



Episode

Student Edition

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

EPI students leave a mark on New York

The EPI Scholars Program is a full-time, paid summer internship program for top graduate epidemiology students at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health or at Public Health – Seattle & King County (Washington). Scholars receive 10 to 12 weeks of supplemental training from senior researchers and training in theory, methods and public health practices to enhance their understanding of the root causes of disease. All scholars have the opportunity to present their findings to senior epidemiologists, key stakeholders and their peers. For many of the scholars, this research internship is used to fulfill thesis requirements and often serves as an opportunity to develop a publishable paper or report. The students who participated in the 2011 scholars program are Quynh Nguyen, Pam Klein, Sirin Yaemsiri, Anne Hakenewerth, Alan Kinlaw and Melanie Napier. A summary of their experiences is provided below.

INSIDE Episode 2012

Page 2:	Chair's message
Page 4:	Faculty news
Page 8:	Alumni news
Page 11:	Staff news
Page 15:	Student news
Page 23:	Post-doc news
Page 25:	Career paths
Page 27:	Giving to EPI



ANNE HAKENEWERTH

Anne Hakenewerth served as an EPI Scholar in summer 2009, working on a project to address cancer inequities in New York City. During her internship, she gained experience analyzing survey data using SUDAAN software. Hakenewerth says that the highlight of her summer was working at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene with a group of smart, hard-working, focused people who were passionate about what they were doing, and that this experience fueled her interest in a career in public health epidemiology. (She also loved living and working in Manhattan for the summer!) Hakenewerth completed her doctorate in cancer epidemiology in December 2011 and is now working at the Carolina Center for Health Informatics.



QUYNH NGUYEN

Quynh Nguyen was the first UNC doctoral student to serve as an EPI Scholar, working in summer 2007 in New York City. Her project used NYC HANES 2004 data to examine inequities in health care access and the medical management of hypertension, hypercholesterolemia and diabetes. During her internship, she improved her skills in population-based survey analysis using SUDAAN software. She says that the highlight of her summer was living in New York City. Now a graduate of the social epidemiology program area, Nguyen serves as a data analyst at the Institute on Urban Health Research at Northeastern University in Boston.

Continued on page 14

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



Dr. Andrew Olshan
Professor and Chair

I am pleased to share some thoughts with this summer, 2012 issue of *Episode*.

The department continues to evolve while maintaining its reputation as one of the top departments of epidemiology. Our multifaceted mission of research, teaching and service on a local, domestic and global scale is challenging, especially in this era of decreased financial support from the State of North Carolina and reduced federal research monies. Nonetheless, the department's dedicated faculty, staff and students have risen to the challenge and have, in fact, accomplished more than ever.

In this issue, we have emphasized student activities and accomplishments.

For 2011-2012, we have 218 students in the program, of whom 180 are in the doctoral program, 18 are seeking the Master of Public Health degree and 20 are in the Master of Science in Clinical Research program. We have one of the largest doctoral epidemiology programs in the U.S. The students are the life-blood of the department and provide for a very stimulating environment in the classroom and in research and service settings. This issue of the newsletter highlights their diverse research and activities.

Our students have participated in the EPI Scholars program at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and at the health departments in Los Angeles and Seattle. Our students also work here in North Carolina. We believe that their exposure to local, city and state health departments is very enriching and provides a real-world public health perspective.

The student news and spotlight stories provide ample evidence for the diversity of backgrounds, training and interests of our students. The awards section shows that their excellence is recognized in the department, at the public health school, across the UNC campus and beyond.

With help from departmental leaders and Dean Rimer, we continue to explore new training programs. For example, we continue to partner with the UNC School of Medicine to administer the innovative Master of Science in Clinical Research degree program. More recently, we are developing a new Master of Public Health concentration in veterinary epidemiology in collaboration with North Carolina State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. We are very excited about this new partnership and opportunity to expand the reach of public health and epidemiology.

I hope you enjoy this issue. As always, I would love to hear from you (andy_olshan@unc.edu).

With Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Olshan".

LETTER FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Dear fellow alumni,

Greetings from your alumni association! As a graduate of the department, you are automatically enrolled into the association. As your association representatives, we serve as liaisons between you and the Department of Epidemiology. Some of our more visible activities include hosting various social functions for both alumni and students, such as the UNC mixer at the annual Society for Epidemiologic Research meeting. We also sponsor



Dr. Aaron Fleischauer

both the H. A. Tyroler Distinguished Alumni Award and the Kaplan Student Publication Award. We work closely with the department chair, dean and other department alumni groups to represent your interests to the Gillings School of Global Public Health and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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, activities of the association and events and awards related to fellow Carolina alumni and friends. Visit www.alumni.unc.edu to stay connected to the whole Carolina alumni community!

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate one of our fellow alumni. Carol Hogue, PhD, is the recipient of the 2011 H. A. Tyroler Distinguished Alumnus Award. Dr. Hogue was cited for demonstrating excellence in developing and advancing the field of reproductive and minority health. From her groundbreaking work to establish Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) and the Safe Motherhood Initiative to her research on pregnancy outcomes among minority women, Dr. Hogue has demonstrated the distinction

embodied in this award. She will be presenting during the department's annual lecture series in fall 2012. If you are in the area, please plan to attend.

Finally, I would like to announce that Drs. Sumitra Shantakumar (2005) and Vani Vannappagari (2005) have volunteered to become the new co-presidents of the epidemiology department's alumni association. Sumitra and Vani are both epidemiologists with Glaxo-Smith-Kline in Research Triangle Park, NC. I am grateful to have represented alumni from our department during the past three years.

Sincerely,

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



Dr. Aaron Fleischauer (left) and Dr. Andrew Olshan congratulate Dr. Donna Arnett, who won the 2010 H.A. Tyroler Distinguished Alumnus Award.

Faculty news - promotions



Til Stürmer, MD, MPH, was promoted from associate professor to professor effective Sept. 1, 2010. Stürmer directs the UNC Center of Excellence in Pharmacoepidemiology and Public Health.



Stephen R. Cole, PhD, was promoted from associate professor to professor, effective Sept 1, 2010. Cole is the director of graduate studies in the Department of Epidemiology. His interest is quantitative epidemiologic methods.



Kelly Evenson, PhD, was promoted from research associate professor to research professor effective Oct. 1, 2010. Dr. Evenson's research interest is in physical activity epidemiology.



Carri Casteel, PhD, MPH, was promoted from research assistant professor to research associate professor, effective June 1, 2011. Dr. Casteel's research interests include injury and violence prevention.



Debra Irwin, PhD, MSPH, was promoted from research assistant professor to research associate professor, effective Jan. 1, 2011. Dr. Irwin's current research involves chronic disease surveillance and issues related to cancer survivorship.



Stephen Marshall, PhD, was promoted from associate professor to professor, effective Sept. 1, 2011. Dr. Marshall's research interests include aging, disabilities, and injury and violence prevention. On August 1, 2012, Dr. Marshall became the new director of the UNC Injury Prevention Research Center.



Eric Whitsel, MD, MPH, was promoted from research assistant professor to research associate professor effective May 1, 2011. Dr. Whitsel's research interest is in the area of cardiovascular disease epidemiology.



Wilfrida Behets, PhD, MPH, was promoted from associate professor to professor, effective Nov. 1, 2010. Her research interests include HIV; infectious diseases including sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean; HIV/STI prevention and control; implementation research; prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV and bioethics and justice in health.

Faculty news - new hires



Before joining the faculty as an assistant professor in July 2011, **Christy Avery, PhD**, received a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Michigan and her doctorate from UNC. Her research interests span several cardiovascular disease topical areas, including heart failure, the genomics and pharmacogenomics of electrocardiographic traits, environmental health and the application of epidemiologic methods to large scale genetic association studies. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, traveling and knitting.



