Epi Department Rocks the 2010 Faculty and Staff Awards!

Dean’s Leadership Award

One of the School’s highest honors, the **Dean’s Leadership Award** was bestowed upon **Dr. Moise Desvarieux**, associate professor in the Department of Epidemiology. An infectious and chronic disease epidemiologist, Dr. Desvarieux is the PI of the INVEST study, a large multi-ethnic cohort of participants in Northern Manhattan aiming to assess the contribution of chronic periodontal infections to vascular disease. Among his numerous other awards and extensive international work, he has played pivotal role in the School’s recent ground-breaking partnership with a French school of public health – the École des Hautes Études en Santé Publique (EHESP), located in Paris.

Noting her particular affection for the recently established honor, Dean Linda Fried said the award recognizes individuals who work to fulfill the aspirations of both the School and the field of public health to serve as leaders, who demonstrate great vision, and who “help bring that vision to fruition.” Dr. Desvarieux becomes the third recipient of the award, and the first selected on the basis of a School-wide nominating process. We are so proud to have Dr. Desvarieux as faculty in the department and we congratulate him on this deserved recognition.

Staff Awards in Excellence

At the State of the School event, the Mailman School recognized the invaluable contributions of administrative and support staff through the annual Staff Awards in Excellence. The Staff Awards, made possible by a generous gift from an anonymous donor, acknowledge outstanding Mailman School employees who demonstrate the highest standards of excellence and extraordinary performance. This year the Department of Epidemiology’s own **Emily Alexandrino** was among the recipients.

Ms. Alexandrino is currently the Program Manager of the Inequalities Center and the Financial Manager of the Robert Wood Johnson Health and Society Scholars program at Columbia. Ms. Alexandrino works with community leaders in initiatives sponsored by the Columbia Center for Youth Violence Prevention. Her tireless dedication and continuing efforts have been inspirational to all those working with her in and outside of the department. She received her MPH from Columbia University in 2006 and is now continuing her education at Mailman as a DrPH student in Sociomedical Sciences.
Welcome to the fourth issue of the Epidemiology Department Newsletter. This past month has been extremely busy for faculty, staff, and students alike. Along with graduation, we had our fourth CUEGR lecture featuring Dr. Jay Kaufman, an informative faculty meeting and a Departmental Faculty Seminar lecture given by Dr. Ryan Demmer. During the next month we have another CUEGR lecture and as well as a Departmental Faculty Seminar lecture and we will also be discussing many items from our departmental strategic plan in the upcoming faculty meetings.

With the end of the academic year and the many commencement and awards ceremonies highlighting several members of the Epi department there has been much to celebrate and to take pride in. Throughout this newsletter we take a moment to recognize the graduating students and thank the faculty and staff who have made outstanding contributions to our department throughout the past year.

It is through the work of all our faculty, students, and staff that we are the dynamic and exciting department that we are. I congratulate everyone on another outstanding academic year.

Warm regards,

Sandro

UPCOMING: JUNE AND JULY 2010

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2010 Grant Attestation Due Dates:

- **Friday, July 30, 2010** (2nd Quarter - April 1, 2010 – June 30, 2010)
- **Friday, October 29, 2010** (3rd Quarter - July 1, 2010 – September 30, 2010)
- **Friday, January 28, 2011** (4th Quarter - October 1, 2010 – December 31, 2010)
The devastation wrought by the Haitian earthquake has resulted in one of the worst public health crises in recent years. At a special Mailman School of Public Health Grand Rounds on March 1, 2010, Dr. Ronald Waldman, MD, MPH, Professor of Clinical Population and Family Health and Professor of Clinical Epidemiology at the Mailman School, discussed the U.S. response in Haiti. At the time of the lecture, Dr. Waldman, who served as Coordinator of the U.S. Government’s Medical and Public Health Sector Emergency Response team in Haiti, had just returned from the country where he has been working closely with an inter-agency team to advance relief efforts and the health sector response.

“I have seen a lot of disasters, but the destruction of this Port-au-Prince, the capital city, is unfathomable,” Dr. Waldman noted in the week after the disaster. “Emergency relief, including burial of the more than 200,000 dead, preparing to provide long-term care for the more than 200,000 injured, providing protection for the hundreds of thousands left homeless, and long-term reconstruction planning all have to be addressed simultaneously.”

