

PublicHealth

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH GRADUATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

SPRING 2005



In the field
GSPH Research
Across the Country
and Around the World



PublicHealth

University of Pittsburgh
Graduate School of Public Health

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PublicHealth is published twice each year for the alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health. *PublicHealth* is printed on recycled paper using vegetable-based inks.

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The University of Pittsburgh is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution. Published in cooperation with the Department of University Marketing Communications. UMC5020-0505

PublicHealth

SPRING 2005

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Dean's Message



Bernard D. Goldstein

The spring semester's annual faculty meeting was especially poignant for me. I will be attending our next school-wide faculty meeting this fall as a faculty member, a title I am proud of and hope to justify. Following an overgenerous introduction, Stewart Anderson, president of GSPH's Faculty Senate, allowed me to sum up the last four years and to put in perspective the school's opportunities for the future. Later, Arthur Levine, the senior vice chancellor for the health sciences, and Steven Reis, associate professor of medicine and head of the GSPH dean search committee, provided updates on the school's search for a new dean.

Summarizing GSPH's accomplishments is not a simple task. There is a dynamism and a breadth and depth of activities that cannot be simply approached as statistics. In the past four years, student-related programs have been notable for not only an increase in activities by outstanding student organization leaders, but also for the development of three new student organizations in addition to the four already in existence. Also highly valuable to GSPH has been the substantial growth of its alumni organization and of the Delta Omega Honor Society. Members of the faculty have successfully led an expansion of the school's teaching programs, including new master's degree programs and seven certificate programs.

Overall student enrollment has increased from 401 in fall 2001 to 507 this past fall. Preliminary data for the coming fall suggest that enrollment will continue to rise, although the school still has a way to go before matching its highest enrollment figure of 550 students in 1992. There has also been an increase in the number of African American students, but minority enrollment at GSPH still is short of its goals. Even more distressing is the lack of progress in diversifying the faculty. Despite an increase in total faculty members from 111 to 142 during the past four years, the number of minority faculty members remains almost unchanged.

Faculty success in research has been nothing short of phenomenal. Total external funding directly credited to GSPH has almost doubled in the past four years, increasing from \$42.5 million in FY 2001 to an estimated \$79 million in FY 2005. An additional \$17 million in research funds are brought in annually by GSPH faculty members but are credited to the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute or other Pitt entities. Therefore, the average amount of external funding is more than \$600,000 per faculty member per year.

Particularly gratifying has been the growth in interactions with the public health community. GSPH's new Public Health Practice faculty designation recognizes the academic strength of the field. Working more closely with the Allegheny County Health Department and other local partners has been beneficial to GSPH. Of note has been the growth of the Center for Minority Health and the Center for Public Health Practice, as well as the development of the Center for Healthy Aging in McKeesport and the Center for Rural Health Practice at Pitt-Bradford.

This increase in external funding has put an enormous pressure on space. The school is now in the unenviable position of having its main buildings, Parran and Crabtree, representing less than half of its total space, with the rest of its space spread around 19 locations in Oakland and elsewhere.

The good news is that GSPH's space needs are one of the four items in the University's capital budget request to Harrisburg for the coming fiscal year, and Dr. Levine has included significant new space for GSPH in Pitt's academic health center submission to the University's next 10-year capital planning process. This is the first time since the construction of Crabtree Hall four decades ago that significant new space for GSPH has been on the University's agenda.

GSPH also has experienced significant growth in endowed student fellowships, resulting in many more opportunities for scholarship funds for deserving students. This increase in competitive awards is part of the reason that 68 of our students were honored at the 2005 University of Pittsburgh Honors Convocation, as compared to 32 in 2001. Another reason for the growth is that our students have done very well in national competitions. Similarly, 20 faculty members were recognized for special distinction at this year's honors convocation, compared to 12 in 2001. My major goal before returning to the faculty is to obtain funding for additional endowed student awards, as I believe students and our ability to fund their studies are central to the future of our school.

I also want to thank the faculty leadership for opening their spring meeting to GSPH staff. We are particularly fortunate in having an excellent staff whose members are highly dedicated to the mission of the school. Their inclusion in the faculty meeting is symbolic of the collaborative spirit of GSPH.

As I said at the faculty meeting, the best advice I could give to the next dean is for her or him to stay out of the way of faculty members—but when they sprint past you, be sure to give them a pat on the back.

Again, my deepest thanks to all of you for the opportunity to serve as dean, and I look forward to continuing to work with you in creating a healthier world.

Bernard D. Goldstein

Cutting Edge

A Sampling of Innovative Research

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome and Early Vascular Changes Linked

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), a common disorder characterized by metabolic and endocrine abnormalities, is associated with early buildup of calcium in coronary arteries, endangering the heart, according to a study by GSPH researchers published in the November issue of *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*. The study was funded by a grant from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health.

“Our findings indicate a strong correlation between PCOS, metabolic cardiovascular syndrome, and initial evidence of calcium deposits that signal blood vessel disease,” said the study’s first author,



Evelyn Talbott, professor of epidemiology and of communication science and disorders. Other GSPH authors include Jeanne Zborowski, Judith Rager, and Monique Boudreaux, all of the epidemiology department.

“Given the large number of women with PCOS and the long incubation period for calcium accumulation in coronary arteries, early and aggressive intervention through lifestyle changes and medication in adolescence and young adulthood may significantly reduce heart disease-related death and illness,” Talbott said.

Affecting about 10 million women in the United States, PCOS previously was treated on a symptom-by-symptom basis by physicians who were unaware that a larger and more complicated condition was present. Today PCOS is increasingly viewed as a lifelong, hereditary, reproductive endocrine condition with both physical and emotional effects. Common symptoms include infertility, irregular menstrual cycles, excessive body hair, ovarian cysts, acne, and obesity.

Women with PCOS who also had metabolic cardiovascular syndrome (MCS)—which is associated with insulin resistance, increased waist size, and high blood pressure—were found to be at an even greater risk of calcification in coronary and abdominal arteries, the study found. PCOS-affected women were more than four times more likely to have MCS than those in the control group who did not have PCOS.

“This is the first study to demonstrate a link between the specific components of MCS in younger women with PCOS and subsequent subclinical coronary atherosclerosis observed at the nine-year follow up,” Talbott said.

Higher levels of testosterone in the bloodstream were also found to be associated with increased risk of aortic calcifications in all women, whether or not they had

an endocrine disorder. Earlier studies have noted such a correlation in women older than 55, but this study found a similar link in women in their 40s.

“These results are provocative and show the need for further investigation of testosterone and PCOS as the two relate to heart and blood vessel disease in later life,” said Talbott.

Talbott, Evelyn O., Jeanne V. Zborowski, Judith Rager, Monique Boudreaux, Daniel Edmundowicz, and David Guzik. “Evidence for an Association between Metabolic Cardiovascular Syndrome and Coronary and Aortic Calcification among Women with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome.” *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, 89 (November 2004): 5454–5461.

Study Finds a More Powerful Predictor of Heart Disease

Early cardiovascular changes, measurable even before symptoms appear, are more powerful predictors of a future stroke, heart attack, or other coronary disease than traditional risk factors such as smoking, obesity, and a sedentary lifestyle. Narrowing of the carotid arteries, electrocardiographic abnormalities, ankle-arm blood pressure index, and carotid intima-media are solid, independent risk factors for future cardiovascular events, including heart attack and stroke. That’s according to a study presented last November at the American Heart Association’s Scientific Sessions 2004 in New Orleans, La., by Lewis H. Kuller, professor and former chair of the Department of Epidemiology.

Kuller reported on the long-term outcomes of patients in the Cardiovascular Health Study, a population-based longitudinal study of coronary heart disease and stroke in adults older than 65 sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health. “Now we can identify older men and women who don’t have any clinical



disease or other risk factors, and yet who are at very high risk,” said Kuller. “Especially among women, these measures are really quite powerful.”

Black women with subclinical disease had more than a two-and-a-half-fold higher risk of a subsequent cardiac event than those who did not have early evidence of cardiovascular changes—the highest risk of any group. Black and White men were found to be nearly twice as likely to have a clinical disease after 10 years if evidence of subclinical disease was present earlier. White women with subclinical disease had a 60 percent higher risk of a subsequent cardiac event, the study found.

“In contrast to traditional measures that provide a snapshot picture of risk factor levels at one point in time, the index of measures [identified in this study] reflects cumulative vascular burden that can more accurately point to later risk for coronary artery disease,” Kuller said. “Earlier interventions, perhaps with drugs to treat cholesterol and hypertension, as well as controlling diabetes and making modifications in exercise and diet, could perhaps help to reverse the process.”

Kuller, Lewis H., Bruce Psaty, Alice Arnold, John Robbins, Russell Tracy, Teri Manolio, Daniel O’Leary, Gregory Burke, and Paolo Chaves. “Risk Factors, Subclinical Disease, and Clinical Disease in Older Adults: The Cardiovascular Health Study.” Adapted from *Circulation* 2004; 17 (Suppl III):III-799. (Abstract #3693). Presented at American Heart Association Scientific Sessions 2004, 7–10 November, New Orleans, La.

Exposure to Smoky Coal Emissions in China May Increase Risk for Genetic Mutations Involved in Lung Cancer

Exposure to emissions from smoky coal used for heating and cooking in Xuan Wei County, China, may cause genetic mutations that greatly increase the risk of developing lung cancer, according to a study of residents there. The research, directed by Phouthone Keohavong, associate professor of environmental and occupational health, was presented last October at the 35th Annual Meeting of the Environmental Mutagen Society in Pittsburgh.

“Lung cancer mortality rates in Xuan Wei are among the highest in China in both nonsmoking women and men who smoke, and are associated with exposure to indoor emissions from the burning of smoky coal,” said Keohavong. The levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons generated during cooking with smoky coal are comparable to exposure levels experienced by coke oven workers.

The study, funded by a grant from the American Cancer Society, screened for two mutations fundamental to the development of the vast majority of cancers—p53, a tumor suppressor gene that prevents normal cells from turning into tumor cells, and K-ras, an oncogene. The study found that 16.3 percent of those screened tested positive for the mutations, indicating they had a higher risk of developing lung cancer in the future.

In other studies, Keohavong and his colleagues found the frequencies and types of K-ras and p53 mutations in nonsmoking women from Xuan Wei were similar to the mutations found in men from Xuan Wei who smoked.

“Tobacco smoking is rare in women from Xuan Wei, yet the female population has an abnormally high lung cancer death rate,” said Keohavong. “Women in this region traditionally start the fires

and cook, spending more time inside homes that lack ventilation. As a result, they are more likely to be exposed to potentially dangerous emissions.”

Keohavong, Phouthone, Wei-Min Gao, Qing Lan, Hussam H. Mady, Mona F. Melhem, Judy L. Mumford, and Kui-Cheng Zheng. “Detection of p53 and K-ras Mutations in Sputum of Individuals Exposed to Smoky Coal Emissions in Xuan Wei County, China.” Presented at the 35th Annual Meeting of the Environmental Mutagen Society, Pittsburgh, Pa., October 2–6, 2004.

Progression of Atherosclerosis at Menopause Slowed by Diet and Exercise

The thickening of artery walls is a sign of the progression of atherosclerosis, which typically accelerates as women enter menopause. Increased physical activity and a lower-fat diet can slow this thickening, according to a study published in an August issue of the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*.

“We were able to show that the successful intervention was accompanied by a measurable slowing of the progression of subclinical atherosclerosis,” said Professor of Epidemiology Kim Sutton-Tyrrell, one of the study’s coauthors. “These are the first intervention data showing that modification of these risk factors actually slows progression of disease.” Other coauthors from the Department of Epidemiology include Professor Lewis H. Kuller, graduate student Laura L. Schott, and research associate Sarah Brockwell.

The researchers analyzed ultrasound images of carotid arteries in 353 participants in the Women’s Healthy Lifestyle Project, who were premenopausal at the trial’s outset. About half the women took part in a lifestyle intervention program to reduce dietary fat and boost physical activity. The women in the control group received the same checkups, but

not the intensive group sessions and lifestyle follow-up support the women in the intervention group received.

When the researchers analyzed results from the 160 women who entered menopause during the trial, they found that on average the artery walls of those in the lifestyle intervention group had thickened more slowly than had the artery walls of those in the control group.

“Diet and exercise really work. Not only do they result in lower weight and cholesterol levels, the result is also a slowing of disease progression,” Sutton-Tyrrell said. “This is particularly important for women undergoing the menopausal transition because this is a point at which the progression of disease seems to accelerate. The intervention prevented this acceleration of disease progression that occurs with menopause.”

Wildman, Rachel P., Laura L. Schott, Sarah Brockwell, Lewis H. Kuller, and Kim Sutton-Tyrrell. “A Dietary and Exercise Intervention Slows Menopause-Associated Progression of Subclinical Atherosclerosis as Measured by Intima-Media Thickness of the Carotid Arteries.” *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, 44 (3) (August 4, 2004): 579–585.



Caregivers Feel Emotional Burden after Placing Relative in Long-Term Care

Caregivers who must make the difficult decision to place their relatives into institutionalized care get no relief from depression and anxiety, according to results of a multisite study coordinated by the University of Pittsburgh. In fact, the study shows caregivers suffer additional emotional trauma following their decision. The study was published in an August 2004 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

“Caregiving—particularly for a spouse with dementia—by an elderly caregiver is a stressful experience that can lead

to adverse health effects and even an increased rate of mortality,” said Professor of Epidemiology and Associate Professor of Biostatistics Steven H. Belle, one of the study’s coauthors. Additional authors from GSPH include Song Zhang, graduate student in biostatistics, and Kathleen A. McGinnis, graduate student in behavioral and community health sciences.

“Placing care recipients in nursing homes or other institutions does not necessarily ameliorate adverse effects,” said Belle. “Caregivers continue to spend time with care recipients on a regular basis and often still perform tasks similar to those carried out at home. In addition, new tasks, including interacting with facility personnel, advocating for the patient, and sharing decision making with others, are often undertaken.”

