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**Chair Chatter**  
**December 2, 2022**

Welcome to December! I hope you enjoyed your Thanksgiving holiday break and had a chance to relax and recharge during the five-day hiatus. Now that we are back, the post-Thanksgiving period is always a busy time of the year as we face exams and deadlines related to the end of the semester, prospective student admissions, etc. Best of luck, everyone!

The EH finance team welcomes two new members. Jorge (pronounced George) DaSilva joins us as our new Assistant Director of Finance, reporting to Cori Chisholm. Jorge comes to us with over 20 years of experience, most recently from Tufts University's Veterinary School. Jorge is no stranger to Harvard; he has worked for many years doing financial and grant management in Harvard's Business School, Medical School, Primate Research Center, and in HU's Psychology Department.

Edward (Eddie) Bowen joins us as Senior Grants Manager. Eddie most recently was a Senior Grants and Contracts Analyst at Johns Hopkins University. Before that, he had several years of financial analyst experience working for the New York City Department of Mental Hygiene, the Department of Youth and Community Development, and the Salvation Army. Please join me in welcoming both Jorge and Eddie to our EH finance team!

Drs. Ramon Sanchez and Linda Tomasso led a delegation of Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health students to the Global Summit of the World Travel and Tourism Council in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Ban Ki Moon (former UN Director General) addressed the Youth in Action session. WTTC's annual Global Summit is the most influential Travel & Tourism event. This year, industry leaders gathered with key government representatives to continue aligning efforts to support the sector's recovery and move beyond to a safer, more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable future.

Anna Young was lead author of a study that indicated that PFAS levels were lower in buildings that had healthier furnishings than buildings that had conventional furnishings. The study, which appeared in [Environmental Science and Technology](#), was also featured on the school's [website](#). Congratulations to Anna and co-authors Heidi Picard, Elsie Sunderland and Joe Allen.

Hey students - are you interested in making classrooms better places? The Healthy Buildings Team at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health is launching a new study to investigate how classrooms influence student wellbeing and learning. We're looking for first-year masters and doctoral students willing to participate over the 2022-2023 academic year. As a participant, you would complete short (~2 minute) puzzles and surveys on a smartphone app after class, in exchange for Amazon gift cards. Find out if you are [eligible by filling out this short survey](#). Email [classroomsforhealth@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:classroomsforhealth@hsph.harvard.edu) with any questions.

Also, I want to mention that there are several new courses that are being offered in the Winter 2023 session and the Spring 2023 semester. Here are their titles; see the end of Upcoming Events for details about each course.

**Winter/January 2023**

- ***EH 286 Environmental Health Literacy & Science Communication***
- ***EH 516 Environmental Genetics***

**Spring 2023**

- ***EH 525 Environmental Justice: Concepts and Peace (Spring 1)***
- ***EH 291 Community Practice in Environmental Health (Full Spring)***

Lastly, I understand that Holly, Francine's dog, felt left out when other pets were featured in our first Photo of the Week a couple of chair chatters ago. Sorry Holly – you get the spotlight in today's Chatter (and I hope your family has finally gotten around to raking up all of their leaves).



Send any news or upcoming events to [eh-chatter@hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:eh-chatter@hsph.harvard.edu).

### Upcoming Events

#### **Tuesday, December 6; 9:30 – 10:30 AM**

**Title:** Stem Cell Niche Interactions at the Barrier

**Speaker:** Tien Peng, MD, Associate Professor, Pulmonary, Critical Care, Allergy & Sleep UCSF

**Location:** Building 1, Room 1302 & Zoom

**Details:** This Seminar is part of the MIPS Work-In-Progress Seminar Series

**Zoom:** <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/96260666705?pwd=enJJWXVLSG1JVjBuWnhFUGVTL0tMZz09>

#### **Wednesday, December 7; 1:00 – 2:00 PM**

**Title:** EH NIH Data Management and Training Presentation Session

**Speakers:** Julie Goldman (Countway) and Patrick O'Neill (SPA)

**Location:** Zoom

**Details:** The new NIH DMS requirements go into effect on January 25, 2023. Julie Goldman from Countway and Patrick O'Neill from SPA will give an overview presentation of these new requirements to EH researchers. There will be time for Q&A. We recommend that faculty and others that plan to submit as PI of NIH grants attend.

**Zoom:** <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/98294396859?pwd=TnhWenNYRzRTRG9oUUQwbU1rci9jUT09>

#### **Monday, December 12; 1:00 – 2:15 PM**

**Title:** Healthier by Design: Behavioral Pathways from Health Policies to Health

**Speaker:** Jessica L. Cohen, Bruce A. Beal, Robert I. Beal and Alexander S. Beal Associate Professor of Global Health

**Location:** Conference Room 1208

**Details:** This event is open to the Harvard Community. Please email [ghp.hsph.harvard.edu](mailto:ghp.hsph.harvard.edu) for more information.

