

NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL) September 2013 – February 2014

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I. EVENTS

Release of NTP Nonneoplastic Lesion Atlas. At the end of January, NTP unveiled a new Web-based resource for pathologists worldwide. The atlas contains thousands of high-quality images and guidelines for diagnosis of nonneoplastic lesions in experimental rodent models, and will help standardize terminology in NTP and other studies. When completed, the atlas is expected to contain 56 sections, each focusing on a particular organ or tissue, and will be updated continually as new science emerges. OCPL worked closely with NTP to develop and promote this resource. A few of the outreach activities to bring visibility to this new free resource included an accompanying editorial in the journal *Toxicologic Pathology*, a story in the NIEHS monthly newsletter the *Environment Factor* (e-Factor) and other NIH publications, promotional materials, presentations and focus groups for staff and outside users, and planning sessions for the Society of Toxicology conference in March and the Society of Toxicologic Pathway conference in June. This new resource can be found at <http://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/nnl/>.

Children's Health Conference. OCPL worked closely with NIEHS program staff and EPA to highlight and staff the October 29-30 conference "[Protecting Children's Health for a Lifetime: Environmental Health Research Meets Clinical Practice and Public Policy](#)." Researchers from the 16 NIEHS/EPA children's environmental health and disease prevention research centers attended the event. A [media advisory](#) was issued, a [brochure](#) updated, and a congressional briefing held. Several media outlets highlighted the event, and a story ran in the December [e-Factor](#).

Gulf science conference in Alabama. NIEHS played a major role in the [2014 Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill and Ecosystem Science Conference](#) held January 26-29 in Mobile, Alabama. NIEHS staff were among the 800 scientists from across the nation who gathered to discuss ongoing research on measuring the effects of the BP oil spill, and ways to improve responses to future environmental disasters. NIEHS and NTP Director Linda Birnbaum, Ph.D.; head of the NIEHS Gulf Study, Dale Sandler, Ph.D., of DIR; head of the NIEHS Worker Education and Training Program, Chip Hughes, of DERT; and others played an active role in the conference. NIEHS exhibited at the conference and handled media requests. Several stories resulted, including:

- January 29, **The Times-Picayune** wrote, "[BP Deepwater Horizon disaster offered lessons for more rapid, cooperative response, scientists say](#)," which included a nice summary of the meeting and made reference to NIEHS scientists participating in the meeting.

- January 28, [The Times-Picayune](#) wrote, “[Gulf Coast residents not showing higher chemical exposure post-BP oil spill than rest of nation](#),” which included quotes from Birnbaum, Sandler and Richard Kwok, Ph.D., of DIR, and some grantees.

Refresh for NTP home page in January. OCPL staff gathered data on traffic and usage patterns of the NTP website, in order to develop designs for a new, more user friendly home page for NTP. After presenting mockups to NTP leadership, OCPL worked with NTP staff to implement the new look and feel. The refreshed design was released in January.



NTP Old Home Page



Refreshed Look for Home Page

NIEHS-NCATS-UNC Toxicogenetics Challenge. In collaboration with Sage Bionetworks and other partners, NIEHS helped promote an initiative that will help find 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](#) helped generated interest among the scientific community.
- November 8, winners were announced at the 2013 DREAM Conference in Toronto, Canada, in conjunction with the RECOMB/ISCB Conference on Regulatory and Systems Genomics, one of the premier annual meetings for computational and experimental scientists in the areas of regulatory genomics and systems biology.
- December 2, Challenge winners presented to about 60 scientists at NIEHS, during an informative seminar, “Crowdsourcing Tox21 Qualitative High Throughput Screening Data.”

OCPL efforts to promote the challenge included:

- A story in the January-February NIH Catalyst, “[Crowdsourcing: accelerating the pace of toxicity testing.](#)”
- Two e-Factor stories — “[Toxicogenetics Challenge winners announced](#)” in December, and “[Seminar showcases Toxicogenetics Challenge winners](#)” in January.

