Welcome to the Epi Bio Portal, a monthly newsletter from the Division of Biostatistics and Epidemiology. Our goal is to provide a forum where students, faculty, staff, and alumni have the opportunity to learn more about each other’s work and interests. We invite everyone to share your news and pictures. Our production deadline is the 15th of the month prior to publication. Please email your submissions to epibiportal@gmail.com.

**NEWS!**

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 1st Annual Graduate Society of Epidemiology and Biostatistics (GSEB) Bike Ride for Breast Cancer. We are happy to report the event raised over $200 for the American Cancer Society.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

11/16, 11:10am:
Bio/Epi Seminar Series
Dr. Enrique Schisterman
Senior Investigator
NIH/NICHD
Campus Center, Room 904-908

11/18, 3pm:
Epi PhD/Faculty Event
Epi PhD students are invited to join faculty members for an afternoon gathering at the Faculty Club

11/20, 1pm:
Practicum Presentations
Please join MS/MPH students presenting on their summer practicum experiences
Arnold Room 120

---

**DR. ANDREA FOULKES** will be leading a 3-day short course on Nov 10-12, entitled “Clinical Genomics and Pharmacogenomics (with R)” at the Health and Life Sciences Institute in Innsbruck, Austria, based on her new textbook. Following that, she will be giving an invited talk on “Mixture modeling for characterizing multi-locus genotype-trait association” in the Department of Biosystems Science and Engineering, Swiss Federal Institute in Basel, Switzerland (Nov 13). The talk is based on joint work with Dr. Kinman Au (post doctoral research fellow) and Dr. Rongheng Lin. Findings of a new study by Dr. Brian Whitcomb and colleagues (titled, “Effect of daily fiber intake on reproductive function: the BioCycle Study” Am J Clin Nutr. 2009 Oct.) were featured on Yahoo! Health. The findings of the study suggest that among women ages 18 to 44, those eating the recommended amounts of fiber had the lowest levels of estrogen and other reproductive hormones in their blood. ♦ **DR. ELIZABETH BERTONE-JOHNSON** and colleagues evaluated the association between recreational activity and plasma steroid hormones among a subset of postmenopausal participants in the Nurse’s Health Study. Compared to women reporting moderate activity, estrogen and androgen levels were found to be lower in the most and the least-active women, suggesting the possibility of a U-shaped relation. Findings of this study (titled, “Recreational physical activity and steroid hormone levels in postmenopausal women”) can be found in the November issue of the American Journal of Epidemiology. ♦ **DR. LISA CHASAN-TABER** was recently awarded a one-year grant by the Association of Schools of Public Health/Centers for Disease Control for a pilot study to test the effectiveness of a lifestyle intervention in a pregnant population. Estudio VIDA will recruit Puerto Rican and Dominican prenatal care patients at Baystate Medical Center and Mercy Medical Center. Participants will be randomized to an intervention group with an individually tailored diet and physical activity intervention or to a control group receiving standard prenatal care. ♦
Dr. Chasan-Taber completed his PhD in Biostatistics at UMASS under the direction of Dr. David Hosmer. Following his graduation, Dr. Chasan-Taber held a post-doctoral fellowship at the Harvard School of Public Health. Since that time he served as Director of Biometrics at Boston Biostatistics (now Averion) and is currently Senior Director for Biostatistics at Genzyme. At Genzyme, his work revolves around statistical analysis of clinical trial data, with an emphasis on renal disease. In his spare time, Dr. Chasan-Taber has been an avid rock climber, kayaker, and golfer, but now focuses his attention on mandolin-playing and canoeing.

**5 questions we asked Dr. Chasan-Taber:**

If you could meet anyone (dead or alive), who would it be and why?
"It wouldn't be a statistician! I would say, Mike Marshall, the mandolinist, because he embraces diversity in musical styles and techniques."

What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?
"Automotive Design Engineer"

What is the last book you read?
"Big Bang: The Origin of the Universe" by Simon Singh.

If someone wrote a biography about you, what do you think the title would be? "The Hobbyist"

What is your best memory of UMass?
"Friendships made and meeting my future wife."

If you could turn back the clock, what is something you wish you had known during your years as a student?
"Get as good at SAS as possible and don't waste your time on other statistical software packages!"

*NOTE: For more information, please visit the Epi Bio Portal website!*
http://people.umass.edu/beportal