

NUTRI NEWS

Department of Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health

Summer/Fall 2014

Hilary Farmer, Editor

NUTRITION DEPARTMENT WELCOMES NEW STUDENTS, POST-DOCS, RESEARCHERS, and STAFF

New Nutrition Students

Alen Agaronov

Yang Hu

Alyssa Moran

Martha Tamez

Mariel Arvizu Boy

Isabel Madzorera

New Visiting Scholar

Jose Perez Vanegas; mentor, *Jorge Chavarro*

New Yerby Fellow

Fred Tabung; mentor, *Ed Giovannucci*

New Senior Grant Manager

Tristan Burke (meet Tristan on Page 14)

New Post-Docs

Ismael Campos; mentor, *Frank Hu*

Audrey Gaskins; mentor, *Jorge Chavarro*

Tao Huang; mentor, *Frank Hu*

Kerry Ivey; mentor, *Eric Rimm*

Alisa Pedrana; mentor, *Anu Shankar*

New Visiting Scientists

Erika Ax; mentor, *Teresa Fung*

Michel Lucas; mentor, *Alberto Ascherio*

Aline Martins de Carvalho; mentor, *Lu Qi*

Lidia Minguez; mentor, *Jorge Chavarro*

Toqir Mukhtar; mentor, *Walter Willett*

Lorena Macias Navarro; mentors, *Eric Rimm* and *Josiemer Mattei*

Daniela Schmid; mentor, *Eric Rimm*

Ilse Schrieks; mentor, *Eric Rimm*

Yeong Sook Yoon; mentor, *Ed Giovannucci*

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Applause, Please

New Appointments/Re-Appointments

Faculty

Primary Appointment:

Eric B. Rimm, ScD, Professor, Nutrition and Epidemiology

Secondary Appointments/Nutrition:

Ganmaa Davaasambuu, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor

Emily Oken, MD, MPH, Associate Professor

Lu Qi, MD, PhD, Assistant Professor

Adjunct Appointments/Nutrition:

Guy A. Crosby, PhD, Adjunct Associate Professor

Sjurdur Frodi Olsen, MD, MSc, DMSc, Adjunct Professor

Research Scientists

Jeremy Furtado, Research Scientist

Anne Lusk, Research Scientist

Vasanti Malik, Research Scientist

Kassandra L. Munger, Research Scientist

New Grant Awards

Alberto Ascherio, PI; *Department of Defense*.

Marilyn Cornelis, PI; *NIH/NIDCD*

Ganmaa Davaasambuu, PI on 2 new grants; *both NIH/NCI*

Josiemer Mattei, PI on 2 new grants; *NIH/NHLBI and American Heart Association*

Kassandra Munger, PI; *National Multiple Sclerosis Society*

Qi Sun, PI; *NIH/NIEHS*

Special Awards

Monica Bertoia, Research Associate, recently received the American Heart Association Scott Grundy Award for Excellence in Metabolism Research for her abstract, "Increased Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables and Weight Change Over Time." This was awarded at the 2014 AHA EPI NPAM Scientific Sessions in San Francisco, CA in March. She also won the Rose Traveling Fellowship to spend 10 weeks at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, UK with Dr. Aedin Cassidy.

Drs. Kassandra Munger, Alberto Ascherio, and colleagues received one of five Best Poster Awards (out of over 900 entries) given at the 2014 Joint Americas Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis—European Committee for Treatment and Research in Multiple Sclerosis meeting held in Boston, MA Sept 10-13, for their poster "*In utero* 25-hydroxyvitamin D and risk of multiple sclerosis among offspring in the Finnish Maternity Cohort".

Dr. Maya Vadiveloo, Research Fellow in Nutrition, was recently awarded a Travel Scholarship from the Boston Nutrition Obesity Research Center (BNORC) to attend the American Heart Association Ten-Day Seminar on the Epidemiology and Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease. She also won second place in the poster competition at the BNORC annual meeting for her poster titled: "Consumption of a Greater Variety of Healthful Foods is associated with metabolic syndrome and its components in U.S. Adults". Dr. Vadiveloo's mentor is **Dr. Josiemer Mattei**.

New Asian Diabetes Prevention Website Launched!

Submitted by Joshua Bocher, Website Coordinator

The Asian Diabetes Prevention Initiative, a joint effort between the Harvard School of Public Health and the National University of Singapore Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health, provides science-based evidence for policy makers and the public to reverse the spread of type 2 diabetes in Asia. It recently launched a new website <http://asiandiabetesprevention.org/> designed to provide the most up-to-date, best-practice information to the public, health and public health practitioners, business and community leaders, the media, and policymakers.

Diabetes is a rapidly emerging epidemic in Asia and contains the potential to overwhelm the health care systems of the world's most populous continent and undermine economic growth. To combat this rising epidemic, the ADPI website provides quick and easy access to information about the causes of type 2 diabetes, its dire consequences, and what can and must be done to decrease its prevalence of in Asia.

