Nepal and the Department of International Health

A Model Relationship for Global Health Research
Our roles in international health are built on collaboration and a long-term commitment to the countries in which we work. The efforts begun by our faculty in the Sarlahi district of Nepal more than 20 years ago have been extremely productive, resulting in findings on vitamin A, iron, zinc and other micronutrients, and more recently on care of newborns. This research has not only contributed to global policy and programs through more than 125 publications, but has led to enhanced maternal and child health programs in Nepal. With increased recognition that nutritional deficiencies and other insults to the fetus or the young infant may have adverse consequences in adulthood, the continuous follow-up of such cohorts is proving to be very valuable and needs to be sustained. Many students have gained experience in the projects in Nepal and a couple of generations of doctoral students have completed research there.

On May 14, the Department celebrated the work and life of Professor Emeritus Carl Taylor, the founding chair of our department, who passed away at age 93 in February of this year. Many colleagues, former students, friends and family gathered to pay tribute to his exceptional contributions to international public health. The video of this event will soon be available online: www.jhsphs.edu/dept/ih/carltaylor/.

Among Carl’s many accomplishments, the long history of his efforts in Nepal illustrate his passion to help the most underserved, constantly blending a rich family life with his professional activities. In 1949 he served as the physician for the first ornithological expedition to Central Nepal, then considered the most isolated kingdom in the world. Learning a Western doctor was nearby, the Nepali people along the route sought him out for treatment, including multiple surgeries where the operating table was the top of a stone wall. Always the scholar, Carl kept detailed notes and published the first systematic health survey of Nepal. Returning for several consultations in the 1960s, he brought his family along for months at a time, leading to return visits by all of his children—Daniel with family planning and environmental conservation, Betsy studying anthropology with the Sherpa, and Henry observing Temple Monkeys for National Geographic. Carl, Daniel, and Henry repeated the 1949 expedition in 1976 as the first of several “peripatetic seminars” sponsored by the Department to teach front-line international health. Fifty years after the initial trek, Carl had his knee replaced and again hiked the same route, with his sons and grandchildren following (literally) in his footsteps. Before his prostate cancer was diagnosed, he had surgery on his other knee anticipating a 60th anniversary trek. Needless to say, Carl lived a full and exceptional life. Former Dean Al Sommer called him a “gentle giant” who inspired and challenged students and faculty to always do their best to help the most neglected of the world’s population.

I would close with congratulations to the graduates of the Department and to the many students who received awards as illustrated in part in this issue of The Globe. I am sure that you are prepared for the opportunities and challenges in international health and wish you well in your careers.
For over 20 years, the Sarlahi district of Nepal has been a second home to many Department faculty, staff and students. The Nepal Nutritional Intervention Project-Sarlahi (NNIPS) in the district has been the locus of globally significant maternal, child, and neonatal survival research. Successes in Nepal, however, have come with challenges of all kinds. From logistics to politics, the Department has contended with more than just research questions. Nevertheless, the first vitamin A trial in the late 1980s has spawned countless research opportunities. Multiple subsequent large-scale community-based trials have been completed in the NNIPS area, and three more are underway. This productive relationship with the people and government of Nepal has contributed to innovative public health interventions that continue to save tens of thousands of mothers and children every year in Nepal, the region and the world.

The Road to Nepal
Vitamin A, Revolutions and CIA Agents

Vitamin A Revolution
Until the 1980s, conventional wisdom held that poor nutrition in general, not vitamin A deficiency specifically, contributed to high child mortality rates in developing countries. Dean Al Sommer and Professor Keith West's groundbreaking work in the early 1980s in Indonesia turned conventional wisdom on its head. Their study found a 34-percent drop in mortality among children given vitamin A supplements twice a year compared to those in the placebo group.

In the mid-1980s, Professors James Tielsch, Joanne Katz and West set out to test the Indonesia findings in the Philippines. They spent several years negotiating with the Marcos government, and when it fell, with the former rebel groups now in power. After securing the necessary authorization for research to begin, the project was brought to an abrupt halt by a small group of physicians working in a remote area of the country, which just happened to overlap with the Hopkins study area. Using low-bandwidth radio and word of mouth, this band of physicians destroyed the reputation of the project. They claimed the vitamin supplements were poisoning mother and infants, causing miscarriages and deaths. Hopkins staff were accused of being agents of the CIA, bent on destabilizing the country and decimating the population. Within a couple weeks of stumbling upon this little-known group of doctors in one of the most remote areas of the country, the study had to be shut down indefinitely.

A Rocky but Welcoming Start in Nepal
During the mid-eighties, West had also begun to work in Nepal and, after this setback in the Philippines, he and Katz regrouped to address the question of vitamin A and child mortality in this Himalayan kingdom. Finding a new location for the study, West and his family moved to Kathmandu in 1989 to set up the research organization that eventually became known to locals and researchers alike simply as NNIPS, which stands for the Nepal Nutritional Intervention Project-Sarlahi. Located in the southern plains district of Sarlahi district of Nepal, the project area was selected to be broadly representative of the health infrastructure and demography of the southern portion of the country, which is the most populous. The area also broadly reflects the levels of undernutrition and unmet need in much of South Asia.