Press Releases

December 17, NIEHS worked closely with EPA to promote a press release, “[EPA Releases Chemical Screening Data on 1,800 Chemicals/Agency improves access to chemical data and announces ToxCast Data Challenges.](#)” Ray Tice of NTP was quoted in the release and served as spokesperson for NIEHS.

October 25, NIEHS issued a media advisory, "[NIH/EPA Celebrate Children's Health Month, 15 Years of Children's Health Research](#)," to highlight the October 29-30 conference.

October 18, NIEHS issued a press release, "[Tanning Gene Linked to Increased Risk of Testicular Cancer, According to NIH Scientists](#)" that focuses on work published in Cell by DIR scientist Douglas Bell, Ph.D., and his colleagues. More than 50 stories resulted from the release issued by NIEHS and the University of Oxford, including stories in **Nature**, **Science**, **Chicago Tribune**, and **Huffington Post**.

August 19, NIEHS issued a press release, "[3-D Images Show Flame Retardants Can Mimic Estrogens in NIH Study](#)," about a study conducted by Birnbaum and DIR scientists, which ran in Environmental Health Perspectives, showing brominated flame retardants can mimic estrogen hormones. Several stories resulted, including pieces in **Chemical Watch** and **Molecular Imaging**.

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

II. NEWS COVERAGE

News Coverage of NIEHS Science, Researchers, and Activities

September 2013 — 198 stories

October 2013 — 352 stories

November 2013 — 745 stories

December 2013 — 693 stories

January 2014 — 672 stories

Highlights from Newspapers, Trade Papers, and National Magazines

February 2, **Philadelphia Inquirer** wrote, "[More evidence that BPA is harmful](#)," which included quotes from Birnbaum, as well as grantees.

December 22, **Durham Herald-Sun** ran an article, "Commuter awareness group honors Durham resident," which featured Dick Sloane, recently retired from OM.

In December, Birnbaum and other researchers, including Theo Colborn, Ph.D., were featured in a video developed by Link TV, "[UNSAFE: The Truth Behind Everyday Chemicals](#)."

December 20, **Durham Herald-Sun** wrote, "Two NIEHS scientists awarded NIH tenure," which highlighted the achievements of Honglei Chen, M.D., Ph.D., and Michael Fessler, M.D., both of DIR.

December 19, **The Atlantic** wrote a lengthy piece "Living sick and dying young in rich America," which included quotes from Frederick Miller, M.D., Ph.D., of DIR.

December 19, **Durham Herald-Sun** ran an article, "NIEHS offers paid internships to college students," which highlighted a program supported by NIEHS.

In December, a peer review meeting organized by NTP in December received some attention. December 12, **BNA's Daily Environment Report** wrote "Ortho-Toluidine Reclassification," and on December 13, "NTP Panel says pentachlorophenol should be listed as reasonably anticipated carcinogen." Both stories highlighted efforts by NTP Report on Carcinogens staff.

December 10, **Environmental Health News** wrote, "Perfluorinated chemicals studied in breast milk, menopausal women," which attributed some quotes to NIEHS scientists who published the paper.

December 9, **Washington Post** wrote, "BPA is still everywhere, and mounting evidence suggests harmful effects," which included reference to NIEHS funding, Web pages, and quotes from grantees.

December 9, **Durham Herald-Sun** touted the achievements of Sandler and a postdoctoral fellow in its piece, "NIEHS mentor and fellow honored."

November 26, **Wall Street Journal** wrote, "Doctor on the front lines of town's fight against asbestos disease," which included quotes from Aubrey Miller, M.D., of OD.

November 25, **Durham Herald-Sun** wrote, "Local beekeeper honored," which highlighted some of the achievements of Jack Bishop, Ph.D., recently retired from NTP.

November 22, **Science** magazine wrote a lengthy piece titled, "When mice mislead," which included quotes from Kristina Thayer, Ph.D., of NTP, among others.

November 21, **Wall Street Journal** wrote, "Battle rages over risk from styrene," which included quotes from John Bucher, Ph.D., of NTP.

November 18, **Chemical and Engineering News** wrote, "Gymnasts exposed to high levels of flame retardants during workouts," included quotes from Birnbaum.

