Summer 2012

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Summer 2012 News

Kinesiology alumna Maria Urso, '06 PhD, a researcher from the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine in Natick, has been chosen as one of nearly 100 scientists honored with the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientist and Engineers. Read more...

Lisa Wexler, Assistant Professor of Community Health Education, is mentioned in a news article examining the effects of domestic violence on native children in rural Alaska. Wexler recently presented her research in Fairbanks, Alaska, as part of the 15th International Congress for Circumpolar Health. Read more...

Elena Carbone, Associate Professor of Nutrition, made a presentation and moderated a panel discussion at the Echi Oltremare Food and Culture conference in Rome in June. Her presentation, titled "Who Are You and What Are You Eating?" examined the interaction of food, health and self-identity. Read more...
C. Marjorie Aelion, Dean of the School of Public Health and Health Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, appears on the list of the “100 Most Awesome Deans of Public Health.” The list was compiled by MphProgramsList.com, an advocacy group for public health student education. Read more...

Nerissa Hall, doctoral student in Communication Disorders, leads a summer camp for special needs children in Holyoke, MA. The camp offers a fun learning environment while also serving as an intensive training program for communication disorders graduate students. Read more...

Jane Kent-Braun, Professor of Kinesiology, is quoted in an article about how daily movement can lead to a better night's sleep. A study she supervised last year showed a very strong correlation between sleep quality and physical activity. Read more...

Andrea Foulkes, Associate Professor of Biostatistics, has been awarded a $97,500 grant from the President’s Science and Technology Initiatives Fund. The grant, announced by UMass President Robert L. Caret, supports the creation of the Institute for Computational Biology, Biostatistics & Bioinformatics (ICB3). Read more...

Rost Receives International Society on Infant Studies Graduate Student Paper Award

Gwyneth Rost, Assistant Professor in Communication Disorders, has been selected for the 2012 International Society on Infant Studies (ISIS) Graduate Student Paper Award. The award is given to the best paper published in the journal *Infancy* in 2010/2011 with a graduate student as first author. The announcement of Rost’s award was made at the International Conference on Infant Studies (ICIS) held in Minneapolis on June 7-9, 2012.
Rost received the award for a paper titled “Finding the Signal by Adding Noise: The Role of Noncontrastive Phonetic Variability in Early Word Learning,” which was published in the November-December 2010 issue of the journal. Her initial submission was made while she was a doctoral student at the University of Iowa under the faculty mentorship of Dr. Bob McMurray.

“Gwyneth Rost was the hands down winner of this award,” commented *Infancy* editor Martha Ann Bell. “The award committee and I were very impressed with her research and publication.”

“I was quite surprised to receive this honor,” Rost said, “but also extremely pleased.” The paper is one in a series that Rost and McMurray worked on together investigating how young children learn words when different people produce them in different ways. “Infants have to figure out that when Mommy says *ball* she means the same thing as Daddy does when he says *ball*, and a different thing than she means when she says *doll*. The problem is that Mommy’s *ball* and *doll* might sound a lot more similar than Mommy’s *ball* and Daddy’s *ball*. And a mix-up between a ball and a doll can be pretty devastating to a one-year-old!”

The ISIS Graduate Student Paper Award is a new biennial award. For the first award cycle, all graduate student papers published in *Infancy* during 2010 (vol. 15) and 2011 (vol. 16) were considered. Subsequent awards will be given at each ICIS meeting, with consideration of papers published in *Infancy* during the two preceding calendar years.

The criteria for this award are that a graduate student be first author of the paper and that the research primarily be the work of the student. The manuscript must be submitted to *Infancy* for peer review prior to receiving the PhD. The published paper should be of high scientific quality and must reflect the significance and innovation of the student’s work. The winner does not have to be a member of the society or attend the ICIS meeting to receive the award.

Rost’s article can be read online here.
The Western Massachusetts Public Health Training Center is offering a free workshop series, “My Life, My Health: The Stanford Chronic Disease Self-Management Program,” on July 25-26 and Aug. 1-2, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. in Greenfield. Space is limited, so please register by July 17.

Spring 2012 News

Choe Awarded Grant to Study Robot-Mediated Stroke Rehabilitation

Yu-kyong Choe, Assistant Professor of Communication Disorders, has been awarded a two-year, $109,251 grant from the American Heart Association (AHA) to examine “Interdisciplinary Stroke Rehabilitation Delivered by a Humanoid Robot.”

Nearly three million Americans chronically experience the debilitating effects of stroke on their daily communication, dexterity, and mobility. Even at the chronic stage, stroke patients can make significant recoveries from these disabilities; however, intensive rehabilitation programs are rarely available or accessible for most stroke patients.

Choe’s research project will explore alternative methods of delivering needed therapy services. In collaboration with Roderic Grupen, Professor of Computer Science, Choe will utilize a humanoid robot to deliver both speech and physical therapy services to stroke patients.

The proposed study will compare two treatment conditions: robot-mediated and computer-mediated. In the robot-mediated condition, patients will complete word-retrieval tasks and upper-limb exercises delivered by a humanoid robot. In the computer-mediated condition, the same tasks and exercises will be presented on a laptop computer. Choe predicts that the robot-mediated condition will yield better outcomes in both speech and physical functions because of the interactive engagement and the resultant patient-robot interactions.
Choe’s research holds the potential for clinical research as well as clinical practice. The robot-mediated treatment program can deliver highly structured therapy activities, and it can ensure the consistency of tasks across therapy sessions and across treatment conditions. Choe envisions future projects utilizing the humanoid robot as a reliable research tool to further test various aspects of interdisciplinary stroke rehabilitation.

To learn more about Choe’s project or to participate in the study, please call her (413-545-4297) or e-mail her (ychoe@comdis.umass.edu).

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Ivan Oransky, M.D., adjunct instructor in the online MPH in Public Health Practice program and executive editor at Reuters Health, has posted the video of his invited lecture from the TEDMED 2012 conference on his personal blog, along with links to additional media coverage of the conference.

View his talk here!

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Listen to her interview here!
Grants Manager Downs-Bembury Receives Chancellor’s Citation Award

From left: Chancellor Robert C. Holub, SPHHS Grants Manager Linda Downs-Bembury, Vice Provost for Undergraduate and Continuing Education Carol Barr.

Linda Downs-Bembury, Grants Manager for the School of Public Health and Health Sciences, recently received one of ten Chancellor’s Citation Awards for 2012. Chancellor Holub honored Downs-Bembury, along with the other Citation recipients and the Gerald F. Scanlon Student Employee of the Year award winners, at a reception held on May 2, 2012, in the Marriott Center.

“I was very surprised when I received the call that I’d won the award,” said Downs-Bembury. “I knew I’d been nominated, but I didn’t think there was any chance I’d receive it. I think I beamed for the next week.”

The Chancellor’s Citation Award program was implemented in 1985 as part of the university’s continuing effort to reward exemplary performance. The award recognizes and honors university staff members who have demonstrated outstanding performance in contributing their time and/or skills in helping the university achieve its goals and objectives. Specifically sought are examples
of original contributions to the university, attainment of high-priority university objectives, performance “beyond the call of duty,” and achievement of significant improvements in productivity or savings in university operations.

“It’s particularly meaningful to receive this award,” Downs-Bembury added. “In terms of personal performance, I think this is the highest award you could receive. It meant a lot to me to be able to receive it under Chancellor Holub’s leadership.”

Recipients may be nominated by any member of the campus community. Richard Peltier, Assistant Professor of Environmental Health Sciences, championed Downs-Bembury for the award.

“I nominated Linda because she’s a wonderful co-worker who helped me immensely as a junior faculty member here,” Peltier commented in a video testimonial played at the award reception. “Linda’s primary responsibility to us as faculty is to accept our scientific research proposals that come in the form of scientific jargon and convert it into the language that’s necessary for the funders. Linda puts the burden of writing the science on me, and she takes all of the administrative hassle and takes it upon herself to help with that process. I wanted to thank Linda for all her hard effort and the wonderful work she does every day.”

“I was very, very touched by Rick’s video,” said Downs-Bembury. “It’s infrequent that people have the time to say thank you, and to have someone say thank you in such a public forum was really touching.”

“I’m still amazed,” she added. “I want it to happen again.”

Downs-Bembury has served as the SPHHS Grants Manager for the past 9 years. She has been a university employee for nearly 31 years.

Zilberberg Authors Book on How to Evaluate Medical Literature

Marya Zilberberg, M.D., M.P.H., adjunct faculty in the online Master of Public Health in Public Health Practice program, has authored *Between the Lines: Finding the Truth in Medical Literature*. The book will be available in print and e-book format in May 2012 through EviMed Research Press.

*Between the Lines* aims to educate readers from all walks of life about how to evaluate some of the claims behind today’s health news headlines. Dr. Zilberberg seeks to
demystify the nuances of such details as what constitutes a valid scientific question, how to judge whether the study design is appropriate, how to identify common threats to validity, and how to evaluate a study’s conclusions. *Between the Lines* is written for a broad audience ranging from journalists and healthcare professionals to students and those who are interested in becoming a savvier consumer of medical information.

Zilberberg is the Founder, President and CEO of EviMed Research Group, a research and scientific communication consultancy specializing in epidemiology, evidence-based medicine, health services and outcomes research. In addition to her position with the UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences, she serves as a Senior Fellow at the Jefferson School of Population Health, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA. She has authored or co-authored over 150 peer-reviewed articles, scientific presentations and book chapters, including systematic reviews, meta-analyses and cost-effectiveness models. She blogs at [Healthcare, etc.](http://www.healthcareetc.com).

To obtain a copy of *Between the Lines*, visit the [book web site](http://BetweentheLinesBook.com).

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**Delta Omega Honor Society welcomes new members**
The Delta Omega Honor Society, Rho Chapter, inducted two new members into its ranks at a luncheon held on April 25, 2012, in the Marriott Center. Rho Chapter President Margaret McCarthy welcomed Steven W. Atwood, V.M.D., M.D., M.P.H., as its 2012 student inductee, and Susan E. Hankinson, Sc.D., Professor of Epidemiology in the School of Public Health and Health Sciences, as its 2012 faculty inductee.

Election to membership is intended to recognize merit and to encourage further excellence in public health. Atwood, a recent graduate of the online Master of Public Health in Public Health Practice program, was cited for academic excellence and demonstration of qualities of leadership in public health. Hankinson was recognized for her contributions to public health scholarship, teaching, research, and publication.

McCarthy also recognized Andrea Morand, a graduate student in Kinesiology, as winner of the Delta Omega Honor Society’s poster abstract competition at this year’s SPHHS Research Day. Morand, who was awarded for her entry titled “Providing further construct validity for a newly developed measure of functional-living in older adults: Movement and Activity in Physical Space (MAPS),” discussed her research findings with luncheon participants.

Delta Omega is the national public health honor society within accredited schools and programs of public health. The purpose of the society is to encourage excellence in student scholarship and research, to recognize academic and professional achievement in the field of public health, and to promote continued effort in public health. Originally founded in 1924 at The Johns Hopkins University, the national Delta Omega Society has more than 70 local chapters in the U.S. and internationally. The Rho Chapter was founded at UMass Amherst in 1985 by Professor Emeriti Robert Tuthill and Howard Peters and Dean Emeritus William Darity.

Individuals must be nominated to join the Rho Chapter of the Delta Omega Honor Society. There are three categories of nomination: student, alumnus/a, and faculty. In addition to individuals in the Amherst on-campus programs, students in the Online MPH Program and in the UMass Worcester campus program are eligible for nomination for membership.
The Rho Chapter of the Delta Omega Society also co-sponsors, along with the School of Public Health and Health Sciences, the annual SPHHS Research Day held every spring.

The aphasia research of Jacquie Kurland, Assistant Professor of Communication Disorders, is featured in two new articles appearing in Health Care News and in the Springfield Republican. Follow the links to read more.

SPHHS Students Awarded CRF Grants

The School of Public Health and Health Sciences is pleased to announce that three of its students have been awarded grants from the UMass Amherst Center for Research on Families.

Talia Grossman, an undergraduate in Communication Disorders, received one of two Family Research Undergraduate Assistantships. The assistantship enables an undergraduate to work with a faculty member on a family research project through a grant of $3,000. Grossman was awarded for her proposal titled “The Impact of Developmental Disabilities on Family Relationships.” She will conduct her research with faculty mentor Mary Andrianopoulos, Associate Professor of Communication Disorders. Her research with Dr. Andrianopoulos will examine sibling relationships in families with developmentally disabled or delayed children.

