Dear Colleagues,

Spring is here! As we enter a new season, it is really wonderful to see the growth in our department. As our team expands, we are working on getting more space—some in other buildings, some in CAM (you should say farewell to the library room as it is being converted to offices). The Lautenberg Lab’s major renovation is nearly finished as well.

Our programs are also growing. We are co-hosting the next exposome symposium with the University of Brescia to be held in Italy in May, and I anticipate we will welcome 2-3 new faculty by this summer to our department. Although not official yet, we have had some good news on scores for several grants submissions. I am looking forward to the summer and the coming academic year as I know there will be many new announcements and some surprises.

Robert O. Wright, MD, MPH
Ethel H. Wise Professor and Chair
Department of Environmental Medicine & Public Health
Director, Institute for Exposomic Research
Director, Lautenberg Laboratory for Environmental Health
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai
New Hires

**WESLEY NAM**

Wesley Nam joins EMPH as a Programmer Analyst for the WTC Health Program General Responder Data Center. Wesley recently graduated from Stony Brook University with a BS in Computer Science. While an undergraduate student, Wesley worked in a programming lab to develop solutions for university professors. As a Queens native, Wesley is proud to be a part of the Mount Sinai family and to work towards a cause that helps members of his community. Wesley aims to learn as much as possible and further his technical skills while working in public health to gain a unique perspective.

**VICTORIA GRAY, MPH**

Victoria Gray, MPH, joins EMPH as Program Coordinator II. Victoria has a BS in Public Health, and she recently graduated with a MPH from Drexel University where she also completed a graduate minor in business. Previously, Victoria worked at the Houston Bureau of Epidemiology as a surveillance investigator and MD Anderson Cancer Center as a myeloma clinical research coordinator. She most recently interned at Hahnemann University Hospital in Philadelphia, where she helped implement a sepsis educational program for high-risk populations. Victoria is a Texas native and recently moved to New York City. She enjoys outdoor activities, especially water sports and running with her Shiba Inu, Lennox.

**TERESA HERRERA, MPH**

Teresa Herrera, MPH, joins EMPH as Program Coordinator with the Region 2 PEHSU. Prior to this position, she was a research fellow in the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai International Research Exchange Program where she studied metabolic disorders in adult populations from Chiapas, Mexico. She received her BS in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from CU Boulder and completed a MPH at Mount Sinai in 2018. Her thesis work focused on understanding the influence of ambient heat on acute mental health outcomes. Teresa is committed to addressing environmental justice issues through her work. In her spare time, you can find her painting and spending time with her family.

**FRANCES MORALES RAMOS, MPH**

Frances Morales Ramos, MPH, joins EMPH as a Trainee in Dr. Luz Claudio’s short-term Public Health and Environmental Health Training Program. Frances completed a MPH in June 2018 at the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus. She then worked as a project coordinator for VOCES, Coalition of Vaccination of Puerto Rico (PR), where she applied her public health background as a means of raising awareness about the importance of vaccination in PR. During her undergraduate and master’s studies she was able to work as a research assistant in gynecology and pediatrics as well as implement a Zika educational program for expectant mothers and families. She aims to explore the field of environmental health and is committed to creating projects based on her belief that preventive behaviors are key to a healthy lifestyle.
AHMAD SABRA, MS, MPH

Ahmad Sabra, MS, MPH, is Senior Data Analyst at the WTC Health Program General Responder Data Center (GRDC). He earned a MS in microbiology from the American University of Beirut and a MPH in epidemiology from Columbia University. Ahmad has also pursued professional experiences in different areas of the world, such as scaling-up tobacco control efforts at the WHO in Geneva and managing nationwide surveillance studies in Lebanon. Prior to Mount Sinai, Ahmad was the lead Senior Data Analyst at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, working on improving permanent supportive housing data collection systems. Ahmad also has published peer-reviewed articles on a number of topics, and is looking forward to collaborating with researchers on public health surveillance activities. He spends his spare time cooking, collecting vinyl records, attending metal concerts, and exploring New York.

STEVEN WALLACE

Steven Wallace joins EMPH as Outreach and Education Coordinator for the WTC Health Program. He grew up in New Jersey and moved to New York City in 1987 to become a NYC Police Officer. He is a four year veteran of the US Navy and a 31 year veteran police officer of the NYPD. He retired in April 2018. Prior to Mount Sinai, Steve was the HR coordinator for the NYPD Police Academy as well as the Union Delegate/Representative at the Police Officers Benevolent Association for the last 15 years. Steve was an academy instructor during 9/11 and responded to the site in the days, weeks, and months after.

