



>>Take Note

News from USF SafetyFlorida

USF SafetyFlorida, welcomed three new SHARP companies this month, bringing the state's total to 55. Florida now ranks in the top five states for federal SHARP companies. The OSHA-recognized Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program award is safety's highest honor for small businesses. Nationally, 1,350 companies have earned the SHARP designation. Charlene Vespi, program manager of USF SafetyFlorida, says "I am very proud of the work we've accomplished this year. We have worked diligently to communicate the benefits of safety consultation, and the increased number of SHARPs in our state shows that our efforts are working."

To achieve the SHARP rating, a company must request and pass a rigorous workplace safety and health inspection by USF SafetyFlorida, which then submits a SHARP recommendation to OSHA. Completing the process, OSHA approves the companies that demonstrate exemplary safety and health management programs.

USF SafetyFlorida is a small business safety and health consultation program administered by the College of Public Health. The program employs 11 full-time safety consultants and industrial hygienists with years of experience in environmental and safety and health issues, building construction and public education. In 2008 alone, the program conducted 745 safety consultations, delivering approximately 26,000 hours in consultation, training and education to Florida's private industry. Of the 745 consultations conducted, a total of 1,982 hazards were identified in the workplace; 1,555 of those hazards were classified as serious.

submitted by Kelly Garland

AIHA Florida Section Holds Annual Meeting

The Florida Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association held its



Spring meeting in St Pete Beach on May 8.

Nine students from the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health attended. They were Laura Farina, Jennifer Fowler, Nicole Garcia, Michael Henderson, Alex LeBeau, Adam Marty, Daniel Medina, Luis Pieretti, Patrick Rodriguez, Megan Sandy, and Steffanie Wickham. They are pictured here with the president of the AIH Foundation,

who was there to describe foundation activities including the funding of student scholarships. In addition to notable speakers from around the country, the students had the opportunity to listen to Tom Bernard, chair of EOH, one more time.

USF Health Development Has Moved

USF Health Development and Alumni Relations has completed their move and are located at the UPC Building 3500 Fletcher Avenue Room 511. There are no changes to telephone or fax numbers. The office at MDC L-1046 will house the USF Health Alumni office. The main room will be converted to an alumni gathering space with a particular emphasis on student alums.

>>Faculty

Dr. Wil Milhous Receives Research Funds

USF CONNECT has awarded Claro Scientific, LLC, a USF spin-out, matching research funds through the Florida High Tech Corridor Matching Grants Research Program for its project "Application and Validation of Photonics Method for Diagnosis of Malaria."

Claro has partnered with [Dr. Wilbur Milhous](#), Department of Global Health, to create a method for a rapid and minimally invasive detection and identification of malaria.

The Florida High Tech Corridor matched Claro's \$122,858 cash and in-kind value with \$61,429. A portion of the matching funds will be used to fund a student in the College of Public Health. For more information about the Florida High Tech Corridor Matching Grants Research Program at USF, please visit www.research.usf.edu/ed/corridor.htm or contact Matt Lowell at hmilowell@research.usf.edu or 813-974-3291.

>>Faculty con't...

Global Health Faculty Publish Articles

Ottendorfer CL, Ambrose JH, White GS, Unnasch TR, Stark LM. Isolation of genotype v St. Louis encephalitis virus in Florida. *Emerg Infect Dis*. 2009 Apr;15(4):604-6. PubMed PMID: 19331744.

Cruz AK, de Toledo JS, Falade M, Terrão MC, Kamchonwongpaisan S, Kyle DE, Uthaipibull C. Current treatment and drug discovery against *Leishmania* spp. and *Plasmodium* spp.: a review. *Curr Drug Targets*. 2009 Mar; 10(3):178-92. PubMed PMID:19275555.

Ulloa A, Ferguson HH, Méndez-Sánchez JD, Danis-Lozano R, Casas-Martínez M, Bond JG, García-Zebadúa JC, Orozco-Bonilla A, Juárez-Ordaz JA, Farfan-Ale JA, García-Rejón JE, Rosado-Paredes EP, Edwards E, Komar N, Hassan HK, Unnasch TR, Rodríguez-Pérez MA. West Nile Virus Activity in Mosquitoes and Domestic Animals in Chiapas, México. *Vector Borne Zoonotic Dis*. 2009 Mar 13. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 19281433.

