 90's"

**Jim Helm** received an American Digestive Health Foundation Outcomes Research Training Award that began in January, 1997.

**Gayle Shimokura** received an industry grant from Ortho Diagnostics in December.

**Karin Yeatts** was awarded a Health Promotion Disease Prevention Mini-Project and the Minority Health Research and Education Center Grant Award for the topic "Indoor Air Pollutants as Risk Factors for Asthma and Asthma-like Symptoms in an Urban/Suburban African-American Community".

**Lisa Pastore** received the UNC On-Campus Dissertation Fellowship for spring semester, 1997.

**Pam Marcus** accepted a 2-year fellowship at NCI in the cancer prevention and control branch starting July 1.

**Lisa Hensley** has been awarded FEMS (European Microbiology Society) travel fellowship for the VIIth International Symposium on Coronaviruses and Arteriviruses, Segovia Spain. She has also been offered a post-doctoral fellowship at NIH, NIDDK on the research of HIV and hepatitis beginning August, 1997.

### **Doctoral Defenses**

The following students defended during 1996.

**Andrews, Kurtis** - Occupational sunlight exposure and cancer mortality (David Savitz, Advisor)

**Curtis, Kathryn** - Determinants of time to pregnancy in the Ontario Farm Family Health Study (David Savitz, Advisor)

**DiLiberti, John** - Social stratification and US childhood mortality trends: 1968-1992 (Peter Margolis, Advisor)

**Folger, Suzanne** - Exploring risk factors for respiratory illnesses: are children who live near waste incinerators at increased risk? (Carl Shy, Advisor)

**Hubacher, David** - Assessing the medical benefit of frequent clinical contact for IUD users (Judith Fortney, Advisor)

**Kaste, Linda** - Occupation and reproductive health of female dentists: the relationships of nitrous oxide and amalgam (mercury) with spontaneous abortion (David Savitz, Advisor)

**Liese, Angela** - Development of the multiple metabolic syndrome: the role of insulin, anthropometric indices, parental history (Gerardo Heiss, Advisor)

**Martinson, Francis** - Seroprevalence of hepatitis B and C viruses and risk factors for horizontal transmission of hepatitis B virus in Ghana (Kristen Weigle, Advisor)

**Nelson, JJ** - Lower extremity arterial disease as a predictor of CHD and mortality, and the association of serum albumin with cardiovascular disease (Gerardo Heiss, Advisor)

**Saemundsson, Sigurdur** - Dental caries prediction by clinicians and neural networks (James Beck, Advisor)

**Sonnenfeld, Nancy** - Volatile organic compounds in drinking water and birth weight (Irva Hertz-Picciotto, Advisor)

**Stutts, Jane** - The impact of visual and cognitive function on older driver safety and mobility (Victor Schoenbach, Advisor)

### **POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS**

Dr. **Anita Kinney** came to the Department of Epidemiology from the MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Dr. **Shermalyn Greene** participated in the Carolina Seminars on Gender.

Dr. **Azi Stark** received the Glaxo-Wellcome Oncology Clinical Research Scholar Award, March 1997.

Dr. **Anne Eckman** came to the Department from and is currently working with Dr. Rachel Royce on HIPP

### **ALUMNI**

#### **EPID ALUMNI SPAN THE GLOBE**

Ever wonder where all of our graduates go after completing their training? Based on last known address, 80 of our alumni are sharing their knowledge and skills in 36 different countries outside the United States. We have representation in: Afghanistan, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, England, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Iceland, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Kenya, Korea, Kuwait, Mariana Islands, Mexico, Nicaragua, Norway, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

#### **WHAT THEY'RE DOING**

##### **Alumnus Proves That Epidemiologists Are Out Of This World**

**Jerry Linenger** (PhD, 1989) gives new meaning to the words "world traveler," having logged over 4.5 million miles! Jerry is currently a Mission Specialist aboard the Russian Space Station Mir. This endeavor represents Phase 1 of the International Space Station. Jerry has been on Mir since January 12, 1997 and is scheduled to return to Earth in May 1997. NASA reports that the mission will include "several experiments in the fields of advanced technology, earth sciences, fundamental biology, human life sciences, microgravity, and space sciences." Jerry's wife, Kathryn Bartmann, and year-old son John await his return from outer space.