BIOS UNAVAILABLE

Luisa Arias, Program Coordinator
Christopher Bland, Trainee
Nelly Castaneda, Medical Assistant
Joanne Dugue, Patient Service Coordinator
Marta Lapinska, Scheduling Coordinator
Nicolo Foppa Pedretti, Biostatistician
Richard Rodriguez, Scheduling Coordinator
Sylwia Styulkowski, Scheduling Coordinator
Congratulations

NEW NIH P30 GRANT

Congratulations to Elizabeth J. Garland, MD, MS (PI); Erin Thanik, MD, MPH; Elizabeth Howard, MD; Carlos Melendez, PhD; Emily Moody, MD, MS; Luz Claudio, PhD; and Maida Galvez, MD, MPH, for recently being awarded a P30 for their work on “Improving identification of home-based environmental exposures and social stressors in at-risk families in East Harlem: a community based participatory project.”

EXTRAMURAL PAPER OF THE MONTH

New research publication authored by Megan Horton, PhD; Christine Austin, PhD; Chris Gennings, PhD; Robert Wright, MD, MPH; Manish Arora, BDS, MPH, PhD, FICD and collaborators entitled “Dentine biomarkers of prenatal and early childhood exposure to manganese, zinc and lead and childhood behavior” was named the NIEHS Environmental Factor Paper of the Month in January. This paper was originally published in the journal Environment International.

JAMES STEWART, DO

James Stewart, DO, MPH(c), was awarded Best Poster at the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) Conference, that took place on March 8-10 in Chicago. Dr. Stewart’s poster was on “Toxic Sites Vulnerable to Climate-mediated Flooding in Bangladesh” in the track of “Planetary Health, One Health, Environmental Health, Climate Change.”
Climate change is taking a toll not just on the environment, but also in the clinic, with a rise in asthma, cardiovascular disease, insect-borne viruses, and heat-related death. That was the urgent message of the inaugural Clinical Climate Change conference, hosted by Institute for Exposomic Research. Panelists at the event, held on Saturday, January 12, at the New York Academy of Medicine, included environmental advocates and leaders in the study of environmental medicine and public health.

The conference aimed to provide public health professionals, policymakers, physicians, nurses, medical students, and allied health professionals with a base of up-to-date evidence to inform patient treatment and care as the global average temperature continues its steady rise. “Air pollution is a major driver of the health consequences of climate change,” said Robert Wright, MD, MPH. “In addition to conditions you would expect to increase, such as asthma and other lung diseases, our research shows that there are many downstream effects.” For example, Dr. Wright and several other panelists focused on fine particulate matter (PM2.5) from air pollution, which causes inflammation in the body that is associated with neurotoxicity, neurodevelopmental disorders, and increased insulin resistance.

“Heat-related conditions are of particular concern for outdoor workers. Thousands become sick every year, and many die, due to these preventable illnesses,” said Roberto Lucchini, MD. “Studies show that recurrent heat exposure, with physical exertion, inadequate hydration, and exposure to chemicals, can lead to chronic kidney disease,” he said. “There is an epidemic of this disease among worker populations in Central America. We have to prepare health care workers in northern areas to be aware of the condition.”

In addition to these critical warnings, speakers presented actionable tools for clinicians both to better inform patients and to modify their practice. “Physicians can explain the importance of paying attention to heat and poor air-quality days,” said Emily Senay, MD, MPH. “This is especially important for vulnerable patients who are elderly or chronically ill.” During a heat wave, clinicians might consider adjusting some medications, like diuretics, which reduce the ability to lose heat by sweating. They should advise patients to close windows and use air conditioning to limit exposure to air pollution but also to be conscious of indoor pollutants like mold and fumes from cleaning products.

Physicians were encouraged to prepare for an influx of diseases previously unseen in their population, particularly those carried by insects. A warming climate will make habitats more hospitable to disease-carrying insects, such as mosquitoes and ticks, exposing a larger swath of the population to diseases such as Lyme disease, Zika virus, and dengue fever.

Another concern is that weather events, such as hurricanes and floods, are becoming more extreme as a result of climate change. Superstorms of recent years, like Hurricane Sandy, are leading to a shift from an “emergency response” model to a more forward-looking “risk mitigation” approach, said George Loo, DrPH, MPH, Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine, and Population Health Science and Policy. That includes moving critical infrastructure out of flood prone areas and developing extensive logistics for managing transportation, power, security, and staffing. In addition, Dr. Loo said, “Health care workers need to first have a plan to take care of themselves and their families. Knowing that your family is safe and that you have a way to contact them will reduce stress and help you focus on your patients.”