Political turmoil between the governments of Nepal and India almost derailed the very first vitamin A trial. Not only is Nepal a landlocked country, but most goods are imported along the southern plains of the India-Nepal border. Sarlahi district, which borders India, depends on Indian trade routes for many essential goods. Only months before the project was to get underway, India closed its borders with Nepal, effectively shutting off all trade to the country. NNIPS staff scrambled to stockpile over 5,000 liters of gasoline to fuel the project’s new vehicles, while making contingency plans to run the study with ox carts should gasoline supplies be completely depleted. After a year of the embargo, during which the first NNIPS trial got underway, the political crisis subsided, the border reopened, and the project continued to its successful completion.

From the start, research staff felt welcomed. The National Society for Prevention of Blindness graciously offered its Kathmandu offices as an official headquarters and home base for the project. The Society’s direc-
Early in the planning phase, Professor West met the owner of a local sugar mill living there. When the owner learned that the study’s goal was to prevent child deaths, he immediately offered one of his vacant buildings to the project free of charge. He had recently lost his young son, and was eager to help prevent the suffering of other parents any way he could. The project eventually took over a building on the sugar mill grounds, still used as the guest house, and purchased land nearby on which a 6,000 square foot eye clinic and research center today stands.

**Early Successes**

The first study, NNIPS-1, confirmed that vitamin A supplementation reduces child mortality. These findings, which reinforced Sommer and West’s work in Indonesia, coupled with another study by colleagues in Nepal and faculty advocacy led to the country’s first national vitamin A supplementation policy. Soon thereafter, the government of Nepal began scaling up vitamin A programs among preschool children. The first phase of the roll-out, however, was not scheduled to include the Sarlahi district. Explains Professor Katz, “The research team felt it was our ethical duty to advocate for the study population. We felt they should be the first to benefit from the research they were a part of.” As a result of their efforts, the government added the district to the first phase of the vitamin A roll-out.

NNIPS-2 focused on maternal vitamin A supplements. The main trial involved nearly 45,000 women of whom over 20,000 became pregnant over the 4-year study. Pregnancy-related mortality fell by 40 percent among the women in the intervention group. Maternal night blindness was also identified as a major risk indicator of mortality in women. However, its early phase too was met by calamity, this time from a devastating flood during the monsoon of 1993, causing NNIPS to halt trial preparations for several months to provide relief throughout the Sarlahi area. Still, over the course of NNIPS-1 and -2, construction on the project’s eye clinic and research facility was completed. The center still serves as a clinic and as a headquarters for the research staff working on projects in the area.

### Civil War

Ongoing tension between the government and Maoists eventually descended into civil war. Between 1996 and 2006 the population and infrastructure suffered from the conflict. Local employees of NNIPS, now numbering over 500, helped negotiate with the Maoists to keep study workers and property safe. According to IH Research Associate, and NNIPS Field Director since its inception, Steven LeClerq, the Maoists even punished a husband who tried to stop his wife from performing her NNIPS job. After the Maoists publicly humiliated him, “everyone else was admonished to help, not interfere, with the work of NNIPS,” retells LeClerq. On another occasion, an MHS student working on the project was riding in a marked NNIPS vehicle when an army truck was blown up just a few vehicle lengths behind. A local project employee later complained to the Maoists about the close call. “The Maoists said it was no close call, they waited for the NNIPS vehicle to safely pass and then blew up the army truck,” LeClerq remembers.

### The Second Decade

NNIPS-1 and -2 tested the effects of vitamin A supplementation in preschool children and mothers, respectively. The next major trial studied additional antenatal supplements to mothers, including iron, folic acid, and zinc. NNIPS-3 was directed by Dr. Parul Christian, Associate Professor in the Department, whose doctoral work in NNIPS-2 led to a global recognition of night blindness in pregnancy as an indicator of maternal vitamin A deficiency. NNIPS-3 found that antenatal and postnatal micronutrient supplementation...
reduced the chance of low-birth weight, a good indicator of neonatal mortality. Professor Tielsch led NNIPS-4. His team enrolled 44,000 children over 7 years and found that zinc supplementation improved survival of children 1 year and older, but iron folic acid had no impact on survival.

**Umbilical cord washing with chlorhexidine**

In 2002, Professor Jim Tielsch led the first major non-nutrition research intervention in NNIPS. His team evaluated the effects of a full body wipe of newborns with chlorhexidine, and umbilical cord care with chlorhexidine on neonatal mortality, the first community-based trial of this intervention. The study, conducted in tandem with NNIPS-4, followed infants up to 1 month of age, at which time they became part of the NNIPS-4 trial. Neonatal mortality dropped by a third in newborns receiving the cord care within 24 hours of birth, and mortality was reduced in those receiving the body wipe, especially in low birth weight infants. The umbilical cord care study was replicated with similar results in Bangladesh by IH faculty and in Pakistan by faculty from the Aga Khan University. The Gates Foundation is now sponsoring trials in Zambia and Tanzania to test the intervention's efficacy in Africa.

