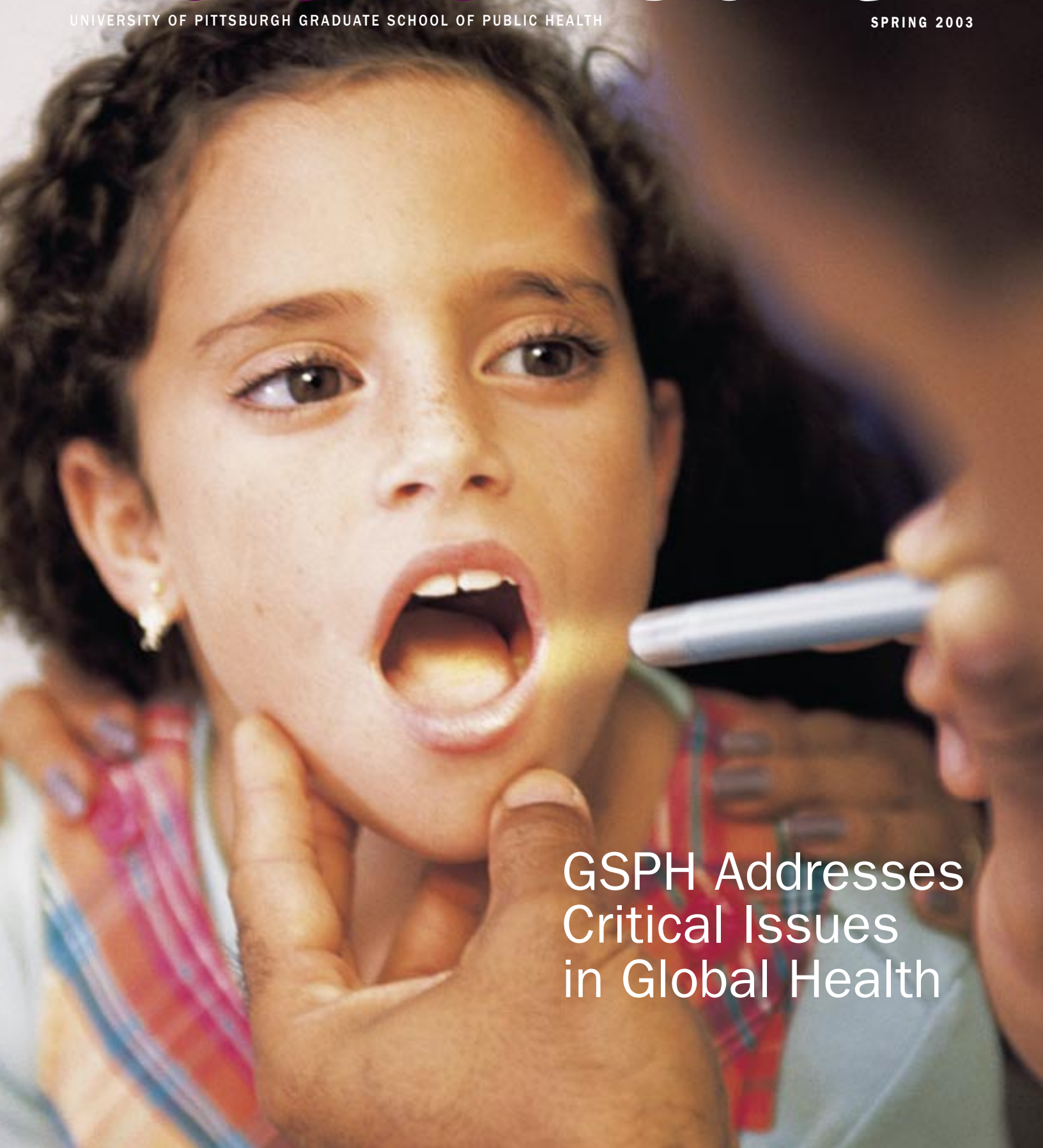


# PublicHealth

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

SPRING 2003



GSPH Addresses  
Critical Issues  
in Global Health

# PublicHealth

SPRING 2003

## PublicHealth

University of Pittsburgh  
Graduate School of Public Health

Dean

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## UP FRONT

Dean's Message	1
On the Cutting Edge	2
Porter Prize	18
Foster Lecture	18
Student Spotlight	28
Development News	30
School Roundup	33
Alumni Notebook	38
In Memoriam	40

## FEATURES

Supercourse	8
Offers a World of Knowledge	
New Global Health Course a Hit	11
Ovarian Cancer Symposium	14
Focus on High-Risk Women Draws International Crowd	
Center For Public Health Preparedness	16
GSPH's Newest Center	
Keys to a Healthier You	23
Department of Epidemiology Hosts PCOS Symposium	
Alumni Profile	24
Janine Jagger Named MacArthur "Genius"	
Distinguished Professor	25
Katherine M. Detre	
APHA Annual Conference	26
Public Health Professionals Meet in Philadelphia	
Environmental Health Conference	29
GSPH Hosts Third Annual ASPH Gathering	
Two New GSPH Departments	32
Replacing Health Services Administration	



University of Pittsburgh  
Graduate School of Public Health

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Bernard D. Goldstein

Public health is not generally termed "exciting." We tend to have a musty odor to our topics. Luckily this is changing—and not just because bioterrorism and other social and environmental challenges have suddenly made public health seem more relevant. In this issue you will read about a sampling of new programs and individual accomplishments of our faculty, students, and alumni—all of which I would categorize as exciting.

Several numbers reflect this excitement. Our research funding has increased more than 20 percent per year for the past two years; our student enrollment is growing; and we have increased interactions with local, state, and national health agencies. Due largely to the extraordinary strength and productivity of the Epidemiology Data Center led by Dr. Katherine Detre, we have taken a significant step toward addressing some of our space needs through approval of a proposed expansion of Parran Hall.

Yet all of these positives for our school are occurring in the context of a widening gap between what the health of the public is and what it could be. Just consider the increasing number of Americans without health insurance, or, at the risk of sounding flippant, the size of our waistlines. In both cases, the evidence for a significant adverse public health impact is unequivocal. Yet in neither case is there sufficient urgency to take advantage of what we know or to move forward in addressing the crucial uncertainties that are hindering advances in public policy. Our role is to provide information on causes, extent, feasibility, and efficacy and to do so in a way that both convinces individuals and advances the public policy debate.

These are just two of many health indicators that are more prominent among disadvantaged members of our society. It is not reasonable to expect all individuals to have the same level of longevity and wellness, but recent studies of the human genome have proven that there is little difference in genes among seemingly different human populations.

The major differences in population health are environmental and include lifestyle habits and access to health care. GSPH has many programs that attempt to define and understand the reasons for health disparities and to evaluate potential interventions. The success of our Center for Minority Health, both in its own programs and in facilitating related programs throughout the academic health center, has been recognized with the recent receipt of a \$6 million, 5-year National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant to achieve these goals.

Despite the fact that human populations are remarkably similar genetically, there is a significant public health role for understanding gene-environment interactions. Our Department of Human Genetics, which we believe is the only such department in a school of public health, has been at the forefront of developing methods that will eventually help us answer one of the oldest human questions about disease: "Why me?" This department's collaboration with other departments in GSPH and with programs throughout the academic health center is notable.

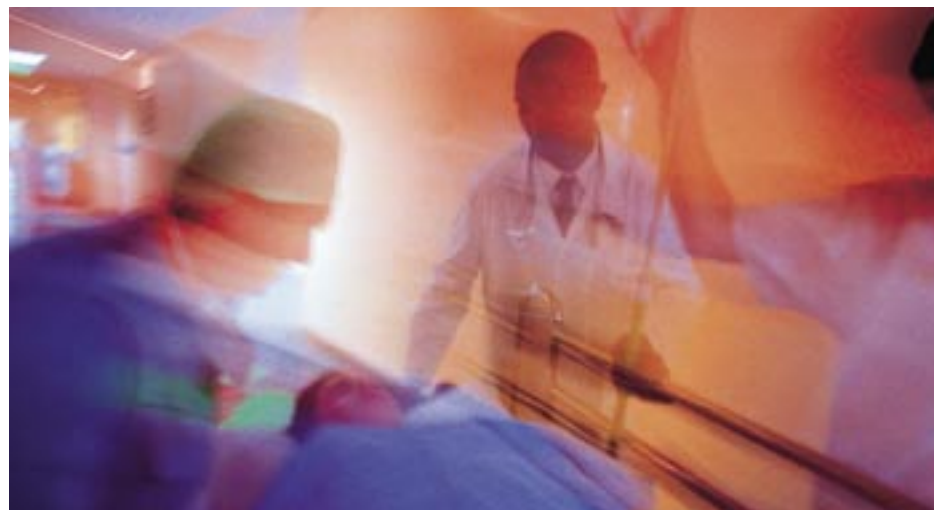
Attacking core public health challenges requires combining the strengths of our school in fields as diverse as basic biology, epidemiology, biostatistics, health communication, and health policy, among others. We are growing these strengths, developing multidisciplinary approaches to the challenges, and educating a new generation of students in what we can proudly call the exciting field of public health.

Bernard D. Goldstein, Dean



# Cutting Edge

A Sampling of Innovative Research



## Mortality Rate from Type 1 Diabetes Higher among African Americans

Preliminary results of a study of deaths related to type 1 diabetes were presented by **Zsolt Bosnyak**, a GSPH research fellow, at the American Diabetes Association's 62nd Scientific Sessions in San Francisco, Calif., on June 17, 2002. The study found that while the rate of deaths related to type 1 diabetes is declining in the overall population, mortality among African Americans remains higher than in Whites. Acute complications such as diabetic coma were to blame.

The study examined the cause of death for 200 type 1 diabetic patients from among a cohort of 1,261 patients diagnosed with type 1 diabetes between 1965 and 1979. Fifteen percent of the African American patients, as compared to 6 percent of the White patients, had died by a 20-year follow-up. Mortality from acute complications was seven times higher in African Americans.

"These results, while preliminary, suggest an inadequacy in care for African Americans with type 1 diabetes," said the study's senior researcher **Trevor Orchard, MD**, professor and interim chair of epidemiology. "This could be the result of issues such as access to care, or the availability

of monitoring supplies and appropriate education about diabetes. It is critical that further studies are undertaken to identify the reasons for this disparity."

Bosnyak, Z., R. Nishimura, and T. Orchard. Excess Mortality in African Americans (AA) with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) Largely Due to Acute Complications: A Population Based Perspective in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Area. Presented at the 62nd Scientific Sessions of the American Diabetes Association, June 17, 2002.

## Controlling Systolic Blood Pressure Early Prevents Heart Disease in the Elderly

Hypertensive elderly individuals who begin blood pressure therapy before signs of heart disease appear may completely avoid the associated cardiovascular problems, according to **Kim Sutton-Tyrrell, PhD**, associate professor of epidemiology, who presented these findings at the American Heart Association's 42nd Annual Conference on Cardiovascular Disease and Epidemiology Prevention.

"We found that elderly individuals with untreated systolic hypertension are three times more likely to experience adverse

cardiovascular events like heart attack, angina, stroke, or heart failure than are elderly individuals with normal blood pressure," said Tyrrell. "However, hypertensive study participants who underwent treatment for their high blood pressure greatly reduced their risk of adverse cardiovascular events, particularly if they were still free of detectable disease when they initiated treatment."

The findings are based on an analysis of the Pittsburgh cohort of the Systolic Hypertension in the Elderly Program (SHEP), a national clinical trial that was the first to show the effectiveness of treating systolic hypertension. Approximately 30 percent of people age 80 and older have systolic hypertension, a type of high blood pressure that is a result of atherosclerosis. Systolic hypertension is

reflected in a blood pressure reading that has a high systolic number and a normal diastolic number.

The SHEP trial lasted four and a half years, after which participants who had been taking placebo were encouraged to see their doctors and begin medication therapy.

GSPH researchers continued

to follow all of the Pittsburgh SHEP participants for 12 years to determine the number of cardiovascular events occurring in each group, regardless of whether or not the participants had continued, stopped, or started medication. Only 60 percent of the participants originally taking the medication remained on the therapy. Still, that group had significantly fewer cardiovascular events 12 years later, indicating that even four and a half years of therapy in one's 70s can have protective effects a decade or more later.



"All too often, physicians focus on diastolic blood pressure, and isolated systolic hypertension is not treated, particularly when patients are older," said Tyrrell. "This study demonstrates that even for individuals who are at an advanced age, treating systolic hypertension is vital to avoiding deadly cardiovascular diseases that can result."

Kuller, L., A.B. Newman, K. Sutton-Tyrrell, and R. Wildman. "Eleven-Year Risk Reduction with Treatment of Systolic Hypertension." Presented at the American Heart Association's 42nd Annual Conference on Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention, Honolulu, Hawaii, April 2002. Available online at [aha.agora.com/abstractviewer](http://aha.agora.com/abstractviewer).

