OBESITY AND CHRONIC DISEASES
INVESTIGATING THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

ROBERT REDFORD HOSTS FUNDRAISER FOR CENTER FOR AMERICAN INDIAN HEALTH
From the Chair
Robert Black, MD, MPH

This issue of *The Globe* highlights some of the Department’s work addressing the global epidemic of obesity. Professor Benjamin Caballero, one of the Department’s first faculty members to work on obesity, once titled a seminar “What makes the world go round?” This question along with even more pressing questions of how to reverse the worrisome trends in the US and worldwide now involve the efforts of numerous faculty and students. The analysis by Associate Professor Youfa Wang projecting future trends to predict that 86 percent of Americans would be overweight or obese by 2030 should certainly raise concerns about our unhealthy eating habits and reduced physical activity. His work and that of others have also shown troubling increases in obesity globally, including in Brazil, China and India.

In addition to the research and obesity prevention programs featured in *The Globe*, our faculty members are engaged in a number of projects designed to understand and prevent obesity and related chronic diseases. Locally, Drs. Caballero, Gittelsohn and Wang in the *Growing Leaps and Bounds* project focus on promoting healthy eating patterns and preventing excess weight gain in the first two years of life. Two projects led by Professor Maureen Black at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and involving our Human Nutrition Program faculty members Caulfield and Gittelsohn, concentrate on other important risk groups, i.e. toddlers and girls in Baltimore middle schools with research on interventions to prevent obesity. Professor Gittelsohn also leads several projects based in Baltimore City to improve the availability of healthy foods in and around recreational centers and churches. These programs, such as *Baltimore Healthy Eating Zones* and *Healthy Bodies, Healthy Souls*, work with the community to help increase physical activity and improve diets. Professor Laura Caulfield leads nutrition efforts in the Baltimore County site of the National Children’s Study, which will follow participants from birth to 21 years of age, addressing the environmental influences on health outcomes, including on pediatric obesity and diabetes. All of these projects provide opportunities for Department graduate students. Internationally, the Department has some major new initiatives. Our faculty were recently awarded three Center of Excellence grants (out of 11 Centers funded nationally) from the NIH National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute to work with collaborators in Bangladesh, Guatemala and Peru on obesity and related conditions, such as diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular diseases.

Obesity in high-income countries and the double burden of malnutrition, i.e., concurrent problems with maternal and child undernutrition and increasing child and adult obesity now being experienced by many low- and middle-income countries, require urgent attention and high global priority.

Fall 2009

3 Investigating the Causes and Consequences of Obesity
Associate Professor Youfa Wang

5 LIST: The Lives Saved Tool
An evidence-based decision-making tool for estimating intervention impact

6 Healthy Choices, Healthy Options
Fighting obesity and related chronic diseases through exercise, diet and community involvement

8 News & Highlights
Faculty and student honors
New staff and faculty

11 Faculty Profile
Assistant Professor Maria Merritt
Advancing the study of community-based research ethics

Robert Redford Hosts Fundraiser
*Feast for the Future* to fight hunger and malnutrition among Native American populations

Cover photo credits, clockwise from top left: HEALTH-KIDS, Chicago; Olivia Sloan, Feast for the Future; Malawi, IIP; and Khalid Raja

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT
From a modest beginning in 1961, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health’s Department of International Health has grown into a global leadership role in health research, policy analysis, and program implementation. The Department is divided into four areas: Global Disease Epidemiology and Control; Health Systems; Human Nutrition; and Social and Behavioral Interventions. We offer master’s and doctoral level training in these areas of international health, as well as doctoral training in public health practice.
At the last faculty retreat, the Department’s commitment to emerging global health topics such as chronic disease, mental health, and injury prevention was debated. The consensus was that the Department should continue pursuing these research opportunities through collaborations within and outside the University. This spring, the JHSPH magazine highlighted work related to two of those topics with featured articles on the Department’s International Injury Research Unit (IIRU) and Applied Mental Health Research (AMHR) Group.