The government of Nepal recently added umbilical cord cleansing with chlorhexidine to its national health policy, marking another important example of Department-led research resulting in major child survival interventions in Nepal. The NGO Nepal Family Health Project (NFHP) is now leading chlorhexidine operations research to facilitate the scaling up of the program nationwide. Associate Professor Luke Mullany, who wrote his doctoral thesis on chlorhexidine cord cleansing and neonatal survival in Nepal and is currently leading his own neonatal research there, said:

NFHP's work was instrumental in following our efficacy research from Sarlahi with important operational research and later linking the research results to the Ministry of Health, NGOs, and other stakeholders. As a result, Nepal became the first country to include umbilical cord cleansing with chlorhexidine in its national health policy.

While Sarlahi is not one of the five districts covered by the first phase of the chlorhexidine roll-out, current Hopkins projects will continue to provide chlorhexidine to the NNIPS community.

**Following participants later in life**

The continuity of NNIPS affords researchers the unusual opportunity to conduct intriguing follow-up studies. Cohorts enrolled in the first trials are now in their young adulthood. Associate Professor Parul Christian has been at the forefront of this work. She continues to examine the long-term impact these maternal and early childhood interventions have on long-term survival, cognition, and early markers of chronic disease. Working with recent IH graduate Dr. Christine Stewart, now an assistant professor at UC Davis, Dr. Christian found that maternal iron-folic acid supplementation can reduce child mortality by nearly a third. Her team’s work has also found that maternal supplementation with iron folic acid and zinc can reduce the risk of kidney dysfunction and metabolic syndrome among children.

As a result of exciting new technology—the portable spirometer—IH faculty, led by Dr. William Checkley, recently measured increased lung size among children whose mothers had received pre- and post-natal vita-min A supplementation. These results were published recently in the New England Journal of Medicine. And

---

**Core NNIPS Research Teams**

**NNIPS-1**
Keith West, Jr., Joanne Katz, Subarna Khatry, Steven LeClerq, Al Sommer, James Tielsch

**NNIPS-2**
Keith West, Jr., Parul Christian, Joanne Katz, Subarna Khatry, Steven LeClerq, Al Sommer

**NNIPS-3**
Parul Christian, Joanne Katz, Subarna Khatry, Steven LeClerq, Keith West, Jr.

**NNIPS-4**
James Tielsch, Robert Black, Joanne Katz, Subarna Khatry, Steve LeClerq

**NNIPS Cohorts Follow-up Study**

**Newborn washing**

**Cookstove replacement**

**Maternal flu vaccine**
Mark Steinhoff, Joanne Katz, James Tielsch

**Sunflower oil infant massage**
Luke Mullany, Joanne Katz, James Tielsch
PhD candidate Jane Schmitz recently wrote her dissertation on findings that vitamin A supplementation of children with purulent ear infections during childhood reduces the chance of hearing loss later in life by 40 percent.

Current Projects in NNIPS

Two new IH-led projects are currently under way in the NNIPS area. A third one, led by Professors Mark Steinhoff and Jim Tielsch, will assess the effects of flu vaccine administered to expectant mothers on maternal and infant morbidity. Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the project is in the process of obtaining all necessary IRB approval. These three innovative projects will each be conducted in roughly separate thirds of the NNIPS area, so that interventions will not encroach upon one another.

Cookstoves and Indoor Air Pollution

Professor Jim Tielsch is currently enrolling participants in a unique NIH-funded trial to replace traditional stoves with high-efficiency, low-cost models with ventilation. Acute respiratory illness is a leading cause of mortality among young children in Nepal and there are few proven interventions available to combat it. This community-based randomized trial will test whether reducing indoor pollution affects the risk of child pneumonia and low birth weight.

Because most homes use open unventilated stoves, the study utilizes a stepwise design that will replace stoves in all homes in the study area by the end of the project. Particulate levels and carbon monoxide concentration will be monitored regularly before and after the stoves are replaced.

A special testing facility was built to replicate local conditions to evaluate the performance of various types of stoves. “It turns out that the best type of stove was one built to very precise specifications by trained craftsmen with adobe bricks fired during use. In addition to the time and labor necessary to build the 350 stoves a month needed, it would require thousands of bricks to be fashioned, which is simply infeasible during Nepal’s long monsoon season,” explains Tielsch. For this reason, researchers will use the next best option—the industrially manufactured Envirofit stove. The locally affordable stoves are built in India by the Colorado-based company of the same name (www.envirofit.org).

