

President's Corner

Hard to believe my year as President is winding down. It's been a busy time, particularly getting the details of the annual scientific meeting together. Great fun for sure, but it has certainly been a humbling experience to try and make the best program possible from the more than 170 abstracts we received.

I'm pleased to say that although the number of submissions were down ~10% from last year, the vast majority were very well regarded by the reviewers. Given my interest in strengthening the relationship between research and decision-making, I am particularly happy our annual meeting will feature a keynote speech on the topic by Jon Tyson "*Clinical Practice Amidst Uncertainty: Clinical Research, QI and Bayes Theorem*" as well as a plenary panel discussion on maternal weight gain that will build on the impending IOM report and recommendations.

Overall, I think we are doing a good job of fostering pediatric and perinatal epidemiologic research but we could do better. Serving as President has given me a richer perspective on the day-to-day health and function of the society. I have a few ideas I'd like to share with you in the spirit of ensuring SPER thrives in the years to come.

First, I think we need to do a better job of engaging people in SPER – recruiting talented people from a variety of disciplines, retaining members, and encouraging greater participation. For a long time now, we have fluctuated around 250 members with attendance at our annual meeting < 200 most years. On the face of it, there isn't anything wrong with a small specialty society of ~250 members, but I think we run the risk of becoming irrelevant or insular. The best science in the field won't always come from the same small group of people over time.

We also heavily subsidize student memberships with the goal of retaining them as regular members, but we don't track whether they transition after training and the overall numbers suggest that strategy is not effective.

2009 SPER Annual Conference
Anaheim, California
June 22 – 23, 2009



Congratulations to the Newly Elected SPER Board Members!

President-elect:

Cande Ananth, PhD, MPH, MS

Professor, UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson
Medical School

Member-at-large:

Anjel Vahratian, PhD, MPH

Assistant Professor, University of Michigan
Medical School

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2009 SPER ANNUAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

LOCATION

SPER's 22nd Annual Meeting will include a poster session and opening reception on the evening of the 22nd from 6:30 – 8:00 pm. A full day of plenary sessions will begin at 8:00 am as well as a lunch time poster session on the 23rd. Registration will be held June 22 from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm and June 23 starting at 7:00 am.

The keynote address, "*Clinical Practice Amidst Uncertainty: Clinical Research, QI and Bayes Theorem*" will be given by Dr. Jon Tyson, Director of the Center for Clinical Research and Evidence-Based Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics, University of Texas-Houston Medical School.

The Advanced Methods Student Workshop also is being held on June 22 from 3:30- 6:30 pm., preceding the SPER opening reception and poster session. More information on the workshop is provided in this newsletter.

Our annual meeting has been generously supported by a grant from the **March of Dimes**.

ACCOMMODATIONS

This years SPER Annual meeting will be held at the Hyatt Regency Orange County, CA (714-750-1234; www.orangecountyhyatt.com). The Hyatt Regency Orange County located in Garden Grove, CA is offering room rates for SPER conference attendees of \$169 single/double occupancy.

Less than one mile from the Anaheim Convention Center, Downtown Disney District, Disneyland Park and California Adventure with complimentary shuttle to the parks. Nearby attractions include: Anaheim Angels Stadium, Knott's Berry Farm, Crystal Cathedral and the Grove Theatre. Also close to shopping, dining, Southern California beaches and entertainment.

Announcing the First Annual SPER Awards

This year SPER is proud to begin an awards program, making two awards to recognize outstanding achievement in the field of reproductive, perinatal and pediatric epidemiology in two areas. One award recognizes exceptional contributions in mentoring students, junior faculty and colleagues in our field (Mentoring Award), while the other highlights academic and professional achievements early in a promising career (Rising Star Award). The awards committee consists of the six most recent past presidents of SPER together with the president-elect. We welcome nominations of qualified individuals for these awards. These awards will be presented at the annual meeting in June 2009.

Nomination forms for both awards can be found on the SPER website (www.sper.org). Scroll down the home page and you will see the links. Please submit your completed nominations to Russell Kirby (rkirby@health.usf.edu) on or before May 1, 2009, and feel free to direct any questions concerning these awards to me as well.

