

National Advisory Environmental Health Sciences Council

NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL) Report

September 2023

The NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison ([OCPL](#)) is the first source of news and information about the institute. The communications team has broad expertise and provides a range of services to support the institute's ground-breaking research, and to share its discoveries with members of the media, the public, Congress, local governments, public health officials, and communities throughout the world. Christine Flowers directs OCPL.

This report reflects OCPL highlights since the [June 2023 Council Report](#).

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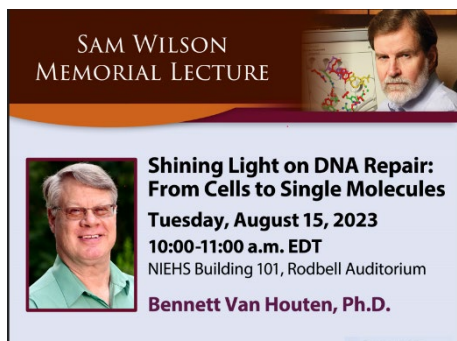
- Environmental Factor (the NIEHS online newsletter)
- Environmental Health Information, Online and Print
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I. Events

Sam Wilson Memorial Lecture on August 15. The invited speaker, Bennett Van Houten, Ph.D., was a former colleague of Sam Wilson's at NIEHS, and is now at the University of Pittsburgh. His talk, "Shining Light on DNA Repair: From Cells to Single Molecules," paid tribute to Wilson as a mentor and for the DNA repair research that Wilson was known for. Wilson was deputy director of NIEHS and the National Toxicology Program (NTP) from 1996 to 2007, during which time he collaborated with then-director [Ken Olden, Ph.D.](#), to expand the NIEHS mission to include the study of gene-environment interactions. From 2007 to 2009, Wilson served as acting NIEHS and NTP director. He passed away in 2021, and NIEHS hosts the lecture in honor of his legacy.



30 middle and high school NC science teachers come to NIEHS for training. In mid-July, NIEHS offered both virtual and in-person participation in its annual NIEHS Science, Teachers, and Research Summer ([STaRS](#)) Experience. In addition to tours and discussions with scientists, the NIEHS director provided an overview of environmental health science and chatted with each participant. STaRS allows participants to transfer knowledge received from the program into classroom applications and to better support their students, including those from underserved populations.



- Read the [story](#) in the August issue of the Environmental Factor.

NIH Office of AIDS Research (OAR) leader visits NIEHS, presents lecture on HIV and climate change. On June 26, Bill G. Kapogiannis, M.D., acting director of the NIH OAR, presented a lecture to NIEHS staff that described how OAR is working to understand the link between climate change and HIV. The climate crisis could lead to more food insecurity, greater prevalence of infectious diseases, increased human migration, and disintegration of public health infrastructure, all of which could potentially add to the global burden of HIV.



- Read the [story](#) in the August Environmental Factor.

Admiral Levine at NIEHS Worker Training Program Site. On June 23, HHS Assistant Secretary for Health Admiral Rachel Levine, M.D., joined Worker Training Program Director Sharon Beard for a site visit in St. Louis. In St. Louis, two nonprofits — [OAI \(Opportunity, Advancement, Innovation\) Training Consortium](#) and [Motivating Purpose With Education and Readiness](#) (MPWER) — are working together with local government to overcome environmental justice and employment challenges.



- Read the [story](#) in the July Environmental Factor.

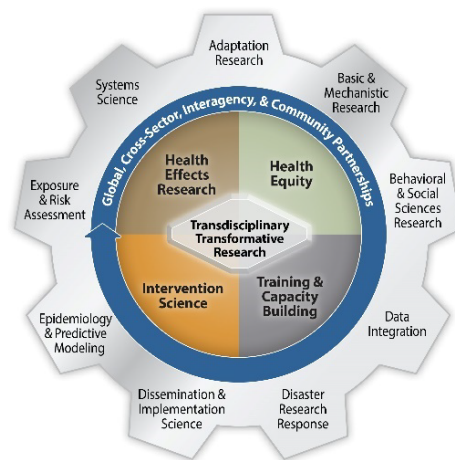
NIEHS Director presents to advisors to NIH Director. On June 9, Dr. Rick Woychik presented to the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director about what NIEHS and other NIH Institutes are doing to address the threat of climate change to health through the [NIH Climate Change and Health Initiative](#).