Eden Ketema, an undergraduate Public Health Sciences major, received one of four Family Research Honors Thesis/Capstone Awards. This spring, Ketema worked with a group of SPHHS students and Square One, a non-profit organization in Springfield, MA, through internships provided by the Western Massachusetts Public Health Training Center. Ketema and her cohort worked on an assessment of the organization’s childcare services.

In addition, Shanshan Chen, a doctoral student in Public Health-Nutrition concentration, was selected for one of eleven Family Research Graduate Travel Awards.
For more information on the Center for Research on Families Award Recipients, click here.

Patty Freedson, Chair of the Department of Kinesiology, explains why walking pedometers are more suitable for measuring steps than distance covered in a new "Ask the Experts" column appearing in Runner's World. Read her answer here.

Five Kinesiology Students Receive American Kinesiology Association Awards

Five students from the University of Massachusetts Amherst’s Department of Kinesiology, including three graduate and two undergraduate students, have been named recipients of American Kinesiology Association (AKA) awards for 2012.

Doctoral student Stephen A. Foulis and Master’s student Amanda Libertine have been selected as National Graduate Scholars for 2012. The AKA Scholar Awards “honor a select number of students whose academic and leadership records are distinctive.”
Jeffer Sasaki, a doctoral student, has been chosen for a Student Writing Award. This award recognizes select graduate students who have published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals. Sasaki was awarded for his publication “Validation and comparison of ActiGraph activity monitors”, which appears in the *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*.

Undergraduate students Salim Zerriny and Michael V. Cavaliere have been named as National Undergraduate Scholars for 2012. This award recognizes the “professional competence and dedication of academically accomplished undergraduate students.”

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**Van Emmerik leads research team examining impact of soldier's equipment load.**

From left: Mike Busa, Luis Rosado, Richard Van Emmerik, Chris Palmer, Jongil Lim and Darnell Simon at a Vietnam memorial on campus. Photo courtesy of UMass Amherst.

A team of researchers led by Richard Van Emmerik recently received a 2.5-year, $975,000 grant through the Navy Health Research Center in the Department of Defense to study how the
average 100-lb. equipment load carried by soldiers, which can be even heavier in some missions, affects their survivability, likelihood of injury and ability to carry out missions.

"Load is not a new issue for field commanders to consider," says Van Emmerik, who is director of the Sensory-Motor Control Laboratory. "But while past studies typically focused on how load affects gait and the lower body, we will for the first time look at how the upper body, trunk and head coordinate in a soldier who is burdened by a heavy load, which is a fundamentally different and a more complex situation."

Doctoral candidate Christopher Palmer, an Army employee who is an expert in motor control and military performance and a key member of Van Emmerik's team, adds, "To us, gait is just the beginning. We'll introduce a visual search task and track the coordination of upper body, postural control and visual acuity. No study has yet added all these, plus other factors, together in a realistic way to look at how load affects the soldier's ability to perceive threats, his or her operational effectiveness and survivability in combat."

Findings will also have practical significance for firefighters, police, rescue workers and others who must wear helmets, body armor, backpacks or other equipment while carrying out their duties.

The Kinesiology research team, which includes doctoral students Mike Busa and Luis Rosado, with postdoctoral fellows Darnell Simon and Jongil Lim, will recruit highly trained infantrymen as laboratory subjects who will be tested with no load as well as while carrying a variety of loads between 70 and 120 lbs. for the studies.

Van Emmerik notes, "Biomechanics has taught us a lot over the past 30 years about load and locomotion, stamina, oxygen use, energy use and so on. We'll expand to look at whether load affects reaction time, visual attention to critical details and the ability to discriminate friend or foe. We'll set up some fairly realistic tasks such as having a soldier jump off the back of a truck, scan an area, and then immediately hit targets in a marksmanship test."

In preliminary tests, Palmer says, they have used participants who are "fresh" and not fatigued. But as work progresses, they plan to also conduct tests with women and with subjects who are tired to see if they have trouble recognizing friend or foe on a radio call or taking a marksmanship test wearing night vision goggles, for
example. "We'll add different layers of stress in a smart progression so that we can understand what each layer is adding to the challenge."

Overall, the Kinesiology research team would like to be able to report to the military a great deal of new knowledge about the physical and mental trade-offs and limitations that come with soldiers carrying heavy loads, and of which a field commander can be aware.

"We'd like to contribute to commanders being able to make better decisions about what can be accomplished under certain conditions," Van Emmerik says. "For example, if the protective equipment has to be x, y and z, where can you expect the sharp drop in performance and how can you balance that with mission success?"

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**Kinesiology Doctoral Students LaBarbera, Xin Receive ACSM Foundation Research Grants**

![Photo: Ling Xin (left) and Kate LaBarbera (right).](image)

Kate LaBarbera and Ling Xin, doctoral students in the Department of Kinesiology, have been awarded research grants from the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) Foundation. The ACSM Foundation awards research grants for doctoral students up to $5,000 for a one-year
period. The awards are to be used for experimental subjects, supplies, and small equipment needs.

The ACSM Foundation Doctoral Student Research Grant program awarded LaBarbera for a proposal titled “NF-κB and muscle damage effects on endothelial cells.” LaBarbera hopes to gain a better understanding of the cellular and molecular mechanisms of muscle repair and regeneration. In order to do this, her study will focus not only on muscle cells, but also on the cells that contribute to the skeletal muscle environment, including pericytes and endothelial cells. Pericytes are a type of cell that associates with endothelial cells, which form capillary vessels. The aim of her project is to determine how pericycle NF-κB, a transcription factor that regulates many cellular processes including proliferation and muscle damage stimulus, affects endothelial cell proliferation in vitro. She also hopes to identify the cytokines involved in the signaling process between pericytes and endothelial cells. This would identify for the first time that endothelial cells are important for muscle regeneration.

Xin received her award for a proposal titled “Attenuated inflammation: contralateral repeated bout effect.” Her research examines the phenomenon of “repeated bout effect” (RBE), in which a second strenuous exercise session causes less damage to the same muscle used in the initial session. Her previous research has shown that RBE also occurs in the opposite (contralateral) leg. The mechanisms to explain this finding are not known. Her project will examine if the contralateral RBE is due to a blunted inflammatory response involving nuclear factor-kappa B (NF-κB), which is believed to be an important stimulator of inflammation after damaging exercise. The identified molecular and cellular mechanisms involving NF-κB from this project may be important in the development of interventions to enhance contralateral RBE while setting up rehabilitation exercise for a unilaterally immobilized limb and in identifying targets of future therapies to facilitate recovery from injury.

The ACSM began its Foundation Research Grant Program in 1989. In 2011, the program awarded approximately $111,000 among 19 research students.

**Communication Disorders Student Stephanie Tompkins Receives William H. Ross Memorial Scholarship**

Stephanie Tompkins, a senior Communication Disorders major, recently received one of four William H. Ross Memorial Scholarships awarded for 2012. The award is made in memory of William H. Ross, former Professor of Physics at UMass Amherst.
Dr. Ross began as an instructor in 1933 and would eventually receive his full professorship in 1956. He was named UMass Amherst’s first Distinguished Teacher of the Year in 1962. Dr. Ross was also a charter member of both the University of Massachusetts Senate and Faculty Club.

The William H. Ross Memorial Scholarship is open to juniors or seniors enrolled as a full-time student at UMass Amherst. Students must be in good academic standing, be registered in a major program, demonstrate financial need, and present a written paper on the subject “What I plan on doing after graduation that will help society as a whole.”

Currently, Tompkins is working on her Honors Capstone Thesis, in which she is investigating an alternative method to cochlear implants for those with high frequency hearing loss. The alternative device is similar to a hearing aid. After graduation, Tompkins will enroll in the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) degree program in the Communication Disorders department at UMass Amherst, where she will continue to aid those with hearing loss to improve their quality of life.

**Wickham Awarded Food Safety Student Challenge Scholarship**

Catherine Wickham, a doctoral student of Public Health in the Nutrition concentration, has been selected as one of nine winners of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation/ConAgra Foods Food Safety Student Challenge Scholarship. Wickham received the $5000 award based on the program plan she designed to help educate college students on the importance of home food safety.

The Food Safety Student Challenge centers around the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ (formerly the ADA) *Home Food Safety* campaign, which provides home food safety statistics, information about food borne illness (also known as food poisoning), and safe food handling information and tips. Together with ConAgra Foods, the Academy developed four simple and easy-to-follow home food safety messages, drawn from government recommendations and the Academy’s positions:

- Wash Hands Often
- Keep Raw Meat and Ready-to-Eat Foods Separate
The Food Safety Student Challenge aims to educate and improve food safety for those living on campus focusing on these four key areas. The program emphasizes the unique opportunity campus living provides to educate college students on the importance of food safety.

Wickham’s proposal incorporates these messages through a blog titled Dorm Food Safety (dormfoodsafety.org). The blog will link to resources on www.homefoodsafety.org and other sites such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and will address issues specific to college students living in a dorm environment. In addition posters with the four key messages will be developed and displayed on-campus and in dorm kitchens. The posters will include a quick response code (QR code) which will link back to the blog and to homefoodsafety.org.

“The latest CDC statistics indicate that 1 in 6 Americans will become sick with a foodborne illness each year,” notes Wickham. “Students who store food in their dorm rooms or cook in dorm kitchens may be at an increased risk due to their unique environments. For example, small room refrigerators do not hold foods to proper temperature, or they may lack experience in safe food-handling practices – like leaving pizza out all night and eating it for breakfast!”

Wickham plans to implement the program over the course of the next 8 weeks. Each week a new blog post covering a different key message or topic will be available. Students will have the opportunity to take a short questionnaire at the end of each week’s blog and be entered into a raffle to win gift certificates.

Foulkes’ Research Could Improve Testing, Resource Use for Treating AIDS in Poorer Countries

One of the major problems that has slowed progress toward universal access to life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART) to treat AIDS in developing nations has been limited availability of laboratories and trained medical staff to conduct blood tests of immune system CD-4 T-cell levels that indicate when to start ART.

Now, Andrea Foulkes, Associate Professor of Biostatistics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, with colleagues at Philadelphia’s Wistar Institute and elsewhere, propose a tool for prioritizing
laboratory-based CD-4 cell count testing by linking cell counts to other patient data. They report details of their new “prediction-based classification” (PBC) system in the current issue of *PLoS Medicine*. Researchers in the United States, Argentina, South Africa, Canada, the U.K. and Malaysia took part in the study at seven sites around the world.

Foulkes, who with others at UMass Amherst has been actively driving this research, says, “By using these new statistical tools, we can decide how to allocate resources to the patients who need them the most. In other words, we identify which patients are most likely to benefit from secondary testing.” PBC could reduce by nearly 57 percent the number of CD-4 tests needed during the first year of ART.

The study is a retrospective analysis that modeled CD-4 counts from 1,000 HIV-infected individuals. The researchers used estimates derived from the model to predict, from CD-4 counts taken at the start of treatment plus white blood cell counts and lymphocyte percentage measurements taken later, whether CD-4 counts would be above the threshold recommended for starting ART and how a patient would do over time.

Luis Montaner at the Wistar Institute says, “Our algorithm could be used as a triage tool to direct available laboratory CD-4 testing capacity to high-priority individuals, that is, those likely to experience a dangerously low CD-4 count.” He and colleagues believe that with additional testing and refinement, their PBC system could increase the ability of medical and laboratory facilities in poorer countries to maintain AIDS treatment.

“Our data raises the possibility that we could save money in order to save more lives,” Montaner points out. Foulkes, Montaner and colleagues say that more studies are needed to demonstrate the long-term feasibility, clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the PBC approach and whether the accuracy of its predictions can be improved.

The work was supported by the National Institutes of Health, The Philadelphia Foundation and The Wistar Institute.

The full, freely available journal article can be found [online here on PLoS Medicine’s website](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22523356).

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**Department of Nutrition Hosts 24th Annual Virginia A. Beal Lecture and Dinner**

The Department of Nutrition will host the 24th Annual Virginia A. Beal Lecture and Dinner on Monday, April 30, 2012. The event begins at 4:30 p.m. in the Amherst Room on the 10th Floor of the Campus Center.
This year’s lecture and dinner features three notable UMass Amherst alumni discussing “The Challenges and Successes of Childhood Nutrition: What Works?” Ann Ferris, PhD, RD, Director, Center for Public Health and Health Policy at the University of Connecticut will address obesity in young children; Jean Anliker, PhD, RD, of UMass Extension will discuss adolescent obesity; and Elizabeth Ward, MS, RD, freelance writer and nutrition consultant, will discuss communicating nutrition to families using current technologies.