After completing his master's and doctoral degrees in the department, **Andrew Edmonds, PhD**, joined the department as a research instructor in November 2011. Since 2005, he has worked with HIV prevention, care and treatment programs in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. He is involved currently with several projects related to prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission service delivery. He enjoys hiking, traveling, and spending time with his wife Tamara and their dog Chance.



In January 2011, the department welcomed back one of its alumnae, **Stephanie Engel, PhD**, as an associate professor. Her research involves environmental and genetic risk factors for adverse outcomes of pregnancy and neurodevelopmental impairment. After receiving her doctorate from the department in 2003, Engel joined the Department of Preventive Medicine at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. She relocated to Chapel Hill with her husband, Dr. Larry Engel, and daughters, Eva and Hannah. Engel enjoys remembering her past hobbies (which at one time included music, running and traveling for pleasure), and hopes she will be able to do them again in the future!



Larry Engel, PhD, is an associate professor in the department and an associate scientist at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) epidemiology branch. His research is focused on environmental and occupational risk factors for cancer and neurologic diseases. He completed his doctoral training at the University of Washington and was a faculty member at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center before coming to UNC in January 2011. He enjoys bicycling, photography and spending time with his family (discussing epidemiology!).



Yvonne Golightly, PT, MS, PhD, joined the department in March 2012 as a research assistant professor. She is a physical therapist with more than a decade of clinical experience in orthopedics. She obtained her master's and doctoral degrees at UNC. Her research focuses on the long-term effects of musculoskeletal injury and disorders of the lower extremity, but she is interested particularly in identifying modifiable risk factors for injury and osteoarthritis. Currently, Golightly conducts research with the UNC Injury Prevention Research Center and UNC Thurston Arthritis Research Center. She and her husband enjoy biking and playing outdoors with their two-year-old son.



Anna Kucharska-Newton, PhD, MPH, is a research assistant professor and fellow at the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research. Born in Warsaw, Poland, Kucharska-Newton received her doctorate in biochemistry from Rush University in Chicago. Her research is focused on the evaluation of health care outcomes for persons with cardiovascular disease. She is interested specifically in patterns of care, with an emphasis on continuity of care. Most of her research is performed within the Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities (ARIC) Study, the Women's Health Initiative and the North Carolina Stroke Care Collaborative. She enjoys spending time with her family, gardening and reading Southern fiction.

Faculty news



Dr. Til Stürmer

Stürmer elected president of international pharmacoepidemiology society

Til Stürmer, MD, PhD, professor of epidemiology at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, has been chosen as president-elect of the International Society for Pharmacoepidemiology (ISPE). His three-year term of service will begin at ISPE's 2012 annual meeting Aug. 23-26 in Barcelona.

Stürmer, who also heads UNC's Center of Excellence in Pharmacoepidemiology and Public Health, focuses his research both on epidemiologic methods and clinical epidemiology. His clinical research includes chemoprevention of colorectal cancer and dementia with nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs; determinants of antibiotic resistance; and hormone therapy, pain and subclinical inflammation in osteoarthritis.

The ISPE is a 1,500-member nonprofit international professional membership organization dedicated to advancing the health of the public by providing a forum for the open exchange of scientific information and for the development of policy, education and advocacy for the field of pharmacoepidemiology.

Pharmacoepidemiology is the science that applies epidemiologic approaches to studying the use, effectiveness, value and safety of pharmaceuticals.



Dr. Charles Poole

Poole wins teaching innovation award winner

Charles Poole, PhD, associate professor of epidemiology, has been selected by the department's students as the faculty member "who improves the student learning environment and outcomes by integrating new technologies, engaging students in interactive activities, employing creative assessment methods, introducing progressive curriculum and/or incorporating creative ideas."

One faculty member from each academic unit was nominated by students to win the award, which includes a \$1,000 prize. Poole's award was announced as part of the celebration of teaching events that began with a kickoff on February 7.

Our student organization also was awarded \$500 for submitting the most nominations for the innovative teaching award!

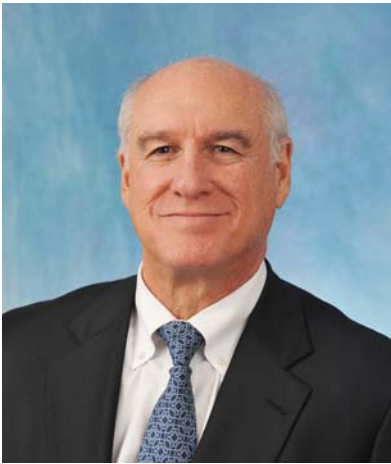


Dr. David Savitz answers questions about pharmacoepidemiology from Dr. Michele Jonsson-Funk.



Dr. Laura Loehr discusses cardiovascular research with graduate student Corey Kalbaugh.

Faculty news



Dr. Myron Cohen

Cohen wins top award from Clinical Research Forum for HIV prevention study

For his groundbreaking research on treatment as prevention of HIV, Myron Cohen, MD, has received the top honor of the inaugural Clinical Research Forum Top 10 Clinical Research Achievement Awards. Dr. Myron Cohen is professor of medicine and microbiology in the UNC School of Medicine and of epidemiology at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Cohen's study, HIV Prevention Trials Network 052, showed that treating people with HIV with antiretroviral therapy renders them virtually non-contagious, reducing sexual transmission by 96 percent. The study findings, published Aug. 11, 2011 in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, were first made public in May 2011, four years before the study's scheduled completion, because they were so overwhelmingly positive.

HPTN 052 convincingly demonstrated that HIV treatment is the most powerful prevention tool currently available.

"Objectively, very few clinical trials have had the impact of HPTN 052," said Marschall S. Runge, MD, PhD, chair of the department of medicine and executive dean at the UNC School of Medicine. "The study is a remarkable example of clinical research from 'bench to bedside' that informs public health policy."

Cohen's research was honored with the Forum's Herbert Pardes Clinical Research Excellence Award, named for the former president and chief executive officer of New York-Presbyterian Hospital, a physician who is regarded as a champion and visionary in clinical research.

HPTN 052 was largely funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, with additional funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Institute of Mental Health, all part of the NIH.



(Left) Dr. Steve Marshall educates his students in a non-traditional setting while lecturing outdoors.



(Right) Anne Starling and Dr. Steve Wing break away from the confines of McGavran-Greenberg Hall to discuss environmental epidemiology.

60s

J. Earl Williams, DDS (MPH, 1962; DrPH, 1965): Still active in church and community, including support and participation in the Columbia County Choral Society.

70s

Tom Prendergast (MPH, 1972): I retired from the position of County Health Officer in San Bernardino County, Calif. in 2004. I still teach an occasional lecture and an even more occasional class. I jog regularly and golf. I recently made my first hole in one after about 58 years of golfing.

Mary Daly (MSPH, 1971; PhD, 1973): Recipient of the "Women of Distinction" award from the *Philadelphia Business Journal*, 2011.

Kathy Magruder (MPH, 1975; PhD, 1978): I am living in Ankara, Turkey, for the academic year as the recipient of a Fulbright Award (senior researcher). I am in the Department of Psychiatry at Hacettepe University, studying Iraqis who came from the worst areas of combat and are now

studying in Turkey.

80s

Myrna Aavedal (PhD, 1982): I have walked the 500-mile pilgrimage route in Spain, the Camino de Santiago de Compostela.

David Goldsmith (MSPH, 1977; PhD, 1983): My first wife died unexpectedly in 2009, and I remarried, to Bonnie Hillsberg, in June 2011.

Stephen Kritchevsky (PhD, 1989): I have three sons ages 21, 21 and 13, one of whom is a senior at UNC now. In January, I will become the editor of *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences*, the first non-MD to hold the post.

90s

Charles Humble (PhD, 1990): My older daughter was awarded a Master of Public Health in Maternal and Child Health last Spring.

Janet Croft (PhD, 1991): My husband and I have taken up Carolina Shag dancing in the recent "empty-nest" years.