Sunflower oil massage vs. Mustard seed

Associate Professor Mullany is leading another innovative, NIH-funded program just now getting underway. Infant massage is widely practiced across Nepal and South Asia. Research conducted in Egypt

Selected Doctoral Research From Nepal

Preschool vitamin A supplementation, middle ear infection, and young adult hearing loss in Nepal (2009) Jane Schmitz, PhD, Human Nutrition

Antenatal micronutrient supplementation, maternal nutritional status, newborn size and biomarkers of metabolic syndrome in seven-year-old children: Exploring the developmental origins of health and disease in rural Nepal (2008) Christine Stewart, PhD, Global Disease Epidemiology and Control

Umbilical cord infection among newborns of southeastern Nepal (2005) Luke Mullany, PhD, Global Disease Epidemiology and Control

Anemia, motor development, and cognition: A randomized trial of iron-folic acid and/or zinc supplementation in young Nepali children (2005) Emily Siegel, PhD

Determinants of linear growth over the preschool-to-school-aged years in rural Nepal (2004) Ravi Madhira Ram, PhD, Human Nutrition

Determinants of night blindness during pregnancy in rural Nepal (1996) Parul Christian, DrPH
International Health across Nepal

Infant and child feeding practices

Since last summer, MHS candidate Laura R. Seckel has been an intern at the Nepal Family Health Program II (NFHP), a collaborative project of the Government of Nepal, John Snow International (JSI) and local partners. Laura is part of a study on infant and young child feeding practices in three different regions of the country. Findings from the study will help the government in its efforts to address the high prevalence of stunting among children. The project’s qualitative research includes in-depth interviews and focus groups with female community health volunteers.

Human rights violations and HIV among MSM

Associate Professor Luke Mullany has begun work on a new project to investigate human rights violations against men who have sex with men (MSM) and the effect those abuses have on health behaviors and outcomes such as drug use and STD prevalence. Assistant Professor at the Hopkins School of Medicine, and Mullany’s former advisee, Dr. Sonal Singh will lead the investigation located in the Kathmandu metro area. The Blue Diamond Society—Nepal’s only community-based organization providing counseling for MSM across the country—will help recruit study participants. In-depth interviews will help researchers develop a survey protocol that will collect information such as HIV risk assessment, human rights violation, and levels of anxiety and depression. An anonymous HIV test is also being administered.

Nepal and International Health

While the majority of research in Nepal occurs in the NNIPS area, faculty, staff and students are involved in a variety of activities across the country, from human rights work to childhood feeding projects (see side bar). The NNIPS area, however, has become a model for global health research. The JiVitA project in Bangladesh, for example, owes much of its success and early design features to the lessons learned and accomplishments in Nepal. The site was established, in part, to test and build on NNIPS findings. Its location in the region relative to Nepal also helps to build an evidence base for the whole of South Asia. Interestingly, JiVitA was established, in part, to test and build on NNIPS findings. Its location in the region relative to Nepal also helps to build an evidence base for the whole of South Asia. Interestingly, JiVitA was

Donor Agencies for NNIPS Research

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
Thrasher Research Fund
Sight and Life Research Institute
Proctor & Gamble
Rotary Clubs of Lalitpur And Vashon Island
Sushil Kedia Seva Mandir
UNICEF-Nepal

and Bangladesh by former faculty Dr. Gary Darmstadt showed that massage with sunflower oil improved survival of preterm infants over no massage at all. Moreover, research on animals has shown that massage with mustard seed oil causes higher levels of skin trauma and higher rates of water loss through the skin compared to other oils. The same research found sunflower oil to cause the least amount of damage to the skin and prevent the most moisture from escaping. With these findings in mind, Mullany and others conducted several formative studies to assess the acceptability of switching to sunflower oil. Their promising results led the way to a new 4-year community-based randomized control trial that will compare the outcomes of the two practices across a population of approximately 100,000 and 10,000 live births.

The intervention will promote oil massage across the study area and provide expectant mothers with a supply of oil—with the intervention group receiving sunflower and the control group mustard seed oil. Local health workers will visit new mothers for the first month after birth to provide the necessary supply of oil, to assess the infant, and to determine whether the oil is being used.

“Infant oil massage is a widely accepted traditional cultural practice. There might be some resistance to using sunflower oil instead of mustard seed, but the choice of oil is only one aspect of the overall practice. We see the promotion of a different oil as an adaptation of an existing practice, with most of the elements, like the frequency, the timing, the mode of massage still intact. The long-established presence in the community and trust between researchers and community members could help us in ways that might not exist in other settings,” said Mullany about participants’ willingness to switch oils.

Human rights violations and HIV among MSM

Associate Professor Luke Mullany has begun work on a new project to investigate human rights violations against men who have sex with men (MSM) and the effect those abuses have on health behaviors and outcomes such as drug use and STD prevalence. Assistant Professor at the Hopkins School of Medicine, and Mullany’s former advisee, Dr. Sonal Singh will lead the investigation located in the Kathmandu metro area. The Blue Diamond Society—Nepal’s only community-based organization providing counseling for MSM across the country—will help recruit study participants. In-depth interviews will help researchers develop a survey protocol that will collect information such as HIV risk assessment, human rights violation, and levels of anxiety and depression. An anonymous HIV test is also being administered.