A physician specializing in child health in developing countries and a veteran of the 2004 tsunami response, Dr. Waldman began his career with the World Health Organization’s Global Smallpox Eradication Program in Bangladesh and then worked at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for twenty-five years. He is a past chairman of the International Health Section of the American Public Health Association and currently serves a number of non-governmental organizations and UN agencies. He has worked in complex emergencies in Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia, Albania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Dr. Waldman has been at the Mailman School for more than 10 years and is the founding Director of the Program on Forced Migration and Health in the Department of Population and Family Health.

In his lecture, Dr. Waldman discussed his experiences coordinating the Medical and Health Emergency Response in Haiti. The immediate priorities in Haiti were to ensure the survival of those injured and displaced. Ensuring the food and water needs of the affected population was not as big a problem as originally anticipated, thanks to the coordinated heroic efforts of the many governmental and nongovernmental organizations too numerous to mention. In the largest urban distribution program ever, nearly 3 million people received food and water during the first days and weeks of the relief effort. Waterproof plastic sheets, were handed out as well – two for each household in need. Providing health services was fraught with difficulty. Most clinics and hospitals were at least partially destroyed and those that remained were ill-equipped in terms of supplies, equipment, and local human resources. In addition to managing these physical impediments, Dr. Waldman and various response teams had to be sensitive to the psychological effects of the earthquake. He notes, “It’s sometimes easy to forget that the people you work with have suffered loss of family, loss of friends, loss of everything they own. And yet you expect them to get up early in the morning and work all day alongside you. They understand the urgency far more than any of us coming from the outside.” More than 300 organizations were registered with the UN/PAHO health cluster, and coordinating their efforts, as well as the substantial health resources of the US Government was a monumental challenge. This challenge was, fortunately, met to a reasonable degree and the unprecedented level of collaboration between both private and public sector partners kept preventable morbidity and mortality at acceptable low levels, at least during the early phases of the relief effort.
Katherine Hensel, MPH, came to the Mailman School of Public Health from the University of Michigan where she completed her BS in Afroamerican and African Studies. With previous research experience in HIV and gender-based violence, Ms. Hensel joined the research staff of Crystal Fuller, associate professor in epidemiology at MSPH and investigator at the New York Academy of Medicine, upon her arrival at MSPH. Ms. Hensel’s research at NYAM focused on substance using populations in NYC, and from this work she presented two abstracts at the 2009 International Conference on Urban Health in Nairobi, Kenya. Her oral presentation focused on adverse childhood experiences and adult alcohol dependence in NYC. Her poster presentation, which was the beginnings of her master’s thesis, concerned social network characteristics and mental health service use among depressed drug users in NYC. Ms. Hensel is currently preparing this work for publication.

As a master’s student, Ms. Hensel found her peers to be intelligent, compassionate, and committed individuals who cared for one another’s success and wellbeing. Doctoral students serving as teaching assistants provided encouragement for her academic development. Professors in the department worked hard to ensure her and all students’ achievements in the classroom, and they welcomed her into their offices for extended conversations on epi methods, career goals, and balancing professional and personal lives. Ms. Liliane Zaretsky, program coordinator and beloved member of the epi department, maintained an open door policy and always had an ear for triumphs and tribulations. This atmosphere of academic excellence, achievement in research, and strong mentorship was the deciding factor in Ms. Hensel’s decision to remain at MSPH for her PhD. “It’s no accident that I am staying at Mailman for my PhD,” Ms. Hensel says. “I travelled all over the country as I made my decision, and while other schools have strong academics and research, the dedication to mentorship at Mailman is outstanding. People here want to see students succeed, and they are willing to go the extra mile to make that happen. We’re family.”

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**SUBMITTED GRANTS**

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**BRIEF MENTIONS**

**EPI FACULTY GRANTS**

Dr. Lisa Bates, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology and Population and Family Health, was awarded a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to study “Mental health consequences of the US economic downturn: What do we know and what can be done?” The goal of the grant is to conduct a rapid collaborative assessment of evidence on the mental health impact of economic contractions. Dr. Bates hopes this research will increase awareness and understanding of further consequences of the economic downturn and to identify opportunities for government interventions.

