Message from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

Traditionally, summer is a time of transition in medicine. Trainees graduate, and we welcome fresh new faces to the program. It is also a time when we can slow down, take some time off to be with family on vacation, and to assess and plan.

We have had a great year in 2015-2016. We are financially and academically stronger now, and I anticipate we will continue to grow our clinical, research, and teaching missions in the years ahead. Thanks to our talented faculty, staff, and trainees, our future looks very bright. I would like to thank each and everyone of you for the hard work and dedication that has made this possible.

In this newsletter, you will find descriptions of the many achievements, large and small, that you—our faculty and staff—made in 2016. It is an impressive list, and I know that it will continue to grow over time.

Thank you,

Robert O. Wright, MD, MPH
Ethel Wise Professor and Chair
Department of Environmental Medicine and Public Health
Upcoming Events

July 26, 2016 On Tuesday, July 26th there will be a special webinar from 1-2:30PM on climate change and health and the implications for PEHSUs. Speakers will include Allison Crimmins and Lesley Jantarasami from the US EPA and John Balbus from NIEHS. Perry Sheffield (R2 PEHSU) and Ari Bernstein (R1 PEHSU) will provide commentary on the impact of this report for the PEHSUs. To learn more, click here.

September 14, 2016 A World Trade Center Health Program (WTCHP) symposium will be held on Wednesday, September 14th at the New York Academy of Medicine. This symposium will give an update on research in the World Trade Center Health Program fifteen years after September 11, 2001. The WTCHP was extended for 75 years with the reauthorization of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act in 2016.

September 25-28, 2016 MANGANESE2016, the Second International Conference on the neurotoxicity and prevention of manganese health effects, will be held September 25-28, 2016 at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. This is the 28th meeting in the International Neurotoxicology Conference series. Dr. Roberto Lucchini is the Conference Chair.

The overall objective of this conference is to bring together experts from academia, governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, industry, and labor organizations from around the world. The conference will yield international state-of-the-science discussion of what is known, identify information gaps, and help define future directions for research to advance our fundamental knowledge of the causes, mechanisms, diagnosis, related new technologies, treatment and prevention of Manganese (Mn)-induced or exacerbated diseases and disorders in children, adults, and the elderly. To learn more, click here.
Promotions

Susan Teitelbaum, PhD

Dr. Susan Teitelbaum has been promoted to Professor. She is an environmental and cancer epidemiologist whose research interests include endocrine disruptors, early puberty, and their relationship to breast cancer risk. Currently, Dr. Teitelbaum is involved in several grants supported by the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) / National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). She is the principal investigator on the project “Breast Cancer Genomics in Windows of Susceptibility to Endocrine Disruptors.” Most recently, she received a grant from NIEHS to lead the Data Center for the Children’s Health Exposure Analysis Resource (CHEAR). CHEAR provides selected children’s health researchers access to laboratory and data analysis services to add or expand environmental exposures as a component of their research.

New Hires

Dawn Byrne, RN, BS, BA, Nursing Clinical Coordinator

Dawn Byrne joined the Selikoff Center for Occupational Health in April 2016. Her nursing background includes the OR, ICU, and PACU. She has extensive experience in critical care and orthopedics. Most recently she was employed at NYU Medical Center as a PACU team member at the Outpatient Surgery Center specializing in ambulatory orthopedic patient care where she was involved in continuing education, nursing research, and post-operative pain management. Dawn has a BA from Fordham University and a BS from Columbia University School of Nursing. She looks forward to contributing to the quality care for our unique and dedicated patient population.

Cheriyan Clemente, BSN, RN, Nurse Clinical Coordinator

Cheriyan Clemente joins DPM as a Clinical Nurse Coordinator. She received her ADN from the College of Staten Island, City University of New York, in 2009 and started working as a clinical ICU RN within the same year. While working, she received a BSN from Grand Canyon University. She worked in the ICU for 7 years before deciding to pursue occupational health nursing.
Priyanthi Shyamalee Dassanayake, PhD, Postdoc Fellow