Caregivers who were married to the patient and those who visited their loved one most frequently had the most difficult transition. Spouses reported higher levels of depression both before and after placement and more anxiety after placement than their nonspouse counterparts. Almost half of the caregivers in the study visited the patient daily and continued to provide some form of physical care during their visits.

“This study shows that we need to help caregivers who place their relatives,” said lead author Richard Schulz, professor of psychiatry at Pitt’s School of Medicine and director of the Center for Social and Urban Research. “We need to treat their emotional distress, educate them about the nature of long-term care facilities and their impact on patient functioning, engage them in end-of-life planning, and prepare them for the eventual death of their loved one.”

The study was funded by grants from the National Institute on Aging and the National Institute for Nursing Research.



Schulz, Richard, Steven H. Belle, Sara J. Czaja, Kathleen McGinnis, Alan Stevens, and Song Zhang. “Long-Term Care Placement of Dementia Patients and Caregiver Health and Well-Being.” *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 292 (August 25, 2004): 961–967.

Study to Explore Connection of Tobacco and Alcohol Use to Head and Neck Cancer

Researchers from GSPH and Pitt’s School of Medicine will examine the correlation between promising genetic markers for head and neck cancer and tobacco and alcohol use.

“The research aims to build on previous efforts to identify inherited or genetic factors that take account of interindividual differences with respect to personal susceptibility to the effects of the known causes for head and neck cancer. The known causes for head and neck cancer include tobacco and alcohol use,” said Joel L. Weissfeld, associate professor of epidemiology and assistant professor of medicine in the School of Medicine. Weissfeld coleads the research with Marjorie Romkes, associate professor with the Center for Clinical Pharmacology in the School of Medicine.

“Eighty percent of head and neck cancer patients are smokers, chew tobacco, and consume large amounts of alcohol,”

said Romkes. “If we can determine who among this population will most likely develop cancer, we can screen and treat them earlier, potentially improving their prognoses and quality of life.”

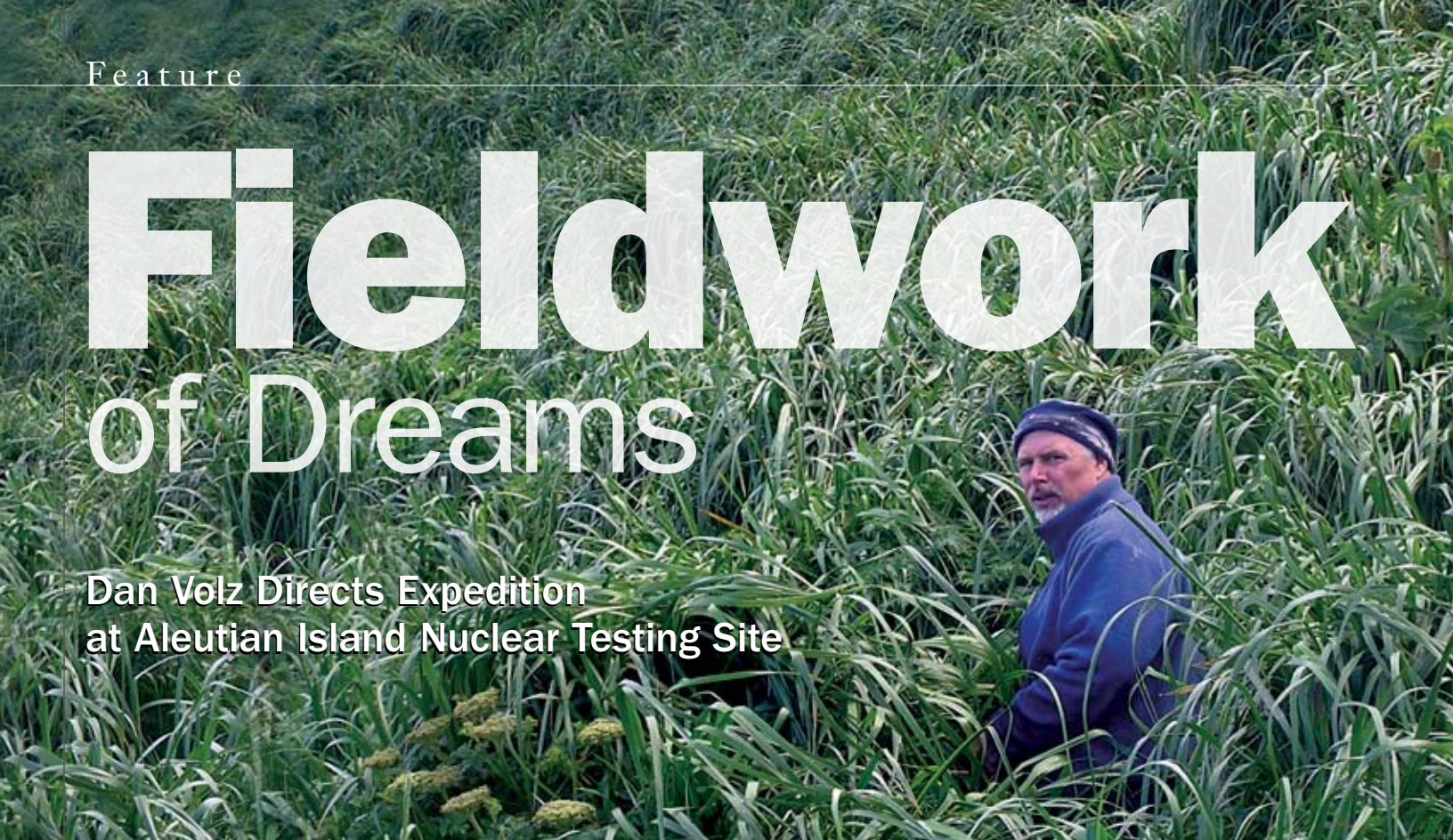
To better identify these individuals, Romkes and Weissfeld will examine alterations in a DNA repair gene, XPD, and a cell cycle regulatory gene, cyclin D1, that previous research at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI) determined to be significant predictors of increased risk of head and neck cancer, as well as increased risk for lung cancer in smokers. The researchers will examine the interaction of those genes, with the goal of identifying individuals who have an increased likelihood of developing head and neck cancer.

The research project was announced as part of a five-year, \$10 million Specialized Program of Research Excellence (SPORE) federal grant to examine innovative treatment strategies designed to improve survival outcomes for patients with head and neck cancer. The grant, awarded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI), is the second SPORE grant awarded to UPCI. The first was awarded to the cancer institute’s Lung Cancer Program in 2001. The latest award is one of only four SPORE grants in head and neck cancer awarded nationally.



Fieldwork of Dreams

Dan Volz Directs Expedition at Aleutian Island Nuclear Testing Site



Conrad "Dan" Volz searches for eiders in high grass.

His life flashed before his eyes when a 10-foot wave crashed over his head and knocked him down in his small boat. But Conrad "Dan" Volz, assistant professor with the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health and the Center for Public Health Practice, was too focused on not losing a skiff that was vital to the success of his expedition.

The intertidal waters off the remote, unpopulated Aleutian island had been choppy at the outset of this particular diving trip. In the 20 minutes it took to make the first dive of the day, the sea swells had become as high as 15 feet. As project director of a study investigating the potential health and ecological consequences of radioactivity from the sites of the nation's largest underground nuclear explosions—off the coast of Amchitka Island, Alaska—Volz was in charge of overseeing the logistics. He was phase I health and safety and overall radiation control officer and was with the divers that day to make sure the biota they retrieved were not radioactive. Once the divers had left safely in two of the skiffs, the research team headed back to the *Ocean Explorer*, the 136-foot trawler that served as their lab, work space, and home away from home.

Volz had just finished unloading samples and equipment from his skiff to the trawler when the first wave slammed him down. The skiff's moorings broke loose, and Volz was swept out to sea. He managed to drain the water out of the skiff and start the motor. A second attempt to hoist the boat onto the trawler with a crane failed, and Volz was four feet out of the water when another wave broke over him and washed the boat out again.

"You would go up a swell and then you would go down," Volz recalls. "You couldn't see anything but water all around you, and then you would have to race the motor up another swell. Going down the other end, you'd have to slow yourself down so you wouldn't hit the water too fast and be washed over. You had to time it perfectly."

Volz, a graduate of the Outward Bound mountaineering school, is no stranger to big adventures. An experienced mountaineer with a professional background in environmental consulting, he's tackled the Alps quite a few times and been ski mountaineering in the Rockies.

Volz is also accustomed to dealing with the logistics of large, complex projects. The company he founded in 1983, Volz Environmental Services, consulted with the Department of Defense (DOD) on major projects in 20 countries. One DOD contract was for a \$20 million asbestos management project that took place on four continents. In 1995, after selling his company, Volz returned to school to work on his doctorate in environmental and occupational health, which he received from GSPH in 2002.

Amchitka Island: Assessing the Aftermath

From 1965 to 1971, Amchitka Island was the site of three planned underground nuclear detonations, code-named Long Shot, Milrow, and Cannikin. Long Shot tested whether the United States would be able to detect an underground Russian nuclear explosion, or tell the difference between a natural seismic event and a nuclear detonation. The Cannikin blast, at five megatons the largest underground explosion in U.S. history, had

been considered too damaging for the Nevada testing grounds. The detonation was so powerful, it changed the physical makeup of the island.

"There were 10-foot rolling waves of land," Volz says. "Many of the surrounding sea cliffs caved into the ocean."

Volz and the other researchers arrived at Amchitka in June 2004 to begin their five-week expedition, which would include a scientific assessment of the island and surrounding marine environment. Charles W. Powers, professor of environmental and occupational medicine at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School of the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey, served as principal investigator, and the team included researchers from Rutgers, Vanderbilt University, the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and the University of Alberta.

The expedition was part of a \$3 million study funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) through the independent Consortium for Risk Evaluation with Stakeholder Participation II (CRESP II). CRESP is a multi-university consortium and think tank (cofounded in 1995 by GSPH Dean Bernard D. Goldstein) that addresses the complex environmental challenges created by nuclear waste left over from the cold war era.

Above-ground remediation of the land had already been carried out by the DOE and deemed successful. The DOE planned to turn management of marine life on the island over to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as part of the Aleutian Maritime Wildlife Refuge; however, first it had to make sure there wasn't any radioactive leakage seeping into the ocean and contaminating the wildlife.

“I’ve done big adventures, but nothing like this combination of high adventure and highly scientific, technical, and administrative work. This has been the greatest undertaking for me—without a doubt the greatest adventure of my life.”

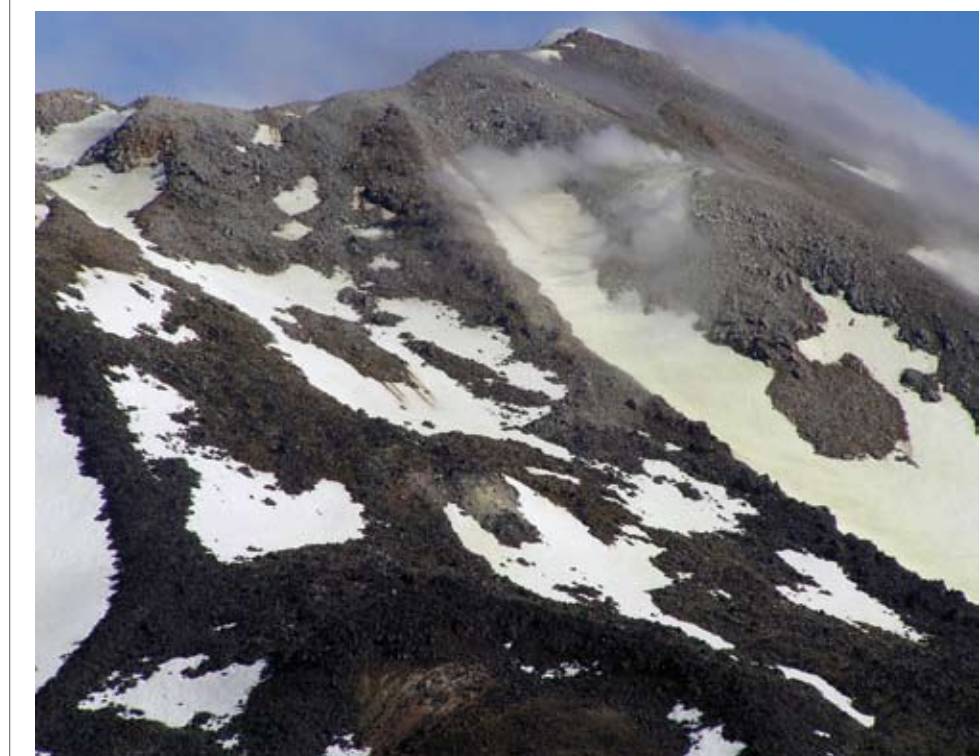
The primary purpose of the CRESP expedition was to explore the issue of contamination from fissures and leakages of radionuclides— isotopes exhibiting radioactivity—into the marine environment. The group would also establish a baseline for use in future studies.

“Our goal was to determine if a threat exists to human or ecological organisms in the maritime environment surrounding Amchitka Island, especially in those areas where there would be possible leakage into the ocean from the Cannikin, Long Shot, and Milrow sites,” says Volz.

Phase I: Charting a Course

Phase I of the project comprised two teams: a physical oceanography team led by Mark Johnson of UAF, and a magnetotellurics team headed by Martyn Unsworth of the University of Alberta. Magnetotellurics (MT) is the science of using probes to measure the distribution of electrical conductivity in the subsurface of the earth.

“Magnetotellurics can provide an underground picture of the cracks and crevices of the geological structure of the earth,” says Volz. “You can also get an idea





of the layers of water—fresh and salt—and where they are relative to the shot cavities of each of these underground nuclear blasts.”

To install the MT recording devices, the team traveled long distances over transects—from the Bering Sea on one side of the island to the northern Pacific Ocean on the other—that included the shot cavities from the three blast sites.

The work was physically challenging—punishing at times—with 40 mph winds and 40-degree temperatures. Members of the MT team had to carry 50 pounds of equipment on their backs, including scientific gear and miscellaneous items such as car batteries and digging implements.

