

nih record

Resources for Employees

Help, Health and Wellness in a Time of Recession

By Belle Waring

Morale is what keeps us believing in ourselves and our goals, especially in tough times. In a global economic downturn and a nation in recession, how are NIH'ers doing?

"We see employees living in counties with cutbacks in services," says NIH Recreation and Welfare Association President Randy Schools. "They're worried about the long-term effects that deficits have on federal retirement. They have a family member who's lost a job or a brother and a sister who've been furloughed. All these, we're hearing stories about."

If you find yourself in such a predicament, take heart. An array of employee services and amenities—some old standbys, others just launched—can help.



NHLBI's Dr. Rachel Permeth-Levine (l) leads a class in hip-hop dance.

ABOVE • Foggy top? See p. 3 for more on this rare view of NIH.

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Anna Post

Courtesy, a Cornerstone of Confidence

Etiquette Can Build, Keep Successful Relationships

By Carla Garnett

So you're at a gathering that includes several coworkers, your boss and a few VIPs the boss wants to impress. Across the room you notice one of the VIPs sneezing into his hand. The next thing you know, your boss—oblivious of the *gesundheit* moment—leads Dr. Sneezy over to meet you. You know what's next. You're expected to shake hands, greet the doc, give a good first impression of yourself and your organization. But, hello? Dr. Sneezy has not washed that hand. Which do you risk, career or cold?

Enter Anna Post, author of several etiquette guides and great-great granddaughter of that

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Workshops Outline Future of Women's Health Research

The Office of Research on Women's Health and Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine recently co-hosted the first in a series of four regional scientific workshops designed to help define the NIH women's health research agenda for the next decade. The workshop was held on the campus of Washington University and brought together more than 300 scientists, clinicians, public policymakers, advocates and members of the public to address changing public health and scientific needs.

"With so many advocacy priorities and special agenda issues, it is a challenge to design priorities to meet all constituency concerns," said ORWH director Dr. Vivian Pinn. "I am confident, however, that the new agenda can address continuing gaps and emerging science about women's health and sex and gender factors, the application of new technologies and the advancement and sustainment of the careers of women in science and engineering."

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The NIH Record is recyclable as office white paper.



briefs

STEP Forum on Mind-Body Medicine

The staff training in extramural programs (STEP) committee will present a Science for All forum on the topic “Mind-Body Medicine: Science or Fiction?” on Thursday, May 7, from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Natcher Bldg., Rms. E1-E2.

Have you ever wondered “Is it in my mind or is it in my body?” If so, you are not alone. In the past 20 years, mind-body medicine approaches have provided mounting evidence that mind and body affect each other in both health and disease. This STEP forum will attempt to separate fact from fiction by exploring how various underlying psycho-physiological pathways are affected by mind-body medical and integrative biology approaches. Take part in a session where you will listen to experts discuss the science and practice of mind-body medicine, get some of your questions answered and learn a few techniques to keep you healthy and happy.

National Day of Prayer, May 7

The National Day of Prayer will be celebrated on Thursday, May 7 at 11:30 a.m. on the lawn in front of Bldg. 1. All are invited to the non-denominational service to pray for our country and its leaders. This year’s observance will feature musical entertainment. Friends and family are welcome—you can even bring your lunch.

NIH Holds Career Symposium, May 19

The NIH Office of Intramural Training & Education invites all NIH graduate students and postdoctoral trainees, both basic scientists and clinicians, to participate in the NIH Career Symposium on Tuesday, May 19 at the Natcher Conference Center from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The symposium provides an opportunity for fellows and graduate students to learn about scientific career options and to explore factors that lead to career success. Panel sessions will focus on science writing, teaching in a variety of settings, grants administration, public policy and both research-intensive careers and careers away from the bench. Experts in each area will provide insights into their diverse career paths. Workshops will address professional skills including negotiation, interviewing, work/life balance, managing and the uses of optimism. Dr. Toni Hoover, vice president of Pfizer Global Research and Research and Development, will keynote the all-day event. A list of sessions and speakers and a registration link are posted at www.training.nih.gov.

Register for National President’s Challenge

For the second annual NIH HealthierFeds Physical Activity Challenge, the Division of Amenities and Transportation Services, ORS, is asking all NIH employees and contractors “Are You Up for the Challenge?” Which institute or center will claim the title of healthiest this year? The Challenge lasts from May 1 to July 24, with registration open May 1-29.

The Challenge is designed to include all federal employees and contractors—from those who already practice an active lifestyle to those currently less active. Participants can choose from nearly 100 activities to earn points, offering enough variety and flexibility to sustain their interest and enthusiasm. There is a wealth of scientific evidence showing that as little as 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (equal to brisk walking) done on most, if not all, days of the week has substantial health benefits for adults.

If you are currently registered with the President’s Challenge, then continue to log your physical activity; your group name and ID has not changed. For those new to the challenge, get started at <http://dats.ors.od.nih.gov/wellness/healthierFeds.htm>. For more information, contact Chris Gaines at gainesc@mail.nih.gov or (301) 451-3631.