Dr. Shyamalee Dassanayake is pursuing post-doctoral research studies under the guidance of Dr. Manish Arora. She is currently associated with the Children’s Health Exposure Analysis Resource (CHEAR) program and projects in the Senator Frank Lautenberg Environmental Health Sciences Laboratory. Her research focuses on developing chromatography and mass spectrometry-based analytical methods for (ultra) trace level measurement of both persistent and non-persistent organic environmental contaminants in human matrices. Her work and findings will contribute towards estimating the human body burden of these chemicals and in finding associations with relevant health outcomes. Her background in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences includes environmental exposure measurement, environmental toxicology, and environmental and occupational health risk assessment. Prior to joining the Department of Environmental Medicine and Public Health, she contributed to epidemiological studies including the National Children’s Study (NCS)–Placenta project with emphasis on measuring persistent organic pollutants. She received her MS and PhD in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Maire Heikkinen, PhD, CIH, Lab Operations Manager

Dr. Maire Heikkinen joined the DPM as a laboratory operations manager working at the Senator Frank Lautenberg Environmental Health Sciences Laboratory with Dr. Manish Arora and the CHEAR consortium. Her background is in environmental health studies, analytical chemistry, and project and study management. She was previously a Senior Environmental Health Scientist at Westat, leading the environmental laboratory and repository group that supported the environmental team of the NIH National Children’s Study in coordination of environmental sample and data storage and analysis, and selection of environmental sampling systems and methods. Earlier, as an Assistant Professor at New York University, she specialized in exposure, dose, and risk assessment of ambient airborne contaminants, application and development of instruments for collection and physical and chemical analysis of these contaminants, and environmental and occupational hygiene. She earned a PhD from New York University and a MS from the University of Turku, Finland.
Megan Markham, Communications and Marketing Associate II

A native Texan, Megan Markham joins the Department of Environmental Medicine and Public Health as the Communications and Marketing Associate for the CEHC. Her background is in nonprofit communications with a focus in health care. She joins us from Children's Hospital Los Angeles where she worked for the past four years as a Media Relations Specialist and an Outreach Specialist. Megan received her BS in Public Relations from The University of Texas at Austin.

Angela M. Medina, RN, AGNP, Specialty Coordinator, Nurse Practitioner

Angela Medina is an Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner who joins the Selikoff Center Occupational Health Clinical Center in Staten Island. She was previously employed in a private Nephrology/Internal Medicine practice servicing Staten Island and Brooklyn. She obtained her Master's Degree in Nursing with a Post Master's Certificate as a Nurse Practitioner from The College of Staten Island.

Leila E. Neal, Project Coordinator

Leila Neal joins the DPM as a Project Coordinator to provide IRB support to faculty in the department. She was previously Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Revenue Cycle at Mount Sinai. Prior to joining Mount Sinai, she was an Administrative Coordinator for the Department of Behavioral Sciences at Columbia Dental School. Leila has a BA from Hampton University in Political Science and Economics and speaks French, Arabic, and English. She has an 80lb pit bull named Winston.

Dhaval Patel, MS, Associate Researcher

Dhaval Patel obtained his MS in Analytical Pharmacy from Gujarat Forensic Science University, India, where he gained experience in methods development and analytical instrumentation including LC-MS/MS. Prior to joining the Senator Frank Lautenberg Environmental
Health Sciences Laboratory, Dhaval worked in industry as a Senior Research Associate at Piramal Discovery Solutions and an Application Specialist at Spinco Biotech Private Ltd., India. He utilized mass spectrometry-based assays for the bio-analysis of a suite of specimens (plasma, urine, liver microsomes, hepatocytes, etc.) from a range of study subjects (mouse, rat, monkey, humans, etc.). Currently, Dhaval is responsible for the analysis of environmental organics of human health interest using liquid chromatography coupled with mass spectrometry. His work will help to determine the body burdens of environmental chemicals in humans, particularly children.

General Preventive Medicine Residents:

- **Candace Tannis, MD, MPH** obtained her medical school degree from New York University of Medicine. She trained in pediatrics for two years at the University of Rochester. Dr. Tannis obtained her MPH from Harvard University School of Public Health, where her thesis was focused on factors that contributed to successful weight management among high risk children at an urban pediatric obesity management clinic.

