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.

FACULTY NEWS

DR. ED STANEK continues to work with colleagues in South America, having traveled to Natal, Brazil in November to present an invited paper on mixed models and sampling. The main thrust of this work (with Dr. Singer (from the University of Sao Paulo)) is to tie statistical models to reality. The results they presented illustrated that for many common approaches to mixed models, a portion of the sample space underlying the model is completely artificial. Check out the presentation at http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~stanek/research-home.html. Over the past several years, several students (Oscar Louiero, Bo Xu, and Ruitao Zhang) have had a chance to attend working group meetings on Finite Population Mixed Models with Dr. Stanek in South America. Another meeting is planned in Amherst from July 19-30, 2010, with collaborators from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and India. Mark that down! You’re welcome to join in. DR. ANDREA POULKES is in Kisumu, Kenya this week for a one-week visiting lectureship (Jan 25–Jan 30, 2010). Over the break she also gave a seminar “Statistical methods for prioritizing laboratory testing in resource-limited settings” for the UMass Medical School Center for AIDS Research.

BIO/EPI SEMINAR SERIES

Dr. Elizabeth Conisky
Assoc. Professor of Public Health
Hampshire College
Monday, Feb 22nd, 11:10-12
@ Campus Ctr 9th Floor Rm 917

Dr. Amy Herring
Assoc. Professor of Biostatistics
Gillings School of Global Public Health
Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Monday, March 8th, 11:10-12
@ Campus Ctr 9th Floor Rm 917

Dr. Robert Krafty
Assistant Professor of Statistics
Univ. of Pittsburgh
Monday, March 22nd, 11:10-12
@ Campus Ctr 9th Floor Rm 917

For more information:
http://www.umass.edu/sphhs/TheJointBioEpiSeminarSeries.htm

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


ANNOUNCEMENTS:

>>Do you have a book you would like to sell or swap with another member of the department? A board for the Graduate Society of Epidemiology and Biostatistics (GSEB) has been set up on the 4th floor (to your right hand as you exit the elevator, next to the GSEB poster). Please feel free to pin up “classified” ads or news on events you would like to share with the rest of the Bio/Epi community!

>>The Society of Epidemiologic Research (SER) will be holding its annual meeting this year in Seattle, Washington, from July 23-26. Please submit abstracts by February 1st. The theme of the meeting will be “Epidemiology in an Interconnected World.”

Alumni Spotlight:

Dr. Jennifer Stark (MPH '04)

“After graduation from UMASS, I began the doctoral program in epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, where I also completed a post-doctoral fellowship. I am now an Instructor of Medicine at the Channing Laboratory in the Department of Medicine at Brigham & Women’s Hospital and Harvard Medical School. I recently moved to Örebro, Sweden with my husband and 2-year old daughter to spend a year or two working with collaborators on cancer registry-based studies. My research has primarily focused on the role of inflammation and infections in prostate cancer, but I am now beginning my first penile cancer study in Sweden.”

5 questions we asked Dr. Stark:
If you could meet anyone (dead or alive), who would it be and why?
“Werner Herzog, the film director/writer. I admire his willingness to take on subject matter that is both technically and emotionally challenging, and think he would be an incredibly interesting lunch date.”
What profession other than your own would you like to attempt?
“Documentary filmmaker.”
What is the last book you read?
“The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo by Stieg Larsson.”
If someone wrote a biography about you, what do you think the title would be?
“Do the roses REALLY smell that good?”
What is your best memory of UMass?
“Realizing that I had finally discovered my professional calling.”
If you could turn back the clock, what is something you wish you had known during your years as a student?
“The connections that you make with peers and faculty will be invaluable throughout your career. I wish I had taken even more time to get to know others involved in my program.”