##### **Chapel Hill And Bahia Forge Environmental And Occupational Health Alliance**

**Vilma Santana** (PhD, 1993) is collaborating with Dana Loomis (PhD, 1989) and Steve Wing (PhD, 1983) on a new educational project to build capacity for research and teaching in environmental and occupational health in Brazil, with funding from NIH's Fogarty International Center. Since returning to Brazil in 1993, Vilma has been Professor in the Institute of Collective Health,

Federal University of Bahia, where she currently directs a new program in Workers' Health.

#### **Alumnus A Leader In Field Of Occupational Epid**

**Harvey Checkoway** (PhD, 1978) has become a leader and innovator in the field of occupational epidemiology and is senior author of the leading text on this topic, in use worldwide. He recently headed an effort for the International Agency for Research on Cancer to evaluate the evidence linking silica to lung cancer. Harvey is a Professor of Environmental Health at the University of Washington School of Public Health and Community Medicine.

#### **Epidemiology Meets Policy In Canada**

**Heather Munroe-Blum** (PhD, 1983) is Vice President for Research and International Relations, University of Toronto. Prior this appointment, she was Dean of the School of Social Work at the same university with an active psychiatric epidemiology program joint with McMaster University. She serves on a number of Canadian advisory committees on science policy for the Canadian government.

#### **Enhancing Epidemiologic Expertise Among Clinicians**

**Douglas Smucker** (MPH, 1994) is combining teaching, clinical practice and research in the Dept. of Family Medicine at the Univ. of Cincinnati. He and his primary care colleagues have recently completed a retrospective study of patients with congestive heart failure, correlating patient characteristics with hospitalization and other clinical outcomes. One of Doug's primary challenges is teaching family practice residents the epidemiologic principles needed to critically evaluate the medical literature on which they base their practice.

#### **Preserving Access To Medical Data For Epid Research Studies**

**Elizabeth Andrews** (PhD, 1990) is the Director of Worldwide Epidemiology at Glaxo Wellcome. She also chairs a committee on Data Privacy for the International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology. This effort is attempting to influence the various US and Canadian legislative initiatives on medical data privacy in order to preserve access to medical data for legitimate epidemiologic research studies. She lives in Raleigh with husband Chris Hoke and two children, ages 4 and 9.

#### **STAYING IN TOUCH**

There are many reasons why it's really important to us that we not lose contact with our alumni --

graduate program evaluations, self-study reports, funding agency reports, and of course the always-anticipated fund-raising activities. **More importantly**, we really want to know how you're doing. How are you using your epid training? Are you involved in any ground-breaking research and/or collaboration? What honors or awards have you received? What would you like to hear from us? Do you have ideas for enhancing training?

If you have access to e-mail, please send a message to [ncolvin@unc.edu](mailto:ncolvin@unc.edu) letting us know what your preferred e-mail address is.

#### **EPIDEMIOLOGY ALUMNI LOST TO FOLLOW-UP**

If you know the whereabouts of any of the alumni listed below, please let us know. You can call Nancy Colvin at 919-966-7459 or send e-mail to [ncolvin@unc.edu](mailto:ncolvin@unc.edu).

Al-Owaish, Rashed A., PhD, 1985  
Barzgar, Mohammad Ali, MPH, 1975  
Blandon, Alejandro Cruz, MPH, 1947  
Blumenstock, Edward M., MSPH, 1970  
Boardman, Virginia, PhD, 1972  
Brown, Roy, MPH, 1967  
Carvalhedo, Domingos B. MPH, 1947  
Clark, Larry C., PhD, 1981  
Davis, Charles H., MPH, 1960  
Dornbrand, Laurie, MPH, 1986  
Fisher, David F., MPH, 1971  
Fisher, Gail F., PhD, 1977  
Florenzano, Ramon U., MPH, 1975  
Fulchiero, Anita G., MPH, 1971  
Giddens, Warren W., MPH, 1968  
Gjorgov, Ane, PhD, 1978  
Hofbauer, Charles J., MPH, 1978  
Houseknecht, Robert A. Jr., PhD, 1987  
Jones, Clara Vicki, MPH, 1976  
Klein, Ronald, MPH, 1972  
Moncrief, E. W. Jr., MPH, 1968  
Mulvihill, Michael N., MPH, 1969  
Nelson, Cheryl R., MSPH, 1983  
Ould-Rouis, Bachir, MPH, 1963  
Powell, Keith, MPH, 1974  
Prather, E. Charlton, MPH, 1963  
Rowe, Theodore, MPH, 1971  
Shiflett, Richard, MPH, 1968  
Skipwith, Hope, MPH, 1964  
Stang, Paul Edward, PhD, 1991  
Stark, Annette, PhD, 1976  
Struba, Robert J., PhD, 1980  
Takaro, Timothy Keen, MPH, 1985  
Tanson, Gabriel Kodzo, MPH, 1979