## No Increase of Cancer Deaths Among TMI Residents at 20-Year Mark

More than 20 years after the partial meltdown of a nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island (TMI) near Harrisburg, Pa., GSPH researchers have found no significant increase overall in cancer deaths among residents living within a five-mile radius of the disaster.

The long-term study, from 1979 to 1998, is significant because it covers the normal

latency period for most cancers, said **Evelyn Talbott, DrPH**, professor of epidemiology and the study's principal investigator. While an upward trend in breast cancer risk related to radiation exposure the day of the accident had been noted in an earlier follow-up at the 13-year mark, Talbott reported in the current study that the relationship is no longer statistically significant.

The findings were published November 1, 2002, on the Web site of *Environmental Health Perspectives*, a journal of the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. The paper will appear in the March 2003 issue of the journal.

The study did find a slight increase in the risk of lymphatic and hematopoietic cancers among men that was not related to lifestyle factors, such as smoking and education, or to natural background radiation. This trend may be related to radiation released on the day of the accident, but the findings were not statistically significant.

Conversely, the study noted an increased risk of lymphatic and hematopoietic cancers among women that appears to be related to background radiation in the TMI area, but not linked to radiation exposure from the day of the accident.

"While these findings overall convey good news for TMI residents, the slight increased risk of death from lymphatic and hematopoietic cancers may warrant further investigation," said Talbott.

McHugh-Pemu, Kathleen P., Evelyn O. Talbott, Ada O. Youk, and Jeanne V. Zborowski. "Long Term Follow-Up of the Residents of the Three Mile Island Accident Area: 1979-1998." *Environmental Health Perspectives* [online] (October 2002).

## Oxidation of Phosphatidylserine Key in Programmed Cell Death

Two important steps in the facilitation of apoptosis, the programmed death of a damaged cell, have been determined by a research team headed by **Valerian Kagan, PhD, DSc**, professor and vice chair of the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health.

"Apoptosis is a very important mechanism to protect the body from disease," said Kagan. However, the end products of apoptosis must be eliminated efficiently so that they don't cause damage to healthy cells. When apoptosis is initiated, Kagan's team discovered, the phospholipid phosphatidylserine (PS) is attacked by free radicals and oxidized. This oxidation then facilitates the movement of PS from the interior wall of the cell's plasma membrane to the exterior.

The oxidation of PS is key to the second part of this process as well—safe elimination of apoptotic cells. "We have found that macrophages, cells which engulf and destroy apoptotic cells, more effectively recognized oxidized PS, enhancing the 'eat me' response of macrophages," said Kagan. For an organism to continue to function normally, apoptosis and the removal of cell remains must function undisturbed.

Kagan's findings were published in the July 1, 2002, issue of the *Journal of Immunology*.

Arroyo, Antonio, Joya Chandra, Carina Elenström-Magnusson, Bengt Fadeel, Bettina Gleiss, Valerian E. Kagan, Shang-Xi Liu, Sten Orrenius, F. Behice Serinkan, Vladimir A. Tyurin, and Yulia Y. Tyurina. "A Role for Oxidative Stress in Apoptosis: Oxidation and Externalization of Phosphatidylserine Is Required for Macrophage Clearance of Cells Undergoing Fas-Mediated Apoptosis." *Journal of Immunology* 169 (2002): 487-499.





## Kidney Disease in Type 1 Diabetics Related to Insulin Resistance

Insulin resistance, a condition commonly associated with the development of type 2 diabetes, is likely a major cause of kidney disease, or nephropathy, in people with type 1 diabetes, according to study results published by GSPH researchers in the September issue of *Kidney International*, a journal of the International Society of Nephrology.

As many as 40 percent of people with type 1 diabetes develop kidney disease, in which the kidneys' tiny blood vessels are damaged and unable to filter wastes and excess water from the blood. Untreated, nephropathy leads to end-stage renal disease (ESRD), in which the kidneys' entire filtration system closes down and the kidneys fail to function. A patient with ESRD requires dialysis or a kidney transplant to live.

"Kidney disease is a major lethal complication for people with diabetes, particularly those with type 1 diabetes, and until now there has been no clear explanation for its cause beyond blood sugar itself," said principal investigator **Trevor Orchard, MD**, professor and interim chair of epidemiology. "We now suspect that reducing or preventing insulin resistance, possibly through exercise, weight loss, and drugs, may help people with type 1 diabetes avoid nephropathy."

The study analyzed data from the Pittsburgh Epidemiology of Diabetes Complication Study (PEDCS), a 10-year prospective investigation based on a cohort of adults with type 1, or childhood-onset, diabetes. Researchers found that strong relationships existed

between nephropathy and insulin resistance throughout follow-up, unlike other risk factors such as blood pressure and blood fats, which only predicted nephropathy in the short term.

"The good news is that not all people with type 1 diabetes are insulin resistant, and for them the risk of kidney disease now appears to be low," Orchard said. "Even for someone with type 1 diabetes who is genetically predisposed to insulin resistance, the secret to avoiding nephropathy may well be to prevent insulin resistance through lifestyle changes such as proper diet, exercise, smoking cessation, and perhaps medication.

"Another intriguing finding from this study is that since insulin resistance also predicts heart disease," Orchard continued, "it may explain the longstanding observation that in type 1 diabetes, kidney disease predicts heart disease. In other words, insulin resistance may be the 'common ground' for both complications."

Chang, Yue-Fang, Demetrius E. Ellis, Robert E. Ferrell, Trevor J. Orchard, and Nancy Petro. "Nephropathy in Type 1 Diabetes: A Manifestation of Insulin Resistance and Multiple Genetic Susceptibilities? Further evidence from the Pittsburgh Epidemiology of Diabetes Complication Study." *Kidney International*, 62 (September 2002): 963.

## Modest Elevations in Two Liver Enzymes Related to Increased Mortality in HIV Patients

Better monitoring of liver enzymes is needed to save the lives of people with HIV, according to a GSPH researcher, who presented the findings at the XIV International AIDS Conference in Barcelona, Spain, last summer.

Mild to moderate elevations in two liver enzymes—increments that are commonly ignored by most physicians—are related to an increased risk of death in people with HIV, said **Amy Justice, MD**,

associate professor of health policy and management at GSPH, associate professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and staff physician at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. As many as one-third of HIV patients have mild to moderate elevations (0.5 up to 2 times the normal level) in liver enzymes ALT (alanine transamine) and AST (aspartamine transamine), yet physicians largely disregard the readings unless they are two to four times above the normal range, said Justice. "Our study shows that even patients whose elevations are mild to moderate have a death rate that is nearly twice that of patients with mid-range normal levels. This association with increased mortality suggests that any elevation in ALT and AST should be addressed."

Elevations in these enzymes signal injury to liver cells and, in some cases, to other cells in the body. The condition can result from highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART), viral hepatitis, or alcohol abuse, all of which are toxic to liver cells.

"The fact that the most common current cause of death among people with HIV is liver failure suggests that liver injury may be a major limiting factor in the effectiveness of current HIV treatment," Justice noted.

In a related study of data from the Veterans Aging Cohort Study, the incidence of liver cancer among HIV-positive veterans since the advent of HAART is shown to be nearly twice as high as it is for HIV-negative veterans. Justice and colleagues presented these findings in a poster on display at the Barcelona conference. Possible reasons for the increase, the researchers said, may include drug toxicity and viral hepatitis.

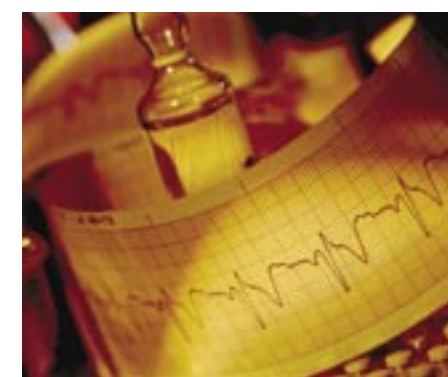
"Chronic viral hepatitis is known to substantially increase the risk of liver cancer," said Justice. "Additional research

must be done to determine whether HAART exacerbates this risk or only helps HIV-positive patients live long enough to suffer the consequences of other chronic diseases such as cancer."

## Cardiovascular Disease Tied to Increased Risk of Dementia

A study showing a correlation between cardiovascular disease and increased risk of dementia was presented at the 2002 annual meeting of the American Geriatrics Society in Washington, D.C., by **Anne B. Newman, MD, MPH**, associate professor of medicine and epidemiology.

The study, part of the Cardiovascular Health Study, looked at the associations between the risk of dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and vascular dementia in people who had a history of heart attack, angina, or peripheral vascular disease or the markers for cardiovascular disease, including electrocardiogram (ECG) abnormalities, left ventricular hypertrophy, carotid artery thickness, or carotid stenosis.



"We found that those with cardiovascular disease had an increased risk of dementia of about 30 percent, only partially explained by stroke," Newman said. "Although the relative risk was moderate, the high prevalence of cardiovascular disease coupled with the high risk of dementia in older adults would suggest that

prevention of cardiovascular disease may be the most effective preventive measure we have for the prevention of dementia."

DeKosky, S., A. Fitzpatrick, D. Ives, W. Jagust, A.B. Newman, S. Jackson, L.H. Kuller, O. Lopez, and C. Lyketsos. "Incidence of Dementia Subsequent to Cardiovascular Disease: The Cardiovascular Health Study." Paper presented at the American Geriatrics Society Annual Scientific Meeting, Washington, D.C., May, 2002. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* (2002): 50.

## India, United States Team Up for Research Training in Genetics

The Fogarty International Center (FIC) of the National Institutes of Health has awarded **Daniel Weeks, PhD**, professor of human genetics and biostatistics, one of six training grants newly funded by the FIC to support international collaborations in human genetic sciences. Weeks and his team will partner with Partha P. Majumder, PhD, and colleagues at The Chatterjee Group (TCG)-Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) Center for Population Genomics in Calcutta, India, to train pre- and postdoctoral Indian candidates as multidisciplinary statistical geneticists.

As infectious and communicable diseases in India have become increasingly manageable with improved health care and public hygiene, attention is being turned toward the management of common diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, that have underlying genetic and environmental components. With large family sizes as well as population groups that are relatively homogeneous genetically and environmentally, India offers the opportunity for genetic epidemiological studies on many diseases that are major public health issues in India as well as worldwide. At the same time, expertise on genetic epidemiology in India is limited. Under the leadership of Weeks, the five-year India-United States



Research Training Program in Genetics will fill a significant gap in human genetics research expertise available in India.

In 2001, Weeks was awarded the prestigious Mortimer Spiegelman Award from the American Public Health Association for his contributions to the field of health statistics.

This is the sixth Fogarty International Award presented to GSPH faculty. Others include the AIDS International Training and Research Program (AITRP) in Brazil, directed by Lee Harrison, MD, associate professor of medicine, epidemiology, and infectious diseases and microbiology; the International Malaria Training and Research Program in Kenya, directed by D.J. Perkins, PhD, assistant professor of infectious diseases and microbiology; the Chronic Disease Epidemiology Program, directed by Eugene Tull, DrPH, assistant professor of epidemiology; the Indo-U.S. Collaboration in Genomic Studies on Diabetes in India, awarded to Dharambir Sanghera, visiting assistant professor of human genetics; and CD8 T Cell Mediated Suppression of HIV from India, directed by Phalguni Gupta, PhD, professor of infectious diseases and microbiology. Gupta also directs an Indian supplement of Harrison's Fogarty AITRP grant.





## Model Involves Youth in HIV Prevention Planning

A model for involving youth in HIV prevention planning has been developed by a GSPH Pennsylvania Prevention Project team led by **Anthony Silvestre**, PhD, associate professor of infectious diseases and microbiology.

At least half of all new HIV infections in the United States are among individuals younger than 25, with nearly 30,000 men and women ages 13–24 having already received AIDS diagnoses.

“It seems clear that the continuing spread of HIV will remain a problem until effective prevention interventions can reduce the barriers related to HIV risk among young people,” the researchers wrote in a paper published in the March/April 2002 issue of the journal *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*. “To develop effective prevention interventions for young people, one needs to thoroughly understand their values and experiences and apply this understanding at all phases of intervention development, implementation, and evaluation.”

The model involved four young adult round table discussions in different parts of the state with continuous input into the planning process of a larger community planning committee. The approach was created as part of a response to a request from the Pennsylvania Department of Health for GSPH assistance in developing a planning committee for the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s Pennsylvania jurisdiction, which includes all of the state except Philadelphia.

Faber, J.F., J. Kopelmen, M. Shankle, and A.J. Silvestre. “A Model for Involving Youth in Health Planning: HIV Prevention in Pennsylvania.” *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*. 34, no. 2 (March/April 2002): 1–97.