- Read the [story](#) in the NIEHS Environmental Factor.
- The NIH Record also developed a [story](#) about the meeting.

NIH Climate Change and Health Initiative. OCPL continues to provide strategic communications support for this NIH-wide program. The NIEHS director leads the Initiative as chair of the Executive Committee, which is comprised of seven NIH Institute or Center directors. OCPL develops content and maintains the [NIH Climate Change and Health](#) web pages. Since the last council report, OCPL worked to support the Initiative by:

- Announcing applications will be accepted to establish new cohort of Climate and Health Scholars.
- Promoting the public lectures by the inaugural class of scholars ([Aug 16](#), [July 20](#), [June 7](#))
- NIEHS director presented on the initiative to the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director on June 9. See the [story](#) in the Environmental Factor (and above entry).



II. Public Information and Outreach

The online [Environmental Factor](#) is produced monthly by NIEHS OCPL and has nearly 14,000 subscribers.



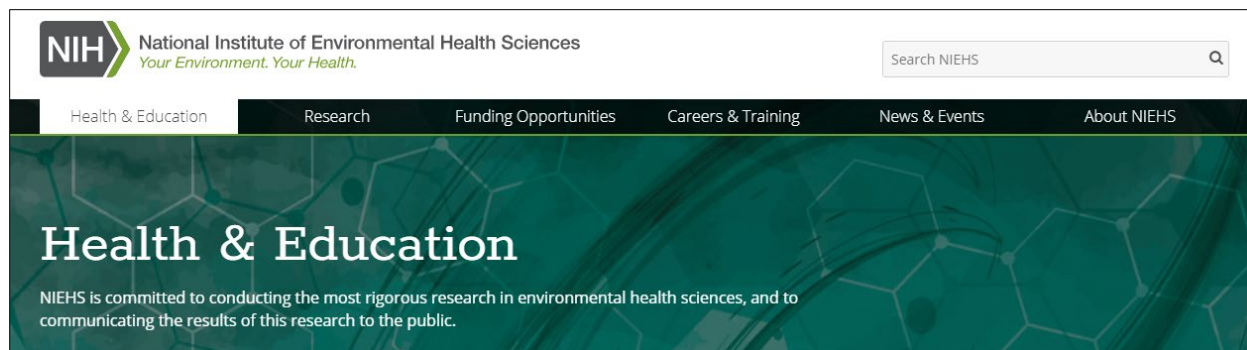
Each month, the Environmental Factor includes a column from Rick Woychik, called the “NIEHS Director’s Corner.”

- In August, [Wildfire smoke, other air pollution can harm brain health, expert says](#). The NIEHS director spoke with NIEHS grantee Deborah Cory-Slechta about links between neurodevelopmental disorders and exposure to ultrafine particles.
- In July, [Microplastics research: sum of our exposures studied by grantee](#). Woychik spoke with Douglas Walker, Ph.D., about his efforts to understand how these tiny plastic particles may affect human health.
- In June, [Scientific excellence, mentorship go hand in hand for NIEHS researcher](#). Woychik spoke with Humphrey Yao about exciting developments in reproductive biology, his efforts to train early-career scientists, and more.



Be sure to [subscribe](#) to the Environmental Factor newsletter if you haven’t already.

Online Environmental [Health & Education](#) Information



OCPL maintains more than [60 health topic webpages](#), which are organized into four categories:

- Conditions & Diseases
- Environmental Agents
- Environmental Health Science Basics
- Population Research

Under [Brochures & Fact Sheets](#), you will find nearly 50 publications, all downloadable. You may also order print copies through our [online order form](#).

- **New Fact Sheets.** OCPL developed a new fact sheet that describes the [Collaborative Centers in Children's Environmental Health Research and Translation](#).

- **Updated Health Topics.** OCPL strives to continually update health topics webpages, such as the following:
 - [Algal Blooms](#)
 - [Endocrine Disruptors](#)
 - [Pesticides](#)

Additionally,

- [NIEHS Superfund Research Program Overview - YouTube](#), OCPL worked with program staff to develop a video about the accomplishments of the NIEHS Superfund Research Program.
- OCPL worked with the Clinical Research Branch to update their [web pages](#) in preparation for the upcoming Board of Scientific Counselors (BSC) review.
- OCPL launched the redesigned [NIEHS Research Partners](#) website.
- A new YouTube playlist was created for the [NIEHS Environmental Health Language Collaborative](#).



