

NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL)
September 2008–February 2009

I. NEWS EVENTS

Announcing the Selection of the new NIEHS/NTP Director

On December 3, 2008, the NIH issued a press release announcing a new director for NIEHS. The press release entitled “[Linda S. Birnbaum, Ph.D., D.A.B.T., A.T.S., Named New Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences](#)” was circulated by OPCL to the media, NIEHS staff, grantees, Council and other distribution lists. The announcement with a photo and a bio was added to the NIEHS website. OCPL coordinated several interviews including stories in **Science**, **The Scientist**, **Science News**, **Occupational Health and Safety**, **The News and Observer**, **Chemical and Engineering News**, **Effect Measure**, **Inside EPA**, the **NIH Record** and others.

On February 2, 2009, **Chemical and Engineering News** ran a two-page feature article on Linda Birnbaum. The article entitled “New Leader Takes Over at NIEHS: Toxicologist Linda Birnbaum charts course for NIH institute” includes photos, audio clips about Birnbaum’s research, and an extensive interview.

Disseminating the Release of Final NTP Report on Bisphenol A — September 3, 2008

OCPL and NTP staff worked together to develop a wide variety of materials to announce and explain the conclusions in the “[NTP-CERHR Monograph on the Potential Human Reproductive and Developmental Effects on Bisphenol A](#).” OCPL updated the NIEHS and NTP web pages related to BPA, including adding a new “Bisphenol A Update” photo and icon on the front of the NIEHS and NTP home pages, [adding audio clips and transcripts from the NTP spokespersons](#), [developing a new fact sheet on BPA](#), and updating its “[Since You Asked](#)” pages for the media and public.

On September 3, 2008, OCPL issued a press release entitled “[NTP Finalizes Report on Bisphenol A](#).” Approximately 400 stories were reported in various media outlets including **Bloomberg News**, **Chemical and Engineering News**, **CNN Money**, **Environment News Service**, **Web MD**, **Associated Press**, **Washington Post**, **New York Times**, **Time magazine** and many others.

In October, November and December 2008, numerous stories following the FDA’s risk assessment decision regarding BPA mentioned the NTP findings. Several stories including one in **Time** magazine on November 2, 2008, and a November 1, 2008 editorial in the **New York Times**, included quotes from NTP Associate Director John Bucher. On December 30, 2008, **USA Today** ran a column entitled “Top health stories of ’08: Stress, drugs and chemical lows” that mentions the September release of the NTP BPA report.

II. NEWS COVERAGE

Newspapers, Trade Papers and National Magazines

The September 2008 issue of **Glamour** magazine featured a lengthy article entitled “The Scariest Health Threat You’ve Never Heard Of” that included quotes from DIR physician/scientist Fred Miller.

In September 2008, several stories focused on the NIEHS-led Sister Study, including a piece by an **ABC affiliate** in Miss. and one in **Medical News Today** entitled “Sisters of Good Morning America’s Robin Roberts Join Sister Study for Breast Cancer Research.”

On September 12, 2008, **Cell-Based Assay News** developed a story called “NTP Hosts RFI Meeting to Develop ‘Rigorous, Comprehensive’ HTS Toxicity-Screen Battery.”

On September 16, 2008, OCPL worked with DERT staff to issue a press release entitled, “[NIEHS Invests \\$21.25 Million to Find Environmental Causes of Parkinson’s Disease.](#)” A story in **Health News** entitled “Deep Pockets Being Opened for Parkinson’s Research” highlighted the new funding. A few months later, on December 9, 2008, a related story appeared in the **Chronicle of Higher Education** entitled “Hidden Hazards: Could pollutants trigger Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases?” that featured NIEHS-supported research on the topic and quotes by Freya Kamel of DIR.

On September 23, 2008, the **University of Arizona** highlighted several of the key speakers that participated in the NIEHS Hispanic Heritage event held at NIEHS. The event highlighted NIEHS’ commitment to educational outreach to the Hispanic community.

On September 29, 2008, **The New York Sun** announced that former NIEHS Director Ken Olden would be the founding dean of the CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College.

