

School of
**Public Health and
Information Sciences**



ANNUAL REPORT 2006



UNIVERSITY of LOUISVILLE
Health Sciences Center

Mission, Vision, Values



Vision

We will be an internationally recognized center of excellence for the creation, sharing and application of *knowledge for the public's health*.

In achieving our vision:

- We will extend the domain of public health to include all factors in the public's health.
- We will pursue health information sciences as an inseparable aspect of public health.
- We will work for close integration of individual health, health care and public health.

Mission

We advance *knowledge for the public's health* in the increasingly complex and interconnected world of the 21st century. We accomplish this through activities in the three cornerstone areas for advancing health knowledge:

- **Research.** We *create* knowledge by seeking new discoveries and understanding through scientific exploration. We communicate our findings.
- **Teaching.** We *share* knowledge with students committed to and prepared for learning in a facilitated environment. Our learners are our students, our faculty and our staff. We commit to preparing our learners for success.
- **Service.** We *apply* knowledge through quality services to the communities of which we are a part – the university, Louisville Metro, Kentucky, the United States and their respective environments.

Values

In fulfilling our mission:

- We nurture an academic setting that fosters ethics, respect, diversity, cooperation, learning and fun.
- We strive to improve our approach and performance through a program of active feedback and deliberate change.
- We embrace innovative ideas for advancing knowledge.
- We investigate new techniques and technologies for doing research, teaching and service.
- We think globally and act locally.
- We collaborate with any who will join us in working for the public's health.
- We recognize that public health starts with the individual.
- We advocate for the public's health.

UNIVERSITY of LOUISVILLE
School of Public Health and
Information Sciences
Welcomes You!

Message from the Dean



Richard D. Clover, M.D.

Welcome to the first progress report of the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences (SPHIS). SPHIS is one of the most recent additions to the University of Louisville's academic programs. This progress report will outline our history, our mission and our progress to date.

Despite our relatively short history, we are already living our mission through partnerships, collaboration and by applying the power of information science to problems and solutions in public health and policy. We are uniquely positioned to offer leading-edge thinking about population-focused health sciences to students, faculty, researchers and community partners.

We are in a building phase, adding faculty members and students. A number of community-focused research projects are in process, addressing issues ranging from air quality to e-health to childhood immunization.

In 2005, we welcomed 25 students as the first class of Master of Public Health (MPH) students. Their enthusiasm for public health and community involvement is bringing energy to the entire school. We're looking to expand the number of MPH students dramatically in the next few years and welcome inquiries and applications from students who have or anticipate having their bachelor's degree soon.

The Center for Health Hazards Preparedness continues to play an active role in training health care providers and first responders in the region – more than 17,000 have completed one or more of our programs, funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In addition, a grant through the Health Resources and Services Administration is funding continuing education for health professionals to prepare them for emergencies. This collaboration with the Schools of Medicine and Dentistry and the University of Kentucky has been very successful.

Our unique approach to these training programs has attracted media attention, having been recently highlighted on the Discovery Channel, featuring our use of patient simulators and standardized patients in first responder training. The film crew told us that we have a very unique, hands-on approach to this training that they hadn't seen elsewhere.

Things change quickly at SPHIS, with new projects, opportunities and programs being added all the time. Please check our web site at <http://sphis.louisville.edu/> often.

Sincerely,

Richard D. Clover

Richard D. Clover, M.D.

Dean

History of SPHIS – “A School is Born”



SPHIS was founded in 2002, but public health education is not new to the University of Louisville. A previous U of L School of Public Health, formed in 1919, was one of the first schools of public health in the United States. The initial school was funded, in part, by a \$3,000 contribution by the Kentucky State Board of Health and was led by Joseph N. McCormack as Honorary Dean. The school was housed on the third floor of the Kentucky Board of Health Building at the corner of 6th and Main Streets. The primary focus of the original School of Public Health was the training of health officers and public health nurses to deal with welfare work in poor communities. The school was deactivated in 1924.

1998 was a pivotal year, when U of L implemented the “Challenge for Excellence,” a 10-year blueprint for the future designed to turn the Commonwealth of Kentucky’s mandate for the university into a reality. This strategic plan was intended to promote significant growth in nationally recognized research, increase interest in the university from highly qualified students, and create new economic and community service initiatives that would benefit local and statewide citizens.

As part of this effort, U of L created an Institute for Public Health Research (IPHR) in order to focus efforts on training the next generation of clinical public health researchers. The Institute was supported by a five-year Clinical Research Curriculum (K30) Award from the National Institutes of Health. MSPH and PhD degrees were initiated in Epidemiology: Clinical Investigation Sciences (ECIS) and Biostatistics - Decision Science (BDS). In 2002, the School of Public Health and Information Sciences was officially established and charged with developing professional degree programs to complement its research-oriented master’s and doctoral degrees and achieving full accreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH).

The initial staffing of SPHIS was drawn from existing entities, including IPHR, the Department of Family and Community Medicine, the Department of Medicine, the Health Informatics Group and the Center for Deterrence of Biowarfare and Bioterrorism.

To provide leadership for the new School, Joel Kaplan (then Vice President for Health Affairs) appointed Richard Clover, chair of Family and Community Medicine, as dean. Clover subsequently asked Paul McKinney, M.D., Director of the IPHR, and Pete Walton, M.D., director of the Health Informatics Group, to take on the roles of associate dean for Public Health and associate dean for Health Information Sciences, respectively.

The team undertook a significant amount of research and analysis of best practices in public health education, and how they relate to CEPH and its accreditation process. CEPH’s five core areas of public health education

helped to shape the initial structure of the School, with a department focused on each of these five core areas.

The next step was integrating the specific applications of information sciences into the vision for the school. There was broad consensus that information technology, management and strategic applications of information sciences would be critical to the future evolution of the field of public health and should be integrated across the disciplines.

Five departments were formed, based on the CEPH core areas but with a specific focus on the application of information sciences: Bioinformatics and Biostatistics, Epidemiology and Clinical Investigation Sciences (now Epidemiology and Population Health), Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences and Health Management and Systems Sciences.

SPHIS also became the home of the Center for Deterrence of Biowarfare and Bioterrorism (now the Center for Health Hazard Preparedness). The center, named a "Specialty Center for Public Health Preparedness" by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is a regional hub for education and service in detection of and response to terrorism or natural disasters. It creates an important bridge from academic public health to public health service, facilitated by integration across the SPHIS departments.

The new school was located in the K-Wing building on the U of L Health Sciences campus, as a temporary solution until larger quarters could be identified. Simultaneously, departments began recruiting new faculty who were excited about the integration of public health and information sciences. By mid-2005, all five departments had put in place faculty, staff, leadership, documented mission statements and course offerings.