Susan Hillis (PhD, 1991): My husband and I have had 11 kids; they are now ages 17 to 26, basically every year. We adopted eight from Russia.

Elizabeth Whelan (MSPH, 1986; PhD, 1991): My daughter, Molly, has entered the teenage years (age 13)!

Patricia Moorman (MSPH, 1989; PhD, 1993): I am in the process of planning a wedding for the baby that I had when I was a graduate student. I don't know how the years flew by so quickly!

Elizabeth (Barnett) Pathak (MSPH, 1990; PhD, 1993): I am married to Dr. Amit Pathak who practices hospital medicine in Tampa, Fla. My children are Kiran (age 16), Nina (age 15), Aidan (age 11 months) and Arya (age 11 months).

Dan Caplan (PhD, 1995): No kids, two greyhounds. Happy to share photos with anyone who wants them.

Shine Chang (MSPH, 1992; PhD, 1995): One of the first recipients of a new teaching award, The Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award, at

University of Texas health institutions and inducted into the UT Academy of Health Science Educators.

Joanne Klevens, MD (PhD, 1995): My son, who was born the first year of my doctoral work is now 20 and has been thinking of a career in public health.

E. Ann Davis (MPH, 1996): Nothing more than I am getting older, my kids are grown, they are doing well. I have an aging parent, so that is another life learning experience. In the last few years, I went back to riding/training/showing horses in my spare time and had two new foals this year. Just like kids, they have their own problems, but they keep life interesting for me. I really appreciate getting to ride horses again after having a spinal injury/injuries and being disabled during military service, so I figure every day is really a miracle!

Kimberley Fox (MPH, 1996): I am married to Michael O'Reilly (also who received a Master of Public Health in EPI at UNC) and we have two daughters, Erin and Alexa, ages 14 and 11. We have lived in Asia (Bangkok and Manila) for more

Alumni news

than eight years now, and we are really enjoying it.

Cynthia Boyd (MPH, 1997): My husband Greg and I have three kids - Graham(7), Liam(5) and Jane (born Sept. 6, 2011).

Kimberly Phillips (PhD, 1997): Three children: Leslie Anne, born during my first year of coursework in 1987, is 24. She graduated from Wake Forest University in 2009 and teaches at a school for children with autism in Cary, NC. Amy Leigh, born just after we moved to Winston Salem after I finished my coursework, is 23. She graduated from UNC-Greensboro with degrees in religious studies and english in 2011 and works for iActive Learning in Winston-Salem, NC . Will,16, is a junior at West Forsyth High School in Winston-Salem. Keith and I have been married 32 years in December. He sold his dental practice one year ago and came to work with me at the Salisbury VAMC. (I left Wake Forest Health Sciences after 19 years to come to the VA 2.5 years ago). The veteran population is awesome.

Eugenia Bastos (PhD, 1999): My son is 26 years old, with a brilliant scholarship record and career. He is working on his doctorate in neuroscience at UC-Davis, with a current internship at the Max Planck Institute in Frankfurt, paid by the National Science Foundation. His dissertation is on molecular developments of cerebral attention. He just received a certificate of completion of his Fulbright Program in the Netherlands (2010) in neuroscience, and he is a high honors graduate in cognitive sciences from UC-Berkeley. He grew up and went to school in Chapel Hill (from ages 9 to 15) when I was going to UNC. For that, I give thanks to UNC for having welcomed me and my family with open arms! Thank you, UNC!

John Grabenstein (PhD, 1999): Prettiest wife in the world. Four greatest kids in the world. Best dog and cat, but you might not believe me on that one.

00s

Mercedes Carnethon (MSPH, 1998; PhD, 2000): I got married on Friday May 13 - and was back at work the following Tuesday. One of my

dear friends from EPI, Mark Sotir, was there as a witness that I actually did walk down the aisle!

Christine Parks (MSPH, 1996; PhD, 2001): Two kids - 13 and 8 -- keeping us quite busy. Time sure does fly.

Daphne Rattner (PhD, 2001): Besides being a professional and now a teacher, I'm an activist of the national and international movement for the humanization of childbirth. I served as president of the III International Conference on Humanization of Childbirth, held in Brasilia, Brasil, in November 2010. More than 15 thousand people from 26 countries attended it. I'm the current executive coordinator of the Brazilian Network for the Humanization of Childbirth - ReHuNa and a member of the board of directors of the International Motherbaby Childbirth Organization (www.rehuna.org.br and www.imbci.org). We have been influential in shaping the maternal and child policies of the Brazilian government.

Danny Benjamin (MPH, 2001; PhD, 2003): We have four kids; my job is great.

Christy Porucznik (MSPH, 2000; PhD, 2003): I have two children who are 5.5 and 2.5 years old. This year, I received two major grants, an R01 from NIEHS, and one from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. I am looking forward to experiencing the tenure review process in the relatively near future.

Matt Price (MSPH, 1999; PhD, 2004): I got married this year (2011) and am expecting my first child (a boy!) in 2012. Wow! [Update: Aytan Michael Price was welcomed into the world on April 28.]

Muge Gucsavas-Calikoglu (MPH, 2004): Three boys, ages 18, 15, 11.

Sarah Knowles (PhD, 2005): Had my first child, a daughter named Audrey Mae Frances, on Dec. 24, 2010.

Kyna Gooden (PhD, 2006): My family and I have relocated from Durham, NC to Princeton, NJ because I recently accepted a position at Bristol-Myers Squibb. We have three kids: daughter Taylor (7), son Fredrick II (4) and stepdaughter Jasmine (11).

Alumni news

Jennifer Norton (PhD, 2006): On Nov. 5, 2010, I married Michael Greenberg, and on Sept. 4, 2011 we welcomed our son Jonah Nathaniel into our family.

Alia Al-Tayyib (MSPH, 2005; PhD, 2007): I got married the week after graduating from UNC (May 2007) in sunny Montego Bay. We have two awesome and funny little boys. Tariq Patrick was born Dec. 31, 2008, and his little brother Haris Alexander was born April 14, 2011.

Suzanne Belinson (PhD, 2007): I am married and have two great kids; Madeline is 7 and Olive is 3.5 and we live in Chicago.

Daniel Koralek (PhD, 2008): Have spent a good amount of time traveling and taking photographs (http://www.flickr.com/photos/dank_photo-stream/).

Lisa Vinkoor-Imler (MSPH, 2005; PhD, 2008): I recently got married to the guy from ENVR that I met on the first day of orientation.

Kristal Chichlowska (PhD, 2009): I gave birth to my second daughter, Natalia Rae Chichlowska, on June 27, 2011. (My first daughter, Monika Eve, was born Feb 23, 2009).

Anne Marie Jukic (PhD, 2009): I have two babies, one born May 10, 2008, (did I tell you about him already?) and one born Aug. 9, 2010. Both are happy and healthy, and I love watching them grow a little bit every day.

10s

Yvonne Carter (MPH, 2010): I have a new baby girl, Taylor Jadyne, born May 7, 2011. She is six months now, so I am learning an entire new set of things to balance!

Quynh Nguyen (MSPH, 2009; PhD, 2011): Because I never had to

worry about UNC tuition (I had a RA/Taship that covered it) I traveled quite a lot during my UNC education-- Hong Kong, Montreal, Vietnam, Paris, Maui. I am traveling again to Hong Kong and to Seoul over the holidays.

Sudha Raman (PhD, 2011): My two EPI-girls, both born while I was a student, are doing well (Anjali - 2.5 years, Maya - 10 months).