“Physicians play an important role in helping patients understand how climate affects the health of individuals and how, at a population level, humans affect the environment,” Dr. Senay said. “With a nuanced approach,” she added, “providers can improve environmental literacy and open the door to discussions about how walking more, eating a plant-based diet, and advocating for renewable energy can make both the planet and patients healthier.”
CITIZEN SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

On March 14, Luz Guel, Community Engagement Core (CEC) Coordinator of The Community Engagement Core at The Mount Sinai Transdisciplinary Center on Early Environmental Exposures (TCEEE), presented “MY NYC AIR: Environmental Health and Justice Citizen Science” at the CitiSci 2019 Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina. The TCEEE CEC was one of the four NIEHS Environmental Health Sciences Core Centers (Emory, Rutgers, & University of Kentucky) presenting as part of the “Citizen Science in Action” symposium. Participants discussed and presented data from four citizen science collaborative projects that have contributed to environmental public health action. This symposium session used a combination of storytelling and data summaries to engage and inspire with real life success stories. Community partners and academics presented together to demonstrate how they collaborated on projects that used scientific tools and local knowledge and engagement to achieve positive public health outcomes.

NEW LEADFREE NYC PLAN TO END CHILDHOOD LEAD EXPOSURE

On January 28, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio introduced a roadmap to eliminating childhood lead exposure as a part of a new LeadFreeNYC plan. The plan will screen apartments for potential lead hazards, eliminate lead risks in NYCHA apartments and family shelters, target unsafe consumer goods, provide children with dedicated nurses, and link together all City agencies responding to lead exposure.

Maida Galvez, MD, MPH, participated in the launch event and spoke on the history and progress made in NYC on protecting children from lead exposure. Dr. Galvez, Founding Director of the new New York State Children's Environmental Health Centers, also spoke on her experiences as a pediatrician working with children affected by environmental exposures.

FUTURE LEADERS IN SCIENCE EDUCATION COURSE

EMPH hosted its 5th year of “Future Leaders in Science Education and Communication” (FLSEC) program October 18-December 13, 2018. This science communication postdoctoral training was led by Alison Sanders, PhD and Erik De Water, PhD. The innovative 7-week lecture and practical teaching series is designed to help early stage researchers sharpen their science communication and leadership skills. This spring, the participants will begin their practical hands-on experience teaching 5th grade public school students.

CLIMATE CRISIS TASK FORCE

Ismail Nabeel, MD, MPH, FACOEM, joined the Westchester County Climate Crisis Task Force (CCTF) to tackle actions needed to reduce Westchester’s carbon footprint and make the County more resilient to climate change. In the short term, the task force supports the County’s commitment to reducing emissions, sequestering carbon through land preservation and planting, and promoting existing successful solutions.
**NEW YORK AFTER 9/11**

New York After 9/11 is a new book edited by Susan Opotow and Zachary Baron Shemtob that offers insights into how 9/11 impacted the New York City community in the years that followed, bringing together experts from medicine, public safety, and law among others to contribute to chapters on health, revitalization, and policy. Roberto Lucchini, MD, and Michael Crane, MD, MPH, were contributing authors. The book launch was held on February 27th at the City University of New York (CUNY). The launch was sponsored by the Public Science Project and the CUNY Graduate Center.

**DLM WORKSHOP**

On February 12, 2019, The Mount Sinai Transdisciplinary Center on Effects of Early Environmental Exposure and the Conduits, the Mount Sinai CTSA co-sponsored a workshop on Critical Windows and Distributed Lag Regression (DLM). There were about 35 attendees that included faculty, postdoctoral fellows and data analysts. Facilitators included Rosalind Wright, MD, MPH; Robert Wright, MD, MPH; Chris Gennings, PhD; Leon Hsu, ScD; and Mathilda Chiu, ScD.

The DLM workshop has emphasized the importance of timing in epidemiology studies and human development and also introduced how this methodology was first conceptualized by Dr. Robert Wright to tackle this field of research. As the dimensions of health and environmental data keep increasing, we are now better equipped to understand data driven human biology and underlying mechanisms compared to a decade ago. The DLM workshop demonstrated the current understanding and developmental frontier aspect of this analytic technique, as well as a hands-on experience for all participants to experience the statistical code in action. The workshop covered "Bayesian distributed lag model", "Reversed distributed lag model", and "Lagged Weighted Quantile Sum Model" in both "R" environment and "SAS" environment.

**FUTURE OF WORK**

Roberto Lucchini, MD, attended a meeting at the UN on January 31 as a representative of the ICOH Working Group on the “Future for a Decent Work” to discuss a report recently launched by the International Labour Organization (ILO) Global Commission on the Future of Work entitled “Work for a Brighter Future.” The report examines how to achieve a better future of work for all at a time of unprecedented change and exceptional challenges in the world of work.