Frank Hu, Professor of Nutrition and Epidemiology at HSPH, is co-editorial director of the new website, along with **Lilian Cheung**, Lecturer, and **Rob van Dam**, Associate Professor at SSHSPH. They hope it will raise the public's awareness about this "silent" epidemic and spur urgent actions to address it.

Some key features of the new website include (1) raising awareness of the problem of diabetes in Asia; (2) concisely summarizing the cause of type 2 diabetes; (3) offering strategies to prevent diabetes in key settings, such as family and community; and (4) presenting a quick and convenient diabetes risk calculator.

For the press release, see: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/asian-diabetes-prevention-website-launched/>



Nurses' Health Study II Receives Very High Score from NIH!

We have good news to report on our latest Nurses' Health Study II (NHSII) grant application, "Risk Factors for Breast Cancer in Younger Nurses". This was the second submission of the five-year R01 and it received a great score! We hope funding will begin later this fall. The project, headed by **Walter Willett** and **Heather Eliassen**, will examine lifestyle, dietary, metabolic, and selected genetic factors associated with breast cancer risk. Specific aims also include examining mechanistic pathways by incorporating metabolomic profiles and breast cancer tumor subtypes. The NHSII cohort study was started in 1989 with 116,430 nurses. This is a wonderful way to celebrate the first 25 years of the cohort!



NUTRITION DEPARTMENT WELL REPRESENTED ON HSPH STUDENT GOVERNMENT BOARD

Alvin Tran, second-year Public Health Nutrition doctoral student, was recently inducted as the incoming President of the HSPH Student Government, and **Ahmed Alhassani**, a student in the *Nutritional Epidemiology* doctoral program, was elected Vice President of Student Life. The purpose of the Student Government is to act on behalf of Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) students in matters concerning their education and welfare. This requires interaction with the administration, faculty, and other groups and individuals affiliated with HSPH and Harvard University.

As the Nutrition Department Representative for Student Government this past year, Alvin worked closely with other HSPH students to advocate for healthier food options in Sebastian's Cafe. As a result of their work, Sebastian's will be implementing the following changes to help student groups provide healthier food during their events and meetings:

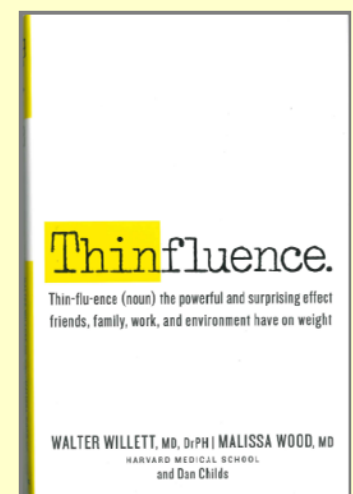
- Using whole wheat whenever possible
- Making healthier options more visible on the menu
- Making whole wheat pizza crust the default when ordering



WALTER WILLETT PUBLISHES NEW INFLUENTIAL BOOK ON WEIGHT

Too often, tackling a weight problem is often viewed as a personal responsibility that requires making healthier choices. However, the latest research shows that *external* factors—from family and friendships to advertising and the workplace environment—make an equal, if not greater, contribution. For example, a person's chance of becoming obese increases by 57 percent if a close friend is obese, 40 percent if a sibling is obese, and 37 percent if a spouse is obese.

In his latest book on the problem of overweight, **THINFLUENCE: The Powerful and Surprising Effect Friends, Work, and Environment Have on Weight** (Rodale Books, 2014), renowned Harvard researcher **Dr. Walter Willett** and co-authors **Dr. Malissa Wood**, a clinical cardiologist and staff physician at Massachusetts General Hospital, and **Dan Childs**, managing editor of medical coverage for ABC News, examine how relationships, workplace, media, and other factors are affecting readers' weights, through a research-based examination of various social, environmental, and policy-based issues. In **THINFLUENCE**, the authors do not tell their readers to ditch their friends and family, change jobs, or move to another state—rather, they help the reader to identify barriers to weight loss success and try to arm them with the tools necessary to overcome these negative forces. The book offers a clear three-step action plan—analyze, act, influence—for readers to identify hidden factors affecting weight, develop a personal toolbox to combat external effects, and become positive influences on others around them. **THINFLUENCE** is unique in that it takes a fresh look at today's weight control discussion, taking it where it has seldom gone before: outside of the individual.