RECENTLY DECEASED ALUMNI

The Department of Epidemiology extends its heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of:

Din-Dzietham, Rebecca (MPH, 1992; PhD, 2000)
Elter, John R (PhD, 1997)
Fisher, Frank (MPH, 1971)
Fogleman, Diane (PhD, 1975)
Johnson, Albert (MPH, 1962; PhD, 1964)
Lednar, Wayne (PhD, 1975)
Pomerans, Mark (MPH, 1973)
Rouse, Beatrice (PhD, 1980)
Socolar, Rebecca (MPH, 1998)
Woodbury, Max (MPH, 1978)

Staff news

New hires 2010-2011

SPA new hires

Martha Kepner	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Shelly-Ann Love	Applications Analyst
Virginia Pate	Applications Analyst
Joy Kloetzer	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Katherine Borron	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Drew Trevor Scobey	Research Technician
Jesica Swanstrom	Research Specialist
Yaming Shao	Applications Analyst
Rebecca Rohde	Applications Analyst
Melissa Polier	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Sarah Whited	Research Technician
Amanda DeSmit	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Tania Desrosiers	Social/Clinical Research Spec
Kathryn Wisniewski	Applications Analyst
Sharon Jackson	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Rebecca Drapp	Research Technician
Monique Justice	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Parita Shah	Research Technician
Crystal Daniel	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Erin Kirk	Research Specialist
Anna LeMahieu	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Yuming Hu	Applications Analyst
Heena Mehta	Research Specialist
Stephanie Blair	Social/Clinical Research Asst
Brittany Walker	Social/Clinical Research Asst

EPA non-faculty new hires

Andrea Des Marais	Project Coordinator
Kathryn Salisbury	Project Coordinator
Samuel Tchwenko	Epidemiologist
Alison Gunn	Project Manager

Service awards 2010 -2011

Sue Wolf - 40 years of service
Carmen Woody- 30 years of service
Thomas Goodwin - 25 years of service
Nancy Colvin - 25 years of service
Richard Howard - 20 years of service
Vicki Moore - 15 years of service
David Kleckner - 10 years of service
Sally Duffy - 5 years of service

Retired Service Award

Joy Wood - 30 years of service

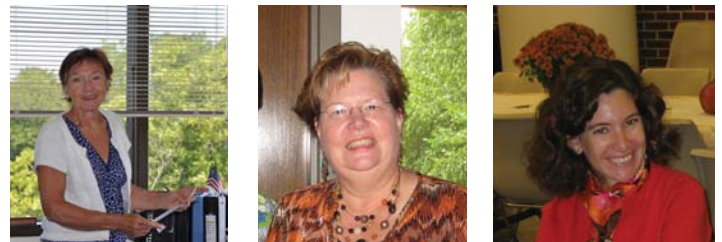
Finally retired, but not forgotten...

SPA retirements

Steven Hutton, Applications Specialist
Retired March 31, 2010
Joy Wood, Applications Specialist
Retired March 31, 2010
Joanna Smith, Applications Specialist
Retired July 30, 2010
Victor Rhodes, Applications Specialist
Retired September 30, 2010
Linda Morris, Social/Clinical Research Specialist
Retired September 30, 2010
Mary Eileen Gregory, Applications Specialist
Retired January 31, 2012
Phyllis Johnson, Social/Clinical Research Specialist
Retired February 29, 2012
Sally Duffy, Accounting Technician
Retired March 31, 2012

EPA retirements

Carol Murphy, Clinical Instructor
Retired December 31, 2010



(Left to right are) Carol Murphy (retiree), Phyllis Johnson (retiree) and Tania Desrosiers (new hire).



(Left to right are) Spencer Gee (IT support and amateur mouse catcher); Courtney Andrews and Jennifer Moore (accounting techs and part-time department muscle).

Staff news



Sally Duffy enjoys an congratulatory card.

2010 Staff Excellence Award - Sally Duffy

Sally Duffy is dependable, hardworking, efficient and always helpful (even concerning questions that may not relate to her job position). She is dedicated to her work and always tries her best in completing tasks for members of her faculty, placing orders for the department and dealing with other fiscal office duties.

Sally deals with her fair share of interruptions throughout the day; however, she always gives her undivided attention to the matter at hand and makes sure a resolution is found. Her attentiveness to detail, willingness to help and effectiveness in solving problems makes faculty, staff and students feel assured that their problem will be resolved if Sally is involved in the matter.

She has a great working relationship with the staff and faculty, and her work ethic is to be admired. Sally is always on time for work, she rarely takes vacation time and she sometimes has to be encouraged to stay at home if she has a cold. She is knowledgeable about all the accounts she is responsible for handling, and she gives her faculty “heads up” about forthcoming financial matters.



David Kleckner accepts the 2011 award from Dr. Andrew Olshan.

2011 Staff Excellence Award - David M. Kleckner

Dave was recognized for his ongoing, outstanding support of the department on a day-to-day basis and also for his work on a special initiative.

During the past year, he has demonstrated his leadership as a member of the school of public health data security task force. Dave was very proactive on the task force, providing considerable input on how to adapt recommendations for departmental needs. Dave took on a lot of hard work behind the scenes to bring the department into compliance with security requirements and has acted as the main point of communication for disseminating policy information and assisting investigators and their research teams with becoming compliant.

Beyond his efforts on data security this year, Dave is recognized for his exceptional day-to-day leadership, productivity and creativity. These strengths have earned him the recognition and respect of his coworkers. One nominator wrote, “Dave clearly treats his employees with respect at all times. He listens to their concerns/needs, but also has the capacity to critique in a way that doesn’t wound.”



Star Heel awards 2010-2011



AMY LOWMAN

Amy Lowman is an all-around great project manager. Her organizational skills are impeccable. She is dedicated to her work, the department, sub-contractors and to the university. Amy has a positive go-to attitude that helps calm all when stress levels are high. She is a true pleasure to work with.



BOYD YOUNT JR.

Boyd Yount is a very hardworking and dedicated department employee. His expert knowledge of the lab, approachability and willingness to help, make him one of the go-to people for lab techs and fellow colleagues. Boyd has made numerous contributions to our field of research, and his contributions have been used around the world by multiple investigators, which has resulted in several U.S. assigned and pending patents.



ALISON WOOMERT

Alison Woomert has an outstanding work ethic. She is described by coworkers as being “attentive to every detail.” As a project director, Alison harmonizes the work flow of subcontractors and UNC staff to ensure adherence to product goals and a wide range of policies and procedures. She is described by her coworkers as “dependable, responsible and a team player.”



NANCY COLVIN

Nancy Colvin provides wonderful leadership in communicating with faculty, staff and students. One student wrote, “I am not sure sometimes how Nancy manages to fulfill her other duties, as students are constantly at her door with questions and concerns.” Recognized for her willingness to listen and help with problem-solving, she is resourceful in reaching out to help address problems when needed. Nancy is friendly and creativity in addressing daily challenges.



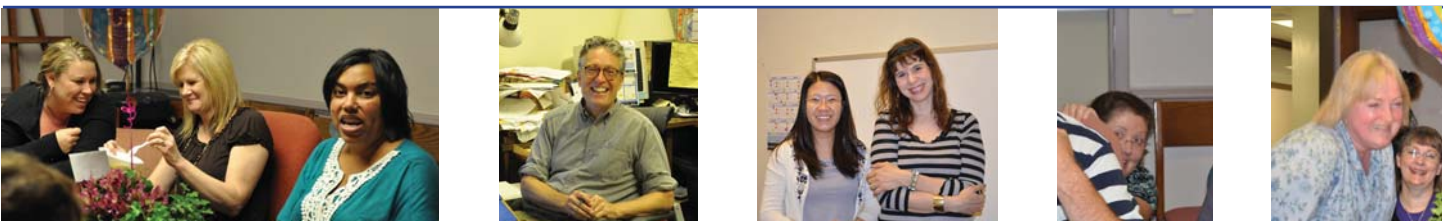
CARMEN WOODY

We are incredibly fortunate to have Carmen in our department. Her work ethic is outstanding; her standards are high; and her work quality is impeccable. In addition, her work is completed in an efficient manner and with good humor despite the many obstacles that come her way.