R&W Holds Finance Fair

The R&W Association will host a Financial Fair on the patio of Bldg. 31 on Thursday, May 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Attendees can meet with representatives from financial institutions, advisor groups, insurance companies and more. The event is free to all NIH/NOAA employees and contractors. This is a great chance to gain some knowledge about today’s economy and housing market. Also, don’t forget to enter the raffle to win a pair of tickets to a Nationals game along with other great prizes.

Conference on Community Engagement in Research, May 14-15 at Natcher

The first step in addressing health disparities that plague minority and underserved populations is to build trust by reaching out in familiar environments. This is one discussion topic planned for the second annual conference “Improving Health WITH Communities: The Role of Community Engagement in Clinical and Translational Research.” If your work involves community outreach, you don’t want to miss this event to discuss ways to: work with communities to improve health; build partnerships with neighborhood organizations; partner with community physician practices; address community concerns about working with researchers.

The conference takes place May 14-15 at the Natcher Conference Center. Registration is now closed but you can view the event at <http://videocast.nih.gov>. For more information, contact Dr. Donna Jo McCloskey at mcclskd@mail.nih.gov. The conference is cosponsored by NCRR and grew out of its CTSA program.

The NIH Record is published biweekly at Bethesda, MD by the Editorial Operations Branch, Office of Communications and Public Liaison, for the information of employees of the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services. The content is reprintable without permission. Pictures may be available upon request. Use of funds for printing this periodical has been approved by the director of the Office of Management and Budget through September 30, 2009.

To receive alerts to our latest issue, send an email to listserv@list.nih.gov with the words “Subscribe NIHRECORD” in the message body.

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nih record

HOPELESS

THE ALZHEIMER'S PROJECT

A 4-PART DOCUMENTARY SERIES CHANGING THE WAY AMERICA THINKS ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

PART 1: THE MEMORY LOSS TAPES
PART 2: GRANDPA, DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM? WITH MARIA SHRIVER
PART 3: MOMENTUM IN SCIENCE
PART 4: CAREGIVERS

HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS. STARTING SUNDAY MAY 10, 9PM HBO

Join HBO, NIA for Sneak Preview of 'The Alzheimer's Project'

The NIH campus is invited to join HBO Documentary Films and NIA on Monday, May 4 from 2 to 4 p.m. at Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10, for a special screening of highlights from *The Alzheimer's Project*, a multi-platform public health series that seeks to foster wider public understanding of Alzheimer's disease research and care.

Co-presented by HBO and NIA, in association with the Alzheimer's Association, Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund and the Geoffrey Beene Gives Back Alzheimer's Initiative, *The Alzheimer's Project* features a 4-part documentary series, 15 short supplemental films, a web site and nationwide community-based information and outreach including other resources such as a companion book to the series. Co-executive produced by Maria Shriver and HBO Documentary Films President Sheila Nevins, the series debuts May 10-12 on HBO. All films will stream free of charge on www.hbo.com and will be offered for free on multiple platforms by participating television service providers.

NIA provided scientific guidance to the award-winning HBO filmmakers on their 2-year journey into the laboratories and clinics of some leading Alzheimer's disease researchers and into the lives of people living with the disease and their caregivers. "We viewed this as a unique opportunity to tell, in a very comprehensive and dynamic way, the compelling story of scientific discovery in Alzheimer's research, and of the human faces behind this devastating disease," said NIA director Dr. Richard Hodes.

The campus screening includes highlights from *The Alzheimer's Project: Momentum in Science*, a 2-part film that explores cutting-edge advances in Alzheimer's research and the challenges

presented by this complex disease. A brief panel discussion with HBO producer John Hoffman and Alzheimer's research experts and an HBO-hosted reception follow the screening.

The series also includes: *The Alzheimer's Project: The Memory Loss Tapes*, capturing the devastating experience of memory loss from the point of view of seven people living with disease; *The Alzheimer's Project: Caregivers*, a portrait of five families caring for people in different stages of the disease; and *The Alzheimer's Project: "Grandpa, Do You Know Who I Am?"* with Maria Shriver, telling the stories of children and teens coping with the illness in a grandparent.

For more information about the May 4 screening, contact the NIA Office of Communications and Public Liaison at (301) 496-1752 or nianews3@mail.nih.gov. For more information about Alzheimer's disease, go to www.nia.nih.gov/Alzheimers/.—Peggy Vaughn

New HHMI President To Speak at Asian/Pacific Islander Heritage Month Observance, May 14

NIH's 2009 Asian /Pacific Islander Heritage Month Observance will be held on Thursday, May 14 in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10, from 11 a.m. to noon. Immediately following the program, there will be ethnic food sampling. The observance is sponsored by the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management and the Asian/Pacific Islander employee committee.

The theme of this year's observance is "Leadership in Science—Meeting the Challenges of a Changing World." The keynote speaker is Dr. Robert Tjian, professor of molecular and cell biology, director of Li Ka-Sing Center for Biomedical and Health Science at the University of California, Berkeley, and new president of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Sign language interpretation will be provided. Individuals who need reasonable accommodation to participate should contact Carlton Coleman at (301) 402-4157 or the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-443-3701. For more information about the program, contact Lucie Chen, (301) 496-7478.



The U.S.S. Warren Grant Magnuson?

