



Episode

DEPARTMENT OF EPIDEMIOLOGY • GILLINGS SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH • THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

School selected to assess indoor air quality, health and nutrition in U.A.E.

The University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health was selected recently by the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi to conduct a National Strategic Planning Project for the United Arab



Dr. Karin Yeatts

Emirates (U.A.E.), one of the fastest developing nations in the world. U.A.E. is a Middle Eastern federation of seven states, situated on the Arabian Gulf, bordering Saudi Arabia and Oman. The components of the two-year project include developing an environmental health strategy and action plan, assessing the ambient air quality monitoring network and conducting an environmental epidemiologic study in the country.

School researchers recently have conducted the "U.A.E. Indoor Air, Health and Nutrition" study in 628 randomly selected households representing all seven emirates in the U.A.E. The research aims to evaluate indoor air quality, explore links between indoor air quality and health status, and assess impact of changes in nutrition and rapid urbanization on the health of U.A.E. citizens.

One of the study's hallmarks is the multidisciplinary and collaborative nature of the project. The project



More than 20 UNC faculty and staff members work in the U.A.E. to examine the nation's air quality, nutrition and health.



Training the DMS (data management system) students at Zayed University.

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Dr. Andrew Olshan
Professor and Chair

This has been another outstanding year for the Department of Epidemiology. Our faculty, staff, and students have continued to excel. The Departments' accomplishments in research, teaching and service have been noteworthy not only in North Carolina, but also nationally and internationally. We continue to attract very high-quality applicants to our graduate program, which is one of the very best in the country. We continue to carefully examine our effectiveness in addressing our research, teaching and service mission. In a future issue of this newsletter, I will provide an overview of the new initiatives.

In this issue, we are very pleased to provide information on a spectrum of activities inside the department and news from our alumni. This also has been a year of change, with the retirement of staff who have anchored central administrative roles in the department for more than 20 years. It also has been a very sad year, with the passing of Jessie Satia, a beloved faculty member.

I hope you find this an informative and enjoyable newsletter, and as always, I welcome your input (andy_olshan@unc.edu).

I wish to thank the members of the newsletter team -- Chandra Caldwell, Julie Kuo, Aaron Fleischauer, Nancy Colvin, Anna Maria Siega-Riz, Spencer Gee and Jessica Jensen -- for all their hard work. Also, a special thank you to Linda Kastleman.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andy Olshan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

LETTER FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow Alumni,

Greetings from your Alumni Association! As a graduate of the department, you are enrolled automatically as an Association member. As your representatives, we serve as liaisons between you and the Department of Epidemiology. Some of our more visible activities include hosting various social functions for alumni and students, such as the UNC mixer at the annual Society for Epidemiologic Research meeting. We also sponsor the H. A. Tyroler Distinguished Alumni Award and the Kaplan Student Publication Award. We work closely with the department chair, dean and other departments' alumni groups to represent your interests to the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and the University.



Aaron Fleischauer, MSPH

We have been working hard behind the scenes this past year to lay the groundwork for a successful future. As you can see, we strive to keep alumni better informed about the department, and activities of the Alumni Association and your fellow Carolina alumni and friends. In addition to this newsletter, be sure to visit www.alumni.unc.edu to stay connected to the whole Carolina alumni community!

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to announce that Gwen Collman, PhD has been selected as recipient of the 2009 H. A. Tyroler Distinguished Alumnus Award. Collman was cited for her contributions as a scientist and administrator at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in developing and advancing the field of environmental and genetic determinants of chronic disease. From basic science to applied public health, mentorship of junior scientists, and advancement of extramural research and training programs, Collman has embodied the spirit of this distinguished award during her illustrious career. As fellow alumni, we are proud to share Carolina Blue with her!

Sincerely,

Aaron Fleischauer, president (MSPH, 1999; PhD, 2002)

Penny Padgett, past president (MPH, 1999)

Richard Kwok, past president (MSPH, 1999; PhD, 2003)



Dr. Gwen Collman with her 2009 H.A. Tyroler Distinguished Alumnus Award (Photo courtesy of Amy Collman).

Gillings Innovation Labs

The UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health received a \$50 million gift from Dennis and Joan Gillings in 2007, providing our School with critical resources to anticipate emerging public health challenges, accelerate solutions, and improve people's lives across North Carolina and around the world. Funded research programs, called

Gillings Innovation Labs (GILs), focus on solving big public health problems, such as lack of access to clean water and health care, epidemics around the world and obesity. The department has been very successful in competing for these awards. Our awardees are listed below.

Learn more at www.sph.unc.edu/accelerate



Ralph Baric, PhD, professor of epidemiology, says his GIL aims to develop a single-dose vaccine to defeat respiratory disease in children to use intranasally. This revolutionary design is being developed through the use of synthetic genomics and a computer-based genome design.



Steve Meshnick, MD, PhD, professor of epidemiology, says of his team, "We are about as close to practice as research can get." The multidisciplinary team includes epidemiologists, geographers, molecular biologists and tropical disease experts. Exceptional, too, is the presence of a member from the DRC. This will help build epidemiological capacity in the DRC and will strengthen UNC's leadership in global public health.



Til Stürmer, MD, MPH, associate professor of epidemiology and director of the UNC-GSK Center for Excellence in Pharmaco-epidemiology and Public Health, will evaluate epidemiologic methods and studying the treatment of chronic disease in elderly people using prescription drugs. Stürmer's interdisciplinary team will offer perspectives from pharmacoepidemiology, clinical medicine, biostatistics and health services research.



David Richardson, PhD, assistant professor of epidemiology, tries to develop a better understanding of the distribution of diseases and their causes. His research team, which consist of staff at UNC Department of Emergency Medicine, Orange County (NC) EMS and UNC School of Information and Libraray Science, will develop innovative computer systems to evaluate data now being collected in many disparate locations.

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New Degree Program

New master's degree in clinical research

The Department of Epidemiology is pleased to report that its new degree program, the Master of Science in Clinical Research (MSCR), enrolled its first student cohort in the 2009-2010 academic year. The program, developed in conjunction with the education, training and career development core of the North Carolina Translational and Clinical Sciences (NC TraCS) Institute, is directed by Dr. Bill Miller of the departments of medicine and epidemiology.

The MSCR is an interdisciplinary research degree program designed to foster skills necessary for a successful career as a clinical or translational researcher. The program emphasizes clinical study design,

fundamentals of data analysis, proposal development/grant writing, interdisciplinary collaboration, project oversight and management, and oral and written presentation of study results. Students must choose one of three academic tracks: translational, clinical trials or population sciences. Eligible students hold a doctoral (MD, PhD, PharmD, DDS, etc.) or other professional degree (MSN, PA) and seek a career as a clinical or translational researcher. In general, students must have an affiliation with a home academic department at UNC or Duke University. The program is intended to be completed in two years. Questions may be directed to Susan Pusek (susan_pusek@med.unc.edu) or Bill Miller (bill_miller@unc.edu).

For more information, visit www.sph.unc.edu/epid and click on "Degrees and Certificates."

Gillings Innovation Lab (continued)



Eric Donaldson, PhD, research assistant professor of epidemiology, says his GIL aims to develop a vaccine to prevent noroviruses. Globally, noroviruses cause about 90

percent of epidemic outbreaks of viral gastroenteritis. Hospitals, college campuses and retirement communities are especially hard-hit, because the virus is easily spread. In vulnerable populations, including older

adults, norovirus infections can be fatal. Donaldson's team will use computer models to design "super antigens" that are tested in a mouse model to accelerate development of a vaccine design strategy. The team also will pioneer a technology that may result in effective vaccines against many other highly mutagenic RNA viruses, ranging from SARS to the common cold.