NIEHS Social Media Accounts

OCPL posts social media content daily to promote people, events, and research. We especially like to promote research conducted by our grantees. Remember to mention NIEHS in your news releases and tag us in your social media.

NIEHS OCPL regularly posts content through these platforms:

- [Facebook](#) targets a general audience.
- [X/Twitter](#) (@NIEHS) targets both a lay audience and science community.
- [LinkedIn](#) targets people working in the environmental health field.
- [YouTube](#) targets both a lay audience and science community.

In July, the top posts for Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn covered the following topics:

- X/Twitter: air pollution (9.5k impressions, 50 engagements)
- LinkedIn: air pollution (1.9k impressions, 50 engagements)
- Facebook: PFAS (1.3k impressions, 30 engagements)

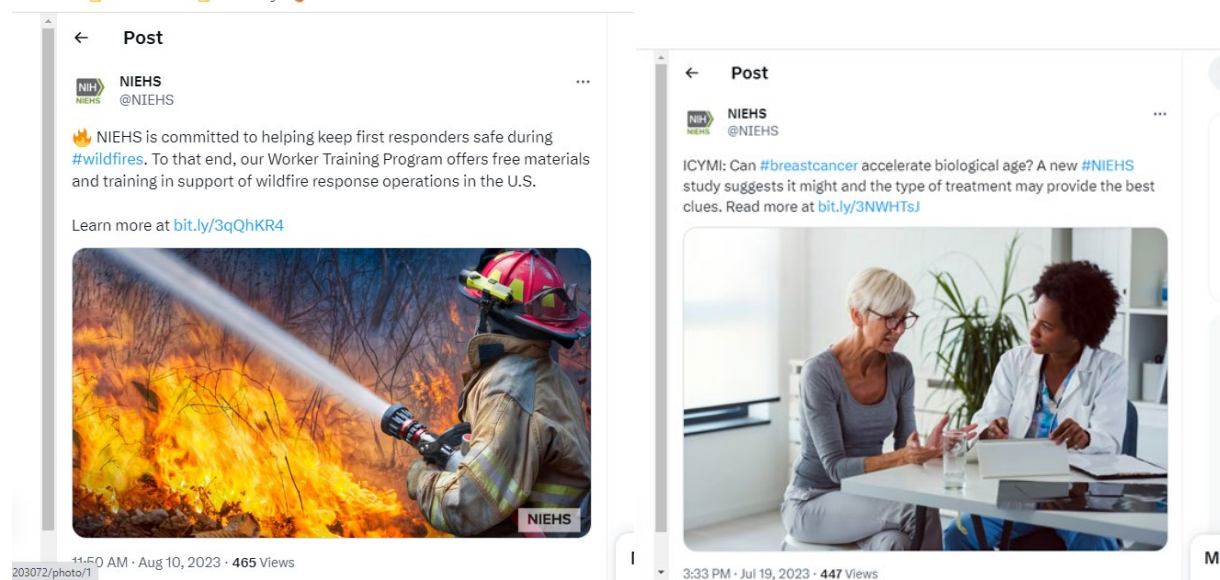
Social Media Growth

NIEHS social media followership continues to steadily increase. From **May 23, 2023 through July 2023**, the NIEHS:

