

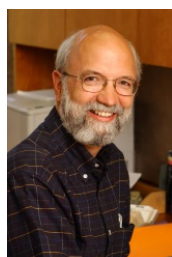
**NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL)
May 2016 – September 2016**

CONTENTS

- I. EVENTS
- II. NEWS COVERAGE
- III. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OUTREACH



NIEHS/NTP director to receive NC state award. On August 23, the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources announced that NIEHS/NTP Director Linda Birnbaum, Ph.D., would receive the state’s highest civilian honor for her science contributions. Birnbaum will join five others, including two Nobel laureates, on September 22 to receive the award from the governor. OCPL helped disseminate the news through websites, listservs, social media, and more. [The News & Observer](#) and the [Chapel Hill News](#) also highlighted the awards.



Vote for Allen Wilcox campaign. OCPL has taken the lead in a social media campaign to get people to vote for NIEHS epidemiologist Allen Wilcox, M.D., Ph.D., to win a [People’s Choice Award](#) from the Partnership for Public Service. This award is associated with his selection as the only NIH finalist for one of the Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals, or Sammies. These awards highlight excellence in our federal workforce and are intended to help inspire other talented and dedicated individuals to go into public service. Winners will be announced September 20. OCPL has developed announcements for the [Environmental Factor](#); the NIH [Catalyst](#), which reaches the larger NIH community; public and NIEHS grantee emails and listservs; and social media and web postings. Media outlets, including the [Washington Post](#), [GovLoop](#), [Partnership for Public Service](#), [Government Matters](#), and an interview on [News Channel 8](#) in Washington, D.C., have also highlighted Wilcox’s achievements.

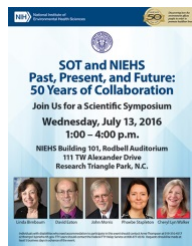


Tar Heel of the Week. Warren Casey, Ph.D., of NTP, was selected by the North Carolina newspaper, The News & Observer, as Tar Heel of the Week. The paper has been bestowing this honor on North Carolina residents for more than 50 years. The reporter visited the NIEHS campus to interview Casey, and highlighted his efforts to lead a coordinated U.S. strategy to replace animal use for regulatory testing. The article, [“Warren Casey is using science to push alternatives to animal testing”](#) appeared in the Sunday, August 6 edition.



NIEHS celebrates 50 Years of environmental health research at NIH. OCPL is leading the committee that is planning the [NIEHS 50th anniversary events](#). Committee members have been meeting regularly to plan and implement a yearlong calendar of activities. The festivities kicked off January 21, followed by monthly events. Preparations are now being made for a big celebration November 1. Other events will

continue through the end of the year, including the [NIEHS Environmental Health Science FEST](#), December 5-8 in Durham, North Carolina, which will bring together researchers, community engagement teams, trainees, and young investigators for a scientific dialogue. A [film festival](#) will also be held at the historic Carolina Theatre the evening of December 7, as part of the FEST.



Society of Toxicology (SOT) celebrates NIEHS 50th Anniversary. Staff from the Office of the Director, National Toxicology Program (NTP), and Division of Extramural Research and Training worked together with SOT to plan and implement a scientific symposium on July 13 at NIEHS. Speakers reflected on decades of collaboration and looked forward to working together to create a safer, healthier world, by increasing the impact of the science of toxicology. Promotional materials, a slide show, web pages, and a [Factor story](#) were developed.



First Global Environmental Health Day. June 29, NIEHS hosted its first [Global Environmental Health Day](#). The program brought nearly 200 people together, in person and by webcast, to recognize the role that environmental health research plays in solving global health problems. Promotional materials, web pages, social media posts, and a [Factor story](#) were developed.



NTP media teleconference on cell phone findings from rat studies.

May 27, NTP teamed with OCPL to host a [telephone press conference](#) to discuss the partial release of findings of NTP studies on cell phone radiofrequency radiation. About 150 media outlets participated in the one-hour briefing. NTP Associate Director John Bucher, Ph.D., and Michael Wyde, Ph.D., the NTP study director, served as the spokespeople. The "Report of Partial Findings from the National Toxicology Program Carcinogenesis Studies of Cell Phone Radiofrequency Radiation in Hsd: Sprague Dawley SD Rats (Whole Body Exposure)" is available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1101/055699>. NTP studies found low incidence of tumors in the brains and hearts of male rats, but not in female rats. Studies in mice are continuing. The complete results from all the rat and mice studies will be available for peer review and public comment by the end of 2017. The transcript, audio recordings from the call, and additional information continue to be added to the [NTP website](#). More than 1,700 stories have appeared in the media, as well as hundreds of social media posts. A few examples include:

- August 25, a **Ventura County Star** [editorial](#), "Cellphone safety measures worth considering," mentioned NTP study findings.
- August 8, a **Los Angeles Times** technology columnist [wrote](#), "Is 5G technology dangerous? Early data shows a slight increase of tumors in male rats exposed to cellphone radiation." The story discussed NTP findings related to cell phones.
- August 8, **International Business Times** [wrote](#) about the NTP cell phone studies in the article, "5G cellphone technology dangerous to health? Possible risks explained."
- August 4, **Rappahannock News** [wrote](#), "Cellphones and cancer? There's no definitive answer."
- June 11, the [People's Pharmacy](#) radio show included an interview with Bucher.
- June 11, **Microwave News** [wrote](#), "Setting the record straight on NTP cell phone cancer study," which included quotes from NTP staff.
- June 2, **Chicago Tribune** [wrote](#), "Commentary: Cellphones, cancer, and the anatomy of a health scare."
- May 31, **New York Times** [wrote](#), "Why it's not time to panic about cellphones and cancer."
- May 30, **Inquisitr** [wrote](#), "Cellphone cancer study: What you need to know."

- May 27, **Wall Street Journal** wrote, “Cellphone-cancer link found in government study.”
- May 27, **Washington Post** [wrote](#), “Do cellphones cause cancer? Don’t believe the hype.”
- May 27, **Consumer Reports** [wrote](#), “Does cell phone use cause brain cancer? What the new study means for you.”
- May 27, **Associated Press** [story](#), “Cellphone radiation study raises concerns despite low risk,” ran in numerous media outlets, including the local paper **The News & Observer**.
- May 27, **Science** [wrote](#), “Questions abound after study links tumors to cellphone radiation.”
- May 27, **Scientific American** [wrote](#), “Major cell phone radiation study reignites cancer questions.”
- May 27, **USA Today** [wrote](#), “Study in rats reignites debate over cell phones and cancer.”
- May 27, **Mother Jones** [wrote](#), “Game-changing study links cellphone radiation to cancer.”
- May 27, **CNN Online** [wrote](#), “Cell phone radiation increases cancers in rats, but should we worry?”

II. NEWS COVERAGE

News Coverage of NIEHS Science, Researchers, and Activities

May 2016 — 2306 stories

June 2016 — 972 stories

July 2016 — 564 stories

August 2016 — 862 stories

Press Releases

August 24, NIEHS posted a link to an Endocrine Society news release, “[North Carolina endocrinologists win top honors from the Endocrine Society,](#)” which highlighted an award received by our new clinical director, [Janet Hall, M.D.](#) The society’s Laureate Awards recognize the highest achievements in the endocrinology field, including groundbreaking research and innovations in clinical care. The award will be presented at the annual meeting next April.

August 23, NIEHS posted a link to a press release from the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, announcing that Birnbaum was among those selected for the state’s highest honor. The release, “[Six to receive the North Carolina Award, state's highest honor,](#)” recognizes Birnbaum for her contributions to science.

August 3, NIEHS linked to a University of Iowa release, “[Study finds Amish children’s exposures protect against asthma,](#)” which highlighted research by NIEHS grantees published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

August 3, research supported by NIEHS and its collaborators at North Carolina State University (NCSU) and elsewhere was highlighted in the NCSU press release, “[Research associates some pesticides with respiratory wheeze in farmers.](#)” The paper published in Environmental Health Perspectives highlighted findings from the Agricultural Health Study, a longitudinal study of farmers and their spouses in Iowa and North Carolina.

June 21, NIEHS worked with NIH to issue the release, "[NIH launches large study of pregnant women in areas affected by Zika virus.](#)" The press release included a quote from Birnbaum.

June 1, in the NIEHS press release, "[Program will train first responders and hazardous waste workers on infectious disease safety.](#)" NIEHS, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, announced the recipients of a new three-year program. Several stories appeared in media outlets, including [Safety and Health](#) and [Executive Government](#). [New web content](#) was also developed by OCPL.

May 27, a media advisory, "[Media telebriefing: NTP cell phone radiofrequency radiation study: partial release of findings.](#)" was released by NIEHS. More than 1,700 stories resulted from the telebriefing.

May 25, NIEHS joined with the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to issue a press release, "[New NIH-EPA research centers to study environmental health disparities.](#)" The centers will examine a range of stressors on health, including air, water, and ground pollution, as well as environmental conditions, such as substandard housing, poor diet, and adverse social dynamics.