New Faculty



Stephen Cole, PhD joined the department in May 2008 as an associate

professor after spending eight years on faculty at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. In 2010, he was promoted to professor. His research emphasis is quantitative epidemiologic methods. Cole believes that time is our most precious resource and is an underappreciated aspect of epidemiology and public health. His loves include Jennifer (his wife), Melody (his daughter), Levi (his son), tennis, books, NPR, math, pizza, jazz, ice cream, movies, cashmere (clothing and the John Singer Sargent painting) and, of course, epidemiology.



In June 2008, we welcomed a new associate professor, **Til Stürmer, MD, MPH, PhD**, to the

department. Stürmer is a physician, trained at the University Hospitals of Basel and Liestal, and a board-certified internist in Switzerland. Funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, he studied epidemiology at the Harvard School

of Public Health and has since focused his career on epidemiologic research at the University of Heidelberg, Germany; and in the U.S. Before joining UNC's Department of Epidemiology, he was a faculty member in the divisions of pharmacoepidemiology and of preventive medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School. In 2010, he was promoted to professor at UNC. Stürmer grew up in Basel, Switzerland. Before moving to Chapel Hill, he lived in Boston, Hamburg, Ulm (where he met his wife Renate), and Heidelberg. The Stürmers have three grown children (21 to 27) and Leo, age 3. Stürmer loves sailing (he used to race dinghies), karate, working on his vintage Citroen cars, and evenings spent with friends.



Melissa Troester, PhD is assistant professor of epidemiology and member of Lineberger

Comprehensive Cancer Center. Her research, focused on genomics of breast cancer risk and breast cancer micro-environment, is funded by the National Cancer Institute, the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences, Avon Foundation,

the UNC Breast Cancer Specialized Program of Research Excellence, and the University Cancer Research Fund. Her training at UNC's public health school (a PhD in environmental health sciences, 2001) emphasized development and validation of biomarkers. She completed postdoctoral training in genomics, microarray analysis and genetic epidemiology receiving her Master of Public Health in epidemiology in 2006. After two years as assistant professor at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, she returned to North Carolina in 2008 with her husband and two daughters, ages 3 and 6.



Jennifer Horney, PhD, is a new research assistant professor in the department as of

Oct. 1, 2009. She received her PhD in epidemiology from the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health in May 2009. Her dissertation research on evacuation from Hurricane Isabel received an Impact award from the UNC Graduate School for its potential benefit to North Carolinians affected by coastal flooding. Dr. Horney's current research interests focus on factors

New Faculty

related to perceived risk and decision making during disasters, outbreaks and other public health emergencies. Recent projects include an assessment of reproductive health needs among women affected by severe flooding in northwest Georgia, for which she used innovative two-stage cluster sampling methodology with referral and an assessment of intention to receive novel influenza A (H1N1) vaccine in two N.C. counties. Horney is deputy director of the N.C. Center for Public Health Preparedness and the NC Preparedness and Emergency Response Research Center, both located at the school's N.C. Institute for Public Health and funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In her free time, she is an avid swimmer and cyclist and enjoys traveling and knitting.



Keri Monda, PhD, a research assistant professor, was born and reared in California. She

received her bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of California-San Diego, and then moved to Chapel Hill to obtain her PhD in nutrition epidemiology at UNC under the guidance of Dr. Barry

Popkin. She completed two postdoctoral fellowships in the departments of nutrition and epidemiology, under the guidance of Drs. Kari North and Gerardo Heiss. Monda's research interests lie primarily in the environmental and genetic determinants of obesity and physical activity. She has three-year-old twins who keep her laughing and very busy.



Marcel Yotebieng, PhD, was born and reared in Bandjoun, rural Western Cameroon. He grew up dreaming

of becoming a physician after spending his childhood in and out of hospitals. In 2002, he earned his medical degree from the University of Yaoundé and served as care coordinator for HIV-infected patients at the South West Provincial Hospital in Limbe. Confronted with the challenge of pediatric HIV and the limited therapies available to children, he sought research and public health skills. He recently earned a PhD in epidemiology, with a minor in biostatistics, at UNC and is now a research assistant professor in the department. Currently, he is based in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, providing

technical assistance to PEPFAR/CDC-funded UNC projects. He also conducts his own research activities involving, HIV in children living in sub-Saharan Africa. Yotebieng and his wife, Kelly, enjoy spending time with their son.



In December 2009, we welcomed **Alan Brookhart, PhD**, to the department as an associate professor. Brookhart

received his PhD in biostatistics from UC-Berkeley in 2002, and since then, has been a faculty member in the division of pharmaco-epidemiology at the Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School. Brookhart conducts both applied and methods-oriented research in health care epidemiology. He works primarily with large clinical and health care utilization databases that may contain data on entire populations but lack measurements of important variables that would be available in typical prospective cohort studies. Much of his work has focused on developing and applying new statistical and epidemiologic approaches to assess safety and effectiveness of prescription drugs,

New Faculty (continued)

using these large but limited databases. Brookhart grew up in Carrboro, N.C., "before the days of Weaver Street Market and Carrburritos." His wife, Carolyn, is a pediatrician from the Boston area. They have two children -- Eva, 5, and Harvey, 3. Outside of work, Brookhart enjoys sailing, cooking, playing soccer, and spending time with family and friends.



Whitney Robinson, PhD, joined the department in August 2010 as an assistant professor.

She is a fellow at the Carolina Population Center and member of the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center. Robinson specializes in obesity research and quantitative methodology for studying race- and gender-based health disparities. One of her ongoing research projects investigates why socioeconomic position is a stronger predictor of obesity risk in females than males. From 2008 to 2010, Robinson was a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health & Society Scholar at the University of Michigan. Prior to that, she received her master's degree and PhD in

epidemiology from UNC. She enjoys reading for pleasure and relaxing when she is not working.

Giving to the department

Every gift to the Department of Epidemiology and the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health makes a world of difference. As one of the top departments of epidemiology, we conduct cutting-edge research that will improve and save the lives of millions of people around the world. Your support also helps us to educate future public health leaders. At a time when state and federal sources of funding are diminishing and financial aid funds are more difficult to come by, private support from alumni and friends – like you – is critical as we strive to be the leading department of epidemiology in the nation.

Your tax-deductible gift will:

- **Provide financial aid and scholarships, attracting the most promising epidemiology graduate students – the future leaders in public health;**
- **Help retain top-tier faculty and recruit international epidemiology scholars and distinguished researchers;**
- **Support cutting-edge programs and first-class teaching and research;**
- **Provide students with funding for travel and field placements; and**
- **Provide support and unrestricted resources for the department's areas of greatest need.**

To request information about how to include the Department of Epidemiology in your will, to discuss naming a laboratory or to establish a student scholarship, please contact Stephen Couch at stephen_couch@unc.edu or 919-966-0219. Your continued financial support is greatly appreciated.

Faculty Promotions



Jennifer S. Smith, PhD, was promoted to research associate professor. Smith is also affiliated with the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, UNC Center for

AIDS Research (CFAR), and UNC Center for Women's Health Research. Her current research focuses on epidemiological studies of human papillomavirus (HPV) and cervical cancer

worldwide (primarily in North Carolina, China and Kenya), with a focus on prevention through HPV self-screening and prophylactic vaccines.