The department will also pay tribute to Professor Beal, who passed away this December. Professor Beal was a longtime member of the Food Science and Nutrition faculty, serving at UMass Amherst from 1971 until her retirement as Professor Emerita in 1986. She was a fellow of the American Public Health Association and American Society of Nutrition and a member of the American Dietetic Association, the Society for Nutrition Education and the New York Academy of Sciences. Her pioneering work and expertise in childhood nutrition and growth was called upon by various national organizations, including the National Institutes of Health, the Children’s Bureau, the National Research Council, the American Heart Association, the Nutrition Foundation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

She gave an endowment to the campus to begin the annual Virginia A. Beal Lecture Series, sponsoring current lectures in the field of nutrition and two scholarships to nutrition students, which continues through the generosity of many alumni and friends. Virginia A. Beal presented the first lecture in 1989. In the intervening years, well-known scholars in the field of nutrition have been invited to speak and honor her. In addition to the lectureship and scholarships, Professor Beal recently endowed a fellowship to support a doctoral student in nutrition.

The registration deadline for the 24th Annual Virginia A. Beal Lecture and Dinner is April 23rd. For the full program agenda and event information, click here. Registration is available online through April 23rd.

For more information, contact Eileen Giard at egiard@nutrition.umass.edu or by phone at 413-545-0740.

Hamill Delivers Trio of Keynote Lectures

Joseph Hamill, Professor of Kinesiology, recently appeared as the keynote lecturer at three conferences held over a two-week period in the U.S., Europe, and Australia.

On March 30, 2012, Dr. Hamill presented “The Case for Shod Running” at the Mid-West American College of Sports Medicine Symposium held in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He followed that with an appearance in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on April 4, 2012. There, Dr. Hamill delivered “Altering Footfall Patterns: Implications for Running-Related Injuries” for the Biomechanics Interest Group Symposium. His travels concluded in Sydney,
Australia on April 11, 2012, for the International Foot and Ankle Biomechanics Symposium, where he gave a keynote lecture titled “Rearfoot vs. Forefoot Footfall Patterns.”

Regarded as a leading expert in the field of biomechanics, and in particular the mechanics of the lower extremity during locomotion, Dr. Hamill shared his latest research findings with his peers.

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**Kinesiology Student Michaela Butler Named UMass Winter Scholar-Athlete**

Michaela Butler, a junior Kinesiology major, has been selected as the female UMass Winter Scholar-Athlete for 2011-12. UMass Athletics recently honored her at a weekly Sports Luncheon.

A member of the UMass Amherst diving team, Butler was also named the 2012 Atlantic 10 Women's Most Outstanding Diver of the Year after winning gold medals in both the one- and three-meter dives at the A-10 Championship meet. She went undefeated during the regular season on the boards and competed in the NCAA Zone A Championship, a qualifier for the individual NCAA Women’s Swimming and Diving Championship.

Butler, who sports a 3.4 GPA, plans to become an orthopedic surgeon. “The Kinesiology major is really helpful for a pre-med student,” said Butler. “I’m learning a lot about the human body, which sets me apart from a biology or chemistry major.”

Butler cites Eliza Frechette, Lecturer in the Kinesiology Department, as one of her academic influences. “Professor Frechette makes sure we’re on task and learning, but she makes it fun at the same time.”

“It’s a pleasure to have a student like Michaela in my class,” said Frechette. “She has a great attitude and works well with her peers. More importantly, she implements and demonstrates the skill sets we want to foster in our student-athletes. She has excellent communication skills, she understands time management, and she takes responsibility for her learning. She doesn’t expect a grade to be handed to her. She earns it.”

For Butler, there’s little time for rest. In addition to her Kinesiology studies, she trains daily throughout the year.
“My goal for next season is to qualify for the NCAA women’s diving championship.”

Butler has two years of eligibility remaining after taking a redshirt season last year. The 2012-2013 diving season begins in October.

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**Peterman Invited to Testify for the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics**

Jerusha Nelson Peterman, Assistant Professor of Nutrition, will testify as an invited panelist on applications for community research for the National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) in Silver Spring, MD on Tuesday, April 17. Her testimony will come as part of the Subcommittee on Privacy, Confidentiality & Security’s two-day panel on “Next Steps for Community Data Use.”

The National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics was established by Congress to serve as an advisory body to the Department of Health and Human Services on health data, statistics and national health information policy. It fulfills important review and advisory functions relative to health data and statistical problems of national and international interest, stimulates or conducts studies of such problems and makes proposals for improvement of the Nation’s health statistics and information systems.

Peterman’s community-based research focuses on issues of food security, acculturation, and dietary choices in immigrant families. Her testimony will help to inform the panel on how building capacity in communities through research partnerships can strengthen the research process and help translate findings into community programs and applications.

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**The Department of Kinesiology will host the 1st Annual Walter Kroll Memorial Lecture on Thursday, April 19 with a talk by Waneen Spirduso, professor emerita in the department of kinesiology and health at the University of Texas-Austin, at 4 p.m. in 135 Integrated Sciences Building.**

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**Bigelow Receives SPHHS Outstanding Online Teacher Award**
The School of Public Health and Health Sciences is pleased to announce that Carol Bigelow, Associate Professor of Biostatistics, has been named the recipient of the SPHHS Outstanding Online Teacher Award. The award, which is given annually by the School, recognizes excellence in online teaching.

Dr. Bigelow, who taught online courses in *Introductory Biostatistics* and *Practical Data Management & Statistical Computing*, was cited for her contributions to teaching in an online classroom environment. Her research interests are in the areas of clinical epidemiology, randomized trials, and cancer prevention.

“Dr. Bigelow teaches two of the most challenging online MPH courses, and does so brilliantly,” said Daniel Gerber, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Director of the online MPH in Public Health Practice program. “She has the ability to tailor the courses to each student’s unique ability, thereby ensuring success. She is also highly approachable, amiable, and willing to put in extra effort to assist her students. Her efforts are most appreciated by all who have the privilege of learning from her.”

“I’m so grateful to the students I’ve been able to reach,” said Bigelow. “It was a joint effort to say the least. This recognition is a wonderful encouragement to keep after the rest.”

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**Norton Receives Student Choice Award**

Claire Norton, Lecturer and Undergraduate Program Director for the Department of Nutrition, has received the Residential First-Year Experience (RFYE) Student Choice Award. First-year students were given the opportunity to nominate a professor or instructor who had a profound influence on them during their first semester. Nominations were made for a variety of reasons, including: inspiring students to learn, hosting interesting and motivating lectures, going above and beyond to support first-year students, helping students adjust to college, challenging students to reach their full potential, and much more.

The RFYE Student Choice Award is organized by the Residential First Year Experience program in the office of Residential Life at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

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**Oransky to Deliver Talk at TEDMED 2012 Conference**
Ivan Oransky, M.D., adjunct instructor in the online MPH in Public Health Practice program and executive editor at Reuters Health, is an invited speaker at TEDMED 2012. The annual conference will be held this year on April 10-13 in the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Oransky will deliver a talk titled “Is the ‘Disease Model’ Sick – Or Just Exhausted?” He will argue that our current way of thinking about health, with its perverse incentives for both patient and health care provider, is driving up costs and anxiety while making us all more ill.

Fellow online MPH in PHP faculty member Marya Zilberberg, M.D., will join Dr. Oransky at TEDMED 2012 as a delegate. Dr. Zilberberg will attend on a TEDMED Front-Line Scholarship, which is open to “anyone who is an innovator or leader or on the front lines of medicine, public service or research.” Zilberberg’s award covers the full registration cost for the TEDMED conference.

TEDMED is described as “a community of people who are passionate about imagining the future of health and medicine. Its curated audience includes thoughtful individuals from every realm of science, business, technology, government, religion, law, military, media and the arts.”

For more information on TEDMED, visit their website at www.tedmed.com.

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**Reich Teaches Workshop at Thailand’s Ministry of Public Health**

On March 1-2, Nicholas G. Reich, Research Assistant Professor of Biostatistics, co-instructed a workshop titled “Forecasting Dengue Incidence and Outbreaks in Thailand” in Bangkok, Thailand with colleagues from Johns Hopkins University, where Reich received his PhD. The Field Epidemiology Training Program at the Ministry of Public Health in Thailand hosted the workshop.

The Models of Infectious Disease Agent Study, or MIDAS, sponsored Reich’s involvement in the workshop. MIDAS, an international research consortium, was established by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences in 2004 as a “collaborative network of research scientists who use computational, statistical and mathematical models to
understand infectious disease dynamics and thereby assist the nation to prepare for, detect and respond to infectious disease threats.” (For more information, visit their website at https://www.epimodels.org/.)

Reich and his colleagues designed the workshop to introduce new methodologies that help predict dengue incidence and provide early warning of outbreaks in Thailand. The researchers discussed two approaches to prediction and outbreak detection. The first focuses on using the frequency of Internet searches related to dengue to identify outbreaks before they are evident in case data reported to the Thai Ministry of Public Health. The second method uses spatial and temporal correlation of dengue incidence in different provinces throughout Thailand to estimate the probability of future outbreaks in each Thai province months into the future. Both methods are implemented in the open-source R software package, a free statistical analysis tool used by researchers worldwide. Reich and colleagues provided the participants with code for running the predictions and creating “weather-map” style risk maps of outbreaks in Thailand.

Reich and his collaborators have been working for several years with the Ministry to develop these methods and incorporate them into an easy-to-use software package. “We hatched this idea with our Thai collaborators a few years ago and have been putting the pieces together since then,” said Reich. “This was the first time that we showed them a version of the software. Many of the participants told us that they were excited about using it in their work to help them understand the current outbreak threats in Thailand. We think there is great potential for these methods to be used to inform public health response to infectious disease epidemics in Thailand.”

Graduates of the Thai Field Epidemiology Training Program, many of whom currently serve as epidemiologists for the Ministry throughout Thailand, were the primary participants in the workshop.

Peterman named Family Research Scholar for 2012-2013.
Jerusha Nelson Peterman, Assistant Professor of Nutrition, was among six UMass Amherst faculty members named as 2012-13 Family Research Scholars by the Center for Research on Families. She was selected to participate in the ninth cohort of the program on the basis of her promising work in family-related research.

The program provides selected faculty with the time, technical expertise, peer mentorship and national expert consultation to prepare a large grant proposal for their research support. A goal of the program is to bring together a diverse, multi-disciplinary group of faculty to foster innovation and collaboration across research areas related to the family.

Over the year, the scholars participate in an interdisciplinary faculty seminar that includes concrete instruction on the details of successful proposal submission and the resources of the university, individualized methodology consultation, and information about relevant funding agencies, which culminates with the submission of a research proposal to a major funding agency. For scholars, the program offers extra time through a course release, support and expertise. One current scholar lauds the program for giving him "the time, space, structure, and guidance to understand and get started in the world of large grants in a way that would not have been possible otherwise as an assistant professor." Since the program first began in 2003, 50 Family Research Scholars have submitted more than 136 proposals.

The Center for Research on Families' mission is to increase research on family issues, to build a multidisciplinary community of researchers who are studying issues of relevance to families, to connect national and internationally prominent family researchers with faculty and students, to provide advanced data analytic methods training and consultation, and to disseminate family research findings to scholars, families, practitioners and policymakers. Research at CRF encompasses disciplines as diverse as the life sciences, social sciences, public health and nursing, education, and natural resources. CRF is a research center of the College of Natural Sciences and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and has affiliated faculty from departments across campus.

Peterman will be researching the "Predictors and Dietary and Health Consequences of Food Insecurity in Immigrant Families in the U.S."

See the complete list of Family Research Scholars.
Dr. Frank Rife, Associate Professor of Kinesiology, and Undergraduate Program Director and Chief Undergraduate Advisor for the Department of Kinesiology, has received the College Outstanding Teacher Award for the School of Public Health and Health Sciences. The award is sponsored by the UMass Amherst Provost’s Office and the Center for Teaching & Faculty Development, and given annually to honor individual faculty members for their teaching accomplishments. The recipients will be recognized at Undergraduate Commencement and at the School’s Senior Recognition Ceremony.

Dr. Rife was cited for his impact on students and contributions to the teaching mission at the university. “I am honored to receive this award as it suggests that my major goal in teaching might be having a positive impact,” said Dr. Rife. “One of my major goals in class is to engage my students. I try to encourage them to challenge me, and I seek this by developing a questioning atmosphere in my classrooms where both civility and curiosity are valued. Basically I want students to be confident in what they know before they begin to apply what they have learned. The end goal is to encourage them to be better at making decisions based on sound and critical analysis and evaluation.”