November 11, **Agence France-Presse** and other outlets, including **Naharnet.com**, carried a story that focused on the NIEHS Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Program. The story, "Surprises in hunt for environmental links to breast cancer," included quotes from Les Reinlib, Ph.D., of DERT.

November 1, **Pacific Standard** wrote, "What in the air causes lung cancer?," which included quotes from Bucher.

October 30, **BNA's Daily Environment Report** reported on some of the happenings at the children's conference, in a piece that included quotes from Birnbaum and grantees, "Research finding that chlorpyrifos affects learning said to justify tighter regulation." A story in **Inside EPA**, "Fearing effects on children, NIEHS chief seeks stricter scrutiny of toxics," also included quotes from Birnbaum.

October 23, **Wall Street Journal** wrote, "Safety rules for cosmetics in limbo," which included quotes from Birnbaum.

October 17, NIEHS was featured in several local news stories about the reopening of the federal government. [ABC 11 TV News](#) featured Jerrel Yakel, Ph.D., and his team in the DIR Laboratory of Neurobiology.

October 9, **Hispanic Business** highlighted some of the NIEHS work related to nanotechnology in “New nanomaterials findings from National Institutes of Health described.”

September 25, **Environmental Health News** wrote, “Flame retardants banned years ago finally declining in women, study suggests,” which included quotes from Birnbaum.

September 25, **BNA’s Daily Environment Report** covered the Scientific Advisory Committee on Alternative Toxicological Methods (SACATM) meeting that was held at NIEHS in September. The story, “Interagency Committee to refocus efforts to spur use of non-animal toxicity tests,” included highlights from the meeting and quotes from Warren Casey, Ph.D., of NTP.

September 10, **Yale Environment 360** wrote, “How tiny fish could reveal effects of chemical exposure,” which included quotes from Birnbaum.

September 5, **BNA’s Daily Environment Report** covered NTP peer review meetings and wrote, “NTP draft evaluations find rubber chemical, wood preservative to be human carcinogens.”

September 4, **JAMA** wrote about some of the research being done in DIR regarding pregnancy outcome. The story, “Pregnancy length may vary by 5 weeks” included quotes from Anne Marie Jukic, Ph.D., of DIR. This topic was covered by many media outlets.

August 27, **BNA’s Daily Environment Report** published a lengthy piece about the state of BPA research. “Bisphenol A debate transforms toxicology as market forces outpace research efforts” included quotes from Birnbaum and others.

August 27, **BNA’s Daily Environment Report** wrote about NTP’s systematic review process in “Strategies weighed for building confidence in systematic reviews: clarifying rationales,” which included quotes from Thayer.

August 25, **Durham Herald-Sun** ran an article, “NIEHS researcher receives tenure,” which focused on Donald Cook, Ph.D., of DIR, receiving tenure.

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](#)

New hires in OCPL



Kelly Lenox. e-Factor editor Eddy Ball retired from federal service in September. December 2, Kelly Lenox was selected and took on his role. Lenox has degrees in environmental science and writing, and has worked for EPA and Oxford University Press.



Joe Balintfy. August 26, Joe Balintfy joined the OCPL team. Balintfy worked in the NIH Office of the Director communications office for six years prior to joining NIEHS. Balintfy's will be providing communications support for DERT and assisting with the Institute's growing social media presence.

Training

October 28-29, OCPL sponsored two Web content writing and infographic classes for nearly 40 NIEHS staff. Staff and contractors who devote a large amount of time to developing Web content attended and provided favorable reviews.

Web and Materials Development

Several new fact sheets have been developed or updated since September.

- [Acrylamide](#) was updated in October to include new NTP findings.
- [The Freedom of Information Act at NIEHS and NTP](#)
- [Lead and Your Health](#)
- [Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods](#)
- [NIEHS/EPA Children's Environmental Health and Disease Prevention Research Centers: Protecting Children's Health for a Lifetime](#)
- [Oil Spill Response and Research](#)

Since NIH launched its new logo guidelines in 2013, 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 e-Factor are selected and used by other publications, including the **NIH Record**, **NIH Catalyst**, **NTP Update**, and others.

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