Von Mohr, George, MPH, 1971  
Wetherbee, Helen, MPH, 1970  
Wilson, Jerome, PhD, 1983  
Wray, Joe, MPH, 1967

## PUBLICATIONS

(Publications listed are those published by our current faculty, staff, students and post-docs from July-December, 1996. Due to space restraints only Journal articles are listed.)

**Ananth CV, Savitz DA, Williams MA.** Placental abruption and its association with hypertension and prolonged rupture of the membranes: a methodological review and meta-analysis. *Obstet Gynecol* 1996; 88:309-18.

**Ananth CV, Wilcox AJ, Savitz DA, Bowes WA, Luther ER.** Influence of maternal age and parity on the risk of placental abruption, placenta previa, and uterine bleeding of unknown etiology. *Obstet Gynecol* 1996; 84:511-16.

**Ananth CV, Wilcox AJ, Savitz DA, Bowes WA Jr, Luther ER.** Effect of maternal age and parity on the risk of uteroplacental bleeding disorders in pregnancy. *Obstet Gynecol* 1996; 88(4 Pt 1):511-6.

**Arbes SJ, Slade GD.** Racial differences in stage at diagnosis of screenable oral cancers. *J Public Health Dent* 1996;56(6):352-354.

**Arrighi HM, Hertz-Picciotto I.** Controlling the healthy worker survivor effect: an example of arsenic exposure and respiratory cancer. *Occup Environ Med* 1996; 53(7):455-62.

**Arnett DK, Tyroler HA, Burke G, Hutchinson R, Howard G, Heiss G.** Hypertension and subclinical carotid artery atherosclerosis in blacks and whites. The Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study. ARIC Investigators. *Arch Intern Med* 1996; 156(17):1983-9.

**Begg DJ, Langley JD, Moffitt T, Marshall SW.** Sport and delinquency: An examination of the deterrence hypothesis in a longitudinal study. *Br J Sports Med* 1996; 30:335-341.

**Conway K, Edmiston SN, Hulka BS, Garrett PA, Liu ET.** Internal sequence variations in the Ha-ras variable number tandem repeat rare and common alleles identified by minisatellite variant repeat polymerase chain reaction. *Cancer Res* 1996;56(20):4773-7.

**Fiscus SA, Adimora AA, Schoenbach VJ, Lim W, McKinney R, Rupar D, Kenny J, Woods C, Wilfert C.** Perinatal HIV infection and the effect of zidovudine therapy on transmission in rural and urban counties. *JAMA* 1996; 275(19):1483-8.

**Hertz-Picciotto I, Lee LW, Hoyo C.** HIV test-seeking before and after the restriction of anonymous testing in North Carolina. *Am J Public Health* 1996; 86(10):1446-50.

**Irwin DE, Savitz DA, Bowes WA Jr, St Andre KA.** Race, age and cesarean delivery in a military population. *Obstet Gynecol* 1996; 88:530-3.

**Marshall SW, Clarke J, Langley JD, Cryer PC.** Overview of injury on New Zealand farms. *J Agric Safety and Health* 1996; 2(4):175-190.

**McMahon MJ, Luther ER, Bowes WA Jr, Olshan AF.** Comparison of a trial of labor with an elective second cesarean section. *N Engl J Med* 1996; 335(10):689-95.

**Miller WC, Thielman NM, Swai N, Cegielski JP, Shao J, Ting D, Mlalasi J, Manyenga D, Lallinger GJ.** Delayed-type hypersensitivity testing in Tanzanian adults with HIV infection. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr Hum Retrovirol* 1996; 12: 303-308.

**Morey MC, Pieper CF, Sullivan, RJ, Jr., Crowley GM, Cowper PA, and Robbins MS.** Five-year performance trends for older exercisers: a hierarchical model of endurance, strength, and flexibility. *Geriatr Soc* 1996; 44(10):1226-1231.

