
Chair Chatter

January 6, 2023

Happy New Year everyone! I hope you enjoyed a nice winter break. This will certainly be a year of transitions and new beginnings for the department, as [Kari Nadeau](#) takes over as chair of our department in just a couple of weeks.

Speaking of transitions, [Joe Brain](#) became an emeritus professor last week at the start of the year. Joe joined the department as a student in 1962, and as assistant professor in 1968. At the celebration of the stars event last fall, Joe was recognized for his 55 years of service to the department and the school. During his tenure Joe mentored and took under his wing scores of students, postdocs and faculty. He was a highly engaging teacher of physiology, inspiring many of us to continue studies in environmental health. He led us as chair for 15 years (1990-2005). He is an international leader in research on lung physiology, pulmonary infection, respiratory defense mechanisms, physiological responses to inhaled gases, particulates, and microbes, health effects of air pollution, prevention of environmental and occupational lung disease, and drug delivery to and through the lungs. Joe has an encyclopedic knowledge of our school's history. Two years ago he co-authored a book on Alice Hamilton and her experience here at the school. Joe has had an enormous influence on our department's achievements and successes. Joe and his wife Judy are fondly remembered for their warmth and hospitality over many decades. We wish Joe every happiness in his new emeritus status.

Lissah Johnson, Marissa Chan, and Tamarra James-Todd have a podcast called [Beauty + Justice](#) that was featured on the [school's website](#). It is an enlightening look into the financial costs and detrimental health effects of beauty products, and how those costs fall most heavily on marginalized groups. This podcast sheds light on the contrast between the beauty industry and the environmental justice movement and is a good example of how research can be used to educate people about better health choices.

Last month Julie Goldman from the Countway Library gave a presentation to EH entitled "Implementing the New NIH Policy for Data Management and Sharing". She explained the new DMS requirements that go into effect on January 25 for all new proposals. Here is a [link to the video](#) (Content starts at the 3:40 mark, Q&A starts at 36:45). It is also worthwhile to visit the school's [HCSRA site](#), and particularly for PI's, the [Faculty section](#), which has a wealth of information and tips about all kinds of school research administration topics, including but not limited to DMS.

Finally, we invite our environmental health family and friends to our annual EH winter party on January 24 (see upcoming events below). Feel free to bring your family. Please [rsvp now](#), or by Monday at the latest.

Upcoming Events

Monday, January 9; 1:10 – 1:50 PM

Title: Prenatal Arsenic Exposure and Spina Bifida in Bangladesh: Role of Gene-Environmental Interaction

Location: FXB G12 and Zoom

Details: As part of the Monday ERC Seminar Series Chih-Fu Wei, MD, a doctoral student in the Department of Environmental Health will describe the advances in spina bifida research and the scientific gaps in spina bifida research. He will also discuss the possible role of environmental factors in folic acid prevention for spina bifida; and explain approaches for identifying folate pathway gene-arsenic interactions in spina bifida.

Register Here: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eySOg4zOxgwhsxxg

Tuesday, January 24; 5:00 – 7:00 PM

Title: EH Department 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. Families are welcome to attend. If you would like to bring your partner and/or children, please email Shaun

(shaunheller@hsph.harvard.edu) with their names and ages of the children by Friday, January 13th. RSVP here: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_37Pp9hIOhyyOcD4

Tuesday to Wednesday, February 14-15; all day

Title: Integrating Environmental Data with Other Omics for Cancer Epidemiology

Location: Virtual NIEHS/NCI webinar workshop

Details: To promote research into the effects of environmental exposures on cancer risk and etiology. Goals are:

1. To understand the challenges and opportunities in integrating environmental data with other omics.
2. To identify the possible approaches and best practices for multi-omic integration including environmental data.
3. To identify special considerations for using environmental and multi-omic data for cancer epidemiology.
4. To determine how experimental models integrating environmental exposures and genomic (or other Omic) effects can be used to inform cancer risk assessment.

