



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

News

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITY MEDICINE ■ UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON ■ WINTER 2002

OUR ALUMNI 1,000 *and still counting*

This past fall, the Department of Environmental Health graduated its 502nd graduate student since it awarded its first degree to Carl Osaki in 1973 (see page 3). In addition, since 1947, we have granted diplomas to more than 500 undergraduate Bachelor of Science majors. This issue of Environmental Health News has a special focus on alumni. Also, we have launched an alumni Web site and are increasing our outreach efforts. We're mailing this newsletter to all alumni whose addresses we have. Let us know if you'd like to subscribe to this and other publications. We'd like to hear your thoughts about how to improve our educational programs.

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Joel Levin

New alumni Maria Majar, Carolyn Whitaker, and Robert Leo receiving their Master's Degrees in 2001.

UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

In the past decade, our department has seen a number of accomplishments and new faces. Our success is measured in part by achievements of our graduates. Here is a synopsis of what is new at DEH.



Dave Kalman

EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

We launched three new master's programs this year—an MPH with a broader scope than our existing MPH in Occupational and Environmental Medicine, and MS and MPH degrees offered jointly with the Evans School of Public Affairs.

Last year, we added a joint PhD program with the Department of Health Services in occupational health services research. We reworked our PhD in Industrial Hygiene to apply to both industrial and nonindustrial settings. This change acknowledges the general lessening of distinctions between workplace and community environmental health issues.

FACULTY

This past year we hired two new faculty members. Dr. Peter Johnson, a University of California, Berkeley-trained engineer with interests in ergonomics and repetitive motion injury, joined the Industrial Hygiene and Safety faculty. Dr. Scott Meschke, who holds a PhD in environmental microbiology from the University of North Carolina and a law degree from the University of Kansas, joined the Technology faculty (see page 9).

RESEARCH

We continue to be awarded multi-investigator programs and centers. The EPA Northwest Center for Particulate Air Pollution and Health—one of five in the country—is conducting research to better understand the relationship between air quality and public health.

The Fogarty Center, which sponsors training for occupational medicine and environmental health leaders from less developed nations, was successfully renewed, as were the NIOSH Center for agricultural safety and health and the NIOSH Education and Research Center

We are collaborating with the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center on a new toxicogenomic consortium. One goal is to develop new techniques for using and analyzing microarrays, "gene chips" that can analyze hundreds or thousands of genes simultaneously.

LOOKING AHEAD

We look forward to recruiting ever more capable students to our programs. We invite our alumni to be part of this process. Two academic programs will be reviewed and possibly enhanced—the undergraduate program and the graduate program in Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

The Department of Environmental Health has enjoyed a high level of success in recent years. We continue to recognize the need to make sure that the research we conduct, the students we educate, and the services we provide meet the needs of the changing environment. This is the exciting nature of our world, and we invite your suggestions.

-Dave Kalman, Chair

1992-2001 GRADUATES*

Where are they now?

Corporate	23%
Academics	22%
Government	17%
Consulting	13%
Health Care	9%
Military	6%
Other Research	6%
Further Education	3%
Unrelated Fields	1%

**graduate programs only, unknowns excluded*

Photos
this page: UW Health Sciences Center
for Educational Resources
opposite page: Kathy Hall

COMING FULL CIRCLE 1973

#1 Carl Osaki



In 1973, Carl Osaki earned the first graduate degree in what is now the Department of Environmental Health, and 501 graduates have followed in his footsteps. In recent years, his footsteps have led back to the door of the Department.

Osaki retired in July 1999 as Chief of Environmental Health at Public Health—Seattle & King County. He describes himself as “retired from a job, but not from a cause or a passion.” Governor Gary Locke recently appointed him to a third term on the Washington State Board of Health. He also teaches in our department and does private consulting work, specializing in environmental health practice and policy development.

He spends his retirement working because “I really feel environmental health is an important discipline ... I feel deeply blessed by the opportunity to continue in a field where I perceive I can still make a difference.”

He teaches an undergraduate Environmental Health Practice class, where he tries to “give students a real life perspective on the practice of environmental health.” He manages a School of Public Health grant to develop a training module for the six-state Pacific Northwest region, helping local and state health departments integrate the Essential Public Health Services (see sidebar) into environmental health practice.