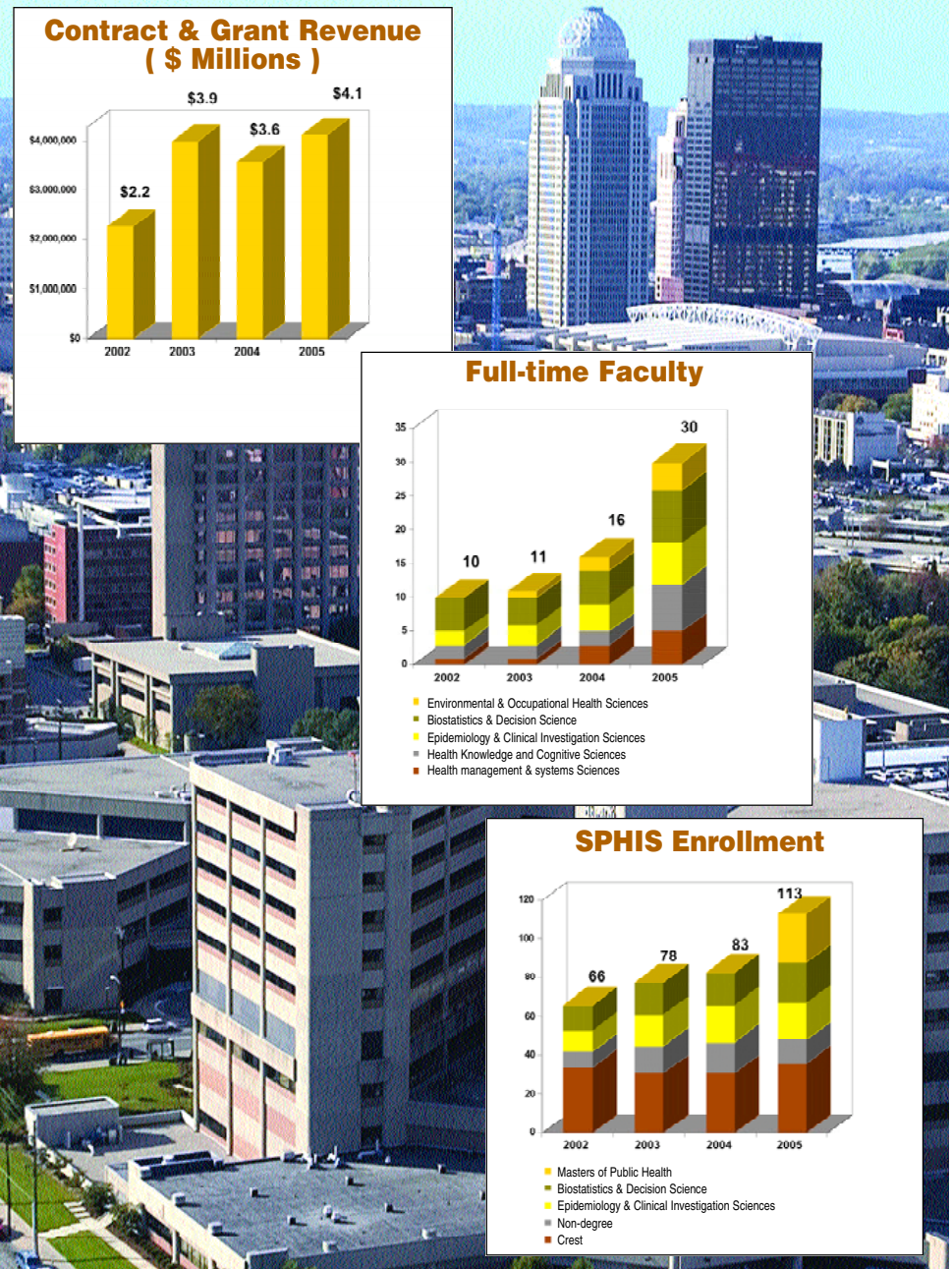
CHHP Trains Region's First Responders

Part of the mission of the Center for Health Hazard Preparedness (formerly the Center for Deterrence of Biowarfare and Bioterrorism) is to increase expertise across the spectrum of healthcare professions in the detection of and response to potential bioterror incidents.

Since 2003, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, a partnership between the University of Louisville and the University of Kentucky has trained more than 12,400 individuals in the early recognition of and response to incidents that may be a threat to public health.

In addition to physicians, public health staff and EMS first responders, the partnership has trained dentists, dental hygienists, nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists and allied health professionals. The training has extended to mental health and healthcare administration as well as veterinarians and others working in the agricultural sector.

This partnership helps ensure that the Commonwealth is prepared for early detection of and an appropriate response to potential threats. Although the name of the center has changed, this portfolio of educational missions and collaborative partnerships will continue.



Dean's Office



As a new school, SPHIS has had a unique opportunity to organize around fundamental principles developed with the collaboration of its faculty and staff. These principles are social justice and human rights, a holistic approach to public health, discovery and transmission of public health knowledge, collegiality among all personnel and promotion of information sciences as a tool of public health.

In keeping with these principles, the SPHIS has identified five primary goals: achieving educational and academic excellence; building a public health and information sciences research enterprise; fostering a diverse, open and accessible school of public health and information sciences; promoting collaboration and community/state partnerships and maintaining a conscious focus on school effectiveness and service.

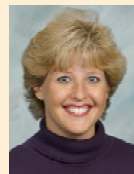
The dean's office is staffed by a team dedicated to ensuring that the SPHIS achieves those goals. Leading the charge is Richard Clover, dean of SPHIS. Dean Clover is accompanied by Paul McKinney, associate dean for Public Health, and Pete Walton, associate dean for Health Information Sciences. The school's commitment to innovation led to a lean administrative structure, requiring the two associate deans to perform a variety of duties often done by a larger number of administrators, with McKinney taking responsibility for the MPH program, diversity, research, faculty development, faculty affairs and accreditation and Walton taking

responsibility for student affairs, admissions, curriculum, service and policies and procedures. A significant amount of leadership and planning is also provided by the school's director of administration, Susi Walsh, who oversees fiscal operations, human resources and grant and contract processing for the school. Critical administrative, business, service and programmatic operations of the school are managed by the following members of the dean's office:

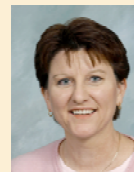
- Peggy Beachy, Associate Director for Administration, who functions as the SPHIS controller;



- Kim Kays, Administrative Associate to the Dean, who coordinates faculty recruitment and hiring processes, promotion, and tenure actions;



- Carol Stowers, Program Assistant, whose duties include processing all purchasing and payroll for the school;



- Vicki Lewis, Receptionist, who also provides administrative support to the associate deans.



- LaTonia Peters, MPH Program Coordinator, who manages recruitment and retention of MPH students as well as MPH curriculum development and assessment;



- Eric Nunn, Research Grants and Contracts Coordinator, who oversees submission and budget preparation for all SPHIS grants and contracts, as well as those from outside the school;



- Tammi Thomas, Student Services Manager, who provides assistance to all students in the school, including initial inquiry, notification of scholarship opportunities, and assistance with general transition issues; and



- Jason Banta, Technology and Facilities Manager, who oversees information and other technologies in SPHIS and handles day-to-day issues with SPHIS facilities.