BOB GOETZE

Bob Goetze is a dedicated, productive, efficient and hardworking employee. Bob works effectively with faculty, project managers and users in designing information technology systems and development of computing solutions. “Bob is cursed with the inability to say no, but blessed with the ability to manage and complete every task he commits himself to,” according to one co-worker. Another stated, “He’s a great colleague to bounce off ideas with since his mind is always turning with new and creative ways to resolve [issues].” “Bob, to me, is just staff excellence.”



New York scholars (continued)



PAM KLEIN

Pam Klein, a fifth-year doctoral student in the infectious disease epidemiology program, worked as an EPI Scholar in summer 2008. Through her project, Klein investigated the role of HIV and other factors in recent tuberculosis (TB) transmission and clustering in NYC. During her tenure, she improved her skills using SUDAAN, GIS, and other approaches in statistical analysis. Highlights of her summer included assisting with a TB contact investigation and shadowing a TB case officer in the field.

MELANIE NAPIER

Melanie Napier served as an EPI Scholar in summer 2011. A third-year Master of Science in Public Health/Doctor of Philosophy student in the environmental, genetic, infectious disease, social and reproductive epi program areas, Melanie examined disparities in fitness and academic achievement among NYC public school students. During her internship, Melanie gained experience working with large datasets and improved her skills in longitudinal data analysis and GIS analysis. Highlights of her internship included spending a day with Ana Diez Roux talking about social epidemiology in her short course. Napier also attended two presentations - on mental health disparities in the NYC correctional system and HIV services at the correctional health facilities -- which highlighted the prison population as a unique population in which to explore disparities and pilot interventions. Napier also enjoyed spending a day with fellow interns having dim sum and eating ice cream, and meeting all the city interns from other agencies at Mayor Bloomberg's barbecue at Gracie Mansion.



SIRIN YAEMSIRI



Sirin Yaemsiri also served as an EPI Scholar in summer 2008, following her first year as a Master of Science in Public Health/Doctor of Philosophy student. Yaemsiri's project was titled, "Food insecurity and receipt of public benefits (TANF): How are these proxies for low socioeconomic status associated with health among low-income New York City residents?" Over the course of the project, she improved on her skills in SUDAAN and GIS, and gained an understanding of the importance of population-based estimates, the difference between burden and risk, and when not to use a DAG. A highlight of Yaemsiri's summer was watching "Almost Famous" on Pier 54. Last April, as a fifth-year student in CVD and nutrition epidemiology, Yaemsiri defended her dissertation, "Serum fatty acids and risk of ischemic stroke among postmenopausal women."

ALAN KINLAW

Alan Kinlaw, a second-year Master of Science in Public Health/Doctor of Philosophy student in the reproductive/perinatal/pediatric epidemiology program area, worked as an EPI Scholar in summer 2011 on a project titled "Assessing social and demographic characteristics for disparities in referral to the Early Intervention Program and special education in New York City." During his internship, he improved his skills in GIS analysis, data management and longitudinal data analysis. Highlights of Kinlaw's summer included visiting a jail on Rikers Island to learn about a program for mentally ill detainees to improve their adjustment to life after detention, and weekly brown-bag lunches with EPI Scholars from other institutions who brought great ideas to the table during discussions of hurdles and obstacles in our research. He also enjoyed roaming the city's neighborhoods and parks for the first time, going to Yankees and Mets games, visiting the Cloisters, and all the great food.



Student news

The department is very fortunate to have such a diverse group of students all of whom are immersed in various research projects. Below is a “snapshot” of their work.



Kapuaola Gellert, Doctoral Student

Cardiovascular disease epidemiology program

Kapuaola Gellert, a student in the doctoral program in cardiovascular disease (CVD) epidemiology, is from Kailua, Hawaii, a small town near the beach and about 25 minutes from Honolulu. Gellert always has wanted to serve the native Hawaiian community, an often underserved group that experiences health disparities, especially in cardiovascular disease. Her aim is to learn the skills necessary to conduct research and implement public health programs that would decrease these health disparities and improve the overall health of native Hawaiians.

She was inspired especially to focus on health when her aunt was diagnosed with a rare form of lung cancer common only in native Hawaiians and Maori from New Zealand. Feeling helpless, she set about to educate herself and her family on her aunt’s illness, and along the way, developed an interest in public health and prevention epidemiology.

Gellert received biology and chemistry degrees from University of Hawaii at Hilo. After graduation, she worked as a medical assistant. During this time, she applied for and received a National Cancer Institute - funded research grant to study ciliary function among native Hawaiians as a possible biological explanation for the increased prevalence of lung disease including lung cancer, among native Hawaiians. She continued with her education and received a Master of Public Health in epidemiology from Oregon Health and Science University. She returned to Hawaii where she worked as an epidemiologist in Moloka`i at the island’s native Hawaiian health care system, Na Pu`uwai. During her time in Moloka`i, Gellert decided that she wanted to be an independent researcher and the first native Hawaiian doctoral-level epidemiologist in Hawaii. Gellert credits her mentor, a UNC epidemiology alumnus, Ronald E. Aubert, PhD, with steering her to UNC.

She currently works with Gerardo Heiss, MD, MSc, PhD on a CVD training grant and her dissertation research is on cardiometabolic risk factors and metabolic syndrome in native Hawaiian communities. She also helped develop a new schoolwide course with epidemiology faculty member Anna Maria Siega-Riz, PhD, RD titled “Introduction to Public Health,” which also will have an online version. What she enjoys most about the Department of Epidemiology is the nurturing atmosphere of both students and faculty members. “The faculty members create a positive learning environment where students are challenged to think in new ways while learning from them and from classmates,” Gellert says. When she is not working on her research, she enjoys dancing the Hula, hiking and making jewelry.

Did you know?....

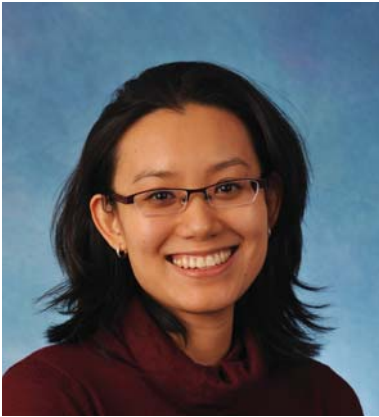
As of Fall of 2011, an overwhelming majority of the 218 currently-enrolled students were in a PhD program in EPI.

Here are the numbers:

PhD:	152 students
MSPH/PhD:	28 students
MPH:	18 students
MSCR:	20 students

Continued on page 16

Student news



Emily M. Ko, MD, Master's student

Master of Science in Clinical Research Program

Emily Ko, a first-generation American, is from Boston, MA. Her parents came to the U.S. from Taiwan in 1976 and settled in Boston. She graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College in 2000, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in cognitive neuroscience. Her summa cum laude senior thesis was on the activity of orexin and histamine neurons during sleep and wake states. During her time at Harvard and after, Ko worked in women's health as co-coordinator of Project Health Fitness and Nutrition Program (Lamont Public Service Fellowship, 1997-2000). This program developed, implemented and instructed a healthy-lifestyle program for underserved, overweight and obese pre-adolescent girls.

From 2001-2002, Ko was a fellow in the Boston Schweitzer Fellowship Program (BSFP), and from 2002-2003, she served as program mentor. This program developed and implemented the "Prenatal Exercise Program," in conjunction with Worcester Healthy Start Initiative, and was targeted towards Spanish-and Portuguese-speaking women. Ko attended the University of Massachusetts Medical School and received her medical degree in 2005. She continued her interest in women's health by taking a combined obstetrics and gynecology residency at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital, in Boston. When considering medical fellowship opportunities, she wanted an institution that also had a school of public health. She was especially interested in UNC because of its outstanding epidemiology program and because of the unique Master of Science in Clinical Research (MSCR) program. The MSCR program is an interdisciplinary research degree program housed within the Department of Epidemiology and jointly sponsored by the North Carolina Translational and Clinical Sciences Institute.