Osaki entered graduate school on the GI Bill and a Public Health Service Traineeship, taking a leave of absence from the county health department, where he was an environmental health specialist. He says he became graduate No. 1 by accident—by finishing a quarter or two ahead of classmates David Bissonnette, Bryce Breitenstein, Stephen Cant, and Bruce Jackson.

In the nearly 30 years since he graduated, Osaki has seen a number of changes in Environmental Health, including a more diverse workforce, increased specialization of activities, and increased community involvement in decision-making.

Osaki’s interest in public process goes back to graduate school, where he took an atypical route to his master’s degree, with the encouragement of adviser Jack Hatlen. Instead of choosing a science-driven topic, he took courses in the Schools of Business and Public Affairs to learn about, as he puts it, “what makes environmental health organizations tick.” His thesis was titled, “The application of organization development concepts to an environmental health section of a local health agency.”

He encourages his students to study communication, behavioral sciences, and conflict resolution, and not to overspecialize. Understanding community needs and perceptions, he said, “is as important as knowing how to calculate parts per million.”

10 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

- Monitor health status to identify community health problems
- Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community
- Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues
- Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems
- Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts
- Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety
- Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable
- Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce
- Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services
- Conduct research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems

For more information

http://www.asph.org/aa_section.cfm/3



1997

Thomas McHugh, PhD

*Senior Toxicologist/Environmental Engineer
Groundwater Services, Inc., Houston, Texas*

Risk & remediation

Tom McHugh works for an environmental consulting company that specializes in environmental engineering and risk management. His projects mostly relate to human and ecological risk assessment, and involve applied research and development of regulatory guidance.

One of his favorite parts of the job is developing training programs on the application of risk assessment to environmental remediation sites. He has had the opportunity to present these training programs around the world, including Brazil, Italy, and Malaysia.

Tom rejoined the firm where he worked before coming to UW for his PhD, but with a new advantage. "I found that the training I received at DEH has created opportunities to advance professionally and within the company that I would not have had without the training."

His specialty in toxicology allows him to tackle highly technical risk assessment issues.

He also found that the DEH program gave him the broad environmental health background that he needed to apply his toxicology training to environmental remediation issues.

He suggests that current students become involved in other activities related to their future interests in addition to the core course requirements and thesis research. For example, he found that collaborations with the Department of Medicinal Chemistry and participation in risk assessment projects, while not directly related to his research, were an important part of his education.

Many parts of the country have a shortage of qualified toxicologists in environmental consulting, he said. "As risk assessment continues to become more important in environmental remediation, the role of toxicologists and other environmental health professionals continues to increase."

For more information:
<http://www.gsi-net.com/>

**I found that the
training I received at
DEH has created
opportunities to
advance professionally**

Photos
this page: Courtesy of Tom McHugh
opposite page: Kathy Hall

profiles

1982

Brad Prezant, MSPH, MBA, CIH, CPE

President & Chief Executive Officer

Prezant Associates, Inc.

Consulting & training

Brad Prezant supplemented his Master's Degree in Environmental Health with a Master's in Business Administration, taking his science background into the business world. The business he started in 1987 has grown from a one-man shop into the largest locally owned industrial hygiene consulting, laboratory, and health and safety training organization in the Pacific Northwest. It employs 35 people in Seattle, Spokane, and Mount Vernon.

After he received his MSPH degree, Prezant worked for five years with what is now called the Field Research and Consultation Group, consulting on indoor air quality and ergonomics.

He has continued to pursue his interest in indoor air quality—especially mold. He is an affiliate instructor and teaches indoor air quality in EHVH 557, the department's Industrial Ventilation class.

Prezant Associates includes DEH master's graduates, such as David Chawes ('81), Rick Gleason ('80), and Dianne Knutson ('99). Gleason teaches in DEH, as does Kate Stewart, whose ergonomics consulting firm merged with Prezant

Associates in 1999.

"We are the only consulting firm with such strong ties with the department," Prezant said. "We are appreciative of the opportunities the department has given us, and we support UW in any way we can."

The field of Industrial Hygiene has broadened in the 20 years since he graduated to include other public health issues. In addition to investigating health and safety hazards in factories, the new economy takes industrial hygienists into office buildings and single- and multi-family residences.

Prezant calls industrial hygiene a "great field for anyone interested in the application and communication of science ... It isn't pure science—we are out doing practical applications—taking science and applying it every day." The application of science to public health gives Environmental Health graduates a broader perspective than, for example, engineering. "Public health is our *raison d'être*," he said.