Happi CT, Gbotosho GO, Folarin OA, Sowunmi A, Hudson T, O'Neil M, Milhous W, Wirth DF, Oduola AM. 2009. Selection of *Plasmodium falciparum* multidrug resistance gene 1 alleles in asexual stages and gametocytes by artemether-lumefantrine in Nigerian children with uncomplicated falciparum malaria. *Antimicrob Agents Chemother*. 53: 888-95.

Milhous, W K (2009) [Globalizations 5](#): 621 - 629, Book Review: Medicine at the Border: Disease, Globalization, and Security, 1850 to the Present. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14747730802528407>

Belenko S., Dembo R., Rollie M., Childs K. Detecting, Preventing and Treating Sexually Transmitted Diseases Among Adolescent Arrestees: An Unmet Public Health Need. *American Journal of Public Health* 99 (6); 1-10, May 2009.

Drs. Hamisu Salihu and Alfred Mbah Receive Grant Award

Dr. Alfred Mbah, a post-doctoral fellow under the mentorship of Dr. Hamisu Salihu, has just received the "James & Esther King Biomedical Research Program Grant" to study the "Effect of Passive Smoking on Risk for Antenatal and Post-partum Depression" among pregnant women in Tampa. The grant will pay for 75% of Dr. Mbah's salary as well as for personnel and other expenses that will serve as study staff on the grant. The grant award is meant to assist Dr. Mbah develop into an independent investigator within the next couple of years.

Dr. Yangxin Huang Appointed Associate Editor

With a track record of publications in *Computational Statistics and Data Analysis* and reviewing manuscripts submitted in CSDA, Dr. Yangxin Huang, Assistant Professor in Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, has recently been appointed as an Associate Editor of the Journal "Computational Statistics & Data Analysis (CSDA) for a long-term service basis. The CSDA, the official journal of the International Association of Statistical Computing first published in 1956, is an international journal dedicated to the dissemination of statistical methodological research and applications in the areas of computational biostatistics/statistics and data analysis. The journal consists of three refereed sections, divided into the following subject areas: (i) Computational Statistics; (ii) Statistical Methodology for Data Analysis; (iii) Special Applications in engineering, biologic and health science, clinical trials, finance and other fields.



>>Students

**Student Research and Funding Opportunities:**

COPH students are encouraged to check out the comprehensive web site of student research at <http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/officeresearch/fundingopps.html> which provides links to COPH student funding opportunities at the COPH, USF, as well as external private foundations and federal funding agencies. The deadline for the (monthly) SHARP <http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/officeresearch/sharp.html> applications for June is Monday June 1, 2009. We advise each students to submit their SHARP applications *at least* one month prior to the conference during which they will be presenting their research, to ensure that there is sufficient time for (a) the application to be reviewed and (b) for the student to work with their departmental administrator to ensure that their travel (TAR) form can be entered into the university system. Feel free to contact Ellen Kent, MPH, Coordinator, Student Research Grants at any time at ekent@health.usf.edu or in room 2150H for advice or further assistance!

Student Service Opportunities:

The USF Health Service Corps is a wonderful way in which you can participate in a wide variety of health-related service activities with other USF Health students. The spring service activities are listed on the website at <http://health.usf.edu/ahec/hsevents.htm> and calendar at <http://my.calendars.net/servicecorps>. Feel free to send questions or suggestions pertaining to student service to Ellen Kent, MPH, Coordinator for the USF Health Service Corps at ekent@health.usf.edu or 974-6622 or stop by room 2150H at anytime!

Here are some upcoming opportunities

Friday, June 19th, 3 - 5 PM [World Refugee Day](#) at USF College of Education. In collaboration with the Florida Center for the Survivors of Torture and USF Pediatrics' Ronald McDonald Care Mobile™, USF Health Service Corps volunteers will be able to contribute to this important event which will provide services to Iraqi, Russian, Burmese and Cuban refugees. (See also <http://www.qcifs.org/fcst/worldrefugeeday.html>) Information for COPH student volunteers: Non clinical activities: Up to 4 COPH or other graduate students can assist with health education exhibits regarding prevention of the flu and food safety/nutrition; please sign up with Ellen Kent, MPH, at ekent@health.usf.edu.

