

# EEH NEWS

Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health

School of Public Health and Health Professions (SPHHP)

University at Buffalo, State University of New York (SUNY)

<http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/epidemiology-and-environmental-health>



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Karen DeGarmo, editor

## The Chair's Corner



Dear EEH Colleagues, Students, Alumni and Friends:

The new semester is speeding along. I hope that you are all finding the challenges you were expecting. There is a great deal happening in the department, the school and the university. I encourage

you to explore the many, different and rich opportunities to learn more about epidemiology, environmental health, health services and public health more generally.

There are some very exciting new developments in the department. Here is just a sampling: We now have a track with a focus on global health within the environmental health MPH program. Students in the entering MPH class are eligible for this program. The Perry lecture is coming soon. Don't miss this opportunity to hear a talk by Donna Peterson, ScD, MHS, a leader in public health who will be talking about maternal and child health. Further, plans are already underway for Public Health Week next April. Keep an eye out for announcements and consider getting involved in the planning and implementing of one or more of those activities.

I hope things are going well for you all for the semester. Please let me or the other faculty and staff know if there is any way that we can help you.

*Jo Freudenheim, PhD*

UB Distinguished Professor and  
Interim Chair

## Hello to All

It's that time for another installment of the newsletter. It has been a busy summer and fall. We have a big incoming class – welcome to you all! Stop in 265 Farber to see the poster of incoming EEH students and fun facts. The much anticipated Student Handbook has been updated and distributed to all. Please refer to it often, I know I do!

*Karen DeGarmo*



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### Note

People listed below with a two digit year after the degree received this degree from EEH. For example, PhD '15, degree awarded in 2015.

## Welcome New Faculty and Staff

**Donna Frey**, started October 2015 as a research support specialist in the Women's Health Research Center.



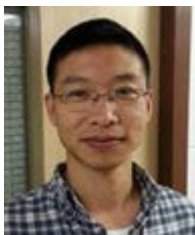
**Yanlin Guo**, MD, PhD, joined the department in September 2015 as a visiting research scholar. She is currently an associate professor in the Department of Pathology, Shanxi Medical University, Taiyuan, Shanxi, China. Guo received both her MD in preventive medicine and PhD in physiology from Shanxi Medical University, Taiyuan, Shanxi, China. Her research focuses on the central mechanism of heart failure and the role of cell cycle and cell apoptosis related genes in tumor pathogenesis.



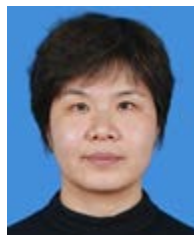
**Peng Jia**, PhD, joined the Systems-oriented Global Childhood Obesity Intervention Program, Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health as a postdoctoral associate in September 2015. Jia received his PhD in medical geography from Louisiana State University in 2015. His major research interests include applications of GIS and remote sensing in health-related fields, built environments, childhood obesity, population modeling, and global health.



**Kelly Kamm**, PhD '14, MHS, started as a postdoctoral associate in July 2015. She received her PhD in epidemiology from the department in February 2014. She received her MHS in molecular microbiology and immunology from Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health (now the Bloomberg School of Public Health). Her major interests include low technology solutions to improve child health in low income settings, nutrition, hygiene, and the gut microbiome as risk factors for diarrhea and environmental enteropathy.



**Miao Li**, PhD, joined the Systems-oriented Global Childhood Obesity Intervention Program, Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health as a postdoctoral associate in September 2015. Li received his PhD in sociology from Purdue University in 2015. His major research interests include social determinants of obesity and chronic diseases, intergenerational causes and consequences of obesity, family dynamics and child health behavior/outcomes, life course patterns of BMI growth, and longitudinal and spatial data analysis methods.



**Qinzhi Wei**, PhD, joined the department in September 2015 as a visiting research scholar. She is an associate professor in the Department of Toxicology, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, Southern Medical University, Guangzhou, China. Wei received her PhD in toxicology from Sun Yat-Sen University, Guangdong, China. Her research focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms to environmental and occupational toxicants, in particular, organic solvents and heavy metals. Her work has demonstrated the important protective role of NF- $\kappa$ Bp65 in toxicity induced by environment chemical pollution substances (ECPs).

## Alumni News

**Elie Akl**, MD, PhD '08, MPH '04, was recently appointed as the director of Clinical Research Institute at the American University at Beirut.

## EEH Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) of the Department of EEH elected new officers for the 2015-2016 academic year: **Raquel Velazquez**, MS, president; **Kan Hong (Christina) Zheng**, BS, vice president; **Rachael Burganowski**, BS, treasurer; and **Zeinab Farhat**, MPH, secretary.

## Faculty/Student Presentations



**Jo Freudenheim**, PhD, was invited to give a talk entitled "*Breast Cancer and the Environment: DNA Methylation as an Indicator of Exposure*" at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Breast Cancer & Nutrition (IBCN) Symposium, held in Le Gosier, Guadeloupe, French West Indies in October 2015.