Russell Kirby, SPER President-Elect



Thanks to Recent Abstract Reviewers

I personally want to thank everyone who volunteered to review abstracts for the annual meeting this year (see p. 4). The process went smoothly despite some major changes.

For the first time, we collected information on the reviewers' areas of interest, and we tried to assign abstracts in a given category to reviewers who indicated that topic as an area of interest. Unfortunately, the distribution of the reviewers' interests was not well matched with the distribution of the abstract topics so reviewers were still assigned some abstracts outside their preferred area. Of course, reviewers were allowed to abstain if they did not feel comfortable reviewing a given abstract. However, the desire to abstain appears to have been rare.

Thanks to Jacqueline Brakey, we also introduced online reviewing for the first time. This year reviewers could still print out their assigned abstracts, but they were able to submit their scores through the web. From our perspective, this went well.

We are interested in suggestions to improve the system (e.g. subject areas that should be added, alternative scoring procedures, any comments on the web interface, etc.). Feel free to send comments to me directly (penelope.howards@emory.edu), or save your comments for the annual business meeting.

If you are interested in participating in abstract review in the future, just check the appropriate box on your SPER membership renewal form in the fall. Thanks again!

Penny Howards, Member-At-Large



SPER 2009 REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The registration fees include attendance at all sessions, meeting materials, continental breakfast, box lunch, and refreshment breaks.

Registration may be completed by mail, fax or via the internet. The early registration deadline is May 23, 2009. A confirmation letter will be sent upon receipt of the completed registration from within 7-10 business days.

Payment can be made by check, MasterCard, Visa, or American Express. Payment must be received prior to admittance to the meeting. We encourage you to be green and use online registration at: <http://www.sper.org/meeting/reginfo.html>

The new registration fees are: early member \$245, late member \$285, early non-member \$270, late non-member \$315, new member: \$395, late new member 435 (new membership includes e-print journal), early student \$75, late student \$125.

Direct access to the online registration form is available at: <http://www.epiresearch.org/sper/regform.php>

Information on the advanced methods student workshop can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.

If you need additional registration information, please contact:

Jacqueline Brakey
P.O. Box 990
Clearfield, UT 84089
Phone: (801) 525-0231
Fax: (801) 774-9211
E-mail: meeting@epiresearch.org

Thank You!!!

A big thank you to those who reviewed abstracts for the annual meeting this year.

Interested in volunteering next year?
Just check the box on the membership renewal form in the fall!

Melissa Adams	Jean Lawrence
Lara Akinbami	Li-Ching Lee
Cande V. Ananth	Terry Leet
Erin M. Bell	Danelle Lobdell
Lisa Bodnar	Zhong-Cheng Luo
Elizabeth Boskey	Camilia Martin
Carol Bruce	Susana Matias
*Germaine Buck Louis	Jareen Meinen-Derr
Lena Camperlengo	Lynne Messer
Dexter Canoy	Amy Metcalfe
Lisa Chasan-Taber	Dawn Misra
Lyn Colvin	Nils-Halvdan Morken
Nicholas de Klerk	*Ruby Hong-Ngoc
Lisa DeRoo	Nguyen
Patricia Dietz	Emily Oken
*Karen Ertel	*Jennifer Peck
Marcia Feldkamp	Cooker Perkins
Jane Ford	Christine Roberts
Suzanne Gilboa	Carole Rudra
Marlene Goldman	Sharon Sagiv
Catherine Haggerty	Maureen Sanderson
Emily Harville	Enrique Schisterman
*Mary Hediger	Karen Schliep
Penelope Howards	*Kenneth Schoendorf
Thomas Hulsey	Carrie Shapiro-Mendoza
Kelly Hunt	
Leila Jackson	Anna Maria Siega-Riz
Monique Kaminski	Antonio Silva
Sarah Keim	Katarzyna Szamotulska
Martin Kharrazi	
*Russell Kirby	Nedra Whitehead
*Mark Klebanoff	Martha S. Wingate

*And a special thanks to those who completed extra reviews.