One of the office's central areas of focus is the Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH) accreditation process. An Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) created a master timeline for accreditation activities, held monthly meetings of the faculty and staff to discuss the accreditation process and formed eleven teams (corresponding to the CEPH self-study criteria) of faculty and staff volunteers from all segments of the school. These teams met independently to outline and then draft narrative responses to the CEPH criteria. The ASC reviewed and compiled the teams' responses into the first complete draft of the self-study document, which was finalized on February 19, 2005. Following an off-campus retreat, a draft of the CEPH document was distributed to external reviewers and made available to SPHIS faculty and staff beginning on July 1, 2005, with their input incorporated into the current draft of the document. In Spring 2006, SPHIS hosted a consultative visit by the Executive Director of CEPH, Laura Rasar King, MPH, CHES. Ms. King answered questions posed by faculty, staff and students and provided guidance to further aid the School in the self-study and accreditation process. The preliminary draft of the self-study document will be submitted in Fall 2006, with the official CEPH site visit scheduled for Spring 2007.

Another key task for the administration was the establishment of professional degree programs to complement the school's research-oriented degrees. The Master of Public



Health degree, with an inaugural class of 25 students, is intended to prepare future public health professionals for practice in an increasingly interconnected and complex world. Students are trained in the five core areas of public health—biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental and occupational health, health behavior and health administration—utilizing an innovative, technology-based curriculum and a superbly qualified faculty. Students also engage with the community and the local public health system through participation in community forums, group projects with the Louisville Metro Health Department and individual practicum projects designed to enhance and solidify their academic learning with real-world experience. Candidates for the MPH degree at SPHIS must successfully complete a “culminating experience” that demonstrates their mastery and integration of the core areas of public health and other critical principles of public health service.

In addition to these two major initiatives, the school continues to grow and change, adding a variety of new projects, opportunities, degrees and programs. Everyone at SPHIS is working to fulfill our mission

through active collaboration, leading-edge research and the recruitment of quality students, faculty and staff.

By Fall 2005, SPHIS formed key advisory and governance groups, such as the Executive Faculty, the Faculty Forum, the Council of Chairs and Deans and the Dean's Executive Committee. Committees had been working diligently to produce the self-study document necessary for CEPH accreditation and core staff and faculty had been working just as hard to prepare for the first class of MPH students.

Those preparations included the development of a full curriculum for public health education, along with the policies and procedures necessary for running an academic program.

The future of SPHIS includes plans to relocate to a new site with additional space for growth. Continued efforts in recruitment, curriculum and policy development are ongoing. Achieving CEPH accreditation is a top priority. As of this publication, SPHIS is forging ahead with its mission of providing quality public health education, research and service to the University of Louisville and the Louisville community.

Productive Partnerships: SPHIS Thinks Globally, Acts Locally



The catch-phrase “Think Globally, Act Locally” has been at the core of a decades-long discussion about the best way to influence positive change in the world.

Originated by United Nations advisor Rene Dubos in the early 1970s, the simple phrase summarizes a very effective way to think about complex problems such as environmental contamination and public health – emphasizing that these issues must be dealt with in their unique physical, climatic and cultural contexts.

This kind of problem-solving requires effective partnerships with the individuals and groups affected by the problem and the flexibility to recognize that one size doesn’t fit all.

And it’s a philosophy that permeates SPHIS – from course offerings to research to experiential learning – almost any organization looking for a partner in working for the public’s health can find a counterpart at the school.

“When I was looking at the director position with the Louisville Metro Health Department (LMHD), the ongoing partnership with SPHIS was absolutely an advantage in my decision to come to Louisville,” said Adewale Troutman, MD, MPH.

The partnership holds advantages for both organizations. U of L students get hands-on experience working with a large local health department, and the health department can address key issues by working with MPH students, who are required to complete a 260 contact-hour project for graduation.

“It’s tremendously valuable to the students,” says Troutman.

“These experiences help them understand that theory needs to be dramatically modified when it’s applied. There are multiple subtleties in daily practice of public health that you don’t get in the classroom.”

The collaboration also benefits LMHD by providing expertise and training for the health department’s professional staff in research protocols. Most recently, the organizations got together to talk about research designs to evaluate the effectiveness of the smoking ban put in place last fall.

David Tollerud, MD, MPH who chairs the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, agrees. He has been involved for several years with environmental justice issues in West Louisville’s Rubbertown and recently collaborated with other U of L departments and several community partners to submit a National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences/Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Justice grant (see pages 12-13 for more on Tollerud’s work in the public sector).

Robert Esterhay, MD, Chair of the Department of Health Management and Systems Sciences, is working with colleagues to create the Louisville Health Information Exchange, a non-profit consortium being organized by leaders representing local physicians, hospitals, employers, patient advocates, insurers, public health groups and others.

The goal of the group is to implement an eHealth system for the Louisville community that maximizes information technology’s potential for improving the delivery and quality of health care and reducing costs.

“One of the important things we have to do as public health partners is recognize the community’s role in identifying the problem, creating the intervention and evaluating the results,” said **Ruth Carrico, RN, PhD**.

Carrico is currently working with LMHD and the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) to improve immunization rates among children enrolled in the public school system.

“We know that problems we see in school-age children can be sentinels for the health of the larger community, but the issue of childhood immunization is highly complex and requires us to think broadly and form additional partnerships – with insurance providers, Medicaid providers, churches and community organizations,” said Carrico.

The school is also playing a role in the Green City Project – a long-term collaboration between Metro Louisville, U of L and the Jefferson County Public Schools. With LMHD, the SPHIS is taking the lead in creating an environmental health registry for the region and increasing public education and access to health care for the escalating problem of asthma.

Childhood obesity – a nationally-recognized problem – is being addressed locally by U of L’s working

group, which includes collaborators from SPHIS, the Schools of Medicine and Nursing, the College of Education and Human Development and the Institute for Bioethics, Health Policy and Law. Members of the team have already worked to design a family-based intervention' designed to raise awareness of habits that lead to children becoming overweight, address some of the environmental issues that contribute to a sedentary lifestyle and provide guidance in forming health habits. The program is already being tested with families identified through the Department of Pediatrics' downtown clinics.

In thinking globally and acting locally, SPHIS is already making an impact in the Louisville community and beyond. The impressive breadth of these collaborations – ranging from eHealth to the environment and asthma to immunization – formed in the relatively short time that the school has been in existence, leaves no doubt that the local community will continue to benefit from the global view of those at the school.



SPHIS PARTNERS

In just a few years, SPHIS has developed an impressive list of collaborators who share the school's vision for improving the public's health.

While space limitations do not allow a comprehensive list of projects, SPHIS is proud to partner with federal and state agencies including the Department of Defense, the Food and Drug Administration, the Governor's Office of Technology (Kentucky), Kentucky Department for Public Health, the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, the National Academies of Science (Institute of Medicine), the National Institutes of Health, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the National Security Agency.

SPHIS also collaborates with industry including ATI MetalWorking Products, Ford Motor Company, Kennametal Corporation, LG&E, Mary Morrow & Associates and VisPlex Association.

Private research partners include Acella Learning, LLC, American Thoracic Society, Coastal Research Group, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (Seattle, WA) and Plexus Institute.

Community partners outside of Louisville include the Arizona Cancer Registry, Green River Regional Educational Cooperative, Illinois State Cancer Registry, Metro United Way of Shelby & Taylor Counties and Seven Counties.