David B. Richardson, PhD, is associate professor of epidemiology. His research investigates occupational and environmental causes of disease. He has led

several studies of workers at U.S. Department of Energy facilities and spent time working at the World Health Organization's International Agency for

Research on Cancer in Lyon, France, and at the Radiation Effects Research Foundation in Hiroshima, Japan.



Dr. Julie Daniels' joint appointment as associate professor in epidemiology and maternal and child health reflects her application of epidemiologic methods to research related to child

health and development. She is specifically interested in perinatal events and exposures that may impact children's growth, neurodevelopment and overall health. In recent

years, her research interests have narrowed to focus on factors affecting children's neurodevelopment.

Anna Maria Siega-Riz, PhD, is a professor of epidemiology and has a joint appointment in nutrition. She serves as program leader of the reproductive, perinatal and pediatric program area in the epidemiology department. In the Department of Nutrition,

she serves as Director of the nutrition epidemiology core of the Clinical Nutrition Research Center. She has served as associate chair of the department since 2008, but in December 2010 she assumed the role of associate dean for academic affairs. Siega-

Riz's research interests include maternal nutritional status and its relationship with birth outcomes, gestational weight gain and obesity development, diet methodology, reproductive epidemiology, child and adolescent dietary



behaviors, and trends in dietary intakes among minority populations.

Faculty Awards

Miller received award for excellence in post-baccalaureate instruction

William C. Miller, MD, PhD, MPH, received a 2009 Distinguished Teaching Award for Excellence in Post-Baccalaureate Instruction.

The award for teaching post-baccalaureate students is one of nine administered by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Office of the Provost to recognize inspirational teaching and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students by UNC faculty and graduate teaching assistants.

Miller is associate professor of medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases at the UNC School of Medicine and of epidemiology in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health. Since joining the faculty in 1997, he has been nominated several times for awards that recognize quality teaching, including the University's Faculty Award for Excellence in Doctoral Mentoring and the School's John E. Larsh Jr. Mentorship Award and McGavran Teaching Award. He has advised more than 50 master's and doctoral students and has served as director or co-director of courses in clinical measurement and evaluation, clinical epidemiology, clinical trials and epidemiology of sexually transmitted infections, among others.

Miller's students identify him as one of their favorite teachers, and advisees value him as a mentor.

"Bill is very deserving of this important award," said Andrew Olshan, PhD, chair of the Department of Epidemiology. "He is a truly outstanding teacher, both in the classroom and with mentoring students one-on-one. He enjoys teaching and is passionate about epidemiology, public health and medicine, and that



enthusiasm is conveyed to the students and his colleagues. The Department is grateful for his stellar contributions and most proud of this achievement."

Since 2006, Miller has been director of the Program in Health Care Epidemiology and Clinical Research in the Department of Epidemiology, and he helps direct the new MSCR (Master of Science in Clinical Research) program. In addition to

his teaching and administration, Miller is board-certified in internal medicine and infectious diseases and attends the infectious disease consult service at UNC Hospitals and Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst, N.C.

His research agenda has focused on STIs, HIV infection and epidemiological methods. His most recent journal article, "Perceived Everyday Racism, Residential Segregation, and HIV Testing Among Patients at a Sexually Transmitted Disease Clinic," appeared in the February issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*.

Miller earned a Master of Public Health degree in epidemiology from UNC and a Doctor of Medicine and Doctor of Philosophy in neuroscience from Johns Hopkins University.

The Distinguished Teaching Award for Excellence in Post-Baccalaureate Instruction was first given by the university in 1995 to recognize the important role of teaching graduate students. A committee selects the recipients based on interviews with deans or department chairs, reading of student evaluations and telephone interviews with randomly selected students, and sends its final recommendations to the UNC chancellor.

Faculty Awards

Millikan awarded the Barbara Sorenson Hulka Distinguished Professorship



Robert C. Millikan, DVM, MPH, PhD, was awarded the Barbara Sorenson Hulka Distinguished Professorship in Cancer Epidemiology.

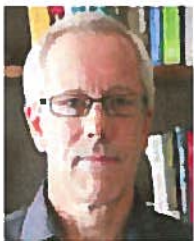
Millikan is the first to receive the Distinguished Professorship, which was established in recognition of the significant contributions made by Barbara S. Hulka, PhD, former professor and chair of the epidemiology department. Dr. Hulka is considered a true pioneer in

the development and advancement of the field of biologic and molecular epidemiology, with particular application to the study of cancer epidemiology.

Millikan is widely recognized as an international leader in cancer epidemiology. His outstanding work on the molecular epidemiology of breast cancer, colon cancer and melanoma follows in the tradition of Hulka's groundbreaking conceptualization and application of biologic markers in cancer epidemiology.

Thomas received School's teaching award at Commencement

James C. Thomas, PhD, associate professor of epidemiology, received the 2009 McGavran Award for Excellence in Teaching.



The award honors Edward G. McGavran, MD, MPH, dean of the UNC School of Public Health from 1947 to 1963 and proponent of "hands-on" field training for public health students, and recognizes career-long excellence in teaching by a faculty member in the UNC

Gillings School of Global Public Health.

After receiving a Master of Public Health and doctorate in epidemiology from The University of California at Los Angeles, Thomas joined the School's faculty in 1989. Since 2001, he has served as director of the School's Program in Public Health Ethics.

Zhiwen Liu, a doctoral student and Thomas' former teaching assistant, calls Thomas a "transformative" teacher.

"He can lead students through basic concepts of epidemiology to complex thinking at their own ability,

and thus students walked away from the course with not only more knowledge, but also new perspectives," Liu says. "He was always able to get students up by asking and answering questions, and encouraging students to volunteer for demonstrations and active discussions."

Hollie Pavlica, DrPH, clinical assistant professor in the Public Health Leadership Program, knows Thomas' work from a global health ethics course he teaches. "Dr. Thomas chose to deviate from a standard voice-over powerpoint presentation [for this distance learning course] and instead has included numerous captivating photographs, many from his travels and research," Pavlica says in her nomination. "Recently, it was suggested to the Leadership Distance Education team that this be a 'best practice' for new lectures."

Pavlica attended Thomas' residential lectures and says she saw firsthand how engaged his students are. "I wholeheartedly believe that teaching skills at this level should be recognized and rewarded," she says.

"Wow!" Thomas said, upon being informed about the award. "I am very honored. Of the titles in my life, the ones that mean the most to me are husband, dad and teacher. This award resonates deep in my soul."

'60s

J. Earl Williams, DDS (MPH, 1962; DrPH, 1965), retired in 1993 as chair of the Department of Community Dentistry, Medical College of Georgia. Williams received his epidemiology training under the tutelage of the late John Cassel, H. Al Tyroler, Ralph Patrick, Cecil Sheps and John Fulton. "These were outstanding teachers and friends", Williams said, "and I count myself fortunate to have known them." Currently, Williams is active in the Columbia County (Ga.) Choral Society as co-founder and singer, and serves as a mentor in the Columbia County School System. He is "grateful that my health allows me still to be involved in family, church and community affairs."

Robert Bagramian, DDS, PhD (MPH, 1967) remains on the faculty of the University of Michigan School of Dentistry and Public Health and was recently named dean of the College of Health Sciences at the American University of Armenia.