ASK THE EXPERT: DR. LILIAN CHEUNG ON MINDFUL EATING

Dr. Lilian Cheung is Lecturer and Director of Health Promotion & Communication at the Harvard School of Public Health's Department of Nutrition. She is the Editorial Director of *The Nutrition Source*, Harvard School of Public Health's nutrition website for health professionals, media and consumers. She also serves as co-editorial director of the *Obesity Prevention Source*, a website providing science based information for policy changes at the community level, as well as the *Asian Diabetes Prevention Initiative*, a website providing research-based evidence for policy makers and public with the goal of reversing the spread of type 2 diabetes in Asia. Her work focuses on the translation of science-based recommendations into public health communications and programs, to promote healthy lifestyles for chronic disease prevention and control. Her latest book [*Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life*](#) (2010, 2011) co-authored with Zen master, Thich Nhat Hanh, has been acquired for translation in 17 countries. Since mindfulness has become such a "hot topic" lately, and since Dr. Cheung has been in the forefront of this movement, I thought many of our readers would be interested to learn more about the mindfulness movement by letting Dr. Cheung describe it in her own words.

Editor: Dr. Cheung, you possess a strong background in nutritional science, yet you are rapidly emerging as a leader in mindful eating and certain breathing and meditation practices. Can you please tell us why you have tried to bridge the gap between more traditional Western science and Eastern philosophy?

Dr. Cheung: My first introduction to mindfulness was through a 1997 retreat in Key West, Florida led by Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh entitled "Opening the door to healing and transformation." Before then, I had no knowledge of what mindfulness was. When I arrived, I was amazed to find that over 900 people were participating in this week-long retreat and almost all of them were psychotherapists or social workers. I asked myself, "Who is this person

that these professionals would spend a whole week learning from?" It was then that I

found out that Thich Nhat Hanh is a world-renowned teacher of mindfulness—an ancient philosophy that has been practiced for over 2,500 years to help people transform their suffering, unhappiness, and attain more peace.

We basically learned three practices during the retreat: How to breathe, eat, and walk mindfully. Through these three practices and the talks, I was able to become more aware and fully present from moment to moment. Within a few days, it helped me stop my lifelong tendency to regret or worry. Most remarkably, I was able to

experience two full days without any stress—a state that I don't remember ever



experiencing as an adult! It was also the first time that I was introduced to mindful eating and I found myself enjoying and appreciating what I ate much more!

My experiences at this retreat intrigued me so much that I subsequently searched the scientific literature to find out more about mindfulness and mindful eating. I learned that Dr. Jon Kabat Zinn of University of Massachusetts Medical School created the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program in the early 1990s based on the findings from his research on mindfulness. Health professionals across the United States since then have been trained in using mindfulness to manage stress and stress-related health problems. At that time, mindful eating research was just barely beginning.

As I reflected over what we focus on in nutritional sciences, the bulk of it has been on what to eat for our health. Yet, given our current always-on, multi-tasking internet age, the current toxic food and beverage environment, sedentary lifestyles, and the obesity and diabetes epidemics, I thought that it would be prudent to infuse the ancient wisdom of mindfulness that has been practiced for thousands of years with modern science-based nutrition knowledge to help people eat better, appreciate their food, and maintain their health at the same time.

Editor: You have recently collaborated on a bestselling book with Vietnamese Buddhist monk and Nobel Prize-nominated Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh to write *Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life* (HarperCollins, 2010), which has been acquired for translation in 17 countries. I understand that you have been a student of Thich Nhat Hanh for many years. Could you please describe your relationship with him and why you decided to collaborate on this book?

Dr. Cheung: Thich Nhat Hanh has been my teacher who inspires me to practice mindfulness in everything I do throughout

the day. His teachings made it clear to me that eating is one of the key ways to practice mindfulness daily. After a few retreats with him, I decided that it would be important to integrate his teachings on mindfulness with what we know in nutritional science, elaborating on the concept of how to eat to help people maintain their wellbeing through forming the habit of mindful food and beverage consumption. I presented my outline to him in 2005 and asked him to write a Foreword. He nodded and agreed.

National Bestselling Author of *Peace Is Every Step*

THICH NHAT HANH
AND **DR. LILIAN CHEUNG**

savor

Mindful Eating, Mindful Life



*Then, a thought that had never occurred to me popped up and I spontaneously asked him if he would consider co-authoring the book with me since I would literally be citing him on every other page. There was a very long pause and then he said, "Why not!" I since learned that *Savor* is the first and may be the only book that he has co-authored with another person.*

Editor: What exactly do you mean by “mindfulness”?

Dr. Cheung: *Mindfulness is the state of being aware of, and awake to the present, approaching each moment with openness, without bias, akin to using a beginner’s mind. To be mindful is to be truly alive, present with what is going on inside your body, your feelings, your thoughts, and with those around you, as well as with what you are doing. With this way of being, you can think, speak, see, hear, and act in ways that help maintain your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of the world.*

We all have experienced some moments of mindfulness, like while riding on a bike, playing the piano, or carefully cutting a carrot. But our current trend of multi-tasking, like talking on portable phones, driving, thinking, listening to the radio, and even eating simultaneously, is bringing havoc to our minds and being.

Editor: Was there ever an “aha!” moment for you regarding your new philosophy on mindful eating?

