

# NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL) May 2013 – September 2013

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## I. EVENTS

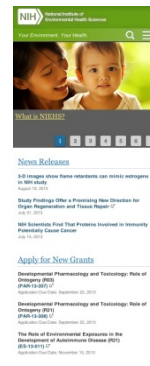
**Launch of NIEHS mobile-ready website June 28.** To meet the growing demands of mobile device users in the U.S. and abroad, NIEHS redesigned its public website, so it can be easily viewed and navigated on a broad variety of mobile devices, such as smartphones and tablets. The NIEHS responsive website reformats the page for mobile devices, to retain virtually all the information that would be seen on a desktop monitor. The redesigned site also fully incorporates the use of the new NIH logo and color scheme.



Old Home Page



New Home Page



Mobile Home Page

**GuLF STUDY Retention.** OCPL continues to work with the GuLF STUDY team on messaging and retention efforts. Since recruitment ended at the end of March, with nearly 33,000 participants enrolled, the GuLF team is working to retain participants in ongoing study efforts. [Web pages](#) have been updated, a newsletter is being developed, and a variety of other outreach efforts continue to be implemented. Dale Sandler, lead scientist for the study, and her colleagues, continue to conduct media interviews to answer questions about the study and provide updates.

**MATCH (Metadata Access Tool for Climate and Health) launch.** OCPL worked with NIEHS program staff to promote the launch of this new cross-agency online resource that is expected to help accelerate research on climate change and human health. John Balbus of OD is serving as spokesperson on this topic and has conducted several interviews.

**NIEHS-NCATS-UNC Toxicogenetics Challenge.** In collaboration with Sage Bionetworks and other partners, NIEHS helped promote a new initiative that will lead to better ways to predict the toxicity of chemicals. A joint [press release](#) issued June 11, “NIEHS-NCATS-UNC DREAM Toxicogenetics Challenge Opens Today: Finding better ways to predict the toxicity of chemicals,” and subsequent Web [updates](#) have generated interest, resulting in 42 teams competing in the challenge as of August 25. The Challenge closes on September 15 and top-scoring teams will be announced at the November DREAM Conference in Toronto. Ray Tice from NTP, and Allen Dearry of OD, are leading this effort at NIEHS. Several webinars and videos about the Challenge have been promoted, and several stories have been written.

- **Chemical and Engineering News** highlighted the challenge on July 1 with a story, “Crowdsourcing toxicity prediction: computational contest aims to improve models for predicting chemical effects.”
- June 23, **Raleigh News and Observer** wrote an article, “How safe are those everyday chemicals.”

## Press Releases

August 19, NIEHS issued a press release, “[3-D images show flame retardants can mimic estrogens in NIH study](#),” about a new paper in EHP that highlighted efforts by our X-ray Crystallography Group. The paper was mentioned in more than 25 media outlets, including **Chemical Watch**. Lars Pedersen of DIR and Linda Birnbaum have served as spokespeople.

July 14, NIEHS issued a press release, “[NIH scientists find that proteins involved in immunity potentially cause cancer](#),” about a paper in Nature Genetics conducted by DIR scientists on APOBEC proteins. Several multimedia components were added to enhance the press release. About 40 stories resulted, including pieces in **Medical News Today**, **Science Codex**, **The Lancet Oncology**, and **Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News**.

June 4, NIEHS worked with federal partners to issue a press release, “[NIH, ONC, and EPA award \\$100,000 to winner of health and technology challenge](#),” to announce the winning teams. The Conscious Clothing system, a wearable breathing analysis tool that calculates the amount of particulate matter that is inhaled, won first prize. David Balshaw of DERT served as the agency spokesperson and participated in the HHS Health Datapalooza event on behalf of NIEHS. Numerous stories were written about the challenge.