Monday June 15th - Thursday, June 18th. Shriners Camp Care A Lot at Rotary Camp Florida in Brandon. To request a volunteer application, please contact Renee Savic at (813) 972-2250 ext: 7325 or at rsavic@shrinenet.org and please mention that are a USF Health student! Volunteers are asked to please commit to 2 or more days or 2 evenings, with 4 hour shifts minimum (to enable the children to bond with the volunteer staff).

Monday, June 15th - Friday, June 19th. Children's Cancer Center Sickie Cell Camp. Please contact Jamie Nettles at jnettles@childrenscancercenter.org and please mention that are a USF Health student! Volunteers are asked to please commit to 2 or more days, to enable the children to bond with the volunteer staff.

Shabnam Mehra MSPH was selected for a 2009 [National Network for Environmental Management Studies \(NNEMS\) Fellowship](#). Her placement is with the EPA Headquarters in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. She begins her fellowship in July and will work on Researching Innovative Air Quality Benefits Estimation Methods <http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/NNEMS/2009101.html>. Shabnam is a PhD student in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health.

Melville Bradley Has Poster Accepted to National 2009 Delta Omega Poster Session

Ms. Mel Bradley was one of 18 students across the country who has been chosen to present her poster at the National Delta Omega Poster Session at the Annual APHA meeting on November 9 between 10:30 and 11:30 am in Philadelphia, PA. Congratulations Mel!

>>Global Scene

Sustainability Course Research Trip to Guyana

Dr. Amy Stuart, Assistant Professor, Environmental and Occupational Health, and colleagues Dr. Trotz (Civil and Environmental Engineering) and Dr. Akiwumi (Geography) recently led a course trip to Guyana, South America, during USF's spring break. The trip was the field research



Dr. Stuart (2nd row far right) and graduate students on the Georgetown seawall

component of the graduate course, Sustainability Concepts and Methods: Mercury in Guyana, and was funded through a USF Sustainable Healthy Communities grant. Ten graduate students from public health, geography, and engineering participated in the trip, which gave the students and faculty hands-on experience in sustainability issues in a developing country setting. Students were introduced to three areas of the country where they collected data for the course case project. These included a nature reserve and sustainability center in the Guyanese rainforest that supports ecotourism and sustainability research, a remote mining town deep in the Guyanese jungle surrounded by Amerindian territories, and the populated coastal area and capital city of

Georgetown. Research activities included water and soil sampling for mercury concentrations, population surveys and observation on mercury issues, and archival data collection. The data collected will feed into analyses for the student course papers and longer-term theses and dissertation projects of students working on the grant. "The experience was a fascinating, eye-opening, and sometimes disturbing look at both the challenges that confront solution of environmental and health issues in the developing world, and the resilience of the local people forging a living in these conditions," said Dr. Stuart.

The following article provides a native Guyanese student's perspective on experiencing his own country through the course trip.

"Going home to Guyana, my native land, to conduct research on mercury and mining, I had mixed feelings regarding what to expect. On one hand, I was anticipating an empowering and enlightening experience conducting surveys. Guyanese are known as some of most hospitable people in the world and are generally not shy about giving their opinion. On the other hand, I envisioned a spectacle of tainted earth, and putrid, polluted waters in the mining district. You see, like the rest of my classmates, this was my first trip to this part of Guyana. You would think that having lived in Guyana for over 25 years before leaving for any prolonged period of time I would be an authority on anything and everything Guyanese. This is far from the truth. I was born, raised, and schooled on the coast of Guyana, a narrow strip of land stretching along the tip of the country, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north, and the jungles of the interior to the south. About eighty percent of the population of the country lives on the coast, and as such, most, like me, have little or no inkling of the happenings of the interior, or 'the bush' as it is more commonly referred to. Going to these locations are reserved for adventurous fortune seekers, or the rich tourists who can afford to fly in for nature tours.