One of the Department’s leaders on the chronic disease front, both in the US and abroad, has been Associate Professor Youfa Wang, MD, PhD. Over the last few years he has published several seminal papers on the epidemiology of obesity in US and global populations. He is currently leading several projects to investigate the causes of obesity, co-morbidities such as Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and metabolic syndrome, as well as related interventions. His ongoing research is funded by grants from several agencies and foundations, including the NIH and US Department of Agriculture.

US and Global Obesity Trends: Complicated Patterns

Most-cited article in Epidemiologic Review

Dr. Wang’s team has published several high-impact studies examining the epidemiology of obesity in the US and globally. His 2007 article on obesity in the US in the journal Epidemiologic Reviews is that journal’s most cited article since 2004. He and co-author May Beydoun—a former postdoctoral fellow at the School, now with the National Institute of Aging (NIA)—provided a comprehensive description of the trends and characteristics of the obesity epidemic in the US based on nationally representative data collected since the early 1970s.

Prevalence of obesity and overweight among US adults

![Graphs showing prevalence of obesity and overweight among US adults](image)


They illustrate how obesity levels have skyrocketed in nearly every population group in the US over the last three decades. Their findings also show how disproportionately affected minority and low-socioeconomic groups have been. (See, “The Obesity Epidemic in the United States—Gender, Age, Socioeconomic, Racial/Ethnic, and Geographic Characteristics: A Systematic Review and Meta-Regression Analysis,” http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/epirev/mxm007.)

Capitol Hill and National Headlines

This year, Dr. Wang was invited to Capitol Hill to report on the US obesity epidemic and related financial consequences. His presentation to Congressional staff also addressed why health reform should contend with the obesity epidemic. His talk focused on the findings from his recent study entitled, “Will all Americans become overweight or obese? Estimating the progression and cost of the US obesity epidemic,” published in 2008 by the journal Obesity. The paper was co-authored by Drs. Benjamin Caballero and May Beydoun from the Department and Dr. Lan Liang from the US Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and Dr. Shiriki Kumanyika from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

Based on nationally representative survey data collected since the 1970’s, they projected that if current trends continued, 86 percent of Americans would become obese or overweight in 2030. With that proportion of the population being overweight or obese, total related healthcare costs would be close to $900 billion. A number of domestic and international newspapers and TV news networks picked up on the article and reported widely on its findings. For just a couple examples, see the NY Times article: [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/09/health/research/09nutr.html?_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/09/health/research/09nutr.html?_r=1) and the ABC News story, America’s Waistline: [http://abcnews.go.com/video/player/index?id=5473963](http://abcnews.go.com/video/player/index?id=5473963).
Global Trends

Dr. Wang’s work has helped document the growing global obesity epidemic. Several of his studies have raised the awareness of this pressing issue among public health professionals, policymakers, and the general public. Examples include a number of widely cited studies such as the 2002 article in American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, which has been cited over 500 times since its publication. The study examined the childhood obesity trends in four large countries on different continents. (See, “Trends of obesity and overweight in children and adolescents in the United States, Brazil, China, and Russia,” http://www.ajcn.org/cgi/content/abstract/75/6/971.)

In collaboration with the International Obesity Taskforce (IOTF), he and co-author Dr. Tim Lobstein analyzed available data from over 50 countries and studied the changes over time in the prevalence of overweight and obesity in children and projected future levels. They showed that prevalence had increased in almost all countries for which trends data were available. Exceptions were found among school-age children in Russia and to some extent Poland during the 1990s, and among preschool children in some low-income countries. (See, “Worldwide trends in childhood overweight and obesity. Int J Pediatr Obes. 2006;1(1):11-25. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17477160600586747.)