Louisville-based community partners include the Bridges of Hope Neighborhood Place Council, Center for Women & Families, Center for Environmental Education, Centro Latino, Family Health Centers, Inc., Greater Louisville Medical Society, Green City Partnership Project, Health Care Excel, Jefferson County Public Schools, Jewish Hospital & St. Mary's Health Care, Kentucky Association of Family Practitioners, Kentucky Association of Health Plans, Kentucky Cancer Program, Kentucky Cancer Registry, Metro Louisville Government including a signature partnership with the Louisville Metro Health Department, Norton Hospital, Passport, University Hospital and West Jefferson County Community Task Force.

In addition, SPHIS collaborates with more than 25 centers or departments within the University of Louisville and more than 20 other research universities in the U.S. and abroad.

Department of **Bioinformatics** and **Biostatistics**



The Department of Bioinformatics and Biostatistics is a strong contributor to the academic and research missions of the University of Louisville. Its academic programs include both masters and doctoral level training in biostatistics and decision science, as well as advanced courses in bioinformatics. The Department offers the MSPH and PhD degrees in biostatistics and decision science and a biostatistics concentration within the school's MPH degree program. Research activities include both collaborative and methodological research in which statistical methods are applied for basic, translational, and clinical research areas and in which new statistical methods are developed, respectively. The faculty and statistical staff in the department work with investigators from other U of L departments and centers on research projects and grants.

As part of its service mission, the department operates the Statistical Consulting Center, which provides a mechanism for researchers in the health sciences community to obtain statistical advice for planning experiments and for analysis of research data. The center allows doctoral students to gain valuable practical experience in statistical consulting. Other members of the department are working closely with HSC investigators on bioinformatics initiatives. Collaborators and clients include faculty from the James Graham Brown Cancer Center, Center for Molecular Medicine and Birth Defects Center, as well as many other departments.

In January 2004, Rudolph Parrish, PhD, began his tenure as the Department's first permanent Chair. He brought to the SPHIS a strong background in statistical computing and clinical trial design, in addition to a research interest in bioinformatics. During the last two years, several faculty have been recruited to the Department, including one full professor, two associate professors, three assistant professors and one visiting scholar. The addition of these faculty members expanded the dimensions of the department with their backgrounds and research interests in areas such as biological applications of statistics, bioinformatics, statistical genetics, microarray analysis, spatial statistics, survival analysis, health care economics, infectious disease modeling, statistical issues in population biology, and compound decision analysis.

These new faculty members are contributing to the expansion and improvement of the department's curriculum and teaching efforts in biostatistics, decision science, and bioinformatics. Student enrollment in the degree programs of the Department of Bioinformatics and Biostatistics has increased dramatically. The PhD program in Biostatistics admitted its first five students in Fall 2005. Since the addition of the Biostatistics doctoral concentration, applications to the department have increased over 200 percent and the number of matriculating students has doubled since 2003. Students in the Department of Bioinformatics and Biostatistics include several international students, representing seven different countries. Since 2003, students have completed their training in cooperation with a variety of university departments, in addition to community agencies and companies in the area.





L. Jane Goldsmith, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, Bioinformatics and Biostatistics

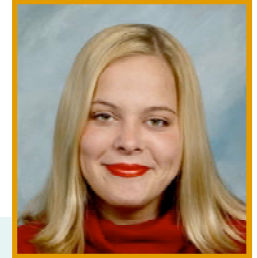
Jane Goldsmith brings a wealth of experience as a biostatistician to the School of Public Health and Information Sciences. Goldsmith has to her credit more than 70 peer-reviewed publications, numerous abstracts, and presentations at national meetings. She has been recognized with national and regional awards for excellence in research. Most recently, she received the CREST Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence in the Clinical Research, Epidemiology, and Statistics Training (CREST) Program and the 2006 KYVU Online Excellence Award for her online biostatistics course from the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education and Kentucky Virtual University (KYVU). An experienced instructor and graduate student mentor, Goldsmith is excited about her current role in course planning and curriculum development in the SPHIS. Her experience in teaching and program development in the Department's and School's academic programs make her a valuable part of the team.



Steven J. McCabe, MD, MSc

Associate Professor, Bioinformatics and Biostatistics

Steve McCabe initially attended the University of Toronto Medical School and was trained in plastic surgery in London, Ontario, at the University of Western Ontario. Having decided to specialize in hand surgery, he came to Louisville to learn more about that field and then returned to Canada, where he decided to expand his education to include clinical research. After three years as a graduate student in Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics at McMasters University, McCabe decided to return to the U.S. and join the hand surgery practice and research that was going on here in Louisville. Once here, he enrolled in the Decision Science program at U of L, allowing him to complete the MSc at begun at McMasters. He then joined the decision science faculty at UofL. Currently, McCabe practices at Louisville Arm & Hand, a hand and upper extremity practice at Norton Healthcare, spending 50 percent of his time in clinical work there and 50 percent of his time in academic efforts with the University. He believes that this allocation of his time is the perfect balance, allowing him to stay "in tune" with what is going on in his field of surgery, while still allowing him to exercise his passion for decision science, research methods, utility measurement and evidence-based medicine and education.



Rachel Cummins

Program Coordinator, Department of Bioinformatics and Biostatistics

Rachel Cummins has a thorough understanding for the Department of Bioinformatics and Biostatistics. She has context for the past, present and future goals of her department, making her an invaluable resource for the department and for the school as a whole. Although Rachel is officially charged with coordinating faculty and student recruitment, in reality she spends much of her time playing "den mother" to current students and directing the overall programmatic goals of the department. Some of those goals include 25% per year growth of the student body and helping students find scholarship money. Her contributions extend nationally as well, with Rachel having received the 2002-2003 Distinguished Service Award from the American Statistical Association. In 2002, she also received Honorable Mention for the Outstanding Performance Award for Classified and Professional/Administrative Staff at the university. On a more personal note, Rachel is currently working on her MEd in Counseling Psychology and hopes to enter the PhD program in Counseling Psychology in the near future. Rachel's goal is to combine her educational interests with her work experience by exploring the field of mental health education, with particular emphasis on interventional strategies.

Public Health and Public Policy: U of L's Tollerud Bridges the Gap



People's jobs shouldn't make them sick.

Environmental cleanup protocols shouldn't leave levels of contaminants that are harmful to people and the ecosystem.

If people in one neighborhood seem to be getting sick, someone should figure out why it's happening and how to stop it.

These statements may seem like common sense, but issues in occupational health and safety and environmental contaminants involve a complex web of entities

ranging from the federal government and state and local authorities to private businesses and individual decision-making. That's where David Tollerud comes in.

"The work that we do here can make a real difference in people's lives," he says.

"Policy makers and individuals are faced with a vast array of data and, as we know, data is not information. If we can provide policy makers and individuals with the very best science available and interpret it so that it can serve as a basis for action plans, then we've played a valuable role."

Tollerud, who chairs the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, has a unique talent for leading collaborations and drawing conclusions that take into account the complexity inherent in solving problems involving multiple stakeholders, often with very different interests.

"My research philosophy is to partner with an organization that wants to solve an actual problem and then get it done," he says.

This philosophy has been tested on the local, state and national stage.

In a \$3.5 million, five-year study funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, he and collaborators from the University of Cincinnati and the University of Kentucky are investigating the health risks that enriched uranium may have posed for workers over the years at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant in southwestern Kentucky.