This past year, Dr. Rife taught two classes each semester: (1) a senior-level course entitled Wellness for All which includes the effects of lifestyle choices on health and fitness and also information on health disparities and possible solutions to reduce those disparities, and (2) a course in Fitness Management which provides some of the business-related skills that students will need in various careers in Allied Health. In addition to his teaching duties in the Kinesiology Department, he is the undergraduate program director and chief undergraduate advisor. Rife’s area of expertise is in campus wellness and fitness programs, as well as workplace wellness and health promotion programs and fitness management.
The School of Public Health and Health Sciences is pleased to announce the results of the faculty-juried poster competition from the 15th Annual Research Day held on April 3, 2012. Posters are judged based on content and presentation and awarded in two distinct categories: Research and Practice.

One student is also presented with the Delta Omega Honor Society Award, which is given based on the poster abstract. The Delta Omega winner’s abstract subsequently will be submitted for further judging by the Delta Omega Society’s national committee for possible presentation at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association.

The 2012 Research Day Award winners are:

**Delta Omega Honor Society Award:**

**Andrea Morand** (MS, Kinesiology). Providing further construct validity for a newly developed measure of functional-living in older adults: Movement and Activity in Physical Space (MAPS).

**Research Award, 1st Place:**
Nina Moore (PhD, Kinesiology). Smokers exhibit blunted changes in muscle NFkB activity after strenuous work.

Research Award, 2nd Place:

Shanshan Chen (PhD, Public Health-Nutrition). Stunting is inversely associated with dietary zinc intake among adolescent girls aged 10-19 years.

Research Award, 3rd Place:

Ling Xin (PhD, Kinesiology). Botanical supplement effects on nuclear factor Kappa B (NF-kB) DNA-binding activity following eccentric exercise.

Practice Award, 1st Place:


Practice Award, 2nd Place:


The SPHHS would like to thank everyone who participated in this year’s Research Day and made it such a success! The SPHHS Annual Research Day is co-sponsored by the School of Public Health and Health Sciences & The Rho Chapter, Delta Omega Honorary Public Health Society.

SPHHS Congratulates Alumni Association’s 2012 Student Award Winners

The School of Public Health and Health Sciences would like to congratulate the winners of the UMass Amherst Alumni Association’s 2012 Student Awards. Each year, the Alumni Association presents more than 100 scholarships and over $90,000 to worthy students.

Once again, students in the School of Public Health and Health Sciences are very well represented among the award-winning group of students. The SPHHS is pleased to announce its students have been chosen as the Alumni Merit-Based SAA Scholarship awardee, as Senior Leadership Award recipients, and as William F. Field Alumni Scholars.
The Alumni Merit-Based Scholarship recognizes a Student Alumni Association member who demonstrates outstanding leadership in the Student Alumni Association and within the larger university community. This year, only one student was selected to receive this honor:

Jessica He ’12, Public Health

The Senior Leadership Award recognizes graduating seniors who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and service to the UMass Amherst community. Award recipients have distinguished themselves through important contributions to student organizations and campus jobs, through academic excellence, and through public and community service. This year, four of the twenty-five recipients came from the School of Public Health and Health Sciences:

Jessica He ’12, Public Health  
Elizabeth Lundy ’12, Nutrition  
Summer Moukalled ’12, Kinesiology  
Thony Tran ’12, Nutrition

Finally, five SPHHS students – a pre-determined number proportional to the size of the School – were chosen as William F. Field Alumni Scholars. The William F. Field Alumni Scholars Program was established in 1976 to recognize and honor third-year students for their academic achievements at UMass Amherst. The program was named in honor of William F. Field, the university’s first Dean of Students, for his outstanding support of academic excellence and his personal commitment to bringing out the best in every student.

The SPHHS William F. Field Alumni Scholars for 2012 are:

Megan Colwell ’13, Kinesiology  
Decia DeMaio ’13, Communication Disorders  
Molly Flynn ’13, Public Health Sciences  
Jeffrey Larnard ’13, Nutrition  
Jennifer Russell ’13, Communication Disorders

The Alumni Association honored these students at a Scholarships & Awards Reception held on April 1, 2012 in the Marriott Center. Please join us in congratulating them.

For a complete list of recipients of the UMass Amherst Alumni Association’s 2012 Scholarships and Awards Recipients, click here.
The University of Massachusetts Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences is delighted to announce the hiring of the Western Massachusetts Public Health Training Center’s (PHTC) new director, Dawn Heffernan. As director, Dawn will oversee the center’s internship program, collaborative community-based projects, and training of community health workers and other frontline health workers.

Dawn joins the PHTC’s Team bringing a wealth of experience and knowledge in community health, chronic disease management, program development, and training and supervision of community health workers. Dawn is known throughout the state for her work in diabetes and chronic disease at Holyoke Health Center where she worked for the past eight years. She is welcomed back to the University where she completed her undergraduate and graduate studies in the School of Nursing.

School of Public Health and Health Sciences Celebrates National Public Health Week 2012

The School of Public Health and Health Sciences (SPHHS) has planned a week’s worth of events in honor of “National Public Health Week 2012: A Healthier America Begins Today.” National Public Health Week (NPHW), which was first created in 1995 through a proclamation from former President Clinton, is celebrated during the first full week of April. This year, the NPHW runs from April 2 through April 8.

The American Public Health Association (APHA) serves as the lead organizer of NPHW, which focuses on an issue that is important to improving the public's health. With the help of its 50,000 members and hundreds of organizational partners, the APHA seeks to educate the public, policymakers, and practitioners about the importance of public health.

The School of Public Health and Health Sciences celebrates NPHW 2012 through events meant to highlight the School’s message of education, research, outreach and practice. Among the student-centered activities during the week are
the undergraduate major in Public Health Sciences’ **Poster Internship and Study Abroad Day** on Monday, April 2, and the School’s **15th Annual Research Day** on Tuesday, April 3.

The Poster Internship and Study Abroad Day showcases the many internship and study abroad experiences of public health students, and is designed to provide their peers with an idea of what opportunities are available both locally and globally, what students learn, and the value of practice-based learning. The Western Massachusetts Public Health Training Center will also provide information and applications for paid summer internships available throughout the region as part of the School’s $2.5 million Training Center grant awarded by HRSA.

On Research Day, students from all SPHHS departments present posters of their work. Posters are entered into a faculty-juried session and judged based on research content and presentation. Select individuals will receive awards for Research and Practice. In addition, one student will be presented with the Delta Omega Honor Society Award. That student's winning poster abstract will subsequently be submitted for further judging by the Delta Omega Society's national committee for possible presentation at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association.

The Public Health Sciences program and the Public Health Club will co-sponsor an exhibit titled **“The Ex-Smokers’ Hall of Fame”** on Tuesday, April 3, from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. in the Student Lounge in the UMass Amherst Student Union Center. The Ex-Smokers’ Hall of Fame celebrates the stories of Hampshire and Franklin County former smokers who were successful in quitting. The event showcases their personal journeys to being smoke-free. By sharing their strategies for success, members of the Ex-Smokers’ Hall of Fame hope to provide inspiration and support to smokers trying to quit. These stories illustrate that there is hope for people who attempt to quit. The Ex-Smokers’ Hall of Fame is a joint effort of the Hampshire Council of Governments’ Tobacco Free Community Partnership and the Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program.

Also on Tuesday, April 3, the campus welcomes Pierre Minn, postdoctoral fellow from UCLA, for a talk titled **“Where They Need Me: Haitian Health Professionals and International Medical Aid Before and After the 2010 Earthquake.”** The event, sponsored by the Five College Program in Culture, Health, and Science, will begin with a pizza party at 6:00 p.m. in Herter Hall Room 301, followed by the lecture at 6:30 p.m.

Students groups will sponsor a number of other events throughout the week, including workshops on **CPR Certification** (Monday, April 2nd, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., Campus Center Room 165), a screening of the film **“Contagion”** (Wednesday, April 4, 7:30 p.m., John Adams
Dormitory), and providing information tables from the Public Health Club, Tapestry, and Active Minds at the Campus Center on Friday, April 6, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For more information on any of these events, contact Patrick Freeman by email at pfreeman@schoolph.umass.edu or by phone at 413-545-4340.

For more information on National Public Health Week, please visit http://www.nphw.org/.

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**Reich Receives Open Education Initiative Grant**

Nicholas Reich, research assistant professor of Biostatistics, was recently selected as a recipient of an Open Education Initiative Grant by the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The grant comes as part of a joint incentive program by the Provost’s Office and the University Libraries to encourage faculty to use existing technology and information resources to support student learning.

The high cost of commercial print textbooks is a growing concern for students and their families. The Open Education Initiative provides grants based on competitive proposals designed to support faculty to use non-traditional educational resources as an alternative to the traditional textbook.

Reich received a $1000 grant for his proposal to develop a statistical computing course that will utilize freely available resources for statistical learning, such as the popular software program R. He will deploy this alternative curricular resource strategy for his Introduction to Statistical Computing and Data Visualization course to be taught during the Fall 2012 semester.

For more information on Open Education Resources, please visit http://guides.library.umass.edu/oer.

For more information on the R Project for Statistical Computing, please visit http://www.r-project.org/.

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**Communication Disorders Graduate Students to Hold Aphasia Awareness Walk**
Graduate students from the University of Massachusetts Amherst Department of Communication Disorders, in association with the UMass Police Department, will be holding The Third Annual Walk and Roll for Aphasia on Saturday, April 14th in Amherst, MA. In addition to raising awareness of stroke and aphasia, the walk will raise funds for the department's aphasia research, outreach, and support services.

Aphasia is a language disorder brought about by brain damage, most often following a stroke. It can impair the ability to use or understand spoken or written language. Aphasia is not a disorder of intelligence. It can greatly limit a person's participation in social, vocational, or recreational activities. In spite of the millions of people affected by stroke and aphasia, public awareness remains relatively low.

The event will take place on the Amherst Town Commons on Saturday, April 14th. Check in begins at 10:00am. The 2.6 mile walk, which will start at 11:00am, will occur rain or shine. Afterwards, a raffle for gift cards and other prizes will take place. There will be music and refreshments.

Anyone interested is asked to join the walk, sponsor a walker, or provide a donation. Participants who raise over $100 in donations will receive a free event t-shirt. To register, forms are available at http://blogs.umass.edu/jacquie/files/2010/02/Walk_RegistrationForm_2012.pdf. Register in advance or on the day of the event. Registration forms and donations may be sent to Polly Stokes, BRoCA Lab Manager, Department of Communication Disorders, 358 North Pleasant Street, Amherst, MA 01003-9296. For more information, visit the website https://blogs.umass.edu/aphasia/walk-and-roll/, contact umass.aphasiawalk@gmail.com, or search for the event page on Facebook.

Contact:
Polly Stokes, M.S., CCC-SLP
pestokes@comdis.umass.edu
(413) 545-4008
or
Are you an ex-smoker with a success story to share? Your story could help others quit for good! We’d like to know what medicines, strategies, lifestyle changes, or support helped you quit. To share your story, contact Megan Griffin at (413) 584-1300 x174 or meganelizabethgriffin@gmail.com.

Sponsored by the UMass Undergraduate Public Health Club.

Barry Braun, Associate Professor of Kinesiology, comments in a Reuters story on a new study that finds that taking a break to walk around every 20 minutes, rather than staying seated for hours at a time, helps reduce blood glucose levels and insulin after eating.

Read more...

Jane Kent-Braun, Professor of Kinesiology, is quoted in a New York Times article about new research linking physical activity with better sleep. A 2011 study done at UMass Amherst showed that there is a very strong correlation between sleep quality and physical activity.

Read more...

Bertone-Johnson Writes Invited Commentary for the Archives of Internal Medicine
Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson, Associate Professor of Epidemiology, has co-written an invited commentary for the journal *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

In the commentary, Bertone-Johnson and co-author JoAnn Manson discuss a new study by Italian researchers suggesting that a single ultra-high dose of vitamin D may help women with painful menstrual periods and allow them to forgo the use of painkillers. Bertone-Johnson and Manson recommend larger trials with a longer follow-up to confirm the benefits and weigh them against the potential long-term risks associated with such high doses.

The new study, along with Bertone-Johnson and Manson's commentary, are receiving additional press coverage at CBS News and MedPage Today. To read their commentary, click here.

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**Kinesiology students Justin Brown, Matt Pilla and Jordan Marks helped train U.S. Women's Rugby National Team hopefuls. The athletes participated in a set of fitness and training tests at UMass, aided by the kinesiology department's Body Shop Fitness Center interns. Read more...**

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**Nutrition Alumna Elizabeth Ward Moderates WebMD Town Hall Event with First Lady Michelle Obama**
Nutrition alumna Elizabeth Ward served as the moderator for the WebMD Town Hall event featuring First Lady Michelle Obama. The event, held on February 10, 2012 in Homestead, FL, celebrated the second anniversary of Let's Move and offered many "Simple Tips for Healthy Families".