Root Causes of Obesity and Lifestyle-Related Chronic Disease

A focus of Dr. Wang’s work has been on the ethnic and economic disparities in obesity and their underlying causes. He recently won a $1.2 million NIH R01 grant to systematically investigate the individual-, family-, and community-level causes of ethnic and economic disparities in the rates of obesity and co-morbidities such as Type 2 diabetes and hypertension in the US.

Dr. Wang’s long-term research interest is to study the impact of childhood obesity and eating habits on the risk of chronic disease such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome later in life, and how appropriate interventions may help prevent such health conditions. He is tracking health-related behaviors, such as eating and exercise habits, and health outcomes, such as blood pressure from childhood to adulthood. Moreover, he is investigating how family environment and parental factors may affect children’s health and related behaviors, with the goal of developing effective intervention programs in the future. Some of these studies are based on data collected from large national surveys and cohorts in the US and China. For example, in China, he and local collaborators are attempting to pinpoint the root causes of chronic disease, such as hypertension and metabolic syndrome in children and adults.

Annualized Change in Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in School-Age Children in Surveys since 1970

(percentage points)

HEALTH-KIDS Project

A passion of Dr. Wang’s is to apply new scientific knowledge to serve underserved populations. A recent application is his NIH-funded school-based childhood obesity intervention study in Chicago—the HEALTH-KIDS Study (“Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyles from school To Home for KIDS”). It showed that a comprehensive intervention program targeting low-SES African-American students in Chicago Public Schools reduced the prevalence of obesity compared to schools without the intervention. In Beijing, supported by a research grant from the Nestle Foundation, his team is developing an innovative healthy eating promotion program among middle school students. In addition, he is working with local collaborators from the Nanjing Center for Disease Control and Prevention to develop school-based obesity prevention programs in that city.

Local and International Leadership

Dr. Wang has served on a host of international and domestic expert committees and boards. Close to home, the governor appointed him to the Maryland State Advisory Board of Physical Fitness. On a national level, he was elected in July to be the chair-elect of the Nutrition Epidemiology Section of the American Society for Nutrition (ASN). On an international level, he chaired a symposium entitled, “Obesity and Related Economic Issues” in the 7th World Congress on Health Economics held in Beijing, China, in July of this year. Meanwhile, he has served on international committees such as a WHO Expert Committee to help develop a new international growth reference for...
Brandon Brown in Peru


The Future

As Dr. Wang’s research portfolio continues to expand, he has had more opportunities for collaboration with other faculty across the university and with researchers from other institutions in the US and overseas. His recent NIH research grants related to obesity and chronic disease helped create two new positions at the Center for Human Nutrition: one faculty and one post-doctoral position. They will help carry out several ongoing research projects related to health disparities and the associations between social, behavioral, and environmental factors and risks of chronic diseases.

Chicago Public School students participating in the HEALTH-KIDS Project.

LiST: The Lives Saved Tool

An evidence-based decision-making tool for estimating intervention impact

LiST is a computer-based tool that estimates the impact of different maternal, child and neonatal health interventions and coverage levels for countries, states or districts. The tool is a component of Spectrum, a suite of easy-to-use models for country- and district-level policymakers, planners and managers in low- and middle-income countries, and for technical staff in NGOs and international funding agencies.

Tool Highlights

The LiST module can

- estimate the number of lives saved by individual interventions or combinations of interventions
- compare effects across countries, creating different intervention package scenarios and target coverage levels
- generate charts and graphs of results

LiST was developed by a consortium of academic and international organizations, led by the Department’s Institute of International Programs (IIP), and supported by a Gates Foundation grant to the US Fund for UNICEF. Spectrum was developed by the Futures Institute with support from USAID and UNAIDS.

For more information, see the IIP website: http://www.jhsph.edu/iip
To download LiST and Spectrum: http://www.jhsph.edu/iip/list
Healthy Choices, Healthy Options
Fighting obesity and related chronic diseases through exercise, diet and community involvement

In the struggle to prevent obesity and related diseases such as type 2 diabetes and hypertension, Department faculty and staff run several projects to encourage healthy living habits, including eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly. Two such programs are Healthy Stores and the Center for American Indian Health program, Native Vision. Because making healthy choices is not only a matter of good information, both programs weave together individual education and community development activities.