Dr. Cheung: *Mindful eating will become a new norm displacing dieting! It will be a new way of life that helps people to enjoy their food, attain their healthy weight, maintain their health, appreciate all the help from nature and mankind that made our meals possible—and last but not least, contribute toward food sustainability so that there will be enough food for everyone globally to eat well.*

Editor: Do you have a primary goal with regard to your promotion of mindful eating?

Dr. Cheung: I see mindful eating as a key self-defense tool for all individuals as we are living a hurried, stressful, multi-tasking life while immersed in a toxic food environment that beckons us to consume more foods and

drinks that compromise our health and wellbeing.

Editor: Could you please briefly list the 7 practices of mindful eating in your book?

Dr. Cheung: These are the 7 Habits of a Mindful Eater:

1. Honor the food—when you eat, only eat
2. Engage all 6 senses—sight, smell, sound, texture, taste and thoughts
3. Serve in modest portions—to enjoy quality, not quantity
4. Savor small bites, and chew thoroughly—to help digestion and taste
5. Eat slowly—to avoid overeating and to let yourself feel satiated
6. Don’t skip meals—to avoid low blood sugar
7. Eat a plant-based diet—for your own health and for the health of the planet

You may want to practice these 7 habits on your own by watching Dr. Cheung’s Mindful Eating HSPH video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Emd9q6_o6Z0&list=TLhfL3viOBVOdoMPQFTWNIiMfa9u-NRrjO

Editor: I understand there is a new mindfulness revolution underway right now in Silicon Valley and elsewhere?

Dr. Cheung: Yes. The cover of the February 3, 2014 of TIME magazine was *The Mindful Revolution—The science of finding focus in a stressed-out multi-tasking culture* (<http://content.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,20140203,00.html>). This is an indication that mindfulness has gone mainstream. The new and high-tech companies in the Silicon Valley and beyond have been interested in mindfulness practice for quite a few years. Each February, executives from these companies and contemplative communities gather at the Wisdom 2.0 conference to learn from experts and each other on how

mindfulness can calm, enrich and enhance their lives, their innovations and productivity (<http://www.wisdom2summit.com>). Universities are also catching on. The University of Mary Washington in Virginia has invited me to be the keynote speaker for their Second Annual Mindfulness Week in September 2014 to address mindful eating. (<http://www.umw.edu/news/2014/08/28/mindfulness-week-returns-to-umw>)

Please also visit Dr. Cheung's website www.savorthethebook.com to locate mindfulness forums, recipes, nutrition information, meditations, the insights of Thich Nhat Hahn, and the Savor blog.

You can also follow the Savor movement on Twitter ([twitter.com/SAVOR the book](https://twitter.com/SAVOR_the_book)) or join the active Savor Facebook community (www.facebook.com/SAVORthebook).

Dr. Cheung also leads a free meditation session every Friday from 12:30-1:30 p.m. in the HSPH Department of Nutrition conference room (317 or 375). Feel free to drop in and join them. However, if you'd like to do a short meditation on your own, here's a link to Lilian's short online breathing exercise on the HSPH YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8c-1Ylieg3g&authuser=0>

If you would like to start practicing mindful eating without distraction at work, please visit the new *Mindful Eating Corner* in the HSPH Kresge cafeteria designated for those who want to eat mindfully. You can locate it by its colorful poster! Dr. Cheung came up with the idea to set aside a special spot in the cafeteria for mindful eating to help people have a more positive eating experience in nurturing and refueling themselves during the lunch break. For Dr. Cheung, eating mindfully means choosing a healthy mix of foods; savoring colors, smells, and textures; chewing slowly; thinking appreciatively about how the food was grown and produced, and being totally present with the meal without multi-tasking. She says some benefits of mindful eating include making healthier food choices, reducing the tendency to overeat, and encouraging people to appreciate and enjoy their food more and feel more satisfied with smaller amounts.



In addition to providing an orientation for people who have never before tried to eat mindfully, Dr. Cheung hopes that "people will take some time to unwind, refuel, and refresh through mindful eating". The Corner was just launched on June 23rd, and is located in the back of Sebastian's seating area. This is a "do-it-yourself" mindful eating space, so bring your food and feel free to use it whenever you'd like!

Please contact nutritionsource@hsph.harvard.edu or check out <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/a-spot-to-savor-in-kresge-cafeteria/> for more information.

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF ATTEND EXCITING ISBNPA MEETING IN SAN DIEGO!

By Alyssa Aftosmes-Tobio, Project Coordinator

We had several students, staff and faculty attend this year's ISBNPA (International Society for Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity) Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA, May 21-24, 2014. ISBNPA is committed to promoting and advocating innovative research and policy in the area of behavioral nutrition and physical activity toward the betterment of human health.