“We had metal detectors with us at all times in the field, literally sweeping pathways before us,” says Volz. “We had to wear steel-shanked boots at all times. ... Walking is extremely difficult. You sink in about a foot with every step.”

The oceanography crew worked simultaneously in the water, mapping the underlying structures of the ocean floor. Using sidescan and multibeam sonar as well as conductivity temperature density (CDT) probes to create a three-dimensional view, the team searched for faults and fissures that could provide pathways for radionuclides to escape.

At the end of two grueling weeks—with the workday often beginning at 6:30 a.m. and lasting until midnight, when the sun finally set—the teams went back to their original base of operations on Adak Island. There, they met the Phase II teams who had just arrived and were preparing to spend their three weeks in the field.

Phase II: Hunting and Gathering

Phase II was the biological sampling component of the expedition. Native Aleut hunting groups joined a team of scientific divers led by Stephen Jewett of UAF and a team of biologists led by Joanna Burger of Rutgers.

“The idea of the second expedition was for scientists to take samples, but also for the Aleuts themselves to be involved, because the Aleutian/Pribilof Island people are stakeholders,” says Volz. “So their representatives were there to hunt and gather in their traditional ways.



“This was also a much trickier operation than Phase I because we had to launch people every day in skiffs on the ocean to dive,” says Volz. (It was on the second day of this phase that Volz had his high-seas adventure.)

The Aleuts helped Volz and some of the other technicians hunt for tufted puffins, guillemots, and eiders to find out if the native species—which feed on biota in the ocean—are bioaccumulating radionuclides. Radionuclides accumulate in tissue, and the researchers need to determine whether they’re making their way up the food chain.

“For instance,” says Volz, “if we have kelp accumulating some radionuclides and a fish eats some of that, it will bioaccumulate in certain tissues. Then if the eagle comes along and grabs that fish, it will take it back and feed some of it to its young, and it will bioaccumulate even further in tissues.”

Volz’s team obtained a permit from the U.S. Forest Service to take birds, including bald eagle chicks, which they apprehended by climbing and rappelling off cliffs. One team member distracted the adult eagle while the other retrieved the feathers, eggs, and chicks. Once, an eagle swooped down on Burger and tore the hood of her jacket.

“Our goal was to determine if a threat exists to human or ecological organisms in the maritime environment surrounding Amchitka Island, especially in those areas where there would be possible leakage into the ocean from the Cannikin, Long Shot, and Milrow sites.”

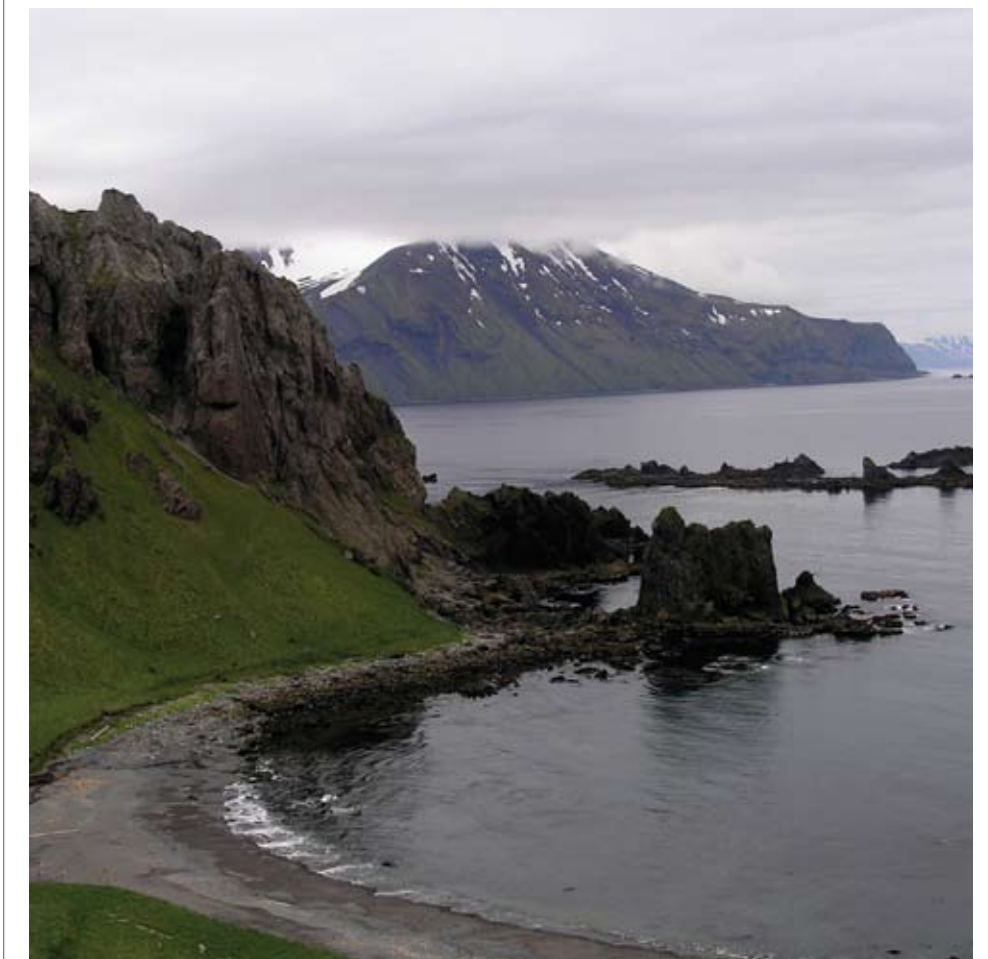
In the analysis portion of phase II, the scientists expect to determine whether there are health risks from increased radiation to the birds, fish, and other organisms in the area on and around Amchitka Island and whether those risks increase farther up the food chain. In addition, they will determine which species would be the most useful to monitor for the long-term stewardship of the area. The results may have implications for native fishermen as well as for commercial fishing.

The list of marine flora and fauna the biologists and divers sampled is as colorful as the organisms themselves—acorn barnacle, giant chiton, green sea urchin, blue mussel, basket star, rock jingle, alaria, brown king crab, octopus, Dolly Varden trout, sea lettuce, Atka mackerel, halibut, and cod.

Adventure of a Lifetime

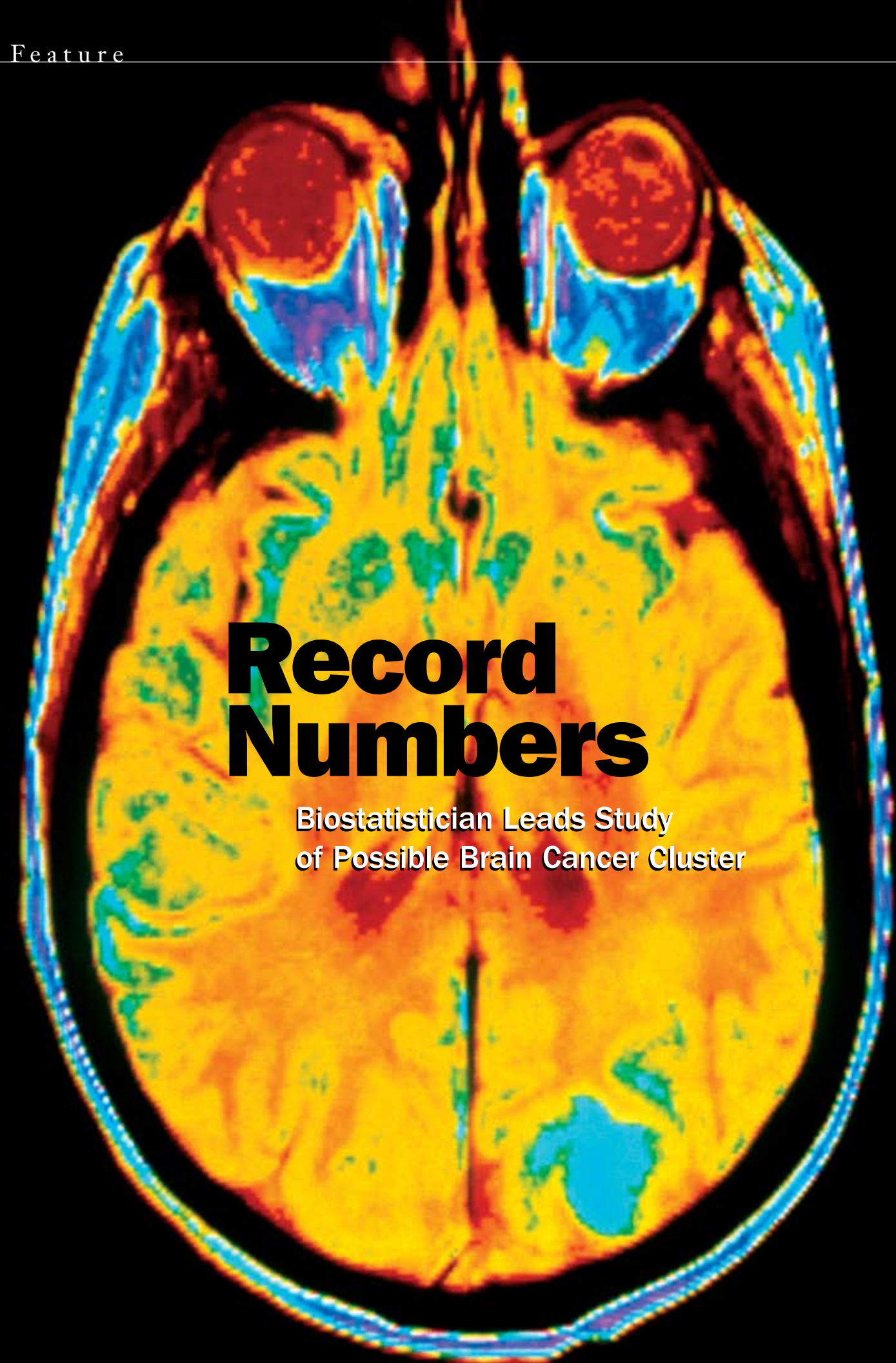
Ask Volz about the fieldwork at Amchitka Island, and he will tell you about the extremes—gale force winds, exaggerated hours of daylight, indigo-blue lupines as far as the eye could see, enveloping fog, the treeless wilderness, and the boggy tundra. He’ll tell you about molting bald eagle chicks, puffins and whales, and the dazzling array of marine life. He’ll tell you how physically challenging the work was—and how absorbing and invigorating.

Life in the continental United States has been considerably tamer for Volz and his team, although not necessarily less busy. The scientists are engaged in the extensive work of developing sampling protocols and analyzing field samples. Volz expects



the report will be complete by midsummer 2005. Because the CRESP project was designed to produce a stand-alone report, the group’s work will then be finished. But Volz, for one, would love to find a way to go back to Amchitka.

“I’ve done big adventures,” he says, “but nothing like this combination of high adventure and highly scientific, technical, and administrative work. This has been the greatest undertaking for me—without a doubt the greatest adventure of my life.”



Record Numbers

Biostatistician Leads Study of Possible Brain Cancer Cluster

Gary Marsh and his research team are accustomed to conducting large occupational epidemiology studies. They recently completed research on a group of 13,000 workers in the synthetic rubber industry who were exposed to chloroprene, an agent that has been proven to be carcinogenic in animal experiments but hadn't yet been tested on humans.

Then there was the landmark 40,000-subject study the team did on workers in the synthetic fibers industry. The study concluded that fiberglass, unlike asbestos, poses no health problems and that the microscopic glass fibers actually dissolve in the lungs over time.

"If you pick up one of the occupational epidemiology journals and flip through it, you'll find the typical study has between 5,000 and 20,000 subjects. Rarely are they larger than 20,000," says Marsh, professor of biostatistics. "There really aren't that many groups in the country that have the resources or interest in doing these large studies. They're time consuming, complex, and messy. They have political overtones. A lot of people choose not to do them. We like to do them."

It's a good thing they do, because one of the team's current projects is large—very large. With 250,000 subjects, Marsh calls it "the mother ship" of this type of epidemiological study, and he's not aware of any that have been larger.

Cancer Outbreak: Coincidence or Cluster?

At the North Haven, Conn., plant of jet-engine manufacturer Pratt & Whitney, an employee died suddenly of brain cancer in 2000. A month later, another died from the same cause. Soon, other Pratt & Whitney employees were diagnosed with brain cancer, and their coworkers, families, and union representatives wanted to know why.



Gary Marsh

Brain cancer is a dramatic—and rare—disease. In the general population, it affects seven in 100,000 people. Glioblastoma multiforme, the brain tumor that caused the deaths of the first two men and several others in the North Haven facility, is the most common, and most deadly, form of brain cancer. It typically carries a life expectancy of less than a year after diagnosis.

"The only established etiologic cause of malignant brain cancer is ionizing radiation," Marsh says. "I could list a whole lot of chemicals that are known to cause lung cancer. With brain cancer, there are a few that have been implicated, but none of them are established."

The families of Pratt & Whitney workers, along with union representatives, approached Mary Lou Fleissner (DrPH '83), director of environmental epidemiology and occupational health at the Connecticut Department of Public Health. They had a list of 16 Pratt & Whitney employees they thought had brain cancer. Fleissner conducted a preliminary analysis that suggested the number of cases at the North Haven plant might be more than would be expected in the general population.

"This wasn't an analysis that you could validate because they didn't do a systematic search of cases in the entire population," says Marsh.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the research arm of the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA), collaborated with Fleissner to review the cases. When asked to make a recommendation for the full study, NIOSH suggested Fleissner team with Marsh, based on his experience and ability to marshal the kinds of resources needed to conduct a study of this magnitude.

"One thing that's interesting about this study is that there is no real *a priori* hypothesis about what's behind these cases," says Marsh. "By and large, this is an exploratory study. That also makes it difficult and challenging."

Two Factors: Exposure and Populations at Risk

Before beginning work on the study, the team had to determine whether it was even feasible.

“Whenever you’re studying a suspected cancer excess, you have to allow for sufficient time to have elapsed between an exposure that might have caused that excess and the actual occurrence,” Marsh says.