- **Vinod Mitta, MD MPH** obtained his medical school degree from The University of Southern California. He trained in surgery for a year at Beth Israel Medical Center. Dr. Mitta obtained his MPH from Harvard School of Public Health with a concentration in Quantitative Methods (Epidemiology and Biostatistics). He is currently the Director of Clinical Risk & Population Health at Oscar Insurance.

- **Jarrod Matthei, MD** obtained his medical school degree from Howard University College of Medicine. He trained in internal medicine for a year in the Howard University Hospital. He also trained in neurology at the University of California Irvine Medical Center.

Occupational Medicine Residents:

- **Luckshman Coomaralingam, MD, MPH** is a graduate of the Rutgers-New Jersey School of Medicine. He trained in internal medicine for two years in the Rutgers-affiliated hospitals in Newark. He recently obtained his MPH from the Rutgers School of Public Health, where his thesis was on the descriptive epidemiology of synthetic cannabinoid abuse, using data from the American Association of Poison Control Centers.

- **Asieh Haghighi, MD** obtained her medical degree from the Iran University of Medical Sciences and trained in anesthesia there before coming to the US. She has
a PG-1 in internal medicine from Griffin Hospital in CT, several years of training and a fellowship in obstetric anesthesia from the Beth Israel-Deaconess Hospital in Boston. She has most recently been involved in coursework and research into health care delivery and services, also in Boston, at Brandeis University.

No bios available:

Katarzyna Bubrowiecki, Scheduling Coordinator I
Yelena Davidyuk, Office Assistant III
Olga Gruscinska, MD, Assistant Professor
Lett Lanair, Trainee
Christine Napolitano, MD, Assistant Professor
Nathania Ornis, Program Coordinator I
Pilar Orlandi, Medical Interpreter
Britta Petersen, Senior Associate Researcher
Carol Reddy, Program Coordinator I
Joanna Stawinski, Scheduling Coordinator

Congratulations

John Meyer, MD, MPH

On April 12 at the American Occupational Health Conference (AOHC), Dr. John Meyer received the ACOEM Centennial Award for Excellence in Education and Research in Occupational and Environmental Medicine for his career in Occupational Medicine training. He was recognized for his work as director of the Occupational Medicine Board Review course, his leadership in promotion of resident research at the AOHC, and his research focused on reproductive hazards and health disparities in minority populations arising from work.

Dana Hashim, MD, MS

Dr. Dana Hashim received a “Women in Cancer Research Scholar Award” from the American Association for Cancer Research and was elected Associate Member Council-led Program Committee Member for the American Association for Cancer Research.
Mary Wolff, PhD

Dr. Mary Wolff received the Jerome J. Wesolowski Award from the International Society of Exposure Science (ISES) in recognition of outstanding contributions to the knowledge and practice of human exposure assessment. The award will be presented at the annual ISES meeting on Interdisciplinary Approaches for Health and the Environment on October 10 in Utrecht, Netherlands.

Dr. Wolff is also the recipient of this year’s Faculty Council Lifetime Achievement Award from Mount Sinai. She will be honored at the Annual Faculty Council Awards Ceremony on July 6 in the Annenberg Building.

Stay Informed

Faculty Retreat- March 2016

In March 2016, over 40 Environmental Medicine and Public Health faculty and postdoctoral fellows attended a three day retreat at Gurney’s Resort in Montauk, New York. It was an opportunity to strengthen cross-collaboration and team performance throughout the department. The retreat was a great success, and attendees reported leaving with a greater understanding of their peers' work and a stronger sense of teamwork. We look forward to future team-building activities.

NY/NJ Education and Research Center 37th Annual Meeting- April 1, 2016

The New York and New Jersey Education and Research Center’s 37th Annual Scientific Meeting examined the latest research on occupational safety and health for health care
workers. OSHA Director David Michaels, MD, and NIOSH Director John Howard, MD gave keynote addresses. Other presentations focused on respiratory protection, safe patient handling, safe staffing, and the new challenges of emerging infectious diseases like Ebola. The NY/NJ Education and Research Center is a consortium of academic institutions in the region that provides education, training, and research in occupational safety and health. More information on the meeting can be found [here].