They are compiling data on thousands of employees who worked at the plant for at least 30 days in different job classifications since it opened in 1952 and using the data to assess exposure levels.

Closer to home, Tollerud joined the West Louisville Partnership for Environmental Justice, a long-term project involving U of L, the Louisville MetroHealth Department and neighborhood citizens aimed at addressing environmental health issues in the Rubbertown area.



“We’re investigating the relationship between environmental exposure to certain pollutants and specific childhood health problems such as neurocognitive development and asthma,” he says.

Tollerud’s reputation for building bridges between stakeholder groups and providing leadership on complex issues means that he’s in demand nationally.

Recently, he chaired a committee sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences to evaluate plans for cleanup at a superfund site in Northern Idaho containing heavy metal contaminants from years of mining operations, including lead, zinc, cadmium, arsenic and mercury.

“Residents and wildlife in the Coeur d’Alene basin have inherited a toxic legacy from a century of mining – the decisions that need to be made impact entities including property owners, the Forest Service, the Coeur d’Alene tribe, recreational users of area lakes, real estate developers, wildlife protection advocates – these aren’t simple issues,” says Tollerud.

A natural teacher, Tollerud discusses his varied research interests and activities with an emphasis on the real-world results. He served on several Institute of Medicine committees looking at the effects of the herbicide Agent Orange on Vietnam veterans. He has collaborated on projects designed to understand and address workplace obesity, lead exposure in the glass industry, on-the-job motor vehicle accidents among police and firefighters, the use of back belts in preventing

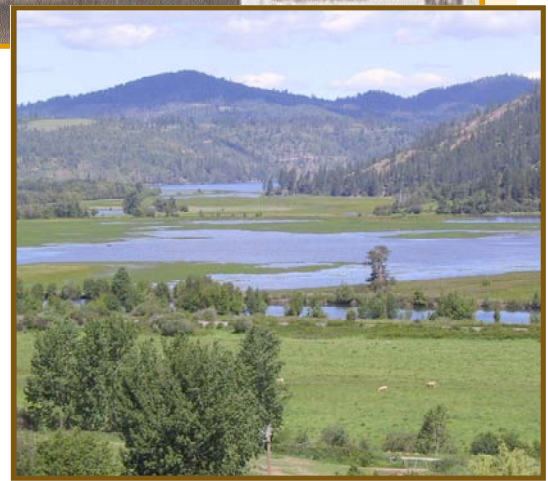
workplace industry, protecting healthcare workers from tuberculosis, understanding how exposure to workplace chemicals affects the immune system and preparing countermeasures for potential radiation incidents.

“I’ve been fortunate in working in all of these areas in that I have had the opportunity to establish partnerships with outstanding individuals and organizations. That’s what gets me excited about all the areas where I do research and also for the potential for the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences,” he says.

These partnerships are at the core of the educational program in the School of Public Health and Information Sciences.

“The program is designed so that our graduates have that real-world experience – through their practicum and other collaborations – that teaches them the value of partnerships and the rewards of community involvement,” Tollerud notes.

Closer to home, Tollerud plays an active role in the Partnership for a Green City, a long-term project involving U of L, the Louisville Metro government, and Jefferson County Public Schools aimed at addressing environmental health, education and management issues in the greater Louisville area.



Department of **Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences**



To many, environmental and occupational issues may seem far removed from the realm of public health. However, to the faculty and staff of the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences (EOHS), their department and their field are both critical and relevant to the health of the public. After all, everyone lives in the environment and most people go to work every day. Therefore, they see their role at the School of Public Health and Information Sciences (SPHIS) as a unique opportunity to provide a holistic approach to public health that embraces the world in which the public lives.

Historically, the fields of environmental and occupational health were born out of the Industrial Revolution and then evolved with the birth of the various governmental agencies (such as the EPA, OSHA and NIOSH) and a multitude of regulations and acts designed to protect the public from the increasing hazards of the industrialized nation. Despite the long history of these fields, however, many challenges still remain. Among the most pressing challenges for environmental health scientists is the need to ensure clean water and clear air.

Occupational health scientists, on the other hand, are particularly concerned with the recent decline of labor unions, the roll-back of occupational exposure limits and budgetary reductions and limitations.

The mission for the department is to prevent adverse health effects related to environmental and occupational

exposures through research, education and service. They have an expansive view of the environment and they believe strongly that partnerships and collaboration are the key. As an academic unit, they are also characterized by a close interplay between research, teaching and service. Their hope is to not only address the current challenges of their field but also to venture boldly into new directions, such as the study of gene-environment interactions, the ethical considerations of developing a better understanding of genetic links to exposure response, the risks of exotic products, global environmental health (the re-learning of old lessons in countries now going through their own industrial revolutions) and global occupational health (child labor, sweat shops, and other problems brought on by the development of a global market without global controls or standards).

EOHS is engaged in research priorities related to the health effects of air pollution, environmental health for children and elderly, prevention of workplace injuries and illness, health impacts of the "Built Environment," community outreach and education and exposure/outreach issues with local disadvantaged communities. The department believes strongly in the importance of collaborations, with faculty members actively involved in the Green City Partnership Project (a local collaboration with multiple U of L departments and the SPHIS, along with the Mayor's office, Louisville Metro Government, the Louisville Metro Health Department, the

Jefferson County Public School System, the Kentucky Lung Association and Kosair Children's Hospital).

Ongoing funded projects include the health effects of occupational exposures among workers at the Department of Energy facility in Paducah, Kentucky, in collaboration with the University of Kentucky and University of Cincinnati/Cincinnati Children's Medical Center. The department is also conducting cutting-edge research on the health effects of exposure to nanoparticles, molecule-sized manufactured particles that are increasingly used in world-wide manufacturing processes.

A newly developing collaboration will focus on the application of sophisticated biomonitoring equipment and principles of exercise physiology and ergonomics to prevent workplace injury. To the department, the notions of collaboration and outreach are critical. They believe that "the ripple keeps spreading across the pond." Therefore, they thrive on creating ripples which tie together various university departments, the School of Public Health and Information Sciences, Louisville Metro Government, Louisville Metro Health Department, the Jefferson County School System, private individuals and any and all groups or people which enable them to spread their message, expand their knowledge and bring others into the community of those who are passionate about environmental and occupational health.



Irma N. Ramos, MD

Assistant Professor, Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

Without a doubt, Irma N. Ramos has been shaped by her past. When she describes her childhood and early life in Puerto Rico, she paints incredibly clear pictures of struggle, but also of warmth and victory. For the future Ramos, a drive to town, public transportation for an hour, then a 15 minute walk were all required to attend the best middle school and high school in the region. But she believed in the value of education saying, "That's why I love to educate communities – I believe education is the key to success." Ramos' medical education included a combined program between Puerto Rico and the poverty-stricken Dominican Republic, where at times she would have to study by candle light and would leave her own clothes for her helpers at the end of her term. Her medical practice back in Puerto Rico included emergency care, rural care and pediatrics, with an eventual decision to specialize in pediatrics. Ramos explains that in pediatrics there is the need to educate the child and the parents, as well as the neighbor and the community. She also states, "My personal and professional satisfactions have always come from helping the poor and the disadvantaged." To Ramos it is clear that race, ethnicity and wealth should not be barriers to health or health care. After a successful practice in pediatrics, she relocated to the mainland and developed a career in public health. Her research and professional activities in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at the School of Public Health and Information Sciences combine expertise in pediatrics and community education with a passion for minority and disadvantaged populations. Examples include projects in Shelbyville educating Hispanics about environmental health issues, in West Louisville focusing on the developmental basis of environmental disease, and other projects in collaboration with the James Graham Brown Cancer Center developing outreach and education programs for Hispanics in the areas of breast and cervical cancer.