Native Vision
Native Vision is a partnership operated by the National Football League Players Association and the Center for American Indian Health. Through the program, NFL players and other professional and collegiate athletes donate their time to be mentors to Native youth. While the hallmark of the Native Vision program is its annual camp, staff have recently developed year-round programming in three tribal communities: White Mountain Apache, Southwest Pueblos, and the Haudenosaunee Nation. The programs are designed to promote four major areas of well-being for Native children and families:

1) Healthy Minds
2) Healthy Bodies
3) Healthy Families
4) Healthy Communities.

The Healthy Bodies component specifically aims to reduce the prevalence of diabetes and obesity by encouraging physical activity during and after school. For instance, a 10-week running program organizes runs, teaches proper technique, and encourages participants to continue their own running regimen after the program concludes. To better engage students, it incorporates information on healthy traditional foods and the history of running in native communities. Native Vision also helps to organize recreational sports leagues for kids and fitness programs for adults and elders.

Healthy Stores
In 2000, Professor Joel Gittelsohn led the first Healthy Stores project in the Republic of the Marshall Islands to address the need for healthy food options in low-income areas where these options aren’t always available, if at all. That first pilot trial has since led to programs in over 10 different healthy stores programs with American Indian tribes, First Nations reserves, Pacific Islanders, and in low-income areas of Baltimore City. Since Native populations suffer from high rates of diabetes, obesity and heart disease, the USDA funded the expansion of the program to the White Mountain and San Carlos Apache in 2003. The Apache Healthy Stores Program was created to address these problems by working to improve healthy food availability and to promote healthy eating.

Specific goals of the program included
• Improving the availability of healthy foods in local stores
• Promoting the purchase of healthy food alternatives in local stores
• Evaluating how successful the program is in increasing knowledge and changing food purchasing, preparation and consumption
An important aspect of the program was developing messages to encourage healthy nutritional choices. These messages were developed in collaboration with tribal members and leaders and were disseminated through a variety of channels, including radio and billboards. Participating stores also displayed project messages to help direct customers to the healthy foods offered by the store. Other features of the program included in-store taste-tests and cooking demonstrations.

The program was successful in improving food-related knowledge, and frequency of purchasing and consumption of promoted healthy foods. The success of the Apache Healthy Stores resulted in its extension and a mandate to expand its programming to the Navajo Nation. On the Navajo Nation, the program is working in partnership with the Navajo Special Diabetes program—which is the institutional base for the Healthy Stores activities.

These behavioral and community-based interventions have been and continue to be an important aspect of the Department’s fight against obesity and related chronic diseases.

For more information:

Healthy Stores: http://www.healthystore.org/
Center for American Indian Health: http://www.jhsph.edu/caih
Native Vision: http://www.nativevision.org/

---

The Huffington Post

Read Dr. Orin Levine’s latest blog, Are some deaths worse than others? http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-orin-levine

Center for American Indian Health Partners with the Notah Begay III Foundation

World Pneumonia Day
November 2, 2009
Activities Now Planned on Six Continents
www.WorldPneumoniaDay.org

Pictured at the Notah Begay III Foundation Event, from left to right: Mike Weir, Notah Begay III, Center Director Santosham, Hopkins Native Vision Manager Ventura Lovato, Tiger Woods, and Camilo Villegas. For more information: http://www.jhsph.edu/dept/ih/news/caih/nb3_event.html

Photo credit: Khalid Raja
Faculty Honors

David Peters, MD, DrPH, associate professor, was elected the Director of the Health Systems Program in the Department.

Keith West, Jr., DrPH, MPH, professor, was elected the Director of the Human Nutrition Program in the Department. He also gave the 21st G. Malcolm Trout Annual Lecture at Michigan State University in East Lansing. The title of his address was, “Vitamin A Deficiency: Evidence, Public Health and Politics.”