'70s

David Deubner (MPH, 1973) is vice president of occupational and environmental medicine for Brush Wellman Inc., in Elmore, Ohio.* He worked for many years primarily as an occupational physician (at Duke University Medical Center, Conrail and Owens Corning) before joining Brush Wellman in 1995. He has been actively engaged in studies of the epidemiology of chronic beryllium disease and lung cancer in beryllium workers. This work has been carried out with epidemiologists at NIOSH, RTI, and other private and public research centers.

Betsy Kagey (MSPH, 1974) completed her PhD in environmental health and toxicology from SUNY-Albany in 1995. She currently serves deputy director of public health emergency preparedness for the state of Georgia. Her husband directs opera; their oldest son has completed his doctorate at Emory and is doing a post-doc in molecular biology/

genetics; and their younger son, a bass guitarist, is an engineering technician in a recording studio in New York City.

Allen Wilcox (PhD, 1979) is the author of a new textbook published by Oxford University Press. Titled *Fertility & Pregnancy: An Epidemiologic Perspective*, the book covers the spectrum of reproductive and perinatal epidemiology. David Savitz says, "I can think of no other epidemiology text that is as elegantly and entertainingly written."

'80s

Miquel Porta (MPH, 1984) has been busy editing the 5th edition of *A Dictionary of Epidemiology* which has received excellent reviews (including from the *American Journal of Epidemiology*) on the Amazon and Oxford Press websites. Porta is professor and head of the clinical and molecular epidemiology of cancer unit in the Institut Municipal d'Investigació Mèdica; professor of preventive medicine and

public health at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; and adjunct professor of epidemiology at UNC.

Philip D. Somervell (PhD, 1984) is an epidemiologist with the Alaska Pacific regional office of NIOSH, in Anchorage. He has been doing occupational safety research in commercial fishing, oil and gas extraction, and agriculture as well as other projects.

Emmanuel Keku, MD, MA (MSPH, 1988) was promoted to professor on July 1, 2009, at the School of Medicine, Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, St. George's University, St. George, Grenada, West Indies. The Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine had its site visit for CEPH accreditation on Sept. 28-29, 2009.

'90s

Joanne Jordan, MD (MPH, 1991) is chief of the Division of Rheumatology, Allergy and Immunology, and director of the Thurston Arthritis Research Center at UNC.

Alumni Updates

In 2009, she was named the Herman and Louise Smith Distinguished Professor of Medicine in Arthritis. She has been principal investigator for the Johnston County (N.C) Osteoarthritis (OA) Project since its inception in 1990. The project is an ongoing, unique, prospective, community-based study of knee, hip, hand and spine OA and disability in African-Americans and Caucasians in Johnston County who are 45 years old and older. Jordan is currently deputy editor for clinical science for the journal *Osteoarthritis and Cartilage* and received both the Osteoarthritis Research Society International's Clinical Research Award in 2007 and the American College of Rheumatology's 2009 Award of Distinction in Investigative Mentoring.

Amanda Adler, MD (PhD, 1992) was appointed chair of the National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence's technology appraisals committee. The role of the committee is to address, from the perspective of the British National Health Service

(NHS), whether a new technology or drug is effective, and, if so whether funding it represents a good use of NHS resources. This is a challenging position, very much in the public eye, and brings together medicine, epidemiology, economics, and statistical modeling.

Elizabeth (Barnett) Pathak (MSPH, 1990; PhD, 1993) was elected a fellow of the American Heart Association in 2009. She is currently associate professor of epidemiology in the College of Public Health at University of South Florida.

Shine Chang (MSPH, 1992; PhD, 1995) recently was promoted to professor in the Division of Cancer Prevention and Population Sciences at The University of Texas, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, in Houston. The center recently honored Chang with their "leading mentor in cancer prevention" award. In addition, Chang serves as director of the Cancer Prevention Research Training Program. She points out that the

program has lots of opportunities for postdocs!

Carlos Rojas, MD (PhD, 1999) was appointed in November as head of the research center at the National School of Public Health (Universidad de Antioquia) in Colombia. His duties include promoting research and expanding the international relationships for his school. He would like to be in touch with faculty members and graduate students who are interested in conducting research in Colombia, especially in Medellin and the state of Antioquia, and would like to establish collaborations with UNC.

'00s

Dora Il'yasova (MSPH, 2000; PhD, 2001) is assistant professor in the Cancer Control and Prevention Program at Duke University. "We have developed a panel of urinary biomarkers to measure oxidative status in humans," she writes, "We also validated these biomarkers in a clinical model of oxidative stress

in humans. If you are interested in these measurements, please, contact me at dora.ilyasova@duke.edu."

Daphne Rattner (PhD, 2001) is now adjunct professor of epidemiology in the Department of Collective Health, School of Health Sciences, University of Brasilia. She is loving her new colleagues and experiences.

Edwin van Wijngaarden (PhD, 2002) is director of the newly established undergraduate Public Health-related Programs at the University of Rochester, N.Y. The programs aim to educate students in an interdisciplinary framework of understanding and responding to global, regional and local public health challenges. Currently, the University of Rochester offers four majors, four minors and five clusters in the public health-related programs. The programs provide students with an opportunity to engage their interests in

Alumni Updates

community health from diverse disciplinary perspectives, including natural sciences, social sciences and humanities. For more information, visit www.rochester.edu/college/CCAS/publichealth.

Tiffany Powell (MPH, 2003) is a newlywed as of Feb. 20, when she married Dr. Kenneth Wiley Jr. Powell will finish her cardiology fellowship at UT-Southwestern, in Dallas, in 2011.

Penny Howards (PhD, 2004) is now assistant professor in the Department of Epidemiology at Emory University.

Cindy Chang (PhD, 2007) is currently a CRTA post-doctoral fellow in the Infections and Immunoepidemiology Branch at the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics at the National Cancer Institute. Her general areas of interest include the genetic diversity of Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) and the epidemiology of EBV-associated cancers, risk

factors for non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) histologic and molecular subtypes, and early childhood exposures and subsequent cancer risk. Under the mentorship of Dr. Allan Hildesheim, she recently published a review paper on EBV genetic diversity and several papers on the risk factors for NHL histologic and molecular subtypes. She also has been involved with developing a feasibility study for a large birth cohort study in China.

Lynette Phillips (PhD, 2007) has accepted a tenure-track faculty position at Kent State University's new College of

Public Health, to start this past fall.

Sarah J. Nyante (MSPH, 2005; PhD, 2009) is now living in Washington, DC, and working as a postdoctoral fellow in the Hormonal and Reproductive Epidemiology Branch at the National Cancer Institute.

'10s

Joe Braun (MSPH, 2008; PhD, 2010) has joined Harvard University as a research fellow in the Department of Environmental Health. His

research examines the association between environmental toxicant exposures and childhood neurodevelopment.

Anjum Hajat (PhD, 2010) accepted a postdoctoral position with Dr. Ana Diez Roux at the Center for Social Epidemiology and Population Health at University of Michigan. Her research interests are in inequality, specifically the impacts of income and wealth inequality on health outcomes.



Do you recognize any familiar faces? Photo courtesy of Dr. Victor Schoenbach.

Faculty News

Continued from front page

team includes more than 20 UNC faculty and staff members -- environmental engineers, biostatisticians, epidemiologists, nutritionists and health economists - - as well as collaborators at the U.A.E. University. More than 50 field interviewers collected data from all seven emirates. Analyses are underway.

Innovative components of the study include adaptation of occupational passive diffusion tubes to monitor seven different air pollutants in a household setting and development of a computer-assisted personal interview in Arabic. The data collection procedures were designed to take into account cultural sensitivities.