Mrs. Obama joined a panel of experts in nutrition, pediatric care, and fitness. In addition to Elizabeth Ward and Mrs. Obama, participants included WebMD Director of Nutrition Kathleen Zelman, Dr. Hansa Bhargava of WebMD, and Jim Kauffman, the national director for health and well-being for the YMCA. The panel answered questions from the audience and from around the country.

Click [here for a transcript or to watch the event in its entirety](#).

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Elena Carbone, Associate Professor of Nutrition, has been named Director of Community Research Engagement by the Commonwealth Honors College. Her goal will be to identify faculty involved in community-engaged research.
and develop means to involve outstanding honors students.

Priscilla Clarkson, Professor of Kinesiology and Dean of the Commonwealth Honors College, comments on a study that shows massage can help sore muscles recover from hard exercise. Clarkson, who studies post-exercise muscle soreness, says the new study didn’t look at whether massage reduced pain.

Alayne Ronnenberg, Associate Professor of Nutrition, comments on "The Vitamin D Dilemma" in "Refresh: A whole health blog" published on the Supermarket News website. She contributes several different factors to the worldwide problem of Vitamin D deficiency.

DiFulvio presents at the 2012 NASPA Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention and Intervention Conference

Gloria DiFulvio, undergraduate program director for the Public Health Sciences major, joined Diane Fedorchak and Sally Linowski of University Health Services (UHS) as featured presenters at the 2012 NASPA Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention and Intervention Conference, held January 19-21 in Atlanta.

The campus' nationally recognized environmental management approach to substance abuse prevention has helped decrease dangerous drinking among students by as much as 48 percent since 2005. NASPA, the foremost professional association in the student affairs field, has featured university experts at its prevention conference seven times in the past three years.

DiFulvio and Fedorchak, director of the BASICS alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs at UHS, led "Digital Stories: Shining Light on Hidden Voices." The session explored this emergent research method as a tool for understanding and assisting vulnerable populations including gender variant youth and students struggling with addiction.
Fedorchak and Linowski, director of UHS' Center for Health Promotion and co-chair of the Campus and Community Coalition to Reduce High-Risk Drinking, also joined Dolores Cimini of the University at Albany for "Engaging Human Capital: Fostering Collaborations and Stakeholder Enthusiasm for Alcohol and other Drug Interventions." The team called on experiences at both schools to show how simple efforts can help evidence-based intervention programs succeed.

The NASPA conference brings together senior-level campus administrators, alcohol education specialists, health promotion and prevention staff, and researchers from the alcohol and other drug arena to focus on advancing knowledge of student affairs educators and information-sharing about alcohol and other drug use on college and university campuses.

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**Public Health Student Awarded 2012 Gilman Scholarship**

Digna Pena Mejia, an undergraduate in the Public Health Sciences program, has been awarded a 2012 Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship. She joins 14 other UMass Amherst students who will receive the scholarship award in 2012, which places the university third nationally.

Sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, the Gilman scholarship program broadens study abroad participation for those in need of financial assistance. Each Gilman scholar is offered a scholarship between $2,500 and $5,000 to study abroad.

Ms. Pena Mejia’s award will support her studies this spring in Thailand.

“I’m very excited for this upcoming semester!” said Ms. Pena Mejia. “I will have an opportunity to study public health on both a regional and national level, as well as to compare the public health systems of different Southeast Asian countries.”

Ms. Pena Mejia’s plans include cultural experiences as well as educational ones. “I plan to truly immerse myself in the Thai culture and participate in traditional Thai cultural events, living with a host family for part of my time in Thailand, and exploring the country in its totality. I am positive this will be a very transformative experience for me, both on a personal and professional level.”
Upon returning to UMass Amherst, Ms. Pena Mejia hopes to encourage other students, especially those in the Public Health major, to pursue studies abroad and discover new cultures.

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**Peltier Receives Health Effects Institute’s New Investigator Award**

Richard Peltier, Assistant Professor of Environmental Health Sciences, was recently selected as a recipient of the 2011 Walter A. Rosenblith New Investigator Award by the Health Effects Institute (HEI). The HEI is a nonprofit corporation chartered in 1980 as an independent research organization to provide high-quality, impartial, and relevant science on the health effects of air pollution.

The New Investigator Award is named after the late Dr. Walter A. Rosenblith, chair of the HEI’s first Research Committee and a former member of its Board of Directors. The award supports the work of a promising scientist early in his or her career, and is given based on the applicant’s potential for a productive scientific career in air pollution research, the support provided by the applicant’s institution, and the scientific merit of the research project and its relevance to HEI’s mission.

Peltier received the award for a project titled “Development of a new method for measurement of reactive oxygen species associated with PM$_{2.5}$ exposure.” With the award, he plans to develop a new instrument that can quantify the formation of reactive oxygen species (ROS) caused by fine particulate matter (PM) exposure.

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**Patty Freedson, Professor and Chair of the Department of Kinesiology,** comments in an Associated Press release about a new high-tech wristband unveiled by Nike that displays measures of calories burned and steps taken and measures the intensity of various actions and motions into a metric called NikeFuel. [Read more...](#)

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**Kurland Awarded NIH Grant to Study Aphasia Recovery**
Jacquie Kurland, Assistant Professor of Communication Disorders, has been awarded a five-year, $1.76 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Kurland received the award for a research project titled “Overcoming learned non-use in chronic aphasia: Behavioral, fMRI, and QoL outcomes.”

Aphasia is a language disorder brought about by brain damage, most often following a stroke. It can impair the ability to use or understand spoken or written language, and can greatly limit a person’s participation in social, vocational, or recreational activities.

Kurland’s project will examine aphasia rehabilitation through a three-pronged longitudinal case series approach. The research will focus on the effect of one variable (constraint to spoken responses during intensive language therapy) on: 1) language recovery; 2) the neural mechanisms supporting that recovery; and 3) Quality of Life (QoL) changes in chronic moderate-to-severe patients, a more severely affected population than is customarily studied.

By taking this three-pronged approach, Kurland hopes to determine not only whether intensive treatment is effective for persons with moderate-to-severe expressive aphasia, but also to identify the signature neural patterns that correlate with improved picture naming, as well as to characterize the relationship between improved language ability and Quality of Life within affected families. She hypothesizes that participants, even those with persistent severe nonfluent aphasia and co-morbid apraxia of speech, will benefit from both implicit and explicit treatment programs, with significant gains in those randomly assigned to a Constraint-Induced Language Therapy program.

Kurland’s research holds the potential to demonstrate meaningful long-term changes resulting from short-term, intensive treatment plus a maintenance home therapy program. Advancing our knowledge of the true anatomical, functional, and behavioral limits and potential for post-stroke language recovery could influence perceptions that affect delivery of services to chronically aphasic persons.
The research of Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson, Associate Professor of Epidemiology, is cited in a story appearing in MSN Health on how vitamin D may affect mental health, especially in winter when many people suffer from seasonal affective disorder.

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The UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences Wins $2.5 Million Training Grant

Training to improve the nation’s public health system by strengthening the technical, scientific, managerial and leadership competence of current and future public health workers will soon be underway in the western Massachusetts communities of Springfield, Holyoke, Pittsfield and the Berkshires, supported by a four-year, $2.5 million grant to the School of Public Health and Health Sciences (SPHHS) at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Dean Marjorie Aelion, with lead faculty investigators Dr. Dan Gerber and Dr. Stuart Chipkin, recently announced the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services award to the SPHHS at UMass Amherst, which creates a Public Health Training Center on the campus.

Dean Aelion says, “Receiving a Public Health Training Center is a significant recognition of the expertise in our school, and we are excited to be able to work and support our community partners.”

The UMass Amherst team in addition to Dr. Gerber and Dr. Chipkin includes Dr. Gloria DiFulvio, Dr. Elaine Puleo and Ms. Risa Silverman, head of the SPHHS Office of Public Health Practice & Outreach. They will partner with state and local agencies to develop community-specific diabetes prevention and management strategies. These will vary depending on a community’s specific needs and goals. Some will focus on front-line health worker training, while others may see student interns helping to set up walking or exercise programs, fresh food markets, cooking clubs or other original, home-grown community-based activities.

As Dr. Gerber explains, “We will be providing the opportunity for each community to direct its own project specific to its needs.” In coming years, broad public health strategies employed in the effort to prevent and manage diabetes will be expanded upon and applied to other chronic diseases, he adds.
A fundamental concept of the Training Center is to allow new diabetes prevention projects to be community driven. According to Dr. Gloria DiFulvio, the UMass Amherst SPHHS project’s evaluator, “Public health workers, community health professionals and community leaders will be key designers of the local projects. Our collective view among public health practitioners in western Massachusetts cities, towns and rural areas is that diabetes is really affecting people of all ages in our communities. The approach we will take as a Training Center is: What can we do together to make a difference?”

One goal for the current and next generation of community public health professionals is to focus on prevention, Dr. Chipkin stresses. For diabetes, this means improving diet and exercise habits among people who are pre-diabetic. He also notes that programs will need to involve all ages because obesity and diabetes rates are rising rapidly among children as well as adults. Dr. Chipkin adds, “This is a great opportunity to bridge the world of clinic and community by increasing collaboration between the state’s flagship public university and health care providers and

*From left: Mary Fechner, Risa Silverman, Gloria DiFulvio, Dan Gerber, Elaine Puleo, Linda Downs-Bembury, Stuart Chipkin*
community health organizations.”

A key component of the Public Health Training Center, Dr. Gerber explains is “to build ongoing, continuous collaborations with community members who see us as full partners in a year-round effort to support and train frontline health workers with a disease prevention framework.”

Partners with the UMass Amherst SPHHS on the training grant are New England Alliance for Public Health Workforce Development, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Community Health Programs of Pittsfield, Massachusetts Public Health Association, Mason Square Health Task Force, Holyoke Community College, Pioneer Valley Area Health Education Center of Springfield, Holyoke Health Center, Partners for a Healthier Community of Springfield, Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center, Brightwood Health Center, North End Community Coalition and Berkshire Medical Center.

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**Van Emmerik receives $975,000 grant from the Navy Health Research Center**

Richard E.A. van Emmerik, Professor of Kinesiology, has been awarded a 2.5-year, $975,000 grant from the Navy Health Research Center for a research project titled “Effects of Armor and Load on Action-Perception Coupling.” The grant supports a joint research effort through the U.S. Department of Defense to examine the consequences of soldier load and armor on the ability to perceive and act in critical situations related to survivability in combat.

The funding extends efforts to understand the issue of soldier load in the research of doctoral candidate Christopher Palmer, ‘95G, and the fundamental research areas of Dr. van Emmerik within the Sensory-Motor Control Laboratory. Department of Kinesiology doctoral students Luis Rosado and Mike Busa also contributed to the development of the project and will work as Research Assistants on the funded research.

The project examines the relationships between the requirement to carry protective equipment and the ability to move and perceive efficiently and accurately within specified task performances, seeking an optimal relationship between the two that provides the best opportunity for soldiers to return safely home to their families. This work provides fundamental insight into
the consequences of personal protective equipment on postural control, dynamic visual acuity, and information pick-up during locomotion tasks and precision performance.

This research is the first of its kind, extending many of the basic theoretical perspectives in Kinesiology and Ecological Psychology to applied problems related to soldiers in combat. The initial goals of the effort are to provide insight into the relations that allow soldiers to survive in realistic situations, and provide an empirically-based model capable of comparing the consequences of different load configurations on soldier survivability.

The research applicability extends to fire fighters, rescue workers, and others who must be protected from environmental threats in a way that restricts their movement and encapsulates them in equipment that reduces their perceptual and movement capabilities (e.g., helmets, backpack loads, etc). Findings of this research will be available to the manufacturers of safety equipment, allowing them to design improved personal protective equipment that considers the “wearer,” and not just the materials technology.

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In Memoriam: Virginia Beal

Virginia A. Beal, Professor Emerita of Nutrition, who endowed and inspired the nutrition lecture series that bore her name, passed away on December 14, 2011. She was a member of the Food Science and Nutrition faculty from 1971 until her retirement in 1986.