The Clinical Center looks like a battleship crossing the horizon in this photo taken one morning in March by Holly Giesen, a research psychologist at NIMH. She snapped the photo from her 17th floor balcony. "It was just amazing to watch the light change that morning," she said. "The top level of the clouds would shift up and down in a perfect line across the horizon, so sometimes you could not see any building, and then a few minutes later, just the top floors, then none again." The NIH Record welcomes images of NIH from interesting perspectives.

ETIQUETTE

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Post greets an attendee with a standard handshake. For those unsure of how firm to grip, she advises: "Use about the same amount of pressure you'd use for the refrigerator door handle."

PHOTOS: MICHAEL SPENCER

great guru of social graces, Emily Post. Not only can Anna Post help you get past the ick factor in the scenario above, but also she can give you tips for navigating other uh, sticky job-jeopardizing situations that arise. At the invitation of NIH's Office of Intramural Training and Education, she shared advice for "Building Successful Relationships" in Lipsett Amphitheater on Mar. 25.

Is Etiquette Essential?

If some attendees came to the lecture skeptical about the relevance of etiquette these days, most seemed convinced of its need after

hearing some of the true stories used to illustrate the workshop. A spokesperson for the family business where she, her mom, dad, sister and a few other relatives all work, Post cited an AP/Ipsos poll that found 69 percent of respondents think Americans are ruder today than 20 or 30 years ago. Whether you agree could perhaps reveal your age. Rudeness, she explained, is generational and expectations as well as "some of the social norms change over time."

Consider cell phone and BlackBerry use around you. Who hasn't involuntarily overheard one end of a conversation by someone loud-talking into some kind of micro receiver? If your BlackBerry buzzes and whirrs during a meeting, what's the protocol for answering? Should you text during Grand Rounds?

"Not only will this be good advice here," Post pointed out to the audience made up largely of postdocs and fellows, "but also it will serve you well as many of you move out into the professional world that may have a little bit of a different culture."

Comfort, Confidence Breed Success

In an informal poll of the audience, Post found many different terms people associate with etiquette, from "being proper" to "grandma." As the holder of a storied pedigree in the field, she admits she's probably heard just about all of the perceptions—good and bad—of manners. Since 1922, when Anna's foremother wrote the now-classic text on etiquette, the Emily Post Institute has addressed all kinds of public behav-

ior—from what to do at weddings and funerals to how to act in classrooms and boardrooms. Anna and other writers at the institute continue to update the book for every generation.

She said today's challenges in common courtesy are no less fascinating than those of yesteryear. Far more than professional or even personal skills to be cultivated, she stressed, the practice of etiquette should be second nature.

"It's not so much about rules," Post said of her great-great grandmother's philosophy, "but more about people behaving in ways that put other people at ease." That was one of her biggest concerns. "My overarching goal is building successful relationships, whether it's in business or in your personal life. Etiquette doesn't happen in a vacuum. When you're in a room by yourself, there's not much concern whether you're rude or polite. It takes two people for this conversation to happen, how we react to each other and influence each other and the decisions we choose to make."

According to the Post model, "etiquette equals manners plus principles." The difference between the latter two is that manners change with the times and vary among cultures. Principles, however, are timeless and cross cultural boundaries.

Knowing how to act and what to expect in any situation is a powerful confidence builder, Post contended. Three factors you can control are key for boosting your poise: actions, appearance, words.

Actions to Prevent Distractions

Common courtesy may seem less common these days, but it's no less useful, Post said. Same goes for the practical behavior most people learned in early childhood. Much of the time, good etiquette simply requires that you think less about yourself and more about the other people you encounter.

"Think before acting sounds very kindergarten, doesn't it?" she noted. "But thinking before acting prevents us from winding up in a situation...where the first thing we have to say is 'I'm sorry.'"

That's not to suggest having manners is all altruistic, Post said. The way you behave affects the way you are perceived, which in turn affects your bottom line. People judge you (and by extension, your work and the organization you

represent) on gestures, mannerisms and courtesies all the time. Were you late getting to a meeting? Were you paying attention to the presentation or BlackBerrying? Were you too familiar or candid in an email? Errors of etiquette distract everyone involved from your real purpose.

“What happens when we’re not making those mistakes?” Post asked. “We get right to the business that we’ve come to do—the good exchange of information. We can be as impressive as possible. That’s where our focus can go. That’s when we do our best work.”

As for the opening scenario involving Dr. Sneezy? Post says this is one of those times when you have to think beyond yourself. The best thing to do, she advised, is “take one for the team.” Shake hands. Make the good impression. You can always wash your hands later.

Post’s workshop at NIH is archived at <http://videocast.nih.gov/>. You can also catch her blog, What Would Emily Do, at <http://annapost.typepad.com/>. 

Celebrate Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month

Everyone is invited to attend a special luncheon program on Wednesday, May 20 to celebrate Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month. The theme for this year’s luncheon program is “Cultural Heritage and Diversity in a New Era.” The program will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the patio of Bldg. 31A and will feature the sale of ethnic food from local restaurants (Delhi Dhaba, Korean Korner, Shanghai Café and Ba-Le Restaurants). A portion of proceeds from sales will benefit the Children’s Inn at NIH. The event will also feature an origami and calligraphy demonstration, an R&W line-dance performance and representatives from the NIH Paddling Club’s Dragon Boat Team, NIH Federal Credit Union, USPHS scientist professional advisory committee, APA Commissioned Corps, NIH Bone Marrow Registry, NIDDK Diabetes information office, the NIH Asian and Pacific Islander American Organization (APAO) and more. The event is sponsored by APAO. For more information, call Donna Wells, (301) 496-5248.