On September 29, 2008, NIEHS teamed with other NIH institutes to issue an announcement about a new NIH Roadmap program. The release entitled “[NIH Announces Funding for New Epigenomics Initiative](#)” highlights that the NIH will invest more than \$190 million over the next five years to accelerate epigenomics research, an emerging field of biomedical research. Several media outlets spread the word, including a story in **Curetoday.com** in December that included quotes from Fred Tyson of DERT.

The October 2008 issue of **Self Magazine** included an interview with Retha Newbold of DIR for several stories in this issue, including “Cancer in a Can?” and “Steering Clear of BPA.”

On October 5 and 6, 2008, **The Times-Tribune** ran a two-part series on power lines. NIEHS Associate Director Chris Portier is quoted.

On October 6, 2008, **The Toledo Blade** published a story entitled “Sister study focuses on genetic link to cancer” which focuses on the NIEHS-led prospective study. Lisa DeRoo of DIR is quoted.

On October 7, 2008, the local N.C. paper, **The News and Observer**, ran a story entitled “Telecommuters look smart as gas prices go up” that focuses on teleworking efforts in Research Triangle Park. Dick Sloane of the Office of Management (OM) and Gloria Jahnke of the NTP were quoted about NIEHS efforts.

The October 20, 2008 issue of **People** magazine included a major story about the NIEHS-sponsored Sister Study including a quote by Dale Sandler of DIR.

On October 21, 2008, **The New York Times** ran a story entitled “Dentists Back Sealants, Despite Concerns” that focused on the chemical BPA. The story mentioned the NTP findings.

On October 29, 2008, the **University of Kentucky** issued a press release announcing that NIEHS Acting Deputy Director Bill Suk and NIEHS grantee Phil Landrigan joined with three doctoral students to launch a new environmental series at the University.

The November 2008 issue of **Nature Medicine** included a story entitled “As IVF becomes more common, some concerns remain” that includes quotes from Carmen Williams of DIR.

On November 12, 2008, a story published online in **Environmental Health News** entitled “Enviro health scientists, chemists join forces to promote safe chemicals” includes quotes from Jerry Heindel of DERT.

On November 12, 2008, local N.C. paper, **The News and Observer**, included a story entitled “Looking at drugs in water” that included quotes from former NIEHS Director Ken Olden.

On November 16, 2008, local N.C. paper, **The News and Observer**, ran a story about BPA entitled “Some moms ditch plastic cups” that includes the findings of the NTP report.

On November 19, 2008, OCPL worked with NTP and NICHD staff to issue a joint NIEHS/NICHD press release entitled “[ADHD Medications Do Not Cause Genetic Damage in Children](#).” The release resulted in stories in the **Washington Post**, **Reuters**, **Web MD**, **UPI**, and **Consumer Affairs.com**.

On December 2, 2008, **Reuters Health** featured a story entitled “Fibroid growth differs in black and white women” about a new DIR-supported paper in PNAS. Donna Baird of DIR was quoted.

On December 16, 2008, **The New York Times** responded to a public inquiry related to electromagnetic devices. Associate Director Chris Portier was quoted.

On December 18, 2008, the National Research Council (NRC) issued a report to EPA on phthalates. Paul Foster of NTP was on the NRC panel and was quoted in numerous media outlets including **Science News and USA Today**.

On December 26, 2008, **Reuters** ran a story entitled “Pain pills may cut risk of bowel cancer: study” that includes quotes from Sangmi Kim of DIR.

On December 26, 2008, the **Washington Post** ran a story related to climate change and pollutants that included a quote from EHP editor Hugh Tilson.

Beginning January 5, 2009, an XM satellite radio program geared toward medical providers called **Reach MD** ran a 15 minute interview with Retha Newbold of DIR entitled “Concerns Over Bisphenol A (BPA) Exposure.” To listen to the program or view a copy of the transcript, go to <http://www.reachmd.com/xmsegment.aspx?sid=3976>.

On January 8, 2008, **The Huffington Post** highlighted the NIEHS-funded work at the University of California, Davis that focuses on autism.

The January 13, 2009 issue of the **Daily Environment Report** included quotes from NTP Associate Director John Bucher for the annual “2009 Outlook” article.

