National Advisory Environmental Health Sciences Council NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL) Report February 2024

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 **September 2023 Council Report**.

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I. Events

NIEHS Superfund Research Program (SRP) annual meeting, December 4-6 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. SRP-funded researchers and trainees — representing 70 institutions across the



U.S. — joined NIEHS staff, including the NIEHS director, community partners, and Tribal leaders to discuss research advances related to heavy metals, ubiquitous chemicals called PFAS, prenatal exposures, and more.

A January 2024 Factor story, <u>Collaboration</u> and training key to <u>Superfund success</u>, provides highlights from the meeting.

Former NCI Director gives lecture at NIEHS in November. Norman Sharpless, M.D., who led the



National Cancer Institute at NIH from 2017-2022, discussed therapy advances and what it will take to cut the cancer death rate in half by 2047 as part of the NIEHS Distinguished Lecture Series.

Read more and watch a video from the meeting in the December 2023 issue of the Environmental Factor, <u>Distinguished Lecturer shares trick or protecting Bone Marrow</u>.

Veterans Day Celebration. NIEHS staff gathered in person and virtually to recognize and thank



Veterans across the country and those at NIEHS for their service to our country. NIEHS Director Woychik, a former U.S. Navy veteran, provided opening remarks.

Read <u>more</u> in the December issue of the Factor about this event and the kick-off of the annual Combined Federal Campaign. At the end of the campaign, NIEHS had raised over \$100,000.

"All of Us" tour bus at NIEHS. In mid-October, Journey, the NIH All of Us Research Program bus,



stopped at NIEHS as part of its nationwide tour. More than 300 NIEHS staff members visited the bus, with more than 50 enrolling in the program while on site.

Read about the <u>"All of Us" tour bus stops at NIEHS</u> in the December issue of the Environmental Factor.

Sister Study 20th Anniversary. OCPL worked with the lead researchers of the Sister Study to



launch promotional activities commemorating the 20th anniversary of this breast cancer and health study. Many new products were developed and highlighted throughout October, which also marks Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Some of the many products developed are listed below,

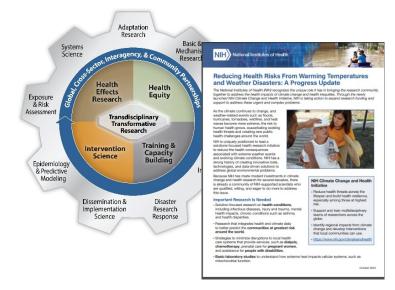
in addition to a partnership with NIH Medline Plus Magazine to develop consumer friendly products:

- A 30-second promotional video and a ten-minute video about the study. Worked with staff to get <u>teaser</u> and full length videos on <u>You Tube</u>, along with a <u>Spanish-captioned</u> version. These were also made available on the Sister Study website and on NIEHS public and internal sites, including a featured video of the month.
- **Factor story.** Developed a story with photos and captions for the <u>October issue of the</u> Factor about Dale Sandler presenting the prestigious Mider lecture at NIH.
- The NIH Catalyst also developed a story about the Mider lecture in their November-December issue. "Dale Sandler on Risk Factors for Breast Cancer."
- Anniversary research highlights. OCPL took a lead role in helping develop the <u>research</u> <u>highlights</u> for the Sister Study site.
- Media advisory was issued on October 2. Sister Study Turns 20.
- Updated NIEHS fact sheet on breast cancer and webpage health topic.
- NIH Medline Plus Magazine: Voices of the Sister Study. Recruiters and participants explain why this national breast cancer study matters.
- NIH Medline Plus Magazine: Infographic on Who are the "Sisters"?

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:

 In October, announced the new 2024 class of seven <u>NIH Climate and Health</u> <u>Scholars</u>. We also <u>wrote</u> an Environmental Factor story about them in December.



- Also in October, updated the fact sheet, <u>Reducing Health Risks from Warming Temperatures and Weather Disasters: A Progress Update</u>.
- Put information about upcoming webinars and conferences on the website and posted social media.
- Developed information about <u>NIH/NSF funding announcement</u> information for the site.
 Applications continue to be accepted for quick response awards.
- Promote the first annual <u>Café Climate and Health Conference</u> that will occur virtually on February 5-7, 2024. This will help build a community of practice.

II. Public Information and Outreach

The online **Environmental Factor** is produced monthly by NIEHS OCPL and has nearly 16,000 subscribers.



Each month, the Environmental Factor includes a column from Rick Woychik, called the "NIEHS Director's Corner."

In January, Research into totality of exposures

 the exposome – advanced by NIEHS.
 The NIEHS director spoke with Drs. David Balshaw and Yuxia Cui from NIEHS about our institute's efforts to promote exposomics in the U.S. and around the world.