Radio personality Alvin John Waples of WMMJ (Majic 102.3-FM) speaks with ORWH director Dr. Vivian Pinn in the lobby of Providence Hospital.

PHOTO: BELLE WARING

‘Take Loved One to Doctor’

Live from Providence Hospital, It’s NIH!

By Belle Waring

NIH pitched in to promote preventive care in the Washington, D.C., community on Apr. 7, which was “Take a Loved One to the Doctor Day.”

“We can’t forget to reach out to our local communities,” said Calvin Jackson, chief of the News Media Branch, Office of Communications and Public Liaison, OD. “This is our third visit to Providence Hospital for Take a Loved One to the Doctor Day, because grassroots efforts can really bring about change.”

The event, part of a national campaign led by syndicated radio host Tom Joyner of WMMJ (Majic 102.3-FM), was a return engagement to Providence—an important venue, both demographically and historically. Chartered by President Lincoln in 1861, Providence is the longest continuously operating hospital in the nation’s capital. Its community roots go deep.

Exhibits lined the lobby, where visitor estimates topped 2,000. Staff, students, patients and their families flocked to the NIH tables for the cool giveaways and literature (in both Spanish and English) on hypertension, diabetes, cancer, stroke, smoking cessation, men’s/women’s/senior health and other topics.

Some folks were on a mission.

“Can you help us set up an event for men’s health?” asked Eddie Martin, vice mayor of District Heights, Md. A community health worker needed speakers for a cancer support group. Others were searching for ways to help loved ones quit smoking.

Meanwhile, in the bustling lobby, Olivia Fox of WMMJ interviewed NIDDK director Dr. Griffin Rodgers and radio personality Alvin John Waples interviewed ORWH director Dr. Vivian Pinn.

Radio One, which owns or operates 54 radio stations, reaches approximately 14 million listeners weekly, with its local affiliate WMMJ heard by half a million strong.

Now, that’s a shout-out.

Permeth-Levine (c) leads class in a stretch you can do at your desk.



COPING WITH RECESSION

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Most employee resources come under the Office of Research Services (one exception is the Work/Life Center, part of the Office of Human Resources, which offers career services). Otherwise, visit the ORS web site (see sidebar) and see “Employee”; some services are also open to contractors. Here are a few highlights:

The first thing you notice about the Employee Assistance Program consultants—Dr. Michael Bowler, Eva Chen and Craig Kalman—is how easy they are to talk to. It’s reassuring to know that you’re not alone.

“The current economic situation is anxiety-provoking, and it trickles down to any organizational or family problem,” says program director Bowler. “We are seeing people who were planning on retiring and now their spouse has lost their job, so their whole retirement plan is in question.”

A branch of the Occupational Medical Service, EAP is really “a

life transition center,” Bowler says, where folks can “feel comfortable about coming and having conversations with us about anything.”

Consultations include one-on-one and organizational assistance, problem-solving, crisis

intervention and referrals as well as training, workshops, seminars and coaching. All services are free and confidential.

Many stressors are hitting “the sandwich generation,” says Chen. “They might have a 19-year-old, plus two elderly parents to care for. We try to give them a broader perspective and help them plan ahead.”

EAP does not provide material or financial assistance, yet it does offer referrals and coordination with other services.

“This is a benefit, not a liability,” says Kalman. “You’re not being sent to the principal’s office. It’s a wise move, so come in proactively.”

Meanwhile, the Division of Amenities and Transportation Services, ORS, offers many other resources. “Taking care of employees is the main function of our division,” says director Tom Hayden. These services include banking, child care, fitness, food/concession, interpreting, retail, transportation, travel and wellness.

Now, about the bottom line: Nationwide, credit unions, compared to banks, are relatively healthy. The NIH Federal Credit Union offers a full range of services, from mortgages to money management. Employees, contractors and their families can join.

Next up: How’s your commute? Need to offset costs? Looking for a carpool or parking assistance? Transportation Services project officer Joe Cox can help. He says 5,000 NIH’ers—up to 6,000 in summer—are using Transshare, a tax-free benefit to subsidize employees using public transportation.

Cheat Sheet to Beat Stress

ORS Employee Services—www.ors.od.nih.gov/services.htm

Employee Assistance Program—<http://dohs.ors.od.nih.gov/eap/index.htm>

Recreation and Welfare Association—<http://does.ors.od.nih.gov/retail/index.htm>

Parking and Transportation Services—<http://dtts.ors.od.nih.gov/transportation.htm>

Fitness Centers—www.recgov.org/fitness/fitness.html

Focus on You: NIH Wellness—<http://dats.ors.od.nih.gov/wellness/index.htm>

Work/Life Center—<http://hr.od.nih.gov/worklife/default.htm>

National Naval Medical Center fitness center—www.bethesda.med.navy.mil/Visitor/Morale_Welfare_Recreation/index.aspx

"It helps the environment," says Cox, "and it helps the wallet." Transshare allocation levels (set by the IRS, not NIH) may soon see an increase.