HRP Mamas Educational Event- April 5, 2016

The Children’s Environmental Health Center (CEHC) and the Hudson River Park Mothers Group co-hosted an educational event at The Downtown Community Center. Dr. Sarah Evans spoke on how parents can take simple steps to safeguard their families from toxic environmental exposures in their homes, personal care products, and foods they consume and purchase.

Eighteenth Annual Child Health Research Day- April 21, 2016

This event highlighted the outstanding research activities of students, house staff, clinical and research post-doctoral fellows, research staff, social workers, nurses, and junior faculty in the Department of Pediatrics at Mount Sinai and our affiliates, as well as The Mindich Child Health and Development Institute (MCHDI) and The Department of Environmental Medicine and Public Health.

Young investigators in the Department of Pediatrics, MCHDI, and the Department of Environmental Medicine and Public Health were given the opportunity to share the results of their research with colleagues, and thereby discover new applications for their work or identify potential future areas for collaboration.

Documenting Hope- April 26, 2016

The CEHC participated in a panel discussion at the Empowered Parents Workshop. This event took place at Coco-Mat in downtown Manhattan and was hosted by Documenting
Hope. Dr. Sarah Evans represented the CEHC in the panel discussion on ways to better understand sources of harmful toxins in various items in the home.

**Pear Tree Point- May 10, 2016**

Dr. Sarah Evans spoke to the parents of Pear Tree Point School in Darien, CT to provide simple steps to parents on ways to make healthier consumer choices, provided education on pesticides and flame retardants as well as steps to get involved in their community.

**NY/NJ ERC Historical Perspectives Tour- June 3, 2016**

The New York/New Jersey Education Resource Center (NY/NJERC) had its 11th Historical Perspectives Tour, visiting Boot Cotton Mill in Lowell, MA; Fishing Vessel Safety in Portland, ME; Sappi Paper Mill in Skowhegan, ME; Granite Quarry in Barre, VT; and Wightmans Lumber and Logging in Portlandville, NY.

The NYNJERC developed this tour to bring students to sites of historical and/or contemporary significance in the occupational safety and health and environmental fields. These tours have been successful in bridging the fields to better understand how occupational and environmental exposures occur.

**International Exchange Program for Minority Students- June 6-10 2016**

The Mount Sinai International Exchange Program for Minority Students is an internship program that supports students and research graduates to conduct mentored research in other countries. The program emphasizes collaboration and the exchange of scientific and cultural knowledge in an atmosphere of support for diversity. Orientation week was held at Mount Sinai from June 6-10 before interns travel to their host country to begin research for the following 11 weeks. To learn more, [click here](#) or contact program director Dr. Luz Claudio.
New York Self Insured Association (NYSIA) Spring Workshop- June 8, 2016

The NYSIA annual meeting took place at the Sagamore Resort in Bolton Landing, NY. Dr. Ismail Nabeel spoke on “Creating Seismic Shifts in the Workplace Injury Management.” This meeting addressed issues facing the self-insured community and the Workers’ Compensation industry.

Community Research Education and Engagement for Data Science Program- June 12-24, 2016

The Community Research Education and Engagement for Data Science (CREEDS) Program took place June 12-24 in the Annenberg Building. This program trains over 180 graduate students on computational genomics. Students will be enrolled in either the Summer School for Computational Genomics or the DREAM Challenges Academy to learn how to conduct and apply computational genomics research. Dr. Luz Claudio, along with Patricia Kovatch and Dr. Andrew Sharp, are co-directing this program.

Dr. Luz Claudio will be sharing her book “How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper” with CREED participants. It comes with exercises in each chapter, and it’s a helpful resource for students and early-career professionals who are starting to publish papers in peer-reviewed journals.

Graduating Residents- June 15, 2016

Aletheia Donahue, MD, Occupational Medicine Resident, and Alean Frawley, DO, MPH, General Preventive Medicine Resident, said their good byes and gave their final research presentations on June 15, 2016. Their research focused on “Death from Unintentional Non-Fire Related CO Intoxication in NYC” (Donahue) and “Hypertension-Related Knowledge and Skills Retention in Community Health Workers Trained by the Optimizing Linkage and Retention to Hypertension Care in Rural Kenya (LARK Hypertension) Study: A Partial Process Evaluation” (Frawley).

