

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

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I. EVENTS

EARLI Study Launch. On Tuesday, June 9, 2009, NIEHS participated in the launch of the Early Autism Risk Longitudinal Investigation (EARLI) Study. OCPL worked with Cindy Lawler of DERT to help coordinate the launch by participating in a media teleconference sponsored by Drexel University and other study coordinators. The EARLI study is one of the largest research studies of its kind to investigate early risk factors for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). It will follow a cohort of up to 1,200 pregnant women who already have a child with autism. NIEHS staff helped develop the content for the media advisory and press release, and prepared written responses to questions that the media might ask. NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum is quoted in the June 4, 2009 press release entitled [NIH Autism Center of Excellence Network Announces Launch of Most Comprehensive Study of Earliest Possible Causes of Autism](#). NIEHS also helped coordinate the role of the other three NIH Institutes supporting this Center. Some of the press coverage of this event included a story in **JAMA, The Wall Street Journal, The Baltimore Sun, Change.org, Philadelphia Inquirer, The Sacramento Bee, Statesman, Contra Costa Times, Disability Scoop, and Educating Autism.**

Clinical Research Unit Grand Opening. On Monday, July 27, 2009, NIEHS celebrated the grand opening of the NIEHS Clinical Research Unit. OCPL took the lead in working with the clinical staff to develop and implement a program to mark the occasion. New materials including a brochure, a formal program, a dedicated Web site and several articles were developed to promote and highlight the event. The ceremony at NIEHS began with a mid-morning program that included local and nationally known personality Joe Graedon of The People's Pharmacy serving as master of ceremonies, remarks from NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum, Acting NIEHS Clinical Director Darryl Zeldin, NIH Deputy Director for Intramural Research Michael Gottesman, M.D., as well as a local partner's perspective by Robert Califf, M.D., vice chancellor for clinical research at Duke University. Next, were remarks from leading state and local congressional members and officials including U.S. Senator Kay Hagan, Congressman David Price, Ph.D., Congressman Bob Etheridge and Congressman Brad Miller, among others. After a tour of the new clinical research unit and refreshments, three distinguished physician-scientists provided talks, including Robert Califf; National Children's Study Principal Investigator Philip Landrigan, M.D., of Mt. Sinai Medical Center; and Franck Mauvais-Jarvis, M.D., Ph.D., a Northwestern University Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Molecular Medicine associate professor of medicine. Stories were written by OCPL staff for the

newsletters **Environmental Factor** and **NIH Record**.

(See <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/2009/august/spotlight-cru.cfm>). Major media outlets from throughout the state were invited and attended. **NBC 17** developed a piece that quoted NIEHS Director Birnbaum; Acting Clinical Director Darryl Zeldin was interviewed on **NC Public Radio**; **News Channel 14** highlighted the event in their evening coverage; and the **Science in the Triangle** Web site included a story with quotes from Darryl Zeldin of DIR.

Promoting NIEHS/NTP at ATS and Endocrine Society. OCPL hosted an NIEHS exhibit and distributed materials at the **American Thoracic Society Meeting** in San Diego, May 15–20, 2009. OCPL also exhibited at the **Endocrine Society Meeting** in Washington, D.C., June 10–13, 2009. OCPL developed a story for the NIEHS online newsletter entitled [NIEHS at Endocrine Society Meeting](#) to highlight some of the NIEHS activities at the meeting. OCPL also posted the Endocrine Society Statement on the NIEHS Web site.

“I Am Intramural” Campaign. OCPL staff worked with David Miller of DIR and others to highlight a campaign to build awareness amongst people outside the NIH about the research being performed in the Intramural Programs throughout the NIH. OCPL worked with DIR and NIH to develop posters and flyers, as well as an internal Web page for staff to participate in the campaign.

II. NEWS COVERAGE

Total News Coverage of NIEHS Science, Researchers and Activities

In May 2009, NIEHS was cited in 485 news stories.

In June 2009, NIEHS was cited in 260 news stories.

In July 2009, NIEHS was cited in 286 news stories.

In August 2009, NIEHS was cited in 300 news stories.

Highlights from Newspapers, Trade Papers and National Magazines

On May 13, 2009, **NIH Radio** conducted and disseminated an audio interview with Darryl Zeldin of DIR entitled [New Data Analysis Shows Possible Link Between Childhood Obesity and Allergies](#) based on an NIEHS press release.

Several stories on **BPA** appeared in the popular media throughout the summer.

- On May 14, 2009, a **New York Times** story entitled “Chicago Bans Bottles with BPA Plastic” refers to the 2008 NTP Report on BPA.
- On May 31, 2009, **The Washington Post** article, “Strategy Being Devised to Protect Use of BPA,” referred to the NTP 2008 opinion on BPA showing “some concern.”
- On June 5, 2009, **The Christian Science Monitor** article “Battle Over the Baby Bottle: Should Containers with Bisphenol A be Banned?” talked about previous NIEHS research on this topic.

