

# SPM NEWS

## Department of Social & Preventive Medicine

School of Public Health and Health Professions (SPHHP)

State University of New York at Buffalo

<http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/spm>



February 2009

Marcia Wopperer, editor


### *The Director's Corner*


Congratulations to **Lynn Kozlowski**, Ph.D., who has been appointed dean of the School of Public Health and Health Professions, effective December 2008. Dr. Kozlowski has served as interim dean since September 2007, and has been instrumental in guiding the School through the final stages of its accreditation process. He joined SPHHP's newly formed Department of Health Behavior as chair in 2006. **Gary Giovino**, Ph.D., who has served as interim chair of the Department of Health Behavior, has now been appointed chair. He will continue to also serve as director of graduate studies. The administrative responsibility for the Ph.D. in Community Health has been moved from the Department of SPM to the Department of Health Behavior. A description of the program can be found online at [http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/hb/community\\_health/index.php](http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/hb/community_health/index.php)


The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) site visit is confirmed for May 4-6, 2009. The self-study document is in the process of being finalized for submission by April 4. The current version of the document is available on the School's website at <http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/>


- *Carl Li, M.D., M.P.H.*


### *Honors and Awards*

 **K. Michael Cummings**, Ph.D., received the American Cancer Society's 2009 *Luther L. Terry Award for Outstanding Research Contribution*. The award will be presented during a special ceremony at the 14<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Tobacco or Health, in Mumbai, India on March 11. Dr. Cummings is the chair of Health Behavior at Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and professor in the Department of SPM.

 **Arthur Michalek**, Ph.D., was awarded the School of Public Health and Health Professions 2008 *Academic Service Award*. This award recognizes the efforts of alumni and their long-standing volunteer academic service to one or more of SPHHP's academic programs. The award was in recognition of Dr. Michalek's considerable contributions in mentoring and teaching in the School. Dr. Michalek is dean of the Graduate Division at Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and research professor in the Department of SPM. The award was presented at the annual J. Warren Perry Lecture held on October 31 in Harriman Hall.

 **Sarah Morrow**, M.D., received the *MERIT Award* from the International Neuropsychological Society for her poster entitled "*Efficacy and Safety of l-amphetamine Sulfate on Cognitive Function in MS Patients.*" She presented the poster at the annual meeting held in Atlanta, GA on February 13. Her research has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Neurology*. Dr. Morrow is an assistant professor of neurology at the Jacobs Neurological Institute, and current student in the M.S. Program.

 **Lisa Rafalson**, Ph.D., was recently named a *National Research Service Award Fellow* in the Department of Family Medicine, School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, University at Buffalo commencing October 14, 2008. Dr. Rafalson holds a voluntary appointment as research assistant professor in the Department of SPM.

 **Melanie Ruszczyk** received a Perry Poster Award in the population-based science category for her poster entitled "*The Associations Between DNA Repair SNPs and the Outcomes to Platinum-Based Chemotherapy in Ovarian Cancer Patients*" presented at the J. Warren Perry Lecture on October 31. Melanie is a student in the M.S. Program.



**Brent Williams, M.S.**, is the recipient of the 2008-2009 Saxon Graham Research Award. This new competitive award provides funds to pre-doctoral students for completion of their doctoral dissertation. The award was established in recognition of Saxon Graham, Ph.D., and his continuing commitment to advancing both the field and the development of young investigators. Dr. Graham was chair of the Department of SPM from 1981-1991.

## *Faculty/Student Research*

**Heather Ochs-Balcom, Ph.D.**, is principal investigator for a three-year \$431,395 grant entitled "Search for Novel Breast Cancer Susceptibility Genes in Pedigrees of African Ancestry" from the Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Mentors for this Career Catalyst Award Disparities Research Grant include Drs. **Jo Freudenheim** and Deborah Erwin. The proposed study involves recruiting African American women with breast cancer and their relatives through partnership with the Witness Project and its member community for a linkage study to search for novel susceptibility genes.

## *J. Warren Perry Lecture*

The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual J. Warren Perry Lecture entitled "Buffalo, the University and the Public's Health" was held on October 31, 2008. Poster presentations were made by the following SPM students and faculty:

**Ted Brasky, M.S.**, "Great Lakes Sport-Caught Fish Consumption and Endometriosis in the Angler Health Follow-up Study (AHFS)"

**Christopher Co, M.D.**, and **Deirdre Wheat, M.B.B.Ch.**, "Assessment of Patient Sign-Outs Conducted by University at Buffalo Internal Medicine Residents"

**Margaret DiVita, M.S.**, "The Utility of Common Household Objects as Markers of Home Hygiene in the Context of Access to Improved Sanitation"

**Katharine Dobson**, "Who is Vaccinating Their Daughters Against HPV in Western New York?"

**Joan Dorn, Ph.D.**, "Alcohol Consumption and Recurrent Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Events in Myocardial Infarction Survivors: The Western New York Acute MI Study (1996-2004)" and "Results of a Regionally-Focused Worksite Wellness Initiative: Western New York Wellness Works (WNYWW)"

**Brian King, M.P.H.**, "Preferences and Practices Regarding Smoke-Free Policy Implementation Among Owners and Managers of Multi-Unit Housing"