Stigma and discrimination against MSM is widespread, but are only two of the many contributing factors driving the HIV epidemic among this marginalized group. Findings should help elucidate the situation, strengthen advocacy efforts of human rights groups, and provide objective population-based information to guide policy.
Later NNIPS-Related Articles


Congratulations Successful Thesis Defense


Leilani Francisco, Social and Behavioral Interventions, “The Synergy between Intimate Partner Violence and HIV: Baseline Findings from the SASA! Study, A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial in Kampala, Uganda.”

Rebecca Merrill, Human Nutrition, “Intake of Iron through Groundwater and Iron Status of Women in Rural Bangladesh.”

Sachi Ozawa, Health Systems, “Trust Matters: Villagers’ Trust in Providers and Insurers in the Context of a Community-Based Health Insurance Scheme in Cambodia.”

Anne Paliaa, Social and Behavioral Interventions, “Understanding the Motivation, Ability, and Attrition of HIV/AIDS Community Health Volunteers in Developing Countries: Implications for Program Sustainability.”

Nirali Shah, Health Systems, “The Effect of Microcredit on Household Well-being in Rural Bangladesh.”

Manuela Verastegui, Global Disease Epidemiology and Control, “Studies on the Mechanisms of Taenia solium Larval Stage Adherence to Host Tissue.”

Professor West knew there was great opportunity to set up lasting capacity with the first NNIPS trial. In addition to the research that has helped save countless thousands of lives and the human capital and infrastructure that benefit the local population, “projects such as NNIPS and JiVitA show how research sites can serve as national and regional resources to advance health and nutrition,” sums up West.
Faculty Honors

Research Associate Jed W. Fahey was invited to give a special lecture to the Tohoku Medical Society, at Tohoku University Medical School in Japan, December 16, 2009. He was presented with the School’s “Testimonial Medal.” The title of his lecture was, "Dietary Strategies for Protection against Chronic Disease: Phytochemicals from Foods as Preventive Medicine."

Assistant Scientist Rolf Klemm was appointed technical director of the A2Z Project, The USAID Micronutrient and Child Blindness Project.

Assistant Professor William Pan was elected chair of the Statistics Section of APHA for 2009-2010.

Associate Professor Youfa Wang was selected for the Danon Institute Academic Mid-Career Nutrition Leadership Institute, which is designed to define and support the 21st century leadership needs within the academic discipline of nutrition.

New Staff

Kathryn Falcone
Administrative Coordinator
Health Systems

Timothy W. Johnson
Program Coordinator
Center for American Indian Health

Alyssa Oliveri
Communications Manager
International Injury Research Unit

Sean Parker
Research Program Assistant II
Center for American Indian Health

Andrea Riner
Research Program Coordinator
Global Disease Epidemiology and Control (GDEC)

Third Term Teaching Excellence Recognition Awards

George Alleyne
Professor
Case Studies in Management Decision-Making

Richard Chaissone
Professor
Epidemiologic Basis for Tuberculosis Control

George Everly
Associate, Health Systems
Stress Management for Relief Workers

Laura Murray
Assistant Professor, Health Systems
Intervention Programming for Mental Health Research in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

David Peters
Associate Professor
Health Systems
Case Studies in Management Decision-Making

New Faculty

Maria Eng, DrPH, MPH, Associate, Health Systems

Monica J. Fox, MHS, Research Associate, SBI

Amita Gupta, MD, MHS, joint appointment, GDEC, Assistant Professor Division of Infectious Diseases, School of Medicine

Benjamin P. Loevinsohn, MD, MPH, Senior Associate, Health Systems

Assistant Scientist Rolf Klemm was appointed technical director of the A2Z Project, The USAID Micronutrient and Child Blindness Project.

Assistant Professor William Pan was elected chair of the Statistics Section of APHA for 2009-2010.

Associate Professor Youfa Wang was selected for the Danon Institute Academic Mid-Career Nutrition Leadership Institute, which is designed to define and support the 21st century leadership needs within the academic discipline of nutrition.

Faculty Honors

Research Associate Jed W. Fahey was invited to give a special lecture to the Tohoku Medical Society, at Tohoku University Medical School in Japan, December 16, 2009. He was presented with the School’s “Testimonial Medal.” The title of his lecture was, "Dietary Strategies for Protection against Chronic Disease: Phytochemicals from Foods as Preventive Medicine."

News & Highlights

Assistant Scientist Rolf Klemm was appointed technical director of the A2Z Project, The USAID Micronutrient and Child Blindness Project.

Assistant Professor William Pan was elected chair of the Statistics Section of APHA for 2009-2010.

Associate Professor Youfa Wang was selected for the Danon Institute Academic Mid-Career Nutrition Leadership Institute, which is designed to define and support the 21st century leadership needs within the academic discipline of nutrition.