Professor Beal was born on Oct. 31, 1918, in Hull, MA, and received a bachelor’s degree from Simmons College in 1939 and a Master’s degree in Public Health, cum laude, from the Harvard School of Public Health in 1946. She began work in the Child Research Council of the University of Colorado School of Medicine in Denver in 1946, where she remained as head of the nutrition studies. She became assistant professor of human growth and then assistant clinical professor of pediatrics at the Colorado Medical School until 1971. At that time, she joined the UMass Amherst faculty as associate professor, rising to full professor in 1978. She retired as professor emerita in 1986.

She was a fellow of the American Public Health Association and American Society of Nutrition and a member of the American Dietetic Association, the Society for Nutrition Education and the New York Academy of Sciences. Her pioneering work and expertise in nutrition and growth was called upon by various national organizations, including the National Institutes of Health, the
Children’s Bureau, the National Research Council, the American Heart Association, the Nutrition Foundation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a consultant or as a member of expert committees.

She was a panel member of the 1969 White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health. She received a Medallion Award from the American Dietetic Association in 1982 and was a Centennial Scholar at Case Western University in 1980. She was a visiting lecturer at 15 universities in the United States and Canada between 1953 and 1983, and presented speeches at international meetings in Sweden, Japan and Canada.

Closer to home, she received the Student Award for Outstanding Teaching in the Department of Food Science and Nutrition in 1974, and in 1985 gave the Chancellor’s Lecture and received the Chancellor’s Medal.

She was the author of the standard textbook *Nutrition in the Life Span*, and a co-author of three books. She was author or co-author of 50 articles published in professional journals from 1943 to 1984.

She gave an endowment to the campus to begin the annual Virginia A. Beal Lecture Series, sponsoring current lectures in the field of nutrition and two scholarships to nutrition students, to continue long after her passing. The Beal Lecture was initiated in 1989 and continues through the generosity of many alumni and friends to honor the contributions she made to her profession and the students she influenced. Virginia A. Beal presented the first lecture. In the intervening years, well-known scholars in the field of nutrition have been invited to speak and honor her. In addition to the lectureship and scholarships, Professor Beal recently endowed a fellowship to support a doctoral student in nutrition.

“We will sorely miss her support and encouragement of the nutrition faculty, staff and students, along with her friendship and mentorship,” notes Nancy Cohen, Head of the Nutrition Department. “Her strength and individuality were inspirations to so many, as were her many contributions to the field of nutrition and child health.”

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**Dr. Dominique Williams, a graduate student in the online MPH in Nutrition program, has published "Obesity in Children and Adolescents: Identifying Eating Disorders" - the featured article in the December 2011 issue of *Consultant for Pediatricians.***

[View the journal online...](#)
Braun reports diabetes drug metformin may blunt exercise benefit

Barry Braun, Associate Professor of Kinesiology, and colleagues recently reported unexpected results in a study suggesting that exercise and one of the most commonly prescribed drugs for diabetes, metformin, each improves insulin resistance when used alone...but when used together, metformin actually blunted the full effect of a 12-week exercise program in pre-diabetic men and women.

Insulin resistance is the root problem in pre-diabetes, a condition that often leads to Type 2 diabetes, the increasingly common disease in which the natural hormone, insulin, becomes less effective at lowering blood sugar, leading to a range of adverse health effects such as eye and nerve damage. An estimated 26 million Americans have diabetes and 69 million are pre-diabetic.

In studies funded by the American Diabetes Association and the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Braun expected to show that combining drug treatment and exercise would help to regulate blood sugar better than either treatment alone. However, the surprising result was that "exercise combined with metformin was not better than exercise alone and it might even be worse," says Dr. Braun. "We're now trying to understand the mechanisms to explain this." Findings appear in a recent issue of Diabetes Care.

Dr. Braun, with his former doctoral student Steven Malin, and colleagues recruited 32 men and women with pre-diabetes and assigned them to one of four groups, 8 per group, and asked them to follow a 12-week course of exercise, exercise plus the drug metformin, metformin alone, or no treatment. The researchers measured insulin sensitivity at baseline and again after the 12-week treatment period in the double-blind study. Exercise training consisted of 60- to 75-minutes of aerobic exercise and resistance training three times per week.

All treatment groups had improved insulin sensitivity but only the two metformin groups lost weight after 12 weeks of exercise training, metformin alone or the two combined. But as noted, adding metformin to exercise did not enhance the effects of exercise training. Rather, adding metformin seems to have blunted the positive effect of exercise by 25 to 30 percent. This is probably enough to have clinical relevance, the researchers point out.

Dr. Braun and colleagues speculate that differences in outcome for the exercise-only and the exercise-plus-metformin group may be related to differences in how muscles, the liver and the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas adapt to exercise training when metformin is present. They are now turning their attention to investigate an exercise/medication combination that more effectively targets the liver and the pancreas in the hope of creating a more effective exercise
drug to prevent the transition from pre-diabetes to Type 2 diabetes.

Calabrese calls for overhaul of methods used to assess nuclear health risks

It's high time for industry and governments to improve the way nuclear health risks are estimated using more evidence-based risk assessment, according to Edward Calabrese, Professor of Environmental Health Sciences.

From the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986 to this year's incident at Fukushima, says Dr. Calabrese, governments and the nuclear industry have failed to address serious data gaps and untested assumptions guiding exposure limits to Cesium (Cs)-137 released.

Dr. Calabrese's commentary, "Improving the scientific foundations for estimating health risks from the Fukushima incident," is included in a Nov. 21, 2011 special issue of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences devoted to documenting the estimated release magnitude and distribution of Cs-137 from the nuclear incident in Japan after the March earthquake and tsunami.

"It is also critical that the linear, no-threshold (LNT) model and the alternative models, such as the threshold and hormesis models, be objectively assessed so that society can be guided by scientific data and validated models rather than ideological perspectives that stealthily infected the risk assessment process for ionizing radiation and carcinogenic chemicals," he states.

After his career-long study of hormesis persuaded Dr. Calabrese that low doses of some chemicals and radiation are benign to humans or even helpful, he says a "comprehensive reappraisal" of the LNT model for cancer risk assessment is urgently needed. He argues that the LNT model was incorporated into U.S. regulatory policy in the 1950s based on faulty assumptions. Its use has become codified in regulatory agencies despite its "questionable scientific foundations," he says.

In addition to over-reliance on the LNT, Dr. Calabrese contends, regulators also place too much weight on assumptions about the ingestion of contaminants in soil by children, in particular dioxin, which date from the 1980s at Times Beach, Mo. "Subsequent soil ingestion studies in children would prove this default exposure assumption represented a massive overestimation, being too high by 200-fold," he points out. Without follow-up studies to provide more accurate data, "costs of clean up at Times Beach alone would have been many billions of dollars more," he adds, illustrating that non-validated assumptions can markedly affect the risk assessment outcome.
Dr. Calabrese also criticizes expert advisory groups and government agencies for rendering exposure guidance "based on hypothetical risks of Cs-137" and using highly precise estimates that give "a false impression of considerable accuracy." In fact, he says, acceptable levels of Cs-137 exposure in Japan are more than three times higher than levels permitted in the Ukraine, while both are probably based on "little independent analysis."

Overall, precautionary urges that pressure regulators to rely on the most conservative option have a downside, in Dr. Calabrese's opinion. They lead to multiplicative protective factors that can add substantially to remediation costs "without validated assurances of accompanying benefit."

Lower is not always better when it comes to enhancing public health, he says. "It is time for the responsible governmental and industrial organizations to develop a practical plan to fill important data gaps."

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**Nutrition Alumna Elizabeth Ward Appears on The Dr. Oz Show**

Nutrition alumna Elizabeth Ward ’84 appeared recently on *The Dr. Oz Show*, where she discussed the many potential health benefits of including mushrooms in your diet. (To watch the segment, [click here](#).) Ms. Ward described mushrooms as "nutritional powerhouses" that are packed with vitamins, minerals and disease-fighting antioxidants.

Ms. Ward, a registered dietician, is the author of several nutrition books, including most recently *MyPlate for Moms, How to Feed Yourself & Your Family Better*, published by Loughlin Press. Her other works include *Expect the Best, Your Guide to Healthy Eating Before, During, & After Pregnancy*, *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Feeding Your Baby and Toddler*, *The Pocket Idiot’s Guide to the New Food Pyramids*, and *Pregnancy Nutrition: Good Health for You and Your Baby*. Ms. Ward also contributes regularly to *Men's Fitness*, *WebMD*, and *USA Today*, and blogs at *Expect the Best*.

As a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association for nearly 10 years, Ms. Ward has been featured in nearly 1,000 print and broadcast interviews. In addition to *The Dr. Oz Show*, she has appeared as a guest on NBC’s *The Today Show* twice, along with appearances on CNN and ABC World News Tonight, and has been interviewed in

In September, Ms. Ward received the 2011 Media Excellence Award from the American Dietetic Association at its annual meeting in San Diego. She is the recipient of the 125 Alumni to Watch Award from the University of Massachusetts, and was named Recognized Young Dietitian of the Year by the Massachusetts Dietetic Association.

SPHHS Student Clubs Organize Food Drive

This November, the UMass Nutrition Association (UMNA), in conjunction with the Public Health Club, the Kinesiology Club, and the UMass chapter of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA), organized the School of Public Health and Health Sciences Holiday Food Drive. The student groups collected nonperishable food items for donation to the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.

Club officers collaborated to raise awareness about the cause among the student community, as the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts has experienced a critical shortage in food supplies. Boxes were placed in Chenoweth Hall and Arnold House, as well as in various dorms across campus. Together, they were able to collect over 70 individual food items to donate to the pantry.

“The food drive was a tremendous success! It’s inspired the four SPHHS student groups to collaborate even further in the future,” commented Elizabeth Lundy, president of the UMNA.

Giving back to the community is a common mission among all of the SPHHS student clubs. Previously, the groups participated in a coat drive on behalf of the Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center’s Coat Give Away in October.
Gallagher Koster Honors 2011 Health Careers Scholarship Winners

L-R: Yesenia Castro (Winner- Oregon State University), John Park (Winner- University of Massachusetts Amherst), Teresa Koster (Scholarship Founder & Board Member), Kevin Izadpanah (Winner- Virginia Tech), Jainty John (Winner- Le Moyne College) and Daniel Cohn (Winner- University of Rochester).

John Park, a Public Health Sciences and Microbiology double major at UMass Amherst, was honored by Gallagher Koster at a recent dinner event in Boston. Park was one of five winners of Gallagher Koster’s 2011 Health Careers Scholarship Program. Each of the five winners for 2011 will receive $5,000 towards his or her 2010-2011 academic expenses.

Established in 2001, The Gallagher Koster Health Careers Scholarship Program was created to provide outstanding, financially-needy undergraduate students with the financial assistance required to pursue their health-related career. A total of 50 students have received this award since the program’s inception, and all previous winners have either completed their degree program or are on track to do so.

Each scholarship recipient is selected by the Scholarship Program Board of Directors based on his or her demonstration of the program standards, which include: a strong motivation to pursue a healthcare career, academic excellence, a dedication to community service and a need for
financial support of their education. Information about Scholarship Program eligibility and enrollment is available at http://www.healthcareersscholarship.org.

The winners traveled to Boston to celebrate their achievements with the Program’s Board of Directors along with Gallagher Koster staff, clients and business partners, during an event at the Seaport Hotel. Featured at the event was guest speaker Cameron Waites, a graduate of University of Michigan-Flint and a 2009 Health Careers Scholarship Winner. Waites spoke to the current winners regarding the importance of creating a support network that will help guide them through the remainder of their academic studies and into their careers. Waites relayed lessons of transforming from his ‘immaturity’ through his service as a U.S. Army Medic, into his undergraduate work, and now as a lab researcher.

Teresa Koster, Division President of Gallagher Koster and founder of The Gallagher Koster Health Careers Scholarship Program, spoke of the commitment that has been demonstrated by this year’s winners, not only to complete their degrees but also to help others in incredible ways throughout their lives. All of this year’s winners have participated in some form of outreach program to better others’ lives throughout the world, and have made a strong commitment to the field of public health.

Cohen Awarded USDA Grant for Farm to School Food Safety Program

Nancy Cohen, Professor and Head of the Department of Nutrition, has been awarded a four-year, $424,878 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Dr. Cohen received the award for a program titled “Food Safety from Farm and Garden to Preschool.” Funding for the grant comes as part of the USDA’s National Integrated Food Safety Initiative.

Farm to School programs, which link farmers with K-12 schools to increase children’s fresh fruit and vegetable consumption, are growing increasingly popular throughout the country. These programs support local agriculture and youth and promote Dietary Guidelines and Healthy People 2020 goals. However, fresh produce can also be a source of foodborne illness. As Farm to School programs expand into preschools, training is needed to ensure that the risk from fresh produce is minimized in this vulnerable group.