- On June 10, 2009, **Reuters** ran a story entitled “Hormone Experts Worried About Plastics, Chemicals” that also mentioned the NTP evaluation of BPA.
- On June 10, 2009, **USA Today** ran a story “Medial Group Calls For Reducing Use of BPA” that focused on a statement released by the Endocrine Society. The story mentions the NTP evaluation of BPA.
- On June 17, 2009, the **National Post** ran an article entitled “Junk Science Week: Case of Chemophobia” that included information about the NTP evaluation of BPA.
- On June 17, 2009, **Fox News** ran a piece on a neonatal BPA exposure paper that was funded by NIEHS.
- On June 30, 2009, **The Huffington Post** ran a story entitled “Cracking the Autism Riddle: Toxic Chemicals, A Serious Suspect in the Autism Outbreak” that included a reference to the NTP BPA evaluation.
- On July 16, 2009, **Chemical and Engineering News** wrote that an independent panel did not have the scientific evidence showing BPA caused harm to humans in its article entitled “California Keeps BPA Off Toxics List.” The NTP report on BPA was mentioned.
- On July 23, 2009, **The Washington Post** ran a story entitled “Evaluating the Dangers of BPA in Plastic Baby Bottles” that refers to the NTP evaluation of BPA.
- On August 22, 2009, the **Milwaukee Journal Sentinel** mentioned the NTP evaluation of BPA in its story entitled “BPA Industry Fights Back.”

In May and June, several stories focused on a new research paper in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition by DIR researcher Honglei Chen and his colleagues that focused on telomere length and multivitamin use.

- On May 18, 2009, “What a daily multivitamin does for your DNA” ran in the **Chicago Daily Herald** that included quotes from Honglei Chen.
- On May 29, 2009, an article which included quotes from Chen entitled, “Can a Multivitamin Extend Your Life?” appeared in the **LA Times**.
- On June 24, 2009, **Science News** ran an article entitled “Vitamins Add Vitality to Aging Chromosomes” that quotes Chen.

On May 20, 2009, the editor of **Environmental Health News** wrote a story “High Selenium Linked to Diabetes: Americans Should Stop Taking Selenium Supplements, Research Team Says” that includes a quote by NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum.

On May 27, 2009, a detailed story entitled “New data suggest PBDE byproducts are ubiquitous in U.S. Waters” appeared in **Environmental Science and Technology**. NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum, a well known expert on dioxins, was quoted throughout the article.

The May 27, 2009 issue of **JAMA** included an article by NIEHS bioethicist David Resnik that focuses on the ethics behind investigators conducting research on their own children.

A May 27, 2009 story in **Reuters** entitled “Climate Health Costs: Bug-Borne Ills, Killer Heat” included quotes from NIEHS Associate Director Chris Portier.

The May 27, 2009 issue of the **NIH Record** has a story entitled “[NIEHS Recognized For Excellence in Animal Care](#)” that highlights the full accreditation by the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care to the NIEHS.

On May 29, 2009, OCPL worked with program staff to develop a press release entitled “[Well Water Should Be Tested Annually to Reduce Health Risks to Children.](#)” Walter Rogan of DIR served as spokesperson. Stories appeared in the June 2009 issue of the **American Academy of Pediatrics News** and the **U.S. News and World Report**.

On June 6, 2009, the **Chattanooga Times Free Press** (Tennessee) ran a story entitled “Research Links Obesity, Allergies” that resulted from an NIEHS press release and an interview with Darryl Zeldin of DIR.

On June 6, 2009, **Korea Times** ran an article entitled “Health Experts Raise Concern Over Pollution Nanoparticles” following a meeting in Korea that was attended by William Suk of DERT.

On June 11, 2009, a story on the **New Jersey News** Web site entitled “NJ Scientists Urge State to Adopt Strictest Levels for Cancer-Linked Chromium,” included information about the NTP Report on Chromium-6.

On June 14, 2009, the **Star Tribune** ran a story “Human hormones, chemicals a bad mix” that included information from the NIEHS Web site and quotes from NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum.

On June 16, 2009, **The Washington Post** ran a story entitled “Lead Study Not Tainted By Utility, Panel Says.” The story mentions an article in the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*.

On June 22, 2009, **Chemical and Engineering News** developed a story entitled, “Balancing DNA Pathways” that included a quote from DIR scientist Samuel Wilson.

On June 22, 2009, **Chemical and Engineering News** included a story entitled “Next-Generation Risk Assessment” that included information about NIEHS and NTP activities and a quote from NTP Associate Director John Bucher.

On June 28, 2009, **The Miami Herald** ran a story entitled “Electricity Studies Don’t Produce a Firm Conclusion” that discusses NIEHS research on the topic.

On June 30, 2009, **Genome Technology** featured a story entitled “ChIP Goes Genome-Scale” that included quotes from Karen Adelman of DIR about her work on the genome-scale ChIP studies.

On July 1, 2009, NIEHS grantees Nicole Lurie and Allen Fremont provided a commentary to **JAMA** entitled “Building Bridges Between Medical Care and Public Health.”

On July 14, 2009, **Miller-McCune** featured an article entitled “Environment Becomes Heredity” that included quotes from Jerry Heindel of DERT, Retha Newbold of DIR and several grantees.