New Faculty

Maria Eng, DrPH, MPH, Associate, Health Systems

Monica J. Fox, MHS, Research Associate, SBI

Amita Gupta, MD, MHS, joint appointment, GDEC, Assistant Professor Division of Infectious Diseases, School of Medicine

Benjamin P. Loevinsohn, MD, MPH, Senior Associate, Health Systems

Third Term Teaching Excellence Recognition Awards

George Alleyne, Professor
Case Studies in Management Decision-Making

Richard Chaissone, Professor
Epidemiologic Basis for Tuberculosis Control

George Everly, Associate, Health Systems
Stress Management for Relief Workers

Laura Murray, Assistant Professor, Health Systems
Intervention Programming for Mental Health Research in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

David Peters, Associate Professor
Health Systems
Case Studies in Management Decision-Making

New Staff

Kathryn Falcone
Administrative Coordinator
Health Systems

Timothy W. Johnson
Program Coordinator
Center for American Indian Health

Alyssa Oliveri
Communications Manager
International Injury Research Unit

Sean Parker
Research Program Assistant II
Center for American Indian Health

Andrea Riner
Research Program Coordinator
Global Disease Epidemiology and Control (GDEC)

Four faculty who spoke at the Celebration of Carl Taylor’s Life and Work on May 14. From left to right: Sr. Associate Henry Taylor, Professor Timothy Baker, Professor Edyth Schoenrich, and Professor Robert Black. Photo by Larry Canner
Student Scholarships and Fellowships

Baker, Taylor, Reinke Scholarship in International Health
Abigail McDaniel, SBI
Rakesh Gupta, HS

Established in 2004, this scholarship commemorates over 100 combined years of dedicated public health service by Drs. Timothy D. Baker, William Reinke and Carl E. Taylor. The efforts of these three men were instrumental in establishing the field of international health as a distinct discipline. This fund supports graduate students in the Department of International Health and is targeted toward students working in the following areas: organization of health delivery systems, community-based healthcare or injury control in less developed countries.

Clements – Mann Fellowship
Michelle Mergler, GDEC
Subhash Chandir, GDEC

Mary Lou Clements-Mann, MD, MPH ’79, professor of International Health, and her husband Jonathan Mann, MD, MPH, visiting professor of Health Policy and Management, died in September 1998 when Swiss Air Flight 111 to Geneva crashed into the North Atlantic. The Manns were at the forefront of the worldwide struggle against AIDS. Dr. Clements-Mann was an internationally known physician who devoted most of her career to developing and testing vaccines to combat respiratory viruses, AIDS, and diarrheal diseases. As professor of International Health, she was the founding director of the Center for Immunization Research, where she worked with colleagues to develop the master’s and doctoral programs in vaccine sciences. Dr. Jonathan Mann founded the World Health Organization’s AIDS program and was one of the first scientists to bring the international AIDS crisis to the world’s attention. The Clements-Mann Fellowship was established by family members, friends, and colleagues as a tribute to Mary Lou and Jonathan’s tireless devotion to vaccine development, research, and human rights. The fund supports outstanding graduate students working in vaccine sciences.

The Mary and Carl Taylor Fund
Brandon Brown, GDEC

The Mary and Carl Taylor Fund was created in 1995 with contributions from faculty and alumni in honor of the Taylors’ commitment to the students of the School of Public Health and to improving international health through research and action. The fund provides support to a student working in the area of international bioethics.

Robert & Helen Wright Fund
Sarah Beckham, SBI
Melinda Munos, GDEC
Kunle Alonge, HS

This fund was established in 1983 with donations from family members and friends of former International Health faculty member Robert Wright, MD, MPH ’40. The Fund provides support for continuing doctoral students who expect to contribute to the improvement of public health in Africa, particularly in Nigeria.

Diana Hess Scholarship
Ashley Jackson, SBI

In 1983 the Diana Hess Memorial Fund was established with contributions from her family and friends. Diana Hess, a former Peace Corps volunteer in Kenya, was devoted to improving public health in Africa. The Hess Fund provides an annual scholarship to students in the Department of International Health. The award is based on academic and professional accomplishments and need for financial support. Preference is given to those planning to work in Africa, but this is not a requirement for receipt of the award.

Wendy Klag Memorial Fund
Abdulgafoor Bachani

This fund supports students at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health who are working on issues related to the health and well-being of children.
Scholarships and Fellowships

**John Snow, Inc. Award**
Tahmid Chowdhury, SBI
Mohammed Khan, HS

John Snow, Inc.’s mission is to provide an extensive range of research and consulting services to the health care and service sectors. The International Division provides technical assistance designed to enhance the effectiveness and quality of public health programs. The John Snow, Inc. Award, an annual award created in 2001, provides financial assistance to outstanding, second-year MHS students in the Department of International Health who are engaged in internships in the field.

**Nancy Stephens Fund**
Hua Jing, HN
Jessica Seidman, GDEC

Established in 1970 as the International Health Fund, this fund provides grants to master’s or doctoral students in the Department of International Health who are completing their degrees. For 37 years Nancy Stephens was the immensely popular student coordinator in the Department of International Health. At her retirement in 2001, Dr. Robert Black honored her by renaming this fund the Nancy Stephens Student Support Fund.