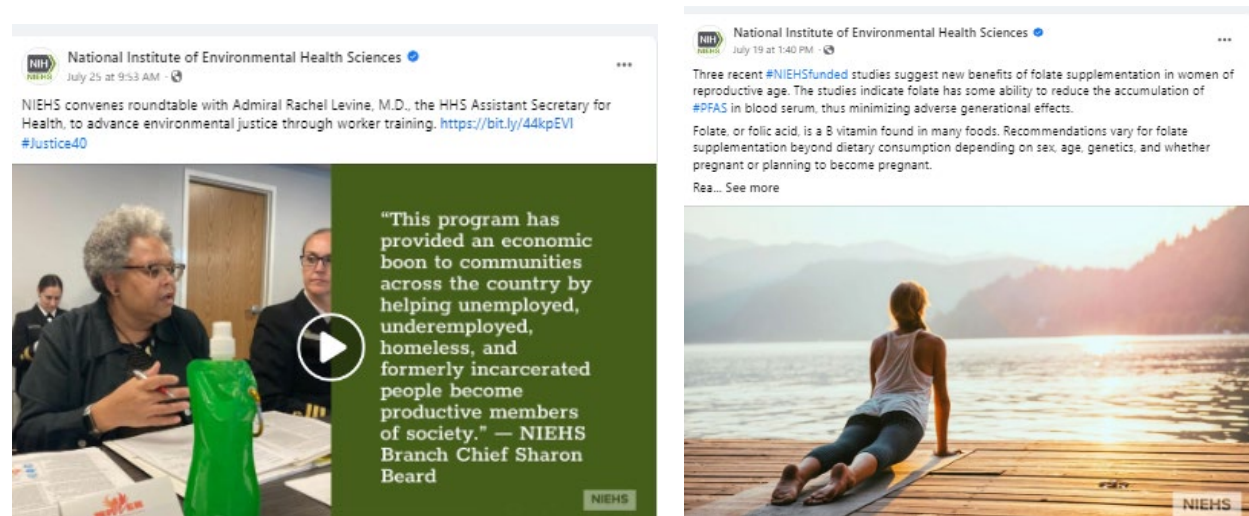
- X/Twitter feed increased from 23,314 followers to 23,422.
- Facebook page increased from 33,722 followers to 34,621.
- LinkedIn page increased from 9,359 followers to 9,751 followers.

Social Media Examples

X/Twitter:



Facebook:





Linked In:



OCPL also creates graphics and materials to promote programs and events:

A few examples from June-August are provided below. These include promotions for both internal and external events.

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

OLDEN DISTINGUISHED LECTURE
PROMOTING DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE



Scientific Understanding and Action to Eliminate Health Inequities: The Critical and Systemic Role of the Environment

Ana Diez Roux, M.D., Ph.D.
Director, Urban Health Collaborative
Distinguished Professor, Epidemiology
Dornsife School of Public Health
Drexel University

SAVE THE DATE
Tuesday, September 19, 2023
10:00 – 11:00 a.m. EDT
Location: TBD

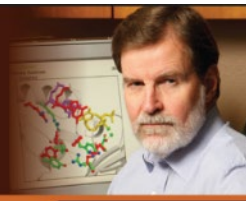
Hosts: Rick Woychik, Ph.D., NIEHS and NTP Director, and Trevor Archer, Ph.D., NIEHS Deputy Director

Individuals with disabilities who need accommodation to participate in this event should contact Cyrena Silveira at 240-220-4666 or cyrenasilveira@niehs.gov. TTY users should contact the Federal TTY Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Requests should be made at least 5 business days in advance of the event.

National Institutes of Health • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

Samuel H. Wilson Jr., M.D. • 1939-2021
Principal Investigator, 1996-2021
Deputy Director, 1996-2007
Acting Director, 2007-2009



SAM WILSON MEMORIAL LECTURE

Shining Light on DNA Repair: From Cells to Single Molecules

Tuesday, August 15, 2023
10:00-11:00 a.m. EDT
Hybrid Meeting – ZoomGov
NIEHS Building 101, Rodbell Auditorium
111 TW Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, N.C.

Bennett Van Houten, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Pharmacology and Cell Biology
Co-Leader, Molecular and Cell Biology Program
Hillman Cancer Center, University of Pittsburgh

Host: Robert Petrovich, Ph.D.



Individuals with disabilities who need accommodation to participate in this event should contact Robert Petrovich at 984-287-3453 or robert.petrovich@niehs.gov. TTY users should contact the Federal TTY Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Requests should be made at least 5 business days in advance of the event.

Any individual seeking access to the NIEHS campus will need to be prepared to show a photo ID (e.g., driver's license, or a company, government, or university ID) and provide either a copy of this flyer or pertinent information about the lecture.

National Institutes of Health • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences



NIEHS Presents

Recenter, Reconnect, and Refresh

Achieve Balance, Build Skills, Work Together

Thursday, July 13, 2023 • 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. EDT
Building 101, Rall Lakeview Conference Room

Recenter, Reconnect, and Refresh: Practical Mindfulness and Self-Care for the Working Professional Webinar

Webinar Presenter: **Jessie Taylor**
Co-Founder and Director of Education, The Mindfulness Center

An employee team-building retreat brought to you by the Office of Acquisitions

Individuals with disabilities who need accommodation to participate in this event should contact Yolanda Cotton at 984-287-3001 or yolanda.cotton@niehs.gov. TTY users should contact the Federal TTY Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Requests should be made at least 5 business days in advance of the event.