Information and registration:

https://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/events/environmental_data/index.cfm

Chair Chatter

January 13, 2023

Yesterday I cleaned out the Chair's office on the 13th floor, in anticipation of Kari Nadeau arriving on Tuesday. It is exciting to welcome our first Chair from outside of our Harvard faculty. Kari, Francine, and I have been meeting regularly for the many months since she was selected, to help her prepare. She also has been meeting with faculty, staff, and the administration to be ready to hit the ground running.

Kari is bringing a ton of ideas to build on the strengths of our department and as many ideas for new opportunities. She has a ton of energy and an incredible capacity for work. I know she plans to spend the first couple of weeks listening. Get ready for a great ride.

What are my plans? On Tuesday I first will be dropping my grandson off at school. Then I am looking forward to picking up Tracy Kidder's new book "Rough Sleeping" about my friend Jim O'Connell. Thirdly, I hope to visit and experience the monument to Martin Luther King Jr and Coretta Scott King in the Boston Garden which is being unveiled today. This monument memorializes these civil rights icons through a representation of their embrace on learning that Dr. King had won the Nobel Peace prize in 1964. Day one of my retirement looks great.

A week from Monday, we will be welcoming our students back as the spring semester starts. Kari and I are looking forward to our welcome back party on Tuesday, January 24th. Our full agenda of events will be ramping up over the next couple of weeks.

Lastly, although this is my last Chatter, I believe Kari wants to continue this regularly department update, so please keep your events and news coming to eh-chatter@hsph.harvard.edu I look forward to reading them!

Upcoming Events

Friday, January 13; 1:00 – 1:50 PM

Title: How to Engage with Journalists and Navigate Today's Media Landscape

Speaker: Amanda Yarnell, MS

Location: HSPH, Kresge 502 and Zoom

Details: This is a winter term professional development seminar for faculty, staff and students

in the EH Department and all of HSPH. Amanda Yarnell, Senior Director, Office of Communication, HSPH, will present the seminar.

For more information contact: abackus@hsph.harvard.edu or visit www.hsph.harvard.edu/erc

Register Here: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dcKaYEbvSY3We2

Wednesday, January 18; 9:00 AM ET (4:00 PM Cyprus)

Title: Emerging Climate & Environmental Health Risks in Cyprus

Location: Nicos K. Shacolas' Amphitheatre and Zoom

Details: The Medical School of University of Cyprus in collaboration with the University of Nicosia Medical School and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health invite you to attend the Scientific event

RSVP for In Person: kouis.panayiotis@ucy.ac.cy or [here](#) by January 16th 2023

Zoom Link: <https://ucy.zoom.us/j/95497431142?pwd=TlRzOW9oVU5oZ09JTGFwdTF3bXNkQT09>

More Information: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/environmental-health/cyprus-harvard-endowment-program-for-the-environment-and-public-health-upcoming-events/>

Friday, January 20; 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Title: ERC Pilot Project Symposium

Speakers: Emily Silva, MS Dena Jevadi, MSPH Naila Segule, MS James Medeiros, DO, MPH Fan-Yun Lan, PhD, MD, MS David Christiani, MD, MPH, MS Greg Wagner, MD, MPH

Location: HSPH, Kresge 502 and Zoom

Details: Five ERC Pilot Project awardees will present the results of the pilot projects. Speakers include Emily Silva, Dena Jevadi, Nail Segule, James Medeiros, and Fan-Yun Lan. Dr. David Christiani, Director of the Harvard Chan ERC will provide the introduction and D. Greg Wagner, Director of the ERC Pilot Project Core will close the symposium.

For more information contact: abackus@hsph.harvard.edu or visit www.hsph.harvard.edu/erc

Register Here: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezkNxf2wBLSCZU

Monday, January 23; 1:10 – 1:50 PM

Title: Leadership and Management: The Importance for Public Health Professionals

Speaker: Lou DiBerardinis, CIH, CSP, Director, Environment, Health and Safety, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Instructor, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

Location: HSPH, FXB G12 and Zoom

Details: Lou DiBerardinis, CIH, CSP, will present a seminar on Leadership and Management which is an introduction or teaser for the Continuing Professional Education Program being offered by the Executive and Continuing Education Program of HSPH in March 27-30, 2023

For more information contact: abackus@hsph.harvard.edu or visit www.hsph.harvard.edu/erc

Register Here: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_72vha36OQUOpAq

Wednesday, January 25; 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Title: Chemical, non-chemical stressors and reproductive health: the EARTH Study

Speaker: Lidia Mínguez Alarcón, Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Brigham and Women's Hospital

Location: Zoom only

Details: Our monthly Center Chalk Talks series (4th Wednesdays) is a chance for members

and affiliates to showcase the exciting research they are working on and solicit collaboration. This event will be recorded and made available on our website.