May 3, the NIEHS press release, "[NIH statement on World Asthma Day 2016.](#)" highlighted research related to asthma supported by NIEHS, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

April 25, NIEHS posted a link to a Johns Hopkins Medical School press release, "[Despite recent increases in reported food allergy, study finds no change in antibody levels associated with food allergy.](#)" which highlighted work by our grantees.

Highlights from Newspapers, Trade Papers, and National Magazines

In August, the University of Pittsburgh magazine **PITT MED** highlighted work of Natalie Shaw, M.D., of DIR, in the [article](#), "Natalie Shaw: Let sleeping kids lie." Shaw [joined NIEHS](#) in fall 2015 and heads the Pediatric Neuroendocrinology Group.

August 24, **Time** magazine [wrote](#), "You asked: Can my couch give me cancer?" which included quotes from Birnbaum. The story also included quotes from NIEHS grantee Heather Stapleton, Ph.D., and Arlene Blum, Ph.D., of Green Science Policy Institute.

August 24, **JAMA** [wrote](#), "Zika: Worse than thalidomide?" which mentioned NIEHS funding for Zika research.

August 21, **The Durham Herald-Sun** wrote, "NIEHS health physicist promoted." The [story](#) highlighted that John McLamb, from the Health and Safety Branch, was promoted to commander in the U.S. Public Health Service.

August 18, **MedPage Today** [wrote](#), "Recommendations target myositis in kids," which included quotes from Lisa Rider, M.D., of DIR.

August 5, **Triangle Business Journal** reported, "Federal outfit based in RTP awards \$177M in grants to Maryland group." The story discusses contract awards from NIEHS.

In August, several media outlets reported on research supported by the Epidemiology Branch in DIR, which found that douching may be associated with an increased risk of ovarian cancer. Clarice Weinberg, Ph.D., and other DIR scientists are quoted.

- **SELF** [wrote](#), “The 1 thing you need to stop doing to your vagina.”
- **Cosmopolitan** [wrote](#), “A worrying link between douching in the shower and ovarian cancer has been discovered.”
- **Allure Magazine** [wrote](#), “New study gives another reason to stop douching.”
- **Reuters Health** [wrote](#), “Ovarian cancer risk nearly doubles in women who douche.”
- **Medical Research.com** [wrote](#), “Douching may be associated with increased risk of ovarian cancer.”

Also in August, several media outlets reported on findings from DIR that levels of vitamin D, involved in immune system and bone health, may fall when women stop taking birth control pills or other contraceptives with estrogen.

- **Health Day** [wrote](#), “Vitamin D levels may fall when women stop taking birth control,” which included quotes from Quaker Harmon, M.D., of DIR.
- **Refinery29** [wrote](#), “One surprising health benefit of being on the pill.”
- **Medical Daily** [wrote](#), “What happens when you stop taking birth control? For women trying to get pregnant, it may worsen immune system.”

July 25, **Nature** [wrote](#), “Brazil asks whether Zika acts alone to cause birth defects,” which included quotes from Birnbaum.

July 25, **Chemical Watch** wrote, “The rise of epigenetics,” which included quotes from Fred Tyson, Ph.D., of DERT.

July 22, **Vermont Public Radio** [aired](#), “Federal panel issues stronger warning about dangers of PFOA,” which included reference to the NTP work in this area. July 20, **Bloomberg BNA** also wrote about the NTP efforts in its article, “PFOA, PFOS likely hazardous to immune system: scientists.” PFOA was also in the news when Sue Fenton, Ph.D., of NTP joined a community meeting in New York to discuss what is known about PFOA. July 9, the **Post-Star** [wrote](#), “Gillibrand seeks ongoing health monitoring in PFOA-affected areas,” which highlighted the meeting and Fenton’s efforts. **WNYT-TV** also aired a [piece](#), “Senator Gillibrand discusses toxic water with Hoosick Falls residents,” on the community meeting.

July 20, **Chemistry World** wrote, “No health effects from chemicals from West Virginia spill,” which highlighted a final report issued by NTP. **Environmental Defense Fund** [wrote](#), “We appear to have gotten lucky in the January 2014 West Virginia chemical spill.” **Chemical and Engineering News** also reported on the NTP efforts with the [story](#), “Federal study of MCHM concludes.” A [story](#) on July 8 in the **Charleston Gazette-Mail**, “Final federal MCHM study leaves same questions unanswered,” included quotes from Bucher.

July 19, a writer from **Northeastern University** covered a visit by Birnbaum in the [story](#), “National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences head lauds Northeastern's interdisciplinary approach,” which included many quotes from Birnbaum.