Glioblastomas have a long latency period. If exposure to a carcinogen indeed caused the incidence of brain cancer at Pratt & Whitney, researchers had to determine when it occurred—it could have been 20 or 30 years ago. In order for the study to proceed, Pratt & Whitney needed to collect information on the subjects’ work history, including where they worked within the plant, what they did, and what kind of exposure they might have received.

For the next several months, Marsh’s team worked with Pratt & Whitney to determine the availability, completeness, and accuracy of the records, not only for the North Haven plant, but also for six other Pratt & Whitney plants in Connecticut. They located enough complete sets of records to warrant a full investigation. At that point they estimated the number of participants to be 100,000, which they soon realized was an underestimate. The study now involves 250,000 workers and multiple pages of information on each subject.

Researchers discovered many of the purported cases of brain cancer had turned out to be benign or to be cancer that had metastasized in the brain from a tumor that had formed elsewhere in the body. Preliminary studies did, however, reveal four confirmed cases involving primary, malignant brain tumors among workers at the North Haven plant—all

“The only established etiologic cause of malignant brain cancer is ionizing radiation. I could list a whole lot of chemicals that are known to cause lung cancer. With brain cancer, there are a few that have been implicated, but none of them are established.”

four of whom had worked in the vane or blade grinding departments prior to 1990. Whether this represents a brain cancer cluster will not be determined until Marsh’s team finishes gathering and analyzing the data.

In addition to the GSPH study, a concurrent study by Nurtan Esmen, a former GSPH faculty member now at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will reconstruct past exposures based on pre-existing conditions at the plant and on the processes that were used to make parts.

In the course of the study, researchers hope to determine if there was a high incidence of malignant brain cancer among Pratt & Whitney workers. The next step, if they find there was an excess, will be to try to determine the reason for the excess by looking at subgroups of the population with respect to time period, age group, race, gender, when the subjects were hired, and how long they worked. Even if Marsh’s group doesn’t find an excess, they will do a subgroup analysis to make sure they haven’t overlooked an excess that was diluted by the larger group analysis.

“You could have a subgroup of that population with an excess,” says Marsh, “but if the rest of the population did not have one and it outnumbered them, it could wash it out.”

Groundbreaking Research

In addition to the exposure-risk and population-at-risk studies, two substudies will take place—a nested control study and a genetic fingerprinting study.

The nested control study involves gathering detailed information on two groups—an identified cases group and a matched control group. The genetic study will be directed by Frank Lieberman, associate professor of neurology and medical oncology at Pitt and head of the adult neuro-oncology program, in collaboration with Sydney Finkelstein of Redpath Integrated Pathology Inc. Researchers will develop genetic profiles of Pratt & Whitney brain cancer cases to see if they differ from the genetic profiles of other brain cancer cases and to determine whether there are certain profiles that are indicative of classes of chemical exposures.

Marsh estimates his team will complete the data-gathering part of the study by the end of 2005, with some preliminary findings coming in late 2006. The study is expected to end in 2009.

“The information content of this study is so vast compared to any epidemiological study conducted to date that it has the potential to identify risk factors, aside from ionizing radiation, for brain cancer,” Marsh says. “This would be groundbreaking research.”

Porter Prize Lecture Emphasizes Health Disparities in the United States

Former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis W. Sullivan received the 2004 Porter Prize award from GSPH this past October. During his lecture, Sullivan spoke regarding “Strategies for Addressing Healthcare Disparities in the Nation.”

Sullivan said that despite several decades of progress, opportunities for minorities and the poor to have equal access to health care and jobs in healthcare-related fields are still below expectations. With the United States becoming more diverse and Caucasians expected to be the minority population by the year 2050, Sullivan warned, “We can’t wait until then to address these problems.”

One of Sullivan’s recommendations for reducing health disparities in the United States is to increase the number of minority health professionals—something he hopes to do through the Sullivan Commission he established in 2003. Sullivan also emphasized the need for more behavioral research on the impact of culture and value systems on health compliance and on the effectiveness of healthcare structures and functions. He noted the economic benefits of a healthy nation, insisting that government funding for public health programs is a necessity because healthier people will contribute more to the economy.

Sullivan remained optimistic about the ability of the United States to increase the quality and length of life and to eliminate health inequities in the population by 2010. He urged public health officials—as well as research facilities like the National Institutes of Health and GSPH—to seize the moment and use their powerful tools of research, technology, and understanding of other cultures to improve health outcomes. He commended the University of Pittsburgh schools of the health sciences and UPMC for the talent, resourcefulness, and creative energy of their faculties.

“Public health professionals,” Sullivan said, “must lead the way to the day when inequities will be looked upon as a condition of a bygone time. We will get there, I hope sooner rather than later, and when we do there will be cause for celebration. Celebrate we will.”

Sullivan served as secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services from 1989 to 1993, when he returned to his previous position as president of Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) in Atlanta, Ga. He was the founding dean and director of the medical education program at Morehouse beginning in 1975 and when it became the School of Medicine in 1978. He was named president emeritus of MSM in 2002.

Sullivan has also served as chair of the advisory council of the American Network of Health Promoting Universities (ANHPU), of which the University of Pittsburgh is one. ANHPU, a project of the Association of Academic Health Centers, encourages its members to actively support programs that will improve community health. Sullivan is also founding president of the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools.

Established in 1985 by the Adrienne and Milton Porter Charitable Foundation, the Porter Prize has been administered by GSPH annually since 1999 to honor an individual for exemplary performance in promoting health. Former recipients of the Porter Prize include Fred M. Rogers,



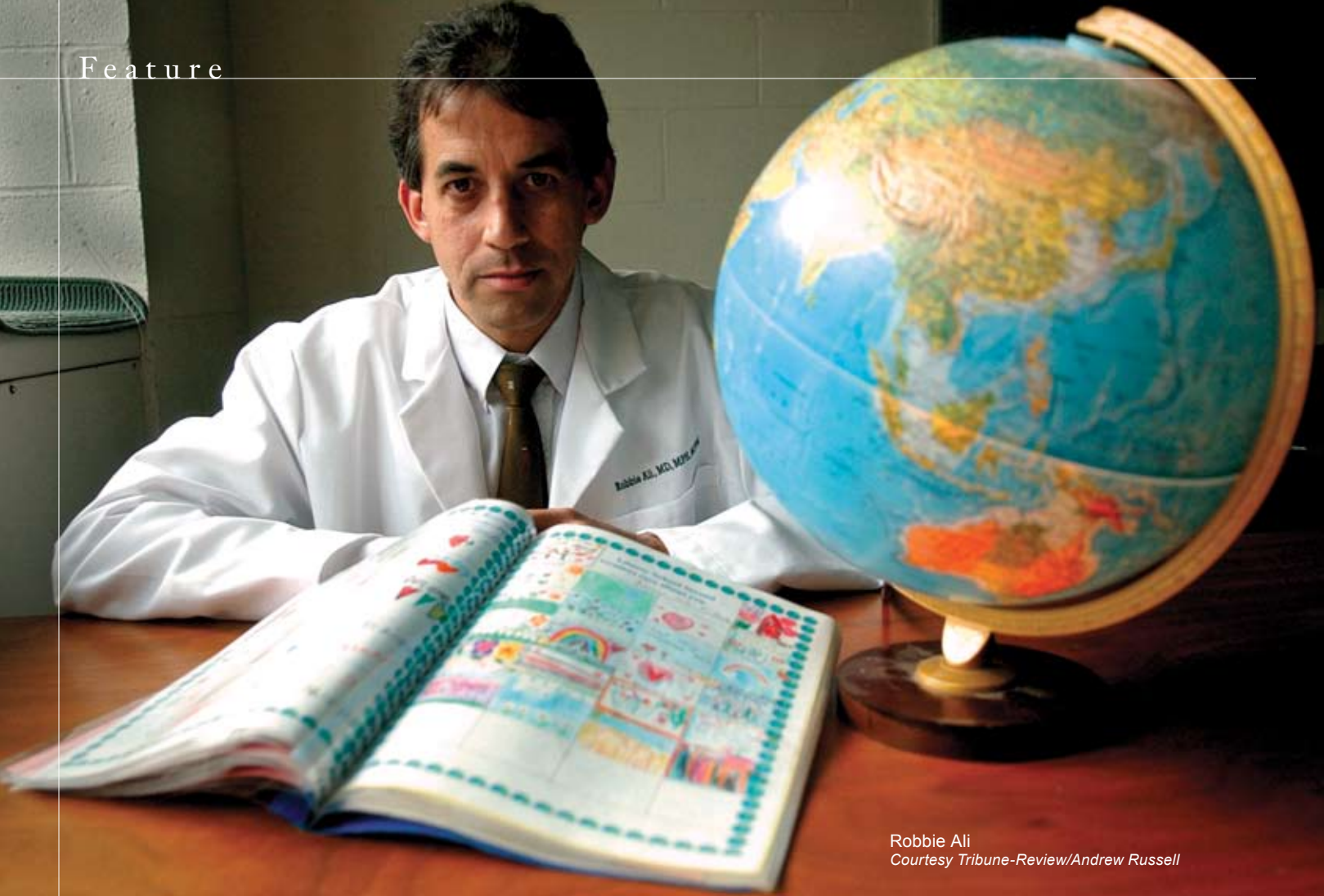
Porter Prize chair Judith L. Davenport (MPH '74) and Louis W. Sullivan

Senator H. John Heinz III, C. Everett Koop, Gordon H. DeFries, William D. Novelli, and Steven A. Schroeder.

Audio of Sullivan’s lecture can be accessed by visiting <http://cidde-msl.cidde.pitt.edu>. Under Categories, select the Graduate School of Public Health and then choose the 2004 Porter Prize Lecture. Audio can only be accessed using Microsoft Explorer and Windows Media Player.



The 2005 Porter Prize was awarded in April to educator and comedian Bill Cosby for his longstanding advocacy for health promotion and disease prevention, including his recent book, *I Am What I Ate . . . and I’m Frightened!!!*, which highlights the importance of nutrition and a healthy lifestyle. See complete coverage of the 2005 Porter Prize in the fall issue of *PublicHealth*.



Robbie Ali
Courtesy Tribune-Review/Andrew Russell

Serving Both Local and Global Communities

Robbie Ali Heads New Center for Healthy Environments and Communities

Whether Robbie Ali is in Indonesia providing relief to tsunami survivors or at home in his native Pittsburgh seeking solutions to public health problems, his primary interest is in mobilizing communities to consider the impact environment has on health—and vice versa. Ali takes his role as a public and environmental health educator to the community quite seriously, regardless of where his “classroom” is located or who his “students” happen to be.

Ali, assistant professor of behavioral and community health sciences and environmental and occupational health, is committed to educating the community through research. He is founding director of GSPH’s new Center for Healthy Environments and Communities (CHEC), which was conceived as part of an effort to focus on Pittsburgh’s environmental

health. One of Ali’s current projects through the center is a report on the state of environmental health data for the city.

“If you want to know how much cancer is caused by the environment in Pittsburgh ... it’s really hard to get those answers,” says Ali. “Assessing the state of information will allow for a better understanding of the limits of what can be learned and maybe for finding areas where there’s a need that could be met realistically.”

Ali is committed to educating the community through its youth. The College After School Team (CAST) is a CHEC-run program at Peabody High School, which is located in the East Liberty section of Pittsburgh. Fifty Pitt students travel to Peabody to work with high school students one-on-one and in small groups on the theme “How to Go to College.”

“If CAST’s theme were environmental health or even community service, the high school students just wouldn’t have the interest,” Ali says. “But everyone wants to succeed in some way. So we’ve chosen to help them with things that they need to do to in order to graduate from high school.”

Because high school students are required to complete a graduation project, the program has become a vehicle for getting them to choose a topic involving community service or some aspect of environmental health. Ali has mobilized 35 different community groups that are willing to work with the students in an effort to steer them toward topics that involve reaching out to their community. Last semester, one group did a project on green buildings, another chose to research various types of cancer, and a third focused on nutrition and school lunches.



“This fits in with what I’d like to see—topics that are relevant to high school students but which also involve an environmental perspective on health and something that’s relevant to their own community,” Ali says. He calls the CAST program one of the most satisfying things he does. “I guess what I’m pushing for is a different way of approaching health—and a different relationship with the environment.”

In February, Ali took his work halfway around the world to Indonesia, seeking not only to lend his skills in emergency medicine to tsunami relief efforts, but again, to reach out to a local community ravaged by the December disaster. He spent 16 days in Aceh, an Indonesian province in northwestern Sumatra that was especially hard hit.

“There were a lot of deaths and there are a lot of displaced people,” he says. “There are issues of outbreaks of infectious disease related to the tsunami. We plan to help revitalize their health system, using community health workers as a main agent of change.”



No stranger to the region, Ali spent parts of the last three years in Indonesian Borneo working to protect the rainforest and to develop a health program for local indigenous peoples living in remote areas. He believes it’s important to work with the Indonesian government to help promote community-managed health and train members of the community to serve as health advocates and educators.

Ali views the work he did in Aceh in much the same way as he does his work with CHEC in Pittsburgh. In fact, he hopes to return in the spring to establish a sister-city relationship between Pittsburgh and Nagan Raya, a district in Aceh.



“It’s easier over there in some ways,” he says. “Communities there function as communities. At Peabody High School we’re looking at community building. The high school is a place to focus our efforts. In Indonesia, the community is there. We just have to provide them with some structure and tools because they already have the mindset. It’s the same work, different context.”

Photos taken during Ali’s trip to Aceh show the devastation caused by the tsunami.

After the Tsunami: Understanding the Disaster

Before leaving for Indonesia to assist with tsunami relief efforts, Robbie Ali participated in a January panel discussion titled “Tsunami: Causes, Impact, and Response.” Pitt’s Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA), GSPH, and several other groups sponsored the policy forum to promote an understanding of the natural disaster, the challenges of responding, and local actions that are being taken in response.

Pittsburgh Indonesia Partnership Fund

GSPIA and GSPH also established the Pittsburgh Indonesia Partnership Fund to assist in identifying and assessing communities in Indonesia with which the schools will partner to provide immediate assistance and foster long-term development.