**Henry and Lola Beye Scholarship**
Horacio Ruiseñor, GDEC

This fund was established in 2001 through the estate of Lola Beye, widow of Henry Beye, MD. Dr. Beye received his MPH degree from the School in 1942 and was an authority on tropical diseases. He spent many years at the U.S. Public Health Service where he was the director of the Middle America Research Unit. He conducted intensive studies on elephantiasis, hemorrhagic fever, filariasis and schistosomiasis, and during his career worked in such countries as Bolivia, British Guinea, Thailand, and Panama. Mrs. Beye, a nurse, often worked in the field with Dr. Beye. This fund supports an outstanding student who has completed a medical degree and is pursuing a graduate degree in the Department.

**Georgeda Buchbinder Award**
Aubrey Levine, SBI

Dr. Georgeda Buchbinder received her MPH from the School in 1984. She then moved to Hawaii and began a public health career by teaching Population Science and International Health. Her career was progressing extraordinarily well when she was diagnosed with cancer. This fund was established by friends and colleagues after her death to celebrate her all-too-brief career in public health. This fund annually supports students, junior faculty, or other priority projects in international health.

**The R. Bradley Sack Family Scholarship Award**
Jessica Seidman, GDEC

Established in 2000 by R. Bradley Sack, MS, MD, ScD ’68, the award supports outstanding doctoral students studying infectious disease in the developing world. Dr. Sack has served on the faculty at the School for over 30 years and has consulted and worked all over the world on problems related to infectious diseases.

**Humanitarian Assistance Award**
Namrita Singh, SBI
Sarah Murray, SBI

This fund provides support to master’s and doctoral students who are committed to improving humanitarian response and health for refugees, displaced persons and populations affected by conflict and natural disasters.

**Harry D. Kruse Fellowship in Nutrition**
Lenis Chen, HN
Tatenda Mupfudze, HN

Presented annually to a continuing full-time student who has demonstrated outstanding academic performance and professional potential in the field of nutrition and public health.

**Johnson & Johnson Community Health Care Scholars**
Stephen Stake, DrPH candidate

The Scholars program is part of a collaboration between the Johnson & Johnson Community Health Care Program and the Bloomberg School to help improve the sustainability of community health care organizations around the country.
Scholarships and Fellowships

The Elsa Orent Keiles Fellowship in Human Nutrition in International Health
Attia Goheer, HN
Amy Desai, HN

This fellowship was established in 1996 with a bequest from the estate of Elsa Orent Keiles, ScD ’25, a graduate of the Department of Chemical Hygiene (now Biochemistry and Molecular Biology). In keeping with Dr. Keiles’ research interests, the award provides tuition support for graduate students with demonstrated financial needs in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology or the Program in Human Nutrition in the Department of International Health.

Fulbright Fellowships

Miraya Jun, MHS candidate, Social & Behavioral Interventions

Miraya is planning on investigating the factors affecting alcohol use among Mongolian adolescents in collaboration with the Health Sciences University of Mongolia for her Fulbright Fellowship.

Namrita Singh, SBI, PhD candidate

Namrita received a Fulbright Award and a Boren Award for International Study for her project, “Care-seeking to informal mental health services: A mixed methods study among internally displaced persons in the Republic of Georgia.”

Health Systems Research Scholarships

MHS: Lindsay Lange, Malaria program design and management with CRS in Sierra Leone

PhD: Abdulgafoor Bachani, Approaches to Measuring Non-Fatal Health Outcomes: Disability at the Iganga-Mayuge Demographic Surveillance System (IM-DSS) in Uganda

Congratulations New Delta Omega Members

Karen Charron, MPH, BSN, Instructor, GDEC
Jessie Davis, MHS, Health Systems (HS)
Alex Ergo, PhD, HS
Cristina Reyes Garcia, MHS, Global Disease Epidemiology and Control (GDEC)
Hope Johnson, PhD, MPH, Assistant Scientist, GDEC
Alain Labrique PhD, MS, MHS, Assistant Professor, GDEC
Orin Levine, DrPH, Associate Professor, GDEC
Stephanie Mayne, MHS, GDEC
Muzi Na, MHS, Human Nutrition
Ann Navar, PhD, GDEC
George Pariyo, MBChB, PhD, MSc, IH Alumnus
Jennifer Scott, PhD, GDEC
Laura Steinhardt, PhD, HS
David Wee, MHS, GDEC
Christa Fischer Walker, PhD, MHS, Assistant Scientist, GDEC
Lauren Wu, MHS, GDEC

GDEC Poster Competition Awards

Yeny Tinoco: The importance of population based-data in estimating the true burden of influenza illness: The pH1N1 experience in Peru

Gwyneth Lee: Effect of Malaria Vivax Infection on Growth among Children in the Peruvian Amazon
Global Health Field Research Awards

The Johns Hopkins Center for Global Health grants these awards to undergraduate and graduate Hopkins students to help support an international research experience. Each student works with a faculty mentor to complete their projects.