Robert R. Jacobs, PhD

Professor, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

Bob Jacobs began to focus on public health in the 1970's while teaching basic sciences as a volunteer in Nigeria. There, he encountered a variety of public health problems such as infectious diseases, environmental degradation, and poor sanitation. On returning to the US, he earned his MSc and his PhD in Environmental Sciences and Engineering at the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. After graduation, he was the Director of Health and Safety Research for a private, not-for-profit corporation, focusing much of his work on understanding the etiology and pathogenesis of byssinosis (a lung disease caused by inhalation of cotton, flax or hemp dust). In 1987, Jacobs returned to the academic world as a Professor of Environmental Health in the School of Public Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. While at UAB, he found himself becoming more and more concerned about public health education, specifically the challenge of bridging the various disciplines in public health. This, in turn, led to his role as Director of the Graduate Program in Public Health (MPH) at Eastern Virginia Medical School and Old Dominion University for five years. While there, he helped prepare and submit the program's self-study for re-accreditation to the Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH), earning reaccreditation for the maximum term of seven years. Jacobs joined the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at SPHIS in 2006. In December of 2006, he was named Director of the MPH Program. Jacobs has some very clear immediate goals for the MPH Program, including continual evaluation. As he explains it, "We are here to serve [the students] and they are the future of public health." He has a strong interest in international public health and continues to move forward with important initiatives here at SPHIS, such as fine tuning the MPH curriculum, developing the MPH student handbook, finalizing the Practicum Experience Manual, and preparing for the first set of students to begin their Practicum Experiences.

Department of **Epidemiology and Population Health**



The science of epidemiology is directed at identifying the various determinants of health, disease, disability and death in populations for the purposes of promotion, control and prevention. These are some of the measurements by which public health is evaluated and are often at the core of public health policy. Therefore, a strong teaching and research program in epidemiology and clinical investigation sciences is vital to the success of any school of public health.

SPHIS views modern epidemiology as an important transdisciplinary science that links population science with basic sciences, quantitative sciences and clinical research. The epidemiologists at SPHIS believe in the importance of integrating new knowledge on disease biology and mechanisms with environmental and behavioral science, as well as with complex statistical methods in population-based studies that are designed to illuminate the causes of disease and test preventive strategies.

This breadth of knowledge and the ability to integrate diverse types of information related to the control, prevention and treatment of disease and other health-related outcomes is necessary for both epidemiologic practice and research. The department strives to balance traditional epidemiology with an emphasis on taking advantage of the world of high-tech research and clinical practice. This integrative and translational approach is what resulted in both the original naming and strategy of the SPHIS Department of Epidemiology and Clinical Investigation Sciences (ECIS). However, the department was recently renamed as the Department of Epidemiology and Population Health (EPH) to reflect an emphasis on studying and improving health for broader populations. The department currently offers an MPH concentration in epidemiology and, in the future, also plans to offer MS and PhD degrees in population-based epidemiology.

At a broad level, departmental research includes studies of oral health and systemic disease, occupational radiation exposures and cancer, women and cardiovascular disease, aging, obesity and breast cancer. The department also serves as the data coordinating center for a national trial of congestive heart failure management.

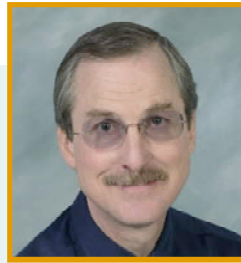
Current faculty members and their research interests include:

- Richard N. Baumgartner, a nationally-recognized expert on the associations between aging, body composition and nutritional status with chronic disease risk;
- Kathy B. Baumgartner, a cancer epidemiologist investigating differences between breast cancer incidence and prevalence among the primary ethnic groups in the Southwest;



- Frank Groves, who researches the causes of childhood acute lymphoblastic leukemia;
- Susan Muldoon, who studies in the epidemiology of aging, chronic disease management and end of life care;
- Chenxi Wang, whose research in nutritional and molecular epidemiology has applications to human obesity, cancer and other chronic diseases; and
- Carlton Hornung, whose research and teaching focuses on clinical research training, evidence based medicine and cardiovascular disease.

EPH also promotes collaboration with faculty in other departments to further the development of innovative, interdisciplinary courses and research programs. The faculty are excited about the potential of these collaborations and look forward to training future public health professionals and epidemiological scientists in the latest technology and techniques.



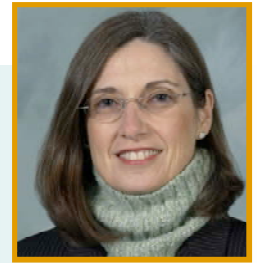
Richard N. Baumgartner PhD

Richard Baumgartner received his PhD in Nutritional Epidemiology from the University of Texas School of Public Health and focuses his research on nutrition, human growth and development, body composition and physical activity to a variety of epidemiological areas, including cardiovascular disease risk, aging and breast cancer prognosis.

Prior to joining U of L's SPHIS, during his tenure at the University of New Mexico, Baumgartner served as the Associate Director of the University of New Mexico Clinical Nutrition Program, then as Director of the Aging and Genetic Epidemiology Program, along with a stint as Interim Chief of the Division of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine.

He was attracted to U of L because he saw this as a unique opportunity to contribute to the philosophical design and development of a school of public health – a school that he feels has the potential to be an innovative, aggressive, cutting-edge leader in the field. He explained this desire by pointing out that it is exciting to “get in on the ground floor” and be part of helping build something, rather than being in the situation of trying to renovate something that already exists. He also found here the right mix of opportunities to continue the research program he has been building and evolving for the past 25 years through collaboration with the James Graham Brown Cancer Center and the Kentucky Cancer Registry.

Academically and administratively, he is interested in developing the epidemiology curriculum to include in-depth learning about the nature and practice of population-based epidemiology, as well as continuing to build the department and school's research programs. He hopes to see a strong balance between teaching and research in the School, as well as initiatives that connect the two in meaningful ways.



Kathy B. Baumgartner PhD

Kathy Baumgartner received her degree in Epidemiology from the School of Public Health in Houston, Texas (UTSPH). Her move to New Mexico provided a research experience that acted as a “springboard” that inspired her to return to UTSPH to complete her PhD in Epidemiology.

Most of her research involves breast cancer but is still broad and complex, ranging from studies of risk to prognosis and quality of life issues for survivors. Baumgartner is the principal investigator of the 4-Corners Women's Health Study (4-CWHS) in New Mexico, a large case control study funded by NIH and involving collaboration with Arizona, Utah and Colorado. The study was designed to explore the differential in breast cancer incidence rates among women in the Southwest, along with the roles of genetic susceptibility, metabolic factors and lifestyle factors. Baumgartner and her fellow researchers are now analyzing data from this study.