**Lina Mu**, MD, PhD, presented a paper entitled "*Metabolomics Study of Biological Responses to Changes in Air Pollution Levels*" at the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE) annual meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil in August 2015.


**Anushree Sharma**, MPH '10, PhD student, presented a scientific poster entitled "*Demographic Characteristics Associated With Smokers of Marlboro, Newport and Pall Mall in the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) 2002 – 2013*" at the American Public Health

Association (APHA) meeting held in Chicago, IL in October 2015.

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## Honors and Awards


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 **Kenyani Davis**, MD, MPH student, was awarded the Arnold P. Gold Foundation Humanism and Excellence in Teaching Award from Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

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### Robert O'Shea Student Travel Award

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 **Joshua Gordon**, BA, MD/PhD student, received a Robert O'Shea Travel award for his abstract submission entitled "Assessment of the Relationship between Periodontal Disease, Systolic Blood Pressure, and Hypertension in a Cross-sectional Study of Postmenopausal Women" to the American College of Epidemiology (ACE) 2015 meeting in Atlanta, GA in September 2015.

 **Youjin Wang**, BPharm, PhD candidate, received a Robert O'Shea Travel award for her poster abstract submission entitled "Gene-hormone Therapy Interaction and Fracture Risk in Postmenopausal Women" to the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) 2015 meeting in Baltimore, MD in October 2015.

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## News and Notes

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**4<sup>th</sup> Annual Julie Baker Memorial Lecture:** Julie Baker, MD, PhD '07, MS '00, was a talented student, physician, researcher and humanitarian, who did her medical and epidemiology training at UB. Many of you knew Julie from her years as a student in our Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health (EEH) (while Julie attended, formerly known as the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine). Julie passed away in 2011 at the age of 39. Every year, Kirsten Moysich, PhD '94, from the Department of Cancer Prevention and Control at Roswell Park Cancer Institute (RPCI), and also a faculty member in EEH, hosts a lecture in her honor and memory. This year the speaker will be Jean Wactawski-Wende, PhD '89, dean of the School of Public Health and Health Professions, and professor in EEH. Her talk entitled "Periodontal Disease, the Oral Microbiome, and Cancer" will be held on Monday, Nov. 16 at 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Gaylord/Cary Meeting Room, RSC at RPCI.



PhD '91.

**Lina Mu**, MD, PhD, was chair for a symposium on air pollution and systemic inflammation held at the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE) annual meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil in August 2015. Two of the six speakers were Pauline Mendola, PhD '94, MS '90, and Zuo-Feng Zhang, MD,

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## Preventive Medicine Residency Program

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**Zubair Butt**, MBBS, MPH '15, completed the Preventive Medicine Residency Program this August.

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## Research News

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**John Violanti**, PhD, is PI on a new four year, \$2.5 million award from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for a project entitled "Stressors and Cardio-Metabolic Disease in Police: A 12-Year Longitudinal Study." The study will assess police stress over a period of twelve years by examining physiological and psychological measures of stress and evaluating associations of these measures with cardiovascular and metabolic disease. Co-investigators are Jean Wactawski-Wende, PhD '89, and Carl Li, MD, MPH.



**Jean Wactawski-Wende**, PhD '89, is PI on a new four year, \$7.3 million award from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)/National Institutes of Health (NIH) entitled "Women's Health Initiative (WHI) 2015-2020 Extension Study." This is an extension of the WHI clinical trial and observational study with primary aims to determine how hormone therapy, diet and calcium/vitamin D affect risk of heart disease, cancer and osteoporosis in postmenopausal women, and to determine the longer term effects of these interventions. Co-investigators are Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH, Amy Millen, PhD, and Heather Ochs-Balcom, PhD.

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## *Congratulations to Our Graduates*

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The following students successfully completed all degree requirements for degree conferrals in September 2015.

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### *PhD Epidemiology*

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**Jacqueline Mix**, MPH '08, "*The Inpatient Rehabilitation Experience of Patients with Cancer*" Committee members: Jo Freudenheim, PhD (major professor), Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH, and Carl Granger, MD. Jacqueline is a research associate at the Center for Functional Assessment Research, Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation.

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### *MS Epidemiology*

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**Wudeneh Mulugeta**, MD, MPH, "*Prevalence and Trends of Obesity, Overweight/Obesity, Underweight and BMI Among Refugees in Buffalo, NY.*" Committee members: Youfa Wang, MD, PhD (major professor), Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH, and Carl Li, MD, MPH. Wudeneh is a physician at Massachusetts General Hospital.

**Emily Gower**, BS, "*Usual Intake of Macronutrients By Postmenopausal Women: Associations With Pathogenic Oral Bacteria.*" Committee members: Jo Freudenheim, PHD (major professor), Amy Millen, PhD, and Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH. Emily is continuing her education in the PhD program in EEH.

