



EOHS *focus*

Discovery knowledge practice

A NEWSLETTER FOR FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS
OF THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SCIENCES

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UTSPH Hosts EHOPAC Meeting



The **University of Texas School of Public Health** served as a host for the **US Public Health Service's Environmental Health Officer Professional Advisory Committee (EHOPAC)** meeting on October 27 & 28, 2009 in Houston, Texas. While at the school, officers participated in a noontime seminar for students and faculty, describing the variety of activities carried out in the field. The seminar was also

broadcast to the school's regional campuses via interactive television across Texas. An evening reception coordinated by the **Student Epidemic Intelligence Society (SEIS)** afforded an opportunity for students to meet with officers one-on-one, and to discuss career opportunities in a relaxed and informal setting.



The meeting was coordinated by **LCDR Robert Emery** who is a member of the Inactive Reserve Corps and an Associate Professor at the School. "Hosting this meeting afforded a unique opportunity for students to meet with officers and hear about their work and the impact they are having on public health" said Emery, "and that sort of personal contact is an extraordinarily powerful way of communicating the value of the Commissioned Corps."

Emery also used the visit as an opportunity to describe to the officers the teaching, research, and service activities being carried out within the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston and the Texas Medical Center. The officers were also taken on a "behind the scenes" tour of Houston Transtar, the emergency operations center and transportation coordination center for Houston and Harris County. The officers held their EHOPAC business meeting at the school the following day.

Feedback from the students was extremely positive. "The officers were wonderful ambassadors for the Commissioned Corps" commented **Rebecca Bryson**, President of the SEIS. "Hearing real world stories of their work in the field really stimulated a lot interest on the part of the students. It was a great experience."



The officers also benefitted from the visit. **CAPT Craig Shepherd**, Chief Environmental Health Officer, USPHS stated that, "It's always a highlight for Environmental Health Officers (EHOs), while attending the EHOPAC meeting, to meet with students and experience their excitement when learning of career opportunities with the Commissioned Corps of the USPHS."



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EHOs serve in a number of challenging assignments throughout this Nation. The profession has evolved from primarily general practitioners to include highly

specialized areas of expertise such as industrial hygienists, epidemiologists, consumer safety officers, health physicists, injury prevention specialists, and hazardous material specialists. **I'm hopeful that several of the students we personally met with will some day gain their commissions in the USPHS."**



EOHS *Calendar of Events*

November 19, 2009: SWCOEH Journal Club, 6:30 PM. The SWCOEH JC meets off campus once



a month to discuss current topics that include Occupational Medicine and Illness, Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology, Injury Prevention and Environmental Health. This

month **Amber H. Mitchell, MPH**, and doctoral candidate, will discuss **"Work Organization and Drinking: an Epidemiological Comparison of two Psychosocial Work Exposure Models."** For additional meeting information please call 713.500.9440 or contact [Marice Barahona](#).

November 20, 2009: UTHSCH Research Day. The UT Health Science Center's annual Research Day, **"Engines of Discovery"** will take place, Friday, Nov. 20, 2009 at the **Fayez S. Sarofim Research Building** of The Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine for the Prevention of Human Diseases. The event will include a faculty seminar followed by student and post-doctoral poster presentations.



December 4, 2009: EOHS Research Seminar Series, 12-1 PM, SPH RAS 102A. **Jaymin Kwon, PhD**, Postdoctoral fellow, Environ-



mental & Occupational Health Sciences, University of Texas School of Public Health, will discuss,

"Exposure to Air Toxics in Houston: Results from a multi-community study (HEATS)." Please contact [Bruce Banes](#) for more information at 713.500.9462.

November 21, 2009- January 8, 2010: UTSPH Spring 2010 Student Registration.



Open Registration for students begins Nov 21-Jan 8th, 2010. New Student Orientation

is on Tuesday, January 5, 2010. Late registration begins January 11-15, 2010. **Spring Classes begin on Monday, January 11, 2010.** Please check the website of the [Office of the Registrar](#) for the official university calendar.