2009 SPER Advanced Methods Student Workshop

SPER, SER-SC, and the ASA Statistics in Epidemiology Section will jointly sponsor the 4th Annual Advanced Methods Student Workshop on June 22 2009, 3:30-6:30 pm.

The workshop will be jointly hosted by the ASA Statistics in Epidemiology Section and precedes the first session of the SPER Annual Meeting. Students and junior and senior investigators are invited to attend this three-hour session that includes presentations on emerging methodologic research in reproductive, perinatal, and pediatric epidemiology.

The presentations for this year's workshop will be given by:

Sander Greenland & Ari Lipsky
on Bayesian perspectives for
epidemiological research

Stephen Cole & Daniel Westreich
on marginal structural models

Articles and additional materials that accompany these presentations will be available prior to the workshop on the SPER website.

Pre-registration for students (i.e., those no more than one year since completing doctoral/post-doctoral work) is only \$40 and the cost is \$75 for non-students.

On-site registration is \$60 for students and \$100 for non-students (cash/check only). Be sure to register for the workshop when you register for the annual meeting.

For information about the SPER Annual Meeting visit our webpage at:
http://www.sper.org/Annual_Meeting.htm.

2009 National MCH Epidemiology Awards: A Search to Recognize Excellence

Sponsored by 16 national public health organizations, the Coalition for Excellence in MCH Epidemiology announces the ninth year of the National MCH Epidemiology Awards. The Coalition is recruiting nominees for the 2009 awards. Nominees are individuals, teams, institutions, and leaders of institutions who have made significant contributions to improving the health of women, children and families through epidemiology, applied research and the effective use of data.

2008 National MCH Epidemiology Award Recipients

Advancing Knowledge – Pat O’Campo, University of Toronto

Effective Practice:

- **Community** – Institute for Health, Policy & Evaluation Research, Duval County Health Department
- **State** – No awardee
- **National** – CityMatCH, University of Nebraska Medical Center

Excellence in Teaching – No awardee

Outstanding Leadership – William Hollinshead III, Rhode Island Department of Health

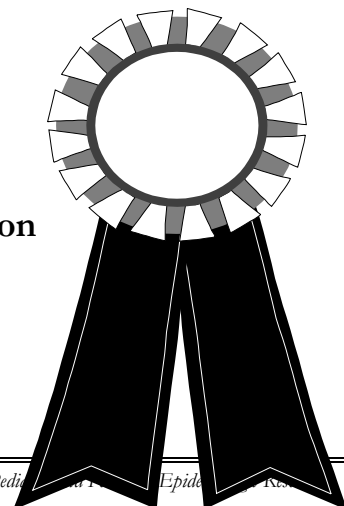
Young Professional Achievement – Stephen Blumberg, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Lifetime Achievement – Irvin Emanuel, University of Washington

These awards recognize research, teaching, leadership and effective public health practice and recognize individuals and organizations at a community, state and national level.

Please visit <http://www.citymatch.org/mchepiawards.htm> for more details on how to nominate and the awards criteria. **Deadline for nominations will be June 1, 2009.** Please contact us if you have questions or need assistance.

Dr. Wanda D. Barfield
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Phone: 770-488-6231
Fax: 770-488-6291
E-mail: mchepi@cdc.gov



SPER Student Prize Winner

The 2009 student prize winner is Mahsa M. Yazdy, for the paper entitled "Maternal dietary glycemic intake and the risk of neural tube defects".

This year's SPER student prize paper competition resulted in 11 submissions. All papers were reviewed by a committee consisting of Cande Ananth, Germaine Buck Louis, Jennifer Parker and Claudia Holzman, chaired by Russell Kirby.

The paper will be presented during the plenary session of the annual conference in Anaheim.

Congratulations Mahsa!

Heinz Berendes International Travel Award winner

This year, SPER received three excellent papers for consideration for the Heinz Berendes Travel Award. The winner of the 2009 Heinz Berendes travel award is:

**Monique Robinson,
Research Officer and Ph.D.
Candidate
Telethon Institute for Child
Health Research
Western Australia**

Please be sure to congratulate Monique when you visit her poster on Monday night entitled:

"Smoking cessation in pregnancy reduces the risk of child behavioural problems: A longitudinal prospective cohort study".