To donate to the fund, please send your check, made payable to the University of Pittsburgh and indicating “Pittsburgh Indonesia Partnership Fund,” to University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, Wendy Wareham, Director of Development, 3403 Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260.

On the World Wide Web

Ali isn’t the only GSPH faculty member responding to the tsunami. Shortly after the disaster, GSPH professor of epidemiology Ron LaPorte and epidemiology student Faina Linkov worked with colleagues from Russia, Iran, and the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health to develop an online lecture titled “TSUNAMI” for the GSPH Supercourse, a Web-based collection of PowerPoint lectures on prevention that currently includes more than 2,000 lectures utilizing a network of 20,000 faculty in 150 countries. To view the lecture, which contains information about the definition, causes, risks, socioeconomic impact, and methods of predicting tsunamis, go to <http://www.asu.edu/lib/news/tsunami05.ppt>.

From the Top Shelf

Books by GSPH Faculty

Molecular Toxicology Protocols

Edited by Phouthone Keohavong and Stephen G. Grant (Totowa, N.J.: Humana Press, 2005)

The field of toxicology has traditionally focused on identifying chemicals and other poisonous agents with an eye toward keeping potentially cancer-causing products from coming to market, says GSPH researcher Stephen Grant.

“You take chemicals,” he says, “newly made chemicals, for the most part, and you run them through a battery of tests to see if there’s anything bad about them.”

But Grant thinks such an approach has limitations. “Even when you identify a chemical that might be bad in the environment, it’s not out in the environment by itself. But almost every test we have only identifies chemicals one at a time.”

He proposes approaching toxicology from another direction—testing humans for possibly unavoidable exposures to toxins and then designing methods of intervention.

“I think starting with the human population has a lot more power,” he says. “You break up the disease mechanism into exposure to chemicals and the biological effect of chemicals. Then you can start to determine if there’s been an effect that is precancerous.”

Grant and Phouthone Keohavong, both associate professors of environmental and occupational health, have coedited the 500-page *Molecular Toxicology Protocols*, which they call a how-to book of procedures for measuring carcinogenic and cytotoxic effects on cells and their DNA.

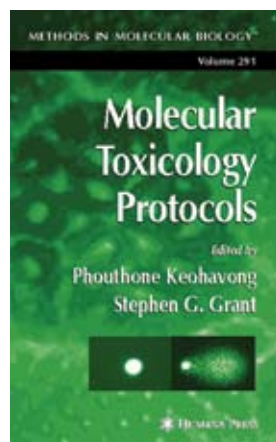
“Molecular toxicology has evolved,” says Keohavong. “We have to take into account that we are now in a transition to very sensitive new methods to locate alterations and genetic abnormalities, not only at the level of the mutant cell or tumor, but also in the benign or nonmalignant as well as in the early stage of genetic alteration induction in the cells.”

Both Grant and Keohavong agree that one of the most important things about the volume is the comprehensive notes section, provided so that scientists who read a chapter for the first time will be able to run the experiment.

“Every protocol has an introduction that reviews what it has been used for, along with notes. The notes represent

the cumulative experience of our attempts not only to run the procedure and optimize it, but to export it to other people,” Grant says. “Including what kinds of problems they ran into and how they were resolved.”

The book is divided into seven sections—analysis of DNA adducts, detection of chromosomal and genome-wide damage, detection and characterization of surrogate gene mutation, detection and characterization of cancer gene mutation, analysis of DNA repair mechanisms, array technologies, and apoptosis.



Experts in the field of toxicology from across the United States, Europe, Japan, and India contributed to the book. In addition to Grant and Keohavong, other Pitt faculty who have written chapters are Valerian Kagan, Jim Fabisiak, Marjorie Romkes—all environmental and occupational health professors—and Jean Latimer from the School of Medicine. Also contributing chapters to the book are former GSPH professors Tony Godfrey and Patrick Koty.

Many of these faculty members were recruited to the environmental and occupational health department by former GSPH Interim Dean Herbert Rosenkranz, who passed away in November and to whom Grant and Keohavong intend to dedicate the follow-up volume, which has been solicited for publication in 2008.



Stephen Grant (above) and Phouthone Keohavong

Feature

Bestselling Author Devra Davis Joins GSPH

Nationally known expert on environmental dangers and award-winning author of the 2002 bestseller *When Smoke Ran Like Water: Tales of Environmental Deception and the Battle Against Pollution* Devra Davis has joined GSPH as professor of epidemiology. Davis will also serve as director of the Center for Environmental Oncology, an innovative new center at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI). The mission of the center is to use multidisciplinary approaches to lowering the risk of cancer by applying the latest scientific findings to reducing the environmental and avoidable causes of cancer.

“Dr. Davis is a national leader in the field of epidemiology,” said Dean Bernard D. Goldstein. “We anticipate that she will have a major impact in synthesizing the vast amount of scientific data that are becoming available

on the causes of cancer and converting this information into effective public policy and education programs.”

While in her former post as senior advisor to the assistant secretary for health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Davis counseled leading officials in the United States, the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the World Bank, offering her expertise in the area of environmental dangers. In 1994, President Clinton appointed her to the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board. She also was a distinguished visiting professor at Yeshiva University’s Stern College for Women and a scholar in residence and executive director of the Board on Environmental Studies and Toxicology at the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences.



Devra Davis

Honored for her research and public policy work by various national and international groups—including the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute—Davis has authored more than 170 scientific publications and edited 11 books.

SCOPE Conference GSPH Hosts Workshop on Emerging Infections



Participants in the fall 2004 SCOPE workshop, including GSPH representatives Robbie Ali (front row, second from left), Dean Bernard D. Goldstein (front row, third from right), and Douglas J. Perkins (back row, second from left)

GSPH hosted a workshop last fall titled Environmental Causes of Emerging and Re-Emerging Infections that featured an invited group of scientists from around the world who are involved in researching the environment and infectious diseases.

The workshop was sponsored by the United Nations Environmental

Programme (UNEP) and the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE). The purpose of the meeting was to analyze and synthesize the available information on the topic into a single document to be shared with environmental ministers at UNEP’s annual meeting. GSPH was especially pleased to serve as host to this meeting,

as this was the first time UNEP had chosen a topic related to human health for one of the two emergency areas on which it briefs the ministers.

Attendees included GSPH representatives Robbie Ali, assistant professor of behavioral and community health sciences and environmental and occupational health; Dean Bernard D. Goldstein; and Douglas J. Perkins, assistant professor of infectious diseases and microbiology. Other participants included scientists from across the United States as well as representatives from Mexico, India, Kenya, and Egypt.

Goldstein is a vice president of SCOPE, a 40-nation organization headquartered in Paris that is devoted to the synthesis and analysis of scientific information related to environmental issues.

Spotlight

Bradford Receives Nathan Hershey Endowment Award

Lauren Bradford, a master's degree student in the Department of Health Policy & Management, was selected as a recipient of the Nathan Hershey Endowment in Health Administration. The Nathan Hershey endowment was established to aid Master of Health Administration (MHA) students who demonstrate merit in academic achievement and the potential to contribute to the profession of healthcare administration and policy.

Patel and Danchenko Named First Recipients of Evelyn Wei Memorial Awards

Ami Patel and **Natalya Danchenko**, both doctoral students in epidemiology, are the first recipients of travel awards from the memorial fund established in honor of Evelyn Han-Li Wei (PhD '99). Danchenko applied her award toward her trip to the 6th European Lupus Meeting in London this March, where she presented her poster "Epidemiology of Systemic Lupus: A Comparison of Worldwide Disease Burden." Patel used her award to present a poster titled "Chronic Low Level Exposure to Gasoline Vapors and Risk of Cancer: A Community-Based Study" at the International Society for Environmental Epidemiology conference held last August in New York.

2005 George Qi Wang Award Given to Parikh

Rahul Parikh, a doctoral student in human genetics, has received the 2005 George Qi Wang Memorial Student Assistance Fund in Pharmacogenetics Award for his research proposal titled "The Role of Angiotensin Receptors (ATR): Up-Regulation in Oral Squamous

Cell Carcinomas (OSCC) and Its Implications for Therapy." The competitive award provides an incentive for graduate students in the University's six schools of the health sciences and the Faculty of Arts & Sciences to pursue graduate research studies in pharmacogenetics. The George Wang award has been made possible through the generosity of Novartis and gifts from the family and friends of George Qi Wang.

Additional Student Awards and Fellowships

Ghada Farhat, a doctoral degree student in the Department of Epidemiology, received the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research Young Investigator Award for her presentation "Volumetric and Area Bone Mineral Density Measures are Associated with Cardiovascular Disease in Older Men and Women: The Healthy Aging and Body Composition Study."

Naila Khalil, a doctoral student in epidemiology, was the recipient of a 2004 Student Scholarship from the American Public Health Association's (APHA) Environment Section, given to public health students involved in environmental health promotion. Khalil was one of only 25 students nationwide to receive the award. The award assists students with registration and/or travel costs associated with attending the APHA annual meeting.

Anna Noller, a doctoral student in infectious diseases and microbiology, was chosen to participate in the Association of Schools of Public Health/Centers for Disease Control (ASPH/CDC) Fellowship Program through the Office of Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response. ASPH/CDC Fellows work on projects with Centers, Institutes, and Offices (CIO) at the CDC for one to two years.

Rosemarie Ramos, a doctoral student in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, is the recipient of a Pennsylvania Space



Grant Consortium Fellowship for the 2004 term. The fellowship supported her study titled "Geographic and Socioeconomic Distribution of Risk for

Asthma Hospitalization of Adults Living in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania," which investigated the temporal relationship between adult hospitalization for asthma and poor air quality. The award recognized Ramos' outstanding academic record and her research in an area related to the NASA space program.

Claudia Leiras, a doctoral student in epidemiology, has been honored with the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award, an individual fellowship award from the National Institutes of Health. The award provides Leiras with an annual stipend to help pay for tuition and other expenses as she finishes her doctorate. Leiras' research interest is in finding markers for early cancer susceptibility.

MMPH Students Present Their Research

Radha Krishna Kambhampati, a student in the Multidisciplinary Master of Public Health (MMPH) Program and a practicing psychiatrist, traveled to Bangalore, India, to give a presentation titled "Public Health and Clinical Practice" for an international medical meeting at the M.S. Ramaiah Memorial Hospital in December. His presentation emphasized the importance and impact of public health research on clinical practice.

Profile

Physician Edward Teeple Jr. Adds MMPH to his Educational Credentials

In the '80s, when lasers were first introduced in the operating room, anesthesiologist **Edward Teeple Jr.** was put in charge of safety for his department at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh. He quickly realized there wasn't a product available to help shield patients from the potentially harmful side effects of lasers.

So he developed one. Teeple and a business partner with a background in the metals industry located a company that could weld a high-melting-temperature plastic between two sheets of aluminum foil. After testing the product, they patented it, ushered it through the FDA approval process, and brought it to market. They went through the same process to develop an eye shield to protect patients' eyes during laser surgery.

At the hospital's invitation, Kambhampati will return to provide additional public health lectures or courses for the physicians.

Scott N. Myers, a student in the MMPH program, presented research at the annual meeting of both the American Society of Human Genetics in October and the American Society of Hematology in December. Myers is working as a Pediatric Oncology Fellow at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, and is assisting in the research efforts of Robert Ferrell, professor and former chair of the Department of Human Genetics, and Rakesh Goyal, director of the Blood and Marrow Transplantation program

Teeple, who also holds an MBA from Pitt's Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business, later developed a computer program for continuous intravenous infusion anesthesia. "It works very well," he says. "I use it myself. But it didn't sell as a product because most anesthesiologists don't purchase their own equipment. Great products don't always find good markets."

That kind of initiative and a willingness to take risks led Teeple—currently director of neuroanesthesia at UPMC Shadyside—to GSPH's Multidisciplinary Master of Public Health (MMPH) Program. He has also been active in the Allegheny County Medical Society and served as president in 2004. In addition to his practice, Teeple conducts clinical research.



Edward Teeple Jr.

"More and more, I noticed that the things that were coming across the table when I was president were related to public health," he says. "I figured I might as well get involved in learning about those things. Quite a number of the courses I've taken offer insight into medicine. I like to be an informed physician."

"I believe in broad-based continuing education," he says. "A little education never hurts at any point in your life."

Corrections to the Fall 2004 Issue

"Pitt Men's Study Hits 20-Year Milestone," page 13. Pictured in the photo from left to right are Charles Rinaldo, chair of the Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology; Gene Ricciardi, Pittsburgh City Council president; and GSPH Dean Bernard D. Goldstein.

School Roundup, page 25. To date, James L. Craig has generously donated more than \$100,000 to the Endowed Excellence in Education Award that bears his name.

2004 GSPH Student Awards Luncheon

Thirty-four students were recognized during the 2004 GSPH Student Awards Luncheon in mid-December, including recipients of awards from GSPH's named endowment funds, GSPH scholarships, and the University's K. Leroy Irvis Fellowship. The luncheon also gave students the opportunity to personally thank some of the individuals for whom the awards are named and who helped make the awards possible.

Among the GSPH donors joining students at the luncheon were Edgar Duncan (MsHyg '56), former assistant professor of health services administration and former associate dean for research (Dr. Edgar and Lauraine Duncan Endowed Fund for Student Resources award); Nathan Hershey, professor in GSPH's Department of Health Policy & Management (Nathan Hershey Endowment in Health Administration award); Lewis Kuller, professor and former chair of GSPH's Department of Epidemiology, and wife Alice (Lewis H. Kuller Scholarship Fund award); and Yuling Wei, mother of Evelyn Han-Li Wei (PhD '99) and senior research associate in GSPH's Department of Epidemiology (Evelyn H. Wei Memorial Fund award).