November 26-27, 2009– Thanksgiving Holidays. UTHSCH Full Closure holiday.

December 11, 2009: EOHS Faculty Meeting, 9-11AM, RAS W204 .



The meeting will be broadcast via ITV. Please contact your ITV technician to confirm your participation

January 8, 2010: EOHS Research Seminar Series, 12-1 PM, SPH RAS 102B. **Megan N. Hall, ScD, RD**, Postdoctoral Research Scientist, Department of Epidemiology, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University will discuss, **"Nutritional Influences on Arsenic Metabolism Among Children and Adults in Bangladesh."** Please contact [Bruce Banes](#) for more information at 713.500.9462.

January 21, 2010: SWCOEH Journal Club, 6:30 PM. **Richard Lo, MPH**, will discuss, **"Occupational**



exposures and asthma in healthcare workers. Comparison of self-report versus a workplace-specific job-exposure matrix". For

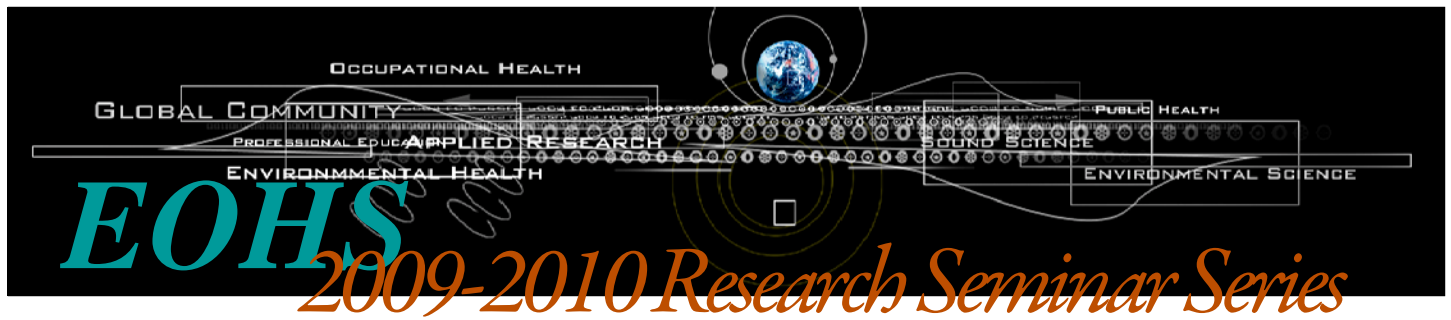
additional meeting information please call 713.500.9440 or contact [Marice Barahona](#)

January 22, 2010: EOHS Research Seminar Series, 12-1 PM, SPH RAS 102B.



José Miguel Martínez, PhD, Occupational Health Research Center, **Universitat Pompeu**

Fabra, Barcelona, Spain will present, **"Improving Multilevel Analyses: The Integrated Epidemiologic Design"** Please contact [Bruce Banes](#) for more information at 713.500.9462.



Friday, November 20, 2009 12:00-1:00 pm, SPH 102A/ITV



Robin Gershon, MHS, DrPH, will present, **“Essential Workforce Willingness and Ability to Report to Duty during a Pandemic Influenza”** During a large scale pandemic, essential personnel, (healthcare workers, health department workers, emergency medical service providers, firefighters, police officers, and corrections workers) will be vital in terms of response efforts. Yet the attitudes and intentions, as well as barriers to ability and willingness of this group, are largely understudied. This lack of knowledge impedes adequate planning for response and surge capacity needs. This study was designed to address these concerns in a large sample of essential personnel by addressing four major constructs: flu history and knowledge, agency pandemic planning, personal pandemic planning and attitudes, and ability and willingness.