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/93854403999?pwd=L3Nvbml2bnQyT3ZObi9BQmxGN3VZZz09>

Friday, January 27; 1:10 – 1:50 PM

Title: Catching Your Breath at Work: An Introduction to Work-related Asthma

Speakers: Rachael Zacks, MD, MPH, Chief Resident, Harvard Occupational and Environmental Medicine Residency, and David C. Christiani, MD, MPH, MS, Elkan Blout Professor of Environmental Genetics, HSPH, and Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School.

Location: HSPH Kresge Building Room 502 and Zoom

Details: This Grand Rounds sponsored by the ERC/EOME program features Chief Resident Rachael Zacks and ERC Director David Christiani in a discussion about the various types of work-related asthma, the treatment and prognosis for employees with work-related asthma, and the process for reporting work-related asthma to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

For more information contact: abackus@hsph.harvard.edu or visit www.hsph.harvard.edu/erc

Register Here: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9Azc7Wlt7aQOTb0

Friday, March 3; by 5:00PM ET

Event: Deadline for Pilot Project Applications (up to \$30,000 in funding available)

Details: Do you study health effects of the environment? Work with communities concerned about environmental exposures? Then apply to our Pilot Project program (up to \$30,000 in funding)! The Harvard Chan-NIEHS Center for Environmental Health is now accepting applications for pilot projects related to Environmental Health sciences. All Center members are eligible to apply for these funds. Other faculty or research scientist-level researchers may apply in collaboration with a Center member co-investigator. Applications are accepted from Harvard Research Associates or Fellows working under the supervision of Center faculty, but the role of the sponsoring faculty members must be specified. Doctoral students are not eligible for pilot project support.

More info: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/niehs/apply-for-funds/pilot-project-program/>

Chair Chatter

January 20, 2023

I am delighted to be here and working with all of you in Environmental Health! It is a pleasure and privilege to be leading this wonderful EH community that you have built. Doug, Francine and I have been meeting weekly over the past several months. I appreciate their time and effort to bring me up to speed on the issues, challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in this dynamic department. Before I tell you a little bit about my vision and plans, I want to thank Doug for all that he has done for the department and the school since he arrived as a masters student over 50 years ago. You may know that Doug contributed mightily to the research that underpinned the Clean Air Act; he has received numerous awards; he was chair of the department from 2005-2016, and then graciously returned as Acting Chair for the past two years. During his career, Doug has mentored hundreds of students, faculty and staff; as chair he has brought our community together by supporting fun events, creating the department's newsletters and the concept of this chair chatter. I appreciate all that Doug has done and know that he will remain actively engaged as an emeritus. I am also grateful that Francine will stay on to work with me as our Associate Chair. They have provided a tremendous foundation for us to continue to build upon.

We are at a critical time in history to create the future; now more than ever, we need to address the changing world in the ever-changing climate and environment around us in order to protect the health of people and the health of the planet. Therefore, we will be putting a strategic plan together over the next months to reflect the vision and mission of EH. I plan to work with all of you to advance the department's mission by fostering and expanding research activities, expanding community engagement, enriching the trainee experience, attracting and mentoring faculty, and providing strategic leadership for our department and how it fits in the larger community and globe. I look forward to working with you to solve both broadly shared and distinctly local challenges and to advance the Harvard Chan's mission of helping people and populations thrive in a healthy world. To do this, we will be setting up meetings over the next few weeks to receive your vision, ideas, thoughts, and comments. Each of you will have an opportunity to be involved. I am here to serve you, help us build upon the great work of the past, and to support the department. I will establish times for open door hours for you to stop by to chat with me directly. I will be at Landmark and Building 1 in person so please come by and visit during the open door times.