## Study Shows Decline of Regular Physical Activity in Adolescent Girls

A study published in the September 5, 2002, issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine* shows that physical activity declines dramatically during adolescence in girls. Sue Y.S. Kimm, MD, MPH, professor of family medicine and clinical epidemiology in the School of Medicine was the study’s principal investigator; **Andrea M. Kriska**, PhD, associate professor of epidemiology in the Graduate School of Public Health, was a co-investigator of the study.

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Growth and Health Study followed 1,213 Black girls and 1,166 White girls from the ages of 9–10 to the ages of 18–19. Nine–10 year old girls of both races reported relatively similar levels of activity, but by the age of 16 or 17, 56 percent of the Black girls and 31 percent of the White girls reported no regular leisure activity at all.



Pregnancy was associated with the decline in activity among the Black girls, while in the White girls, cigarette smoking was associated with the decline.

Barton, Bruce A., Patricia B. Crawford, Stephen R. Daniels, Nancy W. Glynn, Sue Y.S. Kimm, Andrea M. Kriska, Shari S. Kronsberg, Kiang Liu, and Zak I. Sabry. “Decline in Physical Activity in Black Girls and White Girls During Adolescence.” *The New England Journal of Medicine* 347 (September 2002): 709–715.

## Zinc and Nitric Oxide Can Help Reduce Pulmonary Cell Injury

A GSPH researcher is using live-cell fluorescent imaging technology to study the previously unknown role of zinc and nitric oxide in reducing endothelial cell injury in the lungs. “We’ve always known that zinc had a very important role in stabilizing proteins and regulating enzyme activity,” said **Claudette M. St. Croix**, assistant professor of environmental and occupational health. “But what we didn’t realize is that protein-bound zinc was regulatable—that it could be released

to participate in nitric oxide signaling pathways involved in protecting the cell from toxic stressors.” After iron, zinc is the most abundant trace essential metal. However, said St. Croix, “most of it is bound to proteins.”



St. Croix’s basic research investigated the interaction of nitric oxide with the main intracellular zinc binding protein, metallothionein (MT), and the resultant impact on intracellular free zinc. Studies showed that one critical target for the released zinc is a transcription factor, MTF-1, that regulates the expression of a number of protective genes, including the metallothionein gene itself. In addition to its role in regulating zinc levels and distribution within the cell, metallothionein participates in a variety of protective stress responses. “Our data suggests that this pathway represents one potential mechanism by which nitric oxide exposure reduces the sensitivity of pulmonary endothelium to oxidative stress,” said St. Croix.

St. Croix was awarded a 2002 Young Investigator Award by the American Physiological Society for her work in this area. She is also the recipient of the Parker B. Francis Fellowship in pulmonary medicine from the Francis Families Foundation.

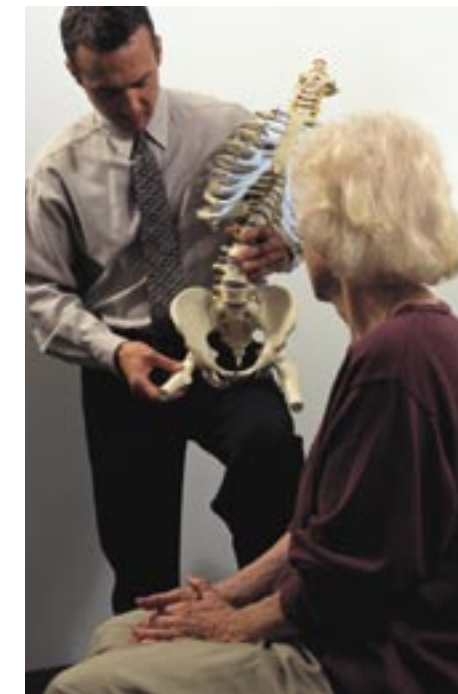
Dineley, K.E., E.S. Levitan, B.R. Pitt, I.J. Reynolds, C.M. St. Croix, and K.J. Wasserloos. “Nitric Oxide-Induced Changes in Intracellular Zinc Homeostasis Are Modulated by Metallothionein/thionein.” *American Journal of Physiology—Lung Cellular and Molecular Physiology* 282 (2002): 185–193.

Gow, A., and H. Ischiropoulos. “NO Running on MT: Regulation of Zinc Homeostasis by Interaction of Nitric Oxide with Metallothionein.” *American Journal of Physiology—Lung Cellular and Molecular Physiology* 282 (2002): 183–184.

## New Grant Studies the Genetic Epidemiology of Musculoskeletal Aging

A \$2.2 million grant from the National Institute on Aging has been awarded to a team of researchers for a five-year study of the role of genes in influencing bone and muscle composition and function as well as age-related declines in composition and function. Loss of bone mass and muscle mass with age may lead to osteoporosis, resulting in fractures and declines in strength and muscle function. These changes contribute significantly to declines in the ability of older individuals to perform tasks of daily living. The research team, led by Professor of Human Genetics **Robert Ferrell**, PhD, includes GSPH collaborators **Joseph Zmuda**, PhD, assistant professor of epidemiology and **Candace Kammerer**, PhD, associate professor of human genetics, and colleagues from Pitt’s School of Medicine and from Carnegie Mellon University.

The Health, Aging, and Body Composition study is a national longitudinal study of 3,075 well functioning White and Black men and women ages 70–79.



The multidisciplinary team will examine the relationship between genes involved in sex-steroid metabolism, growth factors, and cell-signaling molecules in relationship to bone-mineral density, muscle mass and function, and their changes during a decade of follow-up.

The study will contribute to a basic understanding of the mechanisms of age-related loss of lean body mass and may identify individuals at elevated risk, who can then be targeted for preventive interventions.





# Supercourse

## Offers a World of Knowledge

Sloping gently upward from the Egyptian shores of the Mediterranean, the new Bibliotheca Alexandrina basks gloriously in the sun. It's a grand structure with a purpose no less lofty than that of the fabled ancient Library of Alexandria—to gather as much of the world's knowledge as possible.

When Professor of Epidemiology Ron LaPorte, PhD, attended the library's gala opening last fall—an international event replete with heads of state and ministers of health—an idea took hold. With the Library of Alexandria as the venue and his highly successful Supercourse as a model, he would contribute to the new library's ambitious effort by collecting “all of science.”

Ron LaPorte doesn't think small.

One of the many hats LaPorte wears is that of codirector of the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Center in Pittsburgh. From 1986 to 2000, LaPorte led the WHO Multinational Project on Childhood Diabetes. With 155 centers in 70 countries, he came to understand, firsthand, that one of the greatest difficulties of international collaboration was communications. A letter to a colleague in Mexico might be sent three times before it arrived, he remembers. Missives sent to Cuba in December were lucky to reach their destination by March.

LaPorte, who is a cognitive scientist as well as an epidemiologist, began to think about the implications of the Internet—an inexpensive way to transfer large amounts of information—for global public health.

His musings planted the seed for the concept he's dubbed telepreventive medicine. “It's the idea that we can use relatively low-bandwidth information-sharing in order to reach a large number of healthy people with the prevention message,” said LaPorte. “The most cost-effective thing that could improve your health is information, no question about it. That, to me, is the whole future of public health. If we can grasp that, it will have a profound effect upon global health.”

By 1990, LaPorte, with individual colleagues at NASA, the Pan American Health Organization, WHO, and IBM, had begun to work on the first tool in telepreventive medicine, the Global Health Network (GHNet). GHNet's goal was to link public health officials and researchers, making possible a flowing exchange of information and data.

Tony Villasenor, former director of the NASA Science Internet (NSI), remembers first coming into contact with LaPorte when Villasenor wanted to create a database of leading medical doctors around the world who could provide emergency services if a NASA mission encountered catastrophic problems. “Ron, through his international lecture programs, had already amassed a wealth of health practitioners throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America,” said Villasenor. “[He] radiated incredible energy and enthusiasm that attracted and engaged a wide range of international medical collaborators. Furthermore—and from my perspective this was quite significant—Ron understood the power of the Internet!”

The GHNet led LaPorte to the issue of global public health training, which he tackled with a formidable Web-based collection of PowerPoint lectures. This “Supercourse” ([www.pitt.edu/~super1](http://www.pitt.edu/~super1))

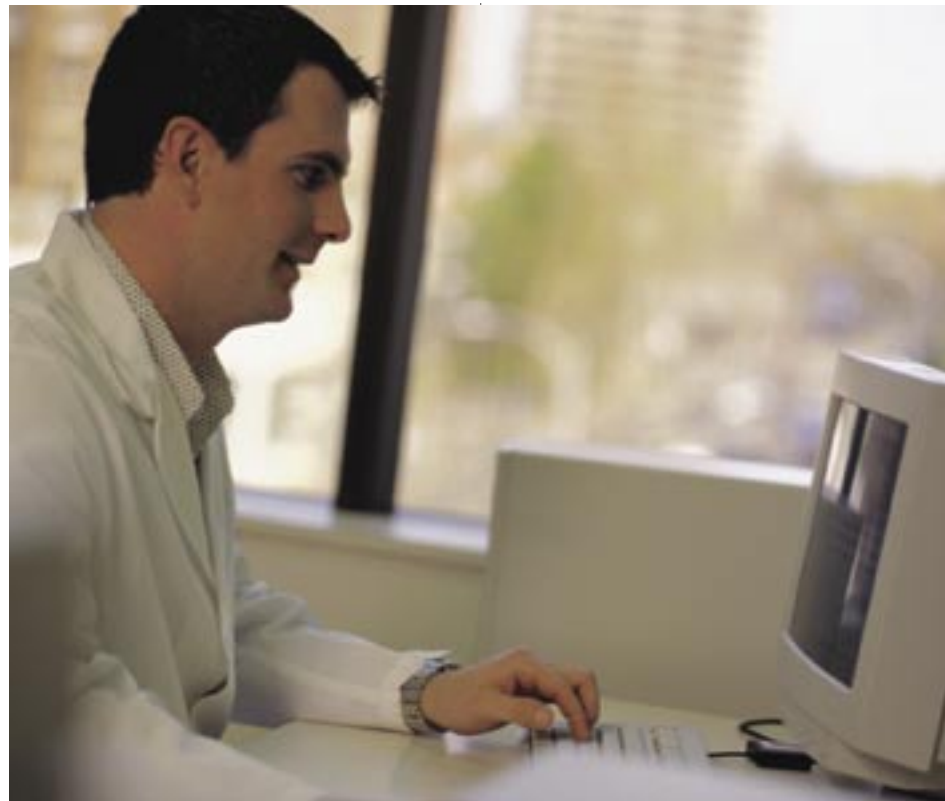
came about in 1998 as LaPorte's answer to distance learning. “The traditional distance education approach is the ‘talking head’ model,” he said. “If you want to teach somebody in Kenya, you set up a voice-video system and do a video feed. There are several problems with doing that. The first is cost. Those voice-video feeds are typically like the gross national product of Mali—hugely expensive. The cost for training each individual is very high. The other problem is that if you're teaching the students in Kenya, then you're not empowering the teachers in Kenya.”

With the Supercourse, a teacher can take a lecture and modify it to suit his or her needs, said LaPorte. Topics cover a wide range of issues: investigation and control of outbreaks of foodborne illness; screening for retinopathy and nephropathy; epidemiology of type 2 diabetes mellitus in the Arab world; colorectal cancer: proposal of a screening program



Members of the local Supercourse team include, from left, epidemiology student Beatriz Rico, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology Akira Sekikawa, Professor of Epidemiology Ron LaPorte, and epidemiology students Mita Lovalekar, and Faina Linkov.





“ Basically, these lectures are templates from some of the best people in the world, a Nobel Prize winner, people from the CDC. —LaPorte ”

for developing countries with emphasis on costs; physical activity and bone health during childhood and adolescence; and staphylococcus aureus in hospitals.

“Basically, these lectures are templates from some of the best people in the world, a Nobel Prize winner, people from the CDC. They can make it easier for you to prepare or improve a lecture for your classes. For example, if I want to train my students about HIV infection in Moscow, I would take a lecture from somebody in Moscow and modify it based upon what I want to teach. You can put your own slides in; you can

take slides out; you can take slides from other lectures; you can change it anyway that you want.”

LaPorte is an intense man by nature. But when he talks about international response to the Supercourse, he becomes even more passionate. “It started as the very simple concept that the best way to improve training in the area of prevention worldwide is to share our best PowerPoint lectures,” he recounted. “It happened to be at the time that PowerPoint was just starting to take off. No one had any idea it was going to take over anything and then, boom, it took over everything. We just happened

to be a little ahead of the curve. Then all of a sudden the same thing happened to us and, boom, we took off, too, in the explosion of interest in what we were doing.” Explosion may be too mild a word. By 2002, the Supercourse Web site was averaging an extraordinary 75 million hits a year. There are more than 10,000 global prevention faculty members in 148 countries involved. There have been more than 110 articles about it in *Nature*, *British Medical Journal*, *Lancet*, and others as well.