Dr. Robyn Gershon is an occupational and environmental health and safety researcher with over 15 years of experience in conducting complex interdisciplinary public health research studies. She has her primary appointment in the Mailman School of Public Health, with a joint appointment at the Columbia University School of Nursing. Prior to her doctoral training, Dr. Gershon served for several years as the director of Biological Safety at Yale University. Her research interests are generally focused on high risk, high stress, work populations. She has conducted a number of applied research studies, including risk assessment studies as well as intervention studies. Her current research projects include the following topics: subway noise exposure, occupational health hazards associated with home health care delivery, emergency preparedness for emergency medical services, avian influenza preparedness, and willingness of essential personnel to report to duty during a pandemic. Dr. Gershon recently completed a project entitled, the World Trade Center Evacuation Study, that identified the individual, organizational, and structural factors associated with the evacuation from the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

Friday, December 4, 2009 12:00-1:00 pm, SPH 102A/ITV

Jaymin Kwon, PhD, will discuss, **“Exposure to Air Toxics in Houston: Results from a multi-community study (HEATS)”** The Houston Exposure to Air Toxics Study (HEATS) was designed to compare personal exposures to a group of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) listed as hazardous air pollutants (HAPS). Two study areas were chosen, the Ship Channel and Aldine, that were socio-economically similar but differed in industrial emission sources. VOC concentrations were measured from the nearest TCEQ fixed monitoring sites, residential outdoor, residential indoor, and personal breathing zone for 78 randomly chosen representative non-smoking households, two times during October 2007—February 2009. The HEATS findings will provide valuable information to characterize the most current daily exposures to air toxics in two communities in Houston, and to improve study designs for exposure assessment in the future.

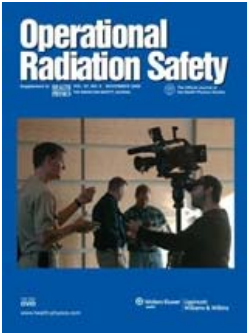


Dr. Jaymin Kwon is a postdoctoral fellow in the Division of the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at the University of Texas, School of Public Health. He obtained his PhD in Exposure Sciences in the Department of Environmental Sciences at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, which is a joint program of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. He has been conducting research in monitoring and evaluating personal exposure to air pollutants in many urban areas, including New Jersey, California, Texas, and Korea. Studies include “the RIOPA Study (Relationship of indoor, outdoor, and personal air study)”, “Meadowlands baseline air quality (MBAQ)”, “Residential VOCs Exposures near Teterboro Airport”, “Urban community air monitoring project in Paterson (UCAMPP), NJ”, and “the Houston Exposure to Air Toxics Study (HEATS)”.



*Please contact your ITV technician or administrator if you would like to receive the ITV transmission

EOHS *In the Spotlight*



The November issue of the Health Physics Journal supplement "Operational Radiation Safety" features a cover photo of Robert Emery, DrPH, Acting Division Director for the Division of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences. The photo highlights an article contained in the journal about a series of drills conducted by the UTSPH in 2008.

In November 2008, faculty from the **UTSPH Center for Biosecurity and Public Health Preparedness (CBPHP)** orchestrated a radiological emergency training drill for the Alamo Medical Response Group of the Texas State Guard. **Drs. Emery and John Herbold**, along with students from the UT SPH **Student Epidemic Intelligence Society**, provided training and expertise to over 40 Texas State Guard members, who in turn, screened approximately 100 student volunteers who served as "concerned citizens". The drill centered on the effective management of a large population of individuals who were asymptomatic but apprehensive about their possible contamination status. The drill evolved from a previous drill conducted in January 2008 in Houston.

Feedback from all drill participants was very positive, and the event served to be a wonderful learning experience for the students involved. The drill also brought together a number of agencies and entities that could be called upon to provide coordinated services in times of disaster, including the Texas State Guard, UTHSCH faculty and staff, local health department representatives, regional hospitals, and the US Public Health Service (in which Emery serves as lieutenant commander in the Inactive Reserve Corps).