Even though I just started on Tuesday, there is much department news to report so let's get started! First, it was wonderful to see the emails that Dean Williams and Dean Kim sent to the school officially announcing that Zac Nagel has been promoted to Associate Professor of Genomics and Cancer Biology, and that Kris Sarosiek has been promoted to Associate Professor of Radiation Biology and Cell Death. These faculty members richly deserve their milestone promotions! In addition, Amra Dewsnap's title has been officially changed to better reflect her contributions and responsibilities in the department; she is now our Assistant

Director of Financial Operations. Congratulations to Zac, Kris and Amra on having earned the next steps on their career path journeys!

Please also join me in congratulating Pablo Taddei on his successful defense of his research dissertation entitled “Indoor Environmental Quality of the Workspace and Employees’ Well-being”.

EH was well-represented on the school’s website this week. Ron Panganiban’s paper in [Nature Communications](#) was featured in an article entitled “[Mechanism behind obesity-related asthma identified](#)”. Quan Lu and many members of his lab and others in MIPS co-authored the paper; congratulations on this important finding which may provide a lead to treatment of obesity-related asthma in people someday.

Rachel Grashow was also featured on the school’s website due to the recent increased focus on football-related injuries. Rachel, who works on the Football Players Health Study at Harvard University, answered questions in the article entitled “[Examining the potential health dangers of pro football—and how to protect players](#)”.

Stefania Papatheodorou was also featured in a school website article entitled “[The dangers of heat during pregnancy](#)”, in which she explains the implications of a warming climate on pregnancy, and how people can decrease their risks while pregnant.

Matt Smith and Sam Myers’ recent *EHP* [research paper](#) calling attention to the health impacts of declining biodiversity and previewing problems that are likely to get much worse in coming years gained mainstream media attention in [The Guardian](#).

During the winter session the 1309/1311 rooms were renovated for our first year doctoral students; we think they will enjoy their new digs!



This has been a wonderful whirlwind of a first week for me. I can’t wait for next week! I am so looking forward to seeing our students as they return for spring session next week. I hope to see many of you at our EH winter party on Tuesday.

Please send news and upcoming events to eh-chatter@hsph.harvard.edu .

- Kari

- **Upcoming Events**

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Location: HSPH, Kresge 502 and Zoom

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Register Here: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_72vha36OQUpOpAq

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Tuesday, January 24; 9:30 – 10:30 AM

Title: Vagal Sensory Neurons mediate polarization of the airway inflammatory response

Speaker: Evan Lemire, PhD Candidate, Haber Lab at Harvard Chan

Location: HSPH Building 1 Room 1302 and Zoom

Details: Part of the MIPS Works in Progress Seminar Series

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/96260666705?pwd=enJJWXXVLSGIjVjBuWnhFUGVTL0tMZz09>

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Wednesday, January 25; 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Title: Chemical, non-chemical stressors and reproductive health: the EARTH Study

Speaker: Lidia Mínguez Alarcón, Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Brigham and Women's Hospital

Location: Zoom only

Details: Our monthly Center Chalk Talks series (4th Wednesdays) is a chance for members and affiliates to showcase the exciting research they are working on and solicit collaboration. This event will be recorded and made available on our website.

Zoom: <https://harvard.zoom.us/j/93854403999?pwd=L3NvbmI2bnQyT3ZObi9BQmxGN3VZZz09>

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Title: Catching Your Breath at Work: An Introduction to Work-related Asthma

Speakers: Rachael Zacks, MD, MPH, Chief Resident, Harvard Occupational and

Environmental Medicine Residency

David C. Christiani, MD, MPH, MS, Elkan Blout Professor of Environmental Genetics, HSPH, and Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School.