July 18, **Spectrum** [wrote](#), “Science junkie bets big on autism's environmental origins,” which included quotes from Lisa Chadwick, Ph.D., of DERT.

July 14, **Chemistry World** wrote, “US urged to curb chemicals that harm brain development,” which highlighted a consensus statement signed by more than 40 scientists, researchers, heads of children’s groups, and Birnbaum. A [story](#) July 1 in the **New York Times** also highlighted the consensus [statement](#) for Project TENDR: Targeting Environmental Neuro-Developmental Risks, which was published in *Environmental Health Perspectives*. The story also mentioned Birnbaum.

July 12, **The News & Observer** [wrote](#), “Teachers get taste of STEM careers at Triangle corporations,” which highlighted science education efforts at NIEHS.

July 11, **Washington Post** [wrote](#), “What toxins have you been exposed to? Your baby teeth may hold the answer,” which mentioned NIEHS support for research in this area.

The July-August issue of **The NIH Catalyst** featured a [story](#), “New tool enables studies of brain structure and function,” which highlighted work by Patricia Jensen, Ph.D., from DIR, and colleagues.

June 27, **Citizen-Times** [wrote](#), “Never stop learning,” which highlighted science education efforts at NIEHS.

June 27, **Palm Beach Post** [reported](#), “Wellington to decide on controversial fluoride in water issue,” which mentioned ongoing research by NTP on fluoride.

June 21, **Risk Policy Report**, wrote about an NTP board meeting in their story, “NTP preparing to assess glyphosate’s carcinogenicity in toxicology study,” which included quotes from Bucher and Stephanie Smith-Roe, Ph.D., of NTP. June 15, **Bloomberg BNA** also wrote about the meeting in their story, “NTP weighing glyphosate, pesticide formulation studies,” which also included quotes from Bucher and Smith-Roe.

June 20, **Reuters Health** [wrote](#), “Parkinson disease may be getting more common,” which included quotes from Honglei Chen, Ph.D., of DIR.

June 24, a **Huffington Post** [story](#), “Big coal funded this prominent climate change denier, docs reveal,” included quotes from David Resnik, J.D., bioethicist in DIR.

June 10, **Nature** [wrote](#), “First rodent found with a human-like menstrual cycle,” which included quotes from Francesco DeMayo, Ph.D., of DIR.

May 24, **Earth Island Journal** [wrote](#), “Flame retardant exposure poses a significant health risk to women,” which included quotes from Birnbaum.

May 23, **New York Times** [wrote](#), “Lawsuits over baby powder raise questions about cancer risk,” which included quotes from NTP.

May 23, a **Providence Journal** [story](#), “Toxicologist: walls and soil pose greater lead threat than water,” included quotes from Birnbaum. The **Washington Times** also [reported](#) on Birnbaum’s visit to Rhode Island.

May 10, **The Intercept** [reported](#), “GPS tracking devices catch major U.S. recyclers exporting toxic e-waste.” The story included quotes from Michelle Heacock, Ph.D., of DERT.

May 6, the People’s Pharmacy column, “Aspirin reduces sister’s risk of breast cancer,” in the **Atlanta Journal-Constitution** highlighted findings from the NIEHS Sister Study.

May 3, the **MIT News Office** released information on a new study, showing a link between asthma and DNA damage, that was published in the journal Allergy and Clinical Immunology. The [story](#) included a quote from Michael Fessler, M.D., of DIR.

III. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND OUTREACH

NIEHS Social Media Efforts

In accordance with popular trends, NIEHS continues to expand its use of social media in an effort to reach new audiences with its environmental health message. At present, NIEHS posts content through the following platforms:

- [Facebook](#) (targeted to a more general audience)
- [Twitter](#) (targeted to both the general public and science community)
- [LinkedIn](#) (targeted primarily to those in the environmental health career field)

Social Media Growth Trends

The spring and summer months saw continued growth in NIEHS social media followership.