**Zoom:** <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/93016006758?pwd=TEZDQ2k4U2F5Q2w3NEwvTHdsRjk0UT09>

#### **Monday, December 12; 10:00 – 11:00 am**

**Title:** The Exposome and Health: Where Chemistry Meets Biology

**Speaker:** R.C.H. (Roel) Vermeulen, PhD

**Location:** Epi Library (Kresge 907) and Zoom

**Details:** Join us for a special lecture by [Dr. R.C.H. \(Roel\) Vermeulen](#), professor of Environmental Epidemiology and

Exposome Science at Utrecht University and the director of the Institute for Risk Assessment Sciences (IRAS) at Utrecht University and the UMC Utrecht in the Netherlands. His scientific research focuses on environmental risk factors for non-communicable diseases with a strong emphasis on integrating epidemiology, high quality exposure assessment, and molecular biology into multidisciplinary investigations.

**More info:** <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/niehs/event/the-exposome-and-health-where-chemistry-meets-biology/>

### **Tuesday, December 13: 9:30 – 10:30 AM**

**Title:** Intermediate Filament Networks Form Connecting Links Between the Nucleus and the Cell Cortex

**Speaker:** Robert Goldman, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Cell and Developmental Biology, Northwestern University

**Location:** Building 1, Room 1302 & Zoom

**Details:** This Seminar is part of the MIPS Work-In-Progress Seminar Series

**Zoom:** <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/96260666705?pwd=enJJWXVLSGJjVjBuWnhFUGVTL0tMZz09>

### **Wednesday, December 14: 1:00 - 2:00 pm**

**Title:** Meet EPA Administrator David Cash for Q&A on Climate Justice

**Speaker:** David Cash, USEPA Region 1 Administrator

**Location:** The Studio (10<sup>th</sup> floor, Kresge Building) and via online streaming

**Details:** The Environmental Protection Agency is launching a new Office of Environmental Justice and vowing to use its regulatory power to mitigate the impact of climate change and pollution on poor and minority communities. Those sound like bold initiatives — but what do they mean in practice? Join us for a conversation with David Cash,

the EPA's regional administrator for New England, about the EPA's plans to address environmental injustice on the ground. This event is presented jointly by the Harvard Chan-NIEHS Center for Environmental Health and the Office of Communications. Co-moderated by Dr. Marc Weisskopf and Dr. Tamarra James-Todd.

**More info:** [https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/event/climate-and-justice-the-epas-action-plan/?](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/event/climate-and-justice-the-epas-action-plan/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Go%20to%20event%20page&utm_campaign=2022.7.14-Roe)

[utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=Go%20to%20event%20page&utm\\_campaign=2022.7.14-Roe](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/event/climate-and-justice-the-epas-action-plan/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Go%20to%20event%20page&utm_campaign=2022.7.14-Roe)

**Register Now:** [https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8GrIN6m1oeHdMLc](https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8GrIN6m1oeHdMLc)

**Students & Postdocs:** We will host an in-person Trainee Session with Dr. David Cash after the event from 2:15-2:45pm in HSPH Building 1 (room number will be emailed out to registrants before the event). This is a chance to chat about employment or internship opportunities at the USEPA, funding mechanisms, etc. in a casual setting. [RSVP is required.](#)

### **New courses being offered in Winter/January and Spring 2023**

#### **Winter/January 2023**

- ***EH 286 Environmental Health Literacy & Science Communication*** (2.5 credits), Winter/January 2023; Monday through Friday, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
  - Environmental health literacy (EHL) is an emerging area of interest within the environmental health sciences. It generally refers to the ways in which people make sense of environmental contaminants and their potential impact on health. Through this class, we will explore the subdomains relevant to EHL and environmental science communication, including health communication, health literacy, risk communication, and environmental literacy. Students will gain an understanding of graphicacy, numeracy, and literacy, and how each of those skill sets influences and individual's EHL. They will also gain experience assessing environmental communications for accessibility and leave with the ability to identify barriers and facilitators to those communications. Students enrolled in this course should have some familiarity with environmental health sciences. Prior experience with health literacy or science communication is not required.
- ***EH 516 Environmental Genetics*** (2.5 credits). Winter/January 2023. Monday through Friday; 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
  - The interaction between genes and environmental and/or occupational exposures plays a major role in disease development. This course will focus on the underlying science of gene-exposure interactions and will use examples of such interactions and their health consequences. Gene-environment interactions will be discussed using an epidemiologic approach to address how genetic polymorphisms can influence susceptibility to disease. This course will enable students to understand and apply findings of genetic association studies and will consist of detailed evaluation of specific examples of gene-exposure interactions and their health consequences, as well as their social implications.