**Rebecca Fielding-Miller**  
*Traditional Stories, Gender, and HIV Risk Behavior in Swaziland.*  
Project Advisor: Caitlin Kennedy

**Alice Hu**  
*Local concepts and behavior towards tuberculosis in Payatas, a slum community in the Philippines.*  
Project Advisor: Pamela Surkan

**Anjalee Kohli**  
*Improving health and social services for survivors of sexual violence, their families and community in post-conflict Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).*  
Project Advisor: Nancy Glass

**Abigail McDaniel**  
*Community-based qualitative research to improve water and sanitation programs with the International Rescue Committee in Côte d’Ivoire.*  
Project Advisors: Caitlin Kennedy and Laura Ho

**Sarah Meyer**  
*Labor Trafficking and Health: A Qualitative Study.*  
Project Advisor: Courtland Robinson

**Suzanne Pollard**  
*Assessment of Exposure to Indoor Biomass Smoke in Puno, Peru.*  
Project Advisor: William Checkley

**Maria Sundaram**  
*The Context of Prelacteal Feeding and its Association With Neonatal Infectious Disease Morbidity in Rural Bangladesh.*  
Project Advisor: Alain Labrique

**The Harry J. Prebluda Fellowship in Nutritional Biochemistry**

**Alison Gernand, HN**  
**Sohyun Park, HN**

This fellowship was established in 1990 by Mrs. Harry J. Prebluda and her children in memory of her late husband. Harry Prebluda earned his doctorate degree in Biochemistry at the School in 1937, and worked closely with E.V. McCollum. The fellowship fosters the careers of outstanding young scientists focusing on nutritional biochemistry and metabolism.

**Student Assembly Honors and Awards Committee**

**Advising, Mentoring & Teaching Recognition Award (AMTRA)**

**Assistant Scientist Kate Gilroy,**  
Health Systems

**Assistant Professor Courtland Robinson,**  
Health Systems

**TA Recognition Award**

**Hsin-Jen Chen,**  
Human Nutrition  
*Advanced Nutritional Epidemiology*

**Alison Connor,**  
GDEC,  
*Intro. to International Health*

**Student Recognition Award**

**Lenis Chen,**  
Human Nutrition

**IH Alumni News**

**Grand Challenge Award**

*Insecticide-treated traditional scarves*  
**David Sintasath,**  
PhD, GDEC, of the Malaria Consortium in Thailand, will research whether treating traditional scarves worn by migrant workers along the Thai-Cambodia border with insecticides will reduce the rate of drug-resistant malaria.

**The Celebration of Carl Taylor’s Life and Work**

Chair Robert Black and alumnus Kenneth Bakken, DO, DrPH ’81 at the Celebration of Carl Taylor’s Life and Work May 14.
Professor Timothy Baker, MD MPH  
Commemorating 50 years of Contributions to the School and the Department

The Department recently presented Dr. Timothy Baker with a plaque—designed by Assistant Scientist Amnesty LeFevre—as a small token of appreciation for his many contributions to public health over the last 50 years. The plaque, which now hangs outside his office on the 8th floor, includes a photo of the Wolfe Street building before its most recent renovation and photos of the deans and Department chairs with whom Dr. Baker has served. A story by Baker himself about an important event leading to the creation of the Department is included (reproduced at the bottom of this page) along with copies of other historical documents.

In 1961, Dr. Baker was appointed as acting chairman of the Division of International Health in the Department of Public Health Administration. In 1966, the Division would become the Department of International Health. Since its inception, Dr. Baker has played a lead role in recruiting faculty (including Drs. Carl Taylor and Robert Black to serve as Department chairs), developing curriculum, mentoring students and faculty, and bringing in financial support for major research projects.

Department Chair Dr. Robert Black remembers one of Baker’s many fund-raising successes: “Dr. Baker was directing the Hubert Humphrey Fellowship program of the School and thought to invite Edgar Berman to the fellows’ graduation. Berman was the physician to Humphrey and had a history, albeit a tenuous one, in international health work, which he nevertheless was proud of. The relationship that Baker established between the School and Berman eventually led to the endowment of the Edgar Berman professorship in International Health with Dean Henderson the first occupant in 1990 and myself the second in 1994.”

How the Department of International Health Started by Dr. Timothy Baker

In the late 1950s, Dr. Eugene Campbell, Director of Health for USAID, presented a proposal to the Association of Schools of Public Health at their meeting in Minneapolis. His proposal was to establish a program for training in international health. He had funding in hand for the project. His presentation was received with polite attention, but as soon as he left the room, objections arose. Dean Jack Snyder from Harvard cited difficulties that they had had working with USAID projects. Dean Andy Anderson from Minnesota followed suit and the USAID proposal was voted down. Flying back from Minneapolis Dr. Baker said to Dean Stebbins, "Stebby, we should go for that grant." Dean Stebbins said, "I had hoped that you would come up with that conclusion." The grant was applied for, approved, and thus a formal base for teaching and research in international health was established at the School of Public Health.