Dr. Elizabeth Garland, GPM Residency Director, Alean Frawley, DO, MPH, and Kristin Oliver, MD, GPM Residency Deputy Director
In the Media

Phys.org – March 1, 2016
Dr. Holly Atkinson addresses in *Annals of Global Health* the impact of climate change and other upheavals on global health. [Article here.](#)

Huffington Post – March 2, 2016
Nsedu Obot-Witherspoon, MPH, authors article highlighting the environmental health risks of poorly maintained schools. [Article here.](#)

Dr. Philip Landrigan discusses lead poisoning in children in the United States beyond Flint, Michigan and how a national effort to reduce risk must be taken. [Article here.](#)

Downtown Express – March 10, 2016
Dr. Manish Arora and Dr. Roberto Lucchini attend community meeting to discuss possible study looking at levels of pollutant exposure. The study would involve examining baby teeth to determine effects of the 9/11 disaster on pregnant women and children. [Article here.](#)

Dr. Philip Landrigan discusses risk to toddlers living in apartments with lead paint. [Article here.](#)

Medical Daily – March 15, 2016
Dr. Luz Claudio talks about toxins in cigarettes affecting any organ of the body, not just the lungs. [Article here.](#)

Dr. Philip Landrigan answers reader’s question on air particulate standards in New York City. [Article here.](#)

Dr. Maida Galvez speaks on artificial fragrances and how they can cause irritation and exacerbate preexisting conditions like asthma or migraine. [Article here.](#)

New York Times – April 7, 2016
Dr. Donald Smith meets with a patient on the NYT Medical Mystery Column who keeps gaining weight. [Article here.](#)

Time – April 11, 2016
Dr. Philip Landrigan co-writes article with Dr. David Bellinger on how to end lead poisoning in the United States. [Article here.](#)

Healthline – April 12, 2016
Arden Moulton, MSW, speaks on the Woman to Woman support program at Mount Sinai for women in treatment for gynecologic cancer. [Article here.](#)
Roll Call – April 12, 2016
Dr. Philip Landrigan talks about the importance of political support to eradicate lead poisoning in the United States. Article here.

HealthDay News – April 13, 2016
Dr. Shanna Swan speaks on possible phthalates exposure from processed foods. Article here.

Mount Sinai Press Release – April 22, 2016
Research conducted by Dr. Alison Sanders on preterm birth and epigenetics is featured by Mount Sinai. Article here.

Time – May 4, 2016
Dr. Philip Landrigan speaks on the importance of countries taking a stance on air pollution. Article here.

SELF – May 6, 2016
Dr. Maida Galvez discusses potential health effects of mouse poison exposure in humans after man was accused of spraying mouse poison on food in a Michigan Whole Foods location. Article here.

Chicago Tribune – May 17, 2016
Dr. Philip Landrigan speaks on possible health effects arising from increased herbicide use. Article here.

Bloomberg, IOL – May 25, 2016
Dr. Philip Landrigan comments on the connection between pollution and cognitive disabilities in children. Article here and here.

The Atlantic – May 27, 2016
Dr. Philip Landrigan speaks on the new update to the Toxic Substances Control Act. Article here.

HealthDay News – June 1, 2016
Dr. Ruth Loos speaks on how certain genetic factors are associated with lower risk of obesity. Article here.

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Publications, Posters, and Pilots

Publications


Posters


Community Activities

Take Your Kids to Work Day- May 20

Nearly 20 children, ages 2 – 12, and their parents or caregiver participated in the Take Your Kids to Work Day. Activities included teddy bear checkups, scientific experiments, and a tour of the Lautenberg Lab by Dr. Manish Arora. It was a fantastic way to introduce young people to the science and medicine, and a unique way to build
community in the department. Special thanks to Catherine Arora, Nishat Nabeel, Jean Stanilaus, and Allison Devia for putting together such a great event.

Wall Street Walk for Heart Health - May 19

The Department of Environmental Medicine and Public Health participated for the second year in the 2016 Wall Street Run and Heart Walk held by the American Heart Association on May 19th, 2016. Mount Sinai collectively raised almost $50,000 for the AHA’s efforts in decreasing cardiovascular disease and stroke in the United States.

Please send any news and updates for the DEMPH newsletter to carla.azar@mssm.edu.