The January 22, 2009 issue of **Discover Magazine** included a story entitled “Is One Very Tough Rat a Very Big Risk to Human Health?” The story includes quotes from Jef French of NTP.

On January 23, 2009, **Congressional Quarterly Press** published a 20+ page report entitled “Regulating Toxic Chemicals” that included quotes from NTP Associate Director John Bucher.

On January 25, 2009, the **Washington Post** ran a story entitled “Database Helps Assess Your Breast Cancer Risk” that references the NIEHS.

On February 1, 2009, the **Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA)** ran an article entitled “Training program brings veterinary pathologists to NIH” that includes information about Mark Hoenerhoff of DIR.

On February 3, 2009, OCPL worked with DIR staff and Duke University to issue a press release entitled “[Research Finds New Cause of Ozone Wheezing and Potential Treatments](#).” A story in the **Arizona Republic** included quotes from Stavros Garantziotis of DIR.

III. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OUTREACH MATERIALS

Media Training. On September 29 and 30, 2008, OCPL teamed with trainers from The Communication Center in Washington to provide tailored, small-group training to 15 scientists in the Institute, to help them more effectively communicate their science findings to the media. <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/2008/november/working-with.cfm>

Presentations Skills Training. In January 2009, OCPL teamed with the National Toxicology Program (NTP) to sponsor two training sessions for about 24 NIEHS scientists and administrators in January. The two-day sessions were specifically designed to help NIEHS staff improve their presentation skills. Scientists from the Divisions of Intramural Research (DIR), Extramural Research and Training (DERT), as well as the NTP, participated. Each participant gave a ten minute presentation that was critiqued by the trainer and other attendees. The training was led by Rick Grandinetti of VisionPlanning, Inc. in Morrisville, N.C. <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/2009/february/scientists-get-tips.cfm>

Chinese Delegation Visit. On November 14, 2008, OCPL staff worked with Deputy Scientific Director Bill Schrader of DIR to host a contingent of Chinese government officials involved in a four-month executive education and English-language immersion program at Duke University. The delegation attended a half-day workshop at NIEHS as part of their series of weekly field experiences. NIEHS division heads presented overviews of the scientific activities and organizational structure of their respective areas during the visit. The NIEHS visit also featured Chinese-born scientists working at NIEHS, who presented talks in their native Mandarin Chinese. <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/2008/december/chinese-delegation.cfm>

Environmental Journalists. In mid-October 2008, the OCPL Director and News Director participated in the 18th Annual Conference of the [Society of Environmental Journalists](#) in Roanoke, Va., that was attended by more than 800 reporters. The OCPL staffers met with many of the reporters, disseminated information, and supported the efforts of Gwen Collman and Jerry Heindel of DERT as they participated in several events.

Online Newsletter. OCPL continued to increase readership of the NIEHS monthly online newsletter called the **Environmental Factor** that highlights NIEHS research, staff accomplishments and ongoing activities.

<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/index.cfm>

National Conferences. OCPL worked with others in the Institute to sponsor the consolidated exhibit at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting in San Diego, October 25–29, 2008. OCPL supported the efforts of NIEHS scientists and administrators presenting at APHA. OCPL also joined with others in the Institute to staff the NIEHS consolidated exhibit at the American Association for Advancement of Science (AAAS) in Chicago in mid-February 2008.

Intranet Redesign. OCPL staff hosted 45 group and individual meetings throughout the NIEHS as part of the Intranet (Junction) needs assessment. This assessment is funded by competitive set-aside funds from the NIH Office of the Director (OD).

Total New Coverage for NIEHS Science, Researchers and Activities

In September 2008, NIEHS was cited in 633 news stories.

In October 2008, NIEHS was cited in 532 news stories.

In November 2008, NIEHS was cited in 367 news stories.

In December 2008, NIEHS was cited in 189 news stories

In January 2009, NIEHS was cited in 266 news stories.

Christine Bruske Flowers
Director, Office of Communications and Public Liaison
National Institute of Environmental Health Science
National Institutes of Health
919-541-3665

Robin Mackar
News Director, Office of Communications and Public Liaison