The **Center for Biosecurity and Public Health Preparedness** provided the focus for the Fall 2009 issue of the Texas Public Health Journal, which is to be published this month. **Dr. John Herbold** served as guest editor and provided the "**Introduction to Public Health Preparedness**," in which he highlighted the evolution of UTSPH's work in public health preparedness from before 2001 to the present, including considerations for the future of public health preparedness. Additionally, CBPHP faculty, associates, staff, and students contributed another eight (8) articles to this issue. The Texas Public Health Journal is a peer reviewed journal, which is now listed with the EBSCO index. The link to the table of contents for this issue of TPHJ can be found on the CBPHP website at: [http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/uploadedFiles/Centers/Biosecurity/TPHACover\(1\).pdf](http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/uploadedFiles/Centers/Biosecurity/TPHACover(1).pdf)



Dr. Ken Sexton was recognized as a past president of the **International Society of Exposure Sciences (ISES)** at their 20th anniversary meeting in Minneapolis on Nov 1, 2009. ISES is dedicated to promoting, protecting, and enhancing the role of exposure science in diverse fields and professional disciplines across academia, government, industry, and policy makers. The objective of the Society is to foster and advance the science needed to analyze environmental contamination leading to exposure related to environmental contamination in human populations and ecosystems; promote communication among exposure analysts, epidemiologists, toxicologists, and other scientists; recommend approaches to improve methods; and strengthen the impact of exposure assessment and analysis on environmental policy.

Dr. John Herbold of the School of Public Health San Antonio Regional Campus provided information to ABC News on a new development involving H1N1. The virus has been detected in a domestic cat.

Dr. Robert "Safety Bob" Emery, Vice President of Safety, health, Environment and Risk Management, gave an interview to Occupational Health Management magazine for a story on what to do when an employee is injured at work.

Dr. Robert "Safety Bob" Emery was quoted in a story about H1N1 in the workplace. The Houston Chronicle published the story on the front page of Sunday's newspaper: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/business/6593370.html>

Dr. Kristina Mena of the School of Public Health El Paso Regional Campus was interviewed by *The Courier-Journal* of Kentucky for a story on food safety tips for college students.

Dr. Irina Cech was interviewed by *The Sun-Newspaper* for a story on "Making a switch: Residents question a change in water supply disinfectant".



Nancy Crider, MS, RN. "Environmental Education for Community Health Workers (CHWs) and promotoras" session titled, Community Health Workers Responding to Environmental Safety and Natural Disasters at the American Public Health Association Conference, Philadelphia, PA. November 2009. To view session online: <http://apha.confex.com/apha/137am/webprogram/Session28069.html>

Oluyomi AO, Marquez SP. "Teasing Out the Facts on the Potential Impacts of Climate Variability and Change: Assessing the Weight of Evidence". 2009 National Environmental Public Health Conference: Healthy People in a Healthy Environment. Atlanta, GA. October 2009.



Marquez SP, Oluyomi AO. "Examining Environmental Health Disparities in the Philadelphia Community: Prioritizing Agenda Setting and Intervention Strategies". 2009 National Environmental Public Health Conference: Healthy People in a Healthy Environment. Atlanta, GA, October 26-28, 2009.



Delclos G. "Duration of sickness absence by medical diagnosis. A retrospective cohort study, 2002-2006". Sociedad Española de Epidemiología, Congreso Anual [Annual Congress of the Spanish Epidemiology Society]. Zaragoza, Spain. October 2009.

Delclos G. "The principal investigator and conflicts of interest: the US experience". Sociedad Española de Epidemiología, Congreso Anual. [Annual Congress of the Spanish Epidemiology Society] Zaragoza, Spain. October 2009.

Delclos G. Seminar on "Spirometry in primary care. An issue of quality". The U.S. NIOSH experience with Spirometry Training, Sponsored by the Government of Catalonia, Department of Health. October 2009.