Left to right:

Jo Charles (Research Assistant)

Becky Franckle (Student)

Neha Khandpur (Student)

Rachel Blaine (Student)

Claudia Gehre (Visiting Scientist)

Poster sessions, short orals and symposium topics centered around community interventions, physical activity, and nutrition of preschoolers, young children and families. After many weeks of preparation, our group was excited to leave the cold weather of Boston behind for San Diego. There were many informative symposia and plenty of opportunities for networking during the poster sessions and receptions. Here is a sample of the exciting work that was presented!

What about dads? Assessing fathers' involvement in child feeding and physical activity (Neha Khandpur, Jo Charles, Tim Nelson, Kirsten Davison)

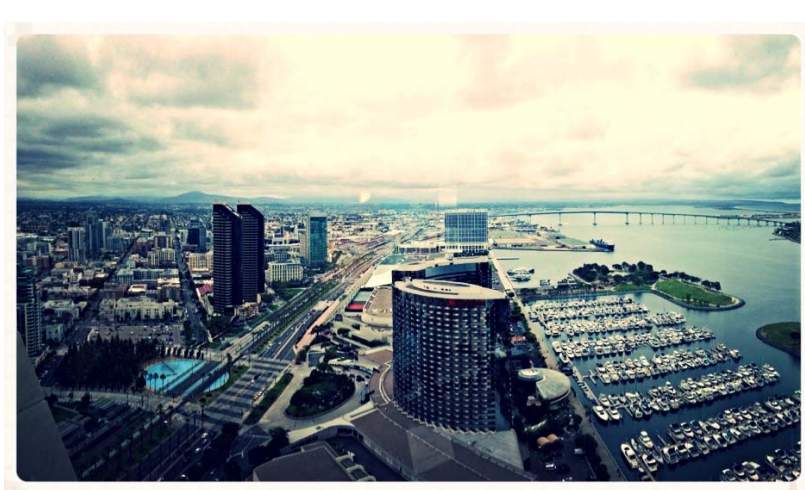
Conditioned to eat while watching TV? Low-income caregivers' perspectives on the role of television and snacking behaviors among preschoolers (Rachel E. Blaine, Jennifer Orlet Fisher, Christine E. Blake, Nicholas Younginer, Alexandria Orloski, Claudia Gehre, Yasmeen Bruton, Kirsten K. Davison)

Anything to make her smile: A conceptual framework for parenting practices around child snacking among low-income caregivers of preschoolers (Authors: Kirsten K. Davison, Christine Blake, Rachel Blaine, Nicholas Younginer, Alexandria Orloski, Claudia Gehre, Yasmeen Bruton, Jennifer Orlet Fisher)

Massachusetts CORD: Leveraging existing state infrastructure – Mass in Motion Kids (Authors: Kirsten K. Davison, Elsie Taveras, Steven Gortmaker, Jennifer Falbe, Rachel Blaine, Rebecca Franckle, Lauren Smith, Thomas Land)

Key stakeholders' perception of major factors influencing childhood obesity and persisting gaps: a qualitative approach in two low-income communities (Authors: Claudia Gehre, Alyssa Aftosmes-Tobio, Emmeline Chuang, Thomas Land, Kirsten K. Davison)

Insufficient sleep among elementary and middle school students is linked with elevated soda consumption and other unhealthy dietary behaviors (Authors: Rebecca L. Franckle, Jennifer Falbe, Steven Gortmaker, Rachel E. Blaine, Claudia Gehre, Catherine Giles, Jo-Ann Kwass, Lauren Smith, Elsie M. Taveras, Thomas Land, Kirsten K. Davison)



View of San Diego Bay from the conference center



Jo Charles discussing his poster

For more information about the conference,
please visit: www.isbnpa2014.org



NUTRITION CLASS LEARNS FIRSTHAND ABOUT FOOD PREPARATION AND SAFETY

BY HILARY FARMER



Recently, the Harvard School of Public Health has begun to facilitate faculty experimentation with innovative pedagogies by encouraging its faculty to forge collaborative ties among teaching and learning experts both within and beyond the university. One fruitful way of obtaining this strategic goal is by engaging students in hands-on learning experiences, such as those acquired through class field trips. In their *NUT 209: Seminars in Food Science & Technology*, required of all Nutrition students, **Drs. Clifford Lo** and **Guy Crosby** recently took their students on a field trip to The Hans Kissle Company in Haverhill, MA to see how food processing and food safety are handled in “the real world”. *NUT 209* is designed to introduce the student to food science and technology based on an understanding of the scientific principles regulating the properties of food, including the nature of food, food safety, and the underlying technology of preparation, processing, and preserving food.