After spending all of her academic career in Massachusetts, Ko left her home state to come to UNC to pursue a gynecologic-oncology fellowship. She is the first gynecologic-oncology fellow to participate in the MSCR program. In 2011, Ko received a Clinical/Translational Cancer Research Award from the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center to fund a pilot study evaluating the role of metformin for treatment of endometrial hyperplasia, a pre-cancerous condition of the uterus. The project parallels her ongoing thesis project evaluating metformin and the risk of development of endometrial cancer. As a student in the department, Ko has found faculty members to be very approachable and the program to have an abundance of resources. She says she has enjoyed thoroughly the learning experience and professional camaraderie among medical clinicians, epidemiology students and faculty members. She calls her experience "incredible." Additionally, she finds that the program is very practical, which allows her to apply what she learns in class to her daily research. Her hobbies include figure-skating, playing the piano, traveling and keeping up with her 11-month-old son, a native Tarheel.



Jenny Lund, PhD

Pharmacoepidemiology and cancer programs

Jenny Lund received her UNC doctorate in epidemiology in December 2011 and started a postdoctoral research position in March 2012 with the Department of Clinical Epidemiology at Aarhus University in Denmark. Her research there will focus on clinical cancer epidemiology and examine patterns of treatment and toxicities associated with the use of various chemotherapeutic agents in patient populations that are not typically represented in clinical trials.

Continued on page 17

Student news

Lund grew up in Edina, Minnesota, and received her undergraduate training in quantitative economics and international relations at Tufts University in Medford, MA. Her interest in pharmacoepidemiology was first sparked by jobs she held after college graduation, including working as an economic consultant specializing in health-care antitrust litigation. There, she was introduced to the role of epidemiology in relation to clinical trials and drug safety. Finding the field of pharmacoepidemiology fascinating, she considered several graduate epidemiology programs, choosing UNC because of its renowned program, great location, funding opportunities and friendly students and faculty members. Lund was accepted into the MSPH/PhD program in 2007 and has worked with Til Sturmer, MD, PhD (Epidemiology), and Robert Sandler, MD (School of Medicine), on a National Institutes of Health training grant from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Her dissertation was titled “The validity of administrative data and patterns of chemotherapy use among elderly colorectal cancer patients.”

One of the most memorable experiences Lund had while at UNC was a summer internship at the health services and economics branch (HSEB) of the National Cancer Institute. During her time as a doctorate student at UNC, she was able to continue her relationship with the HSEB, including collaboration on two book chapters, multiple papers and use of their data for her dissertation research. Lund says she has enjoyed her time in North Carolina, including running races in North and South Carolina, biking around Dairyland and Maple View Farms, attending concerts in Raleigh, Durham and Carrboro and spending warm spring and summer evenings on the Weaver Street lawn with friends. Most of all, Lund will miss her classmates at UNC, whom she describes as “some of the most interesting, multi-talented, and fun people I have ever met.”



Lauren McCullough, MSPH, doctoral student

Cancer epidemiology

Lauren McCullough is from Atlanta, Georgia, and went to Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN as an undergraduate. While taking a class on the history of medicine, McCullough, a pre-med student and neuroscience major, first heard about epidemiology. She decided that she would pursue a career in the field. McCullough attended Meharry Medical College, also in Nashville, and received a Master of Science in Public Health in 2007. While at Meharry, she was involved in clinical epidemiology research under the direction of Dr. Charles Matthews at the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center.

McCullough chose to come to the UNC epidemiology department to continue her graduate education because the department was well-ranked, and the faculty interests were a good match with her own. While visiting the department, she was struck with the collaborative nature of the faculty members and students in both classwork and research and felt that this would be an ideal place to pursue her interests.

Her research primarily focuses on components of energy balance and carcinogenesis, particularly, the molecular mechanisms driving the associations between physical activity, obesity, weight gain and cancer (at multiple sites) and the interplay between genes and environment. In 2010, under the mentorship of professor Dr. Marilie Gammon, she wrote and received a competitive predoctoral award from the Department of Defense to support her dissertation research. This research aims to examine whether the effects of physical activity on breast cancer risk are modified by individual variability in the genetic variants of two different pathways -- oxidative stress and DNA repair pathways.

Student news

For McCullough, one of the best experiences she has had at UNC was being a teaching assistant for Epidemiology 600, the introductory epidemiology course for non-majors. Her love of teaching was shown clearly in 2010, when McCullough received the Sidney Kark Award for Distinguished Teaching Assistant, which honors students who show an outstanding commitment to teaching through their performance as teaching assistants.

McCullough plans to continue both her love of teaching and her research interests by pursuing a career in academia. She currently is applying for postdoctoral positions and has submitted a grant proposal for an American Cancer Society postdoctoral fellowship. This grant proposes to examine the association between physical activity, weight gain, obesity and DNA methylation among breast cancer cases, utilizing resources from the Long Island Breast Cancer Study Project. McCullough's hobbies include dancing and choreography. Before her life as an epidemiologist, she worked with many well-known performing artists including Busta Rhymes, Kirk Whalum and Maya Angelou.



Dwight Yin, MD, Master of Public Health program

(accepted into doctoral Program)

Dwight Yin grew up in Houston, Texas. He attended Duke University and received a Bachelor of Science in biology with a minor in chemistry in 1998. He then taught

general science and high school chemistry at Agape Corner School in Durham, North Carolina. It was during that time that Yin realized he would like to combine his interest in medicine and his love of working with children and pursue a medical career with a specialization in pediatric medicine.

Yin attended the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School at Dallas (2003), followed up with an internship and residency in pediatrics at Washington University-St. Louis Children's Hospital in St. Louis, MO (2003-2006). After his residency, he was hired as a staff physician for the Pediatric AIDS Corps through the Department of Pediatrics in the Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas.

During this time, he was stationed at the Botswana-Baylor Children's Clinical Centre of Excellence in Gaborone, Botswana, where he provided clinical services in general pediatrics and pediatric HIV. In that period (2006-2009), Yin also had the opportunity to take an assistant professorship in pediatrics, coordinate medical education, contribute to national

By the numbers...

*based on 218 currently-enrolled students as of Fall 2011

Students by highest prior degree

Bachelors:	54
MPH/MSPH/MHS	82
Master's - other:	30
DDS:	2
DO	1
DPT:	1
DVM:	3
MD:	40
PharmD:	2
PhD:	3

Students by ethnicity

Asian:	34
Black/African-American:	20
Caucasian	132
Hispanic:	3
Pacific Islander:	1
Multiple:	12
Not Reported:	14
Other:	2

Continued on page 19

Student news

epidemiologic studies and update pediatric guidelines in Botswana, a country in which HIV has had a devastating impact.

In 2009, Yin began a fellowship in pediatric infectious diseases at Duke University. Since 2010, Yin concurrently has been enrolled in the Master of Public Health program in epidemiology and now has been accepted into the doctoral program. He chose the epidemiology department at UNC because of its strong quantitative methods program and its pleasant location.

His current research projects include immunological recovery in HIV-infected children—differences by baseline CD4 and age; adherence and outcomes on antiretroviral therapy with a protease inhibitor versus non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor in HIV-infected children; infectious complications in children following thymus transplantation; and clinical utility of broth-only CSF cultures in ventricular fluid shunt patients—virulence and the need for shunt revision. In keeping with his interest in pediatric HIV, Yin and other physicians are spearheading the start-up of a nonprofit, Maipelo Trust (www.maipelo.org) an organization to fund HIV prevention and care to indigent, migrant families in Botswana.

Yin has enjoyed meeting faculty members and students in the department, especially because of the varied backgrounds and interests that are represented. Yin enjoys relaxing by attending musicals and church and would like in the future to revive his interests in singing and horseback riding.