The students honored during the luncheon, listed according to the award received:

GSPH Awards

GSPH Scholarship Endowment Award

Genevieve Barrow (BIOS)
Linda Berry (EPI)
Ina Jones (BCHS)
Jill Montgomery (IDM)

Public Health Dean's Scholarship Award

Alina Bodea-Crisan (BCHS)
Alana Gregg (EPI)
Shalini Reshmi-Skarja (HuGen)
Nadra Tyus (BCHS)

Disadvantaged Student Award

Alexander Aboka (MMPH)
Pelbreton Balfour (MMPH)
Linda Berry (EPI)
Vanisha Brown (EPI)
Mario Browne (BCHS)
Keon Gilbert (BCHS)
Khaleelah Glover (BIOS)
Roderick Harris (BCHS)
Ina Jones (BCHS)
Lynda Lee-Bishop (EPI)
LaToya Miller (BCHS)
Priscah Mujuru (EPI)
Vinaya Murthy (HuGen)

Bintu Sherif (BIOS)
Valerie Stallworth (BCHS)
Nadra Tyus (BCHS)

Dr. Edgar and Lauraine Duncan Endowed Fund for Student Resources Award

Alexander Aboka (MMPH)
Mario Browne (BCHS)

Herbert S. Rosenkranz Award

Sunita Dodani (EPI)

Department-Administered Awards

Biostatistics Endowed Scholarship Fund Award (BIOS)

Epiphany Nyirabahizi

Evelyn H. Wei Memorial Fund Award (EPI)

Natalya Danchenko
Ami Patel

George Keleti Memorial Award for Excellence in Environmental Health (EOH)

Rosemarie Ramos

John M. Arthur/Duquesne Light Co. Fellowship Award (EOH)

Aimin Zhang

Lewis H. Kuller Scholarship Fund Award (EPI)

Katherine Berger
Vanisha Brown
Xiao Hui Xu

Nathan Hershey Endowment in Health Administration Award (HPM)

Lauren Bradford
Mark Faccenda

The Professor Emeritus Thomas B. Fitzpatrick Scholarship Award (HPM)

H. Thomas Berlin Jr.

University Award

K. Leroy Irvis Fellowship Award

Roderick Harris (BCHS)
Sharyn Parks (EPI)
Keisha Tyler (BCHS)
Maxine Wright-Walters (EOH)



Lewis Kuller with Vanisha Brown (left) and Katherine Berger, Lewis H. Kuller Scholarship Fund award recipients



Disadvantaged Student Award recipients (back, left to right) Mario Browne, Bintu Sherif, Keon Gilbert, Vanisha Brown, Roderick Harris, (front) Nadra Tyus, and Ina Jones with Angela Ford, associate director of the Center for Minority Health (front, center)



Edgar Duncan (right) with Mario Browne, recipient of the Dr. Edgar and Lauraine Duncan Endowed Fund for Student Resources award



Left to right: Lauren Bradford, recipient of the Nathan Hershey Endowment in Health Administration award, with Nathan Hershey and Wesley Rohrer, assistant professor of health policy and management



Yuling Wei (left) congratulates Evelyn H. Wei Memorial Fund award recipient Ami Patel.



Dean Bernard D. Goldstein with Public Health Dean's Scholarship award recipients (left to right) Alina Bodea-Crisan, Nadra Tyus, and Shalini Reshmi-Skarja



Assistant Dean for Student Affairs Mary Derkach (center) with GSPH Scholarship Endowment award recipients Jill Montgomery (left) and Ina Jones

Roundup

Check Out the Latest GSPH News

Twenty-nine GSPH faculty and students presented oral or poster presentations at the American Public Health Association meeting in Washington, D.C., in November. The presenters offered a broad range of research addressing different areas of public health.

Several GSPH faculty members have been awarded \$20,000 Global Academic Partnership (GAP) grants from Pitt's Global Studies Program. **Ravi Sharma**, assistant professor, and **Ken Thompson**, associate professor, both of behavioral and community health sciences, received an award for their support of a 2006 international conference on societal inequality as it relates to overall distribution of resources and individual and aggregate health. **Richard Day**, assistant professor of biostatistics, and **Linda Frank**, assistant professor of infectious diseases and microbiology, received a grant for an international workshop this spring that will bring together Russian scientists working to control the spread of HIV/AIDS in the eastern region of the Russian Federation. GAP grants support research conferences on global issues organized by faculty from two or more Pitt schools, and are designed to strengthen interdisciplinary research and curriculum development at Pitt while enhancing international scholarly ties.

Behavioral and Community Health Sciences

Robert M. Goodman, professor and chair of the department, has been named a 2004 Distinguished Fellow by the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE). The highest honor SOPHE bestows, the award was presented to Goodman at SOPHE's 55th annual awards ceremony in November.

Assistant professors **Robbie Ali** and **Ravi Sharma** received the 2005 John Bowman Faculty Grant from the Nationality Rooms and Intercultural Exchange Programs of the University Center for International Studies. Pitt faculty use these grants for travel and study during the summer to research courses they teach or are preparing to teach.

James Butler, assistant professor, also with the Center for Public Health Practice, provided the definition of passive smoking that will appear in the new edition of the *Encyclopedia of Health Psychology*.

Biostatistics

Assistant Professor **Jong-Hyeon Jeong** received a grant from the U.S. Department of Defense Breast Cancer Research Program. The award will fund Jeong's project titled "Statistical Modeling on Life Expectancy of Breast Cancer Patients."

Environmental and Occupational Health

Associate Professor **Aaron Barchowsky's** article "Arsenic Stimulates Angiogenesis and Tumorigenesis *In Vivo*" was unanimously selected by the Society of Toxicology Board of Publications as the best paper published in *Toxicological Sciences*



Robert M. Goodman

during the past year. Barchowsky and his former colleagues at the Dartmouth Medical School were recognized with an award for the article at the annual meeting of the Society of Toxicology in March.

The National Institute of Environmental Health Services has awarded Associate Professor **Barry Stripp** a grant to study Clara cell secretion and oxidant lung pollutants.

Assistant Professor **Nancy Sussman** and Assistant Professor of Epidemiology **Richard Bilonick** are currently conducting a project funded by the U.S. Department of Energy in which they will help estimate the health effects of coal-fired power plant emissions and analyze which emissions are most detrimental. They will survey data on air monitoring and health collected in the Pennsylvania region between 1999 and 2003.

Assistant Professor **Conrad Daniel Volz**, who is also with the Center for Public Health Practice, has received a \$925,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to evaluate environmental interventions for low-income asthmatic children.

Epidemiology

Research from **Roberta B. Ness**, professor and chair, on variants in the immune system genes that help regulate inflammation, appeared in a December issue of *American Journal of Epidemiology*. The study, titled "Differential Distribution of Allelic Variants in Cytokine Genes Among African Americans and White Americans," reports that African Americans are more likely to carry these variants and are also more likely to carry genotypes that hinder the release of anti-inflammatory proteins.

B. Delia Johnson, research associate, has developed an algorithm based on hormone levels that will clarify where a woman is in her transition to menopause. This can help determine her susceptibility to certain conditions for which the risk increases after menopause, such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and bone loss. The research was published in an October issue of *Journal of Women's Health*.

Reduced amounts of the protein adiponectin in the blood indicate a significant risk of cardiovascular disease for people with diabetes mellitus type 1, according to a study by Professor **Trevor Orchard** published in *Diabetologia*, the journal of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes. Orchard's research suggests adiponectin is an indicator of cardiovascular risk and a possible therapy target for prevention among high-risk individuals.

More than 100 people turned out for professor **Kim Sutton-Tyrrell's** December jewelry sale, the proceeds of which benefited the Evelyn H. Wei Memorial Fund. The sale raised more than \$1,500 for the fund, which was established in honor of Evelyn Han-Li Wei (PhD '99) to support epidemiology students' travel to conferences and meetings.

Steve Wisniewski, associate professor and researcher with the Epidemiology Data Center; **Anthony Fabio**, investigator with the Center for Injury Research and Control and assistant professor of neurological surgery at UPMC; and **Rolph Loeber**, Distinguished University Professor of Psychiatry, Psychology, and Epidemiology, received a research and training grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to study trends in youth violence among Pittsburgh inner-city youth.

Health Policy & Management

Professor **Nathan Hershey** has been appointed to the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing for a five-year term.



Nathan Hershey

Assistant Professor **Patricia Sweeney**, who is also with the Center for Public Health Practice, received the 2004 American Public Health Association (APHA) Balderson Award at last fall's APHA meeting in Washington, D.C. Sweeney and her team were recognized for their study of bioterrorism preparedness training and of the need for continuing education among school nurses.

Human Genetics

Michael B. Gorin, associate professor of human genetics and professor of ophthalmology at the School of Medicine, was awarded a Senior Scientific Investigator Award by the Research to Prevent Blindness organization. The award is given to a nationally recognized scientist who is researching eye disease. Gorin's research involves medical and genetic retinal diseases and ophthalmic genetics with an emphasis on inherited retinal disorders and age-related maculopathy.

Infectious Diseases and Microbiology

In December, Assistant Professor **Rodger Beatty** attended the 25th anniversary of the National Association of Lesbian and Gay Addiction Professionals (NALGAP), an organization devoted to providing service to and advocacy for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered substance abusers. He has been a member of NALGAP since 1980 and served as the group's president for five years. Beatty also attended and participated in the winter meeting of the Adult AIDS Clinical Trials Group in Baltimore and has served as chair of the group's advisory board since 2000.

Centers

Connie Bayles, program director for the **Center for Healthy Aging (CHA)** and clinical assistant professor of epidemiology, presented "The 10 Keys to Healthy Aging: An Innovative Approach to Community Health," at the CDC's National Conference on Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, held recently in Atlanta. The presentation focused on CHA's "10 Keys" community outreach campaign in McKeesport, Pa. The ongoing program employs strategies aimed at reducing preventable diseases and disability in the aging population and improving quality of life and life expectancy.

CHA received funding from The Pittsburgh Foundation to run its "10 Keys" program in 12 Allegheny County Housing Authority senior citizen high rises.

Robert Goodman, professor and chair of the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences, will serve as principal investigator, and **Seunghyun Yoo**, research assistant professor of behavioral and community health sciences, will be the project coordinator.

Hank Weiss, associate professor of epidemiology and director of the **Center for Injury Research & Control**, received a Live Online Award (LOLA) for his online session titled “Car Crashes During Pregnancy.” The award recognizes outstanding achievement in the design, delivery, and production of live online learning events from across the globe.

Stephen Thomas, director of the **Center for Minority Health (CMH)** and Philip Hallen Professor of Community Health and Social Justice, was honored as one of *New Pittsburgh Courier’s* “50 Men of Influence” in a special supplement published last June.

Thomas was also the lead guest editor of the December issue of the *American Journal of Public Health (AJPH)*, and author of the Editor’s Choice article, titled “Health Disparities: The Importance of Culture and Health Communication.” The issue focused on the critical challenge of eliminating health disparities. Contributors included representatives from Pitt, along with researchers who participated in the 2004 National Minority Health Leadership Summit sponsored by **CMH**.

In October, **CMH** announced the Healthy Black Family Project, an initiative directed at decreasing diabetes and hypertension in Pittsburgh neighborhoods. Project participants will go door-to-door to recruit Black families to join in a multi-year effort to improve their diet, increase their physical activity, and reduce stress.

In November, **CMH** received a Racial Justice Award from YWCA Greater Pittsburgh in recognition of the center’s commitment to eliminating racism.

CMH cosponsored the American Cancer Society’s Fourth Annual Youth Tobacco-Free Leadership Institute in early November. The institute develops student leaders in grades 9–11 by providing the tools and knowledge they will need to become advocates, peer educators, and activists for key tobacco control issues in their communities.



Stephen Thomas

The **Center for Public Health Practice (CPHP)** is celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2005 with a symposium that will bring together scholar-practitioners from across the nation to discuss academic public health practice. The center was established in 1994 to enhance the academic and practical goals of public health practice through research, teaching, and service.

CPHP has received grants from the Forbes Funds, the Jewish Health Care Foundation, and the Pittsburgh Foundation to conduct a feasibility study examining the long-term partnership between GSPH and the Allegheny County Health Department. The study will help to identify new educational programs, research opportunities, and ways to better determine the region’s healthcare needs.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has awarded the **Center for Public Health Preparedness (UPCPHP)** a \$5 million grant for the next five years. The center will use the new funding to focus on its three areas of specialization: rural preparedness, legal preparedness, and surge capacity. The center also will work closely with the UPMC Center for Biosecurity and other Pitt partners to advance the translation of public health preparedness science and policy into practice.

Gail S. Cairns, assistant professor of behavioral and community health sciences and deputy director of the **UPCPHP**, has been appointed its interim executive director. Cairns has worked as a public health consultant with the CPHP since 2001, and has also served as codirector for academic programs at UPCPHP. Teaching one of the first courses in emergency preparedness, Cairns also helped design and launch the Public Health Preparedness and Disaster Response Certificate program.

Part of the Public Health Preparedness Project sponsored by the **Center for Rural Health Practice (CRHP)** and UPCPHP, a Pennsylvania Rural Preparedness Task Force convened for the first time in early February at the DuBois (Pa.) Regional Medical Center. The group consists of 28 representatives from state and rural response organizations committed to developing a rural preparedness training curriculum for emergency responders across Pennsylvania.

Michael Meit, director of the **CRHP**, and **Ravi Sharma**, assistant professor in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences, have released a report titled “Community Health Needs Assessment: McKean County, Pennsylvania” that identifies factors affecting the county population’s health and resources available to address its specific health needs.

GSPH Offers Bioterrorism Lecture Series

by Janet Horsch



Lecture series speaker Elin Gursky of ANSER

With topics ranging from biodefense research approaches to protecting civilians to public health leadership during a bioattack, the Pittsburgh Bioterrorism Lecture Series (PBTLS) annually draws national bioterrorism and biosecurity experts to the University of Pittsburgh.

Now in its third year and open to the public, the series has featured such speakers as William Raub, acting assistant secretary for planning and evaluation with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Scott Lillibridge, former director of the Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); David Cullin, director of technology, Joint Program Executive Office for Chemical and Biological Defense; and Elin Gursky, principal deputy for biodefense for the National Strategies Support Directorate of ANSER.