**REGISTER NOW!**

The 9th Annual *International Conference on Urban Health* will be held this year on October 27 - October 29 in New York City. The theme of this year’s conference will be good governance for healthy cities, with a focus on the positive consequences of urban health interventions, as well as the social and public health policies that are required to address these issues. Registration for the conference opens in the summer of 2010. For updates on the conference and to register please go to: http://www.nyam.org/icuh2010/.

**EPIDEMIOLOGY PROFESSOR RECEIVES HONORARY DOCTORATE**

Wafaa El-Sadr, MD, MPH, MPA, received an honorary Doctorate of Science from Boston University at their commencement ceremonies, where she also spoke at the baccalaureate graduation. Dr. El-Sadr is Professor of Clinical Epidemiology and Medicine, Director of the Center for Infectious Disease Epidemiologic Research (CIDER), the International Center for AIDS Care and Treatment Programs (ICAP), and the Global Health Initiative all at Columbia University. The Department of Epidemiology congratulates Dr. El-Sadr and thanks her for her unparalleled contributions to the department and to public health.

**STUDENT AWARDS: SOCIAL INEQUALITIES AWARD**

Graduating master’s student, Nallely Saldana has received the Social Inequalities Research Award from the Inequalities Center – an award previously bestowed for doctoral work – for her master's thesis entitled "Fundamental Causes of Colorectal Cancer Mortality: Understanding the Importance of Socioeconomic Status, Race and Gender in Creating Inequality in Mortality". She recently gave an oral presentation of this work this April at the Annual Student Research Diversity Day, as well as a previous oral presentation this past November at the 137th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association. Furthermore, in March she presented a research poster at the 14th Annual Hispanic American Medical Association on "Prevalence of sleep disorders and sleep apnea among US Hispanic adults, 2005-2008." “Dedicating quality time to mentor Ms. Saldana has been incredibly rewarding as she has been an outstanding, hard-working master’s student who has had numerous accomplishments throughout her short tenure at Columbia University” says Dr. Debbie Barrington, Ms. Saldana’s mentor.
Mady Hornig, MA, MD directs translational research activities in the Center for Infection and Immunity (CII) at the Mailman School of Public Health, where she has been an associate professor of epidemiology since 2002. A physician-scientist board-certified in psychiatry and with fellowship training in neuropsychopharmacology, her current research focuses on understanding how environmental factors—viruses, bacteria, toxicants, stressors and other environmental factors—may trigger or amplify genetic programming to disturb central nervous system structure and function. She has two decades of experience studying how factors previously unsuspected in complex neuropsychiatric conditions—such as those impacting upon the immune and endocrine systems—may contribute to the onset or exacerbation of these disorders, applying brain imaging techniques to identify subsets of patients most likely to respond to specific treatment approaches, and using novel neuropharmacologic interventions to successfully treat patients previously considered treatment-resistant. She is internationally recognized for her work using animal models and clinical populations to investigate the “three strikes” hypothesis: the idea that adverse neuropsychiatric outcomes may arise through the interplay of genes (first ‘strike’) with the environment (second dimension) in the temporal context (the third, maturational dimension).

After completing a psychiatry residency at the University of Vermont (1992), Dr. Hornig joined the psychiatry faculty at Penn where, in 1997, she discovered a link between stress hormones, blood flow to brain regions that regulate emotion and memory, and treatment failure in people with major depression, setting the stage for development of biomarkers to match patients to the interventions most likely to help them. In 2002, Dr. Hornig moved with Dr. W. Ian Lipkin to the Mailman School of Public Health to establish the CII, where they continue to pursue research on the causes, diagnosis and treatment of brain and systemic conditions, with a particular focus on infection and immunitiy. In 2004, Dr. Hornig was the first to show that the risk for neurodevelopmental damage after early life exposure to mercury, at low levels similar to those in the environment and biologic products, correlated with genetic vulnerability in an animal model. That same year, she presented at the Institute of Medicine and testified twice before US congressional committees on this work. In 2008, her work demonstrating the absence of a relationship of MMR vaccine to autism with gastrointestinal problems was lauded in a NY Times editorial and ranked by the Infectious Diseases Society of America as one of the top 5 papers on pediatric infectious disease in 2008. In 2009, she was the first to conclusively demonstrate, in a mouse model of a neurobehavioral syndrome induced by protein components of the bacterium underlying ‘strep throat’ (Streptococcus pyogenes), that the OCD-like syndrome could be triggered by the infection-induced autoantibodies.