At the UN launch meeting, Dr. Lucchini discussed necessary occupational health considerations and concerns for emerging hazards related to new technologies, climate change, and the changing nature of work organization. Recommendations were made that health and safety are kept as priorities and the ILO key words, which are ‘future, decent and sustainable work’, be expanded to include ‘safe’.
PESTICIDES TESTIMONY

Megan Horton, PhD, gave testimony on the health effects of chlorpyrifos at the Maryland Senate hearing on Bill SB0270 on February 27th. Dr. Horton was invited by the environmental law group, Earth Justice. The bill is backed by a coalition of more than 80 organizations. Dr. Horton also gave testimony on March 26th to Oregon lawmakers on a set of bills that would also restrict chlorpyrifos. If these bills pass, these states would join California and Hawaii as states that have moved to restrict the use of chlorpyrifos in the absence of a federal ban.

Media Spotlights

**Paper of the Month** - Megan Horton, PhD; Christine Austin, PhD; Chris Gennings, PhD; Robert Wright, MD, MPH; Manish Arora, BDS, MPH, PhD, FICD
NIEHS- January 2019

**This Genetically Modified Houseplant can Detoxify the Polluted Air in Your Home** - Luz Claudio, PhD
Healthline- January 6

**Language delays linked to environmental chemicals** - Shanna Swan, PhD
Cape Gazette- January 50, 2019

**Physicians more likely to make return to work recommendations with EHR-integrated tool** - Ismail Nabeel, MD, MPH, FACOEM
Healio- February 6, 2019

**The disturbing hypothesis for the sudden uptick in chronic kidney disease** - Roberto Lucchini, MD
Vox- February 15, 2019

**Study Shows Possible Link Between Air Pollution and Higher Cholesterol Levels** - Laura McGuinn, PhD
EPA Science Matters- February 26

**11 Facts About Kidneys** - Roberto Lucchini, MD
Mental Floss- February 26, 2019

**14 Ways Toxins are Sneaking into Your House** - Luz Claudio, PhD
Reader’s Digest- March 20, 2019

**How to Minimize Exposures to Hormone Disruptors** - Manish Arora, BDS, MPH, PhD, FICD
New York Times- April 1, 2019
Publications


Identifying mislabeled and contaminated DNA methylation microarray data: an extended quality control toolset with examples from GEO. Heiss JA, Just AC. Clinical Epigenetics. 2018;10(1):75.


In utero metal exposures measured in deciduous teeth and birth outcomes in a racially-diverse urban cohort. Cassidy-Bushrow AE, Wu KH,


Using Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) data to identify missed opportunities for HPV vaccination. Nobel T, Rajupet S, Sigel K, Oliver K. Human Vaccines & Immunotherapeutics. 2019. 5(7) Jan 25.

Presentations

Eastern Society for Pediatric Research Annual Meeting, March 22-March 24

View your faculty profile at plu.mx/mtsinai/g/prevmed

SCIENTIFIC IMPACT

51 EMPH faculty scientists features on PLUMX.

Current EMPH faculty have published a total of over 2,815 articles, reviews, research papers, etc. over their careers.

Over their careers, current faculty published articles that were altogether...

- cited 293,693 times from numerous academic journals
- shared on Facebook 20,645 times
- tweeted about 14,946 times

NOTICE TO EMPH FACULTY:

All statistics here are based on data collected from PLUMX. Please review your profile on PLUMX to determine if all your information and publications are captured and correct. Please email any changes to carla.azar@mssm.edu.

March 26, 2019 Report

SO FAR IN 2019, THE PUBLICATION WITH THE MOST...


Community & Announcements

2018 HOLIDAY PARTY
**DEPENDENT CARE TRAVEL PROGRAM**

The Department is pleased to announce the new Dependent Care Travel Program. This is a Department run program that offers funds to faculty, staff, postdocs and residents to cover qualified dependent care expenses incurred while traveling for work-related activities. This program helps alleviate the financial burden of dependent care expenses for single care takers and individuals whose spouse/partner are not available for child care due to work obligations or other extenuating circumstances. Recipients must certify that funds requested for dependent care are due to work related travel and beyond normal dependent care expenses.

You can access the program instructions on the shared drive under J:\PM\COMMON\Programs\Dependent Care Program

**GRANTS**

If you find a grant opportunity of interest, please send an email to emphgrants@lists.mssm.edu with a completed internal submission form for any funding announcement to which you intend to apply. Please allot an additional 13 – 15 business days in addition to the funding opportunity submission deadline to allow time for the internal submission processes designed to help you develop your proposal to take place.

The internal submission form can be found through the following file path: J:\PM\COMMON\EMPHGRANTS\Internal Proposal Submission Form

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Department of Environmental Medicine and Public Health

Institute for Exposomic Research

Children’s Environmental Health Center & P50 TCEEE Community Engagement Core

NYS Children’s Environmental Health Center

Selikoff Centers for Occupational Health

WTC Health Program CCE

If you have any questions about using social media or starting your own account, please email Carla Azar at carla.azar@mssm.edu