The Supercourse reached a milestone last fall with a thousand lectures, and LaPorte estimates the collection to cover 70 percent of public health issues. So how much of a stretch will it be to collect, as he puts it, “all of science?”

“It’s totally nuts,” he laughed. Still, he says, it’s feasible. Ismail Seregin, the director of the Library of Alexandria, is a solid supporter. For last fall’s opening, he had copies of the Supercourse CD-ROM created and distributed. LaPorte and his colleagues are developing a business plan and exploring funding for the new project.

“In 300 B.C. the Library of Alexandria captured probably 80 percent of the world’s science—700,000 scrolls,” LaPorte said. “I know that there are two or three million lectures that we can get up in a year. They’re there. All we’re going to do is bring them together and make them available to the scientists of the world.”

LaPorte invites everyone involved with prevention to join the Supercourse at [super2@pitt.edu](mailto:super2@pitt.edu). “We will send you a CD with 1,038 lectures from the Supercourse,” he said. “This is a gift that is meant to be given; we ask that you distribute the lectures to at least 5 people.”

For more information go to: [www.pitt.edu/~super1](http://www.pitt.edu/~super1).

# New Global Health Course a Hit

The first step toward a possible GSPH program in global health sciences was taken last fall with the introduction of a new multidisciplinary course, *Critical Issues in Global Health*. The course, which covered topics such as environmental health, chronic disease, infectious disease, nutrition, and mental health, drew upon the rich and varied expertise of both GSPH and Pitt faculty as well as guest lecturers.

Codirecting the course were Meryl Karol, PhD, professor of environmental and occupational health and associate dean for research, and Ron LaPorte, PhD, professor of epidemiology.

The first month focused on the “big picture,” according to Karol, the global diversity of culture, economic development, health systems, and health problems. Specific diseases, such as diabetes and malaria, as well as mental health issues were examined in the second month. Discussions in the final segment of the course focused on emerging issues and the future of global health and ranged from the possibility of developing vaccines for pervasive diseases like malaria and AIDS to the issue of global warming and the development of systems for collecting medical information.

“One of the assignments for students was to collect medical information about a country of their choosing,” reported Karol. “The students come to realize that it’s very hard to collect medical information in countries where many people aren’t literate. They don’t know their age or how to spell their name. It is difficult to acquire data under these circumstances using traditional methods.”

“But,” she added, “there are organizations that are trying to bring technology to the third world—computer systems have been designed that people there can operate. Medical personnel are trying to collect information so that when a



Twenty students enrolled for the first offering of Critical Issues in Global Health, including students from five GSPH departments and two undergraduates.

person goes back to see the physician the second time, there’s some record of what they were seen for the first time.”

Twenty students were enrolled for this first-time offering, which was cross-listed with Pitt’s Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA). The class included students from five GSPH departments, physicians working on MMPH degrees, and even two undergraduates. At most sessions, however, 20 chairs weren’t nearly enough. Faculty from GSPH, GSPIA, and the medical

school were themselves interested in learning about global health issues and often sat in on the classes. In fact, Karol remembers teasing the class that half of the people in the room were professors. “Seeing this interest is wonderful,” she said. “It’s reached a wide audience. Lots of the students are international, too. Their diversity adds much to the presentations and discussions.”

In the meantime, a 20-member committee has developed a strategic plan for a larger global health program. The committee’s vision for the program is one that will support interdisciplinary research, teaching, and service directed toward the improvement of global health and healthy communities. Among the strengths that GSPH would bring to such a program are the Epidemiology Data Center, which coordinates and analyzes multicenter clinical trials throughout the world; the Supercourse, an Internet lecture library; an international student body; and an international network of

“ The students come to realize that it’s very hard to collect medical information in countries where many people aren’t literate. ”  
—Karol

alumni contacts. Perhaps the most convincing argument for the program is the number of ongoing faculty research projects and established partnerships with research collaborators and government officials around the world. Currently there are 33 ongoing

international studies, including those in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.

A more complete description of the Critical Issues in Global Health course, including PowerPoint presentations

from the lectures, can be found at [www.ceoh.pitt.edu/class.html](http://www.ceoh.pitt.edu/class.html). The course will be offered next in fall 2003.

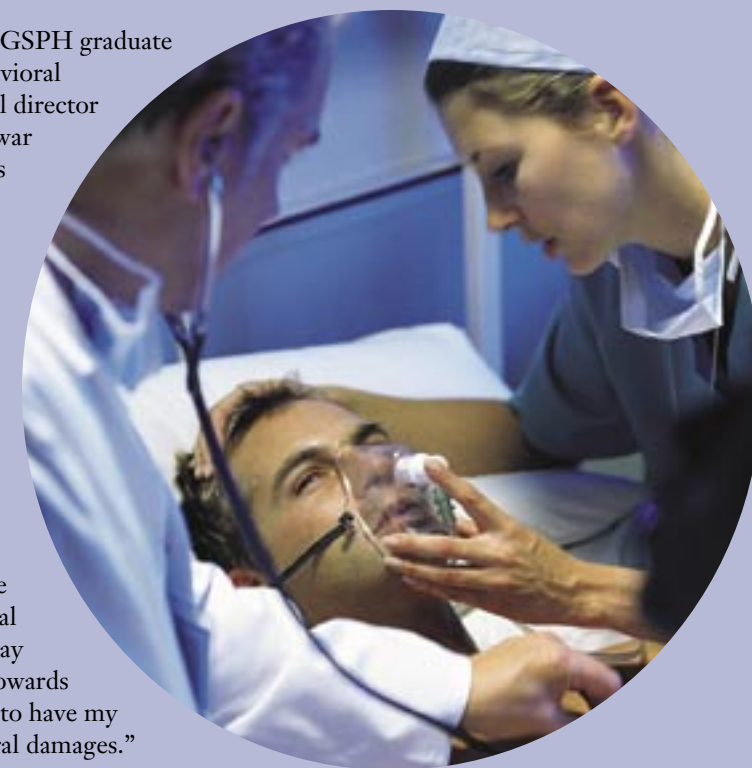
## War as a Public Health Issue

Some in the audience couldn’t help but avert their eyes from the terrible bloody images projected onto the screen in the Scaife Hall lecture room. The well-attended talk, a special lecture by Italian war surgeon Gino Strada, MD, cofounder of Emergency, an organization that builds and staffs surgical hospitals in war-weary parts of the world, was part of the new Critical Issues in Global Health course.

This was not Strada’s first visit to the University of Pittsburgh. In the 1980s, he spent two years as a visiting surgeon, training under heart transplant pioneer Thomas Starzl, MD.

In introducing Strada, Alberto Colombi, MD, MPH, a GSPH graduate and adjunct faculty member in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences and corporate medical director of PPG Industries, had asked the audience to consider war as a public health issue. A startling 90 percent of victims of modern-day conflicts, he pointed out, are not combatants but civilians—women, children, and unarmed men. “Public health is not based on fatalism,” Colombi said. “Like other public health problems, war is preventable.”

Strada had warned the group that he had prepared a “surgically oriented” presentation and that they might find some of the slides “rude.” Indeed, the slides illustrated three typical patterns of injuries caused by land mines, including traumatic amputations of hands and arms, feet, and legs. But even more insistent and disturbing than the destroyed limbs were the eyes of the victims. They drove home another point, Strada’s central message. “It’s the right of each and every one of us to stay alive,” he said. “Land mines are weapons of terrorism towards a civilian population. As a surgeon and a citizen, I fight to have my patients recognized as human beings and not as collateral damages.”





# Ovarian Cancer Symposium Draws International Participants



Despite a deluge of last-minute registrations for her symposium on ovarian cancer last May, Director Francesmary Modugno, assistant professor of epidemiology, had to hold firm at 200 participants for a simple reason. It was all the meeting room could hold.



Symposium Director Francesmary Modugno (right) worked with Julene Fabrizio, an ovarian cancer survivor and vice president of the Pittsburgh Division of the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, to incorporate an advocate's perspective into the symposium. Approximately 25 percent of the symposium attendees represented the advocate community. Modugno and Fabrizio continue to work together to raise awareness of and funds for ovarian cancer research.

This wasn't a case of poor planning on her part, but rather a testament to the need for such a conference. The symposium, *Ovarian Cancer and High-Risk Women: Implications of Prevention, Screening, and Early Detection*, had started out as a hallway discussion about putting together an intimate workshop with GSPH faculty who head several important ovarian cancer research projects. Within months, interest and opportunity had turned the modest suggestion into a two-day conference featuring 22 leading researchers attended by scientists, physicians, policymakers, and advocates from

the United States, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Israel. The conference was hosted by GSPH, the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI), and Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC, with support from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the National Cancer Institute, the Scaife Family Foundation, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, and the Ladies Hospital Aid Society of Western Pennsylvania.

Ovarian cancer, called the "Silent Killer" because of the difficulty of diagnosing the disease in its early stages, is the most

common cause of death from a gynecological malignancy in the United States, where last year, it took the lives of 14,500 women.

"There aren't very good risk models," said Modugno, whose own work focuses on identifying genetic and environmental factors that put a woman at increased risk for ovarian cancer. Women with a strong family history of the disease or carriers of a mutated gene—BRCA 1/2—are known to be at high risk. "But those only represent 5 to 10 percent of the cases. For 90 percent of the women who are diagnosed with the disease, it's just out of the blue."

There's been little progress in terms of prevention for the last several decades, according to Modugno. Prophylactic oophorectomy—the removal of the ovaries—and the use of oral contraceptives amount to the only preventive measures.

The symposium offered an interdisciplinary approach with clinical, scientific, and patient and family care components to the programming. "Cancer is too complex a disease spectrum for any one discipline to really cover," said Modugno. "You need to have experts from a variety of disciplines." Sessions included the Epidemiology of Ovarian Cancer; Screening; Biology, Pathology, and Technologies for Early Detection; New Directions in Chemoprevention; A Consumer's Perspective; and Standards of Care: Health Implications of Surgical Prophylaxis.

Lewis Kuller, MD, DrPH, professor of epidemiology, spoke on the health implications of prophylactic oophorectomy. At the opening of the conference, Kuller had also delivered a heartfelt memorial tribute to pioneering epidemiologist Baruch Modan, MD, DrPH. Modan, an adjunct GSPH faculty member who ran one of the largest case control studies of ovarian cancer

“ I felt it was really important to say there are real faces behind the numbers that we crunch. ”  
—Modugno

ever among Jewish women in Israel, was one of the original inspirations for the conference.

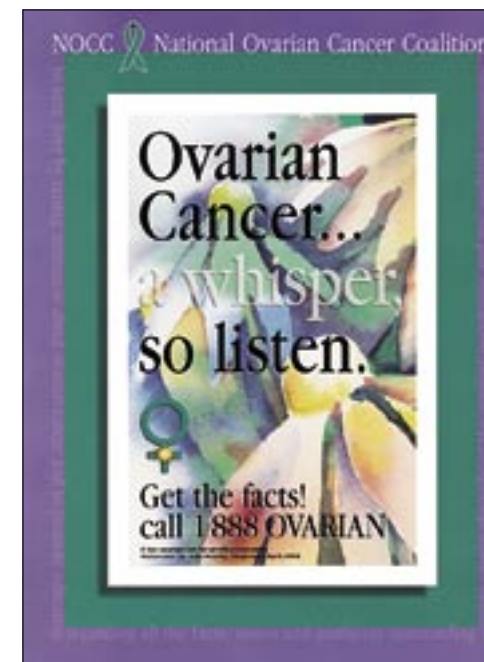
Conference sessions were videotaped. Information on viewing the lectures on the Internet, replete with PowerPoint slides, or purchasing a CD or DVD can be found at [www.pitt.edu/~ovarian](http://www.pitt.edu/~ovarian).

The final session, a panel composed of survivors of the disease and representatives from the Ovarian Cancer National Alliance and the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, was the highlight of the conference for Modugno. "In my work, I deal with 2,000 subjects, running

statistical analyses, drawing conclusions," she said. "And that's wonderful. But I felt it was really important to say there are real faces behind the numbers that we crunch. When we're sitting there crunching our numbers, can we remember the Barbara Junkers and the other women for whom we're really doing this?"

A follow-up conference is on the agenda for 2004. The specifics of the program have yet to be established, but one thing's for sure. For this one, Modugno's got her eye on the ballroom.

Further information can be found at [www.pitt.edu/~ovarian](http://www.pitt.edu/~ovarian).