For more information

<http://www.prezant.com/>



1985 Kim Lowry Coble, MSPH

*Maryland Assistant Director
& Senior Scientist
Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

Environmental advocacy

Kim (Lowry) Coble applies her science background to environmental advocacy with the Maryland-based Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Her job is to ensure that the foundation uses sound science to restore and protect the bay. As the only person on staff with a public health background, she is the key link between the environment and human health, and as assistant director, she helps administer and manage the foundation's Maryland office.

She has been with the foundation for more than a decade and says, "I can honestly say I have never had two days be the same." She spends a great deal of time trying to influence state legislation (she is a registered lobbyist). She also spends time on the Bay in kayaks and canoes. She talks to citizen groups and international organizations, working specifically in the area of chemical contaminants and nutrients from point and non-point sources. "I am continually challenged by the diversity of the issues that I work on and therefore, am constantly learning new things."

After graduating from DEH, she managed the Exposure Pathways Study, which assessed the arsenic exposure of the citizens living near the Asarco smelter in Tacoma. After the study was complete,

she worked for the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, overseeing its Water and Hazardous Waste section. In 1990, she and husband Joe Coble moved to the East Coast.

She is unequivocal about the role the Department of Environmental Health played in her career. "My experience at DEH gave me the foundation on which I have built my profession. I learned how to use and communicate scientific issues in particular, environmental health issues, in order to protect the environment and human health."

She was inspired by professors who "made it clear that once you are educated about environmental health issues, you then have a responsibility to be an advocate about those issues."

She sees ample opportunities in her field. "There is a need for people who understand science and can communicate the issues." She suggests that graduates contact advocacy groups and private foundations about job possibilities. "While you may not die a millionaire, you will definitely feel as if you are making a difference."

For more information
<http://www.cbf.org/>



**While you may not die
a millionaire you will
definitely feel as if you
are making a difference**

profiles

1984

Joe Coble, MSPH, ScD, CIH

Staff Scientist, National Cancer Institute

Division of Cancer Epidemiology & Genetics

Occupational Epidemiology Branch

Tracking occupational illnesses



Joe Coble is with the National Cancer Institute, working on identifying and preventing occupational health hazards. He conducts retrospective exposure assessments for occupational epidemiology studies. Because the Institute collaborates on a wide variety of national and international studies, he interacts with some of the world's leading experts on occupational health.

After graduating from UW in 1984, he worked for 12 years as an industrial hygienist in the private sector, primarily in the forest products industry. In 1996, he entered a doctoral program in Environmental Health Engineering at Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health, and received a Doctorate of Science (ScD) in 2000. He was hired by Occupational Epidemiology Branch at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland.

He feels the interdisciplinary curriculum at UW provided him with a solid scientific foundation for his work in industry, and later in research. He learned the basic principles of industrial hygiene, as well as toxicology, epidemiology, and biostatistics. His master's thesis on the development and validation of monitoring methods to assess occupational

exposure to formaldehyde led directly to a job as an industrial hygienist in private industry.

Although he specialized in occupational health and safety, he appreciated that the faculty at DEH has expertise on a wide spectrum of issues. "Exposure to a range of environmental as well as occupational health topics provided a broad perspective from which to understand the larger aspects of health policy and risk assessment, as well as some of the more scientific and technical issues associated with the identification and control of health risks."

He encourages students to "learn as much as you can about the science, as well as the applied aspects of occupational and environmental health." While most graduates will not end up working in research, he thinks an understanding of the scientific method would serve them well in other fields. He sees a Master's Degree in Industrial Hygiene as a launching pad for a variety of careers in the private sector, government, and academia.

For more information

<http://www.dceg.cancer.gov/>

Photo
Courtesy of K. Coble

1993

Bradley A. Evanoff, MD, MPH

*Richard A. & Elizabeth Henby Sutter Associate Professor
of Occupational, Industrial, & Environmental Medicine
Director, Division of General Medical Sciences
Washington University School of Medicine*

Research, teaching & helping patients

Research, teaching, and clinical practice fill the life of Brad Evanoff. His research specialty involves musculoskeletal disorders and occupational injuries.

As an associate professor in the Department of Internal Medicine at Washington University in St. Louis, he teaches medical students, residents, and fellows. "I find teaching to be stimulating and enjoyable," as is mentoring junior faculty as they "develop into independent investigators."