But some things don't change. Even in a recession, "people want to have fun," says R&W's Schools. "Our movie ticket business is up. We also have services that provide convenience and save time: getting greeting cards, picking up gifts, dry cleaning or a honey-baked ham. Time is so valuable now and the R&W can help."

Such help includes housing—R&W provides listings—and much more: health and wellness programs, a low-cost prescription plan and supplemental group disability insurance. Employees, contractors, patients and their families can join R&W for \$7 a year. Employees and contractors can also join one of the fitness centers in Bldg. 31, Rockledge or Baltimore at a discounted rate.

"What's really cool," says fitness trainer Terry Bowers, "is that exercise teaches your body how to appropriately respond to stress. The more you exercise, the more your body will appropriately respond to other stressful situations."

If you like a group vibe, try the classes. Robert Geter leads 12 boot camp classes each week, supporting his participants as "a fitness coach, not a drill sergeant."

Meanwhile, Fitness Center Director Laura Lavrin has noticed an increase in attendance at both the Bldg. 31 and Rockledge centers. "We are happy NIH employees and contractors are taking advantage of our fitness centers," she says. "The services we offer help them relieve their stress."

Lavrin offers fun and practical activities and sessions, complete with handouts, that you can do at your desk, office or home. And in concert with the NIH Office of the Director and the Office of AIDS Research, she's also providing a month-long series of activities in May to help people create a balanced lifestyle and make wise choices leading to good physical health. She's also assisting other institutes with their wellness initiatives.

Mind you, this is Wellness with a capital W. A trans-NIH initiative spearheaded by NHLBI and sponsored by ORS as well as other ICs, Wellness is a lecture series ("Focus on You!"), a web site (just launched) and other events like "Mind/Body Week," slated for September.

Dr. Rachel Permuth-Levine is getting the word out: "I'm tasked with looking after employee health at NHLBI at Rockledge," she says, "where we saw people lose a lot of weight,



then come off cholesterol medication, blood pressure medication...they got on the Wellness Train. It would be terrific for other ICs to see these benefits.

"People are very stressed," she observes. "They tell me about bad eating habits, poor sleep...If we have to deal with this recession, there must be a culture of change, focusing on health and wellness...and we'll be much more resilient."

Those who enjoy swimming for exercise and relaxation may join the National Naval Medical Center fitness center and pool.

You may also be eligible for discounted memberships at non-NIH fitness centers; check the R&W web site for details.

And finally, at least it's spring. This month, the NIH Farmer's Market returns with affordable, freshly picked produce trucked onto the Bldg. 31 patio. Even in a time of recession, we can still taste the sweetness of life.

Above:

EAP consultants include (from l) Dr. Michael Bowler, Eva Chen and Craig Kalman.

Below:

Permuth-Levine (l) leads class in a leg stretch exercise.

PHOTOS: KEITH RICHARDSON, BELLE WARING



WOMEN'S HEALTH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Right:
ORWH director Dr. Vivian Pinn speaks in St. Louis at a workshop.

Keynote speakers included Dr. Nancy Nielsen, president of the American Medical Association, who spoke by video telecast from the White House Forum on Health Care Reform. "It is essential for women's health research to be included in a national health research strategy," she said.

Dr. Phoebe Leboy, president of the Association for Women in Science, spoke on the difficulty of retaining women in academic medicine. "Although women make up more than 40 percent of M.D.s and biomedical Ph.D.s, they are still underrepresented among medical school faculty," she said.

Leboy noted several causes for women's decisions to leave academic medicine, such as a system that rewards traits such as assertiveness that are socially less acceptable for women; environments where women are still demeaned and undervalued; and a highly competitive culture that assumes a workday of more than 12 hours, including weekends.

"Supportive help for women at academic centers would include activities such as mentoring and networking and enacting family-friendly policies such as family leave, the extension of the probationary period and the construction of childcare facilities," she said.

NIDDK director Dr. Griffin Rodgers presented at a panel on enhancing interdisciplinary science in women's health research. He noted several key developments such as the activities of ORWH, the inclusion of women in clinical trials and the Women's Health Initiative.

"Powerful interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches are ones that harness technology and expertise," said Rodgers. "We also need to emphasize translational research that helps move discoveries from bench to bedside."

The conference also featured a session to receive testimony from the public on women's health issues and issues related to the advancement of women in biomedical careers. Work groups were also conducted, whose members drafted recommendations on women's health in conjunction with such medical issues as chronic pain syndrome, obesity and bladder and pelvic floor disorders.

The remaining three scientific workshops will be held at the following locations: University of California, San Francisco, May 27-29; Brown University and Women and Infants Hospital,



Providence, Sept. 21-23; Northwestern University, Chicago, Oct. 14-15.

Once the workshops are complete, the ideas, recommendations and testimony will be integrated with other NIH input and will inform the agenda of women's health research for the next decade. 1

Upcoming Wednesday (and Thursday) Afternoon Lectures

Dr. Eric Nestler, director of the Mt. Sinai Brain Institute, will present a Wednesday Afternoon Lecture on May 6 at 3 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10. A pioneer in the field of neuroscience and psychiatry, he will discuss "Transcriptional Mechanisms of Drug Addiction."