President's Corner

Continued from page 1

We have a core group of dedicated members, but it's not clear how many people that is (<100?). Targeted recruitment and retention efforts to increase diversity might also be helpful. I propose working with our Treasurer, Danelle Lobdell, during my year as Past-President to examine our membership trends over time. A look at the data may give us ideas about how best to increase the SPER base membership and diversity.

In the early years, the vitality of interchange between clinical researchers, academic epidemiologists and public health folks (among others) was a hallmark of the SPER meetings. Without overstating it, I think we haven't done quite as good a job lately in maintaining that disciplinary diversity and interdisciplinary exchange. When a recent question on CME came up, I was surprised to find that we had no physicians on the board this year (and none next year as well). Not a problem necessarily, but something to pay attention to as we grow – are we becoming more homogeneous? We made a special effort this year to advertise our meeting in clinical newsletters, it will be interesting to see how that impacts attendance in Anaheim.

Financially, the society is holding its own but struggling to stay ahead of rising costs. Keeping a vital and growing membership base is also key to keeping the cost per member and annual meeting registration fees affordable. The proposed increase in dues, including the new "full member" category will allow us to continue to subsidize student members and support from the March of Dimes will really help us out this year. Most of us are members in several societies and in these tough economic times, not everyone can maintain activity in multiple organizations. We want to keep SPER thriving, so it's the place you most want to come and talk about your cutting edge research.

SPER has always felt like my scientific "home" and it has been a great honor to serve as SPER President. We've accomplished a lot this year, with much credit going to the fabulous Executive Committee we have. We are all lucky to have the tangible support of such talented people focused on keeping the SPER successful. Couldn't have a better group to work with!

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Anaheim!

Pauline Mendola

A Great Big Thank You!

to all who have donated to SPER to help support our student memberships.

Those who donated this year are:

Dawn Misra

Wayne State University School of Medicine, U.S.A

Hind Beydoun

Eastern Virginia Medical School, U.S.A

Ghasi Phillips

National Center for Health Statistics, CDC, U.S.A

Katarzyna Szamotulska

National Research Institute of Mother and Child,
Poland

PROPOSED DUES CHANGE

At this year's business meeting, we will be introducing a proposal to increase the membership dues and to change the dues structure. Membership dues have not changed for regular members since 2003. However, during this time, subscription rates to Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology on average have increased yearly about 2-3% and we have seen increases in operating costs, especially web services as we now include on-line membership registration and renewal as well as on-line abstract submission and meeting registration. At last year's business meeting, we discussed options to address our fiscal needs while maintaining our commitment to training and encouraging student participation through reduced membership dues and reduced rates for our annual scientific meeting.

Please review this new dues structure and be prepared to discuss it and vote on it at our annual business meeting which will take place at the conclusion of our annual scientific meeting on June 23, 2009 in Anaheim, CA.

Any questions or comments can be sent to Danelle Lobdell at lobdell.danelle@epa.gov or 919-843-4434

Suggested New Dues Structure

Full Member (print only)*	\$220
Full Member (e-print only)*	\$210
Full Member (print + e-print)*	\$235
Regular Member (print only)	\$170
Regular Member (e-print only)	\$160
Regular Member (print + e-print)	\$185
Student Membership (e-print only)	\$ 60
Student Membership discount (no journal)	\$ 25

*Full members help support our student membership

Preliminary Program
Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiologic Research
22nd Annual Meeting
Anaheim, CA
June 22-23, 2009

Monday, June 22nd, 2009

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1:00 – 3:00 pm | Executive Committee meeting |
| 3:30 – 6:30 pm | Advanced Methods Student Workshop

Sander Greenland & Ari Lipsky
Bayesian perspectives for epidemiological research

Stephen Cole & Daniel Westreich
Marginal structural models |
| 4:00 – 8:00 pm | Registration desk open |
| 6:30 – 8:00 pm | Welcome reception and Poster Session A