The study is led by Andrew Olshan, PhD, professor and chair, and Karin Yeatts, PhD, research assistant professor, both in the Department of Epidemiology. The indoor air measurement team is led by Bill Funk, PhD, postdoctoral fellow, and David Leith, PhD, professor, both in the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering. Ronna Chan, PhD, is the epidemiologic project manager.

Barry Popkin, PhD, Carla Smith Chamblee Distinguished Professor of Nutrition, and Shuwen Ng, Research Assistant Professor, are leading the nutrition and obesity team. Ed Davis, PhD, Professor of Biostatistics, directs the study team from the Collaborative Studies Coordinating Center (CSCC). The CSCC developed a data management system in Arabic and is coordinating the electronic real-time data collection.

The principal investigator for the U.A.E. project is Jacqueline MacDonald, PhD, assistant professor of environmental sciences and engineering. Ivan Rusyn, MD, PhD, co-principal investigator for the project, said the School is partnering with United Arab

Emirates University's Department of Community Medicine. The UAEU team, led by Mohamed El Sadig, PhD (UNC epidemiology adjunct faculty member) has been involved in epidemiological studies in the U.A.E.

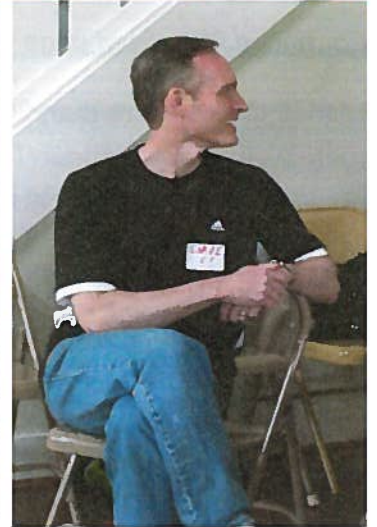
"The challenges to human health in the U.A.E., as well as other rapidly developing nations in the Gulf Region, are poorly understood, and we are confident that our study will provide the scientific basis for understanding risks and improving health and quality of life in the U.A.E.," Rusyn said.

This is the first epidemiologic study conducted in the country under the auspices of the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi (the U.A.E. counterpart of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency). Data collection for the study was completed in June 2010.

(L-R): Drs. Andy Olshan, Jay Kaufman, Anna Maria Siega-Riz, Bill Miller and Wayne Rosamond travel to Germany to teach an epidemiology course.



Department Events



Finally retired, but not forgotten...



Gail King

It is so hard for me to believe that it has been almost two years since I retired from the University after 39 years of service. The last 23 of those years were in the Department of Epidemiology. It was such a great experience to be a part of the growth of the department. When I began in 1985, the total budget had just reached two million dollars. When I retired in 2008, the total budget was well over \$20 million. All of that growth is due to the expertise, and therefore success, of the faculty in competing for and being awarded contract and grants in research and training. The staff worked hard to assist the faculty in the pre- and post- grant award process. The atmosphere of working together to accomplish that success was one of the special attributes of the department. The faculty always treated the staff and students with the highest respect and that made the working environment outstanding. I cannot say, in all honesty, that I miss the grant deadlines and the financial stress -- but I do truly miss all of the people. I have been reading all of the books that I collected over the years but just couldn't find the time to read. I have also enjoyed taking care of all of my dogs. My husband and I have been doing a lot of those house projects that we kept putting off, but that list just continues to grow. The wonderful part of my retirement is that I can do pretty much whatever I want and that, my friends, is how retirement should be for everyone. I have so many fond memories that I will never forget as

well as the people that were a large part of my life during my many years there. The epidemiology department is a very special place, with very special people. - Gail King



Lesla McPherson

Is there life after epidemiology? Definitely! On Oct. 1, 2009, I began a new chapter in my life - retirement. After spending 30 years working full-time, I wondered if I would be able to adjust. The transition was easier than I ever imagined. After two weeks of rest and relaxation, I began a new career with Hospice of Alamance/Caswell County, coordinating the Hospice Meal Ministry. This ministry provides food to many homebound Hospice patients and families. The work is very rewarding, and I am sure this is what I should be doing.

The best part of retirement is not having to make the decision about going to work in winter weather. All you have to do is pour a second cup of coffee and relax. I do find time to have fun and do some things I didn't have time to do while working. Jazzercise and line dancing have become part of my weekly routine.

In conclusion, I highly recommend retirement — it definitely is stress-free living. - Lesa McPherson

Staff News

New Staff

Sharon Sullivan, human resources manager

The department welcomed Sharon Sullivan, HR manager, back in November 2009. Sullivan has more than 15 years experience at UNC, beginning as a tax shelter annuity specialist in the benefits department, then moving to division manager and residency coordinator for the Department of Plastic Surgery. Sullivan originally from Swansboro, N.C., fell in love with Chapel Hill while studying biology during her undergraduate years here at UNC. She has traveled extensively throughout Europe, Australia and New Zealand. She loves her three cats -- Maxomalley, Milo and Madison Marie. Her favorite band is Bon Jovi and she enjoys spending time with her niece and nephew. Stop by 2101C McGavran-Greenberg to find out more fun facts about our new HR manager!



Grants Manager Chandra Caldwell (left) and Sharon Sullivan (HR Manager) at staff holiday party.



(L-R): Carmen Woody (student services manager), Lesa McPherson, Phyllis Johnson (research associate) and Jadie Baldwin-Hamm (social research assistant) attend a departmental reception.

Baby Announcements

Spencer Gee (computing consultant), welcomed daughter Zadie Mei born June 17, 2009.

Courtney Andrews (accounting technician), gave birth to a son, Evan James, born Dec. 28, 2009

Sonia Napravnik (research assistant professor), had a son, Lukas Joseph, born Jan. 1, 2010.

Laura Loehr (research assistant professor), welcomed her son, Carson Alexander, born Jan. 28, 2010.

Audrey Pettifor (associate professor), had a son, James Hayward, born Febr. 4, 2010.

David Hunt (accounting technician), enjoys his daughter, Malia Eden, born June 21, 2010.

Staff Awards (2008-2009)

2008

Gail King—Staff Excellence Award Winner

Sally Duffy— Star Heel Award Winner

Lesla McPherson—Star Heel Award Winner

2009

Chandra Caldwell—Staff Excellence Award Winner

Bob Goetze—Star Heel Award Winner

Dave Kleckner—Star Heel Award Winner

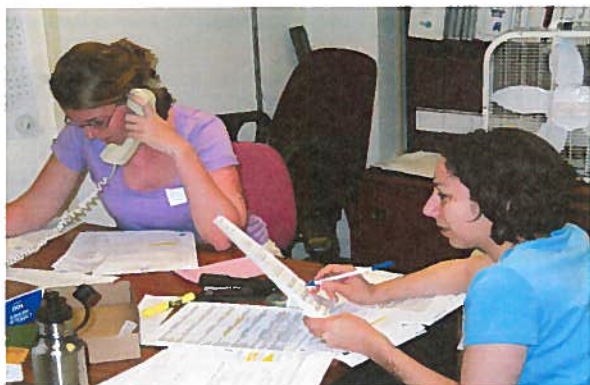
Molly Wen—Star Heel Award Winner



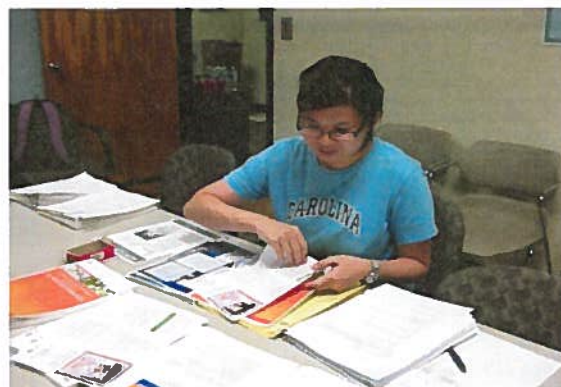
(L-R): Sally Duffy (accounting technician); Scott Gee (IT support); Jennifer Moore and Courtney Andrews (accounting technicians) make the department function well.