**Robert Parker**, BS, "*The Relationship Between Consumption of Sport-Caught Fish from Lake Ontario and Cardiovascular Disease and Risk Factors in the New York State Anglers Cohort Study: Implications of PCB and Omega-3 Fatty Acids in Fish Consumption.*" Committee members: Matthew Bonner, PhD '03, MPH (major professor), Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH, and James Olson, PhD. Robert is working in Portsmouth, VA in the Navy & Marine Corps as an epidemiologist.

**Allison Soucise**, BA, "*Sleep Quality, Duration and Breast Cancer Tumor Aggressiveness.*" Committee members: Heather Ochs-Balcom, PhD (major professor), Jo Freudenheim, PhD, and Amy Millen, PhD. Allison is now a data manager at Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

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### *MPH Epidemiology*

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**Zubair Butt**, MBBS, "*Analysis of Public Health Problems in Rural Kashmir.*" Committee members: Martin Mahoney, MD, PhD '87 (major professor) and Michael Noe, MD, MPH. Zubair has accepted a position as a physician in Cooperstown, NY.

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## *Welcome New EEH Students*

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Please welcome the following new students this fall.

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### *PhD Epidemiology*

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**Gauri Desai**, BS, microbiology, Pune University; MPH, epidemiology, Indiana University.

**Zeinab Farhat**, BA, natural science, Fordham University; MPH, Long Island University.

**Emily Gower**, BS, public health, George Washington University; MS '15, epidemiology, University at Buffalo.

**Irene Osagie**, MBBS, medicine, University of Benin; MPH, Monash University.

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### *MS Epidemiology*

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**Leslie Aurelio**, BS, pharmacology and toxicology, University at Buffalo.

**Rachael Burganowski**, BS, biochemistry, University at Geneseo.

**Andrea Elmore**, BS, nutritional science, Cornell University.

**Alexandra Grippo**, BS, mathematics, University at Buffalo.

**Natdanai Punnanithinont**, MBBS, medicine, Mahidol University; MPH, Harvard.

**Shruthi Konakonkda Surendra Rao**, BS, chemistry, botany and microbiology, Bangalore University; MS, microbiology, University of Mysore.

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### *MPH Epidemiology*

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**Robert Coleman**, BA, economics, Assumption College.

**John Etter**, BS, biochemistry, University at Buffalo.

**Mariana Grati**, BA, humanities, Moldova State University.

**Adrian Hamouda**, BS, biomedical science, Rochester Institute of Technology.

**David McCartney**, BS, biology, Gannon University.

**Lindsey Nowak**, BS, health care studies, Daeman College.

**Ben Robinson**, pre-pharmacy, University at Buffalo.

**Amy Shaver**, BA, english, LeMoyne University.

**Jocelyn Stooks**, BS, exercise science, University at Buffalo.

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### ***MPH Environmental Health***

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**Roseann DeVito**, BS, biology, LeMoyne University.

**Elizabeth Domachowske**, BS, international studies, University at Fredonia.

**Rebecca Hammett**, BS, health science, Daeman College.

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### ***MPH Health Services Administration***

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**Allison Altman**, BS, chemistry, Canisius College.

**Shiba Bailey**, BPharm, pharmacy, University of Mumbai.

**Gaggan Brar**, BS, molecular and cell biology, Johns Hopkins; MD, internal medicine, University at Buffalo.

**Milind Chaudhari**, MBBS, medicine, BJ Medical College; PhD, exercise science, University at Buffalo.

**Juli Chikaraishi**, BS, biology, University of Illinois.

**Sarah Dascanio**, BS, human nutrition, food and exercise, Virginia Tech University.

**Ian DiPace**, BS, exercise science, University at Buffalo.

**Kathryn Franco**, BA, criminal justice, Canisius College.

**Neriy Izkhakov**, BS, biology, University at Stony Brook.

**Ju Hoan Joh**, BS, biochemistry, University at Buffalo; MS, chemistry, University at Stony Brook; MD, medicine, University at Buffalo.

**Courtney Mann**, BA, sociology, University at Buffalo.

**Gregory Oswald**, pre-pharmacy, University at Buffalo.

**Ryan Warthern**, BA, economics, University at Buffalo.

**Yilmaz Yoruk**, BS, biology, Rochester Institute of Technology.

**Sultan Zain**, BA, economics, Columbia College.

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## ***Supporting the Educational and Research Mission of EEH***

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We are very appreciative of the support that we have received from many of you. Donations to the department are used for scholarships, for special seminars such as the Saxon Graham Lecture and to assist students in their research and education. Credit card donations can be made online at [www.giving.buffalo.edu](http://www.giving.buffalo.edu). Select the "Use My Gift For" box and search on "epidemiology" for EEH fund options if you want your donation to be used for EEH. If you would like, you can tell us how you want your fund used, e.g., to support student fellowship, awards, research seed grants, or the teaching and research programs.