Jean B. Nachega, MD, MPH, Associate Scientist, GDEC, was appointed Honorary Professor in the Department of Medicine, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town.

Youfa Wang, MD, PhD, associate professor, Human Nutrition, was elected Chair of the Nutrition Epidemiology Section, American Society for Nutrition (ASN), and became an Adjunct Professor at both the School of Public Health, Peking University, and the School of Medicine, Xi’an Jiaotong University.

Maria Merritt, PhD, assistant professor, Health Systems, received the Greenwall Faculty Scholars Award.

Myaing Myaing Nyunt, MD, PhD, assistant professor, GDEC, received a Faculty Development Award from the PhRMA Foundation.

David Sack, MD, professor, and Alain Labrique, PhD, MHS, assistant professor, both of GDEC, received a Technology Transfer SEED Award for their project entitled, Benchtop Agglomeration of Dry Food Powder with Live Bacteria.

Dr. Henry Perry, Sr. Associate, received the CORE Group’s 10th Dory Storms Child Survival Recognition Award. Dory Storms, the award’s first recipient, led the Child Survival Support Program at the School.

Student Honors

The Johns Hopkins Center for Global Health awarded two scholarships to Department of International Health MHS Students. A Global Health Scholarship covers full tuition for the 11-month MPH program and for one year of the MHS program. The awards are offered on an annual basis.

Congratulations Successful Thesis Defense

Amnesty Lefevre, Health Systems, Enhancing Diarrhea Treatment Services through Community-Level Zinc Introduction in India, Mali, and Pakistan

Junko Onishi, Health Systems, A Multilevel Analysis of Village and Local Health Systems Factors Affecting Maternal Health Service Delivery and Use in Rural Indonesia.

Wilbert van Panhuis, Global Disease Epidemiology and Control, Dynamics of Dengue Antibodies: Transplacental Transfer, Decline after Birth and the Serotype Specific Response to Infection among Infants and Children in Thailand
Faculty Promotions

Abdullah Baqui, MBBS DrPH, Professor, Health Systems

W. Abdullah Brooks, MD MPH, Associate Scientist, Health Systems

Joel Gittelsohn, PhD, Professor, Human Nutrition

Luke Mullany, PhD MHS, Associate Professor, Global Disease Epidemiology and Control

Prasanthi Puvanachandra, MD MPH, Assistant Scientist, Health Systems

William M. Weiss, DrPH, Assistant Scientist, Health Systems

Peter Winch, MD MPH, Professor, Social and Behavioral Interventions

New Faculty

Ahmed Al-Kabir, PhD, Associate, Health Systems

Assistant Professor Cheryl Ann Marie Anderson, PhD, MPH, MS, joint appointment, Human Nutrition

Edward B. Bunker, MPH MS, Associate, Health Systems

Nadine Caron, MD MPH, Associate, Health Systems, Center for American Indian Health

Andrea N. DeLuca, MHS, Research Associate, Health Systems

Amanda Driscoll, MHS, Research Associate, Health Systems

Maria Karla Lin Eng, DrPH, Associate, Health Systems

David M. Faso, MPH, HS, Associate

Associate Professor Harold P. Lehmann, MD, PhD, joint appointment, Health Systems

Katherine C. Lin, MHS, Associate, GDEC

Li Liu, PhD MHS, GDEC-IIP, Assistant Scientist

Rose Reis, BA, Research Associate, Health Systems

Jennifer Harris Requejo, PhD MHS, Assistant Scientist, Health Systems, Institute for International Programs

Stephanie A. Skavenski, MPH MSW, Associate, Health Systems

Assistant Professor Sonal Singh, MBBS, MPH, joint appointment Health Systems

Gail Dana-Socco, PhD MPH, Associate, Health Systems

Assistant Professor Kent A. Stevens, MD, joint appointment, Health Systems

Aimme Summers, MHS, Research Associate, Health Systems

Pablo Yori, RN, MPH, Research Associate, GDEC

New Staff

Malia Allen, Research Program Assistant II, Center for Immunization Research (CIR)