Dr. Hornig has particular interest in the role of microbial, immune, and toxic stimuli as contributors to psychiatric illness, and in defining mechanisms leading to disruption of brain structure and function. In addition to her animal model work, she also employs epidemiologic approaches to investigate the role of immune disruption in autism, schizophrenia, and mood disorders. She is a lead investigator for a landmark, prospective birth cohort study in Norway of 100,000 mothers, fathers, and their children that is identifying how genes and maturational factors interact with environmental agents to lead to autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions. She also is investigating the influence of immune molecules on emotional brain circuitry and function in several prospective birth cohort studies in the US and in a large study of adults with unipolar and bipolar mood disorders and schizophrenia through the Microbiology and Immunology of Neuropsychiatric Disorders Project (MIND), initially designed to address the role of Borna Disease virus in the development of these disabling conditions.

Dr. Hornig has been honored as an American Medical Association, Rock Sleyster Memorial Scholar (1987), an Association for Academic Psychiatry Fellow in Academic Psychiatry (1992); received a National Alliance for Research in Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD) Young Investigator (1993-1995), Mentored NIMH Clinical Scientist Development Award (1998-2003), and NIH Pediatric Research Loan Repayment Program Awards (2002-11). She serves on the President’s Council of Cornell Women and on the Medical Reserve Corps for the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.
High levels of CMV in older women increase the risk of frailty and mortality

A recent study shows a higher risk of frailty and mortality among older women who have high levels of cytomegalovirus infection (CMV). CMV is a prevalent herpes virus that often shows no symptoms in healthy people. However, among those with compromised immune systems, the presence of CMV can lead to severe disease or reactivation of a latent disease. Findings from the study, entitled “Cytomegalovirus Infection and the Risk of Mortality and Frailty in Older Women: A Prospective Observational Cohort Study” and published in the American Journal of Epidemiology in April 2010, clarify a previously reported association between CMV and frailty. They show a higher risk of frailty among women with not only high levels of CMV but also higher levels of IL-6, a protein that is secreted by the body to stimulate immune response to trauma. Results also show a higher 5-year mortality risk among women with higher concentrations of CMV. The results of the study, on which Dean Linda Fried served as senior author, along with the high prevalence of CMV infection worldwide, provide a strong rational for more studies investigating the long-term effects and the pathogenic mechanisms of persistent CMV infection.


A look at HIV/AIDS mortality rates support the fundamental social cause theory

The fundamental social cause theory asserts that as we learn more about how to prevent or treat diseases, the benefits of this new discovery are not distributed equally throughout the population. Epidemiology professor, Dr. Bruce Link, is the senior author on a new study that tests the validity of this theory by examining changes in HIV/AIDS mortality rates before and after introduction of highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART). HAARTs were introduced to the public in March 1996 and have been linked to declines in morbidity and mortality in persons with HIV/AIDS. Results of the study showed that while there was a decline in HIV/AIDS mortality rates for the entire population, there was also a significant increase in inequality when comparing low SES counties to high SES counties and comparing Blacks to Whites. High SES counties and Whites showed a larger decrease in HIV/AIDS mortality rates than did their counterparts. The findings of this study not only support the fundamental cause theory but they also show the importance in implementing programs that will equally distribute the benefits of this treatment and new discoveries like it.

The William Farr Award is given to students in the Department who have shown commitment to understanding or addressing the causes of social inequalities in health. William Farr was a leading British epidemiologist who was a pioneer in the field of medical statistics. He developed the first national vital statistics system and assured its use as a surveillance instrument. His efforts also facilitated the use of that system in the conduct of epidemiologic studies.

The work of these students, both here at Mailman as well as in their work away from the school, exemplifies the heart and foundation of the William Farr Award in Epidemiology.

**Mr. Daniel Tracy** has been working at the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center for the past year. He completed his master’s thesis this year on the “Evidence of Gender Differences in Factors Associated with Incident Hepatitis C Virus Infection: A Prospective Study of Young Injection Drug Users from San Francisco” and will for the moment continue working at the AIDS research Center. Mr. Tracy, who has been a “stellar MPH student” throughout his tenure, is considering entering a doctoral program in the future.