The Food Safety initiative proposed by Dr. Cohen centers on an innovative multistate, multi-institutional partnership, which includes university extension faculty and staff, county educators, local Farm to Preschool (F2P) programs, early child care educators and local agriculture organizations in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Together, they will collaborate to identify and improve fresh produce safety knowledge and practices of foodservice staff, educators, and parent volunteers in F2P programs.
Dr. Cohen expects that through increased food safety knowledge and practices and increased adoption of safe and healthy Farm to Preschool programs, food safety risk will be reduced for over 100,000 preschool children who participate in expanding F2P programs in New England and nationwide.

**Wiist Contributes Chapter to New Global Chronic Disease Book**

William H. Wiist, clinical professor in the online MPH in Public Health Practice program, has authored a chapter in the new global chronic disease book *Sick Societies: Responding to the global challenge of chronic disease*, edited by David Stuckler and Karen Siegler. The book, published by Oxford University Press, examines the prevention and control of chronic diseases from epidemiologic, economic, prevention/management, and governance perspectives and covers both the developing and the developed world.

Wiist contributed a chapter titled “The corporate play book, health, and democracy: The snack food and beverage industry’s tactics in context.” The chapter is juxtaposed with the chapter written by employees of PepsiCo.

For more information, visit the [Oxford University Press website](http://www.oup.com).

**The School of Public Health and Health Sciences hosted the Western Massachusetts Public Health Training Center Kickoff Event on Thursday, November 17, in Holyoke, MA.**
Lorraine Cordeiro and Jerusha Peterman, assistant professors in the Department of Nutrition, presented at the “Community Health and Research: Making the Connections” Symposium on November 4, 2011. The event, sponsored by the UMass Medical School’s Center for Clinical and Translational Research, was designed to promote clinical and translational science across the UMass five-campus system, and to promote better community-engaged research.

Drs. Cordeiro and Peterman presented findings from their community-based research projects to an audience of academic and community researchers, representatives from community health centers and agencies, and faculty from across the five-campus system. Cordeiro and Peterman shared their research on “Food Security, Food Practices and Health Risks among Pregnant and Postpartum Cambodian Women Residing in Massachusetts.” Peterman also presented “Food Insecurity: Nutrition and Health Implications for Immigrants and Refugees.”

The projects, supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station, collect preliminary data of causes and consequences of food security in refugee and other low-income populations. The data will be used to support an R01 application to NIH in 2013.

The Nutrition department was also represented with a poster presentation on “Nutrition Research from Cells to Communities.”

Several students joined Drs. Cordeiro and Peterman at the symposium, including Shanshan Chen, a graduate student in Nutrition, and undergraduate students Sovandara Sarou, Kannika Chap, and Alina Lee. Together, they helped design and present the posters.

One example of how the symposium achieved its mission of promoting clinical and translational science across the five-campus system came when Ms. Chen was subsequently asked to
participate in translating nutrition information into Chinese for Yunsheng Ma, MD, PhD, MPH. Dr. Ma is an alumnus of the School of Public Health and Health Sciences and currently serves as Associate Professor of Medicine at the UMass Medical School. In addition, Daneille Reilly, MPH '10, a former student of Dr. Cordeiro, invited the student researchers to visit her community-based program in the Boston area.

Dr. Marya Zilberberg, adjunct associate professor of Epidemiology, discusses in a recent Reuters article that an increasing number of elderly dementia patients are being hospitalized, putting a strain on both the health care system and the patients themselves.

Read more...

Reed Mangels, lecturer in the Department of Nutrition, has authored The Everything Vegan Pregnancy Book. The book "answers any question that a pregnant woman and her family could possibly have."

Read more...

Communication Disorders Team Launches Telepractice Recruitment Effort
Mary Andrianopoulos, Associate Professor of Communication Disorders, along with doctoral candidates Michelle Boisvert and Nerissa Hall at the UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences, have launched a recruitment effort targeted at some 300 rural Massachusetts school districts. The research conducted by Andrianopoulos, Boisvert, and Hall aims to provide equal access to speech-language pathology (SLP) services for individuals irrespective of geographical location, disability, or socioeconomic status via live, secure video teleconference over the Internet, known as telepractice.

The researchers, in partnership with videoconferencing giant Cisco Systems, are recruiting schools in preparation for submitting a Rural-Urban Sustainability-Distance Learning Technology (RUS-DLT) grant application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The team envisions extending the telepractice services that are currently being provided on a local level, to schools on a national level through a campus-based high-tech hub to support the remote delivery of these services. They are signing up qualifying school districts that are in need of SLP services for the 2012-13 school year. To qualify for services, districts must meet a “rurality” standard, have some basic computing equipment, as well as access to high-speed Internet service and be willing to dedicate a staff member to coordinate the program on-site.
Telepractice is rapidly gaining national attention due to the critical shortage of speech-language pathologists and special education teachers who work with high-need students nationwide. The shortage is most prevalent in rural areas and the implementation of telepractice has been proven to be a viable, evidence-based and cost-effective practice for schools to receive these needed services.

Telepractice, also known as telemedicine and telehealth, can significantly improve access to services for students with special needs, in particular students with communication disabilities, says Boisvert. Research conducted by Boisvert and colleagues revealed successful delivery of intervention services to individuals with autism via telepractice. In fact, her empirical findings yielded no statistically significant differences between speech-language services that were provided on-site and in-person compared to those services using telepractice as the intervention delivery method. In addition, adds Hall, initial research findings also support that telepractice has been beneficial for those who require assistive technologies as well as those who have complex communication needs resulting from neurodevelopmental disabilities.

“The number of children in the United States diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder has increased and is now reported to be as high as three to six cases per 1,000 children,” Boisvert notes. “Our research supports that telepractice is an effective vehicle for delivering evidence-based interventions to improve long-term outcomes for these students.”

Boisvert and Hall note that rural school districts can benefit from a variety of services offered by the team, be they one-on-one, direct services, or in-direct services as well as professional development for existing staff.

Andrianopoulos’ team demonstrated the efficacy of these services – and established a model for future collaborations – during a pilot project last year in two rural schools. The group’s findings showed that quality-controlled protocols work well for students, their families and the school.

“Once the clinician, child and family have established a personal connection via telepractice, ongoing therapy sessions allow for more consistent services and evidence-based practice as well as a reduction in travel time for everyone,” Boisvert says. Further, with frequent quality assurance assessments, “students achieve comparable progress through telepractice as they do when a session is conducted face-to-face.”

Count Timothy Merritt, principal of Sunderland Elementary School, one of the school districts involved in the telepractice research study, among the team’s staunchest advocates.

“There are some hurdles – particularly around the impression that an exclusively on-site experience is always preferable,” Merritt states. “I shared that skepticism when I first signed off on the study. I’m not convinced of that position anymore.” Merritt adds, “Our experience here in Sunderland has been extremely positive. I am very pleased with all aspects of their work. I'm
confident that my students, parents, and faculty would offer the same opinion.” In fact, Merritt was so impressed with the group’s work that his school contracted the Center for Speech, Language and Hearing to provide telepractice services for nearly 20 students while their own specialist was out on medical leave.

The group is equally sought for their expertise in Active Consultation, a means of providing real-time feedback to clinicians-in-training. Hall, who specializes in this field, recently presented her research findings at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) annual professional conference, held in San Diego, California in November, 2011. During a one-hour oral presentation, she and Boisvert reported the results of a pilot study that examined how Active Consultation can be used to implement strategies for individuals who use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices.

“We’ve established a training model for clinicians on how to use these devices, which can have such a high learning curve,” Hall notes. “By providing real-time feedback, we’re able to deliver instruction and guidance without having to interrupt the therapy session.”

Andrianopoulos’ team continues to garner national recognition for their work in telepractice, which remains a relatively new and groundbreaking specialty in speech-language pathology. In addition to their presentations at the recent ASHA conference, the Telepractice Research Team (including Andrianopoulos, Boisvert, and Hall) recently had an article accepted for publication. Titled *Multi-faceted Implementation of Telepractice to Service Individuals with Autism*, and scheduled to be published in the *International Journal of Social Sciences*, the article addresses how telepractice can be used to provide a range of SLP services to children with autism spectrum disorders.

The team is bringing all their expertise to bear in preparation for the RUS-DLT grant application. Although the final details of the application will not be released until later in January, 2012, Andrianopoulos and her doctoral researchers have already spent the past year working with Cisco, the OGCA and Research Development offices and members within the School of Public Health and Health Sciences at UMass Amherst in preparation for what is sure to be a complex, multi-faceted, and multi-partner submission.

Andrianopoulos and her team recognize that their level of success hinges on the continued growth and sustainability of the telepractice practice program in communication disorders at UMass Amherst, and in part, on their success in recruiting rural schools that need their services for the RUS-DLT grant and other grant initiatives.

“We believe that this research and service delivery model currently is at a grass roots level at UMass Amherst; however, we are very optimistic and encouraged by the growth and development of our telehealth and telepractice program in communication disorders here at UMass Amherst to date. We have received much attention and a positive response from school
districts and other medical facilities around the country and world, who want to participate in this innovative delivery model offered at a research-based state university by experts and specialists in the field,” adds Andrianopoulos.

Interested individuals can contact the UMass Telepractice Research Team at 413-545-0551 or by email at umasstelepractice@comdis.umass.edu. More information about the RUS-DLT grant can be obtained at: www.umass.edu/doegrants/rus_dlt.html.

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### Balasubramanian Receives NIH Grant to Study Prevention of Mother-Child Transmission of HIV

Raji Balasubramanian, assistant professor of Biostatistics, has received a two-year, $458,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health’s Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Dr. Balasubramanian received the award for a project titled “Properties of HIV-1 DNA/RNA Assays for Detecting HIV Infection in Infants.”

Balasubramanian is working with colleagues at Harvard School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

UNAIDS, a joint United Nations program designed to stop and reverse the spread of HIV, estimates that approximately 800,000 infants are infected with HIV annually, with 90% of those infections occurring in resource-limited settings. Virtually all HIV infections are attributed to mother-to-child transmission (MTCT), which can occur during pregnancy, birth, or while breast-feeding.

The overarching aim of this project is to characterize the performance of commonly used HIV diagnostic assays in infants born to HIV-positive mothers, particularly in the context of maternal regimens involving highly active antiretroviral therapy. A key medical challenge in this area of work arises due to the fact that the performance of gold standard DNA and RNA amplification HIV diagnostic assays in HIV-1 infected infants is far from perfect during the early weeks of an infant’s life. Through the use of a large database comprised of several cohorts including approximately 5,800 HIV-positive infants born to HIV-positive mothers in the U.S., Europe, Africa, and Asia, Dr. Balasubramanian and colleagues plan to conduct large-scale statistical analyses to better evaluate the performance of DNA/RNA assays in diverse settings and in diverse population groups.

In the end, Dr. Balasubramanian expects that these results would also be useful in shedding light on the optimal scheduling of diagnostic tests in HIV-exposed infants. In addition, the characterization of the performance of these assays together with evaluation of associated virus and host-related factors could be important in shedding light on the differential pathogenesis of the virus.
SPHHS Student Clubs Collect Coats for Baystate Mason Square NHC 13th Annual Coat Give Away

The School of Public Health and Health Sciences student clubs organized a coat drive on behalf of the Baystate Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center’s 13th Annual Coat Give Away. Representatives from each of the four student clubs – the Public Health Club, the University of Massachusetts Nutrition Association (UMNA), the Kinesiology Club, and the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) – participated in the drive.

“We collected the coats by going to classes, through our club meetings, and by emailing the majors,” explained Catie Piccolo, president of the Public Health Club.

The club presidents visited Dr. Gerber’s PUBHLTH 160 class “My Body, My Health” on several occasions to accept coat donations. “This was hugely successful,” stated Elizabeth Lundy, president of the UMNA, “and where I believe a large percentage of our donations came from.”

The clubs collected nearly 50 coats in total for the Baystate Mason Square Neighborhood Health Center. The coats were handed out to those in need on October 8th in the Health Center’s Community Room in Springfield, MA.

The SPHHS student clubs believe that giving back to the community is a big part of their mission. “It is important to us to serve the community and help people that are in need,” said Ms. Piccolo. “As a club it feels great to give back to the community and help others who need coats for the cold winter that is coming soon!”

“I enjoyed being involved in a collaborative effort with the other club presidents,” said Ms. Lundy. “I am looking forward to working with them again, as the opportunities present throughout the semester.”

Environmental Health Sciences Professor Edward Calabrese says he has uncovered evidence that one of the fathers of radiation genetics, Nobel Prize
winner Hermann Muller, knowingly lied when he claimed in 1946 that there is no safe level of radiation exposure.