Student News



(L-R): Margaret Adgent and Kim Angelon-Gaetz answer calls about the H1N1 pandemic influenza outbreak.



Epidemiology student Sue Naorungroj prepares materials for the H1N1 vaccination surveys.



Meagan Vaughn conducts phone interviews during an outbreak investigation.



Matt Simon (left) and Amanda Eudy discuss a health issue.

Team Epi-Aid

Team Epi-Aid volunteers engage in a variety of epidemiologic activities at the state and local levels. In 2009, the group engaged in several activities related to H1N1 influenza. From April 29 to May 6, Team Epi-Aid volunteers assisted with North Carolina's response to H1N1 flu at the Public Health Command Center in Raleigh. Six students worked to return phone calls to local health departments and clinicians across the state. In the summer, Team Epi-Aid assisted with a rapid needs assessment, in collaboration with the N.C. Division of Public Health, to provide evidence-based information on community

attitudes towards influenza vaccination prior to the fall 2009 flu season. Students and staff members surveyed more than 200 community members in two N.C. counties. The project was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Team Epi-Aid is housed in the North Carolina Center for Public Health Preparedness at the North Carolina Institute for Public Health and is led by epidemiology research assistant professor Dr. Pia MacDonald. Learn more about Team Epi-Aid at nccphp.sph.unc.edu/teamepiaid/index.htm or contact tea@unc.edu.

Student News



Nicaragua

Jess Edwards and Sheri Denslow spent summer 2009 in the rural North Atlantic Autonomous Region of Nicaragua conducting surveys to better understand health issues and access to health care in this remote region. The UNC-Chapel Hill medical school works on this project in partnership with the medical school at the University of León. They were based in Sahsa, but Edwards and Denslow travelled to several communities, many reachable only by foot or horse.

Thailand Bound

A team from the field epidemiology training program was deployed to Thailand's Tak province on the border of Myanmar to help with a cholera outbreak investigation; the health department suspected that contaminated meat was the source of infection. The team collected samples and interviewed vendors. Part of the health department's response was to drive around the community for several hours per day playing a public health message from loudspeakers mounted on

a truck, encouraging good sanitation and recommending that anyone with diarrhea visit the local hospital.

Winston-Salem, N.C.

Doris Ngemasong, Aliza Liebman and Lydia Feinstein helped to abstract data from HIV-syphilis records in Winston-Salem, N.C. The collected data will be used to examine the sexual networks of the past and current syphilis outbreaks.

France

Through a fellowship from the International Union Against Cancer (UICC), Annah Layman was able to join the Lifestyle and Cancer Group at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in Lyon, France, for seven weeks during summer 2010. Under the mentoring of Dr. Mia Hashibe (IARC) and Dr. Andy Olshan (UNC-Chapel Hill), Layman conducted research on smoking and smokeless tobacco products and the risk of head and neck cancers. She used data from the International Head and Neck Cancer Epidemiology (INHANCE) Consortium.



Anne Fortino Rositch



Report from Anne Rositch

I am working in Nairobi, Kenya on my dissertation and other research studies. My funding is through the Fogarty International Clinical Research Scholars (FICRS) program, a one-year, mentored training experience that provides opportunities for U.S. graduate students in the health professions to participate in clinical research at NIH-funded research centers around the world. After the initial FICRS selection process, there is a weekend of interviews for finalists, and then both the applicants and research sites rank each other for final matching. My program in Kenya is led by my mentor, Dr. Carey Farquhar, who is the U.S. director of the University of Washington International AIDS Research and Training Program. The University of Washington works in partnership with the University of Nairobi on several HIV-related research projects. In particular, I work on a study of HIV-discordant couples that aims to determine correlates of protective immunity to

HIV acquisition (Funding: NIH R01, P.I. Dr. Carey Farquhar). My dissertation study (supervised by Dr. Jennifer Smith) is nested in this discordant couples cohort, so I also am collecting primary data for my thesis on HPV, cervical cancer and HIV (Additional funding: UNC LCCC-CFAR development award). The study takes place at Kenyatta National Hospital in Nairobi. I have been involved in all aspects of the study recruitment, enrollment, in-clinic participant interviews, training sessions, data management, questionnaire design and protocol development. In addition, I have been able to work with the Ministry of Health on an adolescent health survey focused on high-risk sexual partnerships and HIV infection. I love Kenya, and it's been a pretty amazing year -- but I am looking forward to coming back to UNC in July 2010.

Student News

Student Awards

Dissertation Completion Fellowship, sponsored by The Graduate School

- Elizabeth "Lizzi" Torrone, 2008-2009
- Virginia "Ginger" Guidry, 2010-2011

Smith Graduate Research Grant

- Anjum Hajat, 2008

Society of Fellows Sequoyah Dissertation Fellowship

- Kristal Raymond Chichlowska, 2008-09

Robert Verhalen Endowed Scholarship in Injury Prevention/Trauma Management

- Catherine Vladutiu, 2008
- Laura Sandt, 2009
- Sudha Raman, 2010

Greenberg Award for Excellence in Doctoral Research

- Sangmi Kim, 2008
- Daniel Westreich, 2009
- Marcel Yotebieng, 2010

Robert and Kristen Greczyn Scholarship in Public Health

- Anjum Hajat, 2008

Susanne Moulton and Thomas Wong Scholarship

- Eboni Taylor, 2008
- Chantel Martin, 2009
- Montika Bush, 2010

Elizabeth Reaves Martin Moore Scholarship

- Doris Ngemasong, 2008

FLAS Fellowship

- Brettania Lopes, 2008-2009

Society of Epidemiologic Research-Student Caucus research travel award

- Sunil Agarwal, 2008

Nancy A. Dreyer Endowed Scholarship in Epidemiology

- Sunil Agarwal, 2008
- Petra Sander, 2010

Graduate Education Advancement Board Impact Award

- Amy Kalkbrenner, 2008
- Sandra McCoy, 2008
- Lynne Sampson, 2008
- Elizabeth "Lizzi" Torrone, 2008
- Sunil Agarwal, 2009
- Jennifer Horney, 2009
- Ruchika Goel, 2010

Boka Hadzija Award

- Elizabeth "Lizzi" Torrone, 2009

Office of Undergraduate Research Graduate Mentor Support Grant

- Kirstin Crowder Huiber, 2009

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health's Alumni Associate President's Challenge Scholarship

- Eboni Taylor, 2009

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health's Winstanly Scholarship

- Virginia Senkomago, 2009

Student News

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health's Gary G. and Carolyn J. Koch Merit Scholarship

- Jane Der, 2009

Miriam L. Cole Scholarship

- Amitabh Suthar, 2009

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health's Annual Fund Scholarship