Melchior Kashamuka (Kash) Mwandagalirwa, MHS, doctoral student

Infectious Disease Program

Melchior Kashamuka (Kash) Mwandagalirwa is from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Mwandagalirwa received a Bachelor of Science degree in laboratory techniques from the Institut Supérieur des Techniques Médicales in Kinshasa, DRC in 1983. Following graduation, he worked in the laboratory, primarily on HIV. Eventually, he became the section chief of Project SIDA Laboratory in Kinshasa, DRC. In 1998-1999, Mwandagalirwa conducted an HIV research study in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University and the National AIDS control program of the DRC looking for immunological factors (primarily cytotoxic T lymphocyte) among HIV discordant couples.

In 2001, Mwandagalirwa received a Master of Health Science (MHS) degree in molecular microbiology and immunology from Johns Hopkins University. He returned to the DRC and continued his work on HIV, serving as the co-PI in the Priorities for Local AIDS Control Efforts study (PLACE 1), which studied geographical locations of new sexual partner acquisitions in Kinshasa. In PLACE 2 (a collaboration between UNC and Johns Hopkins), Mwandagalirwa served as the local PI. This study was focused on HIV incidence and prevalence among people socializing at high transmission area sites and two control groups (patients attending STI clinics and pregnant women attending antenatal clinics). Through his HIV work in the DRC, Mwandagalirwa developed close ties to UNC epidemiology department faculty members including Steve Meshnick, MD, PhD, Frieda Behets, PhD and Annelies Van Rie, MD, PhD, who have ongoing research projects in the DRC. In addition, he served as the representative of the Kinshasa School of Public Health/UNC-DRC Program. Because of these ties Mwandagalirwa chose to come to UNC to pursue his doctorate in epidemiology.

Student news

His research interests include HIV and malaria, specifically looking at these two diseases from the molecular epidemiology aspect. His doctoral research project is titled "Spatial epidemiology of infectious diseases in the DRC."

One of the most interesting things Mwandagalirwa has done while at Carolina, is to learn about epidemiology methods and data analysis. He would like to learn about geographic information systems (GIS). He is enjoying his time in the department, he says, because faculty members have profound knowledge in epidemiology methods and are very friendly, happy and always willing to help. Once Mwandagalirwa finishes his doctorate, he hopes to apply what he has learned here to the actual problems in the DRC and to continue the UNC-DRC partnership. Mwandagalirwa enjoys playing soccer, running and reading.



Student awards

Departmental awards

Arrighi Scholars Award

- Leah Schinasi, 2011

Rebecca James Baker Scholarship

- Anne Rositch, 2010
- Catheryne Clouse, 2011

Joan Cornoni-Huntley Scholarship

- Genee Smith, 2010
- Nora Rosenberg, 2011

Nancy A. Dreyer Endowed Scholarship in Epidemiology

- Petra Sander, 2010
- Jessie Buckley, 2011

Harry A. Guess/Merck Scholarship in Pharmacoepidemiology

- Leah Sirkus McGrath, 2011

Barbara Sorenson Hulka Dissertation Award

- Susan Mason, 2010
- Anna Dow, 2011

Berton H. Kaplan Student Publication Award

- Katie O'Brien, 2011

Sidney Kark Award for Distinguished Teaching Assistant

- Lauren McCullough, 2010
- Ghassan Hamra, 2011

Marilyn and Al Tyroler Endowed Scholarship in Epidemiology

- Meagan Vaughn, 2011

School of Public Health awards

Greenberg Award for Excellence in Doctoral Research

- Marcel Yotebieng, 2010
- Emily Vavalle, 2011

Susanne Moulton and Thomas Wong Scholarship

- Montika Bush, 2010
- Damon Ogburn, 2011

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

- Corey Kalbaugh, 2010
- Zachary Kerr, 2010
- Mugdha Gokhale, 2011
- Catherine Lesko, 2011

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Gillings Merit Scholarship

- Alexandre Lockhart, 2011

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Gillings Poster Award

- Jie Ting, 2012

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

- Jane Der, 2010-2012

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Martin Moore Scholarship

- Rushina Cholera, 2011

UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health's Tellus Foundation Scholarship

- Virginia Senkomago, 2010-2012

Robert Verhalen Endowed Scholarship in Injury Prevention/Trauma Management

- Sudha Raman, 2010
- Ashley Schoenfisch, 2011

Graduate School awards

Dissertation Completion Fellowship

- Kim Gaetz, 2011-2012
- Ashley Naimi, 2012-2013

Graduate Education Advancement Board Impact Award

- Ruchika Goel, 2010
- Virginia Guidry, 2010
- Stephanie Watkins, 2011
- Meagan Vaughn, 2011
- Catherine Vladutiu, 2011
- Brooke Hoots, 2011
- Mehul Patel, 2011

Student awards

Off-Campus Dissertation Research Fellowship

- Anisha Gandhi, 2012

Graduate Tuition Incentive Scholarship

- Genee Smith, 2011-2012

Other UNC Awards

FLAS Fellowship

- Julie O'Donnell, 2012-2013

External awards

American Lung Association Dissertation Grant

- Genee Smith, 2011

CEHS Pilot Projects Program Award, "Free to breathe, free to teach: indoor air quality in schools and respiratory health of teachers"

- Kim Gaetz, 2010-2011

Department of Defense Predoctoral Traineeship Award, "Modifying effects of DNA repair variants on physical activity and breast cancer risk"

- Lauren McCullough, 2010-2013

Department of Defense Predoctoral Traineeship Award, "Vehicular traffic exposure to polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and breast cancer risk"

- Irina Mordukhovich, 2011-2014

EIS Alumni Association Scholarship

- Zachary Kerr, 2012

EPA Star Fellowship

- Kim Gaetz, 2011-2012

NC TraCS Institute grant, "Pilot study of 'Free to breathe, free to teach: Indoor air quality in schools and respiratory health of teachers'"

- Kim Gaetz, 2010-2011

NRSA F31 individual predoctoral fellowship, "Initiation and identification of concurrent partnerships: A longitudinal study"

- Diana Sanchez, 2012-2015

Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans

- Naman Shah, 2010-2012

Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE)/CDC Student Fellow in Unintentional Injury/Violence

- Zachary Kerr, 2012

First Place Drug Utilization Research SIG's poster walk for, "Concurrent cardiovascular medication initiation among new statin users" at the 27th International Conference on Pharmacoepidemiology and Therapeutic Risk Management, Chicago in August 2011

- Bradley Layton

Second best student abstract, "Time-varying propensity scores and hazard ratio estimation," at the 27th International Conference on Pharmacoepidemiology and Therapeutic Risk Management in Chicago, August 2011

- Christina Mack



Meagan Vaughn, recipient of the 2011 Marilyn and Al Tyroler Endowed Scholarship, pictured with Barbara Tyroler (daughter of Dr. & Mrs. Tyroler).



Katie O'Brien, recipient of the 2011 Berton H. Kaplan Student Publication Award, pictured with Dr. Berton Kaplan.

Postdoctoral news

The postdoc life in EPI

Below, two postdoctoral students in the department describe how life is treating them after obtaining their doctoral degrees!



Dr. Colleen Hanrahan

Colleen F. Hanrahan, PhD

Colleen Hanrahan is a new postdoc, working with Dr. Annelies Van Rie. She completed her doctorate in epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her dissertation work focused on the clinical impact and cost-effectiveness of a new diagnostic strategy for multi-drug resistant tuberculosis in South Africa. Hanrahan spent a year-and-a-half living in South Africa while completing this research. She will continue her research on tuberculosis at UNC, focusing on the implementation and evaluation of diagnostic testing for TB in South Africa, as well as TB/HIV program integration. In her spare time, she enjoys “adventurous cooking” and running.



