

EEH NEWS

Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health

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



April 2018

Karen DeGarmo, editor

The Chair's Corner



Dear EEH Colleagues, Students, Alumni and Friends:

I hope that everything is going well for you this semester.

There have been some important changes in EEH. As detailed below, there have been two recent retirements. Dr. Richard Donahue, EEH professor since 1997 and Richard Harding, assistant to the chair since 2007, both retired. We will miss each of them!

We encourage you to participate in National Public Health Week (NPHW) during April. Part of the celebration of NPHW is the Saxon Graham lecture; this year's speaker is Dr. Jay Kaufman, a leading epidemiologist from McGill University. More information regarding his talk is below.

On May 25, we will be hosting a research day in collaboration with two Canadian university departments with a public health focus: the Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence and Impact at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario chaired by Dr. Holger Schünemann, and the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Western University, London Ontario, chaired by Dr. Saverio Stranges. Faculty and students from those departments will be coming here. We are looking forward to this opportunity to interact and develop collaborations with researchers in our region. We encourage all students and faculty to participate.

Finally, we are excited to tell you that 2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the department! In 1919, the Department of Hygiene and Public Health was established; that department later became EEH. Soon we will be announcing plans for the celebration. Watch for those announcements!

Jo Freudenheim, PhD

UB Distinguished Professor and Chair

Hello to All

Hope you are enjoying the spring semester. There is lot going on so keep up the good work. The end of the semester is coming and so is spring!

Karen DeGarmo



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 EEH Staff

Joy Lowe, BS, started December 2017 as a research support specialist in the Women's Health Research Center.

Fond Farewell

Richard (Dick) Harding, MA, retired from EEH on January 3. Dick joined EEH in 2007. He had previous experience as an administrator in other departments in UB before joining us. Dick has been instrumental in his role as an administrator in EEH, working on all the needed processes related to departmental personnel. He was a font of information on the many rules and regulations for operations at UB and he knew almost everyone in the UB administration which meant that what he didn't know, he could find out. We all wish him a wonderful time in retirement.



Dick Harding at his retirement party held at Giancarlo's Sicilian Steakhouse on Jan. 24.



Richard (Dick) Donahue, PhD, MPH, also recently retired. Dick joined the department in 1997 (then Social and Preventive Medicine). With a PhD from the University of Pittsburgh and his MPH from the University of Michigan, he came to Buffalo with experience as an epidemiology intern for the Framingham

Heart Study, as a deputy project officer for NHLBI on the CARDIA study and as the deputy director of the CATCH data coordinating center. In addition, Dick had previously been an assistant professor in the department of medicine at the University of Massachusetts medical school and then went to the department of epidemiology and public health at the University of Miami. He was a full professor at Miami when he came to UB where he was also appointed as a full professor. We also want to wish Dick all the best for his retirement.

Alumni News



Rachael Burganowski, MS '17, received a fellowship in the Epidemiology Field Support Team at the US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine at the Wright – Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, OH.



Linda Duffy, PhD, MPH, MS '87, program director, Division of Extramural Research, National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, MD, presented "*Evidence for Keystone Beneficial Microorganisms Disappearance:*

Renewed Search for Metagenomic Footprints and Essential Functions" at the EEH graduate seminar in February 2018.



Jo Freudenheim, Linda Duffy, Jean Wactawski-Wende at the graduate seminar on Feb. 9.



Laurie Grieshofer, PhD '17, postdoctoral fellow, Department of Population Health Sciences, University of Utah School of Medicine, Salt Lake City, UT, presented a poster entitled "*Longer Sleep Duration is associated with Longer Telomeres: Results From the Women's Health Initiative*" at the Society

for Epidemiologic Research (SER) Annual Meeting in Seattle, WA, June 2017.



Kelly Kamm, PhD '14, MHS, research assistant professor, Department of Kinesiology and Integrative Physiology, Michigan Technological University, Houghton, MI, received a grant from the Portage Health Foundation Research See Grant to study infant feeding practices among mothers of young

children in the upper peninsula of Michigan.



Arthur Michalek, PhD '80, research professor, was elected to serve on the board of directors of the Patrick P. Lee Foundation in February 2018.

Amy Shaver, MPH '17, received the 2018 USPHS (United States Public Health Service) Excellence in Public Health Pharmacy Award.

Danise Wilson, MPH '14, Erie Niagara AHEC's Executive Director, has been chosen as one of the 2017 Buffalo Business First's 40 under 40 honorees.

EEH Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) of the Department of EEH elected officers for the 2017-2018 academic year: **Jen Mongiovi**, MS, president; **Sarah Twardowski**, BA, vice president; **Brendan Kerr**, BA, treasurer; and **Zeinab Farhat**, MPH, secretary.

Faculty/Student Presentations



Shruti Dighe, MBBS, MPH, MS student, presented a poster entitled "*Health Diets for Prevention of Age Related Macular Degeneration: A Literature Review*" at the Western New York Society of Aging Conference in Buffalo, NY, October 2017. She won third place.



Zeinab Farhat, MPH, PhD candidate, presented a poster entitled "*Consumption of Raw Garlic and Tea, Indoor Air Pollution and Lung Cancer*" at the 2017 International Society of Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE) Annual Meeting in Sydney, Australia in

September 2017



Katarzyna (Kasia) Kordas, PhD, associate professor, gave the inaugural lecture, "*The Exposome and Human Health Across the Lifecycle and Generations*" at the 5th Symposium in Psychology and the 1st Research Symposium in Wellbeing and Health, Catholic University of Uruguay, Montevideo, Uruguay in November 2017. Kordas also spoke on "*Interactions between Diet and Toxic Metals in Children with Low-Level Environmental Exposure*" at the

Program in Toxicology, Faculty of Pharmacology, University of Bahía, Brazil in November 2017.



Ekaterina (Katia) Noyes, PhD, MPH, professor, presented "*Collaborative Opportunities in Rural Cancer Survivorship Research*" at the VA Center for Integrated Healthcare Monthly Research Meeting in Canandaigua, NY in January 2018. She also presented "*Introduction to the US Health Care Organization*" at the From Brazil to Buffalo: Research and Dialogue with "Health in Brazil" Visiting Scholars at University at Buffalo in October 2017.

Noyes presided on a panel entitled "*Healthcare Reform: Understanding Policy and Perspectives*" at a public healthcare forum sponsored by DSA/NYSNA/CNYH in Buffalo, NY in November 2017.

She did a webinar entitled "*Challenges and Opportunities in Rural Cancer Survivorship Research*" for the Cancer Care Delivery Research Quarterly Webinar, Wake Forest NCORP (NCI Community Oncology Research Program) through Wake Forest School of Medicine in September 2017.



Heather Ochs-Balcom, PhD '04, associate professor, presented "*The Jewels in Our Genes Study: Latest Research Updates*" at the National Witness Project AMEN Meeting at Roswell Park, July 2017. She presented "*Research and the Community: Building Partnerships, Creating Solutions*" at the Community Panel hosted by the Patient Voices Network and the Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute, September 2017. She presented "*Genetic Research in the Era of Precision Medicine*" at Clarion University Soaring Science Symposium, Clarion, PA, October 2017.



Moshood (Lanre) Omotayo, MD, PhD, MPH, postdoctoral associate, presented three posters entitled "*Association Between Continued Feeding and Extended Case-Fatality 50-90 days Following a Moderate-to-Severe Diarrheal Episode in Low and Middle-Income Countries*", "*Association between use of oral rehydration salts during home treatment, and dehydration and extended case-fatality following a moderate-to-severe diarrheal episode in low and middle-income countries*" and "*Strengthening implementation of routine immunization programs: Perspectives of primary healthcare facility managers in western Kenya*" at the 2017 American Society for Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) Annual Conference in Baltimore, MD, November, 2017.



Pavani Ram, MD, associate professor, presented “*Strengthening Evaluation of the Community and Household Effects of the Global Sanitation Fund*” at the University of North Carolina Conference for Water and Health in Chapel Hill, NC, October, 2017.



Julia Ravenscroft, PhD, postdoctoral associate, presented “*Multi-Metal Exposure and Children’s Neurodevelopment in Montevideo, Uruguay*” at the 5th Symposium in Psychology and the 1st Research Symposium in Health and Wellbeing, Catholic University of Uruguay, Montevideo, Uruguay in November, 2017.



Gauri Desai and Amy Millen at the SPHHP Student Awards ceremony held at Hayes Hall on Mar. 12.

Montevideo, Uruguay in November, 2017.

Honors and Awards



Catherine Callahan, PhD '16, was awarded the Saxon Graham Award, an award based on the excellence of her dissertation. She is now a postdoctoral fellow in the Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology Branch, National Cancer Institute (NCI), National Institutes of Health (NIH).



Gauri Desai, MPH, PhD candidate, received the 2017 Saxon Graham Research Award. She received \$2,000 to assist her in conducting her research on the role of folate and vitamin B12 in reducing toxicity of arsenic exposure among Uruguayan schoolchildren. Under

the guidance of her mentor, Katarzyna Kordas, PhD, she has proposed to use the funds to carry out folate and vitamin B12 assays on the stored serum samples of 328 schoolchildren from Montevideo, Uruguay, who are exposed to low levels of arsenic through food and water. She will assess the extent to which biomarkers of folate and B12 status reflect dietary intake of these nutrients, and the extent to which folate and B12 status modify the relationship between low-level arsenic exposure and cognitive outcomes among these schoolchildren. The findings of her project will be a step toward formulating dietary guidelines for children with low-level arsenic exposure, and will shed light on the role of maintaining optimal folate and B12 status in reducing arsenic neurotoxicity. Gauri started the PhD program in EEH in 2015. She came to UB with training in both epidemiology and microbiology. Her future research interests are in the field of environmental epidemiology and child health.



David Jacobs, PharmD, PhD candidate, was awarded a Buffalo Translational Consortium Mentored Career Development Award from UB’s Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) in February 2018.



Holger Schünemann, MD, PhD '00, MS '97, professor and chair, Michael Gent Chair in Healthcare Research, Department of Health Research Methods, Evidence, and Impact, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, received the University at Buffalo International Distinguished

Alumni Award at the 2017 Alumni Achievement Award ceremony. In December, he came to EEH and presented a seminar, “*Why Do Organizations Use GRADE to Make Decisions? From Risk of Bias to Evidence to Decision Frameworks.*”



Raquel Velazquez-Kronen, MS, PhD candidate, predoctoral fellow, Radiation Epidemiology Branch (REB), Division of Cancer Epidemiology & Genetics, National Cancer Institute (NCI), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, MD, received a 2018 National Cancer Institute

Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics Fellows Award for Research Excellence in November 2017.

Robert O'Shea Student Travel Award



Gauri Desai, MPH, PhD candidate, received a Robert O'Shea Student Travel award for her presentation entitled: "*Methylation Capacity, Folate Intake and General Cognitive Abilities Among Uruguayan School Children Experience Low Level Arsenic Exposure*" at the 5th Symposium in Psychology and 1st Research Symposium in Health and Wellbeing, at the Catholic University of Uruguay, in Montevideo, Uruguay in November 2017.



Reinier Narvaez, MD, MPH student (health services administration), received a Robert O'Shea Student Travel award for his abstract submission entitled "*Hard-To-Place Kidneys: Granular Examination of Risk Factors for Discard*" to the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS) meeting in Miami, FL in January 11-14, 2018.

News and Notes

29th Annual J. Warren Perry Lecture: J. Warren Perry was founding dean of the University at Buffalo School of Health Related Professions (now the School of Public Health and Health Professions), a prolific and accomplished scholar, administrator, author and lecturer. Dean Alan Stull, PhD, established the award and lectureship in 1989 to recognize exemplary leadership in public health, health professions or the health sciences. This year the speaker was Russell R. Pate, PhD, professor in the Department of Exercise Science in the Arnold Science School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina. His talk entitled "*Physical Activity and Public Health – Where We've Been and Where We Need to Go*" was held on Nov. 2, 2017.

6th 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. There is an annual Roswell Park seminar in her memory.



This year, **Jo Freudenheim**, PhD, UB Distinguished Professor and chair of EEH presented the Julie Baker lecture, entitled "*Thoughts on Interactions in Cancer Epidemiology*" on November 20, 2017.



Julia Ravenscroft, PhD, postdoctoral associate, will be joining the faculty of the Health, Society, and Populations Program, College of Arts & Sciences, at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, KY starting this fall.

Global Health Day: The School of Public Health and Health Professions Office of Global Health Initiatives, UB's Global Health Equity Community of Excellence, and EEH sponsored a symposium on the Exposome and Global Health Burden on April 6, 2018 in Farber Hall.



Keynote speaker was **Rosalind Wright**, MD, MPH, who holds the Horace W. Goldsmith Professorship in Children's Health Research. She is also professor of pediatrics at Kravis Children's Hospital and Icahn School of Medicine. Wright is dean of Translational Biomedical Research, and co-director of the Institute for Exposomic Research, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY. Wright gave a lecture, "*The New Era of Exposome and Its Implications in Global Health.*"

Several SPHHP faculty gave presentations along with panel discussions to complete the morning.

Gary Giovino, PhD, MS, professor and chair, Department of Community Health and Health Behavior, presented "*Behavioral Contributions to Chronic Diseases.*"

Lina Mu, MD, MPH, associate professor in EEH, presented "*Metabolomics in Exposome.*"

Kasia Kordas, PhD, associate professor in EEH, presented "*Metal Exposures in Women and Children, What Has Diet to do With It?*"

Jeff Miecznikowski, PhD, associate professor, Department of Biostatistics, presented "*An Introduction to 16S Microbiome Analysis in Bioconductor.*"



Xuefeng Ren, MD, PhD, associate professor in EEH, presented "*Environmental Health Perspectives on Global Inequalities: Multi-Generational Impacts of Arsenic Exposure on DNA Methylation and their Implications in Arsenic Toxicity.*"

A lunch followed. Later that afternoon the acclaimed documentary on the global health movement, "*Bending the Arc*" was shown at the Screening Room, Center for the Arts on the North Campus. Discussion and refreshments followed the film. The event was free and open to all.

Research News



Lina Mu, MD, PhD, associate professor, received Renew seed funding of \$32,990 for one year for a study entitled “*Traffic Air Pollution, Genetic Variation and Autism Spectrum Disorder*.” Co

investigators are Michelle Hartley-McAndrew, MD, FAAP, Norma Jean Nowak, PhD, Matthew Bonner, PhD, MPH, Zia Ahmed, PhD, Joseph Gardella, Jr., PhD, and Lili Tian, PhD.



Kasia Kordas, PhD, associate professor, received \$35,000 in pilot funding for a one-year study from Renew for a project entitled “*Scola-Exposome - toward an understanding of patterns and health effects of chemical exposures among school children*.”



Heather Ochs-Balcom, PhD, associate professor, is Co-PI on a new, 8-month award of \$5,000 from UB’s Genome, Environment and Microbiome Community of Excellence’s (GEM) Education and Engagement Innovation Awards for a project entitled “*Genetic predisposition for breast cancer among African*

American women: Development of educational messaging.”



Katia Noyes, PhD, MPH, professor, is PI on a new, 9 month, \$53,681 award from Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason and NIAID/NIH, for the award entitled “*Immune Tolerance Network BEAT-MS*.”



Pavani Ram, MD, associate professor, is PI on a new, one year, \$3,719 award from the Board of Trustees of Stanford University, entitled “*Optimizing Windows to Improve Ventilation in Dhaka Slums*.”



Laura Smith, PhD, assistant professor, is PI on two awards that were recently transferred from Cornell University.

The first, from Cornell University and NIEHS, is a two year, \$63,293 award entitled “*Mycotoxins in Pregnancy and Birth Outcomes in Zimbabwe*.”

The second, from Cornell University and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is a two year, \$185,101 award entitled “*Establishing the Link between Mycotoxin Exposure, Gut Dysfunction and Stunting in Zimbabwean Infants*.”



John Violanti, PhD, research professor, is Co-PI on a new, three year, \$814,156 award from the National Institute of Justice entitled “*The Effects of Trauma Exposure on Neurophysiological, Cognitive and Psychological Function in Active Duty Police Officers*”. Lead PI is Janet Shucard, PhD, Department of

Neurology, Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences. Co- investigators are David Shucard, PhD, and Thomas Covey, PhD.



Jean Wactawski-Wende, PhD ‘89, SUNY Distinguished Professor and dean of SPHHP, is PI on a new five-year, \$7 million award from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)/National Institutes of Health (NIH) for the “*Women’s Health Initiative (WHI) 2015-2020 Extension Study*.” Co-

investigators include Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH, Amy Millen, PhD, and Heather Ochs-Balcom, PhD.

Saxon Graham Lecture

Mark your calendars! The 2018 Saxon Graham Lecture will be held on Friday, April 27 from 12:00-1:00 pm in Farber Hall 144 with a reception starting at 11:30.



Jay Kaufman, PhD, professor and Epidemiology Program Director in the Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health at McGill University will present, present “*Racial Health Disparities in the United States: Heterogeneous Progress and a New York Miracle*”.

Kaufman's work focuses on social epidemiology, analytic methodology, causal inference and on a variety of health outcomes including perinatal outcomes and cardiovascular, psychiatric and infectious diseases.

He is a professor and epidemiology program director in the Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health at McGill University. Kaufman is also currently appointed as visiting professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Chile, visiting associate professor in the Department of Epidemiology, University of Michigan School of Public Health, and adjunct professor in the Department of Epidemiology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Kaufman is editor at the journal "Epidemiology", an associate editor at the "American Journal of Epidemiology", and co-editor of the textbook "Methods in Social Epidemiology" (2nd edition, 2017). He is the 2017 winner of the Excellence in Education Award, given by the Society for Epidemiologic Research (SER).

The annual lecture honors Dr. Saxon Graham, a leader in nutritional epidemiology, who chaired the department from 1981-1991.

Congratulations to Our Graduates

The following students successfully completed all degree requirements for degree conferrals in February 2018.

PhD Epidemiology

Ajay Myneni, MBBS, MPH, "*Dietary Factors, Smoking Cessation and Lung Cancer.*" Committee members: Lina Mu, MD, PhD (major professor), Gary Giovino, PhD, MS, Amy Millen, PhD, and Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH.

MPH Epidemiology

Ayesha Malik, BS, "*Association between Physical Activity and Renal Cell Carcinoma.*" Committee: Lina Mu, MD, PhD (major professor) and Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH.

Ben Robinson, PharmD, "*Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Health Facilities in Rural Malawi.*" Committee: Pavani Ram, MD (major professor) and Amy Millen, PhD.

MPH Health Services Administration

Elisabeth Brisley, BS, "*Analyzing the Opioid Epidemic: A Comparison of Prescription Monitoring Programs in NY & FL.*" Committee: Katia Noyes, PhD, MPH (major professor) and Jessica Cao, PhD.

Julia DiTondo, BS, "*Financial Incentives for Comprehensive Discharge Planning.*" Committee: Katia Noyes, PhD, MPH (major professor) and Jessica Cao, PhD.

Joel Nassi, BA, "*Practicing Excellence: A Program Plan Pilot.*" Committee: Katia Noyes, PhD, MPH (major professor) and Sarahmona Przybyla, PhD, MPH.

Correction to September 2017 newsletter

Reinier Narvaez, MD, MPH student (health services administration), received his degree from the Medical School at UCSF (University of California San Francisco), not California State University.

Welcome New EEH Students

Please welcome the following new students this spring.

MPH Environmental Health

Kyle Fletcher, BA, biology, University of Geneseo. Kyle deferred from fall to accept an internship with a non-government organization in Haiti ending December 2017.

MPH Health Services Administration

Chelsea Recor, BS, biochemistry, Niagara University. Chelsea is in the accelerated program, on leave of absence from the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Supporting the Educational and Research Mission of EEH

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. Donations can be made online at www.giving.buffalo.edu. Select the "Use My Gift For" box and search on "epidemiology" 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.