**Ms. Wendy Tse** completed her practicum in the Summer of 2009 at the HIV division of the Nanning Centers of Disease Control in Guangxi, China. She graduates this year, leaving a lasting impression both on the students and on her professors. As one professor said, “She is an inspiration to her fellow students, and continues to be an inspiration to me. She has all of the intelligence, leadership and personality necessary for a true public health leader.”

**Ms. Kerry Keyes** is a PhD student in Epidemiology and will defend her dissertation “Societal level disapproval of alcohol and smoking as predictors of future individual level use among high school seniors in the US from 1976-2007” on June 1, 2010. During her time in the Department both as a Master’s student and a doctoral student she has received 9 academic awards, has 34 peer reviewed journal articles, 9 of which she is the first author, 8 articles submitted for review, 7 book chapters and short articles, has lectured in numerous classes and has been the senior seminar leader for the Epi Core course for several years.
STUDENT AWARDS: ANNA C. GELMAN AWARD

As a faculty member in the Department of Epidemiology, Anna Gelman devoted her career to researching and teaching epidemiology to several thousand students at the Mailman School of Public Health. One of a small and highly select group of women to graduate with a Master’s in Public Health from MIT in 1934, Professor Gelman distinguished herself as an epidemiologist, researcher and in unending service to the Mailman School of Public Health.

Students receiving the Anna C. Gelman Award for Excellence in Epidemiology are those who represent the high academic distinction and the potential for significant contributions in the field of public health that was the hallmark of Dr. Gelman’s career.

While continuing his work as an Assistant Professor of Clinical Medicine in the Department of Medicine as well as the Medical Director of the TB Clinic at the Harlem Hospital, Dr. Cyrus Badshah found time to complete an MPH in Epidemiology with outstanding academic excellence. Prior to joining the Columbia University community, Dr. Badshah received a MBBS from the Topiwala National Medical College at the University of Bombay in India and a PhD in Tumor Cell Biology from Northwestern University.

Throughout the two years masters program, Amanda Farr has been an extraordinary epidemiology student. Completing her practicum as a surveillance intern at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in the summer of 2009, Ms. Farr wrote her exceptional master’s thesis on “The Effect of Neighborhood Characteristics on CA-MRSA Hospitalizations, NYC 2002-2006.” She is now working at the International Center for AIDS care and Treatment Programs in New York City.

Dr. Heidi Mochari-Greenberger defended and deposited her dissertation, “Modifiers of the Effectiveness of a Diet Intervention in Family members of Cardiovascular Disease Patients” (sponsor: Dr. Mary Beth Terry) in April 2010. Dr. Mochari-Greenberger received her degree as a Registered Dietician in 1998 and has been working as such since then. Most recently, she has been the Director of Nutrition in the division of Cardiology of the Department of Medicine at Columbia University Medical Center. She will continue her training at CUMC as a post-doctoral fellow in Preventive Medicine starting in September.

From right: Dr. Cyrus Badshah, Amanda Farr, Dr. Heidi Mochari-Greenberger, Dr. Sandro Galea
Sydney Kark coined the term “community-oriented primary health care” to describe his work in South Africa. This award is given to students in the Department who are committed to research in global health. Early in his training, Dr. Kark seemed to have a comprehensive view of health in society. His research innovated the cornerstone concepts of community-oriented primary health care, including: an emphasis on applied research, the importance of understanding local concepts of health and disease, a refined understanding of community diagnosis, a stronger orientation to the community itself, and a team-based approach.

The students awarded the Sydney Kark Award in Epidemiology truly encompass the passion for and commitment to the community-oriented primary health-care.

Ms. Amy Huber is an MPH student in Global Track of the Department of Epidemiology. She completed her practicum working at the Aurum Institute at Rustenberg Research Centre in South Africa. While there she coordinated a mobile HIV testing and counseling team, analyzed screening data and co-authored a paper, “Beliefs and knowledge of the benefits of circumcision predict request for male circumcision in Rustenburg, South Africa”, among many other things. Upon graduation from the Mailman School, Ms. Huber plans to return to South Africa to continue her work with the Aurum Institute.