Dr. Amy Kalkbrenner

Amy Kalkbrenner, PhD

“My postdoc in the epidemiology department at UNC was a great jump-start to my current faculty position at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee,” Kalkbrenner says. “I was brimming with ideas at the time of my doctoral graduation, and was lucky enough to continue with the same mentor during my postdoc to nurture these ideas. During this time, I published my dissertation papers, submitted several grants, fostered collaborations, and developed several new projects. The protected time of a postdoc was an ideal environment for me to focus on these items without having the teaching and service demands of a faculty position.”



Dr. Virginia Guidry

Guidry selected as Environmental Health Sciences’ communication fellow

Virginia (Ginger) Thompson Guidry, PhD, MPH, postdoctoral fellow in UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health’s Department of Epidemiology, is one of ten scientists recently named as a 2012 Science Communication Fellow by Environmental Health Sciences (EHS). EHS is a not-for-profit organization founded in 2002 to increase public understanding of the scientific links between environmental factors and human health.

Now in its sixth year, the fellowship program trains early-career scientists to articulate research results and explain findings in ways that deepen public understanding. The fellows’ training began with a conference March 8-10 in Washington, D.C., and will continue during the coming year, as fellows polish communication skills and learn effective ways to inform journalists and the public about new research findings.

Hailing from the United States and Canada, the 2012 fellows represent a wide range of interests and experience. Their professional and academic backgrounds range from environmental toxicology to epidemiology to green chemistry.

Postdoctoral news

Guidry studies the health impacts of air pollution from industrial livestock production while working with communities to conduct research and emphasize environmental justice. She currently studies asthma-related outcomes in children attending middle schools near industrial swine and poultry operations. Epidemiologic data were collected in collaboration with students' science classes to provide educational opportunities for students.

Fellows were selected through a competitive process by a committee of seven prominent scientists from universities throughout the country.

"We are very proud that Dr. Guidry was selected for this prestigious fellowship," said Andrew Olshan, PhD, professor and chair in the public health school's epidemiology department. "Ginger is well known for her outstanding teaching skills and community environmental research. Effective communication of science, especially environmental health issues, to the media and public is of critical importance and often under-appreciated in training programs."

"Environmental health research has enhanced value when it can be effectively and enthusiastically communicated to the public," Guidry said. "Accurate information is an essential spur for popular movements seeking positive change."

Bradshaw, epidemiology researcher, selected as AICR fellow



Dr. Patrick Bradshaw

Patrick Bradshaw, PhD, postdoctoral epidemiology researcher at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, was awarded the Marilyn Gentry Fellowship in Nutrition and Cancer, funded by the American Institute of Cancer Research (AICR).

Bradshaw's research interests center on identifying lifestyle characteristics, particularly modifiable ones such as diet, weight and physical activity, which influence breast cancer risk and survival. He is interested in the development and application of novel quantitative epidemiologic methods and how they might be used to understand the relationship between diet, obesity, exercise and chronic disease. He also is supported by Susan G. Komen for the Cure to identify and characterize risk factors for cardiovascular disease, including weight change and physical activity patterns, among breast cancer survivors.

"Patrick is such a thoughtful and energetic scientist," said June Stevens, PhD, AICR/World Cancer Research Fund Distinguished Professor of nutrition and chair of the department. "It is my honor to mentor him as a Marilyn Gentry Fellow." Stevens is also professor of epidemiology at the UNC public health school.

The AICR fellowship, established in 2001, is awarded to a junior scientist who shows signs of becoming a leader in diet and cancer research.



Postdoctoral students enjoyed the 2012 Winter Music Fest held in February.



Postdocs Kate Hoffman and Ginger Guidry collaborating on future endeavors.

Spotlight on young alumni: Lizzi Torrone, PhD (MSPH, 2003; PhD, 2009)

Lizzi, what are you up to these days?

I am a surveillance epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. I started as an Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) officer in the Division of STD Prevention. The fellowship allowed me to apply the skills I learned at UNC to real-time problems occurring in states (called epi-aids). For example, I traveled to Alaska to work with state and tribal health officials to determine feasible control strategies following a gonorrhea outbreak. Our investigation resulted in the state's releasing guidelines for expedited partner therapy (in which infected patients take medicine directly to their partners). After finishing EIS in June 2011, I took a full-time position on the Division of STD Prevention's surveillance team. I primarily work on surveillance of chlamydia, the most commonly reported nationally notifiable disease (1.3 million cases in 2010) so I have a lot of data to work with!



Dr. Lizzi Torrone

What brought you to Carolina?

I was working at a county health department in North Carolina as an HIV test counselor. I loved what I was doing, but I was frustrated by the county's restrictive "abstinence until marriage" sex education policy. I wanted to learn how to change it, so I decided to study health policy at UNC. My (now) husband Don was in school at the time, so to get started, I enrolled in the online Certificate in Core Public Health Concepts program. Over the course of a year, I took the five core classes, including (what was then) EPI 160. I hadn't known anything about EPI before the class, but I got hooked. I decided that instead of being the one to change the sex education policies, I could provide the evidence that they should be changed! I finished the certificate program, Don graduated, we moved to Chapel Hill, and I started the Master of Science in Public Health/Doctor of Philosophy program in epidemiology.

What were your research interests at Carolina?

I came to Carolina intending to focus on domestic HIV research, and Dr. Jim Thomas was assigned as my faculty adviser. It was a great match because I realized that I was most interested in social determinants and Thomas was part of what was then a small - but growing contingent of students and faculty members working in social epidemiology. With Thomas, I worked on a number of research studies, including an analysis of incarceration and STDs, and a network analysis of HIV prevention agencies. For my dissertation, I worked with Dr. Lisa Hightow-Weidman, a faculty member in the School of Medicine. Using mixed methodology (yes, EPI students can conduct qualitative research!), we investigated barriers to risk behavior disclosure during HIV test counseling. I spent six months in the Durham County (North Carolina) STD clinic, interviewing young men about how honest they are when the counselor asks, "Do you have sex with men, women, or both?" (Spoiler: Some men lie!) Looking back, I realize how lucky I was to work on research projects that were both interesting and important to me.

Gifts to the department

Gifts to the department (Oct. 1, 2010 – June 30, 2012)

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
Carol Zielinski Anderson
Elizabeth Jernigan Andrews
Barbara Arrighi
H. Michael Arrighi
Alan Mills Ball
Colleen Dooling Ball
Eugenia Moraes Bastos
Aaron Earl Blair
Louise Annette Brinton
Mildred S. Cannon
Daniel Jonathan Caplan
Mercedes Renee Carnethon
Shine Chang
Luenda E. Charles
Terence Louis Chorba
Joann C. Cook
Ralph R. Cook
David Herman Cooper
Kourtney Johnston Davis
Elizabeth Sills Delzell
Nancy Dole
Nancy Ann Dreyer
Sara Anne Ephross
Richard Bernard Everson
Lisa Fredman
Cynthia Johnson Girman
Yvonne Marie Golightly
Jerome Edward Goodman
Susan Lee Hartmaier
Joel Wayne Haswell
Martha Mullen Haswell
Deborah Glosson Hauser
Edward Hauser
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Dr. Joan Cornoni-Huntley and Dr. Berton Kaplan catch up on the latest epidemiology news.

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Gillings School of Global Public Health
CB# 7435, 2101 McGavran-Greenberg Hall
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We welcome your comments and suggestions.
Please direct them to:

Chandra Caldwell
Department of Epidemiology
Gillings School of Global Public Health
2101 McGavran-Greenberg Hall
CB# 7435
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-7435
ccaldwel@email.unc.edu

Editorial contributions by:

Lorraine Alexander
Chandra Caldwell
Nancy Colvin
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For additional information:

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You also may contact:

Nancy Colvin
Assistant to the chair for graduate studies
Email: ncolvin@unc.edu
Phone: (919) 966-7459

Carmen Woody
Student services manager
Email: carmen_woody@unc.edu
Phone: (919) 966-7458
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