Launched in February 2002 by Associate Professor Samuel Watson of the Department of Environmental and Occupational

Health, PBTLS was originally funded with generous support from Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Nimick Jr.

“In starting and continuing the Pittsburgh Bioterrorism Lecture Series, we are committed to bringing nationally prominent people to the Graduate School of Public Health,” Watson says. “This furthers our goal of exposing the region’s community to bioterrorism issues, and the lecturers to the great synergies in bioterrorism preparedness here in southwestern Pennsylvania.”

Watson is a former senior White House official with extensive federal government experience in national security policy making, intelligence, counterterrorism, and national-level preparedness, and currently serves as the senior biosecurity advisor for the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Preparedness (UPCPHP). In addition to the lectures, Watson arranges meetings for speakers with key faculty and administrators in the schools of the health sciences

and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC).

UPCPHP now sponsors the lecture series through generous support from the CDC. As part of the CDC’s national network of Centers for Public Health Preparedness, UPCPHP, which is based in the Center for Public Health Practice, trains the public health workforce to respond to threats to the nation’s health from bioterrorism, infectious disease outbreaks, and other public health emergencies.

Other recent lectures have included Monica Schoch-Spana of the Center for Biosecurity at UPMC; David Carney of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene; Vicki Freimuth of the University of Georgia and formerly of the CDC, and Kristine Qureshi of Adelphi University School of Nursing.

For more information, visit www.cphp.pitt.edu/upcphp.

Assistant Professor Reaches Out to Latino Community

Last September, more than 500 members of the Latino community from Pittsburgh area communities crowded into the classrooms and hallways of St. Hyacinth Church in Oakland for *Al Servicio de la Comunidad (Serving the Community)*, a health, wellness, and information fair.

The third annual fair—the city’s largest ever—was spearheaded by Patricia Documét (MPH ’95, DrPH ’01), assistant professor of behavioral and community health sciences at GSPH. The atmosphere was festive and ethnic, and the food was plentiful. One room was set aside for children to play.

“Latinos take their children and extended family everywhere,” explains Documét. “Everybody goes everywhere—grandmother, child, uncle, the baby.”

Attendees received information from 54 organizations on topics that ranged from health monitoring and disease prevention to banking, careers, and even bicycle maintenance. The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile was also on hand to provide free blood glucose and blood pressure tests.

Documét, who had been a pediatrician in Peru, chose to get involved in public health issues when she came to America in 1991.

“I always believed that medicine was a social science,” she says.

The impetus for the information fair was Documét’s 2001 doctoral dissertation, for which her research on healthcare access for Latinos in southwestern Pennsylvania had revealed a cause for concern. In Allegheny County, 38 percent of Latinos—the highest percentage of all ethnic groups—are



Patricia Documét (left) and Lora Ann Bray, project director for Cancer Information Services at GSPH’s Center for Minority Health

uninsured. Among low-income Latinos, the percentage of uninsured rises even higher, to 54 percent. Documét also discovered a need to improve the dissemination of information on available resources.

“There is a need for community building,” she says. “We are not a united, cohesive community, but a lot of overlapping communities.”

Symposium Held on Hepatitis-A Outbreak in Western Pennsylvania by Janet Horsch

Last September more than 120 local public health professionals, faculty members, and graduate students attended a symposium on the Hepatitis-A virus titled Anatomy of an Outbreak in Western Pennsylvania. It was sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh Center for Public Health Preparedness (UPCPHP) and GSPH.

The purpose of the symposium was to explore and foster discussion about appropriate public health agency and professional responses to public health crises resulting from food-borne illnesses. The nation's largest Hepatitis-A outbreak—in November 2003 in Monaca, Pa.—served as a practical model of rapid response. The virus has been linked to contaminated green onions that were used in making salsa at Chi Chi's restaurant at the Beaver Valley Mall. A total of 660 people were infected and three died.

Speakers for the symposium included representatives from several local, state, and federal public health agencies that participated in various aspects of the response, including the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Bureau of Epidemiology, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Food Safety & Laboratory Services, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

A panel consisting of Virginia Dato, public health physician with the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Bureau of Epidemiology and associate professor with GSPH's Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences; Bruce Dixon, director of the Allegheny County Health Department; and Marcus Eubanks, a physician with the Medical Center, Beaver, convened after the speaker session to facilitate discussion with the audience.

Organized by Elizabeth Gettig, associate professor of human genetics at GSPH and codirector of the Genetic Counseling Program, the symposium was a good learning tool.

"The symposium was an excellent educational opportunity for our own students to see the management of a critical situation in our own community," says Gettig. "The application of theories, approaches, and research to an actual real world experience demonstrates the value of public health education."

A CDC report on the outbreak is expected soon. UPCPHP is interviewing key people who were involved in the outbreak and the response to it, and from those interviews it will produce a case study of the Hepatitis-A outbreak to be released in the summer of 2005.

PowerPoint presentations of the speakers are available at the UPCPHP Web site, www.cphp.pitt.edu/upcphp.

Inaugural John C. Cutler Lecture Looks at Global HIV Prevention

The complicated history of HIV/AIDS was the subject of the inaugural lecture in honor of the late John C. Cutler. The lecture, which was sponsored by GSPH, was part of the festivities surrounding the University Center for International Studies' International Week in September 2004.

In "Global HIV Prevention—Where Have We Been, Where are We Going?" Sten Vermund, professor of epidemiology, medicine, pediatrics, and nutrition sciences at the University of Alabama, Birmingham, traced the history of the spread of HIV from the 1980s to the present, often referring to research conducted at GSPH through its Pitt Men's Study and others. He insisted early health-education messages aimed at preventing the spread of the disease were too timid and vague to be effective, especially among at-risk populations.

Vermund pointed out that the public health advertisements of the 1980s didn't target the most at-risk populations, weren't specific enough about how to modify behaviors to avoid infection, offered few resources other than a phone number for more information, and didn't use the word "sex."

"We wasted millions of public health education dollars because of our inability to speak frankly with persons who were at risk," he said. "John Cutler would have been shocked."

Vermund said it wasn't until the '90s that the global community accepted that HIV could be devastating to all people, especially in poorer countries. Since then, however, the widespread availability and use of antiviral drugs has turned HIV from a death sentence to a chronic disease. Researchers have also discovered how to block the transmission of HIV from mother to child.



Left to right: Cutler lecturer Sten Vermund; Eliese Cutler, widow of John Cutler; and GSPH Dean Bernard D. Goldstein

Many more advances must still be made. Even though death rates have plummeted in developed countries and among Whites, there is still a disparity in access to quality health care between Whites and minorities in the United States. Although the number of people currently infected with HIV in the United States is the highest it has ever been, the rest of the world is experiencing staggeringly high new-infection rates. Cultural taboos related to HIV, a lack of quality medical care, inadequate funding for health care, and higher rates of intravenous drug use continue to be serious barriers to lowering the new-infection rate in many places. Only a few countries, such as Uganda, Thailand, and Brazil, have seen positive results from aggressive medical, social, and political HIV-prevention efforts.

Vermund closed with a message of cautious optimism. He believes continued progress in combating HIV is possible, provided American academic institutions will partner with developing countries and those countries will commit to funding research, treatment, and prevention efforts. "There is much to be done," said Vermund. "Progress will not be made until we break down the barriers between prevention and care."

Cutler's widow, Eliese, said, "John would have been very pleased by the number of students hearing this lecture. He was deeply involved with the worldwide problem of HIV/AIDS and strongly recommended that it be given much more attention and funding."

The John C. Cutler Annual Global Health Lecture is funded through a permanent endowment that was established by GSPH after Cutler's death in 2003. Cutler's family, friends, and colleagues support the fund to perpetuate his legacy of global health leadership, research, practice, education, and devotion to nurturing the careers of future public health professionals. To donate to the John C. Cutler Memorial Global Health Fund, or for more information on the endowment, please contact Daphne Mayer at 412-383-8849 or dmayer@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu.

Audio of Vermund's lecture can be heard by visiting <http://cidde-ml.cidde.pitt.edu>. Under Categories, select the Graduate School of Public Health and then choose the Inaugural John C. Cutler Annual Global Health Lecture. Audio can only be accessed using Microsoft Explorer and Windows Media Player.

Harvey Fineberg Lecture Celebrates Health Policy Institute's Silver Anniversary

Citing dramatic advances in health in the United States in the 20th century—including an increase in average life expectancy from 50 to 75 years, a 75 percent decline in infant mortality over the past 50 years, and a decline in the number of deaths from cardiovascular disease during the last 40 years—Harvey V. Fineberg, president of the Institute of Medicine, began his lecture, “Changing Health Care in America,” by reflecting on the past.

Turning his attention to what he considers to be the current U.S. healthcare predicament, Fineberg said, “We are confronted with a series of failures in health care,” including 43.6 million uninsured Americans, nursing shortages, worsening burdens of malpractice insurance, and disparities in access and outcomes among different racial and ethnic groups. In addition, noting that only five cents of every healthcare dollar is spent on prevention, Fineberg said, “We need to recognize how underinvested we are in preventing disease before it starts.”

Fineberg proposed what he called a 12-step program of recovery for America's healthcare system based on six criteria—that it be “safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable.” His 12 steps included finding a middle ground politically, investing in health protection and prevention, putting people first, educating for quality and teamwork, experimenting with care models for chronic diseases, paying for performance, and assuring future progress by funding and fostering scientific discovery.



Left to right: Dean Bernard D. Goldstein, M. Allen Pond Professor of Health Policy & Management and director of the Health Policy Institute Beaufort B. Longest, lecturer Harvey V. Fineberg, and Pitt Chancellor Mark A. Nordenberg

“It is most fundamentally important that we keep our arms around the totality of the problem,” Fineberg said. “That we not simply push on one piece of it—because it will be like the proverbial big cushion that blows up wherever we don't push in. Rather we have to try to approach it from a number of sides simultaneously.”

The lecture, which took place in early December 2004, marked the 25th anniversary of GSPH's Health Policy Institute (HPI) and was held in a packed auditorium in Parran Hall.

In the opening remarks, Beaufort B. Longest, M. Allen Pond Professor of Health Policy & Management and director of the Health Policy Institute, noted, “HPI has been supported by 73 foundations, healthcare organizations, and businesses during its life. The breadth of this support has allowed HPI to legitimately claim broad community support and to be a resource for this entire region.”

HPI was founded in 1980 to enhance health care in the Pittsburgh area by improving the policies and decisions that guide the region's healthcare system.

HPM Alum Honored as Legacy Laureate

When David P. Hunter (MPH '70) cofounded The Hunter Group, a nationally recognized healthcare consulting and management company, with Merrilee Gerew in 1987, he relied on the experience he had gained while serving in executive-level positions at several organizations—from a rural hospital in Rochester, N.Y., to the not-for-profit health system VHA Inc.

“We worked with boards of directors and senior management teams and effected change in their organizations. ... If you talk to people in the industry, they'll tell you almost all the clients we dealt with, we changed significantly.”

Hunter served as CEO of The Hunter Group until Navigant Consulting acquired it in September 2002, and he

and managed care organizations such as HMOs and PPOs. Recently, Hunter started a new venture, Hunter and Gerew Advisors Inc., in which he advises healthcare executives.

In October 2004, the University of Pittsburgh honored Hunter as one of its Legacy Laureates for his outstanding personal and professional achievements. An active alumnus, Hunter has spoken at GSPH's Health Policy Institute's governance briefings, and is a member of the GSPH Department of Health Policy & Management National Advisory Board. When Hunter reflects on his professional accomplishments, he is pleased that his success in the healthcare industry reflects positively on his alma mater.

“From the point of view of the industry, they see that a Pitt grad had a significant impact in the last 15 years on what was going on in these individual hospitals,” he says.

“Our work was data based—a very realistic analysis of data that indicated where the organization was going and what kind of condition the organization was going to be in if it procrastinated or didn't make decisions.”

Hunter wanted his firm to fill a niche, turning around troubled healthcare services organizations and offering help to others wanting to improve their performance, through three distinct lines of business—consulting, interim management, and implementation support. The Hunter Group assisted about 250 clients across the country, often stepping in to run some hospital systems on an interim basis.

One reflection of Hunter's success was that his last name began to be used as a verb in the healthcare industry. “People would talk about getting ‘hunterized,’” he says.

The firm built a reputation of being fairly aggressive because it pushed its clients, which is why Hunter is only half joking when he refers to the company's modus operandi as the “grim-reality methodology.”

“Our work was data based—a very realistic analysis of data that indicated where the organization was going and what kind of condition the organization was going to be in if it procrastinated or didn't make decisions,” he says.

remained with Navigant until March 2004. At the time of the acquisition, The Hunter Group employed 60 professionals and had posted revenues of more than \$27 million in 2001. The firm continues to provide services to hospitals, health systems, physician-group practices,



David Hunter (center) with health policy and management students (clockwise from left) Kaneen Allen, George Mitchell, and Michael Erlai

Notebook

GSPH Grads Share News and Notes

1960s

John A. Armstrong (ScDHyg '67) is professor emeritus of infectious diseases and microbiology at GSPH. He still maintains an office in GSPH and serves on the Institutional Review Board for Pitt/UPMC.

1970s

Madalon O'Rawe Amenta (MPH '68, DrPH '78) of Pittsburgh was the recipient of the 2005 Leading the Way Award from the Hospice and Palliative Nursing Association (HPNA). The award recognizes Amenta's significant contributions to the field of end-of-life care, including her help in founding both the HPNA and the Pennsylvania Hospice Network.

Richard P. Frey (MPH '79) was recently named chair of the Lancaster Osteopathic Health Foundation in Lancaster, Pa. He also continues to serve as program director of the Family Practice Residency at the Heart of Lancaster Regional Medical Center.

Captain Andre M. Greedan (MPH '73) retired from the U.S. Navy Medical Service Corps in July 2004 after a 30-year career. Greedan's last assignment was as deputy commander for Naval Health Care New England. He has since relocated and is working as the medical administrative officer for the U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command in North Chicago.

Dennis M. Hanson (MPH '74) of Louisville, Ky., is interested in contacting fellow classmates from the hospital administration Class of 1974.