- Heidi Soeters, 2009
- Corey Kalbaugh, 2010
- Zachary Kerr, 2010

Graduate Tuition Incentive Scholarship from the Graduate School

- Sirin Yaemsiri, 2009-2010
- Anne Rositch, 2009-2010
- Sharon Myers, 2009-2010

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Student Travel Award

- Danielle Backes, 2009
- Sheri Denslow, 2009
- Andrew Edmonds, 2009
- Jessie Edwards, 2009
- Kimberly Powers, 2009
- Quynh Nguyen, 2009
- Naman Shah, 2009

Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans

- Naman Shah

Sidney Kark Award for Distinguished Teaching Assistant

- Rachel Palmieri, 2008

- Marcel Yotebieng, 2008
- Virginia Guidry, 2009
- Lauren McCullough, 2010

Rebecca James Baker Scholarship

- Alyssa Mansfield, 2008
- Kimberly Powers, 2009
- Anne Fortino Rositch, 2010

Barbara Sorenson Hulka Dissertation Award

- Sangmi Kim, 2008
- Daniel Westreich, 2009
- Susan Marshall Mason, 2010

Joan Cornoni-Huntley Scholarship

- Sarah Nyante, 2008
- Kimberly Powers, 2008
- Andrew Edmonds, 2009
- Genee Smith, 2010

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Ibrahim Fellowship

- Monica D'Arcy, 2010

Harry A. Guess Scholarship

- Katherine Tumlinson, 2010–

Harry A. Guess/Merck Scholarship in Pharmacoepidemiology

- Hoa Van Le, 2008
- Christina Mack, 2010

Sandra Winn Green Scholarship in Public Health

- Meagan Vaughn, 2010

Postdoctoral Students

Student Awards *(continued)*

Berton H. Kaplan Student Publication Award

- Kimberly Powers, 2008
- Andrew Edmonds, 2009

H. A. Tyroler Endowed Scholarship in Epidemiology

- Sirin Yaemsiri, 2010

Gillings Merit Scholarship

- S. Kapuaola Gellert, 2010

UNC Highway Safety Research Center Scholarship

- Catherine Vladutiu, 2010

James Irving Public Health Scholarship

- Montika Bush, 2010

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Martin Moore Scholarship

- Andrew Edmonds, 2010

North Carolina Public Health Association Scholarship

- Kim Angelon Gaetz, 2010



Virginia Guidry, recipient of the 2009 Sidney Kark Award for Distinguished Teaching Assistant, poses with Dr. Andy Olshan.

Postdoctoral News

Five postdoctoral students have joined the department recently -- Patrick Bradshaw (PhD from UNC, focused on diet, obesity and physical activity), Deborah Bujnowski (PhD from St. Louis University, focused on cardiovascular and nutritional epidemiology), Channele Howe (PhD from Johns Hopkins University, focused on epidemiologic methods and alcohol and HIV acquisition), Amy Kalkbrenner (PhD from UNC, focused on environmental exposures and neurodevelopment) and Kira Taylor (PhD from Emory University, focused on genetic and reproductive epidemiology).



Channele Howe

Keri Monda and Eric Donaldson, former epidemiology postdoctoral students, have been promoted to research assistant professors in the department.

Christy Avery (mentored by Gerardo Heiss and Patricia Chang) was awarded a Career Development Grant (K99/R00) from National Heart Lung & Blood Institute (NHLBI) that will examine methods to estimate the community burden of heart failure.

Daniel Westreich (mentored by Stephen Cole and Charles van der Horst) was awarded a Career Development Grant (K99/R00) from NICHD that will investigate the effect of pregnancy on response to antiretroviral therapy among HIV positive women in South Africa.

Chris Heaney (mentored by Steve Wing) received an external competitive postdoctoral fellowship -- the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Health Scholar-Community Track, 2009-2011. Heaney also received pilot grants from the N.C. Translational and Clinical Sciences Institute (NC TraCS), for "Water, health and quality of life in a community bordering a landfill" and from the UNC Program on Ethnicity, Culture and Health Outcomes (ECHO), for "Odors, health and quality of life in a community bordering a landfill."



Christopher Heaney

Career Paths

Carolina and the Epidemic Intelligence Service

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) is a two-year post-graduate fellowship for health professionals in applied epidemiology. The program began in 1951 under the direction of Dr. Alexander Langmuir (1910 – 1993), then director of CDC's predecessor institution, the National Communicable Disease Center. EIS continues to train epidemiologists, or "disease detectives," to respond to requests for field-based epidemiologic assistance in the United States and across the world. EIS officers are on the public health frontlines, conducting surveillance, epidemiologic investigations and research. Carolina's Department of Epidemiology has a rich tradition of placing its graduates into EIS.

In the past decade, nearly 20 UNC Department of Epidemiology alumni have completed EIS. In this edition of *Episode*, we recognize the following alumni who have trained in the Epidemic Intelligence Service (year of entry into EIS): Susan "Neely" Kaydos-Daniels (2002), Mark Sotir (2002), Claire Newbern (2002), Aaron Fleischauer (2002),

Christina Porucznik (Peterson) (2003), Jennifer Brown (2003), Eric Miller (2004), Kathy Ritger (2004), Mary Ann Wenck (2004), Sherry Farr (2004), Trang Nguyen (2005), Andrew "Drew" Voestch (2005), Danielle Rentz Hunt (2006), Aaron Wendelboe (2006), Jacqueline Tate (2006), Myduc Ta (2008) and Elizabeth Torrone (2009). We also welcome to the incoming EIS class, Kim Porter (2010) and Zewde Demissie (2010). If you were an EIS officer in the past 10 years and a graduate of the UNC Department of Epidemiology and were not included here, please contact Aaron Fleischauer at aaron.fleischauer@dhhs.nc.gov. Likewise, if you graduated from EIS between 1951 and 1999 and are a UNC epidemiology alumnus/a, please contact Aaron to receive information about a social gathering at the EIS annual Carolina conference.



UNC EPI meets Facebook

We now have our own Facebook group, and it's 236 members strong. The group exists to provide a mechanism for epidemiology alumni to stay connected for professional and social purposes. It is our hope that members will use this mechanism to seek help with puzzling epidemiological issues (especially those of you in locations where no other epidemiologists work), and to share information about available jobs and/or positions wanted, etc.

The group is open to UNC public health school faculty and staff members, as well as other UNC public health students who are friends of epidemiology. To join through your facebook page, search on "UNC Epidemiology Alumni and Friends."

Career Paths

Spotlight on Young Alumni: Mia Gaudet, PhD (2005)

Mia, what are you up to these days?

I am currently the director of genetic epidemiology at the American Cancer Society (ACS) in Atlanta. I am pursuing cancer research projects in obesity-related pathways, using both molecular and genetic approaches. Most of my work focuses on cancers of the female breast and uterus. In some regards, these tumors have overlapping etiologies, but their differences are points of interest. At ACS, I am able to research the influence of genetics and other biological markers within the Cancer Prevention Studies that were initiated and maintained in my department. I also collaborate within large consortia of female breast cancer studies, of male breast cancer studies, of studies among BRCA1/2 carriers, and of endometrial cancer studies.

What brought you to Carolina? I was attracted to the department's and school's emphasis on nutrition and chronic disease. Prior to attending Carolina, I received my bachelor's degree in nutrition at the University of Florida. In one of my post-college jobs, I practiced as a nutritionist in rural North Carolina for the supplementary food program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Although the position was short-term, the experience left me with impressions about Americans' diet, class and race that influenced my future research. At Carolina, I was eager to apply my basic nutrition knowledge to exploring the relationship between diet and risk of cancer in a population-based setting. In addition to the didactic



training in epidemiologic methods, I also had the opportunity to gain practical experience in dietary assessment, subject recruitment, data analysis and manuscript preparation. The training at UNC was invaluable to pursuing an academic career in cancer epidemiology.

