

## President's Corner

**Russell S. Kirby, PhD, MS, FACE**

Even though it is the dead of winter, SPER has been a hotbed of activity. Behind the scenes, your executive committee works tirelessly, mostly via email with full meetings bimonthly and smaller meetings approximately biweekly – and so far we have not cancelled any meetings due to winter weather, other natural hazards, or statistical software glitches!

As demonstrated throughout this newsletter, plans for the 2010 annual meeting in Seattle are well under way. The conference will be supported in part through grants from the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute for Child Health and Human Development and the March of Dimes Foundation. Dr. Jan Friedman from the University of British Columbia will be the keynote speaker, and will focus his remarks on “Genetics, Epigenetics, Genomics and the Future of Perinatal and Pediatric Epidemiology”.

Pay attention to deadlines for submissions for abstracts, the Heinz Berendes international travel award, the student paper prize, and the ‘Mentoring’ and ‘Rising Star’ awards nominations.

As is now our custom, we will host a training workshop on the afternoon prior to the poster reception.

We are also in the early stages of planning for the Congress of Epidemiology to be held in Montreal in June 2011. As usual, the SPER conference will be held the day prior to the Congress. SPER members with ideas for session topics should contact Pauline Mendola ([pim9@cdc.gov](mailto:pim9@cdc.gov)) or me ([rkirby@health.usf.edu](mailto:rkirby@health.usf.edu)).

Watch for some changes to the SPER website in the coming months. Our webmaster Jackie Brakey is in the final stages of completing a redesign, which should go live early this year. Also new this year, applicants will submit their papers for the Berendes international travel award and student prize through the web portal, which should facilitate the review process.

As always, if you have ideas for how to improve our organization, thoughts, questions, or concerns, please feel free to contact me or other members of the executive committee.

### In This Issue -

Call for Nominations .....	page 3
Nominations sought for 2010 SPER Awards .....	page 3-5
Call for Abstracts for 2010 Annual Meeting .....	page 4
Deadline for 2010 Heinz Berendes International Travel Award .....	page 6
Deadline for 2010 Student Prize Paper Award .....	page 7
Highlights from the 2009 MCH Epidemiology Annual Meeting.....	page 8

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS !!

Nominations are being sought for President (2010-2013), Secretary (2010-2013) and one Member-at-Large (2010-2014). All terms will begin at the close of the June 2010 annual meeting. Members of SPER may nominate themselves or any other member of SPER. We are also seeking nominations for the SPER Student Representative (2010-2011). In the past, nominations were sought separately and an appointment was made by members of the Executive Committee.

The **President** will serve as President-Elect (2010-2011), President (2011-2012), and Past-President (2012-2013). The main duties of the President-Elect are to help the President develop plans for the annual meeting and to chair the selection of the Student Prize Paper Award recipient; the President designs the program for the annual meeting and is in charge of the Executive Committee decision-making; and the Past-President chairs the selection of the Heinz Berendes International Travel Award recipient and provides input as needed.

The **Secretary** is involved in all Executive Committee activities, works with the President to schedule conference calls and takes minutes, and develops the annual meeting brochure and works on planning the logistics for the annual meeting in coordination with the Utah Conference Services.

The **Member-at-Large** participates in all Executive Committee activities. The unique task assigned to the Member-at-Large elected this cycle is to prepare the annual meeting program book, which includes the meeting abstracts. This member will replace Courtney Lynch.

The **Student Representative** participates in Executive Committee meetings, encourages and facilitates student participation in SPER and works on the Analytic Methods Workshop, which precedes the annual meeting.

This call for nominations will be posted on the SPER website. Nominations are due by February 15, 2010 and should be sent to Suzan Carmichael, [scarmichael@marchofdimes.com](mailto:scarmichael@marchofdimes.com). You can also contact her for more information at 510-597-7056. The slate of candidates and ballot will be presented to the membership for elections by email in the Spring of 2010.



**2010 SPER Mentoring and  
Rising Star Awards**  
Nominations Requested

In 2009, the Society began an awards program to recognize outstanding achievement in the field of reproductive, perinatal and pediatric epidemiology.