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Register Here: https://harvard.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9Azc7Wlt7aQOTb0

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Tuesday, January 31; 12:00 – 1:00 PM ET

Event: The Secret Sauce to Successful Digital Health Companies: Driving Strategic Stakeholder Alignment

Details: Dr. Liz Kwo (EH MPH alum 2015-16) and Nicki MacManus will discuss the strategic insights that create successful digital health companies, and how these technologies are contributing to a better healthcare experience for all. The discussion will explore how companies continue to transform care and how to ignite the 3Ps: payors, providers, and patients to accelerate the adoption of digital health and fine tune the implementation of these technologies. Topics will include remote patient monitoring, applications of AI, using voice for mental health and genomics for precision medicine.

More info: [Register Here](#) (email susan.calcio@hbshealthalumni.org with any questions)

Friday, March 3; by 5:00PM ET

Event: Deadline for Pilot Project Applications (up to \$30,000 in funding available)

Details: Do you study health effects of the environment? Work with communities concerned about environmental exposures? Then apply to our Pilot Project program (up to \$30,000 in funding)! The Harvard Chan-NIEHS Center for Environmental Health is now accepting applications for pilot projects related to Environmental Health sciences. All Center members are eligible to apply for these funds. Other faculty or research scientist-level researchers may apply in collaboration with a Center member co-investigator. Applications are accepted from Harvard Research Associates or Fellows working under the supervision of Center faculty, but the role of the sponsoring faculty members must be specified. Doctoral students are not eligible for pilot project support.

More info: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/niehs/apply-for-funds/pilot-project-program/>

Chair Chatter
January 27, 2023

It was a pleasure meeting many of our community members at our EH winter party on Tuesday! I want to thank Barbara for organizing the event, and Kaitlin and Rose for helping out. It was great to meet many of you and your families. Our students shared some terrific ideas about what we as a department can do to enhance their experience here.

I am always open to hearing from anyone in our EH community about what your thoughts are about how to build upon the tremendous foundation that we have; I plan on soliciting your input in several different ways in the near future – stay tuned! I have open office hours every Monday starting 2/13 from 1-2 pm in Room 1301, Bldg 1 and every Thursday starting 2/16 from 2-3 pm in Room 404 (Conference room—across from Room 404J) at 401 Park (Landmark). I look forward to seeing you soon.

Now for other news about the department. Last week I congratulated Zac Nagel and Kris Sarosiek on their respective promotions to Associate Professor. This week, I am pleased to announce that they have been named Acting Co-Directors of the John B. Little (JBL) Center for Radiation Sciences. The JBL Center is in good hands under their leadership.

Congratulations to Jeff Fredberg, who reaches his 35-year milestone at the school in February.

Congratulations also to Tamarra James-Todd, whose Taplin Equipment Fund proposal to purchase an MC-780U Bioimpedance Tanita scale was accepted. The Taplin committee noted that equipment awarded is meant to be shared, and this item could potentially benefit many researchers in the school.

Ronald Panganiban, a research scientist in Quan Lu's lab, has accepted an assistant professor faculty position in the Division of Asthma Research at Cincinnati Children's Hospital and Medical Center. Ron starts in April. Congratulations Ron!

Meanwhile, several of our department's researchers were quoted in the popular press. You may have heard a lot about the potential asthma health risks related to gas stoves. Ari Bernstein of C-CHANGE was featured on a CNBC digital video entitled "[The Health Risks from Cooking With Gas Stoves, Explained](#)".

Shruthi Mahalingaiah was quoted in *The New York Times* in an article entitled "[What to know about PFAS in Period Underwear](#)", which discusses the health consequences of PFAS, particularly as it relates to girls and women. Also, congratulations to [Shruthi](#) and to [David Christiani](#) who were both named top doctors by *Boston Magazine*.

As you can see below, now that spring semester has started we are back to hosting many exciting events. Also keep in mind that the next round of pilot projects for the Harvard Chan-NIEHS Center for Environmental Health is due at the beginning of March.

Please send any news or upcoming events to eh-chatter@hsph.harvard.edu.

I leave you with a couple of pictures from the party; one where we presented Doug a binder full of his chair chatters from 2006 to his last one earlier this month, and another where he literally passed the chair baton to me.



Have a great week, everyone!

Kari

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Upcoming Events