The Pittsburgh Division of the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition (NOCC) is devoted to increasing awareness, promoting education, and raising funds for ovarian cancer research within Western Pennsylvania. To support these efforts, the third annual Karen F. Bowers Walk for the Whisper will be held in North Park on Sunday, September 7, 2003. The last two walks brought together more than 2,500 participants and raised more than \$100,000 for education and research into this most deadly of gynecological diseases. Details about the organization and this year's walk can be found at [www.ovarian.org](http://www.ovarian.org).



# Center for Public Health Preparedness Established at GSPH

It was no accident that Associate Dean of Public Health Practice and Director of GSPH's Center for Public Health Practice (GSPH/CPHP) Margaret A. Potter, JD, MS, was able to swing into action so quickly when GSPH got the word that it was being given a \$1 million grant last September by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to start an academic Center for Public Health Preparedness.

"What we have been doing here in the Center for Public Health Practice for the last seven years has been making the linkage between academic resources and the needs of the practice world," said Potter, who will serve as principal investigator for the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Preparedness (UPCPHP). "That foundation is something that we're building on."

Potter notes that GSPH has been a cosponsor of the BioMedical Security Institute (BMSI), which developed the Realtime Outbreak and Disease Surveillance System (RODS) software now being implemented nationally to detect the sudden increase of symptoms indicative of a possible bioterrorist attack. Samuel J. Watson, AB, MA, cofounder of the BMSI, will serve as UPCPHP senior defense advisor.

GSPH was also one of the first schools of public health funded by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration to do workforce development. "We've been in the field longer than the other schools," said Potter. "We have a record of publication in workforce development. When the whole workforce development thrust got focused on emergency and bioterrorism, we were able to move into that rather quickly."

Pitt's center is part of a national network of 19 such centers charged with training the nation's public health, healthcare, and public safety workforce to respond to bioterrorism, infectious disease, and other public health threats and emergencies. The 19 centers are among the initiatives funded by the \$2.9 billion in bioterrorism appropriations signed by President Bush in January 2002. UPCPHP will assume responsibility for Pennsylvania and Ohio.

A 1999 survey indicated that only six percent of local public health officials nationwide had received

any training in bioterrorism. Likewise, a post-September 11 survey by the National Association of County and City Health Officials reported that almost 80 percent of health departments lacked comprehensive bioterrorism response plans.

Five programs are currently under development through UPCPHP: a leadership preparedness institute; surge capacity training; a rural preparedness program; a 15-credit graduate certificate in emergency preparedness; and public health agency personnel training.

"We work hand in glove with the two state health departments to carry out what they see as needed in the areas of training and education to prepare the workforces," said Potter. "Emergency response calls for cross-sector cooperation with public health, emergency management officials at the state and federal levels, emergency management technicians, public safety workers, and hospitals. Our approach is to try to educate all of them about public health and to educate public health workers about how to participate in emergency response."

## Being Prepared

David Piposzar, MPH, executive director of the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Preparedness (UPCPHP), laughs when asked about the timeline for UPCPHP's surge capacity training program. "I would have loved to have it done yesterday," he said.

Surge capacity looks at the resources necessary to provide adequate response if hospitals become overwhelmed during a bioterrorism or other incident of mass trauma. Surge-capacity volunteers, including scientific experts, retired clinical professionals, outpatient-clinical and private-practice physicians and nurses, would then be called on to assist public health officials with what Piposzar calls "the large numbers of the worried well," who need vaccinations, antibiotics, or other kinds of preventive care.

Still, said Piposzar, the real challenge involves the logistics of setting up sites—addressing communications between centers, hospitals, public health systems, and public safety systems within those communities and providing security, parking, and transportation of people and materials—even getting the tables and chairs set up.

"Under the smallpox program, for example, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines say that in order to vaccinate one million people, you need to set up 20 sites, operating 16 hours a day for 10 days. The staff equivalent of that would be approximately 234 individuals at each site," said Piposzar. "You do the math. You're basically looking at a small army of individuals—almost 5,000 people that would have

to be activated in order to deliver this kind of mass immunization."

Piposzar expects to develop a plan for neighborhood emergency help centers that piggybacks on the Red Cross system of emergency shelters. And as former chair of Pennsylvania's Region 13-Metropolitan Medical Response System and head of Allegheny County Health Department's environmental, public health, and public preparedness programs, he brings a wealth of experience to the challenge.

"It's exciting," he said of his new responsibilities. "It's where I want to be. I go in every day with a little better sense of preparedness."

"I want people to understand that we're making additional progress every day."





## Gordon H. DeFriese Receives 2002 Porter Prize

Gordon H. DeFriese, PhD, delivered the 2002 Porter Prize lecture on November 18, 2002, to an attentive audience in Crabtree Hall. DeFriese's lecture was titled "Prevention as Health Policy Priority: Staying the Course While Swimming Upstream."

DeFriese brings a wealth of expertise and insight to his topic. He is a professor of social medicine, epidemiology, and health policy and administration at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as well as president and CEO of the North Carolina Institute of Medicine. He has served on the U.S. Prevention Health Services Task Force and was founding

director of the national Partnership for Prevention, a Washington, D.C.-based coalition of private sector business and industry organizations, voluntary health organizations, and state and federal public health agencies.

The Porter Prize was established in 1983 through a gift from The Adrienne & Milton Porter Charitable Foundation to recognize "outstanding and exemplary performance in the field of health promotion." The recipient of the prize receives a \$10,000 award intended to encourage the study, teaching, and practice of health promotion. Since 1999, the Porter Prize has been administered by GSPH and



Gordon H. DeFriese

reflects the school's mission to promote health and prevent disease in individuals and their communities.

## Second Foster Lecture Gives Update on Alzheimer's Disease Risk Factors

With a soft-spoken Scottish accent and gentle sense of humor, Hugh C. Hendrie, MB, ChB, delivered an update on risk factors for Alzheimer's disease at the second Jay L. Foster Memorial Lecture Series in Alzheimer's Disease on November 14, 2002. Hendrie is the Albert E. Sterne professor and past chair of the department of psychiatry, Indiana University School of Medicine, as well as the codirector of the Indiana University Center for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Neuropsychiatric Disorders.

Using his Indianapolis-Ibadan Alzheimer's Disease Project as a framework for discussion of potential risk factors,

Hendrie discussed incidence rates for dementia and Alzheimer's disease in two diverse elderly community-dwelling populations. The Indianapolis-Ibadan project—a longitudinal study of elderly African American residents in industrialized Indianapolis, Indiana, and Yoruba residents of nonindustrialized Ibadan, Nigeria—is the first epidemiological study designed to determine the environmental risk factors for Alzheimer's disease.

The Jay L. Foster Memorial Lecture Series in Alzheimer's Disease is funded by the family of the late Jay L. Foster to enhance the scientific base for preventing and treating Alzheimer's and to call



Hugh C. Hendrie

attention to the devastating effects the disease has on the family as well as the patient.

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## Feature

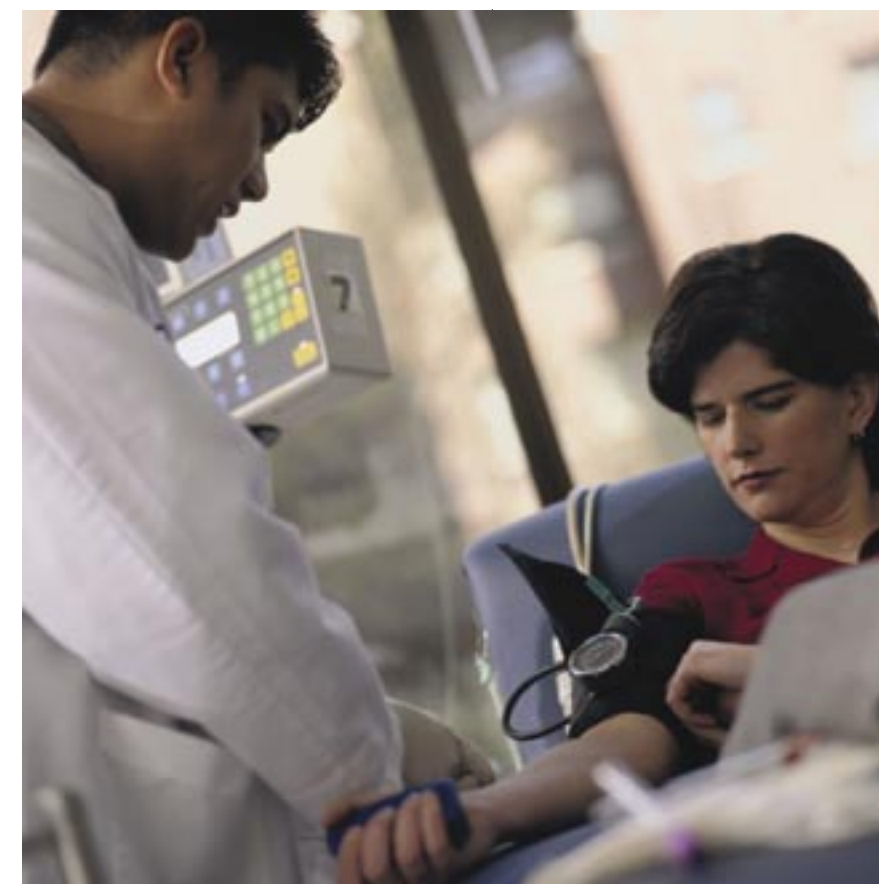
# Department of Epidemiology Hosts PCOS Symposium

## Polycystic Ovary Syndrome: The Keys to a Healthier You

On October 26, 2002, GSPH hosted approximately 110 guests at a standing-room-only symposium for women with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), their families, and health professionals. Titled "PCOS: The Keys to a Healthier You," the conference was presented in collaboration with the Pittsburgh chapter of the Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome Association (PCOSA) and consisted of 15 lectures presented by national leaders in the field on topics such as infertility, diabetes, hirsutism, genetics, and osteoporosis. The event also featured a "LifeKeys Fair," where women could connect with vendors offering products and services beneficial to women suffering with PCOS, and receive blood pressure and heart screenings.

"It was very exciting to see so many women interacting with scientists and clinicians about this little-known and studied topic," said Evelyn Talbott, DrPH, professor of epidemiology at GSPH and co-organizer of the conference. "This was the first symposium aimed at these women. It gave them hope by teaching them about lifestyle modifications that can really improve their quality of life."

The conference came about after an impromptu conversation between co-organizer Jeanne Zborowski, PhD, of the GSPH Department of Epidemiology, and Tracy Montarti, president of the Pittsburgh chapter of PCOSA. The two women appeared together on WQED's *On Q* magazine in the spring of 2002 to discuss both the scientific and human perspectives of this complex



reproductive hormone disorder that affects 5 million to 7 million women and teenagers in the United States. After the show, Zborowski said, "We just started talking about how there isn't much done for these women to bring them together with researchers and vendors who could help them."

As a result, in an amazingly brief period of about four months, the daylong conference was fully organized with the help

of cosponsors Magee-Womens Hospital of UPMC, Magee's Center for Fertility and Reproductive Endocrinology, RESOLVE of Pittsburgh, and Fisher's Specialized Pharmacy Services. There is hope among the collaborators that the conference will become an annual event.

For more information about this event and PCOS, please visit [www.knowpco.com](http://www.knowpco.com).



## GSPH Alum Named MacArthur “Genius”

“It’s one of the nicer things that can happen to a person,” said Janine Jagger, PhD, MPH (GSPH ’74), of being named a 2002 MacArthur Fellow. “I can’t think of any downside to it.”

The MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, often called a “genius grant,” is a no-strings-attached award of \$500,000 over five years. For Jagger, founder and director of the International Health Care Worker Safety Center at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, the recognition has come after years of taking a public health approach in an academic setting more focused on the clinical.

“I never followed the money trail,” she said.

She did, however, follow injury prevention issues. In 1985, a colleague mentioned that needlestick injuries to hospital workers were drawing the attention of the infection control community because of the risk of HIV and other blood-borne diseases such as hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Each year U.S. healthcare workers sustain about 400,000 injuries from sharp medical devices. Jagger’s reaction was quick and to the point. “I said, ‘Well, if it’s a product-related injury, then change the product to make it less likely to cause injury,’” she recalled. “The reaction I got was so dramatic that I realized this had not been thought of.”

With a \$10,000 grant, Jagger embarked on a study of 415 healthcare workers. “My research question,” she said, “was this basic: ‘What stuck you?’”

“Nobody had ever asked the workers that question before. They just asked, ‘Why did you stick yourself?’”

“We determined that devices that required disassembly and handling after



Janine Jagger (left of Clinton) and others look on as President Bill Clinton signs the Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act on November 5, 2000.

use had higher injury rates than those immediately thrown in the trash,” she said. “We also found that about 25 percent of injuries were caused by needles that were totally unnecessary.”

The result was a landmark study published in 1988 in *The New England Journal of Medicine* showing that needlestick injuries to healthcare workers were a device problem, not a human problem. The study classified the medical devices associated with injuries, and, for the first time, outlined design criteria for safer devices. After that, it was, Jagger said, “a kind of relentless march forward combining epidemiology with public policy. We looked for every mechanism of change we could find.”