Shannon Barkley, Research Assistant, Health Systems

Jamila Batts, Senior Research Nurse, CIR

Tenise Bell, Budget Analyst, Human Nutrition

Kimberly Boucher, Senior Research Nurse, CIR

Ian Craig, Research Assistant, GDEC

Julia David, Research Assistant, Institute for International Programs (IIP)

Racine Harris, Research Program Assistant II, CIR

Janet Hurd, Senior Research Nurse, CIR
New Staff

Esther Johnston, Research Assistant, Health Systems

Jamie Lok, Senior Research Program Coordinator II, CIR

Carrie Martin, Senior Research Assistant, Human Nutrition

Fatuma Mawanda, Research Technologist, Global Disease Epidemiology and Control

Jacqueline Moore-Williams, Research Program Assistant, Human Nutrition

Shaina Norvell-Cold, Administrative Coordinator, Health Systems

Ashley Pickett, Administrative Coordinator, Health Systems

Daesha Ramachandran, Research Assistant, Global Disease Epidemiology and Control

Megan Rowan, Research Program Coordinator, Human Nutrition

Anusha Sathyanarayan, Administrative Coordinator, CIR

Stacey Schultz, Research Assistant, Health Systems

Fatima Sharif, Research Assistant, Health Systems

John Simkins, Research Service Analyst, Health Systems

Eeva J. Sallinen Simard, Budget Analyst, Institute for International Programs (IIP)

Elizabeth Yanik, Research Assistant, GDEC

New Websites

WWW.CHERG.ORG
Child Epidemiology Reference Group (CHERG)
CHERG’s mandate is to develop and deploy new and improved evidence on the causes and determinants of maternal, neonatal and child morbidity and mortality, on intervention coverage, and on the effectiveness of interventions to inform and influence global priorities and programs.

WWW.JHSPH.EDU/IIRU
International Injury Research Unit (IIRU)
The International Injury Research Unit (IIRU), formed by a committed group of faculty from the Department of International Health, seeks to understand the burden of injuries and develop affordable means of injury reduction in underserved populations of the world through adopting a health systems approach to injury prevention, especially in low- and middle-income countries.
What can or should researchers do if a child enrolled in a study is severely malnourished? Beyond providing for the safety of a subject, what obligation does a community-based researcher have? Assistant Professor Maria Merritt was recently named a Greenwall Faculty Scholar in Bioethics for her innovative work in this area. The Greenwall Faculty Scholars Program supports original research and is open to those in a variety of fields—including medicine, law, humanities, and public health—who study ethical issues related to the life sciences. The Program is highly competitive, and Dr. Merritt first had to pass through an internal selection process to become the single Johns Hopkins University nominee allowed by the Greenwall Foundation for later stages of nationwide competition.

Dr. Merritt joined the Health Systems Program in 2006 and is a core faculty member of the Berman Institute of Bioethics. She is also one of the first bioethicists to systematically address the obligations of community-based public health researchers. As a Greenwall Faculty Scholar, Merritt will be able to continue her pioneering work exploring the ethical dilemmas that can arise in international settings. She also seeks to contribute to the development of practical ethical guidelines through a collaborative process with researchers, sponsors, and other experts in bioethics.

While extensive bioethical scholarship exists for clinic-based research, much public health research in developing countries takes place in homes and communities, where non-medical study staff often work directly with research subjects. This creates situations very distinct from clinic-based research. Merritt’s winning proposal entitled, Researchers’ Obligations in Community-Based Research: Resolving Dilemmas of Care, focuses on these community-based settings that are familiar to faculty and students in the Department.

