



WELCOME!

I am pleased to welcome you to our first ever Environmental Health Science FEST, a fitting close to our year-long celebration of the Institute's 50th anniversary. This gathering of grantees, community partners, trainees, and collaborators reflects both the breadth of science that we support, from laboratory research to epidemiology to community engagement and translation, as well as the meeting name – FEST – Facilities, Engagement, Science, and Training. Working together for the last 50 years, we have greatly increased our understanding of how the environment impacts human health.



For the next two and a half days, we will celebrate our accomplishments and also look toward the future. We want to take advantage of this unique gathering to consider what the next 50 years of environmental health sciences may hold. As we discuss cross-cutting themes, I encourage you to engage in conversations with attendees outside your usual grant programs and contemplate new partnerships to advance environmental health sciences. The concurrent sessions, poster sessions, and sensor/technology fair offer a variety of opportunities for such interactions.

We are thrilled to be in downtown Durham for this event. I hope you find some time to explore the city and participate in some of the planned evening events that highlight Durham's history and character. As one example, please consider attending the Environmental Health Science Film Festival on Wednesday evening at the Historic Carolina Theatre, which is celebrating its 90th anniversary.

With the emergence of social media, sharing ideas at meetings has changed rapidly in recent years. We will be using the hashtags #EHSFEST and #NIEHS50 to post highlights, relevant resources, and questions from the sessions.

I am looking forward to visiting with old friends and making new ones over the next few days. Thank you for joining this historic meeting and contributing to its success.

Linda S. Birnbaum, Ph.D., D.A.B.T., A.T.S.
Director, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
and National Toxicology Program