Read more...

Richard Peltier, assistant professor of Environmental Health Sciences, joins Anika James, environmental advocate for Environmental Massachusetts, on The Bill Newman show on WHMP radio to talk about the smog problem in Springfield, deemed the smoggiest metropolitan area in Massachusetts.

Listen here.

In Memoriam: Alvin Winder

By George Cernada, Professor Emeritus

PHOTO: Community Health Education faculty, circa mid-1980s. From left: David Buchanan, Alvin Winder, Ted Chen, and George Cernada.

Alvin Winder, retired Professor of Community Health Education, passed away in September at age 88. He joined the SPHHS in the early 1980s after a distinguished career as a professor in both the Psychology and Nursing Departments of UMass Amherst.
Born in New York City, he was a WWII veteran, graduated from the City College of New York, and the University of Chicago, with a Ph.D. in psychology, and later received an MPH from the University of California, Berkeley.

He published numerous books and articles on public health, particularly on strategies to reduce smoking, and various applied psychology topics. He also worked on studies related to the effects of radiation on public health.

Al, as he was affectionately known to his students and fellow faculty, is known to many inside and outside academia as a social activist at the university, community, state and international levels. He helped organize the faculty union, served as a Leverett selectman, lobbied against tobacco at the state level, and, after retirement, continued to work to promote anti-smoking collaboration among East and Southeast Asian countries.

Although he was no stranger to his fellow Chicagoan Saul Alinsky’s tough organizing methods and applied them rigorously to public settings, he also was influenced by Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in putting into practice in the classroom the idea that the learner was a co-creator of knowledge. This philosophy, along with his use of non-formal education methods, endeared him to his graduate students.

His long and distinguished career as a teacher, social activist, researcher and clinician gave him considerable insight into multi-disciplinary approaches and he was a keen interdisciplinary researcher, working on national grants on smoking among African American populations, and anti-tobacco and health promotion in Asian countries. He also practiced psychotherapy and worked as clinician in public settings.

His versatility and energy was well-known. He practiced psychotherapy and worked as a clinician in public settings. He was an enthusiastic handball player, often with public health students a third of his age, an ardent horseback rider, a fisherman, golfer and hiker, as well as a writer of poetry and lifelong learner. He continued as Book Review Editor of the *International Quarterly of Community Health Education* for 30 years until he passed away.

He was predeceased by his first wife and leaves his wife, two sons, two daughters and a stepdaughter as well as four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

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**Buchanan invited to external review panel for Medical Research Council in South Africa**

David Buchanan, Professor and Director of the Division of Community Health Studies at the UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences, has been invited to Cape Town, South Africa, to serve on an external review panel for the Health Education Division of the
Medical Research Council (MRC). South Africa’s MRC has been described as being similar to a combination of the NIH and the CDC, in that it funds both research and programs.

This marks a return trip to South Africa for Dr. Buchanan, who began collaborating with the MRC in the late 1990s when he and a group of consultants were invited to assist in the creation of South Africa’s first school of public health.

“I am delighted to go back to South Africa,” Buchanan said. “There have been so many changes since the fall of apartheid that it is important to witness the country’s progress.”

Like many other agencies, the MRC conducts comprehensive reviews of each of its units every five years, a process that includes a self-evaluation and external review. Buchanan will serve on a panel with 7 other reviewers, including one other international reviewer.

“It is particularly gratifying to me as the Health Education Division is now directed by Dr. Priscilla Reddy, who is a former international Fulbright scholar and UMass graduate (MPH, 1993). It’s great to see the things that our graduates go on to do.”

The Health Education Division has been particularly active in HIV prevention, tobacco control and school health.

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**Communication Disorders Doctoral Student Awarded Grant from the Organization for Autism Research**

Marcil Boucher, a third-year doctoral student in the Speech Language Pathology program within the Communication Disorders Department at UMass Amherst, recently received a grant from the Organization for Autism Research (OAR) to fund her dissertation research, which will support family participation in her study. Boucher is one of 6 doctoral students in Speech Language Pathology funded under a DOE Leadership Grant received by Associate Professor Mary Andrianopoulos. The DOE Leadership Grant is designed to recruit the best and the brightest of doctoral students and train them to become the next generation of scholars and leaders engaged in innovative research benefiting children with communication disabilities in the public schools.

Ms. Boucher also completed a 4-week summer internship at the Department of Education’s (DOE) National
Headquarters in Washington, D.C. There, she worked in the Research to Practice division with the Early Childhood Team and collaborated on recent changes in the Part C eligibility of the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center and the federal grant system under Part D of IDEA.

Richard Peltier, assistant professor of Environmental Health Sciences, comments in a story about a recent report from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that finds Springfield was the smoggiest city in Massachusetts in 2010.

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Barry Braun, associate professor of Kinesiology, is quoted in the October 2011 issue of Self magazine. In an article titled "The Truth About Exercise and Appetite," he describes how physical activity may increase appetite-stimulating hormones, especially among women.

Read more...

Buchanan to Deliver Keynote Address at Connected Communities Conference

David Buchanan, Professor and Director of the Division of Community Health Studies at the UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences, has been invited to be a keynote speaker at the Connected Communities Programme to be held September 19-21 in Cardiff, Wales. Dr. Buchanan’s appearance comes as part of a three-day research development workshop on “Communities, Cultures, Health & Well-Being” sponsored by the Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

Organised as a part of the United Kingdom’s cross-council Connected Communities programme, the conference aims to build on existing research and bring together researchers from a wide range of disciplines to identify the key future research challenges and opportunities for understanding the potential contribution of community cultures and community-based cultural activities in enhancing health and well-being in communities.
“One of the main objectives of the conference,” stated Dr. Buchanan, “is to introduce and integrate humanistic perspectives on people’s decision-making, and in particular, looking at the role of moral reasoning in choosing the best course of action. This view stands in stark contrast to the prevailing scientific approach, which sees human behavior as caused by antecedent factors.”

Buchanan added, “I have been writing about the implications of these differing assumptions for developing health promotion programs for more than 20 years. It is deeply gratifying to be part of an international conference that is seeking to implement new ideas and new approaches to improving quality of life in communities.”

The workshop will seek to stimulate the development of innovative cross-disciplinary research consortia, combining arts and humanities expertise with other research disciplines and community, policy and practice partners, to pursue these challenges and opportunities. A key theme will be the potential to engage with diverse cultural communities in all stages of the research and in developing flourishing communities which support enhanced health and well-being and inform future policy and practice.

The AHRC is supported by the United Kingdom’s Department for Business Innovations & Skills (BIS). It seeks to advance arts and humanities research worldwide.

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**Communication Disorders Graduate Students Receive Travel Fellowships**

Kelly Johnson and Julia Parker, graduate students from the Department of Communication Disorders in the School of Public Health and Health Sciences at UMass Amherst, have been awarded travel fellowships to attend a two-day training on transcription, coding, scoring, and analysis of aphasic discourse with the AphasiaBank project at Carnegie Mellon University. Ms. Johnson and Ms. Parker are research assistants in the BRoCA lab (Brain Research on Chronic Aphasia) run by Dr. Jacquie Kurland, Assistant Professor of Communication Disorders. They assist with projects investigating factors that contribute to treatment-induced neuroplasticity and language recovery in participants with chronic aphasia.

Aphasia is a language disorder affecting all language modalities (i.e., speaking, listening, reading, and writing) and is caused primarily by strokes in the language centers of the left hemisphere. It is a disorder of language production and comprehension and not a disorder of cognition. The AphasiaBank is a multimedia database of language samples from individuals with aphasia and non-brain damaged controls.
The two-day training at Carnegie Mellon will enable the BRoCA lab to utilize computational discourse analysis procedures to compare spoken narratives of individuals with aphasia before and after treatment. Information about how treatment impacts propositional language of individuals with aphasia will help determine whether or not, and to what extent, certain treatments are effective.

Dr. Kurland and her students would like to thank and acknowledge the AphasiaBank, a project funded by the National Institutes of Health, and Dr. Brian MacWhinney of Carnegie Mellon University’s Department of Psychology, for their support.

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**Van Emmerik named as a Fellow of the National Academy of Kinesiology**

Richard van Emmerik, professor in the Department of Kinesiology, was inducted as a Fellow into the National Academy of Kinesiology (NAK) at its 81st annual meeting, September 14-17, 2011, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Eleven U.S. and two international scholars were inducted during a special banquet and ceremony held on the last evening of the conference. Dr. van Emmerik joins Professors Clarkson, Hamill, Kamen, Kent-Braun and Freedson as UMass Amherst members of the academy.

The National Academy of Kinesiology is an honorary organization composed of Fellows who have made significant and sustained contributions to the field of kinesiology through scholarship and professional service. The dual purpose of the National Academy of Kinesiology is to encourage and promote the study and educational applications of the art and science of human movement and physical activity and to honor by election to Fellow those individuals who have contributed significantly to this purpose. Fellows in the National Academy of Kinesiology reflect a “who’s who” of eminent scholars in the field.

For additional information on the National Academy of Kinesiology refer to the academy’s website at [www.nationalacademyofkinesiology.org](http://www.nationalacademyofkinesiology.org).

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**Landesman Selected as a Candidate for President-Elect of the APHA**

Dr. Linda Landesman, adjunct faculty with the online MPH in Public Health Practice program, has been selected as a candidate for the position of President-Elect of the American Public Health Association (APHA). The candidate elected by the Governing Council will become president-elect at the close of the 2011 APHA Annual Meeting and assume presidency at the close of the 2012 Annual Meeting.
A former chair of the APHA Executive Board, Dr. Landesman notes that 2012 will be a critical year for discussions about prevention, health reform and the future of Medicare and Medicaid.

“As APHA President and member of the Executive Board, I will leverage my passion for public health, my commitment to our Association, my experience delivering and administering healthcare services, and my knowledge of how our Affiliates and the national Association function, to ensure that the voice of APHA is heard,” Landesman states.

To read Dr. Landesman’s candidate statement in full, please click here.

NOTE: Dr. Landesman instructs “Public Health Emergency Management” and “Research Methods” for the online MPH in PHP program. She is the author of the seminal book Public Health Management of Disasters: The Practice Guide. Recently updated in an all-new third edition, the book is now available directly through the APHA bookstore here.

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Ivan Oransky, co-instructor in the online MPH in PHP program, discusses Retraction Watch, the blog he co-founded with Adam Marcus, on NPR's "On the Media." Click here to listen.

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**Rogers Urges Residents to Dry Flooded Homes as Quickly as Possible to Avoid Health Problems**

As Northeast residents begin to clean up after recent torrential rains, Assistant Professor of Environmental Health Sciences Christine Rogers is urging people to throw open their windows and doors and remove wet household items as quickly as possible to avoid one of the worst effects of warm-weather flooding: Mold.

(Note: Rogers also comments on the health risks of mold in the Boston Globe and on WWLP Channel 22 news.)

"There is a strong link between dampness in buildings and asthma, and part of this association is thought to be due to mold growth," says Rogers.
"Mold will grow virtually anywhere if there is enough moisture, whether it’s just dampness or feet of flood waters. If you can dry out the building within 48 hours you can avoid most of the mold growth."

She and her colleague Mike Muilenberg know first-hand what a flood can do to living spaces, as they assessed the mold situation in New Orleans where homes were flooded for weeks after hurricane Katrina. They found that houses with open windows had less mold growth than those that had been closed up tightly.

They recommend opening all windows fully to get a lot of air circulation even if water still needs to be pumped or bailed out by hand. Also, removing all wet household items and putting them outside to dry will help. If safe electrical outlets are available, use a fan to circulate air and evaporate more water.

Above all, if mold is present, Rogers says, "Don’t panic. You can deal with mold yourself if it is a small enough area, such as 10 square feet." Use protective gloves, safety glasses, and an N95 mask during clean-up. Wash non-porous items with detergent and water. Wipe painted surfaces with a dilute bleach solution (one cup of bleach in a gallon of water) and dry them. Resist the temptation to use full strength bleach, because it will be no more effective and could cause its own health problems.

Once mold has formed, removing moldy items should be done carefully to avoid putting mold spores into the air where they can be inhaled. One trick to reduce exposure is to cover or wrap items in a plastic sheet or bag before removal. For drywall, cover the area with something like sticky shelf paper so spores stick to the adhesive and don’t become airborne. Then use a knife or saw to cut the affected piece out. Moldy carpets must be thrown out.

Rogers adds, "Don’t forget to think about who is doing this cleaning. Vulnerable individuals such as children and anyone with asthma or allergies should not do this work!"