The field trip adventure began by everyone boarding a chartered bus in front of the FXB Building. The students and their two professors all enjoyed a brief road trip together to the Hans Kissle factory located in Haverhill, MA, which was filled by happy chatting and enjoying the beautiful passing scenery. When the class arrived at the Hans Kissle Company headquarters, they were greeted by **Robin Beane**, Director of Operations, who had also interned under Dr. Crosby in her

nutrition program at Simmons College. During her brief introduction, Ms. Beane stressed to us that the company is—first and foremost—driven by food safety. The USDA has an on-site office, and the company undergoes regular inspections by the FDA, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and US Army. Hans Kissle is SHARP Certified which is a partnership program with OSHA to ensure a safe working environment. We also learned that Hans Kissle had achieved and maintained an SQF (Safe Quality Food) Level 3 Certification for 3 years in a row before it received the SQF’s highest honor of being awarded

Manufacturer of the Year this past November! This was no small feat indeed, since implementing HACCP procedures and insuring that each and every one of their products is manufactured to the absolute highest standards has remained a cornerstone of their business. (The Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point, also known as the HACCP, is a system of safety in food production and pharmaceuticals. The system is used by the Food and Drug Administration and the Department of Agriculture to ensure safe procedures and products. Inspections are conducted by a certified HACCP auditor.)



Dr. Clifford Lo

By way of introduction, Robin began by mentioning that Hans Kissle's founder began by making salads at a small food preparation area in a local grocery store many years ago. Before long, this company's salads far outshone those of their competitors and the company gradually evolved into today's Hans Kissle Company, which now sells its products all across the country.

Most of these products are "private label" products, which are sold under the retailer's or food service's brand name. The



Dr. Guy Crosby

Haverhill plant currently employs 125-250 employees on various shifts, and each employee is carefully trained before being allowed to enter the facility since special care is given to personal safety and food safety. In addition to the regular plant workers, Hans Kissle also employs 15 certified quality control experts, 3 food scientists including Robin, who was recently approved as a "Certified Food Scientist" by the Institute of Food Technologists. There are also several on-site safety teams; in addition, everything at Hans Kissle is color-coded for food safety, including the coats worn by plant workers. We learned that all employees have to "suit up" before entering the plant. This entails donning a special hair net, beard mask, earphones, coat, and rubbers for the shoes—a rather time-consuming endeavor. This the class found out firsthand because we too had to "suit up" before being allowed into the plant. Then, on top of this, we had to first go through a special automatic hand-washing station and pass through a sanitizer mat for our rubber shoes! Finally, everything in the plant is taken apart, scrubbed down, and sanitized every night by the sanitation team on the night shift.

Hans Kissle is a nationally respected, independently owned and operated, upscale food manufacturing company, which produces over 1000 different products, including salads and related products sold to retail and food service establishments throughout the US. To give you an idea of all the different foods HK produces, please see a list of their full product line at:

www.hanskissle.com/pdf/hk_productLine.pdf . At

the end of our tour, the class was allowed to sample some of the company's different foods, which was an end-of-the-day treat indeed! If you would like to try some of their delicious recipes, please visit their website at:

<http://hanskissle.com/recipes.html>



The nutrition class learned that the Hans Kissle plant consists of several major components, including special areas just for salads and prepared foods, loading docks containing special coolers (and which were very cold!) and receiving centers, preparation areas, processing areas, a seafood-only area, a pasta room, a special room for spices and preservatives (all specially labeled), and a potato room—among others. Just to give the reader an idea of how food is processed in a facility such as Hans Kissle, pasta is cooked by two different methods: either by blanching (with cooking and cooling sections) or by boiling in a kettle (where more fragile pasta is cooked in small batches). In similar fashion, the potato room contains potatoes,

rice and squash, where food items are cooked under pressure and vacuum. To regulate this, there are control panels for the different cooking cycles.

One thing that was stressed repeatedly throughout our tour of Hans Kissele was its concern for food safety. For example, its cooling system has alarms for all of the cold or frozen storage areas, as well as a special fogging system. Raw materials such as those in salads and seafood are immediately refrigerated. The areas where these products are prepared are continuously kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit, the same as your refrigerator. The company is also a peanut-free facility to protect those people with allergies. All of its procedures are constantly monitored and cross- and double-checked. Considerable testing also goes on for various items such as bacteria and mold. Records are reviewed daily regarding temperatures and allergic labeling. Samples of each batch are retained in the event of future complaints. COA's are required from suppliers, as well as letters of guarantee and third-party audits. Foods are tracked through the system by lot number and then computerized.

At the end of the day, I discovered I had learned quite a lot about food preparation, safety and processing that I never knew before. I suspect many of the students in the class did, too. For example, **Natalie Marchand** summed up her field trip experience very well by saying that *"It was very interesting to see food produced on such a large scale and to learn about the exacting measures taken to ensure food safety. This visit was a wonderful complement to the material in the Food Science and Technology course."*

If you would like to learn further about The Hans Kissele Company, please take their corporate video tour at:

<http://hanskissle.com/video.html>



Updates from the Diabetes & Women's Health (DWH) Study

Sylvia H Ley PhD RD
Postdoctoral Research Fellow

The DWH study team shares exciting updates on the study progress. The DWH Study, funded by the National Institutes of Health, aims to investigate the impact of gestational diabetes across the lifespan and to determine modifiable and genetic risk factors and their interaction for the progression to type 2 diabetes. The team completed the first round of data collection earlier this year. A total of 3036 nurses with a pregnancy history of gestational diabetes agreed to participate and returned completed questionnaires. Biospecimen samples were also collected from 962 women. The team is currently preparing for the second round of data collection to launch this fall.