- June 29, a **Houston Chronicle** article, “The age of personal air monitoring is at hand,” which included quotes from Balshaw.
- June 5, **CNET.com** wrote, “Conscious Clothing measures the junk you're breathing.”
- June 5, **Medill Reports Chicago** wrote, “Breathe in, breathe out: Conscious Clothing designs a wearable air pollution monitor.”
- June 5, the **Examiner** wrote, “EPA and NIH award \$100,000 for air monitoring clothing.”
- June 27, the challenge and winners were highlighted on the [NIH Director's Blog](#).

May 8, OCPL coordinated with other NIH institutes to issue an [NIH statement on Asthma Awareness Month](#). The release included a quote from Birnbaum and highlighted NIEHS findings.

Additionally, collaborations with universities, journals, and other partners allowed OCPL to promote other key findings supported by NIEHS.

- Joined with the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology to issue a press release "[Length of human pregnancies can vary naturally by as much as 5 weeks](#)" that included a quote from Anne Marie Jukic, postdoc in DIR. More than 225 news stories have been written about the research published in Human Reproduction. Several key outlets included **BBC, U.S. News & World Report, Discover Magazine, Shape Magazine, and numerous network affiliates.**
- Collaborated with the University of Rochester to highlight new findings from research supported by NIEHS. The [press release](#) also included a quote from Cindy Lawler of DERT.
- Worked with Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center to include a quote from NIEHS Scientific Director Darryl Zeldin in their press release, "[Study findings offer a promising new direction for organ regeneration and tissue repair.](#)"
- Michigan State University worked with OCPL to issue a press release about new funding they received from the Superfund Research Program. Several stories were written from the press release, including "MSU teaming up to tackle pervasive pollutants" on **Fox 47 News**, and "Michigan State U. to lead \$14.1M dioxin research," in the **Seattle Post-Intelligencer**.
- Columbia University Mailman School of Health released a story, "[Lead acts to trigger schizophrenia](#)" that was posted on the NIEHS website.
- Emory put out a press release, "[Emory, Georgia Tech receive first human "exposome" center grant in U.S.](#)"

## II. NEWS COVERAGE

### News Coverage of NIEHS Science, Researchers, and Activities

May 2013 — 1144 stories

June 2013 — 769 stories

July 2013 — 468 stories

August 2013 — 587 stories

## Highlights from Newspapers, Trade Papers, and National Magazines

September 3, **OnEarth Magazine** ran an article, “Something in the air: the health risks of leaded gasoline are a thing of the past, right? Wrong” that mentions two articles in Environmental Health Perspectives.

August 25, the **Durham Herald-Sun** highlighted NIEHS in the article, “NIEHS researcher receives tenure,” as part of OCPL’s effort to inform local media of NIEHS research and activities. The news focused on Donald Cook of DIR receiving tenure.

August 23, **BNA’s Daily Environment Report** developed a special 11-page report on BPA. The piece, “Bisphenol A debate transforms toxicology as market forces outpace research efforts,” included quotes from Birnbaum and many others.

The summer issue of **Lab Matters** included a story, “NIEHS leaders address environmental committees,” written by OCPL staff, highlighting the role that NIEHS played in the annual meeting of the Association of Public Health Laboratories.

**The Center for Public Integrity** developed a Web-based piece, “Industry muscle targets federal Report on Carcinogens” that focuses on some of the work being done by NTP. Birnbaum is quoted, among others.

July 20, **The Lancet** wrote a story, “Wellcome Trust scheme boosts sustainable health research” that included quotes from Balbus.

After developing a [Ginkgo](#) fact sheet discussing NTP study results, several stories appeared over the summer.

- July 18, **Natural Products Insider** wrote, “Senate committee urges National Toxicology Program ‘to be highly precise.’”
- June 17, an **Everyday Health** column by Dr. Sanjay Gupta reported, “Herbal supplements: how safe are they?”
- June 4, **New York Daily News** reported, “Consumer group asks FDA to ban ginkgo biloba after study links supplement to cancer in mice and rats.”
- June 3, the **Center for Science in the Public Interest** wrote, “FDA urged to prohibit sale of ginkgo in wake of cancer study.”

July 1, **Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology News** featured the work of Alex Merrick of NTP in a piece, “Unraveling the Transcriptome.”