"Addiction can be viewed as a form of drug-induced neural plasticity," he says. "Given the stability of the behavioral abnormalities that characterize an addicted state, it makes sense that stable changes in gene expression are involved." He will explore this complex state of addiction, focusing on two main pathways implicated in drug addiction that his lab studies.

On May 13, also at 3 p.m. in Masur, Dr. James Collins, co-founder and co-director, Center for BioDynamics, Boston University, will speak on "Engineering Gene Networks: Integrating Synthetic Biology and Systems Biology."

A special Thursday lecture takes place at 2 p.m. on May 14, when Dr. Thomas Sudhof, chair of the department of neuroscience at UT Southwestern Medical Center, speaks on "Molecular Physiology of Neurotransmitter Release" in Masur Auditorium. Sudhof will present recent data describing the properties of the calcium sensors mediating the triggering release and its regulation during presynaptic plasticity. His lab studies how calcium triggers neurotransmitter release and how it regulates release during synaptic plasticity.



Eye Exams Urged for Vision Month

Each May, the National Eye Institute sponsors Healthy Vision Month (HVM), a national eye health observance that supports the vision objec-

tives in Healthy People 2010. This year's observance is dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of comprehensive dilated eye exams in detecting common vision problems and keeping vision at its best.

More than 11 million Americans have common vision problems due to refractive errors such as nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, and presbyopia and could benefit from the use of corrective eyewear.

Regular comprehensive dilated eye exams are important for maintaining good eye health. It is a painless procedure in which an eye care professional dilates the pupils and examines your eyes to look for common vision problems and eye diseases, many of which have no early warning signs. If nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism or presbyopia are detected, they can often be corrected with prescription eyewear such as eyeglasses and contact lenses.

Join NEI in celebrating HVM by making sure you are seeing your best. Encourage your family and friends to do the same. Send someone special an e-card to let them know you care about their eye health. For more information about common vision problems and keeping your eyes healthy, visit www.nei.nih.gov/healthyeyes. Learn more about what NEI is doing for HVM at www.healthyvision2010.nei.nih.gov/hvm/.

Bike To Work Day, May 15

Celebrate National Bike Month and Bike to Work Day with the NIH Bicycle Commuter Club on Friday, May 15, from 7 to 10 a.m. on the patio in front of Bldg. 1. Satellite events will also take place at Rockledge Blvd. and Executive Blvd.

In recent years, nearly 7,000 area residents have participated in this event; NIH has won the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' award for being the area's biggest employer of Bike to Work Day participants for the past 3 years. Help defend our title this year by registering (it's free!) at www.waba.org (and choose NIH as your pit stop). All pre-registrants get a Bike to Work Day 2009 T-shirt. At Bldg. 1, all employees and contractors who show up riding a bicycle and wearing a helmet may enjoy breakfast snacks and cycling fellowship. For more information visit www.recgov.org/r&w/nihbike/bike.html.



Chepelinsky Says Farewell to NEI

After 33 years at NIH and 26 years with the National Eye Institute, Dr. Ana Chepelinsky has retired. She was chief of the regulation of gene expression section in the Laboratory of Molecular and Developmental Biology for 11 years.

"I'll always remember and appreciate Ana's enthusiasm and curiosity during our many years together in the lab," said former lab chief Dr. Joram Piatigorsky. "She made numerous scientific contributions that were a credit to her and to the laboratory."

Born in Argentina, Chepelinsky earned her Ph.D. from Buenos Aires University in 1970. She completed her postdoctoral training at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and in 1973 she joined the Institute for Biochemical Research in Buenos Aires. She came to NIH in the late 1970s as a visiting scientist at NCI and NIAMDD.

Since 2006, Chepelinsky has served as intramural career development advisor and workforce development manager. In this capacity, she coordinated the NEI action plan for recruiting underrepresented minorities. "As NEI workforce development manager, I was particularly impressed with Ana's recruitment and mentoring efforts for the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities program," said Dave Whitmer, NEI executive officer.

While on detail from NEI from 2004 to 2006, Chepelinsky served as program director for the Americas and the Caribbean at the Fogarty International Center's Division of International Relations. Throughout her career, she served on several NIH committees including the Diversity Council and as NEI representative on the NIH woman scientist advisors committee.

Chepelinsky played a significant role in training and mentoring postdoctoral fellows and other young scientists from all over the world. Dr. Shawn Drew, one of her students, presented her a plaque in June 1993 that read, "In May of 1991, I stepped into your lab and you stepped into my heart. You are the first and only person who ever told me two life-changing things: one, that I can achieve my Ph.D., and two, that I will be a great scientist." Drew obtained her Ph.D. in 1998 and says, "I'm now in a position to do [for others] what Ana did for me."

In retirement, Chepelinsky plans to continue mentoring women and underrepresented minorities to encourage them to advance in their science careers. She also loves to read and travel and enjoys nature and the outdoors, including whitewater rafting and snorkeling. She will also have more time to pursue her artistic interests, mainly in painting and ceramics.