National Institutes of Health • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

NIH National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences



Environmental Health Language Collaborative
Seminar Series

How to Improve Metadata Reporting Through Better Data Dictionaries

Friday, August 4, 2023
2:00-3:00 p.m. EDT
Virtual Meeting • Open to the Public • Live Caption

Jeanette Stingone, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Epidemiology,
Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://bit.ly/3p15p5n>
Meeting ID: 161 355 6436
Passcode: 080423

Individuals with disabilities who need accommodation to participate in this event should contact Maria Shatz at 984-287-3184 or maria.shatz@niehs.gov. TTY users should contact the Federal TTY Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Requests should be made at least 5 business days in advance of the event.

National Institutes of Health • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Juneteenth Lecture

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 • 11:00 a.m. – noon EDT



**BIPOC in Veterinary Medicine:
A Historical and
Contemporary Perspective**
Tracy Hanner, D.V.M.
North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Retired



**Taking Freedom:
Liberation in North Carolina**
Angela Thorpe
Director, Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice

**Climate Change and HIV:
The Next Research Frontier**



Bill Kapogiannis, M.D.
Acting Associate Director, AIDS Research;
Acting Director, NIH Office of AIDS Research (OAR),
National Institutes of Health

**Monday, June 26, 2023
9:00 – 10:00 a.m. EDT**

Join on Zoom or attend in person.

Additional examples of OCPL design work created to support of NIEHS research:

NIEHS Human Research Protection Program

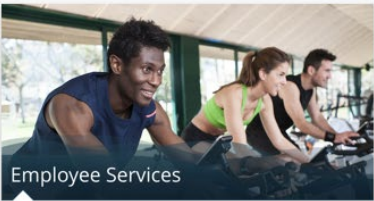




IT Knowledge Base

Clearing Your Browser's Cache

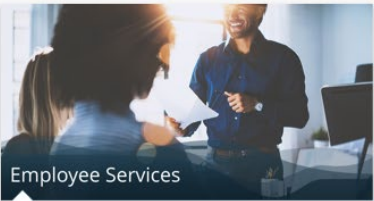
It's a good practice to clear your browser's cache at least every 6 months. This resource will teach you how.



Employee Services

Fitness Center

Discover activities offered by our Health and Wellness programs.



Employee Services

Technology Assisted NIEHS Meetings

NIEHS has many technologies available for your next meeting. Find out which options fit your needs.

OCPL also helps develop materials for **clinical trial recruitment**. Visit [Join a NIEHS Study](#).

III. News Promotion and Coverage

News Releases from NIH-NIEHS and NIEHS-Funded Researchers in the NIEHS Newsroom

Date	NIH/NIEHS Releases and URL
July 19, 2023	Women Treated for Breast Cancer May Age Faster Than Cancer-free Women Women diagnosed and treated for breast cancer have increased biological aging compared to women who remain free of breast cancer, according to a new study by researchers at the National Institutes of Health and their collaborators.
Date	News Releases from NIEHS funded Researchers
August 9, 2023	Wayne State University Researchers Improve Environmental Monitoring Applications A research team from Wayne State University's National Institutes of Health-funded Superfund Research Program, the Center for Leadership in Environmental Awareness and Research (CLEAR), recently published a paper that describes a new technique they developed that couples the Internet of Things sensor network with Edge Computing (IoTEC) to improve environmental monitoring.
July 19, 2023	Why Ongoing Worker Safety Training Is Critical to Effective Disaster Response When it comes to disaster response and recovery operations, it is crucial that workers are prepared before there is an emergency, according to Rutgers researchers.
May 31, 2023	Human Health Is Suffering Because of Climate Change Public health experts at BU and Harvard are teaming up to diversify and expand the global network of climate and health researchers to reach better solutions.

May 11, 2023	NIH Launches \$140 Million Effort to Investigate Genetic Variation in Normal Human Cells and Tissues Common Fund Program will accelerate research on human development, aging, and disease.
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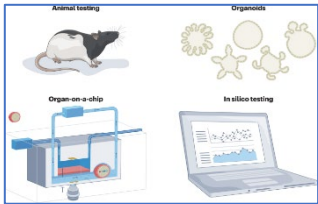
NIEHS in the News

NIEHS and NTP are often mentioned in a mix of top tier, trade, syndicated, and international news outlets. Examples follow that cover **May 2023 – August 2023**. Selected news articles featured NIEHS or interviews with NIEHS staff.