Maternal/Women’s Health: A1 – A24
Labor and Delivery: A25 – A35
Child Development and Behavior: A36 - A47
Preterm Birth: A48 – A58
Psychosocial Factors, Stress: A59 - A62
Puberty: A63- A66
Intrauterine Exposures, Pregnancy Outcomes: A67- A72 |

Tuesday, June 23rd, 2009

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 7:00 - 11:00am | Registration desk open |
| 7:00 – 8:00 am | Continental breakfast |
| 8:00 – 8:15 am | Welcome Remarks: Pauline Mendola |

8:15 – 9:30 am

Plenary 1: Influences on Child Development

Moderator: Marcia Feldcamp

Cognitive impairment associated with in-utero smoke exposure. Angela Miller

Low-moderate prenatal alcohol exposure and risk to child behavioural development: A large-scale cohort study. Monique Robinson

The effect of prenatal and postnatal exposure to polychlorinated biphenyls and child development at age 24 months. Courtney Lynch

Long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids from breastmilk and formula and infant cognitive development. Sarah Keim

Predictors of ADHD-like Behaviors Among a Population-Based Sample of School-aged Children. Sharon Sagiv

9:30 – 10:00 am

Morning Break

10:00 – 11:00 am

Plenary 2: Stress Measures and Consequences

Moderator: TBN

Perceived stress and severity of perimenstrual symptoms: The BioCycle Study. Audra Gollenberg

Stress and Time to Pregnancy. Germaine Buck Louis

Is placental CRH a stress hormone? Michael Kramer

The association of chronic and traumatic stress with bacterial vaginosis during pregnancy. Alison Cammack

11:00 – 12:00 pm

Keynote Address

Clinical Practice Amidst Uncertainty: Clinical Research, QI and Bayes Theorem

Dr. Jon Tyson, Director of the Center for Clinical Research and Evidence-Based Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics, University of Texas-Houston Medical School.

12:00 – 1:30 pm Lunch and Poster B

GDM: B1-B5
Maternal Weight: B6 – B12
Fetal Growth and Infant Outcomes: B13-B24
Breastfeeding: B25-B28
Fertility: B29-B38
Birth Defects: B39-B49
Pediatrics: B50-B55
Methods: B56-B68
Special Populations, Race/Ethnic Differences: B69-B75

1:30 – 2:45 pm Plenary 3: Birth Defects
Moderator: Russell Kirby

Birth defects in infants born in 1998-2004 to men and women serving in the US military during the 1990-1991 Gulf War era: a population-based retrospective cohort study. Anna Bukowinski

Paternal age and birth defects in offspring in California, 1989-2002. Jagteshwar Grewal

Gene-gene interactions in the folate metabolic pathway and risk of conotruncal heart defects. Philip Lupo

Maternal alcohol consumption and infant clefts: the role of alcohol metabolism gene variants. Abee Boyles

Nested case-control study of one-carbon metabolites in mid-pregnancy and risks of cleft lip with and without cleft palate. Suzan Carmichael

2:45 – 3:00 pm Student Prize Paper Presentation

Maternal dietary glycemic intake and the risk of neural tube defects
Mahsa Yazdy

3:00 – 3:15 pm Discussant: Russell Kirby

3:15 – 3:45 pm Afternoon Break

3:45 - 5:00 pm

Maternal Weight Discussion Panel

Moderator: Anna Maria Siega-Riz

Introduction to the IOM review and recommendations. Anna Maria Siega-Riz

Adequacy of gestational weight gain and the risk of adverse birth outcomes. Lisa Bodnar

Rate of pregnancy weight gain before diagnosis of gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) and subsequent risk of GDM. Monique Hedderson

Associations of gestational weight gain with short- and longer term maternal and child health outcomes. Emily Oken

Discussant: Mary Hediger

Open discussion

5:00 – 5:15

Closing Remarks: Pauline Mendola

5:15 – 6:15

Business meeting

Chair: Russell Kirby

7:00

Executive committee dinner