On November 5, 2000, then-President Bill Clinton signed the Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act, the first law requiring healthcare facilities to use

safety-engineered needles and other sharp medical devices with protective features that retract, blunt, or otherwise shield the sharp point or edge after use.

Along the way, Jagger and several colleagues designed seven devices for which they hold five patents. (Among Jagger’s honors is the 1988 Distinguished Inventor Award from Intellectual Property Owners.) In the early 1990s, Jagger developed EPINet, the Exposure Prevention Information Network, a standardized surveillance system used by 1,500 hospitals in the United States for tracking occupational blood exposures. “I like to say there is power in numbers,” said Jagger. “As an epidemiologist, I’ve found that the larger database you’re working with, the more powerful it becomes.”

While it’s too soon to have all her plans in place, the MacArthur award, she said,

will act as seed money for programs that might not otherwise find funding.

One such project will be an injection safety program in Ghana, where Jagger has a strong network of colleagues. An innovative component of the project will be the testing of traditional brick-making kilns, built with a new emissions-reducing design, for the clean incineration of medical waste.

“There’s no approved technology by the World Health Organization for incinerating medical waste in developing countries because the incineration process results in so much pollution that you create a problem as big as the one you’re trying to eliminate,” said Jagger. “We feel that we

have a significant program to pursue, and we’re going for it.”

Jagger hopes to reflect some of the glory of the MacArthur award back on her education at GSPH. “Academically, what led to this award first of all was my degree in public health,” she said. “Once I had that degree I took on the role of a public health person. And wherever I went professionally or academically thereafter, I always sought out the public health direction within those different roles.”

In particular, Jagger recalls a Fundamentals of Epidemiology course with Professor of Epidemiology Lewis Kuller. “I didn’t know at the time that I was going to become an epidemiologist,” she said, adding that she discovered, when called upon to teach epidemiology as

a doctoral student at the University of Virginia, that it suited her well.

A second important influence was the opportunity to work in international health when Professor Ray Primus sent Jagger to Nigeria for a summer to do a community health survey. “It was a summer packed with educational experiences—and I mean that in both the most positive and the most negative sense. But the lessons lasted a lifetime. And despite the challenges that I experienced there,” she laughed, “it did not diminish my lust for all things international.

“I’m pleased to recognize the influence of my colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh on the professional path I have followed and on my accomplishments leading to this award.”



## Katherine M. Detre

Appointed Distinguished Professor

Recognizing her “extraordinary, internationally recognized scholarly attainment,” Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg appointed Katherine M. Detre, MD, DrPH, to the rank of distinguished professor of epidemiology in the Graduate School of Public Health.

Distinguished professorship is the highest honor that a university can bestow upon a member of its faculty.

Detre, who has been a member of the epidemiology faculty since 1974 and is founding director of GSPH’s Epidemiology Data Center, is acclaimed for her work in the study of coronary heart disease. In 2001, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded a \$52.2 million grant to Detre for an international clinical trial of coronary heart disease and diabetes. The award is significant not only as one of the largest medical research grants in Pitt’s history, but as the largest grant ever given by the NIH to a sole principal investigator.

GSPH will serve as the hub for this seven-year project that will involve approximately 2,500 subjects at 40 sites across the country and the world. In addition to reduction of risk factors and symptoms, the study will examine the best course of treatment for patients with type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease, including angioplasty and bypass surgery or medical therapies, as well as two different approaches to the treatment of diabetes. Cardiovascular complications are now the leading cause of illness and death in diabetic patients. Detre has been a mentor to the many students and young faculty in statistics, medicine, and epidemiology who collaborate on the research projects she directs. She has supported development of computing and data management systems that make the Epidemiology Data Center a leader in the field of multicenter clinical trials. She is a fellow of the American Heart Association Council on Epidemiology and Prevention, the American College of Cardiology, the American College of Epidemiology, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.



# APHA

Public health professionals from around the world congregated in Philadelphia for the American Public Health Association's (APHA) 130th Annual Meeting and Exposition from November 9 through 13, 2002. Faye Wong, MPH, RD, president of APHA, said this year's meeting served as a forum to begin developing a strategic plan for the future directions of public health. In a statement welcoming attendees to the meeting, Wong said, "Public health professionals have always been looked upon as the prevention people. But now we are also coming to be known as the public safety people. Public health is in the spotlight now as never before."



Top: Hundreds of students, faculty, and public health professionals visited the GSPH booth at the APHA Exposition held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia.



The GSPH Reception for Alumni and Friends at the APHA annual meeting attracted approximately 60 people to the Loews Philadelphia Hotel on November 11, 2002. Guests enjoyed an evening of food, wine, and lively conversation while getting re-acquainted with faculty, alumni, and friends. The reception was cohosted by Dean Bernard D. Goldstein and by GSPH alumnus and Philadelphia resident Gerald Katz (MHA '63) and his wife, Ellen Magen.



Right: Dean Goldstein with epidemiology student Vinay Mehta, winner of the raffle drawing.



# Spotlight

## Doctoral Student Wins Prestigious Scholarship

Idethia Shevon Harvey, PhD, has received the 2002–03 AARP Andrus Scholarship Fellowship Award for the



Shevon Harvey

Doctoral Leadership Development Program. The award included a \$500 stipend for research and covered travel expenses to the Gerontological Society of America's annual meeting.

As a fellow, Harvey participated in a two-day Technical Assistance Workshop sponsored by the National Institute on Aging, which provided professional development for those becoming independent researchers in aging. Seventy-three students competed for 10 awards administered by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education. Students were selected based on academic excellence, strong faculty recommendations, and the students' commitment to the field of aging. Harvey is a student in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences.

## International Dinner

Students celebrated diversity and sampled an array of cultures at the International Dinner on December 6, 2002, an event sponsored by the GSPH Global Student Association. The event was held at the GSPH lounge and auditorium and featured



a sampling of multicultural food and entertainment.

Fun was the main ingredient at the International Dinner.



## Four Students Receive SOPHE Scholarships

Four GSPH students received scholarships covering registration fees for the Society of Public Health Education (SOPHE) annual meeting in Philadelphia in November 2002. The scholarships, funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, were awarded to Katie Hinds (DrPH), Nadra Tyus (DrPH), John Lemos (MPH), and Neyal Ammary (MPH), all in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences. Ammary also presented a poster at the meeting titled "In Mommy's Garden: A Tool for Helping Children to Deal with a Parent's Illness," a children's book dealing with cancer. SOPHE is the national professional organization for health educators.

# GSPH Hosts National Environmental Health Conference

The Graduate School of Public Health was host September 8–10, 2002, to the third annual Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) Environmental Health Conference. The conference, Responding to a New Environment, was built around the theme of disaster preparedness and emergency management with attention to the public health role in preparedness and ways to best incorporate preparedness into the curricula at schools of public health. The 120 participants of the conference included public health faculty, representatives from health departments, and federal officials. GSPH Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health Bruce Pitt was a member of the conference planning committee.

A day of preconference workshops, "Bioterrorism: The Role of the Public Health Workforce," set the tone for the overall conference with an exciting and challenging agenda planned by Samuel J. Watson, AB, MA, GSPH associate professor of public health practice and senior biodefense advisor to the Center for Public Health Preparedness. "My major goal for the preconference program was to bring in faculty that teach environmental and occupational health issues and have them talk about what is terrorism, what are the pathogens that can be used, how do they work, how do they get disseminated and infect us, and what are the fears that we have about it," Watson said. He added that a further goal of the preconference was to connect practice with academics: "What does the public health force need in the way of trained and educated students, and thus, what are the kinds of skills and education that we ought to be teaching?"



Approximately 120 people participated in the ASPH environmental health conference, "Responding to a New Environment," including public health faculty, representatives from health departments, and federal officials.

The conference itself opened with a keynote address by Scott Lillibrige, MD, University of Texas-Houston School of Public Health professor, titled "Education as the Key to a National Strategy for Bioterrorism Preparedness." Concurrent sessions on the first day included presentations on biological, chemical, and radiological terrorism courses; respiratory protection, training, and postdisaster evaluation; and public information, concerns, and policy decisions. A panel session on academic centers for public health preparedness included panelist Margaret A. Potter, JD, MS, GSPH associate dean of public health practice and director of GSPH's Center for Public Health Practice and the new Center for Public Health Preparedness.

A plenary speech, "Natural Technological Events: Frequency and Severity of Toxic Releases During and After Natural

Disasters," was delivered on the second day of the conference by Stacy Young, MS, MPH, of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Environmental Health. Jay Harper, MD, MPH, GSPH professor of environmental and occupational health, presented "Employee Preparedness: An All Hazards Disaster Training and Education Program in a Multihospital Health System." GSPH students had the opportunity to contribute to the conference at a poster session.

Watson reported that the conference was well received by the ASPH and by the environmental and occupational health community. He noted the interest of participants in GSPH initiatives. "People wanted to know what we were doing," he said, adding that he was pleased at the recognition that Pittsburgh is ahead of the curve. "The Graduate School of Public Health is out in front doing things as a national leader."



**Beaufort Longest Delivers Inaugural Lecture**

Beaufort B. Longest Jr., PhD, director of the Health Policy Institute, marked his formal installation as the M. Allen Pond Professor of Health Policy & Management with a lecture on November 19, 2002, titled "Health Systems: A Promising New Class of Corporate Citizens."

"Just as the business sector has produced many good corporate citizens to the great advantage of American society, health systems with sufficient financial and organizational gravitas are increasingly assuming these roles," Longest said, "and in so doing are making positive differences in their communities."



Beaufort B. Longest Jr.

Longest holds a secondary appointment as professor of business administration in the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business, and he is known for his research on modeling managerial competence and on issues of governance in healthcare organizations. His publications include dozens of peer-reviewed articles, nine books, and 26 book chapters. Two of his books, *Managing Health Services Organizations and Systems* and



Arthur Levine, MD, senior vice chancellor for the health sciences and dean of the School of Medicine (left), talks with Longest after the lecture.

*Health Policymaking in the United States*, are among the most widely used textbooks in graduate health policy and management programs.

The M. Allen Pond Chair in Health Policy & Management was made possible through gifts from an anonymous donor and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center in memory of M. Allen Pond, a former dean and longtime faculty member of GSPH. Pond was known by his colleagues as a consummate public health professional who dedicated his long and distinguished career to advancing the profession of public health.

**First Craig Award presented to David Rowe**

A committee of faculty and students awarded David Rowe, PhD, associate professor of infectious diseases and microbiology, the first Dr. James L. Craig

Endowed Excellence in Education Award at GSPH convocation April 27, 2002. Along with a plaque commemorating the award, Rowe received a \$2,000 prize in recognition of his dedication to teaching and his skill in communicating his expertise to students at GSPH.

Rowe quickly put the award to work for his students, purchasing molecular biology lab manuals, (invaluable "recipe books," said Rowe, that students and lab technicians use to set up experiments) and a laptop computer. The computer, intended as a "loaner" for graduate students in the Microbial Pathogens course and for Data and Journal Club presentations, proved more valuable than Rowe originally anticipated.

"Probably the best story involves my student whose project requires a collaboration with the GSF Institute of Immunology in Munich. We went over

there to finalize her three-month visit there this spring. Everything—all our correspondence, experimental plans, and her seminar—was on my laptop, which, the evening before we left, just died." Luckily, they were able to quickly load everything onto the new laptop before leaving for Germany that afternoon.

Through a generous endowment of \$50,000, James Craig (MPH '63), a distinguished alumnus of GSPH, established the Craig Award to recognize teaching excellence at the school. The award will be presented annually to a faculty member nominated by GSPH students and alumni and approved by a committee of faculty and students.

Rowe summed up his feelings about the award quite simply: "Thank you, thank you, thank you, Jim Craig."

**Gift Helps Fund Bioterrorism Lecture Series**

Through the Pittsburgh Bioterrorism Lecture Series, Samuel Watson, AB, MA, associate professor of public health practice and senior biodefense advisor to the Center for Public Health Preparedness, looks to educate the University community on issues regarding bioterrorism, specifically how to detect it, how to respond to it, and how to contain it. The series, an adjunct to Watson's "Issues in Bioterrorism" course, invites nationally recognized experts in the fields of medicine, law, government, and public health to discuss the varied and complex issues associated with bioterrorism.

The spring 2002 term was the inaugural season for the series and began with Barry Kellman, JD, professor of law from DePaul University College of Law presenting "Legal Issues of Bioterrorism Prevention, Preparedness, and Response."

