The Center for Health Equity had a busy summer and is in the midst of an eventful fall. After eight weeks, the Center’s Advanced Research Program (CHE-ARP) for medical students concluded this fall with final presentations. The CHE-ARP provided research training in areas of health inequities through a structured core curriculum, closely supervised research projects, clinical research seminars, and participation in selected scientific meetings. The scholars worked closely with their mentor to conceptualize, design, and carryout research projects according to the scholar’s interests and ongoing research programs of the faculty mentor. The program was so successful that many of the ARPs are continuing their work, and some are expanding internationally. I was delighted with the quality and thoughtfulness of the projects and credit goes to the scholars, mentors, Kate Barry, and Selwyn Vickers, who played a vital role in orchestrating the program. The ARPs are featured in the inside pages of the newsletter and I encourage you to read about their research.

In October, we were fortunate to host CHE Research Rounds visiting scholar, Dr. Ichiro Kawachi, a Department Chair and a social determinants of health expert from Harvard’s School of Public Health. Dr. Kawachi’s lively visit included an dialogue of health services research and funding in surgical oncology with the Program in Surgical Outcomes (pictured); a fantastic dinner meeting bringing together members of the Center for Chronic Disease Outcomes Research, the School of Public Health, MN Department of Health, and the Center for Health Equity; and Dr. Kawachi’s well-attended and thought-provoking presentation entitled “Income Inequity and Population Health: Should We Worry?”

(Left to right) Liz Habermann, PhD; Ichiro Kawachi, MD, PhD; Waddah Al-Rafaie, MD; Abe Markin & Jasjit S. Ahluwalia, MD, MPH, MS
Director’s Update, continued

I am pleased to announce an upcoming grant writing seminar that CHE is hosting along with MC3 and CTSI—Research Training and Career Development. *Write Winning Grants* is widely acclaimed seminar that is coming back to the University on January 18th. The seminar is geared towards NIH grant applications and emphasizes strategies designed to merit a fundable priority score. For more information and to apply to this seminar, please visit our website: http://www.med.umn.edu/che/

As the center continues to grow, we hope you will join in our efforts to reach health equity. To get involved, join our listerv, or for more information on the Center for Health Equity, e-mail us at umnche@umn.edu. May you have a safe and joyous Holiday Season.

With warm regards,

[Signature]

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**Research, Training and Education Core**

**CHE Advanced Research Program Scholars**

The Center for Health Equity (CHE) Advanced Research Training Program (ARP) was established to expose rising medical researchers to the importance of health disparities research. The ultimate goal of the program is to increase the amount of research being conducted around health equity.

**Scholar: Erica Warnock, Second-year medical student, University of Minnesota**

**Area of Interest:** PM&R, pediatrics, health care disparities among people with disabilities.

**Mentor:** Peter Scal, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics

**Project Title and Description:** "HPV Vaccination Among Adolescents with Disabilities" A secondary data analysis of the National Survey of Children's Health. We found that adolescents with disabilities were less likely than adolescents with other types of special health care needs to receive the HPV vaccine. Our research suggests that this may be because adolescents with disabilities are less likely to have a doctor recommend that they receive the vaccination.

**Scholar: Emily Moody, MHS, Fifth-year medical student gaining clinical research experience before starting residency next year**

**Area of Interest:** Environmental health, toxicology, primary care, health disparities

**Mentors:** Jasjit S. Ahluwalia, MD, MPH, MS Executive Director, Center for Health Equity and Associate Director, (CTSI)

Robert Wright, MD, PhD; Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Health, Harvard School of Public Health

**Project Title and Description:** “Air Pollution Exposure Assessment” substudy of Stress, Lead, Iron Deficiency and Neurodevelopment. This project is part of a large birth cohort study in Mexico City. The primary study is interested in the effect of psychosocial stress on the toxicity of lead and of in children, and has a rich bank of prenatal, birth, and postpartum data and biological samples for each participant. We will use municipal air quality data going back to the prenatal period for each child to estimate air pollution exposures, and will assess exposure to environmental tobacco smoke to each child.