- In December, <u>Burn pits' complex emissions</u>
 <u>simulated in NIEHS grantee's laboratory</u>. The NIEHS director spoke with Tim Nurkiewicz about his use of combustion generators and rodent models to gain insight into the emissions' potential effects on Veterans.
- In November, <u>Light and dark: underappreciated exposures with big effects on health</u>. For this conversation, Rick Woychik talked with Mariana Figueiro about how too much or too little exposure to light and dark can disrupt human biology and influence disease.
- In October, <u>Breast cancer disparities top of mind for NIEHS grant recipient</u>. The NIEHS director spoke to Justin Colacino about his research into why Black women are especially vulnerable to an aggressive form of the cancer.
- In September, <u>Diet and exposures in pregnancy: grantee tackles research, messaging</u>. Dr. Woychik speaks to Emily Oken about fish consumption during pregnancy, how diet influences effects of PFAS, and more.

An archive of all NIEHS Director's Corner is available at https://factor.niehs.nih.gov/previous-directors-corners#/

Be sure to subscribe to the Environmental Factor newsletter if you haven't already.

Online Environmental Health & Education Information



OCPL maintains more than <u>60 health topic webpages</u>, 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.

New Fact Sheets. OCPL developed a new fact sheet that is focused on <u>Cosmetics and Health</u>. It highlights NIEHS research findings.

Another fact sheet on <u>Arsenic and Your Health</u> gives an overview of this toxic substance and highlights NIEHS research, much of which is conducted by the Superfund Research Program.

Updated Health Topics. OCPL strives to continually update health topics webpages, such as the following:

- Women's Health and the Environment
- Native American Health and the Environment

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.

The demand for social media coverage of NIEHS research, scientists, and events continued to rise in 2023. There was a 15% increase in total posts and an 18% increase in the production of original content (i.e., custom graphics, videos).

NIEHS OCPL regularly posts content through these platforms:

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

| Year | NIEHS Twitter/X Posts (including retweets) | NIEHS Facebook Posts | NIEHS LinkedIn Posts |
|------|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2023 | 791 | 342 | 219 |

Social Media Growth

NIEHS social media followership continues to steadily increase. From **August 2023 through January 2024**, the NIEHS:

- X/Twitter feed increased from 23,422 to 23,836 followers.
- Facebook page increased from 34, 621 to 35,465 followers.
- LinkedIn page increased from 9,751 to 10,892 followers.

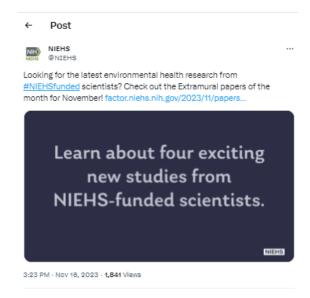
Social Media Examples

X/Twitter:



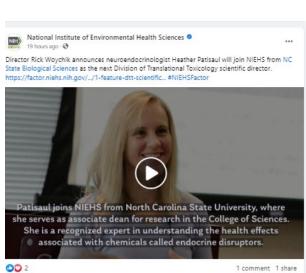
An example above of how our grantees can work with us to share news on social media.





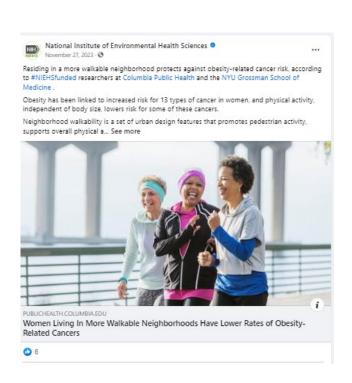
Facebook:



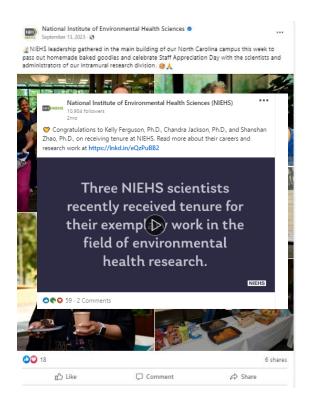








Linked In:



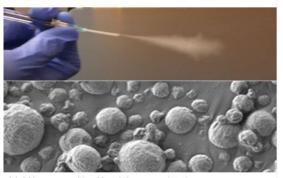






"Around the world, cancer is going to become more and more prevalent in lowand middle-income countries," said Sangeeta Bhatia, M.D., Ph.D., an MIT Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research senior scientist. "The epidemiology of lung cancer globally is that it's driven by pollution and smoking, so we know that those are settings where accessibility to this kind of technology could have a big impact."

The new diagnostic is based on nanosensors that can be delivered by an inhaler or a nebulizer.



Inhalable sensors could enable early lung cancer detection

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

A few examples from August to January 2024 are provided below. These include promotions for both internal and external events.