#### **Spring 2023**

## Spring 1

- ***EH 525 Environmental Justice: Concepts and Peace*** (2.5 credits). Spring 1, Monday, 8:00 am – 11:15 am
  - The purpose of this course is to introduce the topic of environmental justice as it relates to public health. It has been developed to be accessible to a broad audience including those with backgrounds in environmental health, epidemiology, basic sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and health policy. Topics will include fundamental principles and frameworks, social and biological mechanisms underlying environmental health disparities; methods for assessing and measuring the disproportionate burden of harmful environmental effects borne by some communities as a consequence (of racism and other forms of) discrimination; the practice of environmental justice as a framework for guiding the approach to reducing environmental health disparities; and strategies for effective community-based participatory research; development of action-oriented research strategies to lessen environmental health disparities; and translation of research findings for the purpose of science communication and implementation. The course format will include discussions of case studies and guest lectures from leading figures in the field.

## Full Spring

- ***EH 291 Community Practice in Environmental Health*** (5 credits). Full Spring 2023. Friday, 8:00 am – 11:15 am
  - The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the complexities of and best practices for community engaged/action research and collaboration. Students will integrate skills and knowledge from their environmental health training to address community interests/needs. Students will work with a member of a non-academic partner organization and will complete a formal project report/presentation, as well as reflect on their experience throughout the semester.

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## Chair Chatter

### December 16, 2022

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Welcome to the last Chair Chatter of the year! The school will be closed from December 22 through January 2. Congratulations on getting all your papers, finals, budgets, and all other projects done. I'm sure you are all looking forward to a relaxing winter break!

As you can imagine, I am happy to see the official announcement that Kari Nadeau will be your new Chair of the Environmental Health Department. Kari was chosen after a search that took well over a year to complete, and I have no doubt she is the best person to fill this role. Kari has a phenomenal record of research and leadership accomplishments in the field of immunology and allergies. Just as importantly, she has the commitment, vision and energy to work with you to bring this department to a whole new level. Kari was in town this week to set up her new apartment. She was gracious enough to come by the school for various meetings Monday through Wednesday, and she had the opportunity to meet with most of the faculty and some of the staff. I can think of no greater pleasure than to be able to hand the chair duties over to someone with her intellect and abilities. Kari's official start date is January 17; I look forward to watching as this department soars to new heights under her leadership.

While this was the big news of the week, we also have other major news to announce. Professor Quan Lu was named the Cecil K and Philip Drinker Professor of Environmental Physiology. This endowed professorship honors and recognizes Quan's demonstrated excellence in his research endeavors. Please join me in congratulating Quan!

With timing especially appropriate to the COP15 UN Biodiversity Conference happening now, research led by Matthew R. Smith and Samuel S. Myers was published on December 14 in *Environmental Health Perspectives*. The study, entitled "[Pollination loss removes healthy foods from global diets, increases chronic diseases causing excess deaths](#)," is the first to quantify the present-day human health toll of insufficient wild (animal) pollinators. Inadequate pollination has led to a 3-5% loss of fruit, vegetable, and nut production and an estimated 427,000 excess deaths annually from lost healthy food consumption

and associated diseases. It was also featured on the school's website [here](#) and in the [Harvard Gazette](#).

Barrak Alahmad, Aaron Bernstein, Stefania Papatheodorou, Antonella Zanobetti, Eric Garshick, Joel Schwartz, and Petros Koutrakis were among the authors of a publication that describes the largest multinational study on heart disease mortality & temperature. Published in *Circulation* on December 12, it is entitled "[Associations Between Extreme Temperatures and Cardiovascular Cause-Specific Mortality: Results From 27 Countries](#)". The American Heart Association (AHA) issued a [press release](#) about it, and it received much attention in the popular press.

C-CHANGE developed a toolkit to help clinics care for patients during climate shocks that was featured on the school's [website](#) and in the popular press like the [Boston Globe](#) and [Axios](#).

Our financial team asks anyone who is contemplating submitting a grant in the next three months to fill out this [survey](#).

Here is your Photo of the Week – New incoming Chair Kari Nadeau and yours truly with Marc Weisskopf and Tamara James-Todd after their terrific interview with [David Cash, EPA regional administrator for New England](#) . This event was co-sponsored by the Harvard Chan-NIEHS Center for Environmental Health.



As you can see, we finished strong after a challenging yet successful year. I hope you have a wonderful, joyous and restful winter break. I will remain the EH acting chair until January 16. Happy New Year – we have a lot to look forward to in 2023!

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**Upcoming Events**

**Tuesday, January 24; 5:00 – 7:00 PM**

**Title:** Winter Holiday Party

**Location:** Kresge Cafeteria

**Details:** The Department of Environmental Health invites you to join with your colleagues at the Annual Winter Party on Tuesday, January 24, 2023 from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm in the Kresge Cafeteria. Please RSVP by Monday, January 9th.

RSVP Here: [https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_37Pp9hIOhyyOcD4](https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_37Pp9hIOhyyOcD4)