Daniel J. Landis (MPH '76) of Pittsburgh was awarded the Chairman's Circle Award for being among Prudential Preferred Realty's top 4 percent of sales professionals in the United States.

Thomas M. Priselac (MHA/MDiv '75) was honored with the 2005 Mathies Award at the Partners in Care Foundation's Vision & Excellence in Healthcare Leadership Tribute Dinner. The Mathies Award is given each year in recognition of an innovative and creative leader in the executive healthcare community whose dedication and accomplishments are a model for others to emulate in changing the shape of health care. Priselac is president and CEO of the Cedars-Sinai Health System in Los Angeles, Calif.

1990s

Laura D. Jantos (MHA '95) of Mercer Island, Wash., has been promoted to principal of the healthcare information technology division at ECG Management Consultants Inc. in Seattle. Her division specializes in IT strategic planning, system selection and implementation, IT project management, and system integration, with particular expertise in electronic health records.

Ketul J. Patel (MHA '97) is the new senior vice president for strategy and market development at St. James Hospital and Health Centers, which operates hospitals near Chicago. Prior to his appointment, Patel worked for more than three years as corporate vice president at Sharp HealthCare in San Diego, Calif.

Mark Sevco (MHA '91) has been appointed president of UPMC Braddock, an acute care hospital serving communities in the southeastern Pittsburgh metropolitan area. Sevco has served in various management capacities at UPMC since 1992.



Mark Sevco

2000s

David Hicks (MPH '03) recently co-authored a \$20,000 Pfizer-funded Association of American Medical Colleges "Caring for Community" grant. Hicks is currently a student at the School of Osteopathic Medicine of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

Theresa J. Kaijage (MPH '04) received the 2004 James E. Dixon Humanitarian Award for HIV Education from the Seven Project Inc. Kaijage was honored for her work in HIV/AIDS education in Pittsburgh and in her homeland of Tanzania, where she helped form the country's first AIDS treatment and education center. The award honors individuals, groups, and organizations providing support to people of color in the fight against AIDS.

Laura Rosas (JD/MPH '04) works as a compliance manager with Hudson River Healthcare Inc. in Peekskill, N.Y., where she oversees all corporate and healthcare compliance-related issues, including healthcare fraud and abuse, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance, and corporate policies and procedures.

Andrea Shissler (MPH '01) currently serves on the board of the Pennsylvania Public Health Association as communications chair and editor of the newsletter.

Kirsten St. George (PhD '04) has moved to Albany, N.Y., to become the director of the Virus Reference and Surveillance Laboratory at the Wadsworth Center, New York State Department of Health.

Profile

Tom Sadvary is Designated CEO of Scottsdale Healthcare



Tom Sadvary

When Scottsdale Healthcare, a three-campus healthcare system in the Northeast Valley region of Phoenix, Ariz., went looking for a new CEO, it found the best candidate was already one of its own. With **Tom Sadvary** (MPH '79) serving as executive vice president, chief operating officer, and CEO designate, the company is in the midst of running a textbook-perfect change of watch.

Sadvary takes over the helm in October 2005 as Scottsdale Healthcare's fifth CEO in its 42-year history. By that time, he'll have already worked for a year on the transition—side-by-side with the current CEO.

"I think stability in leadership is important," says Sadvary, who first joined Scottsdale Healthcare in 1986, "as long as you continue to grow and develop."

The Northeast Valley is one of the fastest growing areas in the country, and Scottsdale Healthcare, with two 300-bed hospitals, outpatient clinics, home health agencies, and other services, has kept pace. With 5,000 employees, it is the city of Scottsdale's largest employer. In 2007, the system will open an \$80 million hospital on its third campus.

For now, Sadvary's immediate goal is to secure a smooth transition of leadership. His agenda is to build on the current positive organizational momentum.

He cites five priorities: to be known as the Northeast Valley's outstanding quality and service provider, to continue collaborative efforts with physicians, to strengthen an already strong culture for employees, to continue to build scale as the community grows, and to build and develop his management team.

"That," he says, "ought to get me through at least the first few days."

Artis Hall Oversees Southwest District of Pennsylvania Department of Health

If there's such a thing as a typical day in her new position as executive director for the Southwest District of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, **Artis Hall** (MPH '93) has yet to discover it. The district she oversees covers a lot of ground, with 11 counties in all—Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Somerset, Washington, and Westmoreland.

Hall's purview includes nine state health centers that provide immunizations for adults and children as well as clinical support services for tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV. And that doesn't include the 14 community partnerships the district has through the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP).

"SHIP's collaborative partners include representatives from business, health and

human services, schools, and religious institutions," Hall says. "The community best knows its problems and can work out solutions. I think it is empowering to get communities involved. What I try to do is attend meetings and work with the partnerships. With 14 partnerships, that keeps me pretty busy."

Hall oversees an environmental health specialist, a public health preparedness coordinator, and a team that conducts surveillance and investigation of communicable diseases. She also oversees nurse consultants who support and train community groups and other state agencies to treat diabetes and cardiovascular diseases; prevent injuries, tobacco use, and cancer; and provide services related to maternal health, special needs, and school nursing.

Hall, who has more than 20 years of experience in public health, was most recently the program administrator for Healthy Start Inc. in Pittsburgh and has served as the GSPH representative to the Alumni Association's Alumni Board. She says she is still in the learning phase of her new position, assessing needs in each of the counties and developing plans to address them.

"One of the issues that really concerns me is health disparities," she says. "How do we close those gaps that we see time after time? What's the best approach? I think I can provide leadership and direction in accomplishing the goals that have been set. These are things that are very important to me. It's not just a job to me."

Keep In Touch! Have you changed jobs? Earned another degree or special award? Did you get married or have a baby? Did you relocate? Keep your alma mater and fellow graduates informed of the changes in your life. Simply return the enclosed reply card; visit the alumni information section of the Web site, www.publichealth.pitt.edu; or send us an e-mail at contact@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu. We'll publish your updates in the next issue of *PublicHealth*.

In Memoriam

Herbert Rosenkranz, biochemist and interim dean of GSPH from 1998 to 2001, died in his Florida home on November 27, 2004, at the age of 71.

Born in Vienna, Austria, Rosenkranz earned his undergraduate degree in chemistry at the City College of New York and his doctoral degree in biochemistry from Cornell University Medical College. Rosenkranz came to GSPH in 1990



after serving in various professorships and department chair positions at Columbia and Case Western Reserve Universities. In addition to serving as chair of the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at GSPH, Rosenkranz was founder and director of the Center for Environmental and Occupational Health and Toxicology, established in January 1993 in collaboration with UPMC. Perhaps best known for pioneering the use of computer programs to predict the toxicity of chemical pollutants, Rosenkranz also researched environmental pollutants as a cause of cancer and developed better ways of detecting harmful chemicals in the environment. While at Case Western, Rosenkranz helped develop one of the first computer programs that was able to predict the carcinogenicity of chemicals based on their chemical structure. His invention helped launch the field of computational toxicology. Rosenkranz authored more than 500 publications and served on the editorial boards of *Mutation Research* and *Environmental Science Research*, among numerous others. He is survived by his wife, Deanna, eight children, and three grandchildren.

In 2002, GSPH created the Herbert S. Rosenkranz Award, which recognizes research excellence and is given to a student at the annual Dean's Day event that Rosenkranz established in 1999. To donate to the Rosenkranz award fund, please contact Daphne Mayer at 412-383-8849 or dmayer@gspbdean.gspb.pitt.edu.

Aurelia Koros, assistant professor in the Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology, died January 18, 2005. Koros studied lung and breast cancers, and at the time of her death was investigating antibodies that could be used in lung cancer therapy. Part of Koros' small cell lung cancer research was on sea urchins, of which she maintained a small colony. Koros was active in Cancer Federation Inc., which provides information, counseling, and educational materials and conducts meetings for cancer patients and their families and friends. She is survived by her husband, Peter, one sister, five children, and four grandchildren.



Pittsburgh native **Richard Lehman** (MPH '00, DMD '01) died November 11, 2004, at the age of 31, from acute myelocytic leukemia. While enrolled in dental school, Lehman earned a reputation as a diligent and ambitious student. Working with dentists, dental students, and professors, he wrote a book (published in 1999) to help students prepare for the Dental Admission Test. At the time of his death, Lehman was living in Brookline, Mass., where he was studying periodontology at Harvard University School of Dental Medicine and completing an illustrated handbook of dentistry. He is survived by his wife, Sneha, and his parents, two sisters, and a brother.

Wilfred "Bud" McMahon (MS '51) of Canandaigua, N.Y., died July 16, 2003. McMahon attended Washington & Jefferson College until he was called to serve in World War II, during which he earned the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart for service to his country. Upon his return, he continued his education at St. Bonaventure University and was one of the first students to graduate from GSPH. For 35 years, McMahon worked for Corning Inc., retiring as vice president of manpower development in 1985. He continued to pursue his

Patricia Bodell (MPH '74)

Eleanor McKnight (MPH '58)

Frank J. Moore (MPH '59)

Wesley "Guy" Pietz (MPH '68)

interest in education by serving on the board of trustees at several colleges. He enjoyed fishing and playing golf; however, spending time with his family was his priority. He is survived by his wife, Elayne, three children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Samuel Troese (MPH '71) of Cranberry Township, Pa., died January 9, 2005, at the age of 61. Troese was a planning and evaluation specialist with Family Services of Western Pennsylvania. Before joining Family Services, Troese was assistant director of the Comprehensive Health Planning Association of Western Pennsylvania, deputy director of Health Systems Agency of Southwestern Pennsylvania, and planning director at North Hills Passavant Hospital, now UPMC Passavant. A Civil War buff, Troese was also a long-time member of the Civil War Round Table of Western Pennsylvania. He is survived by his wife, Carol, two daughters, and two brothers.

Grace E. Ware (MPH '73) of Homewood, Pa., passed away on August 30, 2004, at the age of 70. Ware came to GSPH as an accomplished social worker and employee of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, where she worked for 25 years. After earning her MPH, Ware also served as a lecturer in GSPH's Department of Epidemiology. Ware was deeply committed to family planning issues and worked continuously to strengthen the ties between GSPH and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. She was active in her community, serving as president of several organizations, including Women in Urban Crisis, The National Council of Negro Women, and the National Women's Political Caucus. A recipient of GSPH's Distinguished Alumni Award in 1994 for her contribution to the field of public health, she is survived by her husband, Leonard, six children, and 11 grandchildren.

Joseph Watson, GSPH professor emeritus of radiation health, passed away October 6, 2004, at the age of 78. Watson, who received his bachelor's degree in bacteriology, his master's degree in microbiology, and his doctoral degree in microbial genetics from Pitt, also had an esteemed career at GSPH,

beginning as a research assistant in the Department of Occupational Health. Much of Watson's research was funded by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and focused on the biological health effects of inhaled radioactive particulates. Having helped develop the department's teaching program in radiobiology, Watson

also later helped found the school's Department of Radiation Health and headed its graduate teaching program, through which he directed many U.S. Public Health Service training and fellowship grants of the Institute of Nuclear Power Operators. He is survived by his wife, Dolores, and two daughters.

GSPH Launches Institute for Evaluation Science in Community Health

GSPH's Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences (BCHS), in collaboration with the Department of Health Policy & Management (HPM) and the University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR), has established the Institute for Evaluation Science in Community Health. The institute has as its fundamental goal the advancement of evaluation science, scholarship, and practice through regional, national, and international research, training, and consultation. Edmund M. Ricci, professor of sociology in public health and former chair of BCBS, heads the institute.

Among the institute's primary activities are designing and conducting evaluation and community health needs assessment studies, developing and testing new methods for hard-to-evaluate programs, developing and applying advanced technologies in evaluation studies, and offering advanced educational programs for doctoral students and executives in public health and human services organizations. The fundamental purpose of the institute's activities is to make evaluation science a core component of the public health infrastructure as well as an indispensable tool for improving the performance of public health and other human services organizations.

"Although evaluation science is a well established set of methods, it has not had a widespread impact upon the delivery of public health and other human service programs," Ricci said. "This situation must change if we are to gain maximum health impact from the resources we invest in these programs."

Composed of an interdisciplinary core staff of methodologists based within BCBS, HPM, and UCSUR, the institute serves three distinct constituencies—public sector organizations, hospitals and long-term care centers, and community-based nonprofit organizations.

Institute staff employ a full range of quantitative and qualitative research methods and designs, including probability sampling, survey research, historical/descriptive case studies, community-based participatory research, and ethnography. Case study, experimental, and quasi-experimental designs are employed to meet the unique requirements of each evaluation study.

Among the activities the institute has planned for the coming year is an international conference in which participants



Edmund M. Ricci

will discuss complex methodological issues in evaluation science and appoint a group of Evaluation Fellows drawn from a field of high-level executives in the human services delivery system. Each fellow will team with a doctoral student and faculty member to design a specific evaluation project—an approach organizers hope will take evaluation science more fully into the domain of public practice.

Mark Your Calendar!

June 30, 2005

Alumni Society Annual Meeting

109 Parran Hall, 5:30 p.m.

Contact: Maureen Passmore,
Marketing and Development,
412-648-1294, passmore@pitt.edu

September 13, 2005

Nathan Hershey Celebration

Vietnam Veterans Pavilion,
Schenley Park, Pittsburgh,

Time: TBA

Contact: Sharon Dailey,
Dept. of Health Policy & Management,
412-624-3104, sdailey@pitt.edu

October 3, 2005

GSPH Open House for Prospective Students

GSPH, 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Contact: Diane Kline, Student Affairs,
412-624-5200,
dkline@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu

October 24–28, 2005

Pennsylvania Public Health Association/Public Health Institute 2005 Conference

“Bridging Capacities, Communications,
& Communities”

Hilton Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Contact: Molly Eggleston,
Center for Public Health Practice,
412-383-2230, egglestonm@edc.pitt.edu

January 20, 2006

GSPH Open House for Prospective Students

GSPH, 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Contact: Diane Kline, Student Affairs,
412-624-5200,
dkline@gspHdean.gspH.pitt.edu



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Graduate School of Public Health

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