The DWH Study Team (from left to right): Frank Hu, Sylvia Ley, Renee Miciek, Audrey Gaskins, Jorge Chavarro, Deirdre Tobias



TEACHING NUTRITION LESSONS TO THIRD-GRADERS

Several third grade classes at the J.C. Solomonese Elementary School in Norton, MA recently received a nutrition lesson from our second-year doctoral student in Nutritional Epidemiology, **Nathalie Marchand**. Norton is a suburb just south of Boston and the weather that day was more amenable to skiing than sitting in class, but the students were eager and all participated. They learned about the growth of fruits and vegetables, the different parts of the plants we eat, the amount of sugar in both sugar-sweetened beverages and natural fruit juices, and about Harvard's Healthy Eating Plate.



Nathalie and students (shown holding their vegetables!)

Nathalie used a sugar demonstration to show the students just how much sugar was contained in some of their favorite beverages—the results surprised not only the students, but their teachers as well. The students also had an opportunity to share some of their favorite fruits and vegetables with the class—not surprisingly, oranges and corn often topped the list of favorites.

MEET OUR NEW GRANT MANAGER



Tristan Burke joined the Nutrition Department as a Senior Grant Manager after working in OSP for about two years as a Financial Analyst supporting HMS and HSPH. Prior to OSP he worked as an Operations Manager at an environmental startup in Seattle, Washington that was the recipient of a DOE grant. Tristan is a graduate of the REACH Foundations program and the Research Administration Boot Camp. He has also served as “faculty” for the GMAS Survival class and Research Administration Boot Camp as a content expert in grant closeout. As a Senior Grant Manager here in the Nutrition Department, Tristan will

oversee and manage the pre- and post-award activities for a diverse portfolio of federal and non-federal grants, sub-awards, and contracts. He looks forward to bringing his varied experience to the Nutrition Department and continuing to specialize in Research Administration in his new role. **Welcome, Tristan!**

MEET AL WING: HPFS PROGRAMMER AND CENTENNIAL STAR!

by Hilary Farmer

Alvin Wing, Senior Programmer Analyst, recently enjoyed the unique distinction of having been honored at HSPH's **Centennial Celebration of the Stars** event for being the longest-serving employee at this year's celebration! In fact, Al has been employed at Harvard for 45 years! During this time he has seen many people come and go, and he has witnessed many changes taking place. Curious to find out what some of them were, I asked Al to tell me about some of his earlier work experiences and how he thought the Department's work in nutrition research has evolved over the years.



Al got started in his career with the landmark College Alumni Health Study, launched in 1960 by **Ralph S Paffenbarger**, an internationally known authority in the physical activity epidemiology field and an Officer with the US Public Health Service. During that time, Al worked directly with "Paff" until the CAHS moved from the National Heart Institute in Framingham to HSPH in 1968. The group was later joined in 1988 by a public health student named **I-Min Lee**, who is now a Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology here. Al recalls working on the second floor of a wood frame house which they shared with the now-famous Framingham Heart Study under the leadership of **Dr. Roy Dawber**, whose space was on the first floor, in the early years of this Study.

I asked Al what was involved in his work in those early days, and was surprised to learn that he used an IBM 1620 computer at HSPH. The group shared the type 83 card sorter and IBM 029 keypunches that they used with the Framingham Heart Program. As if this weren't enough traveling back and forth, he also performed his data analyses on a mainframe IBM 7094 computer at the Office of Information Technology (OIT) at Harvard in Cambridge as well as certain MIT computer facilities. Thus, Al dutifully rode the shuttle bus back and forth to Harvard and MIT, which also began to offer workshops on programming—something which was highly innovative in those times. Ever resourceful, Al jumped on the early bandwagon and took advantage of

these early workshop offerings, and told me that he received much of his training this way.

Al joined the Health Professionals Follow-up Study in the Department of Nutrition in 1992 after it was launched in 1986 by **Dr. Walter Willett** and colleagues. At the same time he was working in the Department of Epidemiology with **Paff** and **I-Min Lee** on the College Alumni Health Study. We took a brief detour down Memory Lane when Al recalled that everything was a lot smaller back then, and he clearly remembers working with **Bill Mahoney**, who recently retired as Director of IT Infrastructure—and who has been at HSPH longer than Al—in the Biostats Department. **Taso Markatos**, now Chief for Information Technology at HSPH, was in charge of all of the computers in the Epi Department which was led by **Dr. Brian McMahon**, Epi Chair.