Baumgartner is now beginning a brand new study that seeks to investigate recurrence, survival and long-term quality of life among women previously diagnosed with breast cancer. This study promises to be ground-breaking. It will provide a population-based measure of recurrence that is not routinely available, an evaluation of the difference in survival between Hispanic and non-Hispanic white women, as well as the impact that breast cancer has on women's quality of life almost 15 years post-diagnosis. Baumgartner is collaborating with others across U of L's Health Sciences Center to design and submit a proposal to investigate significant issues associated with breast cancer incidence and mortality here in Kentucky. This will involve collaboration with the James Graham Brown Cancer Center, the Kentucky Cancer Registry and the Kentucky Cancer Program. She is in the process of developing a course that will focus on epidemiology research management which will focus on field methods and the conduct and management of epidemiologic investigations, to cover such topics as design and development, administrative management, human research issues — and essentially “what it takes” to conduct a study. She believes this type of training is critical to epidemiology students and is well qualified to teach them these skills.

Department of **Health Promotion** and **Behavioral Sciences**



The Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences (HPBS) uses an innovative approach to understanding the health information and health behavior component of public health. By delving into the cognitive and information science aspects of health knowledge and health education, rather than merely the traditional approach of focusing on behavior alone, the department's faculty and staff hope to broaden the understanding of how people think and behave with regards to health and increase the effectiveness of interventions designed to impact their thinking and behavior.

The department offers instruction, conducts research and provides community service to advance traditional public health education and health promotion competencies. In particular, the department is concerned with community assessment, strategic program planning, education and communication techniques in health promotion and program evaluation. In addition, the department is addressing key aspects of health information sciences, including health informatics, risk analysis and communication and decision-making.

The research and service mission of the department and the opportunities for student engagement are enhanced by partnerships with traditional local and state public health agencies, other healthcare organizations, other departments and schools in the university, local school systems, various community agencies and groups and government and commercial entities. HPBS faculty members come from a broad array of backgrounds that integrate to address the range of topics covered by their field. Their experience and training encompasses areas including public health education and promotion, experimental psychology, health services management, immunization and infection control, emergency preparedness and family and community medicine. Their current interests are equally varied, with involvement in such areas as emergency and disaster response and preparedness, health decision and risk analysis, infection prevention, disease transmission, immunization, preventive medicine, clinical research methodology, cognitive issues in health communication, cognitive and social influences of health-related decision making, psychological aspects of cancer prevention and treatment and addressing health initiatives among school-aged children.

The department offers a concentration in the MPH program. Students who complete this concentration will be qualified for careers in public health agencies at the local, state and federal government levels, as well as private nonprofit and community-based health agencies, health care institutions, universities and school systems and health promotion units in private corporations. In the near future the department will be developing other graduate programs consistent with its mission.



The **Positive Deviance** MRSA **Project**

Ruth Carrico RN PhD and **Richard Wilson** DHSc MPH



The “Positive Deviance” approach to strategic change involves taking advantage of pockets of success and using them to raise the performance level of the entire community or organization. This is completely different from such strategies as benchmarking or best practice, in that it builds on successful but different (or “deviant”) practices that already exist within the organization. The challenge lies in identifying those individuals who happen to have identified ways around obstacles or better ways of accomplishing goals than their co-workers (even though they have access to the same resources), identifying the behaviors and strategies that seem to lead to that deviant success rate, and then finding mechanisms to disseminate the behaviors and strategies to others. Ruth Carrico and Richard Wilson are members of the Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences at SPHIS who believe in the importance of exploring this change strategy to improve health care. Specifically, they have partnered with the Plexus Institute, University of Louisville Hospital and others who are interested in positive deviance.

The team has been selected to serve as a beta test site for a project led by the Plexus Institute and funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The project addresses the challenge of reducing the incidence of a multi-drug resist-

ant organism that is rampant in healthcare organizations across the United States. This organism, methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (or MRSA), causes significant morbidity and mortality among hospitalized patients and has proven to be a formidable foe. The project has an incredibly aggressive goal of reducing the incidence of MRSA by 75% in targeted areas at the University of Louisville Hospital. Acceptance as a beta site for this project is in part because the SPHIS offers the project something unique – the involvement of health behaviorists who are particularly knowledgeable in the field of social and behavioral aspects of health care (including the interaction of health care providers and patients and their resulting health outcomes). During this project, active collaboration will occur wherein experts in positive deviance will come to the University of Louisville and University of Louisville Hospital to explore, stimulate, participate in and contribute to the positive deviance efforts underway. As Carrico explains, this project is a “real opportunity to move change and success horizontally across the departments and functions of the hospital and then outside the hospital to other organizations.” She also believes firmly that this approach and the results of this collaboration will have application to other areas of public health as well.

The **Katrina Project(s)**

Scott LaJoie, PhD, MSPH and **Muriel Harris**, MPH, PhD



In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Scott LaJoie attended a training session on the potential use of the Kentucky Tele-Health network for bioterrorism preparedness. As a member of the Kentucky Psychological Association and a faculty member of the Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences, LaJoie was intrigued by the possibility of using tele-health to help Katrina evacuees in Kentucky who might be having mental health issues. LaJoie contacted a fellow KPA member about this idea and they worked together to develop a set of nine training modules targeted at mental health providers regarding the treatment and assessment of multiple population groups. For each of the sessions that have taken place so far, approximately 100-150 people have attended, including art therapists, clinical psychologists and psychiatrists.

A second component of the Katrina Project is designed to evaluate the experiences of Katrina evacuees and understand the long-term support needed. This component is intended to collect information on the agencies involved, the effectiveness of the support given, the processes used in meeting evacuee needs and how those needs change over time. Muriel Harris, also a faculty member of HPBS, has become integrally involved in this component, proposing that focus groups and interviews be done with Katrina evacuees to develop resource materials

for those individuals beyond “first responders” who act as disaster support. It has been hypothesized that different resource materials are necessary for those who try to help “pick up the pieces” and provide the kind of long term support that is necessary for disaster victims to be able to move on with their lives than for those who act in the role of “first responder.”

The vision that Harris and LaJoie have is that of developing a resource guide, possibly with fill-in-the-blank templates that can be tailored to the disaster type and disaster location by the inclusion of resource materials specific to the current need.

As an extension of the Katrina Project, Harris has proposed that research be done to determine the parallels between disaster evacuees and refugees who have had to flee their country of origin. The expectation is that useful similarities exist that can be examined and hopefully come to benefit both populations. Concepts proposed for study include needs assessment, experiential reports, factors influencing transition and factors that seem to result in positive outcome.

This parallel approach may be particularly appropriate for the Katrina population, since the hurricane disrupted a rather unique culture – the Cajun culture. Of interest to Harris, LaJoie and others involved in this research is the question of how a culture deals with the loss of its

geographical identity and how its members acculturate in a new location and culture without losing the identity of their original culture. A distinct problem that occurs in such a situation is the widespread scattering of evacuees/refugees, resulting in diminished contact with others of their culture.

Along these lines of thought, a grant has been submitted to consider developing a web-based mechanism for use by evacuees that would facilitate general communication, the sharing of resource information, and maintaining cultural identity. As LaJoie explained, “Hurricanes are perfect examples of how public health and mental health can combine and, thanks to the increasing public health awareness of mental health issues, disasters of such magnitude offer the opportunity to address mental health from a public health point of view.”