Date	Headline	Outlet	URL
August 20, 2023	‘Forever Chemicals’ Are Everywhere. What Are They Doing to Us? 	New York Times Magazine	https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/16/magazine/pfas-toxic-chemicals.html Sue Fenton of DTT is quoted. NIEHS grantees are quoted.
August 17, 2023	Use of AI Is Seeping Into Academic Journals—and It’s Proving Difficult to Detect	Wired	https://www.wired.com/story/use-of-ai-is-seeping-into-academic-journals-and-its-proving-difficult-to-detect/ David Resnik of NIEHS is quoted.

Date	Headline	Outlet	URL
July 27, 2023	Women Treated for Breast Cancer May Age Faster Than Cancer-Free Women 	Health	https://www.health.com/breast-cancer-patients-age-faster-7564771 Dale Sandler of DIR is quoted.
July 26, 2023	Breast Cancer Treatments May Accelerate Biological Aging: Study	The Jewish Voice	https://thejewishvoice.com/2023/07/breast-cancer-treatments-may-accelerate-biological-aging-study/ Dale Sandler of DIR is quoted.
July 25, 2023	Patients with Breast Cancer Age Faster Than Cancer-Free Women	Cure	https://www.curetoday.com/view/patients-with-breast-cancer-age-faster-than-cancer-free-women Dale Sandler of DIR is quoted.
July 21, 2023	Hair-Straightening Products Associated With Uterine Cancer: What You Need to Know 	Cleveland Clinic	https://health.clevelandclinic.org/uterine-cancer-hair-straighteners/ NIEHS research findings highlighted.
July 20, 2023	Women Treated for Breast Cancer Seem to Age Faster	Breastcancer.org	https://www.breastcancer.org/research-news/breast-cancer-treatment-ages-women-faster Dale Sandler of DIR is quoted.

Date	Headline	Outlet	URL
July 20, 2023	E. Palestine health study enters second phase	The Marietta Times	https://www.mariettatimes.com/news/local-news/2023/07/e-palestine-health-study-enters-second-phase/ The NIEHS program Human Health Exposure Analysis Resource (HHEAR) is mentioned. NIEHS is mentioned as study funder.
July 19, 2023	Researchers find evidence of ‘forever chemicals’ in blood of pregnant women	The Guardian	https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/jul/19/pfas-forever-chemicals-pollution-pregnant-women-health NIEHS is mentioned as funder.
July 13, 2023	Can Using Hair Dyes or Hair Relaxers Impact Your Cancer Risk? 	Cancer.Net	https://www.cancer.net/blog/2023-07/can-using-hair-dyes-or-hair-relaxers-impact-your-cancer-risk Alexandra White of DIR is quoted.
July 10, 2023	NIEHS Selects David Balshaw as New Director of Extramural Research and Training	Durham Magazine	
June 24, 2023	How Do You Know If Drinking Water Is Safe from Forever Chemicals?	The Washington Post	https://www.washingtonpost.com/wellness/2023/06/24/pfas-water-forever-chemicals/ NIEHS is listed as funder of research in this story.

Date	Headline	Outlet	URL
June 9, 2023	Noise Could Take Years Off Your Life. Here's How.	New York Times	https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2023/06/09/health/noise-exposure-health-impacts.html Chandra Jackson of DIR contributed to this piece.
June 8, 2023	A Q&A With the NIEHS' Dr Symielle Gaston: Understanding Racial/Ethnic Variations in Sleep Health	The American Journal of Managed Care	https://www.ajmc.com/view/a-q-a-with-the-niehs-dr-symielle-gaston-understanding-racial-ethnic-variations-in-sleep-health Symielle Gaston of DIR highlighted.
June 1, 2023	Researchers and Regulators Plan for a future without Lab animals 	Nature Medicine	https://www.nature.com/articles/s41591-023-02362-z Nicole Kleinstreuer of DTT quoted.
May 31, 2023	Human Health Is Suffering Because of Climate Change 	Boston University, the Brink	https://www.bu.edu/articles/2023/human-health-is-suffering-because-of-climate-change/?utm_source=miragenews&utm_medium=miragenews&utm_campaign=news NIH Climate Change and Health Initiative highlighted. NIEHS Director is quoted.

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