Tuesday, December 19, 2023 • 11:00 a.m. - noon

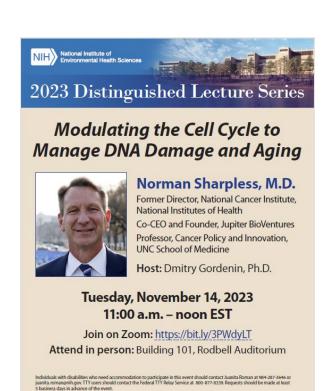
Keystone, Room 1003



Brought to you by the Division of Extramural Research and Training

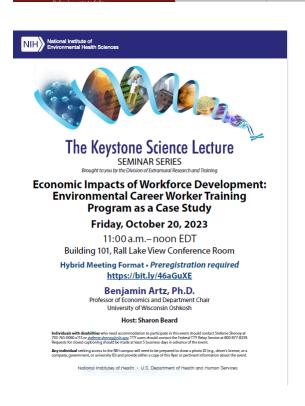






National Institutes of Health . U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



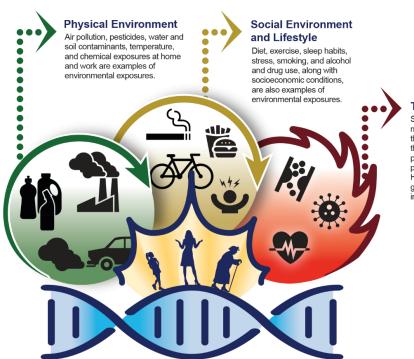




Additional examples of OCPL design work created in support of NIEHS research:

Exposome

Our environment — from the air we breathe, food we eat. and water we drink to the chemicals we ingest and stress we experience influences health. Scientists strive to measure the exposome, which is the totality of these exposures and the body's response to them. The study of the exposome, called exposomics, will allow scientists to discover how exposure mixtures drive health and disease, so people can take steps to modify their individual exposures and improve their health.



The Body's Response

Some environmental exposures may cause biological changes that affect health. For example, these changes can affect DNA, protein levels, signalling pathways, and metabolism. However, a person's unique genetic makeup and environment influence how the body responds.

OCPL developed this exposome graphic to convey information about this topic. It is used in the NIEHS Director's Column in January 2024.



OCPL helped develop the graphic for the new Climate and Health Outcomes Research Data Systems (CHORDS) web pages



OCPL helped develop and promote this poster to get input for <u>COMPLEMENT-ARIE</u>. The NIH is conducting planning activities to inform a potential Common Fund research program called Complement Animal Research In Experimentation (Complement-ARIE) aimed at development, standardization, validation, and use of new methods and approaches that will more accurately model human biology, known as New Approach Methodologies (NAMs)

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 | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| January 11, 2024 | Reduced Blood Lead Levels Linked to Lower Blood Pressure in | |
| | American Indians | |
| | A press release developed in collaboration with the National | |
| | Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and grantees. | |
| October 2, 2023 | Sister Study Turns 20 | |
| September 18, 2023 | Al and Machine Learning Can Successfully Diagnose Polycystic | |
| | Ovary Syndrome, New Study Confirms | |
| September 12, 2023 | NIH awards \$50.3 million for "multi-omics" research on | |
| | human health and disease. | |
| September 11, 2023 | NIH awards \$50.3 million for "multi-omics" research on | |
| | human health and disease | |

| Date | News Releases from NIEHS funded Researchers |
|--------------------|--|
| December 11, 2023 | Largest study of its kind suggests physical activity reduces a |
| | woman's risk of developing breast cancer before menopause |
| | |
| | News release from The Institute of Cancer Research. The |
| | NIEHS intramural program contributed to this research. |
| 0.1.1.2000 | |
| October 11, 2023 | Study Clearly Identifies Nutrients as a Driver of the Great |
| | Atlantic Sargassum Belt |
| | Woods Holo Oscanographic Institution issued the news |
| | Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution issued the news |
| | release. NIEHS supports this research. |
| September 29, 2023 | Global Call to Action on Sleep Health Published in The Lancet |
| | Public Health |
| | |
| | World Sleep Society issued this news release. Chandra |
| | Jackson of NIEHS intramural program is quoted. |
| | |
| September 12, 2023 | NIH awards \$50.3 million for "multi-omics" research on |
| | human health and disease |
| | NIEUC is postisinating in this program and contributing |
| | NIEHS is participating in this program and contributing |
| | funding. |

NIEHS in the News

NIEHS staff are often mentioned in a mix of top tier, trade, syndicated, and international news outlets. Examples follow that cover **August 2023-February 2024**. Selected news articles feature interviews with NIEHS staff or mentions of NIEHS as a resource.