Exercise Is Safe, Improves Quality of Life in Patients with Chronic Heart Failure

Regular exercise is safe for heart failure patients and may slightly lower their risk of death or hospitalization, according to results from the largest and most comprehensive clinical trial to examine the effects of exercise in chronic heart failure patients. Supported by NHLBI, the study also found that heart failure patients who add regular, moderate physical activity to standard medical therapy report a higher quality of life compared to similar patients who receive medical therapy only.

Researchers with HF-ACTION (Heart Failure—A Controlled Trial Investigating Outcomes of exercise TraiNing) published two papers in the Apr. 8 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The study was conducted at 82 centers in the United States, Canada and France.

“Many patients and health care providers have continued to be concerned about the safety of aerobic exercise for heart failure,” said NHLBI director Dr. Elizabeth Nabel. “With the results of this robust clinical trial, we can now reassure heart failure patients that, with appropriate medical supervision, regular aerobic exercise is not only safe but it can also improve their lives in really meaningful ways.”

Researchers Discover New Genetic Variants Associated with Increased Risk of Stroke

Scientists have identified a previously unknown connection between two genetic variants and an increased risk of stroke, providing strong evidence for the existence of specific genes that help explain the genetic component of stroke. The research was funded by NHLBI and several other institutes and centers. The analysis of over 19,000 participants is published in the Apr. 23 *New England Journal of Medicine*.

The genetic variants were discovered by analyzing the genomes of individuals from the CHARGE (Cohorts for Heart and Aging Research in Genomic Epidemiology) consortium. This includes participants from the Framingham Heart Study, Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study, Cardiovascular Health Study and Rotterdam Study. The researchers discovered that two previously unsuspected common genetic variants, or single-nucleotide polymorphisms, were consistently associated with total stroke (all types) and ischemic stroke in white people.

Use of Antipsychotics in Alzheimer’s Patients May Lead to Detrimental Metabolic Changes

Atypical antipsychotic medications are associated with weight gain and other metabolic changes among patients with Alzheimer’s disease, according to a recent analysis of data from the NIMH-funded Clinical Antipsychotic Trials of Intervention Effectiveness—Alzheimer’s Disease (CATIE-AD) study. The study was published online Apr. 15 in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*.

The CATIE-AD study compared the atypical antipsychotics olanzapine (Zyprexa), quetiapine (Seroquel) and risperidone (Risperdal) to a placebo (inactive pill) among 421 participants with Alzheimer’s disease. During the first 12 weeks of the trial, olanzapine and quetiapine were significantly associated with weight gain—up to 0.14 pounds per week. Women gained more weight than men and weight gain increased the longer a patient stayed on the medication. In addition, olanzapine was associated with a decrease in HDL (good) cholesterol and increased waist size. Previous results from CATIE-AD found only modest effectiveness in treating behavioral symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease while adverse effects limited improvements overall. The results of this latest analysis suggest further caution is needed when using atypical antipsychotics to treat Alzheimer’s patients.



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milestones

Fraumeni Honored for Lifetime Achievement in Cancer Research

Dr. Joseph F. Fraumeni, Jr., recognized for his research contributions in understanding the causes and prevention of cancer, has received



the American Association for Cancer Research Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cancer Research. For more than 30 years, he has led one of the premier cancer epidemiology groups in the world at the National Cancer Institute and has helped mentor and train the next generation of interdisciplinary scientists.

Fraumeni is best known for the syndrome that bears his name, along with that of his colleague Dr. Frederick P. Li. Li-Fraumeni Syndrome (LFS) is a rare, inherited disorder that predisposes young people to certain cancers including breast cancer, sarcomas and a variety of other tumors. The search for genetic underpinnings of the familial syndrome eventually led to collaborative studies in the laboratory of Dr. Stephen Friend at Harvard, where the team discovered germline mutations in the p53 tumor suppressor gene. The findings were especially dramatic since p53 mutations were previously found in the tumor tissue of a substantial proportion of cancer patients.

“Perhaps as important to me as the discovery and characterization of LFS,” said Fraumeni, “is the U.S. Cancer Mortality Atlas project.” By developing computer-generated and color-coded maps of cancer mortality at the county level, it was possible to visualize high-risk areas where Fraumeni and his colleagues conducted epidemiologic studies that identified a number of previously unrecognized carcinogenic hazards, including:

- oral cancer associated with smokeless tobacco use in the rural South
- lung cancer with shipyard asbestos exposures along coastal areas and with inhaled arsenic in

smelter workers and residents of surrounding communities

- lymphoma with agricultural herbicides in farming communities
- nasal cancer with work in the furniture industry in the Southeast
- bladder cancer with certain occupational exposures and with high levels of arsenic in drinking water in the Northeast.

These studies have often led to cancer control measures such as educational campaigns and labeling policies for smokeless tobacco and regulatory limits for arsenic exposure. Impressed with these results, 35 other countries developed similar geographic atlases and strategies.

The AACR Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cancer Research was established in 2004 to honor an individual who has made significant fundamental contributions to cancer research. “I am delighted to receive this award, particularly as it comes from the world’s leading professional society devoted to cancer research,” Fraumeni said. “It has been gratifying to see epidemiology steadily move into the mainstream of AACR, including its meetings and publications.”