As both a faculty member of International Health and the Berman Institute, Merritt is uniquely positioned to explore this relatively uncharted territory. She has already made significant progress in articulating some of the special issues faced by global health researchers. For instance, her commentary, “Ancillary Care for Public Health Research in Developing Countries,” co-authored with Associate Professor Adnan Hyder, appears in the July 22 issue of JAMA (2009;302(4):429-431). And her paper, “Ancillary Care in Community-Based Public Health Intervention Research,” with Assistant Professors Luke Mullaney and Holly Taylor, has been accepted for publication in American Journal of Public Health.

While her training is in moral philosophy, Merritt is especially concerned with helping to develop guidelines that are relevant in real-world settings. Currently, she sits on the School’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) where many community-based international research protocols are reviewed. She also teaches the course “Ethics of Public Health Practice in Developing Countries.” Merritt locates her work at the intersection of bioethics, moral philosophy, and public health research, and believes her ties to public health research bring an added dimension to fields of scholarship that tend to be abstract.

The study of community-based research ethics is truly in its infancy, which makes it both an exciting and daunting venture for Dr. Merritt. Past and ongoing collaborations with faculty in the Department have been invaluable to her work. She looks forward to continuing that dialogue with researchers, whose input will be essential to the development of practical guidelines for addressing ethical concerns in the field.

Feast for the Future, with honorary host Robert Redford, kicked off a new initiative to fight hunger and malnutrition among Native American populations. The prestigious Niman Fine Art Gallery provided the backdrop for the evening of traditional food, entertainment, and reflection. The gallery—owned by internationally renowned artist Dan Namingha (Hopi) and his wife Frances (Ohkay Owinghe)—generously donated a portion of the art sales to the cause. Mr. and Mrs. Namingha co-chaired the fundraiser along with Rick and Beth Schnieders, and Sibylle Szaggars. For a look at Mr. Namingha’s work, visit: http://www.namingha.com.

The Department’s Olivia Sloan, a native of Santa Fe, organized the event in partnership with the Namingha family, Share Our Strength and a local plan-
Robert Redford Hosts Center for American Indian Health Fundraiser
(continued from previous page)

ning committee. As part of the theme, they invited four celebrated chefs from the area to create dishes inspired by American Indian and Southwestern culinary traditions. A live and silent auction including culinary experiences, sports memorabilia and local packages was also held during the dinner. The evening was the first event sponsored by the new partnership between the Center for American Indian Health, Share Our Strength, and the NFL Players Association (NFLPA). Each organization is committed to reducing hunger and empowering communities to develop local solutions to improve the health of its members.

Since its founding, the Center for American Indian Health has been partnering with Southwestern tribes to improve health status through building capacity and training leaders. The Center’s work over the years has brought to light the vast range of nutritional challenges, including hunger facing families and young people in these communities. As honorary host, Robert Redford explained:

"Today, the original and best stewards of North America are suffering from nutrition-related sickness and death, including hunger, diabetes, and obesity. The fate of Native Americans is prophetic for all Americans. Feast for the Future will launch a national initiative to reestablish traditional diets, optimal nutrition and active lifestyles—building on cultural practices cherished by Native communities."

Donations from the evening are going directly into developing pilot programs to help combat these pressing problems. Examples of new programs include the following:

- **Community Visioning Project**, a community-driven initiative to promote broad-based nutrition and healthy foods access
- **Menu for Life**, to prevent hunger and food insecurity, with targeted outreach to the most vulnerable Native families with young children
- **School Gardening and Farmer Outreach Project**, to promote school-, family-, and community-based programming to teach children and families to grow, eat and distribute healthy foods

Dr. Santosham described the event as an unqualified success. He added that Mr. Redford—or Bob, as Dr. Santosham now calls him—personally expressed his commitment to the cause and the Center. You can read more details about the successful dinner and fundraiser in the Santa Fe art magazine, *Trend*: [http://santafetrend.com/pages/articles/V102/flash2.html](http://santafetrend.com/pages/articles/V102/flash2.html)