The SPER Mentoring Award recognizes exceptional contributions in mentoring students, junior faculty and colleagues in our field, while the SPER Rising Star Award highlights academic and professional achievements early in a promising career.

The awards committee consists of the six most recent past presidents of SPER together with the president-elect. Nomination forms are available on pages 4 and 5 of this newsletter and we welcome nominations of qualified individuals for these awards. These awards will be presented at our annual meeting in June 2010 in Seattle.



**CALL FOR ABSTRACTS !!**

Abstracts are being sought for consideration for presentation at the 2010 SPER meeting. Abstracts must be submitted electronically by 5:00 pm local time, February 6, 2010. Authors do not have to be a member to submit an abstract, but if the submitted abstract is accepted, we require that you join SPER before presenting your paper at the meeting.

Accepted abstracts will be assigned to either a poster or oral presentation. Authors must adhere to the requirements. Accepted abstracts will be available on the SPER website one month prior to the meeting and printed in the book of abstracts distributed at the meeting. Abstracts of papers that have been published or will be published prior to June 2010 should not be submitted.

Abstract submission information can be found at:

<http://www.sper.org/2010Call.pdf>

To access the abstract submission page see: <http://www.sper.org/abstracts/>

Meeting information can be found at:

[http://www.sper.org/Annual\\_Meeting.htm](http://www.sper.org/Annual_Meeting.htm)

## The Mentor Award in Reproductive, Perinatal and Pediatric Epidemiology

Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiologic Research Nomination Form

**Must be received by April 15, 2010**

This award is to recognize the importance of dedicated and skilled mentors in the development of RPPE epidemiologists at all levels. The nominees will be evaluated based on proficiency in mentoring skills, dedication to mentoring, and attention to advisee development both technically, professionally, and personally in the field of RPPE epidemiology.

**Eligibility:** Individuals with an established career from academia, government, or the private sector are eligible. Candidates should be at the Associate Professor rank or above if in academia or at an equivalent senior rank in government agencies or industry. Nominees must be SPER members in good standing.

**Nominations:** To nominate an individual for this award, please submit the following: 1) letter of nomination from an SPER member; 2) two additional letters from persons who have been or currently are being mentored by the nominee (including but not limited to student advisees, junior faculty or staff, or other persons who are/were mentored by the nominee); and 3) the nominee's curriculum vitae.

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Name of Nominee:

Agency/University Affiliation:

Nominee Information (phone, email, address):

Reason for Nomination (use additional pages if necessary):

Other materials attached (nomination, two letters, c.v.): \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Nominated/submitted by (name, phone, e-mail):

**Return to Cande Ananth (cande.ananth@umdnj.edu) by April 15, 2010**

Incomplete forms may be returned to the contact person.

## The Rising Star in Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology Research Award

Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiologic Research Nomination Form

**Must be received by April 15, 2010**

This award is to recognize early to mid-career investigators whose achievements and potential set them on a trajectory to become research leaders in the field of reproductive, perinatal and pediatric epidemiology. We will consider their overall research contribution thus far, including publications, presentations, and influence on the field. We will also take into account their likely future role as their careers continue to evolve.

**Eligibility:** Early to mid-career investigators from academia, government, or the private sector are eligible. Candidates should be at the Assistant to Associate Professor rank if in academia (more advanced than post-doctoral fellow, but not at the full professor level) or an equivalent employment status if outside academia. The time since the highest degree should be no more than 7 years.

**Nominations:** Candidates may only be nominated by SPER members - no self-nominations will be accepted. Nomination materials consist of a cover letter outlining specific achievements and career trajectory, two supporting letters, a full curriculum vitae and copies of the nominee's three most important publications.

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Name of Nominee:

Agency/University Affiliation:

Nominee Information (phone, email, address):

Materials attached (Cover Letter, C.V., 3 Representative Publications, 2 Supporting Letters):

Yes  No

Nominated/submitted by (name, phone, e-mail):

**Return to Cande Ananth (cande.ananth@umdnj.edu) by April 15, 2010**

Incomplete forms may be returned to the contact person.