Scott LillibrIDGE, MD, special advisor to the secretary of health and human services and former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program, delivered a lecture on "Federal Government Planning for Preventing and Responding to Bioterrorism." The series concluded with John LaMontagne, PhD, deputy director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), who lectured on "NIAID Research on Bioterrorism." A CD is currently in production through the sponsorship of the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Preparedness that will include audio and slides from the lectures.

The lecture series is sponsored in part by a donation from Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Nimick Jr. Other series sponsors include GSPH; Arthur Levine, Pitt's senior vice chancellor for the health sciences; and the Center for Public Health

Preparedness. Watson is currently lining up speakers for the spring 2003 series. If you would like more information, call 412-383-7985.

**Alumnus Establishes Student Assistance Fund**

Alumnus Jan R. Jennings (MPH '72) has recently established the Jan Ricks Jennings Student Assistance Fund in Health Administration with a gift of \$10,000 to the Graduate School of Public Health. Jennings, currently president and CEO of Jefferson Regional Medical Center near Pittsburgh, wanted to not only give back to his alma mater, but to honor his teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend at GSPH, Edmund M. Ricci. The Jennings fund will be used to provide books, conference fees, travel, and other educational expenses for students enrolled in the health administration program at GSPH.



Madeleine Davidson Pond, wife of the late M. Allen Pond, speaks with her good friend Daniel H. Brooks, MD, following Longest's inaugural lecture. Brooks is vice president and chief medical officer at Heritage Valley Health System and member of the Health Policy Institute's Advisory Council.



## Two New Departments Replace Health Services Administration

Reflecting increasingly specialized and complex fields, two new departments have been created in the Graduate School of Public Health to take the place of what previously had been the Department of Health Services Administration. The Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences (BCHS) and the Department of Health Policy & Management (HPM) became operational in July 2002.

The Department of Health Policy & Management offers two degrees: a Master of Health Administration (MHA) and a joint law and Master of Public Health program (JD/MPH) offered with Pitt's School of Law.

The MHA program has refocused its attention on managing the health of populations. According to Judith R. Lave, PhD, professor of health economics and interim HPM chair, "We have conducted a complete review of our curriculum to make sure that all courses are where they ought to be."

The program has also taken steps to ensure that it is connected to the world of practice. The program now requires that students participate in the Health Policy Institute Lecture series. The series, which brings speakers to GSPH monthly, focuses on important problems facing health managers and health policy makers in the United States today. "It's a way to keep the students au courant," said Lave.

In addition, the program also initiated the Executive-in-Residence Program in the fall of 2002. John Zanardelli, MPH, FACHE, executive director and CEO for United Methodist Services for the Aging, is the inaugural executive-in-residence. "We believe this program will offer the students more of a sense of what an executive does as well as a deeper

understanding of the world into which they will be going," said Lave.

Edmund M. Ricci, PhD, professor of sociology in public health and chair of BCBS, is equally excited about opportunities in this new department. "For the first time we can offer students in-depth training in the social and behavioral sciences," he said. A Master of Public Health in Behavioral and Community Health Sciences has been created with four areas of specialization: public health and aging; health education and promotion; maternal and child health; and behavioral research methods.

Also under the umbrella of BCBS are the Master of Public Health/PhD Public

Health Social Work degrees, the Doctor of Public Health program, and several joint programs with Pitt's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and Pitt's Department of Anthropology. The latter two enable the department to address international public health issues.

The new BCBS department, Ricci says, will allow faculty to define and expand research in the social and behavioral sciences in public health. In the works is the creation of an Institute for Evaluative Sciences in Public Health.

"An understanding of human behavior is fundamental to achieving our national and international health promotion and illness prevention goals," Ricci said.



Lave (left) and Ricci have worked tirelessly together to make the departmental split a seamless transition.

# Roundup

Check Out the Latest GSPH News

Three GSPH faculty members participated as part of Governor Rendell's 20-member, non-partisan Health Transition Team. **Judith R. Lave**, PhD, acting chair of the Department of Health Policy & Management, **Stephen Thomas**, PhD, director of the Center for Minority Health and Philip Hallen Professor of Community Health and Social Justice, and **Dean Bernard D. Goldstein** were part of the group that made recommendations to the incoming governor concerning the future direction of the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

### Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences

**Sandra Crouse Quinn**, PhD, was recently elected covice president of the Society for Public Health Education for the 2002-04 term. In that capacity, she will cochair the planning committee for the 2003 annual meeting in San Francisco, Calif.

Quinn is also the principal investigator on a new cooperative agreement grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Association of Schools of Public Health for a study titled "Lessons for Risk Communication from the 2001 Anthrax Attack."



In January, Quinn completed a community assessment of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community of Allegheny County. Funded by the Maurice Falk Medical Fund and The William J. Copeland Fund, the assessment was conducted for Persad Center Inc., the Gay-Lesbian Community Center, and the Seven Project. Deborah Aaron, who holds a joint appointment with the Department of Epidemiology, was the coinvestigator.

The National Institute of Aging has granted \$498,790 to **Myrna Silverman**, PhD, for the third year of a four-year study (2000-04) exploring the process of self-care for chronic illness among older African Americans and Whites in Allegheny County.

A gathering of students, faculty, and staff celebrated the retirement of longtime faculty member **Elsie Broussard**, MD, DrPH, on September 20, 2002. Dean Goldstein presented Broussard with a chair bearing the University insignia to commemorate her years of dedication to the school and to public health. Broussard has been a faculty member of GSPH since 1967.

Broussard, now a professor emerita in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences, participated as part of an expert panel in an educational meeting at the



Holiday Inn Select, University Center on March 21 titled, "Divorce and Human Development: Medical, Legal, and Psychotherapeutic Interventions."

### Department of Biostatistics

**Carol Redmond**, ScD, is the 2002 president of the Eastern North American Region (ENAR) of the International Biometric Society, the primary professional society for biostatisticians. In March 2002, Redmond, Distinguished Service Professor of Public Health, presided over the society's annual meeting in Washington, D.C., which drew more than 1,000 participants. During 2002, Redmond was also elected to serve on the governing council of the American Public Health Association, and she was re-elected for a two-year term to the executive committee of the International Society for Clinical Biostatistics.

**Gary Marsh**, PhD, has received a \$4 million grant to investigate a suspected cluster of brain cancer cases at a Pratt & Whitney jet engine manufacturing plant near New Haven, Conn.



Marsh and Nurt Esmen of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center conducted a feasibility study on the suspected cluster, first noted more than two years ago; Pratt & Whitney funded the larger study. Marsh will perform a series of epidemiological studies in the company's index plant and six control plants.

Esmen, a former GSPH faculty member, has separate funding of a similar amount to assess the extent of historical exposures to various chemicals at the seven plants. The investigation is expected to take six years.

## Department of Epidemiology

**Lewis Kuller**, MD, DrPH, has formally stepped down as chair of the Department of Epidemiology after a 30-year tenure to devote himself full time to directing the newly formed Center for Healthy Aging. During his time as chair, Kuller attracted an eclectic faculty covering a broadly diversified body of research, tripling the size of the department from less than 10 full-time faculty when he arrived in 1972 to 31 faculty and 246 staff today. Within the department, he established nationally recognized programs in women's health, diabetes, and cancer epidemiology, and he was instrumental in developing an Alzheimer's research program, which has led to a much broader understanding of cognitive functioning in the elderly. Kuller was honored at a Festschrift celebrating his distinguished career on March 28 and 29 at GSPH.

**Trevor Orchard**, MBCh, MMedSci, professor of epidemiology, is serving as acting chair of the Department of Epidemiology. He will hold this position while a national search is conducted for a permanent successor to Lewis Kuller. Orchard is a national leader in the epidemiology of diabetes and cardiovascular disease, with a particular emphasis



on insulin-dependent diabetes and management of lipid disorders.

The National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases has awarded **Steven Belle**, PhD, \$1.89 million to study patient and viral characteristics, including immunologic and genetic characteristics, to help explain viral resistance to pegylated interferon and ribavirin, the current optimal therapy for chronic hepatitis C.

**Evelyn Talbott**, DrPH, was awarded a 2003 Health Care Hero Award for the category of Health Care Innovation and Research. The Health Care Hero Award program recognizes outstanding people and organizations that are making significant strides in the local health care field. The awards are presented by the *Pittsburgh Business Times*, Allegheny County Medical Society, and The Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania.

## Department of Environmental and Occupational Health

**Meryl Karol**, PhD, was selected to deliver the 2002 Frederick Sperling Memorial Lecture at Howard University in Washington, D.C. The lecture, titled "Asthma, Allergy, and Chemicals," reflected Karol's interest in the mechanisms of chemically induced respiratory sensitization and methods that predict susceptible individuals.

## Department of Health Policy & Management

**Nathan Hershey**, LLB, has been selected for inclusion in the 2003–04 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*. Hershey was among those lawyers honored for being named to the list for 10 years or more since its first publication in 1983. Attorneys in *Best Lawyers* are selected by their peers, a group of 15,000 lawyers throughout the United States who cast their votes based on the legal abilities of other lawyers in the same specialties.

## Department of Human Genetics

**Eleanor Feingold**, PhD, has been appointed associate editor for *The American Journal of Human Genetics*.

The National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research has awarded **Susanne Gollin**, PhD, a \$1.6 million grant to conduct studies on a region of the human genome that is present in extra copies in a large percentage of oral cancers. She and her team of researchers will also investigate the process of gene amplification in oral cancer cells.

Gollin has also been re-elected vice chair of the Allegheny County Board of Health.

Friends and colleagues of Professor Emeritus **C.C. Li**, PhD, gathered at GSPH on October 25, 2002, to celebrate Li's 90th birthday. The schedule for the daylong event featured several talks, a brown bag lunch, and an afternoon reception.

## Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology

The Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (ANAC) awarded **Linda Frank**, PhD, MSN, ACRN, the ANAC's 2002 HIV/AIDS Educator Award at its annual meeting in San Francisco, Calif., on November 9, 2002. Frank's 14 years of dedicated work educating healthcare providers about treatment and care for persons with HIV led her peers, HIV consumers, and community providers to nominate her for this prestigious honor.

**John Encandela**, PhD, participated in a panel presentation at the International Congress on Law and Mental Health in Amsterdam, Holland, in June 2002. The panel addressed the rights of psychiatric clients in the provision of services that clients do not necessarily request. Encandela was involved in two papers on this panel and is the first presenter to address the provision of HIV prevention through mental health case management of severely mentally ill clients.

## Centers

**David Pipozar**, MPH, has been named executive director of the **Center for Public Health Preparedness**. Pipozar joins the center following a 28-year career with the Allegheny County Health Department, where he worked in environmental programs, public health program management, and public health preparedness activities. As one of his key career accomplishments, he directed the development of the Metropolitan Medical Response System in Western Pennsylvania. This collaboration of more than 150 agencies and 65 hospitals organized under the Pennsylvania Region 13 Counter-Terrorism Task Force, has been cited as a national model of regional collaboration.



Professor Emeritus C.C. Li cuts the cake at a celebration of his 90th birthday on October 25, 2002 at GSPH.





Alumni Hall, University of Pittsburgh

The Center for Public Health Practice cosponsored the 2002 Allegheny County Health Department seminar “New Things” in October 2002. Nearly 300 staff of the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) and GSPH attended the seminar, which focused on new developments in local public health practice. Topics included the Three Rivers Wet Weather Demonstration Project, Realtime Outbreak and Disease Surveillance (RODS) and Emergency Preparedness, Public Health Practice (presented by Margaret A. Potter, JD, MS) and the Mobilizing Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) Strategic Planning Process.

The Pennsylvania & Ohio Public Health Training Center presented a workshop titled “Bringing the World to Your Agency,” which presented strategies to public health professionals on accessing information effectively via the Web, satellite, and interactive television. The workshop combined formal presentations with hands-on practice and individual consultation. Sixteen participants from Pennsylvania and Ohio took part in the workshop, which was held at Pitt’s Alumni Hall on July 16 and 17, 2002.



Photos above: Sixteen public health professionals took part in the workshop “Bringing the World to Your Agency,” sponsored by the Pennsylvania and Ohio Public Health Training Center.



The Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of HIV/AIDS, has awarded GSPH a three-year \$10.65 million grant to continue operating the **Pennsylvania/MidAtlantic AIDS Education Training Center (PA/MA AETC)**. The center, funded by the Ryan White Comprehensive Care Act, provides clinical HIV/AIDS education and training programs for primary healthcare providers in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The program is headquartered in the Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology under the direction of **Linda Frank, PhD, MSN, ACRN**.

Among its many activities, the PA/MA AETC sponsored an update on the XIV International AIDS Conference in Barcelona, Spain. The update, held on July 31, 2002, drew more than 75 healthcare professionals from the greater Pittsburgh area including physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dentists, social workers, and mental health workers.