July 1, **Environmental Health Perspectives** released a story, “Tox21 to date: steps toward modernizing human hazard characterization,” which discussed a new review article by some of the Tox21 participants, including Tice, who is quoted in the news story.

June 26, **BNA's Daily Environment Report** included quotes from Kristina Thayer of NTP in the story, "NTP urged to continue efforts to craft ways to systematically review scientific evidence."

June 18, another story on this topic appeared in **BNA's Daily Environment Report**, "Groups commend Toxicology Program on systematic review approach; offer advice."

June 18, a **Huffington Post** story, "Endocrine disruptors heat up the Hill," included quotes from Birnbaum.

June 17, **Environmental Health News** developed a story, "Frogs feminized, but atrazine's effects on people uncertain," which included quotes from Suzanne Fenton of NTP.

June 11, **USA Today** story, "Study links food-packaging chemical and obesity in girls," included quotes from Kimberly Gray of DERT.

June 6, **Fremont News Messenger** wrote, "Proving chemical caused cancer cluster could prove difficult," which included an interview with Scott Masten of NTP.

June 6, **Discover Magazine** focused on the NTP studies on hexavalent chromium in "The cancer chronicles: Erin Brockovich and Mother Jones."

May 28, **Environment and Energy Daily** wrote a lengthy piece featuring the work of an NIEHS key stakeholder. The story, "Fiery leader of breast cancer group puts chemical exposures in spotlight," included quotes from Gwen Collman, director of DERT.

May 10, the **Baltimore Sun** wrote an article, "Rising temperatures increase health risks" that included quotes from Balbus.

May 9, **Science Daily** featured research supported in part by NIEHS through its intramural research program. The story, "Early infant growth rate linked to composition of gut microbiota," highlights work done by Shyamal Peddada and colleagues in DIR and other organizations.

May 9, a story in **Medscape**, "Can eating peppers help ward off Parkinson's disease?" included quotes from Honglei Chen of DIR.

May 8, **BNA's Daily Environment Report** wrote, "Groundbreaking nanotechnology studies replicate results across independent labs," which highlighted the nanotechnology work being supported by NIEHS.

May 7, **The Nation's Health** featured an interview with Birnbaum, "Q&A with NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum: Looking toward the future of new environmental research: Providing leadership in environmental health sciences."

May 6, **Scientific American** included a story, "Flame retardants linked to lower IQs, hyperactivity in children," which quoted Birnbaum.

### **III. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OUTREACH**

#### **Social Media Efforts**

NIEHS continues to expand its use of social media and other outlets to reach a broad audience, including:

[Facebook](#)

[Flickr](#)

[Twitter](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Email lists](#)

[RSS News Feeds](#)

The final week of March, NIEHS marked a [social media milestone](#), when its Facebook likes exceeded 1,000.

During the first week of July, a new study on UV exposure and juvenile dermatomyositis, by Lisa Rider of DIR, received a lot of attention in the social media arena, with several people and organizations tweeting about the paper.

#### **STEM Day Participation**

OCPL participated in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Day June 24 at NIEHS, in partnership with North Carolina New Schools. OCPL Director Christine Flowers participated in the career snapshot panel.

#### **Training**

The NTP leadership team and OCPL worked together to organize a presentation skills training for 9 NTP staff scientists. The all-day session, with trainers from the Communications Center, was held June 13. The training incorporated individual, hands-on exercises, interactive discussion, and experiential on-camera learning, to help develop presentation skills.

## Web and Materials Development



Since NIH launched its new logo guidelines in the spring, OCPL has been incorporating the new NIEHS logo on many of its online publications. All fact sheets, pocket cards, and brochures are available on the NIEHS website at <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/index.cfm>.

### Online Newsletter

The NIEHS monthly online newsletter, the [Environmental Factor](#), highlights NIEHS research, staff accomplishments, and ongoing activities. Many of the stories in the Environmental Factor are selected and used by other publications, including the **NIH Record**, **NIH Catalyst**, **NTP Update**, and others.

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