What were your research interests at Carolina? My research at Carolina was focused on common genetic variation, dietary and hormonal

factors, and risk of cancer in the female breast and head and neck. At the time, research in genetic epidemiology was shifting from polymorphisms with known or suspected functional changes in candidate cancer genes to a more agnostic polymorphism selection process throughout the gene. For my dissertation research, I examined putatively functional polymorphisms and haplotypes in two genes in the estrogen metabolism pathway and under the tutelage of Dr. Marilie Gammon risk of breast cancer in the Long Island Breast Cancer Study Project. I also worked with Dr. Andy Olshan on his North Carolina case-control studies of head and neck cancer that allowed me to utilize my knowledge of the North Carolina diet.

Career Paths

Spotlight on Young Alumni: Richard MacLehose, PhD (2006)

Richard, what are you up to these days? I'm currently an assistant professor with a joint position in epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. The interesting thing about being asked to write this article is realizing exactly how little time I spent planning my career and how haphazard the whole thing was! I have friends who have long-term career goals and figure out where they want to be in ten years and plan how to get there. I'm not one of those people. I would say, however, that although I didn't have a plan, I did benefit greatly from my relationship with my primary mentors while at UNC as well as the extensive course offerings, and that those relationships -- as well as the training that UNC provided -- has greatly influenced how I got to where I am.

What brought you to Carolina? I started UNC's doctoral program in epidemiology in 2002. I came in with a master's degree in epidemiology and a strong interest in quantitative methods. I actively looked for faculty with whom I could work to develop my interests in quantitative methods. As a result, I worked extensively with Jay Kaufman (*former associate professor at UNC, now at McGill University*) on causal inference and other methodological approaches. It would be hard to overstate Jay's influence on me. I learned an enormous amount under his guidance and have continued to benefit greatly from having him to advise me on a career path and collaborations.

What were your research interests at Carolina? Towards the end of my doctoral training, I became increasingly interested in Bayesian methods. I began working with David Dunson, former researcher at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), *currently a professor of statistics at Duke University*, on semi-parametric approaches to hierarchical models. When I

finished my dissertation, David offered me a postdoctoral fellowship in the biostatistics branch at NIEHS. I jumped at the offer and continued working on Bayesian non-parametrics and the use of Bayesian techniques in epidemiologic data analysis.

That brings us back to your current position. Can you tell us a bit more about your role there?

When a job was posted for a joint appointment in epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of Minnesota, it seemed well suited to my interests in both fields. I was extremely excited when I was offered the position.



I've been at the university one and a half years; I currently split my time between research in biostatistics (Bayesian non-parametrics and causal inference) and epidemiology (reproductive and, increasingly, occupational research). I taught my first course (biostatistics for epidemiologists) this semester, which was fun, time-consuming, and importantly, highlighted to me how much I benefitted from my time as a graduate student at UNC. That time has prepared me extraordinarily well. There's rarely a day that goes by when I don't rely on that training in some way.

Gifts to the Department

Gifts to the Department (July 1, 2008 - September 30, 2010)

The Department of Epidemiology wishes to thank the individuals and corporations whose donations provide the much-needed funds to support graduate education.

We are thankful for your continued support.

Individuals

Lorraine Kathleen Alexander
Norma J. Allred
Alia A. Al-Tayyib
H. Michael Arrighi
Donna Day Baird
Jeffrey Propes Baker
Marissa Ellen Baltus
Robert Bruce Barlow
Eugenia Moraes Bastos
May Ahmad Baydoun
John Franklin Bergner Jr.
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Edward A. Pascarella

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Parasitology & Laboratory Practice (PALP) ALUMNI:

The UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Alumni Association brings together alumni from all over the country at various times throughout the year. Many of you have expressed interest in gathering and reconnecting with other PALP alumni at professional meetings during the year. Please let us know if you plan to attend the following events:

- **The 86th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Parasitologists**

June 1-4, 2011 - Anchorage, Alaska

- **The Association of Public Health Laboratories**

Annual Meeting & Fifth State Environmental Laboratory Conference

June 5-8, 2011 - Omaha, Nebraska

If you are interested in participating in group events, contact Stephen Couch by e-mail (stephen_couch@unc.edu) or telephone (919-966-0219).

Gifts to the Department

A new scholarship fund: the Arrighi gift

Michael and Barbara Arrighi have added a new feature to their multifaceted portfolio of philanthropy. In addition to their unrestricted annual support for the Department, the endowed scholarship that bears their name and the provision they have made for the School in their estate plan, the Arrighis have decided to exercise a new category of giving – an expendable scholarship that will be used immediately to recruit a member of next year’s incoming class. This gift is made in honor of Victor J. and Marion Schoenbach, acknowledging Vic’s mentoring role when Michael was a research fellow.

The gift was announced to cheers and general acclaim at this year’s 32nd Annual Minority Health Conference, where Dr. Schoenbach has a large following and distinguished history.

In his native San Francisco, Michael serves as senior director of epidemiology at Janssen, and his team focuses its work on the devastating effects of Alzheimer’s disease on patients, as well as how it affects family members, caregivers and the community at large.

Though Michael earned his undergraduate degree at Whitman College and his master’s at UCLA, he said that nowhere else could have better prepared him for his life’s work than UNC’s Gillings School of Global Public Health.

“I think I was born an epidemiologist,” Michael said. “UNC’s was the only program on my list because it was one of the country’s top schools of public health, and also brought together so many strong disciplines that we



Michael and Barbara Arrighi

epidemiologists draw upon in our work — biology, sociology, mathematics, statistics, anthropology, psychology, public policy, even medicine — the collaborative and research opportunities were significant.”

“It’s extremely important for us to support higher education, as both of us launched wonderful careers as a result of educational opportunities we were afforded,” they said. “We wanted to focus on the graduate program for our scholarship support because, generally, graduate programs don’t always receive the support that undergraduate initiatives do.”

*This article is adapted from one written by Hope Baptiste for *Carolina Connections*.

Gifts to the Department



Sirin Yaemsiri, recipient of the 2010 H.A. Tyroler Endowed Scholarship in Epidemiology, is pictured with Marilyn Tyroler (widow of Dr. Tyroler) on the far left and pictured with Barbara Tyroler (daughter of Dr. Tyroler) on the far right. Far right photo courtesy of Tom Fuldner.



Anne Fortino Rositch (l), recipient of the 2010 Rebecca James Baker scholarship, is pictured with Mary Ellen James (mother of the late Dr. Rebecca James Baker). Photo courtesy of Tom Fuldner.



Dr. Susanne Moulton (l) is pictured with Montika Bush (r), the 2010 recipient of the Susanne Moulton and Thomas Wong Scholarship. Photo courtesy of Tom Fuldner.



Sudha Raman (l), the 2010 recipient, and Laura Sandt (r), the 2009 recipient, are both pictured with Robert and Phyllis Verhalen. Both Raman and Sandt were awarded the Robert Verhalen Endowed Scholarship in Injury Prevention/Trauma Management in their designated year. Photos courtesy of Tom Fuldner.





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HAVE ANY UPDATES FOR US?

Please be sure to keep us up-to-date on new addresses, e-mails, employment, etc.
Send updates to Nancy Colvin. We always love to hear from you!

We welcome your comments and suggestions for our newsletter.

Please direct them to:

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You may update your own information,
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Nancy Colvin with any changes.