**Andrea Licht**, "HPV-Related Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors Among Female College Students"

**Melanie Rusczyk**, "The Associations Between DNA Repair SNPs and the Outcomes to Platinum-Based Chemotherapy in Ovarian Cancer Patients"

**Stephanie Wasch**, "The Association Between Recreational Physical Activity and Gestational Diabetes Mellitus"

**Brent Williams, M.S.**, "Vitality and Recurrent Event Risk in Acute Myocardial Infarction Survivors"

## *American Heart Association Conference*

The American Heart Association (AHA) Joint Conference - 49<sup>th</sup> Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention Annual Conference; and Nutrition, Physical Activity and Metabolism Conference, will be held March 10-14 in Palm Harbor, FL. The following posters have been accepted for presentation:

**Daniela Geba, M.D.**, "Uric Acid as a Predictor of Incident Hypertension: The Western New York Health Study"

**Lisa Rafalson, Ph.D.**, "Sleep Duration is Associated with Progression to Impaired Fasting Glucose: The Western New York Health Study."

## *American Public Health Association*

Mark your calendars! The Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association will be held November 7-11, 2009 in Philadelphia. "Water and Public Health" is the theme for the 137<sup>th</sup> annual meeting. For more information visit <http://www.apha.org/meetings/>

## *News and Notes*

**Carole Rudra, Ph.D.**, is participating as a preliminary stage judge in the *Young Epidemiology Scholars (YES)* scholarship competition. The goal of the *YES Competition* is to inspire talented high school students to explore the many issues that affect health, to employ epidemiological methods of analysis in their research, and to use this understanding to discover ways to improve the health of the public. The *YES Competition* is funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and administered by the College Board.

**Nicoleta Voian, M.D.**, has been accepted to the Medical Genetics Residency Program, Department of Molecular and Medical Genetics, Oregon Health and Science University. She will begin her new residency program on July 1, 2009.

## *February 2009 Graduates*

The following students successfully completed all degree requirements established by the Department of SPM and the University at Buffalo for February 2009 degree conferral. Congratulations to our graduates!

### Ph.D. Epidemiology and Community Health

**Susan Bruce, M.S., R.N.**, *"The Association Between Central Fat Distribution and Recurrent CVD Events in Men and Women with Non-Fatal MI."* Committee members include Drs. Joan Dorn (major), Richard Donahue, Yulan Liang and Saverio Stranges. Susan is a clinical associate professor in the School of Nursing, University at Buffalo.

**Vijayvel Jayaprakash, M.B.B.S.**, *"Bimodality Screening for Lung and Oral Cancers."* Committee members include Drs. Mary Reid (major), Kirsten Moysich, Maureen Sullivan, Saikrishna Yendamuri and Alan Hutson. Vijay is a research coordinator at the Head and Neck and Dental Center, Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

### Ph.D. Epidemiology

**Chunqiao Tian, M.D, M.P.H.**, *"Polymorphisms in DNA Repair Genes and Treatment Outcomes Among Advanced Epithelial Ovarian Cancer."* Committee members include Drs. Christine Ambrosone (major), Kirsten Moysich, Hua Zhao and Mark Brady. Chunqiao is a biostatistician at the Gynecology Oncology Group, Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

### M.S. Epidemiology

**Patricia Marshall**, *"Analysis of the Corporate Compliance Survey at Roswell Park Cancer Institute."* Committee members include Drs. Martin Mahoney (major), Kirsten Moysich and Frank Schimpfhauser. Patricia is an assistant corporate compliance officer at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

**Stephanie Wasch**, *"The Association Between Gestational Diabetes Mellitus and Recreational Physical Activity."* Committee members include Drs. Carole Rudra (major), Jo Freudenheim and Michael LaMonte. Stephanie is a project coordinator at the New York State Muscular Dystrophy Center (NYSMDC), Jacobs Neurological Institute.

### M.P.H. (Epidemiology)

**Hala Ibrahim, M.B.B.Ch.**, *"Racial and Ethnic Health Care Disparities."* Committee members include Dr. William Scheider (major) and Ms. Kristina Young.

**Nelissa Thibado**, *"Grant Proposal for Research in CPR Training for School-Aged Children."* Committee members include Drs. Joan Dorn (major) and Carl Li.

## *Course Announcements*

NEW COURSE FOR FALL 2009

**SPM 604 Fundamentals of Genetic Epidemiology** (3 credits)

Instructor: Heather Ochs-Balcom, Ph.D.  
Tuesdays 9:00-11:40 a.m.

An overview of the field of genetic epidemiology including how to study the genetic causes of phenotypic variation. Topics include human genetics, molecular genetics, and population genetics as they apply to the conduct of a genetic epidemiology study. The concepts of heritability and linkage disequilibrium are covered. The course covers more detailed aspects of segregation, linkage, and association as they are used in family- and population-based studies to search for disease-causing genes. Current concepts in the genetics of complex traits as well as an exploration of online databases used in genetic epidemiology are included. The course includes in-class computer laboratory exercises using standard software tools to analyze genetic data.

Prerequisites: SPM 501, SPM 502, STA 527