| Date | Headline | Outlet | URL |
|---------------------|--|-----------------|---|
| January 29, 2024 | Everyone says trees are good for us. This scientist wants to prove it. | Washington Post | https://www.washingtonpost.co m/health/2024/01/29/louisville- trees-heart-health/ NIEHS funded grantee Aruni Bhatnagar, University of Louisville |
| January 24, 2024 | Is Dying Your Hair Bad for Your Health? Here's what the research suggests about the link between hair dye and cancer. | New York Times | https://www.nytimes.com/2024/ 01/24/well/hair-dye-health- cancer.html Alexandra White of Division of Intramural Research (DIR) is quoted |
| January 5, 2024 | Indo-U.S. Workshop Concludes | The Live Nagpur | https://thelivenagpur.com/2024/ 01/05/indo-us-workshop- concludes/ Rick Woychik, NIEHS Director, and David Balshaw, Division of Extramural Research and Training Director, are quoted in this article. |

| Date | Headline | Outlet | URL |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| December 20, 2023 | This Weed Killer Is Banned in 50 Countries. U.S. Workers Say It's Giving Them Parkinson's | LA Times | https://www.latimes.com/enviro nment/story/2023-12- 20/california-workers-say- herbicide-is-giving-them- parkinsons Dale Sandler of DIR is quoted |
| December 4, 2023 | Using Keratin Treatments or Hair- Straightening Creams? Research Suggests Potential Cancer Risk | The Wall Street Journal | https://www.wsj.com/health/w ellness/keratin-treatments-hair- straightening-creams-cancer- risk-b60fe102 Dale Sandler of DIR is quoted |
| December 2, 2023 | Lead Can Alter Personalities, Pose Lifelong Risks. It's Still in America's Water Pipes. | USA Today | https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/health/2023/12/02/lead-exposure-poisoning-health-consequences/71764877007/ NIEHS resources are mentioned |
| December 1, 2023 | Air Pollution Is Really Dangerous, Even More New Evidence Shows | Scientific American | https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/air-pollution-is-really-dangerous-even-more-new-evidence-shows/ Alexandra White of DIR is quoted |
| November 15, 2023 | Glyphosate Exposure Linked to Behavioral and Gut Health Concerns in New Studies | Beyond Pesticides | https://beyondpesticides.org/da ilynewsblog/2023/11/glyphosate -exposure-linked-to-behavioral- and-gut-health-concerns-in-new- studies/ NIEHS and grantees mentioned |

| Date | Headline | Outlet | URL |
|---------------------|--|------------------------|---|
| November 3, 2023 | National Academies to Hold Virtual Derailment Workshop. | The Review | https://www.reviewonline.com/ news/local- news/2023/11/national- academies-to-hold-virtual- derailment-workshop/ Aubrey Miller of NIEHS Office for the Director (OD) quoted |
| November 7, 2023 | Noise Pollution Harms More Than Your Hearing. | National Geographic | https://www.nationalgeographic. com/premium/article/noise- pollution-body-health-harm Chandra Jackson of DIR is quoted |
| October 24, 2023 | Study links elevated pollution levels to breast cancer WILDFIRE POLUTION HARMS HEALTH FIRE PRINTED BY A LONG TO THE POLITICAL APPROXIMATION OF THE POLITIC | Spectrum News | https://ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2023/10/23/elev ated-pollution-levels-linked-to-breast-cancer?cq_ck=1698176742368 Alexandra White of DIR is quoted |
| October 13, 2023 | Researchers say commonly prescribed hypertension drug, amlodipine, is safe and effective | Medical News Today | https://www.medicalnewstoday.c om/articles/researchers-say- commonly-prescribed- hypertension-drug-amlodipine-is- safe-and-effective#Bringing- clarity-to-high-blood-pressure- drugs Anant Parekh of DIR is quoted |

| Date | Headline | Outlet | URL |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| October 6, 2023 | Indoor wood burning raises women's lung cancer risk by 43%, says US study | The Guardian | https://www.theguardian.com/e nvironment/2023/oct/06/indoor- wood-burning-raises-women- lung-cancer-risk-study Suril Mehta of DIR (Translational Toxicology) is quoted |
| October 2, 2023 | Sisters Share Special Secrets: Marking the 20 th Anniversary of the NIEHS Sister Study | Sanctuary | https://www.sanctuary-magazine.com/october-2023-sister-study-dr-sandlerdr-obrien.html An interview with Dale Sandler and Katie O'Brien of DIR |
| September 14, 2023 | The Cost of Straight Hair | The New York Times Magazine | https://www.thecut.com/article/hair-straightener-relaxers-cancer.html Alexandra White of DIR is quoted |
| 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 DIR is quoted. NIEHS grantees are quoted. |

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