Guyana offers its wilderness visitors a truly inimitable experience with nature, a raw ruggedness that contrasts sharply with the more traditional fare of Caribbean tourism. Here, the spectacular, brochure perfect, blue waters of the Caribbean are replaced by a coffee brown hue the gets richer and darker the further inland you venture. Gaiety and tacit bliss is replaced by a dark brooding serenity that perpetuates a beauty of its own. Wilderness tours are the main attractions, capitalizing on the unique wildlife, mystic awe of its waterways, and untainted, unexplored nature of its jungles.

Conducting literature research on small scale gold mining in Guyana left me with a concept of family owned claims, with 6-10 persons, working the mines, more on a subsistence basis rather than entrepreneurial. Whilst some mines fulfilled that projection, most of the mines we saw can be classified as middle-scale business enterprises. Miners now employed the use of excavators to extract the ore, thus being able to process thousands of metric tons of ore in any given day. The ore is washed into a hole where a gravel pump, or five, pumps the slurry over a mercury-impregnated mat.



>>Global Scene con't...

This water is continuously being recycled for use in the process, by being held in a tailings pond, allowed to settle, and pumped back to the wash hole. This presents a greater possibility for the generation of hotspots for mercury pollution. They all had one common thread though. They were all owned by a single person, a single boss who had total control of the entire operation and was present on the mine site on a daily basis. These mines and the mining town that catered to their needs seemed far removed from the hustle and bustle of the city. Coming from Georgetown, there is a sense of complete isolation, both geographically and administratively.

This pervading sense of isolation was reinforced during my survey of the mineworkers. It was my opinion that few of them had any access to print media whilst working in the mines. There were no local news channels on television, thus there was no access to information regarding significant events in the country. They relied on travelers into and out of the area to convey news. There was a common thread of acute job speculation occurring in the mining camps, for example, the "jetters"



Gold mining operation near Madia

whose task is to wash the ore into the feedhole for the gravel pump, had little or no idea about processing the amalgamated ore. Whilst some workers had a fair idea of how often they "washed the mats" it was mainly motivated by economics rather than a knowledge of the process. That is, they had more knowledge about how often washing was done and less about how it was done, since washing meant payday was close.

Washing of the mats and burning of the amalgam seems to be predominantly done by the owners themselves. Whilst retorts are prevalent in the mines, their use cannot be ascertained. I received mixed reviews from the workers and the owners concerning their use and perceptions of mercury. The same can be said of the general perception of mercury as a pollutant and toxic metal. Some miners considered mercury as a sacred 'liquid' that protects them from snakes and other evils associated with mining folklore, whilst others had a vague idea it could be dangerous to their health but had no point of reference with regard to disease, symptoms, or cure. Monitoring is done by the Guyana Mines Gold Commission, but the number of mines are vast, and they are severely understaffed. Thus, they are regulated to mainly settling land disputes and mining infractions rather than enforcing environmental protection.

I was left with a feeling of loss as to the overarching financial benefits of mining on the local community, and the country as a whole. The typical expectation of the boomtown associated with short-term wealth was not realized. I got the sense of a community and environment being raped at a sustained rate. Not even in the capital city of Georgetown could I identify proliferation of wealth that I can trace back to mining. Yet it remains a naturally rich and beautiful country, with a resiliency that I pray may enable it to face its future."

Ryan Michael
Doctoral Student
Environmental and Occupational Health

>>Alumni News

Deb Hensley (MPH, MHA) is the Cities Readiness Initiative Coordinator in Public Health Preparedness for the Pasco County Health Department. She encourages members of the COPH community to write their congress persons in support of the Public Health Workforce Act for 2009 legislation. The details about the act are available here <http://durbin.senate.gov/showRelease.cfm?releaseId=313358>. Deb may be reached at (352) 521-1450 ext 315 or Deborah_Hensley@doh.state.fl.us.

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Important Dates

Friday, June 5, 2009 - Summer 2009 Graduation Application Deadline
<http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/academicaffairs/graduation.html>

Monday, June 15, 2009 - 12:00 pm, COPH 1023-A - Dean's Lecture Series - Dr. David Redden, Assistant Professor Department of Biostatistics School of Public Health University of Alabama at Birmingham - "Will the Largest Confounder Please Stand Up"