Senior citizens throughout the Pittsburgh region can learn how to improve their health or stay in good shape by tuning in to a new radio program featuring healthcare professionals affiliated with the **Center for Healthy Aging**. The 20-minute radio segment, “Healthier Tomorrows,” airs on WEDO-AM 810 each Thursday from 2:30 to 2:50 p.m. as part of the *Gary G. Variety Show*. The center has currently scheduled guests for the program through the end of May. However, due to an overwhelming response from community partners, they are now planning to extend the show through the summer.



Healthier Tomorrows Spring 2003 Radio Schedule

**March 27:** Carole Milas; National Nutrition Month

**April 3:** Dr. Mike Pramuka; “Use it or Lose it”

**April 10:** Michelle Baich, McKeesport Hospital & Ruth Smith, McKeesport Collaborative; “State Health Improvement Plan,” McKeesport Community Health Task Force

**April 17:** Frank Vitale; Smoking Cessation

**April 24:** Sharyn Gesmond, McKeesport Aging Program; “Safety and the Older Adult”

**May 1:** Anne Newman; CHA/ Health ABC Study

**May 8:** Andrea Kriska; Surgeon General’s Report on Physical Activity and Health

**May 15:** Connie Bayles; Exercise Programs for Older Adults

**May 22:** Broadcast LIVE from Asbury Heights, Senior Health and Fitness Fair

**May 29:** Anna Lisa Wolfe/Gail Weisberg, OASIS Pittsburgh; Physical Activity through Behavior Modification

The National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities awarded a \$6 million grant to the **Center for Minority Health** to establish a Center of Excellence designed to support community partnerships, outreach, research, and training needed to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities. The project, titled EXPORT Health, provides five years of core resources needed to support a multidisciplinary team of faculty scholars working in partnership with civic organizations, the faith community, and private business.

**New Leadership at GSPH**

Dean Goldstein recently announced two significant changes in leadership at GSPH:

- **Meryl Karol, PhD**, professor of environmental and occupational health, is the new associate dean for academic affairs. She replaces **Carol Redmond, ScD**, Distinguished Service Professor of Public Health in the Department of Biostatistics, who has stepped down as after five years of service in the dean’s office.
- **Roberta Ness, MD, PhD**, professor of epidemiology, is the new associate dean for research. In this capacity, she will develop a number of support structures for faculty research and training initiatives.

All three faculty members will continue to pursue their prior teaching and research activities at GSPH within their respective departments.



# Notebook

## GSPH Grads Share News and Notes

### 2000s

**Tadao Okada, MD, MPH '02**, has accepted a position as interim chief of the Department of Family Medicine at Kameda Medical Center in Kamogawa, Japan, and is serving as the residency director in family medicine at the center. Kameda Medical Center is home to one of only three family medicine training programs in Japan.

### 1990s

**C. Lu Conser, MPH '93**, has been named director of grants at the Carlisle Area Health & Wellness Foundation in Carlisle, Pa. The foundation was established in June 2001 to identify and address healthcare needs and policies, promote responsible health practices, and enhance access to and delivery of health services in the Carlisle area.

**Stuart Gitlow, MD, MPH '91**, of Woonsocket, R.I., was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the American Society of Addiction Medicine. The society is dedicated to educating physicians and improving the treatment of individuals suffering from alcoholism and other addictions.

Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson named 13 doctors, scientists, and other experts to the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Genetics, Health, and Society, a list that includes GSPH alumna **Barbara Willis Harrison, MS '95**. The committee's charge includes considering the clinical, ethical, legal, and societal implications of genetic testing and other technologies. Harrison is a genetic counselor and instructor in both pediatrics and healthcare ethics at the Howard University College of Medicine.

**Margaret C. McDonald, PhD '93**, has been named chair-elect of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Group on Institutional Advancement (GIA) for 2003. She will assume the position of chair in 2004. Prior to her election, McDonald served as the GIA's vice chair for public relations. The AAMC is a nonprofit association that fosters public awareness, understanding, and support of medical education, research, and patient care. McDonald serves as assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs in the health sciences at Pitt, where she coordinates the development and support of academic and public affairs initiatives within the six schools of the health sciences. She is also an assistant professor of epidemiology at GSPH and a clinical instructor in the Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine.

**Jeffrey A. Tiesi, FACHE, MHA '91**, has been appointed system vice president, cardiovascular, cancer, and neuroscience services, for Geisinger Health System in Danville, Pa. Geisinger is a physician-led, patient-focused healthcare system dedicated to health care, education, research, and service. Tiesi was formerly the vice president, cardiovascular services, at Guthrie Healthcare System in Sayre, Pa. He also served as executive director of Guthrie's same-day surgery center.

### 1970s

**Gerald Barron, MPH '71**, has been elected president of the Pennsylvania Public Health Association. He will officially take on this new role in October. Barron is deputy director for operations of the Allegheny County Health Department, adjunct associate professor of public health practice at GSPH, and codirector for leadership preparedness in the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Preparedness.

**James J. Cook, MPH '79**, of Johnstown, Pa., has been elected chair of the board of the Pennsylvania Association of Rehabilitation Facilities for 2003. The association represents medical rehabilitation hospitals and outpatient clinics, as well as vocational and residential programs for persons with disabilities related to mental health or mental retardation.

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation awarded **Janine Jagger, MPH '74**, a 2002 MacArthur Fellowship Grant, also dubbed MacArthur "genius grants." This program awards five-year fellowship grants to individuals who demonstrate exceptional merit and show potential to make future creative contributions in their fields. Jagger is one of 24 new fellows and will receive \$500,000 in unrestricted support during the next five years. She is founder and director of the International Health Care Worker Safety Center at the University of Virginia School of Medicine. (See page 20 for a profile of Jagger.)

**Michelle Jones, MPH '79**, has recently been appointed to the Medical Assistance Advisory Committee in the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Jones is also executive director of Healthy Start Inc., which has programs in Allegheny and Fayette Counties in Western Pennsylvania. In addition to her MPH, she holds an MSW from Pitt.



Diane Peterson

Readers of *Modern Healthcare* magazine named **Diane Peterson, MPH '75**, and **David Hunter, MPH '70**, to *Modern Healthcare's* inaugural list of 100 Most Powerful People in Healthcare. Peterson, president of D. Peterson & Associates in Houston, Texas, and Hunter, CEO of Hunter Group in Saint Petersburg, Fla., were among more than 1,000 candidates nominated for the list. The complete list can be found in the August 26, 2002, edition of *Modern Healthcare*.

### 1960s

**Ronald L. Kathren, MSHyg '62**, of Richland, Wash., retired as professor and director of the U.S. Transuranium and Uranium Registries (USTUR) and has been appointed professor emeritus. The USTUR is operated by the Washington State University College of Pharmacy and Nuclear Radiation Center and is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Health Studies.

### Two GSPH Grads Receive Public Health Excellence Awards

The Pennsylvania Public Health Association (PPHA) presented Public Health Excellence Awards to **David Puposzar, MPH '97**, and **John Domzalski, MPH '69**, at the association's annual meeting on October 22, 2002.

Domzalski, commissioner of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, received this award in recognition of more than 30 years of service as a public health professional and leader in his field. He has served in a number of prominent public health roles during his career, including deputy commissioner for public health services, director of correctional health, and district health director. Since 1996, he has served as a member of the City of Philadelphia



David Puposzar

Emergency Management Planning Group and has been an early advocate of bioterrorism preparedness. In addition to his MPH, Domzalski holds a JD from Temple University.

Puposzar, recently named director of the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Preparedness (UPCPHP), was recognized for his leadership in mobilizing community partnerships and for his work in identifying and solving health problems. He joined UPCPHP after a 28-year career with the Allegheny County Health Department, where he managed environmental and public health programs and public health preparedness activities. For the past several years, he has developed and delivered training programs on bioterrorism and public health preparedness to emergency medical personnel throughout the state.

PPHA presents Public Health Excellence Awards to Pennsylvanians who exemplify excellence in public health policy or practice. Susan M. Myers, MPH '97, of the GSPH Center for Minority Health, chaired this year's awards committee, and Karen S. Peterson, MPH '70, served on the committee.



# In Memoriam

## John Cutler

John Cutler, MD, MPH, professor emeritus in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences, died February 8, 2003, of pneumonia following a heart attack. Cutler, a resident of Point Breeze, Pa., was 87 years old.

Cutler's distinguished and influential career in public health began when he graduated from Case Western Reserve University Medical School in 1941 with a Phi Beta Kappa key. Soon after, he joined the Public Health Service as a commissioned officer, remaining active until 1967. During World War II, he served as a medical officer on convoy duty in the Coast Guard, and in 1943 worked as a medical officer in the U.S. Public Health Venereal Disease Research Laboratory in Staten Island, N.Y. He accepted an appointment to head a venereal disease research program for the Pan American Sanitary Bureau in Guatemala in 1948. A year later, the World Health Organization asked him to lead a venereal disease demonstration program for Southeast Asia based in India. He returned to the United States in 1950 and became assistant surgeon general of the U.S. Public Health Service in 1958.

He worked for the Allegheny County Health Department, organizing the final polio vaccination program in the Hill District, and went on to become an assistant and then deputy director of what later became the Pan American Health Organization in Washington, D.C.

He returned to Pittsburgh permanently in 1967 when the University of Pittsburgh recruited him to head the population division of GSPH as professor of international health. He served as chair of the Department of Health Services Administration and was acting dean of GSPH in 1968 and 1969. Cutler was instrumental in procuring funds for a major international health project in West Africa and in organizing a program that enabled obstetricians and gynecologists from Third World countries to train in reproductive health technology in the United States. He was particularly interested in the international arena,

**John Cutler, MD, MPH**

**Lawrence F. Gabbert, MPH '96**

**Arnold I. Goldman, MSHyg '68**

**Oliver L. Walker, MSHyg '72**

**David N. Kuhn, MPH '52**

helping to develop a joint program with the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. He also actively promoted the recruitment of foreign students by GSPH, greatly adding to the school's reputation abroad. As a member of the faculty of health services administration, Cutler was especially noted for his work in developing research and curriculum in the areas of venereal disease control and population management.

A memorial fund has been established at GSPH to commemorate Cutler's contributions to public health. To make a contribution, or for more information, please contact Karen Crenshaw at 412-624-5639 or crenshaw@pitt.edu.

## Get Involved!



GSPH Alumni Society President Michael D. Shankle (left) and Dean Bernard D. Goldstein have made the revitalization of the GSPH Alumni Society a top priority for themselves and the school.

It's not too late to get in on the ground floor of a movement to revitalize the GSPH Alumni Society. In fact, **Michael D. Shankle, MPH '96**, says it's a great time.

Since last summer, a growing corps of alumni and faculty have been working to strengthen the connection between GSPH and its grads by creating pathways for alumni to become more involved with the school's continued success.

"The response has been overwhelming," said Shankle, who is leading the effort as president of the GSPH Alumni Society. "More than 100 alumni have added input or are taking an active role in creating this process. It's a real exciting time."

The committee has identified four areas for involvement: continuing education and distance learning; student recruitment; mentoring

and career placement; and social and programming activities. In the works are one- to three-year plans with specific activities and measurable goals.

"We want to give alumni the support they need in their professional careers, whether that's through networking opportunities or job placement. We want alumni that have graduated 25 years ago to have GSPH as a resource to come back to for training," said Shankle. "We want to make sure the alumni have the opportunity to continue a professional relationship with the school."

"I want to encourage alumni to reconnect and get involved with this process."

For more information on becoming involved, contact alumni coordinator Susan Carr at 412-648-1294 or scarr@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu.

## Mark Your Calendar!

*April 23, 2003*

**Environmental Protection Agency Town Meeting, 2-4 p.m.**  
"Shaping a National Agenda on the Environment and the Aging"  
Pennsylvania Room, Pittsburgh Athletic Association, Pittsburgh  
Contact: Elizabeth Kim, 412-624-3001 or ekim@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu

*April 26, 2003*

**Annual Alumni Dinner, 4 p.m. cash bar; 5 p.m. dinner**  
Pittsburgh Athletic Association, Pittsburgh  
Contact: Diane Kline, 412-624-5200 or dkline@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu

*April 27, 2003*

**GSPH Convocation, 4:30 p.m. lineup; 5 p.m. start of program**  
IBEW Conference Center  
5 Hot Metal Street, Pittsburgh (South Side)  
Contact: Diane Kline, 412-624-5200 or dkline@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu

*May 15, 2003*

**Jay L. Foster Memorial Lecture Series in Alzheimer's Disease**  
Mary Ganguli, MD, MPH, professor of psychiatry and epidemiology, University of Pittsburgh

Community Lecture, 1 p.m.  
IBEW Conference Center  
5 Hot Metal Street, Pittsburgh (South Side)

Scientific Lecture, 4:30 p.m.  
Graduate School of Public Health  
Reception to follow  
Contact: Gloria Curtis, 412-383-8849 or gcurtis@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu



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