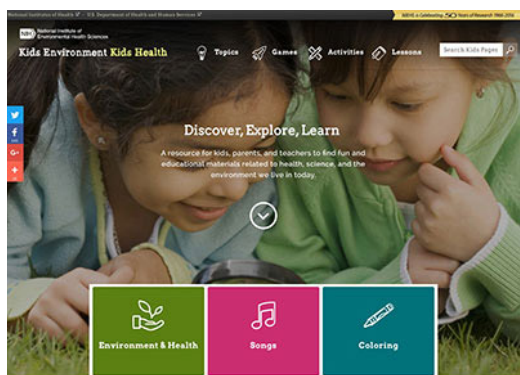
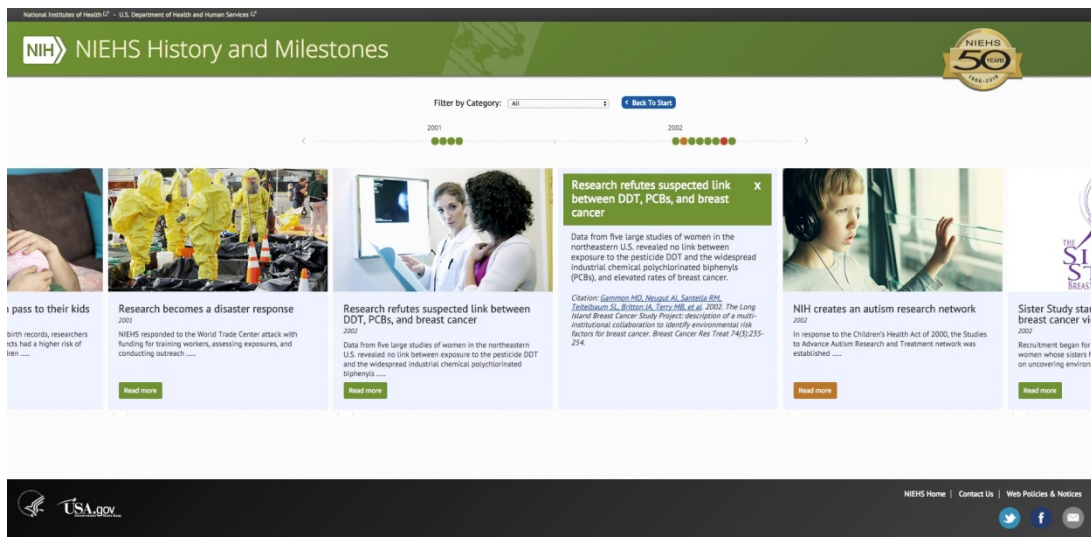
- From January 1 to August 1, the **NIEHS Twitter feed** (@NIEHS) saw a five percent increase in followership, growing from 12,100 to 12,731 followers.
- During that time, the **NIEHS Facebook** page saw a 23 percent increase, growing from 11,500 “likes” to 14,976.
- Finally, the **NIEHS LinkedIn** page grew by twelve percent, from 1,470 to 1,681 followers.

Highlighting Work of Grantees Through Social Media. OCPL promoted several grantee publications via social media.

- [Urban greenspace linked to reduced youth aggression](#), from the University of Southern California. A [Factor article](#) was also written.
- [New cancer gene-drug combos have potential for precision medicine](#), from the University of California, San Diego.
- [TENDR consensus statement](#) about neurodevelopmental harm from environmental chemicals. A [Factor article](#) was also written.
- Article about ONES awardee Cheryl Rockwell’s research on [food additives and potential links to allergies](#).

Web and Materials Development

September 1, as part of the yearlong celebration of the 50th Anniversary, OCPL launched the NIEHS History and Milestones timeline at <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/about/anniversary/index.cfm>.



Redesigned Kids Site. In May, OCPL launched a redesigned kids site at <http://kids.niehs.nih.gov>. The website is a great resource for kids, parents, and teachers to find fun and educational materials related to health, science, and the environment. It features a fresh new look and improved format, specially designed for viewing on cell phones, tablets, and other mobile devices. Social media posts, an email to all NIEHS staff, a new kid-focused bookmark noting the URL for the newly redesigned site, and a Factor story were some of the ways OCPL created awareness about the new site.

Fact Sheets and Web Pages

- A new health topics page about [harmful algal blooms](#) was launched in August.
- In July, NIEHS released a new fact sheet on [Flame Retardants](#). New [web pages](#) were also developed.
- In July, OCPL worked with NTP to update the [West Virginia Chemical Spill fact sheet](#), as well as the [NTP web pages on this topic](#).
- OCPL continues to work with DERT and grantees to develop the Children's Health Exposure Analysis Resource ([CHEAR](#)) [website](#).
- The [Aloe Vera](#) fact sheet was updated in June.

Conferences

- OCPL staffed the NIEHS exhibit at the **Endocrine Society Meeting** April 1-3 in Boston.
- NIEHS also exhibited at the **American Thoracic Society Meeting** May 14-18 in San Francisco.
- Plans are being made to exhibit at the **American Public Health Association Annual Meeting** in October.

Christine Bruske Flowers

Director, Office of Communications and Public Liaison
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
National Institutes of Health
919-541-366

Robin Mackar

News Director, Office of Communications and Public Liaison