NIAMS Symposium Honors Yu

Dr. Leepo Yu, a research physicist in the Laboratory of Muscle Biology, NIAMS, was recently honored for her career at NIH. In recognition of her contributions to the field of muscle research, NIAMS hosted a symposium in her honor titled, “Structural Basis of Muscle Contraction.” NIAMS director Dr. Stephen Katz, scientific director Dr. John O’Shea, and LMB chief Dr. Kuan Wang presided over the event, where leaders in the field of muscle biology presented their research.

Yu has 36 years of experience at NIH, studying structural biology of muscle tissue. She completed her undergraduate degree at Brown University and her doctoral studies in physics at the University of Maryland. In her early years here, Yu served under the mentorship of Dr. Richard Podolsky and was instrumental in visualizing molecular structure of muscle involved in contraction. She also played a critical role in characterizing a new intermediate state in the force generation of muscle. Lately, her focus has turned to establishing a link between molecular processes occurring in intact muscle cells and the atomic structures of contractile proteins.

“Leepo epitomizes the ‘doing big science with a small team’ approach at NIH intramural programs,” said Wang. “She led one of a handful of teams in the world that looks closely at how the tiny molecular motors move about in live muscles by using synchrotron X-ray.”

More information about the symposium, including a list of presenters, is available at www.niams.nih.gov/News_and_Events/Meetings_and_Events/default.asp. 



Field Notes

Clark Catalogs Birds of NIH

Cindy Clark, a biomedical librarian in the NIH Library in Bldg. 10, also pitches in as a volunteer naturalist. Because the Bethesda campus is a birdy kind of place (thanks to the creek, groves of trees and several areas deliberately unmowed), Clark's pace picks up in spring.

As a librarian, Clark brings professional expertise to bear on cataloging NIH birds. Her "NIH Bird Checklist" cites 39 confirmed species of a potential 100-plus species, from gnatcatchers to wood warblers. Nonetheless, she says, "I don't want to give the impression that I am an expert. Some other birders on campus have longer confirmed species lists. I just don't get out as much as I'd like."

A former bluebird monitor volunteer, Clark now works informally with NIH landscape architect Lynn Mueller, who monitors the habitats of birds who feed or nest on the NIH campus.

Since 2000, Mueller has organized and monitored the NIH and NIH Animal Center (Poolesville farm) bluebird trails and nearly 100 bird boxes. He's also compiled a personal list of 50 species observed over the years.

"I have evidence of other species visiting or living on the campus," he says, "such as an owl pellet, but I have not seen an owl yet."

Each bird on Clark's list is assigned a "designation and relative abundance code." These range from "vc" for "very common, difficult to miss"—think Carolina chickadee—to "x" for "accidental, only one or two sightings"—like the cattle egret.

Hereabouts, there aren't many cattle sightings, either, so if you spy one of their egret pals, you've seen an outlier.

Spotting and identifying birds is really enjoyable, Clark says. It's also helping our corner of the planet: "Tracking resident numbers and seasonal migrations helps NIH staff assess the health of the ecosystem of the 308-acre campus."

As for the bird lovers themselves, there is no official list, but unconfirmed reports cite at least two species: the noontime stroller and the full-fledged ornithologist.

Anecdotal evidence also suggests that rookies exposed to bird-watching on their lunch hour do have a tendency to get hooked, especially as those who habitually perform close work with computers and pipettes adjust to the scale of the great outdoors.



Above:
Medical librarian and volunteer naturalist Cindy Clark checks bluebird boxes on campus.

Right:
Do not enter: Birds Working.

PHOTOS: BELLE WARING



Furthermore, once binoculars and field guides ("bird books") are introduced, there is a robust correlation with increased enjoyment levels.

Hear that *chirr-chirr-chirr*? Look up—peeking around that old tree trunk is a red-bellied woodpecker, announcing his territory or searching for a mate. Higher still, a red-tailed hawk, circling...—**Belle Waring** 📍



Solowey Awardee Davidson To Lecture, May 14

Dr. Beverly Davidson, professor of internal medicine, molecular physiology and biophysics, and neurology at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, has received the 2009 Mathilde Solowey Lecture Award in the Neurosciences for her research on developing brain-targeted therapies for inherited neurological diseases. She will present the lecture on Thursday, May 14 at noon in Lipsett Amphitheater, Bldg. 10.

The annual award, administered by the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences, honors rising neuroscientists for innovative research with significant translational potential.

Davidson has pioneered the development and application of brain-targeted gene-silencing technologies to treat neurodegenerative diseases. Gene silencing harnesses a powerful natural process called RNA interference to turn off production of toxic proteins. Davidson's group has developed reagents for expressing inhibitory RNA in vivo. This approach improved disease phenotypes in relevant models of dominantly inherited human neurodegenerative diseases. Davidson's work may help lead to therapies for conditions such as Huntington's disease and Lou Gehrig's disease. For recessive diseases, strategies to supplement the missing protein must be developed. Novel approaches for tackling the CNS manifestations of these different forms of inherited diseases will be presented, including methods to achieve gene replacement in the brain following peripheral delivery of recombinant vectors or methods to inhibit gene expression using inhibitory RNAs.

Davidson is a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and serves on the board of directors for the American Society for Gene Therapy.