Ms. Tsega Gebreyesus is a graduating MPH student in the Global Track. Her work abroad, at the Population Council in Cairo, Egypt, allowed her to analyze and present findings on reproductive health data sets. While in Cairo, Ms Gebreyesus also volunteered with several non-governmental and community-based organizations. This fall, she will enter the doctoral program in the Department of International Health at John’s Hopkins University with a focus in Social and Behavioral Interventions.

Dr. Sarah Braunstein completed her dissertation research in Rwanda while working with the Center for Poverty-Related Communicable Diseases and the International Partnership for Microbicides, INC. She defended her dissertation “The Added Value of Data on HIV Incidence Rates and Risk Factors, and the Promise of New Methodologies” (sponsor: Denis Nash), for which she was awarded distinction. After receiving her degree in October 2009, Dr. Braunstein began her position as the Assistant Director of the HIV Surveillance Unit in Bureau of HIV/AIDS Prevention & Control of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Karestan Koenen, PhD
Associate Professor
Departments of Society, Human Development and Health and Epidemiology
Harvard School of Public Health

A life course perspective on gene-environment interplay in the production of mental disorders

JUNE16 CUEGR: KARESTAN KOENEN, PHD
Substance use prevention programs and social safety nets can reduce gun-related homicide

Epidemiology Professor Magdalena Cerdá, DrPH, was lead author on a study published in the American Journal of Public Health this month. The study, “Investigating the Effect of Social Changes on Age-Specific Gun-Related Homicide Rates in New York City During the 1990s”, used cross-sectional time-series data for 74 New York City police precincts from 1990 to 1999 to assess whether New York City’s gun-related homicide rates in the 1990s were associated with a range of social determinants. The researchers aimed to expand upon past literature by separately examining how such factors are related to homicide victimization in specific age groups. By looking at specific age groups, researchers hoped to better understand the homicide rates for the age groups that cause the overall rates to rise and fall. Findings show a decline in homicide rates with decreased use of alcohol and cocaine, increased receipt of public assistance, and increased misdemeanor policing. These results of this important study indicate that substance use prevention policies and expansion of social safety nets may be effective in a major reduction in gun-related homicide.


Exposure to a traumatic event may alter gene expression

The biological foundations of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have been explored in a new study published in May in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS). PTSD is an uncommon psychological and physiological stress response that can occur when a person is exposed to a potentially traumatic event (PTE). Although prevalence of PTSD is low, symptoms are lifelong and extremely debilitating to both the lives of the individuals as well as their families. The study, “Epigenetic and immune function profiles associated with posttraumatic stress disorder”, is one of the first of its kind to examine the epigenetic changes of PTSD. Findings show a change in immune function that is significant among those affected by the disorder. Dr. Sandro Galea, senior author on the paper, explained in a recent interview on NPR’s “All Things Considered” that, “What we are thinking is that trauma that somebody experiences results in molecular changes around the DNA that result in changes in what genes are expressed and not expressed. [...] These changes may result in symptoms of the psychological disorder.” The implications of this study are far reaching in terms of improvements to treatments for the disorder – both psychological and pharmaceutical. And as more and more veterans, who are more likely to experience PTEs, return home to their friends and families, this research could not come at a better time.

The longer-term goal is not to restore Haiti to where it was prior to the earthquake, with the lowest health parameters in the hemisphere, but rather to “build it back better”. However, there are still many major obstacles to overcome. The roads remain filled with rubble and key Government Ministries, along with homes, commercial areas, and health facilities, that have been completely destroyed, must be rebuilt. Nevertheless, Dr. Waldman looks positively towards the future, especially if the donor countries of the world meet their pledges to make substantial financial contributions to Haiti’s recovery efforts. “The most important question,” he said in his lecture “is what does the Haitian government want the health system to look like 5 years from now? If you know that, you have a clear vision of where you are going and everything you do now can be a building block toward the realization of that vision.” It will take time, and there will be setbacks along the way, but well-planned and well-executed recovery efforts will hopefully allow Haiti to emerge from this dark period with a stronger health system than it had before, one that is better suited to meet the needs not only of those affected by the earthquake, but of the entire population.