**Passaro KT, Little RE, Savitz DA, Noss J.** The effect of maternal drinking before conception and in early pregnancy on infant birth weight. *Epidemiol* 1996; 7: 377-83.

**Robbins WA.** Cytogenetic damage measured in human sperm following cancer chemotherapy. *Mutat Res* 1996; 355(1-2):235-52.

**Rosamond WD, Shahar E, Luepker RV.** Assessing medical history in coronary heart disease surveillance: agreement between contemporaneous and retrospective methods. *Epidemiol* 1996;7(4):447-9.

**Rosamond WD, Shahar E, McGovern PG, Sides TL, Luepker RV.** Trends in coronary thrombolytic therapy for acute myocardial infarction (the Minnesota Heart Survey Registry, 1990 to 1993). *Am J Cardiol* 1996; 78(3):271-7.

**Royce RA.** HIV-related morbidity and mortality in injection drug users: Should the AIDS definition be changed yet again? *Epidemiol* 1996; 7:563-565.

**Savitz DA, Brett KM, Baird N, Tse C-K.** Male and female employment in the textile industry in relation to miscarriage and preterm delivery. *Am J Ind Med* 1996; 30:307-16.

**Schreiner PJ, Heiss G, Tyroler HA, Morrisett JD, Davis CE, Smith R.** Race and gender differences in the

association of Lp(a) with carotid artery wall thickness. The Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) Study. *Arterioscler Thromb Vascul Biol* 1996; 16(3):471-8.

**Schreiner PJ**, Terry JG, Evans GW, Hinson WH, Crouse JR 3rd, Heiss G. Sex-specific associations of magnetic resonance imaging-derived intra-abdominal and subcutaneous fat areas with conventional anthropometric indices. The Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study. *Am J Epidemiol* 1996; 15:144(4):335-45.

Sorlie PD, Cooper L, Schreiner PJ, Rosamond W, Szklo M. Repeatability and validity of the Rose questionnaire for angina pectoris in the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study. *J Clin Epidemiol* 1996; 49(7):719-25.

**Stark A** and Sherman MD. Risk Factors for Constant, Severe Trachoma among Preschool Children in Kongwa, Tanzania, (letter to editor). *Amer J Epidem* 1997; 145(7).

**Steiner M**, Dominik R, Trussell J, Hertz-Picciotti I. Measuring contraceptive effectiveness: a conceptual framework. *Obstet Gynecol* 1996; 88(3 Suppl):24S-30S.

**Stevens J**, Metcalf PA, Dennis BH, Tell GS, Shimakaw T, Folsom AR. Reliability of a food frequency questionnaire by race, gender, age and education. *Nutrit Res* 1996; 16:735-46.

**Suris-Swartz PJ**, Schildkraut JM, Vine MF, Hertz-Picciotto I. Age at diagnosis and multiple primary cancers of the breast and ovary. *Breast Can Res Treat* 1996; 41(1):21-29.

Svetkey LP, George LK, Tyroler HA, Timmons PZ, Burchett BM, Blazer DG. Effects of gender and ethnic group on blood pressure control in the elderly. *Am J Hypertens* 1996; 9(6):529-35.

**Thomas JC**, Tucker MJ. The development and use of the concept of a sexually transmitted disease core. *J Infect Dis* 1996; 174 Suppl 2:S134-43.

**Vine MF**. Smoking and male reproduction - a review. *Int J Androl* 1996; 19:323-337.

**Wasilewski Y**, Clark NM, Evans D, Levison MJ, Levin B, Mellins RB. Factors associated with emergency department visits by children with asthma: implications of health education. *Am J Public Health* 1996; 86:1410-1415.

**Weigle KA**, Saravia NG. Natural History, Clinical Evolution, and the Host-Parasite Interaction in New World Cutaneous Leishmaniasis. *Clinics in Dermatology* 1996; 14:433-450.

**Williamson DS**, Bangdiwala SI, Marshall SW, Waller AE. Repeated measures analysis of binary outcomes: Applications to injury research. *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 1996; 28(5):571-579.

**Wing S**, Grant G, Green M, Stewart C. Community based collaboration for environmental justice: South-east Halifax environmental reawakening. *Environment and Urbanization* 1996;8(2):129-140.

**Yarbrough WG**, Aprelikova O, Pei H, Olshan AF, Liu ET. Familial tumor syndrome associated with a germline nonfunctional p16INK4a allele. *J Natl Cancer Inst* 1996; 88(20):1489-91.