To continue this work into the Spring semester, Ms. Moody was awarded a $4,000 Student Research Grant with a Minnesota Medical Foundation.
CHE ADVANCED RESEARCH TRAINING PROGRAM CONTINUED

Scholar: Abe Markin, Fourth-year medical student, University of Minnesota
Area of Interest: General Surgery
Mentor: Waddah Al-Refaie, MD, Assistant Professor, Department of Surgery
Project Title and Description: "Cancer Surgery Among American Indians: A Neglected Topic in American Surgery." American Indians have the poorest cancer survival of any US ethnic group. Previous work has shown that they have poor access to medical care and are diagnosed at later stage, but that these factors do not entirely explain the inequity. This project examines whether differences in peri-operative outcomes or the types of hospitals where care is delivered contribute to the long-term survival deficit among this group.

Scholar: Ben Braus, Second-year medical student, University of Minnesota
Area of Interest: Primary care, chronic illness, and emergency psychiatric services.
Mentor: Donna McAlpine, PhD, Associate Professor, Division of Health Policy and Management, University of Minnesota School of Public Health Director, Program in Public Health Administration and Policy
Project Title and Description: "Examining Collaborative Care for Depression in Everyday Practice: What Matters Most to Care Managers?" examines the patient characteristics that care managers consider important as they make decisions about designing care plans for their patients with depression, focusing specifically on the question of whether there are identifiable "opinion types" among care managers.

CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM UPDATE

Pre and post-program assessments were conducted with the 2010 cohort of nine students involved in the CHE Undergraduate Research Training Program. These assessments measured students’ confidence in applying a variety of skills involved in research. The figure depicts the increase in confidence averaged across all students in applying almost all of the research skills measured. The Program continues to be a success and has welcomed a new cohort of students for the 2011-2012 school year. Stay tuned for a request for applications to be issued this spring for next year’s cohort.
Dr. Collins recently accepted a position with The University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita. She will serve as the Chair and Endowed Distinguished Professor of Preventive Medicine and Public Health. Dr. Collins has been an invaluable asset to the formation and ongoing efforts of the Center for Health Equity. We will miss her dearly, but wish her all the best in her new endeavors.

Jas and Karen Kaler at Community Day

UROC COMMUNITY DAY AND VISIT FROM PRESIDENT KALER

In an ongoing effort to connect with the community, the University of Minnesota Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC) held a community open house on September 20th. In addition to displays from UROC resident programs and community outreach efforts was a visit from the newly inaugurated University President, Eric Kaler. There was an impressive turn out of University personnel as well as community members.

The Center for Health Equity displayed information on our various seminars, programs and activities. This event was an incredible opportunity for CHE to connect with the community about the work and the opportunities that CHE provides.

CONGRATULATIONS TO TRACIE COLLINS, MD, MPH

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University of Minnesota
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Suite 166
Minneapolis, MN 55414
612.626.3378
umnche@umn.edu
www.med.umn.edu/che

CHE CORE UPDATES

RESEARCH CORE

Recent Works in Progress (WIP): Guy Lucien-Whembolua, PhD
Title: “Facultative Melanin and Tobacco Use Factors among Homeless Smokers.” September 27, 2011

Upcoming Works in Progress (WIP): Susie Nanney, PhD
“An Examination of the Association between School Breakfast Participation and Student test Scores in Minneapolis.”
October 25, 2011, 1-2pm at 717 Delaware Building, Room 105.

CHE invites all University of Minnesota Faculty to the 3rd Thursday event on November 17th at the Campus Club from 4:30-6PM. A short presentation will be given about the Center. We hope to see you there.

Building Bridges: Stay tuned for information on an upcoming Speed Networking event.

External Grant Review Program supports a select number of meritorious applications for external peer review prior to submission to a funding agency. Please visit our website.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CORE

On September 25th 2011, Greater Friendship Baptist church organized their second “Body and Soul” event. During this event, Mrs. Cynthia Johnson, head chef of Living Soul Cuisine, demonstrated healthy recipes. Additionally, participants completed the second part of this intervention. They answered a questionnaire and had their body mass index, glucose, cholesterol and triglycerides measured. Members of Center for Health Equity (Megan Hoffman, Tolu Abikoye and Dr. Guy-Lucien Whembolua) assisted church coordinators during this event.

This event concludes the pilot phase of the Body and Soul intervention which includes the following churches: He is Risen, Wayman and Greater Friendship Baptist church. The first Phase of the “Body and Soul” intervention will start in the coming months and will include Camphor Memorial Church, Progressive Baptist Church and Mount Olivet Church.

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