On July 15, 2009, an article on the **Science in the Triangle** Web site focused on a talk given in the Durham community by Allen Wilcox of DIR about the reproductive research his group conducts at NIEHS.

On July 22, 2009, **The Philadelphia Inquirer** included a story entitled “The Complexities of Greening Your Lawn” that included quotes from Jane Hoppin of DIR.

The July 23, 2009 issue of **Nature** featured an article on careers in nanotechnology. The article entitled “Big Opportunities in a Small World” included quotes from Sally Tinkle of OD.

On July 21, 2009, OCPL worked with program staff and NIEHS grantee Frederica Perrera of Columbia University to issue a press release entitled “A Child's IQ Can Be Affected by Mother's Exposure to Urban Air Pollutants.” Kim Gray of DERT served as spokesperson and was quoted in **Science News and Time**.

On July 30, 2009, OCPL worked with DIR researchers to issue a press release entitled “Sun Exposure May Trigger Certain Autoimmune Diseases in Women.” Fred Miller of DIR served as spokesperson. Stories appeared on **About.com and UPI**. The study results were also highlighted on the home page of the **NIH Web site** for several weeks.

The August 2009 issue of **Environmental Health Perspectives** included a Focus article entitled “Tox21: New Dimensions of Toxicity Testing” that included interviews with John Bucher and Ray Tice of NTP among others.

On August 3, 2009, a story in **Environmental Health News** entitled “Chemicals Can Turn Genes On and Off; New Tests Needed, Scientists Say” focused on an NAS meeting that was co-sponsored by NIEHS. Linda Birnbaum is quoted.

The August 7, 2009 issue of **Science Magazine** included a story entitled “Putting Chemicals on a Path to Better Risk Assessment” that discusses activities the NTP, EPA and NIH are pursuing to improve toxicity testing in the U.S.

On August 15, 2009, **Science News** ran an interview they conducted with NIEHS Director Linda Birnbaum entitled “Tackling Toxicology and Environmental Health.”

Several stories in N.C., including one on **Reflector.com**, highlighted the fact that Mary Grant of DIR was named to the North Carolina Association for Biomedical Research board of directors.

On August 21, 2009, stories appeared in the **LA Times** and **Environmental Health News** about the state of California moving toward more stringent chromium 6 standards for drinking water. Both stories refer to a study completed by the National Toxicology Program in 2007 that was promoted widely through an [NIEHS press release](#).

On August 23, 2009, a front page story in the **New York Times** focused on the weed killer known as atrazine. The story, entitled “Debating How Much Weed Killer is Safe in Your Water Glass” included a quote from the NIEHS Director. The story was printed in numerous papers including the News and Observer, the Boston Globe, and the Seattle Times.

III. PUBLIC INFORMATION, OUTREACH AND TRAINING

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The OCPL is working closely with DERT and NIH OD to develop and disseminate information about the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) awards. OCPL summarizes the public health significance of the award and communicates the information to NIH and other audiences. OCPL also works closely with DERT to regularly update ARRA information on the Web. OCPL has worked with DERT to highlight 224 awards so far.

Public Inquiries. OCPL responded to approximately 150 public inquiries per month, received by phone, mail and e-mail. The questions range from concerns about EMF to requests for educational materials or referrals to environmental health clinics.

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. Many of the stories in the factor are selected and used in other outreach outlets, including the **NIH Record**, **NIH Catalyst**, **NTP Update** and others. (See <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/index.cfm>)

Web Pages. OCPL staff worked with program staff and the Web team to develop new content and design for several Web pages. For example, pages were developed for the NTP Host Susceptibility Branch <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/atniehs/labs/hsb/index.cfm> and the Biomolecular Screening Branch, <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/atniehs/labs/bmsb/index.cfm>. OCPL also works closely with the Web development team to continue to improve the look and usability of both the public and internal sites. OCPL and the Web team recently created new internal pages for the Fitness Center, Disability Advocacy Committee, and the Assembly of Laboratory Staff.

Materials Support. OCPL continues to work with program staff to develop materials for their programs. OCPL helps to develop posters and PowerPoint presentations that

professionally highlight program achievements for laboratory reviews, retreats, and advisory, board and scientific meetings.

Writing and Media Training. OCPL is working to sponsor a professional news writing refresher course for OPCL staff and others in the Institute interested in improving their writing skills and keeping up with new trends in the writing industry. OCPL is also planning to offer media training to approximately 10 scientists this fall.

NIEHS Design Updates. OCPL is working with the NIEHS leadership team to update several NIEHS design elements. For example, designs have been developed to replace signage for the front of the Rall Building and street entrances, to highlight both the NIEHS and the NTP. OCPL has also developed new templates for NIEHS/NTP business cards and materials, and is working with program staff to update and redesign several of the exhibits used to travel to conferences.

Flu Updates. OCPL continues to coordinate with OM and the Office of Clinical Research to share information with employees and the public about the **flu** and **H1N1 virus**. In coordination with the HHS, NIH and CDC, information is regularly updated and placed on the NIEHS Web site and disseminated through e-mails.

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