## Heinz Berendes International Travel Award

### Submissions Due March 6, 2010

The Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiologic Research (SPER) requests papers for the 2010 Heinz Berendes International Travel Award. The paper should represent work in reproductive, perinatal, or pediatric epidemiology, and research that concerns populations in developing countries is encouraged.

To be eligible for this award, the applicant must not currently reside in the United States or Canada as a student, exchange scholar, or permanent resident. The paper must be unpublished at the time of submission. Authors do not have to be SPER members to apply for the award but are asked to join SPER if selected for presentation. The winner will present the selected paper at the 2010 meeting in Seattle.

An award of \$250 plus expenses for travel, 2 days' lodging, and SPER meeting registration will be given to the author of the paper selected by the International Travel Award Committee. The submitted manuscript should be prepared according to the "Author Guidelines" in the journal *Pædiatric and Perinatal Epidemiology* (or available online at <http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/journals/ppe/>). You will also be asked to provide the name and address of your academic affiliation or research establishment and your country of residence in the previous six months.

Please go to <http://www.sper.org/hbaward.php> to complete the online application. After submitting the application, you will receive instructions on how to submit your manuscript.

PLEASE NOTE: Applicants should also submit the abstract of their paper according to the SPER guidelines in order to be considered for the conference program in the event their submission is not selected for the travel award (deadline for abstracts is February 6, 2010, guidelines will be available on the web [www.sper.org](http://www.sper.org)).

## SPER Student Prize Paper Award

Submissions Due March 6, 2010

The Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiologic Research (SPER) requests papers for the Annual Student Prize Paper Award. This competition is open to graduate and medical students, postdoctoral fellows, medical residents, research trainees, and clinical fellows interested in reproductive, perinatal, and pediatric epidemiology. The winner of the award will present the selected paper at the 2010 meeting in Seattle.

An award of \$500 plus expenses for travel, two days' lodging, and SPER registration will be given to the author of the selected paper. The paper should represent work in reproductive, perinatal, or pediatric epidemiology conducted as a student or trainee during the two years prior to the 2010 meeting. The paper must be written by the student/trainee and must be unpublished at the time of the meeting. The author may submit the paper simultaneously to the Abraham Lilienfeld Student Prize Paper competition of the Society for Epidemiologic Research (SER); however, if the paper is selected for that award, it will not be eligible for the SPER award. Authors do not have to be members of SPER to apply.

Students are also encouraged to submit their papers as abstracts, following the standard abstract submission guidelines (available at our web site, <http://www.sper.org>) by the February 6, 2010 deadline.

To apply for the award, you will need the following:

- **Manuscript:** prepared according to the "Instructions to Authors" printed in the journal *Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology*
- **Application Form,** including name, address, organization, date work was completed, etc.
- **Letter:** from the person under whose supervision the work was done, indicating your specific contribution.

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA THE WEB. Please go to <http://www.sper.org/studentaward.php> to complete the online application. After submitting the application, you will receive instructions on how to submit your manuscript and letter.

PAPERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 6, 2010.

Applicants will be notified of the selection committee's decision by April 6, 2010.

## Highlights from the 2009 MCH Epidemiology Meeting

Last month, maternal and child health epidemiologists from across the United States met in Tampa, FL for the 15<sup>th</sup> Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Conference. The keynote speaker was David Barker, MD, PhD from the United Kingdom, who spoke to the audience about the fetal origins hypothesis. Plenary sessions focused on the life course perspective and 1) strategies for translating theory to practice, 2) emerging environmental insults, and 3) how healthy families start with family planning.

In addition, the following public health professionals were recognized for their contributions to maternal and child health epidemiology:

**Allen Wilcox, MD, PhD** – Advancing Knowledge Award

**Donna Strobino, PhD** – Excellence in Teaching Award

**Donna Petersen, ScD, MHS** – Outstanding Leadership Award

**Bernard Guyer, MD, MPH** - