

GSPH AIDS Education and Training Center Awarded \$23 Million

Grant will support training and education of health professionals in Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and DC. **PAGE 12**

BCHS Chair Visits White House

Ron Stall invited to witness President Obama announcing national HIV/AIDS policy. **PAGE 14**

Public Health Dynamics Lab Opens

Systems thinking and computational modeling get a boost from new center. **PAGE 15**

The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health
Special Issue on Aging

PhoQ

PUBLIC HEALTH QUARTERLY

HEALTHY AGING

A NATIONAL IMPERATIVE

in this **ISSUE**



HEALTHY AGING: A NATIONAL IMPERATIVE



NATE HERSHEY TURNS 80

NEW DEPARTMENT CHAIR



3 BCCHS Admits First Students to New PhD Program

STUDENT NEWS

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SPECIAL ISSUE ON AGING

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN DONALD S. BURKE, MD

The human species has undergone an astonishing transformation during the past century: we are older, much older. Throughout most of human history, the average lifespan at birth was around 30-35 years, with little change. Our forebears, whether born in the Iron Age, through the classical Greek era, the Dark Ages, and even into the latter parts of the 19th century, all had about the same average lifespan. Then something happened. First in the industrialized countries of Europe and North America, then throughout the world, humans stopped dying prematurely, and began living longer lives. After World War II, the global pace increased as populations in China, India, and other large countries shared the trend. Increasingly throughout the world, seniors rule!

Proceeds from the Ladies Hospital Aid Society gala will benefit healthy aging research at GSPH. If you would like to make your own contribution to our research—whether for healthy aging initiatives or something else meaningful to you—please contact Apryl Eshelman, GSPH director of development, at 412-624-5639 or eshelman@pitt.edu.

What caused this dramatic increase in longevity? Intriguingly, there is a strong link between wealth (or lack of poverty) and longevity. Country by country, and decade by decade, increases in gross domestic product (GDP) per person correlate beautifully with increases in average lifespan. To be sure, simple improvements in sanitation and nutrition that come with wealth were



important in increasing lifespan earlier in this century; much of the upswing occurred well before modern medicine with its antibiotics and vaccines. Today, effective programs for maternal health and safe childbirth, vaccines, and environmental health are saving and extending even more lives. The association of GDP and lifespan may work both ways. Many experts hold that it is the relative societal wealth that results in greater societal mean lifespan. However, I confess that as I age I am drawn to believe in the opposite causality: age (and wisdom) permits societal generation of wealth. Not only do seniors rule, they rule wisely!

This special issue of Public Health Quarterly—and its theme of research on healthy aging at GSPH—was prompted by the generosity of the Ladies Hospital Aid Society (LHAS), a group that has dedicated itself to community service for more than 100 years. This year, we are fortunate to be the beneficiary of the annual LHAS gala, to take place on Saturday, August 28. On behalf of the entire GSPH community, I extend sincere thanks to LHAS for its generosity and commitment to improving the lives of the citizens of Western Pennsylvania.

The theme of the gala is one that should resonate with all our alumni and friends who are approaching their senior years: "The best is yet to come!"

Donald S. Burke

GSPH ALUMNA HONORED AS INFLUENTIAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR IN VIRGINIA

Michelle Clayton, MD, MPH '96, who has worked to combat child abuse as a pediatric forensic specialist at Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters (CHKD) in Norfolk, Va., was named the 2010 Influential Woman of the Year by Virginia Lawyers Media, publishers of Virginia Lawyers Weekly and the Virginia Medical Law Report. She was voted to receive the honor by the other women who were chosen as Influential Women of Virginia for 2010.

Clayton was praised for working to bridge the gap between medicine and child abuse investigation and prosecution. For the past 10 years, she has been associated with the child abuse program at CHKD, performing hundreds of consultations with police and social service officials and prosecutors on cases. Clayton also serves on a number of state and local boards dedicated to stopping abuse and to improving the lives of children.

The Influential Women of Virginia program, started last year, recognizes the outstanding efforts of women in the commonwealth in all fields, including law, business, health care, education, and the arts. The honors are given to individuals who are making notable contributions to their chosen professions, their

communities, and society at large. The honorees were celebrated at a luncheon on May 20.

Clayton earned her bachelor's degree at Harvard and Radcliffe Colleges, her MPH in epidemiology from GSPH, and her medical degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. She is one of the few board-certified child abuse pediatricians in Virginia, and serves as medical director of the Children's Hospital Pediatric Forensic Nurse Examiner program. She chairs both the commonwealth's Child Abuse Prevention Committee and the child abuse committee of the Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She also serves on the advisory committee to the Court-Appointed Special Advocate program.



Michelle Clayton

HPM ALUMNI SPONSOR 80TH BIRTHDAY BASH FOR NATE HERSHEY

Nathan Hershey, JD, emeritus professor of health law, was feted at an 80th birthday bash on May 11 at Le Pommier Bistro Francais. Alumni from New York to California attended the event that was co-sponsored by Chris Gessner '91, Bill Schaudé '77, and Bill Holman '79, and underwritten by Le Pommier owners Anna and Ed Dunlap. Birthday well wishers contributed nearly \$25,000 in Hershey's honor to the scholarship fund bearing his name. To make your own contribution to the Nathan Hershey Endowment in Health Administration, contact Apryl Eshelman, GSPH director of development, at 412-624-5629 or eshelman@pitt.edu.



University of Pittsburgh Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg (far right) presents Nate Hershey with a Pitt football jersey with his name and the number 80 in honor of his 80th birthday.

**Do you have news to share with your fellow GSPH alumni?
Go to www.publichealth.pitt.edu/update and let us know about it!**

BCHS ADMITS FIRST STUDENTS TO NEW PHD PROGRAM

To better meet the needs of students interested in the role behavioral and social factors play in illness and health, the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences (BCHS) has established a PhD program and made major revisions to its longstanding DrPH program. The first nine students were accepted into the PhD program for the fall 2010 term.

The new PhD degree program will train students to develop interventions grounded in the social and behavioral sciences and test them in randomized controlled trials, while the revised DrPH degree program will focus on the translation, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based interventions for use in community settings through the department's Institute for Evaluation Science in Community Health.

This approach to doctoral education encourages PhD students to learn from practitioners in the DrPH program and

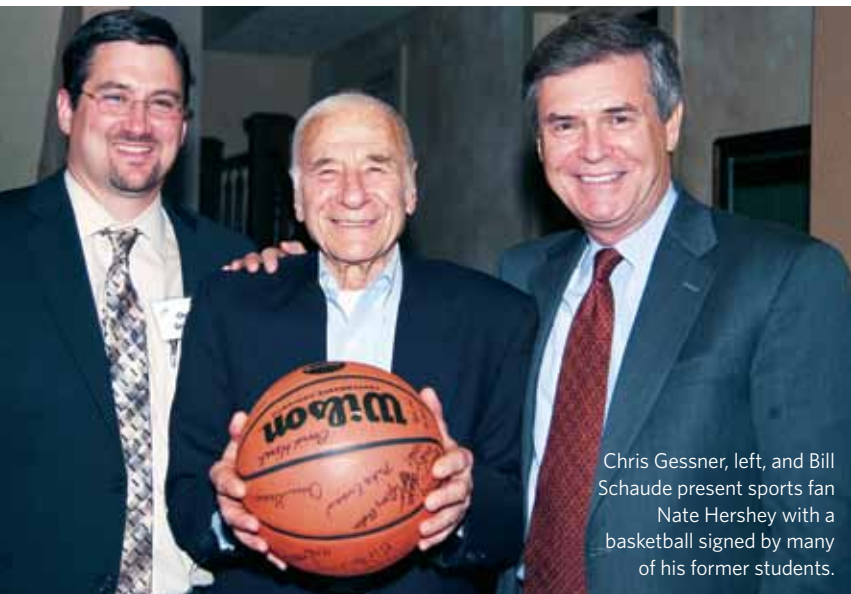
vice versa. "We believe this ongoing exchange between the worlds of theory and practice will result in a new generation of scholars and practitioners who will be trained to work together to address the world's most pressing public health problems," said Jeanette M. Trauth, PhD, director of the doctoral programs and BCBS associate professor.

Students accepted into the 81-credit PhD program will receive instruction in qualitative and quantitative methodological approaches to behavioral and social science research. The curriculum for the DrPH program will be guided by newly developed competencies for professional education. Half of the coursework in the programs will overlap. A commitment to the elimination of health disparities and working with underserved populations will underlie coursework in both programs.



HPM STUDENT RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

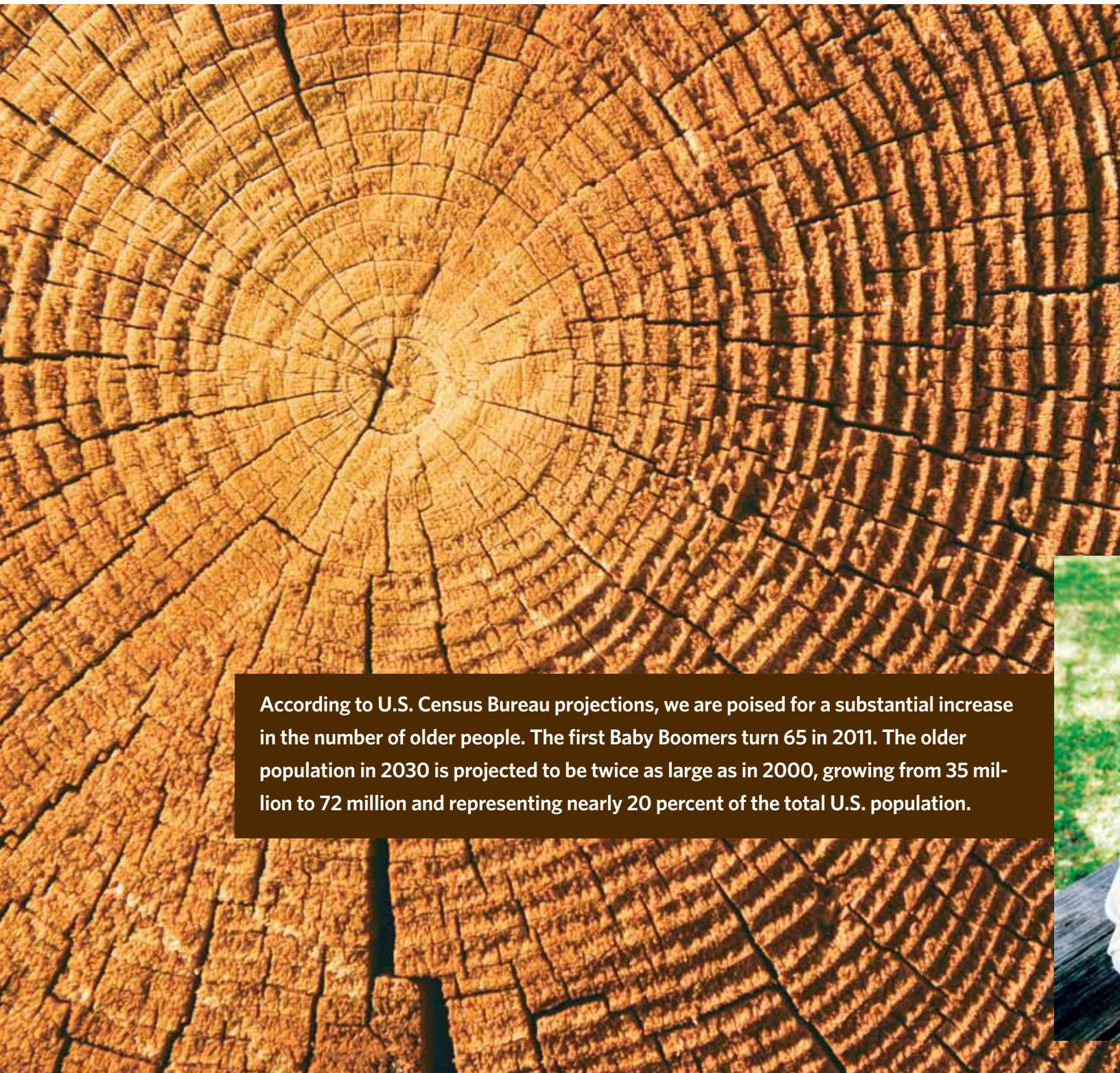
Kathleen Sullivan, a second-year MHA student in the Department of Health Policy & Management, has been awarded the Foster G. McGaw Graduate Student Scholarship from the Foundation of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE). ACHE established the scholarship in honor of the founder of the American Hospital Supply Corporation. Offered annually, the McGaw scholarship is designated for students enrolled in their final year of a health care management graduate program. Each scholarship is worth \$5,000. ACHE is a professional society of more than 30,000 health care executives.



Chris Gessner, left, and Bill Schaude present sports fan Nate Hershey with a basketball signed by many of his former students.

HEALTHY AGING

A NATIONAL IMPERATIVE



According to U.S. Census Bureau projections, we are poised for a substantial increase in the number of older people. The first Baby Boomers turn 65 in 2011. The older population in 2030 is projected to be twice as large as in 2000, growing from 35 million to 72 million and representing nearly 20 percent of the total U.S. population.



Helping older people live healthier lives is a public health imperative.

The U.S. health care system, already struggling to contain costs and avoid rationing of care, would be overwhelmed in the coming decades if there were no new discoveries in aging and health. Researchers at GSPH are actively engaged in initiatives from basic research to understand the aging process at the molecular level to health policy changes that affect elders.

A few of the major centers and projects that GSPH has participated in include the **Center for Aging and Population Health** (CAPH, www.caph.pitt.edu). CAPH strives to generate new solutions to the challenges of an aging society through the conduct of population-based research that promotes healthy aging, longevity, and prevention of disability. Building on the resources of the GSPH Department of Epidemiology, CAPH orchestrates epidemiologic and public health research on aging, trains professionals in population research methodology, and conducts community outreach. These efforts are collaborative within the University and the community and engage older adults as valued resources in society. Thus, the focus of the CAPH is to optimize health in older adults by emphasizing health promotion and disease prevention. The center is directed by Anne B. Newman, MD, MPH, professor of epidemiology.

The **Pittsburgh Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center** (www.pepper.pitt.edu) was established in 2004 to provide support and resources for investigators to pursue research in the field of balance disorders in the elderly. The research registry core of the center is directed by Steven M. Albert, PhD, professor of behavioral and community health sciences

at GSPH. This core optimizes the recruitment and retention of participants for studies of balance and aging. Investigators at the University of Pittsburgh have established successful methods for recruiting older adults into a full range of ongoing and completed studies, including large epidemiological cohorts, clinical trials, and mechanistic investigations.

The GSPH **Center for Healthy Aging** (www.healthyaging.pitt.edu) was first funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2001 and recently was refunded for another five years. The center's mission is health promotion and disease prevention in the older adult population through collaboration with the public health community and the community at large. Overall goals include promoting healthy aging as a theme and as a public health goal for the community, focusing on the 10 Keys to Healthy Aging that research has shown to be highly effective in enhancing to the health of older adults; translating and disseminating research results, and disseminating quality prevention education materials to the community; providing multidisciplinary training and evaluation on prevention; and establishing program activities within the community of patients, providers, researchers, educators, and policymakers.

GSPH is also a clinical study site of the **Study of Women's Health Across the Nation** (SWAN), a longitudinal study of the natural history of the midlife, including the menopausal transition. The study examines the physical, biological, psychological, and social changes during this transitional period. The goal of SWAN's

research is to help scientists, health care providers, and women learn how mid-life experiences affect health and quality of life during aging. The study is co-sponsored by the National Institute on Aging, the National Institute of Nursing Research, the National Institutes of Health Office of Research on Women's Health, and the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine. Nationwide, the study recruited 3,302 African-American, Caucasian, Chinese-American, Hispanic, and Japanese-American women, each of who participates in a clinic visit.

GSPH researchers also contribute to the **Study of Osteoporotic Fractures (SOF)**, which is supported by National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases and the National Institute on Aging. This multicenter study has been following more than 9,000 postmenopausal Caucasian women since 1986 and has yielded comprehensive data about multiple risk factors for osteoporosis-related fractures. This study has provided the foundation for developing ways to identify people at greatest risk for osteoporosis and fractures decades in advance, and thus has greatly aided disease prevention efforts.

SOF investigators have added African-American women to the group of patients they are following, and they hope to provide unique information on risk factors for osteoporosis and fractures in this population. GSPH is one of five clinical sites for SOF. A total of 9,704 participants were recruited nationwide. All of the women were 65 and older during the SOF recruitment period of 1986-1988. Some participants are now over 100 years old; 4 years ago, the average study subject age was 83 years. Study subjects have had clinical visits every two years during the study. Other GSPH researchers have also studied osteoporosis in men.

To the right is an overview of some of the most recent GSPH research on aging and health.

Alzheimer's Disease

GSPH geneticists are working to understand the basis of late-onset Alzheimer's disease. The identification of genes responsible for triggering this disease may help to understand the underlying molecular causes of Alzheimer's disease leading to the development of therapeutic and preventive measures. GSPH also educates the caregiver and scientific communities about the latest findings in Alzheimer's disease through the Jay L. Foster Memorial Lecture. The next lecture in the series will take place on Thursday November 11, 2010, and will be delivered by Lewis H. Kuller, MD, distinguished university professor of public health. More details are on the events calendar at the end of this issue.

Cancer

GSPH researchers have focused on effective clinical trial recruitment strategies for the elderly. Studies have sought to understand the range of knowledge, attitude, beliefs, and motivations regarding cancer treatment and participation in medical research held by cancer patients in this population. In addition, they examined the perspectives of elderly cancer patient caregivers regarding participation of their loved ones in cancer clinical trials.

Since 1974, the Department of Biostatistics has directed the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Cancer Project (NSABP) Biostatistical Center. Department faculty and staff design, implement, and analyze the research that have led to NSABP's ground-breaking findings on breast-conserving surgery and the benefits of adjuvant chemotherapy and hormonal therapy. Newer studies have focused on the efficacy of the drugs tamoxifen and raloxifene in preventing breast cancer and the benefits of genetically targeted breast cancer therapies like herceptin.

Finally, Susanne Gollin, PhD, professor in the Department of Human Genetics, has been appointed to serve on the Pennsylvania Cancer Control, Prevention, and Research Advisory Board, which advises the state secretary of health. The eight-member board approves a plan for cancer control, prevention, and research each year, known as the Pennsylvania Cancer Plan.

Cardiovascular Disease

GSPH researchers recently published a landmark study showing that there is no difference in mortality among patients with type 2 diabetes and stable heart disease who received prompt bypass surgery or angioplasty compared to drug therapy alone. The study also found that while prompt bypass in patients with more severe heart disease did not lower mortality, it lowered their risk of subsequent major cardiac events.

Another GSPH study, "Epidemiology of Cardiovascular Risk Factors in Women," is a follow-up to the Healthy Women Study that began in 1983-84 as the first study of the determinants of risk factor changes among women during the peri- to postmenopause. Investigators looked at coronary and aortic calcium, carotid ultrasound and vascular stiffness, and maximal exercise testing, measures of cognitive function, history of clinical depression, physical functioning, and sleep quality and duration.

Chromosomal Aging

Patricia Opresko, PhD, an assistant professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, researches the role of telomeres in aging and disease. Telomeres are protein-DNA structures at the ends of chromosomes that have been shown to influence lifespan, disease, and genome integrity. As somatic cells replicate, the telomeres naturally get shorter, but when the telomere loss is too great, the cell no longer replicates. On the flip side is the role that telomeres play in cancer. Cancer cells have been shown to

contain an enzyme called telomerase that keeps telomeres from shrinking, which contributes to cancer cells' ability to replicate unchecked.

Opresko's research now focuses on the environmental pollutant hexavalent chromium and telomere loss and defects. She and her colleagues have found a protein that plays a role in protecting against hexavalent chromium toxicity. Her future work will focus on defining the precise role for this protein in telomere replication, hoping to discover novel mechanisms for targeting telomeric DNA replication to kill proliferating cancer cells, and novel mechanisms of telomere preservation to prevent or delay cancer and aging-related diseases.

Diabetes

GSPH researchers are investigating the genetic and environmental causes of Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes and ways to prevent the onset of the disease. Among the studies is the Pittsburgh Epidemiology of Diabetes Complications Study, a long-term prospective examination of childhood onset type 1 diabetes that began in 1986 and has followed study participants into middle age.

GSPH researchers have also published findings that advances in treatment and care have reduced overall death rates from type 1 diabetes, but that women and African-Americans have higher risks of mortality. The results are based on the Allegheny County Type 1 Diabetes Registry, one of the largest population-based registries of the disease, which includes nearly 1,100 people diagnosed between 1965 and 1979 in Allegheny County.

HIV/AIDS

GSPH has been a leading research center for HIV/AIDS for more than 25 years. As this disease has progressed from acute to chronic in the developed world, research has evolved and groundbreaking studies are now underway to learn more about the effects of long term antiviral drug usage and how to control these effects.

Long-Term Care

GSPH faculty members conduct research into improved quality of care in long-term care facilities and in-home care. For example, Nicholas Castle, PhD, MHA, professor in the Department of Health Policy & Management (HPM), is examining the practices and policies of adverse event reporting in nursing home settings. In addition to querying all 50 state departments of health, he is collecting online input from nursing homes regarding adverse event reporting. Another of his projects is a national evaluation of the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) funded direct service community workforce demonstrations, designed to recruit and retain direct service workers. This evaluation is being conducted through a collaboration between the RAND Corporation and the University of Pittsburgh.

Howard Degenholtz, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Health Policy & Management, has conducted several projects funded by The Commonwealth Fund related to improving the quality of long-term care. One is a structured interview guide to enable nursing home staff to ask residents directly about problems they experience and then design interventions to correct them. Another is to determine the prevalence and use of health information technology in nursing homes.

Finally the HPM department is planning a statewide policy conference on the topic of Quality of In-Home Services. The conference will occur this fall. Check the GSPH Web site for more details as they are finalized.

Medicare Policy

A recent GSPH study showed that after enrolling in Medicare Part D, seniors who previously had limited or no drug coverage spent more on prescriptions and less on other medical care services such as hospitalizations and visits to the doctor's office. The study also found that seniors who had relatively good drug benefits prior to enrolling in Medicare Part D spent somewhat more on prescriptions and, at the same time, increased their spending on other medical care services.

Another study showed that beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Part D who reached a gap in health care coverage known as the doughnut hole were much less likely to use prescription drugs than those with an employer-based plan. The findings raised concerns about health consequences and increased costs from hospitalizations and physician visits that may arise from lack of coverage. The authors suggested a change in policy that would mandate the coverage of generic drugs in the doughnut hole through a modest increase in initial prescription co-pays. The doughnut hole is now slated for eventual elimination in the health care reform plan passed this year.

Testosterone and Men's Health

GSPH will participate in the largest national study to date on the effects of testosterone treatment in men 65 and older. The Testosterone Trial (T Trial), a multi-center study sponsored by the National Institute on Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health, will explore whether hormone therapy can improve diminished physical function, low vitality, impaired cognition, reduced sexual function, cardiovascular disease, and anemia—all of which have been linked to low levels of testosterone.

GSPH AGING RESEARCH: news from 2010

The volume of research in healthy aging at GSPH is far too vast to be chronicled fully in these pages. But to demonstrate the extent of such research, below are news items about major grant awards and research findings just from calendar year 2010.

GSPH Receives CDC Funding for Fall Prevention Study

A \$1.5 million grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to GSPH will explore the effectiveness of programs to prevent falls in seniors, which occur in more than one-third of adults 65 and older every year in the United States.

Led by principal investigator Steven M. Albert, PhD, professor in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences at GSPH, in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, the two-year grant will compare two interventions: Healthy Steps for Older Adults, an education-only program, and Healthy Steps in Motion, an education-plus-exercise program. Participants will be randomly assigned to the programs or to a waiting-list group that will start the programs later.

"Falls are the leading cause of death from injury among older adults, and yet we know little about how prevention programs work in the real world," said Albert. "This study will give us needed guidance on how we can prevent such falls, which result in billions of dollars in health care costs."

Based in Pennsylvania, the study will enroll 750 seniors in each arm of the trial as well as 300 Latino seniors, who represent an aging U.S. population. Through the programs, lay service providers will be trained to identify people at risk of falling and make referrals for home safety assessments.

The study was funded through the CDC's Prevention Research Program under the 2009 Recovery Act for comparative effectiveness research. For more information on the Prevention Research Centers, visit the CDC's Web site at www.cdc.gov/prc.

GSPH Explores the Health Benefits of Aspirin

The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health is recruiting participants for a new study that will explore whether aspirin can not only prolong life, but also help prevent physical disability and dementia in healthy older people. The Aspirin in Reducing Events in the Elderly (ASPREE) study is the largest international trial ever sponsored by the National Institute on Aging, and includes researchers from across the United States and Australia.

Aspirin is known to prevent heart attacks and strokes in people with established heart disease—benefits which clearly outweigh any associated risks, such as bleeding—but the role of aspirin in older people without a history of cardiovascular disease is less certain.

"Very little information is available about the overall effects of aspirin in older adults because most trials focus on middle-aged people," said Anne B. Newman, MD, MPH, director of the Center for Aging and Population Health at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health and principal investigator of the Pittsburgh site. "ASPREE will help determine whether the potential benefits of low-dose aspirin outweigh the risks for people age 70 and over, especially important now since people are living longer than ever."

The ASPREE study will enroll 6,500 healthy individuals age 70 and over in the U.S. and another 12,500 in Australia. Up to 800 of these participants will come from the Pittsburgh area. All eligible participants will be randomly assigned to take either low-dose aspirin or placebo daily for about 5 years. Patients will receive initial measure-

ments on specific health markers, as well as functional and cognitive ability, and changes will be monitored throughout the study.

Additional information about the study is available at www.ASPREE.org. People in the Pittsburgh area interested in finding out whether they may be eligible should call the University of Pittsburgh at 800-872-3653.

CDC Awards GSPH \$2 Million to Continue Healthy Aging Research Center

As part of its Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research Center program, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention awarded a five-year grant of \$2.18 million to GSPH continue and enhance the Center for Healthy Aging (CHA), which focuses on major public health concerns regarding the elderly and promoting healthy aging within the community. The continuation grant period began on March 1.

"We are very proud of the work that was done at the center," said principal investigator Anne Newman, MD, MPH, professor of epidemiology. "There are excellent manuals and materials developed there and we are excited to be able to move forward."

Some of the signature programs of CHA are the Ten Keys to Healthy Aging and the Community Health Ambassador Program that trains laypeople to spread the word about preventive measures that all older people can take to reduce, postpone, or eliminate disease and disability. For more information, visit www.healthyaging.pitt.edu.



GSPH Study First to Examine Impact of Medicare Part D on Overall Medical Spending

After enrolling in Medicare Part D, seniors who previously had limited or no drug coverage spent more on prescriptions and less on other medical care services such as hospitalizations and visits to the doctor's office, according to a GSPH study published in the July 2 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The study also found that seniors who had relatively good drug benefits prior to enrolling in Medicare Part D spent somewhat more on prescriptions and, at the same time, increased their spending on other medical care services.

"We found that Part D led to increases in overall pharmacy spending among all beneficiaries," said the study's lead author, Yuting Zhang, PhD, assistant professor of health economics in the Department of Health Policy & Management.

"These increases were offset by decreases in spending on other medical care services in those with little or no drug coverage before they enrolled in Medicare Part D, which was one-third of the beneficiary population studied. The majority of Part D enrollees in our study population—those with relatively good prior prescription coverage—spent more on prescriptions as well as other medical services."

The purpose of Medicare Part D, which took effect in January 2006, is to subsidize the cost of prescription drugs for Medicare beneficiaries, more than 30 percent of whom had limited or no coverage for prescription drugs prior to its implementation.

When it came to spending on other medical care services excluding drugs, the no-coverage group and poor-coverage group decreased their spending by \$33 and \$46 per month respectively, while the good-coverage group increased their spending by \$30 per month.

"The offset in spending by seniors with limited or no prior drug benefits could be due to improved adherence to medication, especially for those with chronic conditions. Improved access to prescription drugs provided by Part D may enable this population to better control symptoms and cut down on visits to the physician's office or emergency room," said Zhang. On the other hand, the lack of a similar spending offset in the good-coverage group could indicate an overuse of some medications and services by this population, she noted.

Co-authors of the study include senior author Joseph P. Newhouse, PhD, Harvard University; Julie M. Donohue, PhD, HPM assistant professor; Judith R. Lave, PhD, HPM professor; and Gerald O'Donnell, MS, Highmark Inc. The study was funded in part by a grant to Donohue from the National Institutes of Health and a grant to Newhouse from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

Dementia in Older Women Linked to High Blood Pressure Years Earlier

High blood pressure may put women at greater risk for dementia later in life by increasing white matter abnormalities in the brain, report researchers from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health in a study published online in the *Journal of Clinical Hypertension*.

"Hypertension is very common in the U.S. and many other countries, and can lead to serious health problems," said Lewis Kuller, MD, DrPH, distinguished university professor of public health. "Proper control of blood pressure, which remains generally poor, may be very important to prevent dementia as women age."

The study, part of the multisite and long-term Women's Health Initiative Memory Study (WHIMS), included 1,424 women 65 or older who had their blood pressure assessed annually and underwent magnetic

resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain. Researchers assessed white matter lesions, which are associated with increased risks for dementia and stroke. White matter makes up 60 percent of the brain and contains nerve fibers responsible for communication among the brain's regions.

Women who, at the start of the study, were hypertensive, meaning a blood pressure of 140/90 or higher, had significantly more white matter lesions on their MRI scans eight years later than participants with normal blood pressure. Lesions were more common in the frontal lobe, the brain's emotional control center and home to personality, than in the occipital, parietal or temporal lobes.

"Women should be encouraged to control high blood pressure when they are young or in middle-age in order to prevent serious problems later on," said Kuller. "Prevention and control of elevated blood pressure and subsequent vascular disease in the brain may represent the best current preventive therapy for dementia."

Co-authors of the study include Karen L. Margolis, MD, Health Partners Research Foundation, Minneapolis; Sarah A. Gaussoin, MS, and Jeff Williamson, MD, Wake Forest University School of Medicine; Nick R. Bryan, MD, University of Pennsylvania; Diana Kerwin, MD, Northwestern University; Marian Limacher, MD, University of Florida; Sylvia Wassertheil-Smoller, PhD, Albert Einstein College of Medicine; and Jennifer G. Robinson, MD, MPH, University of Iowa.

The research was funded by grants from the National Institutes of Health's National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

FOUR GSPH FACULTY NAMED

DOCTORS OF DISTINCTION

The Ladies' Hospital Aid Society (LHAS) has recognized the research excellence of four GSPH faculty members by naming them Doctors of Distinction. They will be honored at the LHAS annual gala on August 28. Proceeds from the gala will support research in healthy aging at GSPH.

LHAS was founded in 1898 to address the pressing needs of the sick, the poor, and immigrants. Among its many community service accomplishments was the opening of the original Montefiore Hospital in 1908, and the construction of the current site in 1929. LHAS raised more than \$5 million for Montefiore Hospital and initiated and funded the Follow-Me-Home Program and the LHAS Ambulatory Surgical Center. In 1990, Montefiore Hospital was sold to the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

LHAS in turn expanded its mission and has remained responsive to changing health care needs of the entire Western Pennsylvania community. LHAS has implemented programs for the elderly and women's health care, including the LHAS Arbor at Weinberg Village, LHAS Prevention and Early Detection Center at the Hillman Cancer Center, and the LHAS Women's Heart Center. Fulfilling its commitment to education, LHAS has allocated thousands of dollars for college scholarship grants to future health care professionals and nursing students.



Steven M. Albert, PhD, is a professor in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences at the University of Pitts-

burgh Graduate School of Public Health and is the department's associate chair for research and science. His research examines how societies can ensure optimal aging. This effort includes a wide variety of topics, from how health in midlife affects prospects for old age to ways we can promote quality of life at the end of life. His efforts focus directly on physical, cognitive, and mental health, rather than primary prevention of chronic disease alone, because the senescent changes of aging directly affect these domains.

One line of Albert's research examines the functional significance of cognitive and physical impairment and its broader impact on health outcomes. He has carried this research forward in the areas of Alzheimer's disease, HIV-related dementia, and in non-demented older adults. A second line of research aims to understand patient and family decision-making in chronic disease. In this effort, he has worked with patients to explore mental health changes with the approach of death. An extension of this effort includes cross-national research with collaborators in Israel and Germany and development of public health tools for end of life surveillance. A new NIH study set to begin in 2011 will examine trajectories in the last year of life among the very old to determine when medical interventions offer benefit and how families seek medical care near the end of life.

Active research projects in 2010 include:

- Delivery of aging services to prevent depression. This is a study of the nonprofit sector's ability to deliver home- and community-based services to vulnerable elders, supported by the Allegheny County United Way. Investigators are assessing the capacity of aging services providers to deliver a depression prevention intervention.
- Medication review to support aging in place among vulnerable seniors residing in subsidized housing. With funding from The Pittsburgh Foundation, Albert has partnered with the Allegheny County Housing Authority (ACHA) and University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy to bring pharmacy students to ACHA buildings to conduct free medication reviews. We wish to determine if correction of medication regimens may help reduce the very high rate of hospitalization in this population.
- Randomized controlled trial of information from nasal ventilation devices in people with ALS. With funding from the ALS Association, he is exploring ways to improve use of nasal ventilation by taking advantage of device data card recording capacity.
- Randomized controlled trial of low-cost, population-based falls prevention efforts in Pennsylvania. With funding from CDC, we have developed a partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Aging to examine falls prevention efforts offered by senior centers throughout the state.



Jane A. Cauley, DrPH, is a professor in the Department of Epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. She has spent the past 15 years

as an investigator of numerous research projects examining the physical and psychological changes that occur in postmenopausal women. Her work has focused on use of estrogen, risks of hip fractures, bone density, and cholesterol levels of women who are going through menopause.

As a co-principal investigator for the Pitt site of the Women's Health Initiative, a National Institutes of Health-sponsored study, Cauley and her colleagues examine the effects calcium and vitamin D have on osteoporosis. She has published more than 75 articles in journals such as *The Lancet*, the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Her honors include the National Research Service Award, individual postdoctoral fellow in epidemiology, the Distinguished Alumni Award from GSPH, and membership in Delta Omega, the public health honor society. Cauley is a member of the Society of Epidemiological Research, the American Public Health Association and the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research. She serves on the review board of the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, the *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

A native of Pittsburgh, Cauley received her bachelor's degree in nursing at Boston College in 1975. She received her master's degree and her doctorate in public health in 1980 and 1983 respectively, from the University of Pittsburgh. She served as a postdoctoral fellow in Pitt's department of epidemiology from 1984 to 1986 before becoming an assistant professor in the department. In 1989, Cauley became an associate professor at the GSPH.



Lewis H. Kuller, MD, DrPH, distinguished university professor of public health and past chair of the Department of Epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of

Public Health, has spent the past 30 years studying risk factors for individuals with heart disease and women going through menopause. In addition, as the director of the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute's Cancer Control and Prevention Program since 1990, he has spent many years studying prevention of cancer and cancer risks.

Kuller has published more than 300 articles in peer-reviewed publications. His honors include the 1994 Chancellor's Distinguished Research Award, University of Pittsburgh; the Abraham Lilienfeld Award, American College of Epidemiology; the MERIT Award, National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute; and the Centennial Scholar, John Hopkins University. In 2009, he was named the American Heart Association Distinguished Scientist for major contributions to cardiovascular disease and stroke research.

Kuller graduated from George Washington University medical school in 1959. After completing an internship and an assistant residency, Kuller continued his education at the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health, where he received his master's degree and doctorate in public health in 1964 and 1966.

He was a medical officer in the U.S. Navy from 1961 to 1963 and a faculty member of the department of epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health from 1966 to 1972. Kuller came to Pitt in 1972 as professor and chair of epidemiology at GSPH.



Anne B. Newman, MD, MPH, is a professor in the Department of Epidemiology and director of the Center for Aging and Population Health (CAPH) at GSPH, and has a joint

appointment in the Division of Geriatric Medicine in the School of Medicine. She is internationally renowned for her work in the epidemiology of aging, longevity, and disability and has served as the principal investigator for several long-term studies of aging and longevity. Newman's research has established the clear potential for old age to be a productive and active period of life that far exceeds previous expectations.

Her research focuses on the epidemiology and implications of subclinical diseases in older adults. She is particularly concerned with the impact of apparently subclinical disease on physical, cognitive, and muscle function, as well as its contribution to frailty, a concept that she has helped to define. Her studies of subclinical cardiovascular disease document its strong relationship to declines in health and function that had been previously attributed to aging itself. Her work on body composition and fitness has documented the adverse effects of high body fat on strength and the importance of fitness to function.

Newman is principal investigator of the CDC Prevention Research Center in the Department of Epidemiology. She also is principal investigator of the Long Life Family Study, the Pittsburgh site for the Lifestyle Interventions for Independence in the Elderly (LIFE) study, and the Aspirin to Reduce Events in the Elderly (ASPREE) study. She has been recognized for her work by election to membership in the American Epidemiology Society. She serves on numerous NIH review panels, is associate editor of the *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Science*, and has published more than 300 manuscripts in major medical journals.



SALLY MORTON APPOINTED CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOSTATISTICS

Sally C. Morton, PhD, has been appointed to head GSPH's Department of Biostatistics. Morton's areas of expertise include comparative effectiveness and meta-analysis, areas of research contributing to evidence-based decisions in health care.

Most recently, Morton was vice president of statistics and epidemiology at RTI International where she led a department of 270 biostatisticians, statisticians, and epidemiologists. She also served as an adjunct professor of biostatistics at the University of North Carolina. Prior to her position at RTI, she led the statistics group at the RAND Corporation and held the RAND endowed chair in statistics.

"Dr. Morton is an outstanding biostatistician. As the immediate past-president of the American Statistical Association, she brings a deep understanding of the future of biostatistics. Her perfect blend of academic credentials and industry experience will help guarantee GSPH's

position as a leader in health care decision-making," said Donald S. Burke, MD, GSPH dean. "Dr. Morton's special skills at analyzing, interpreting and explaining public health and policy data are extremely valuable during the current era of health care reform."

Morton has authored more than 100 peer-reviewed articles, books and book chapters on topics ranging from statistical and analytic methods to health care policy, evidence-based medicine, and research on special populations. At GSPH, she will develop programs to address complex health care questions at both societal and individual levels. She will also employ evidence-based analyses to better inform public health decision-making, and mentor students entering the field.

Morton received both a master's degree in operations research and a doctoral degree in statistics from Stanford University, as well as a master's degree in statistics from the London School of Economics.

GSPH HIV/AIDS EDUCATION CENTER AWARDED \$23 MILLION

A \$23 million grant to GSPH will support the training and education of health professionals who care for the thousands of people infected annually with HIV in the United States. The five-year award from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration's HIV/AIDS Bureau, through the Ryan White Comprehensive Care Act, supports the continuing work of the Pennsylvania/MidAtlantic AIDS Education and Training Center (AETC), headquartered at GSPH since 1988.

Led by principal investigator Linda Frank, PhD, MSN, associate professor in the Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology, the Pennsylvania/MidAtlantic AETC provides HIV/AIDS-related training to health professionals in Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

"HIV/AIDS remains one of the most significant public health issues of our time," said Frank. "It is extremely challenging and rewarding to participate in improving access to quality HIV/AIDS care by assisting individual clinicians, agencies and programs throughout our region. Given the health disparities that exist within our care system, continued stigma associated with this disease and the need for more timely HIV testing and treatment intervention, I am pleased that this funding will allow us to continue this important work."

Training focuses on clinical treatment, prevention and support for people with HIV and emphasizes the medically underserved, including women, men who have sex with men, minorities, prisoners, youth, and substance users. The GSPH center is one of 11 AETC programs established around the country, representing a network of clinician educators and trainers with expertise in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of patients with HIV/AIDS and its related health conditions. For more information, visit www.pamaaetc.org.



IN BRIEF



Gerald Barron, MPH, associate professor in the Department of Health Policy & Management, was named the 2009 recipient of the Allegheny County Medical Society Benjamin Rush Individual Public Health Award. The award is

given by the ACMS to a lay individual in appreciation of outstanding volunteer contributions to the health and welfare of citizens of Allegheny County. Douglas Clough, MD, ACS president, stated, "In light of [Barron's] well-known, extraordinary commitment to public health and community education, [he is] certainly most deserving of this award." Barron was honored at the ACMS Foundation Gala in January. Barron is the director of public health consults and director of the Pennsylvania Preparedness Leadership Institute, both through GSPH's Center for Public Health Practice. From May 1996 to June 2006, he was the deputy director of the Allegheny County Health Department, capping off an association with that agency that began in 1971.



Eleanor Feingold, PhD, professor in the Departments of Human Genetics and Biostatistics, was elected a fellow of the American Statistical Association (ASA), the nation's preeminent professional statistical society. Feingold will receive

her certificate at a ceremony on August 3, at the annual Joint Statistical Meetings in Vancouver, British Columbia. According to ASA by-laws, each year the Committee on Fellows can elect no more than one-third of one percent of the total ASA membership as fellows. Individuals are nominated by members and, to be selected, must have an established reputation and made outstanding contributions in some aspect of statistical work.



Linda Frank, PhD, MSN, associate professor in the Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology and director of the Pennsylvania/MidAtlantic AIDS Education and Training Center, was honored with the Chancellor's Distinguished Public Service

Award at the University's Honors Convocation in February. In his award letter, Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg wrote, "[T]he selection committee was particularly impressed by your many public service contributions that have increased general knowledge and awareness of HIV/AIDS, diminished the stigma associated with the disease, and reduced disparities with regard to patient access among minorities and other underserved populations." The award includes a \$3,000 grant to support Frank's teaching functions, and a \$2,000 cash award.



Bernard Goldstein, MD, professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security on the outcome of the Institute of Medicine committee

Biowatch and Public Health Surveillance: Evaluating Systems for the Early Detection of Biological Threats. Goldstein also was invited to serve on the National Academies Roundtable on Science and Technology for Sustainability, which provides a forum for sharing views, information and analyses related to sustainability. Additionally, Goldstein was appointed chair of the United Nations Environmental Programme's Experts Meeting, and was responsible for choosing emerging scientific issues that were highlighted in its annual meeting in May at the Paris headquarters of the Scientific Committee of Problems of the Environment.

IN BRIEF continued...



John Grefenstette, PhD, director of GSPH's Public Health Dynamics Laboratory and professor in the Department of Biostatistics, received the Evolutionary Computation Pioneer Award from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Computational Intelligence Society. He was presented with the award during the IEEE World Congress on Computational Intelligence, July 18-23, 2010, in Barcelona, Spain.



Meryl H. Karol, PhD, professor emeritus in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, received the 2010 Ambassador of Toxicology Award from the Mid-Atlantic Society of Toxicology for advancing the understanding of the science of toxicology.



Rachel H. Mackey, PhD, MPH, assistant professor of epidemiology, received the Trudy Bush Fellowship for Cardiovascular Research in Women's Health. The award is given by the American Heart Association Council on Epidemiology and Prevention to recognize the top three abstracts related to women's health accepted to their annual conference. This year's conference was held March 2 to 5 in San Francisco. Mackey's abstract is titled, "Lipoprotein Particles Predict Incident 36 Coronary Heart Disease among Extremely Obese (BMI Greater than or Equal to 40) Black and White Postmenopausal Women."



Charles R. Rinaldo, Jr., PhD, chairman and professor, Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology, received a Red Ribbon Award from Educating Teens about HIV/AIDS, Inc., for his commitment and dedication to HIV-prevention education for teens and young adults. In 1983, Rinaldo established the Pitt Men's Study, one of the longest-running studies of AIDS.



BCHS Chair Receives Invitation to the White House

Ron Stall, PhD, MPH, chair of the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences, recently received an invitation, along with other experts and activists on HIV/AIDS, to join President Barak Obama at the White House to witness the president's announcement of the nation's HIV/AIDS strategy. Stall's research focuses on HIV prevention and behavioral epidemiology, both in the United States and abroad. He is on the editorial boards of three AIDS-related journals.

"It was quite an honor to receive the invitation, and I was very moved to be standing in the White House hearing a U.S. president articulate a national policy aimed at reducing new infections, treating those infected, and reducing health disparities for those living with HIV/AIDS," Stall said. A video and transcript of the president's speech are available at www.whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/president-obama-national-hiv-aids-strategy.

EVENTS

PUBLIC HEALTH DYNAMICS LABORATORY CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING

GSPH has established the Public Health Dynamics Laboratory (PHDL) to develop interdisciplinary computational approaches to understand and solve the world's most challenging public health issues. Led by John Grefenstette, PhD, professor of biostatistics at GSPH, the PHDL was officially launched at an event on July 8. In addition to Grefenstette, speakers included George Klinzing, PhD, vice provost for research at the University of Pittsburgh, and Donald S. Burke, MD, GSPH dean.

Computational modeling in public health typically is associated with the evaluation of strategies to contain infectious disease outbreaks, but it also can be applied to behavioral health, emergency response planning and health policy.

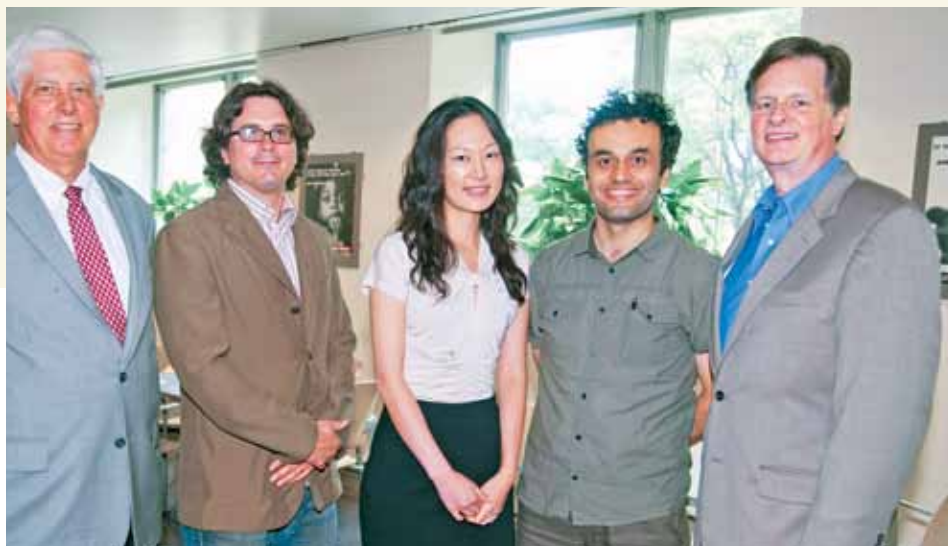
"One of the major challenges we face in improving public health is predicting how well certain interventions will work," said Burke. "By using computational modeling across diverse disciplines, the PHDL will help us test the impact of a multitude of intervention strategies and select those that have the most likelihood of preventing illness and death."

According to Dr. Grefenstette, the laboratory will serve as a "collaboratorium," by bringing together epidemiologists, biostatisticians, behavioral scientists, public health policy experts, and computational scientists to produce the next generation of tools for public health analysis. Areas of focus include infectious diseases; vaccine distribution in developing countries; public health response to epidemics and other emergencies; social networks and their effects on obesity, smoking, and other health behaviors; racism, segregation, and health disparities; and open access to historical and current public health data.

PHDL collaborators include experts at Pitt's Center for Simulation and Modeling; the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center; Pitt's schools of medicine, engineering, and arts and sciences; and Carnegie Mellon University. Current projects underway at the PHDL include:

- Modeling of Infectious Disease Agent Study (MIDAS), a collaborative network of scientists formed in 2009 to develop and use computational models to improve the nation's response to infectious disease outbreaks, such as H1N1.
- Vaccine Modeling Initiative, a partnership among infectious disease modeling teams at the University of Pittsburgh, The Pennsylvania State University and Imperial College London to evaluate new vaccine technologies for influenza, measles and dengue diseases that affect millions of people globally.
- Public Health Adaptive Systems Studies, one of nine Preparedness and Emergency Response Research Centers funded through a five-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to improve the response of the nation's public health system to emergency situations.
- Fogarty Training in Thailand, a training grant to strengthen epidemiologic research in planning and response to emerging influenza outbreaks in Thailand.

For more information, visit www.phdl.pitt.edu.



GSPH Dean Donald Burke, MD, far left, and PHDL Director John Grefenstette, PhD, far right, with three recent additions to the PHDL faculty. They are, from left, Shawn Brown, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Biostatistics and a research fellow at the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center; Eunha Shim, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Epidemiology; and Hasan Guclu, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Biostatistics.

The presentations given at the PHDL grand opening can be viewed online at www.publichealth.pitt.edu/lecturearchive.

EVENTS



UPCOMING GSPH EVENTS

ONE BOOK, ONE COMMUNITY RETURNS TO GSPH

This academic year will mark the second annual One Book, One Community event at GSPH. The event was instituted in the fall 2009 term as a way to engage new and returning students—as well as interested faculty, staff, and alumni—in the shared experience of reading the same book and joining in a discussion about its public health lessons.

The book chosen by GSPH Dean Donald Burke for this year is *An Enemy of the People*, by Henrik Ibsen. The five-act drama, published in 1882, tells the story of a doctor who discovers a potential threat to the health of a town's citizens and visitors, but fixing the threat would be costly and revealing the threat could destroy the economic prosperity of the community.

Everyone is encouraged to read the play and join the rest of the GSPH community in a discussion which could also include a dramatic reading of the play, a film screening, and/or a presentation by an expert in Ibsen's work. The date for the discussion will be announced shortly, but will likely take place in the fall.

The play is available in the public domain through Penn State Electronic Classics. Simply enter Penn State Electronic Classics into a Web search engine and follow the links to the play. It is also readily available at public libraries. Alumni are also encouraged to participate, so download the free PDF now and get a jump on your fall reading. Please check the GSPH Web site for more details as they become available.

2010 GSPH
One Book
One Community

Orientation for New Students

Thursday and Friday, August 26-27, 2010

A full slate of events can be viewed at www.publichealth.pitt.edu/newstudentorientation.

Potential Public Health Impacts of Marcellus Shale Drilling

Friday, August 27, 2010, 1:30-3 p.m., G23 Parran Hall

This panel discussion is free and open to the public and is presented by the Center for Healthy Environments and Communities. www.chec.pitt.edu

Ladies Hospital Aid Society Gala

Saturday, August 28, 2010

Proceeds from the gala will benefit aging research at GSPH.

First Day of Classes

Monday, August 30, 2010

Reunion for HPM Classes 1980-89

Friday and Saturday, September 10-11, 2010

For more information, visit www.publichealth.pitt.edu/HPMreunions.

Open House for Prospective Students

Friday, October 15, 2010

Please note that this is a date change from the original date of October 29.

Reunion for HPM Classes 1971-79

Friday and Saturday, October 15-16, 2010

For more information, visit www.publichealth.pitt.edu/HPMreunions.

APHA Annual Meeting and Exposition

November 6-10, 2010, Denver

The GSPH alumni reception will take place on Monday, November 8, 2010, 6:30-8 p.m., at the Colorado Convention Center, Room 101

Jay L. Foster Memorial Scientific Lecture in Alzheimer's Disease

Thursday, November 11, 2010, 11:30 am.-12:30 p.m., G23 Parran Hall

The lecture will be delivered by Lewis H. Kuller, MD, DrPH, distinguished university professor of public health.

PHOTO OF THE QUARTER

GSPH Presented with Portrait of Renowned Epidemiologist Katherine Detre



A portrait of Katherine M. Detre, MD, DrPH, was presented to GSPH at a reception on June 9. Detre was one of the nation's leading epidemiologists, noted particularly for her leadership of large-scale studies investigating cardiovascular disease. At the time of her death in January 2006, she held the position of distinguished professor of epidemiology at GSPH, an honor bestowed in 2002 in recognition of extraordinary, internationally recognized scholarly attainment. She was one of the first two professors to be honored with the title of distinguished professor by the University of Pittsburgh.

The portrait, a gift to the school from Christine Fulton and George Fechter, now hangs in the GSPH lobby in Parran Hall. Among those present at the reception were Thomas Detre, emeritus distinguished senior vice chancellor for the health sciences, and husband of Katherine; and Tony and John Detre, their sons. Tony and John Detre are shown here with GSPH Dean Donald S. Burke, MD, as they unveil the portrait for the first time in public.

Before the unveiling, tributes to the scientific legacy that Katherine Detre left were made by Mark A. Nordenberg, chancellor of the University; Arthur S. Levine, MD, senior vice chancellor for the health sciences; and Lewis H. Kuller, MD, DrPH, distinguished university professor of public health; and Dean Burke.



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RECONNECT WITH GSPH AT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING!

Planning to attend the APHA meeting in Denver this November? If so, please leave room in your schedule for the GSPH alumni and friends reception, to take place on Monday evening, November 8, 2010. Watch your e-mail or mailbox for more details or check the GSPH Web site at www.publichealth.pitt.edu.