Department of Health Management and Systems Sciences



To the members of the Department of Health Management and Systems Sciences (HMSS), chaos is no stranger, nor is it an enemy. In fact, they spend much of their time living on and studying “the edge of chaos,” because this is where complexity, innovation and adaptive change are most likely to occur. They believe it is essential to understand the nature of chaos, complexity and the adaptive behavior of various systems, organization, and networks that exist in the world of individual health, health care and population health.

HMSS seeks to be nationally recognized as a center of excellence for understanding health organizations and systems as complex adaptive networks. As such, HMSS was initially formed, under the leadership of department chair, Robert Esterhay, MD, to integrate traditional studies of health policy and management and health systems with new approaches from systems science, complexity science, network sciences, social science and transaction cost economics.

HMSS is currently teaching Master of Public Health students and selected PhD students in the specialty area of health management and systems science. A PhD in health information sciences is under development. Students, staff and faculty work collaboratively to advance knowledge of health organizations and networks. Content areas related to systems science are: complexity and network sci-

ence, particularly people, organizational and social issues; systems structure, properties, and behavior; information systems and networks and adaptation management.

Faculty are also interested in economic and legislative issues related to health care, such as: health services research, health economics (e.g., transaction cost economics), health policy and health law and ethics. The combination of all of these interests, theories and issues culminates in a new mode of systems thinking with regards to the conduct of health care and public health in today’s society, which HMSS studies and teaches under the heading “population health management.” This is an attempt to embrace the need that currently exists to manage the health of the general population through more innovative and collaborative strategies than those that have been attempted in the past.

The faculty members of HMSS are a diverse and unique group of individuals who value collaboration in teaching and research, along with service, both inside and outside the department. Several have joint appointments, which serve to bridge the gaps that often exist between various academic departments and those public and private sector organizations which should ideally be their partners. These joint appointments include faculty who work part time or more with other departments of the School or University, the Louisville Metro

Health Department, the Kentucky Department for Public Health and the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. In addition, all of the faculty and staff members of the department have had “real-world,” practical experience that helps enrich their teaching and research. They are also all actively involved in various governmental and industry projects and boards, in keeping with their overall interest in collaboration and service.

Current projects of note include development of bioterrorism surveillance systems in hospitals, development of a statewide bioterrorism preparedness dashboard, new approaches to managing community based research, a project for improving the capacity of a public health department to act as a learning organization and research on developing a statewide and community electronic health information network.



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Robert J. Esterhay ,MD

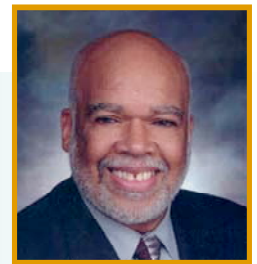
Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Health Management and Systems Sciences

Bob Esterhay has devoted the past 30 years of his career to improving our nation's health care system. Initially, Esterhay was directly involved in patient care, as a clinical hematologist/oncologist. He specialized in the treatment of patients, specifically children, with leukemias, lymphomas, sarcomas, and other cancers of young adults. Needless to say, this work was stressful and emotionally difficult, although also incredibly rewarding at times.

Esterhay then chose to make use of his knowledge about cancer and his observations about clinicians' needs for quick and accurate information on cancer treatment and research protocols by designing and implementing the National Cancer Institute's PDQ Cancer Treatment Information System. This system became and remains a critical source of cancer information for doctors and their patients and is available today over the Internet (at www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/pdq).

Esterhay chose to remain in the realm of clinical information and technology systems, becoming involved in the design, specification, planning, and implementation of a multitude of health information systems, including clinical information systems such as electronic medical records, dictation and transcription systems, laboratory and radiology systems, picture archiving and communication systems, and pharmacy information systems. Along the way, he also worked in a variety of settings and organizations, including government, private industry, and university settings.

As a result of these experiences, Esterhay became convinced that the key factors involved in the effective exchange and utilization of health information were standardization and/or translation of clinical vocabulary, understanding people and organizational issues, and appreciating and navigating the complexity involved in each new situation or system. This created another new branch in his career path, leading him to his current involvement in multiple large scale collaborative efforts, such as the Kentucky Telehealth Network, the Kentucky e-Health Network, the Louisville Metro Electronic Health Surveillance Project and the Louisville Health Information Exchange Project. Academically, he has chosen to focus on the exploration of chaos theory and complexity science, network science and organizational theories, strategic and tactical planning for health systems and health care policy and management.



Adewale Troutman, MD, MPH

Associate Professor of Health Management and Systems Sciences and Director of the Louisville Metro Health Department

Troutman has an undeniable presence, fed by his passion and his visions for public health, education, health equity and social justice. He describes his life as a series of choices made on the basis of asking himself the question, "What would make the biggest difference?" After having spent fifteen years in clinical practice, he chose public health as his new direction, believing it was the way to make the biggest difference in the community, the community's health and the public's health. This led him to pursue his Executive MPH at the Columbia University School of Public Health and take on subsequent roles as the Director of the Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness in Atlanta GA and now as the Director of the Louisville Metro Health Department (LMHD). Along the way, he also spent time as an Associate Professor of Community Health and Preventive Medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine.

The time spent in academia gave him the opportunity to research the social determinants of health outcome, including health disparities related to race. For someone like Troutman, who believes passionately that "health is a basic human right," the existence of disparities in health and health outcomes is a problem that simply must be solved. As he explains it, "If there are dramatic inequities due to socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, language, etc., then public health agencies have a responsibility to eliminate those inequities."

This kind of passion, along with his need to combine front-line public health with the academic world, is what made Louisville attractive. He was excited by the fact that the position of Director of the LMHD was a partnership between the School of Public Health and Information Sciences (SPHIS) and the Louisville Metro government.

Troutman explains that he loves teaching and working with newcomers to the field, especially when it comes to being able to shape their thinking and give them the opportunity to interact with someone who works directly in the field. He is particularly excited by the approach of the SPHIS MPH program, which has its students entrenched in the public health department beginning with their first year of study and then coming back later for their practicum work. He believes that this exposure to front-line public health is essential. And he loves sharing with the students the realities of his work.

Troutman began his tenure as Director of LMHD with several very clear goals. He wanted to make the community more aware of public health as a field and more aware of the existence of LMHD and its role as a community resource, create new coalitions with community groups on community issues, institute a smoking ban in Louisville and elevate the progress of public health in Louisville to a level deserving national attention. Along the way, these efforts have required strategic re-organization of the LMHD, in an attempt to create a leaner and fitter organization, more capable of meeting the community's needs.

He is particularly proud of the fact that Louisville now has the Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement, which provides a vehicle for many crucial public health initiatives. He is also thrilled about the recently established Center for Health Equity, which places an emphasis on social justice and social determinants of health. He sees these two programs as Louisville's mechanisms for achieving the Healthy People 2010 goals of increasing the total number of years of quality life and eliminating health disparities. And for someone with Troutman's vision and goals, trying to meet or exceed the national expectations of public health improvements aren't just a welcome challenge, they're an opportunity to shine.



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