I then proceeded to ask Al how he got his start as a computer analyst in the first place when back in those days so such job title even existed? I was quite surprised to learn that Al actually started out in Economics with an AB from Tufts University, after which he got his MBA in Business Administration at Columbia University. Since no university offered a degree in computer science then, Al thought a business background could give him an edge. To round out his education even further, Al then began to take a number of statistics courses in Framingham while working as a GS-7 (or Statistician I) in the Federal study.

Mr. Wing has always been quite a go-getter, and I was amazed to learn about all the many other things that have occupied his time throughout his life. For example, at one time he was in the Hanscom Air Force Reserve in New Bedford. He remembers going to summer camp for a month each year in New Hampshire and going to training for one week per month for six years. He said this was preferable to the draft! After graduating from Tufts, Al then went to Lackland AFB for basic training in San Antonio, TX, then on to Wichita Falls to train as an aircraft mechanic. I was fascinated to hear that Al had been a member of Hanscom's Flying Box Cars, so his unit had actually been activated during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 and was on active standby for a month until the crisis was finally over. For his valor in the Cuban Missile Crisis, Al was awarded official Veteran status. Al has always remained very patriotic and continued to be active in the American Legion Post, where he served as Commander for two years. He recalls marching in Veterans Day parades with the New York Chinatown Post and his role as an active participant in their Toys for Tots program.

If all of this hasn't kept Al busy enough, he has also been involved with the New England Lee Association (his original name was Lee, not Wing), first serving as President and then Vice President, in addition to a host of other activities on behalf of the organization. For example, the Wing family often goes to the US convention for the Lee Association, having recently attended one in Portland, OR. The family also took a cruise to Nassau, the Bahamas, one time with the Lee Association. On this cruise Al's wife Anita (who was a bilingual public school teacher in Quincy before retiring) helped the non-English speakers in the group with the program of daily activities and the ship's menu. Another member of their group taught a Tai Chi class on the ship. Al loves to tell the story of how, in order to prepare for their very first cruise, he and Anita took a ballroom dance class with another couple that they knew. This sparked quite an enthusiasm for ballroom dancing—and the Wings have been dancing ever since! (Al personally likes to cut a rug with foxtrot and rumba—no fast dances for him!) When they

were younger, the Wings went dancing on a weekly basis and also attended some mixers. They currently go to Mosely, and occasionally do some line dancing there.



I was impressed with how curious about things and how enthusiastic Al was for getting involved with life, so was not too surprised to find out that he also enjoys photography. In fact, Al's wife planted the photo bug in Al on an early date when she took him to her darkroom at UMass/Boston. Now, both of them are lifelong shutterbugs. The Wings are also very devoted to their family and enjoy visiting Anita's 101-year old mother in Brookline, and their son's and daughter's families in Seattle and Brookline. Although Anita does most of the cooking at home, Al confessed that he learned how to cook himself early in life when he worked with his brothers in his father's Wing's Restaurant in Chelsea, prepping all of the food. Sadly, the restaurant is no longer in operation.

I asked Al what came to mind when he looked back on his long and fruitful career here? Although Al could reminisce forever, some of things that came back to him were his running days with **Betsy Frost-Hawes**, **Liz Lenart**, and **Sarah Freeman**, and **Dr. Frank Speizer's** offering Al tickets to various Red Sox games. All in all, Al Wing says he has experienced a very enjoyable time in the Nutrition Department, has had very nice colleagues, and has been very fortunate to have worked with **Walter Willett**, **Eric Rimm**, **Ed Giovannucci**, and **Alberto Ascherio**—to name just a few! ☺

REMINDER:
DIETITIANS NEED YOUR MANUFACTURER LABELS!

(Submitted by Lauren Dougherty)

We would like to remind you of the email that was sent from the dietitians in April regarding the on-going collection of food and vitamin manufacturer labels. Due to the current cutback in staff, the dietitians are asking for help collecting manufacturer labels representing the 2013-2014 time frame to help develop the year-specific brand cereal, vitamin, and margarine nutrient tables of products reported >50 times by cohort participants.

We would like to thank those who have submitted margarine, vitamin and cereal 2014 labels to date. We have 20 cereal labels so far out of the 70 we hope to obtain, 5 margarines and only 2 vitamins out of over 100 hundred.

The dietitians plan to send a quarterly list of what is still needed, but don't hesitate to send packaging of current popular or common items not listed. We are not sure yet what we might need for the 2014/2015 nutrient databases so if a product is popular and new to the market since 2010/2011 it might be reported >50 times on the 2014/2015 FFQS.

Emailed photos can be sent to Laura Kent at nhlas@channing.harvard.edu or your labels can be sent by interoffice mail to:

Laura Kent
HSPH NUTRITION
Landmark Center
Nutrition 3East, Rm 11

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!!!

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**Email Hilary Farmer (hfarmer@hsph.harvard.edu)
with any comments, corrections, or suggestions for future issues.**