Arnold Schecter presented a paper on persistent organic pollutants in US Food and cochaired a session on old and new persistent organic pollutant or POPs with Linda Birnbaum, Director of NIEHS/NIH, at the **International Society of Exposure Science Annual Conference** "Transforming Exposure Science in the 21st Century". Minneapolis, MN. November 2009.



International Society
of Exposure Science
Science for Better Environmental Health

EOHS *Grants*

2009-2010 PI GDelcols. "Duración de la incapacidad temporal por contingencia común según el diagnóstico médico. Un estudio de cohorte retrospectivo. Cataluña, 2005- 2007". [Duration of nonoccupational sickness absence by medical diagnosis. Catalonia, 2005-2007]. Spanish Ministry of Health and Social Policy/Scientific Research Foundation[FIS]. PI09/90077. 20,570 Euros.

2009-2010 PI GDelclos (co-PI, Fernando G. Benavides). "**Impacto laboral de la pandemia de gripe A(H1N1): seguimiento epidemiológico de la incapacidad laboral**". [Impact on businesses of the H1N1 flu pandemic: surveillance of work absenteeism] Spanish Ministry of Health and Social Policy/Scientific Research Foundation[FIS]. GR09/0031. 48,000 Euros.

McHugh M, Symanski E, Delclos GL, Pompeii LA. Prevalence of Asthma among Adult Males and Females in the United States: Results from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), 1999-2004. *Journal of Asthma* 2009; 46(8): 759-766. PMID: 19863277.

Porter P, Susarla S, Polikepahad S, Qian Y, Hampton J, Kiss A, Vaidya S, Sur S, Ongeri V, Yang T, Delclos G, Abramson S, Kheradmand F, Corry D. Link between allergic asthma and airway mucosal infection suggested by proteinase-secreting household fungi. *Nature Mucosal Immunology* 2009; 2(6): 504-517. PMID: 19710638.

Badgwell B, Chang G, Rodriguez-Bigas MA, Smith, K, Lupo P, Frankowski R, Delclos G, Du X, Cormier J. Management and outcomes of anorectal infection in the cancer patient. *Annals of Surgical Oncology* 2009; 16(10): 2752-2758. PMID: 19649556.

Chen M, Cassidy A, Gu J, Delclos G, Fan Z, Yang H, Hildebrandt M, Lin J, Ye Y, Chamberlain R, Dinney C, Wu X. Genetic variations in PI3K-AKT-mTOR pathway and bladder cancer risk. *Carcinogenesis* 2009 Oct 29. [Epub ahead of print] PMID: 19875696.

De Vogli R, Gimeno D. Changes in Income Inequality and Suicide Rates after "Shock Therapy": Evidence from Eastern Europe. *J Epidemiol Community Health*. 2009; 63(11):956.

Elovainio E, Ferrie JE, Singh-Manoux A, Gimeno D, De Vogli R, Shipley M, Vahtera J, Brunner EJ, Marmot MG, Kivimäki M. Organizational justice and markers of inflammation: The Whitehall II study. *Occup Environ Med*. (Published online first 22 Sep 2009, doi:10.1136/oem.2008.044917.)

EOHS

Doctoral Opportunities



The Department of Environmental and Occupational Health (EOH) in the Colorado School of Public Health has openings for three fulltime tenure track/eligible positions, two Assistant and one Associate Professor. We seek candidates with research and teaching interests in environmental or occupational epidemiology, molecular toxicology, environmental chemistry, and infectious disease. We encourage applicants with interests in cross-disciplinary research in respiratory health, the modeling of EOH exposures or health outcomes, and sustainability and public health. Other focus areas will be considered if a strong research and teaching mission is articulated. Required qualifications: A doctorate or MD with additional research training in public health or related disciplines; an established research program (Associate) or demonstrated potential to establish an independent research program (Assistant). Applications are accepted electronically at: <https://www.jobsatcu.com/applicants>, Job Posting 808384 (Associate) and 808385 (Assistant).

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