He also sees patients in an occupational health clinic and in the general medicine service in the hospital, and has administrative duties as chief of the Division of General Medical Sciences, a research group that performs outcomes research and clinical epidemiology.

Evanoff finds occupational health research exciting because "it offers the ability to combine clinical medicine with public health." He acknowledges that "there is no shortage of controversies in our field, which will continue to have important social consequences and generate interesting questions for academic research." He has been involved, for example, in ergonomics regulation at the national level.

He received his clinical training at Washington University School of Medicine before entering the Occupational and Environmental Medicine program at UW. He returned to Washington University to start a new research and teaching program in occupational diseases.

He still relies on the training in epidemiology, industrial hygiene, and toxicology that he received at UW, either in his own research or in teaching.

In Seattle, he found "an incredible group of faculty" who served as role models. He also learned from his peers, a diverse group of nurses, industrial hygienists, epidemiologists, and fellow physicians.

He encourages students to take advantage of these opportunities. "You are unlikely to again be in a setting where you have such a talented group of people interested in occupational and environmental health and safety."

He sees "great opportunities available in occupational medicine and occupational health," both in academic research and its application in the real world.

For more information:
<http://medicine.wustl.edu/>

**There is no
shortage of
controversies in
our field**

Photos
this page: Washington University
School of Medicine
opposite page: UW Health Sciences
Center for Educational Resources;
background: CDC, Dr. Erskine
Palmer (calicivirus)

Bridging the gap

new faculty

His research will focus on environmental fate and transport of viruses, bacteria, and other pathogens

The Department's newest faculty member, Scott Meschke, hopes to establish a nationally recognized research program in environmental and public health microbiology. Dr. Meschke would also like to help bridge the gap between science, policy, and law. "The law treats public health and the environment as separate areas, when they really are the same thing," said Meschke, who holds a PhD in environmental microbiology in addition to a law degree.

As an assistant professor of Environmental Health Technology, Dr. Meschke will research causes of foodborne and waterborne illnesses. His research will focus on environmental fate and transport of viruses, bacteria, and other pathogens, as well as water and wastewater treatment, including alternative methods of disinfection.

Much of his research is with a particular family of viruses, the caliciviruses, which includes the Norwalk-like viruses. The Environmental Protection Agency has recognized the importance of caliciviruses as water contaminants by including them on the Contaminant Candidate List. Other areas of research will include developing methods for detection and recovery of pathogens from the environment, and using surrogate organisms as indicators for human pathogens in the environment.

The new arrival from the University of North Carolina School of Public Health would like to see more effort in explaining hard sciences to legislators and rule-makers in state and federal agencies. Dr. Meschke wants to build bridges between the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, the Law School and the Evans School

of Public Affairs. "There should be more collaboration between lawyers, policy-makers and scientists," he said. Additionally, he would like the public—and the news media—to recognize the public health implications of environmental policy. "Most environmental statutes are designed to protect the public health, but they are rarely treated that way in the media," he said. "When people think about the Clean Water Act, they are more likely to think about salmon than they are about drinking water."

Dr. Meschke is a member of several national and international professional organizations, including American Society for Microbiology, International Water Association, American Water Works Association, and National Association of Lake Managers.

His faculty Web page is located at: http://depts.washington.edu/envhltb/about/facultypage/mesc_page.html/.



Scott Meschke

Alumni



photo: Joel Levin; web header: Devon DeLapp

DATABASES

The undergraduate and graduate program offices maintain alumni databases so we can continue to be a resource to alumni long after you have graduated. You might like to receive the departmental newsletter or attend departmental events such as Student Research Day or Career Day alumni mixers. Your information is an important tool for the department. We are routinely asked to report on the career paths of our alumni when submitting grant renewals. Applicants to our programs are often curious to know the variety of jobs our alumni hold.

To update your information, you can complete and mail in this form, e-mail your news to ehug@u.washington.edu (undergraduate) or ehgrad@u.washington.edu (graduate program), or go online to <http://depts.washington.edu/envhlth/alumni/updateinfo.html>.

Name _____

Home Address _____

Work Address _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Job Title _____

DEH affiliation (undergraduate or graduate program alumnus)

About you (awards, honors, publications, employment, personal)

Permission to use this information in future newsletter or Web site?
Yes No

Would you like to be on the mailing list for *Environmental Health News*?
Yes No

Please mail either to the Graduate or the Undergraduate Program Office, Department of Environmental Health, University of Washington, Box 357234, Seattle, WA 98195-7234 or fax to 206-616-0477.

NEW & UPDATED WEB SITES

Graduate

The Department has launched a Web site designed to keep alumni involved,

<http://depts.washington.edu/envhlth/alumni/>.

The site will help you keep your contact and career information up to date, let your classmates know what you've been up to, and provide continuing education and career information.

As alumni, this is your site. Please help us to build it so that it serves your needs. We welcome your comments, either using the form on the site or by sending an e-mail to ehgrad@u.washington.edu.

Also, if you haven't seen our new graduate program brochure, you can download a copy from the Web, <http://depts.washington.edu/envhlth/admission/gradbrochure.pdf>.

Undergraduate

The Department's undergraduate Web site has a new look. You'll find it at <http://depts.washington.edu/ehug>. The site focuses on recruiting, as well as service to existing students. It offers an overview of "What is Environmental Health" and descriptions of the various careers to which our bachelor's degree can lead. You can also download a fact sheet about the program. Graduates of this program are invited to share information through the DEH alumni site, <http://depts.washington.edu/envhlth/alumni/>.

A new graduate brochure can be downloaded at: <http://depts.washington.edu/envhlth/admission/gradbrochure/index.html>.

Web designers Devon DeLapp and Leigh Caplan are responsible for the design of these sites.

SUBSCRIBE

Do you want to continue receiving this newsletter? Fill out the form at left or phone 206-543-1564 or e-mail kiplingw@u.washington.edu.



To confirm this schedule or find more information about these courses, call 206-543-1069 or visit the Continuing Education Web site at <http://depts.washington.edu/ebce>. Courses are in Seattle unless noted.

NW CENTER FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY

- April 3 Current Issues in Construction Safety
May 22 Office Ergonomics

OSHA TRAINING INSTITUTE EDUCATIONAL CENTER

Not for OSHA rules only! All classes offer training that meets WISHA, OR-OSHA, and Alaska state standards.

- April 15-18 510 OSHA Standards for Construction (Portland)
April 17 845 OSHA Recordkeeping Rule
April 29-May 2 521 OSHA Guide to Industrial Hygiene (Portland)
April 30 845 OSHA Recordkeeping Rule (Anchorage)
May 3 845 OSHA Recordkeeping Rule (Boise)
May 6-9 301 Excavation, Trenching, and Soil Mechanics (Anchorage)
May 6-9 501 Trainer Course for General Industry
May 13 845 OSHA Recordkeeping Rule (Spokane)
May 17 845 OSHA Recordkeeping Rule (Portland)
May 20-23 311 Fall Arrest Systems
June 10-13 309A Electrical Standards (Portland)
June 24-27 500 Trainer Course for Construction Industry

Scott Auerbach won the graduate student award competition from the Molecular Biology Specialty Section for his poster presentation for the Society of Toxicology.

Elaine Faustman was in Bangkok, Thailand for a WHO conference called "International Conference on Environmental Threats to the Health of Children: Hazards and Vulnerability" in March.

Nancy Judd, research scientist with the Institute for Risk Analysis and Risk Communication, won an award for her paper on beryllium analysis at the Society for Risk Analysis in Seattle in December.

Terry Kavanagh has been appointed Toxicology program director and Joel Kaufman Occupational and Environmental Medicine program director.

Jane Koenig made a scientific presentation on acute respiratory disease studies at the Environmental Protection Agency's Science Advisory Board, Particulate Matter Research Centers Interim Review Panel in Washington, DC, in February.

Lianne Sheppard spoke at the World Health Organization/Health Effects Institute workshop on exposure assessment in studies on the chronic effects of long-term exposure to air pollution in Bonn, Germany, in February.

Chuck Treser was invited to participate in a workshop sponsored by the National Environmental Health Science & Protection Accreditation Council/CDC/HRSA reviewing the guidelines for accreditation of environmental health academic programs in New Orleans in March.

Gerald van Belle has been appointed to the National Research Council Committee to Review the EPA Research Program. The committee, formed in January, will meet five times during the next year, and will issue a report in March 2003.

Jim Woods was an invited guest speaker at the Instituto Piaget in Lisbon, Portugal, delivering a lecture on environmental mercury toxicity.

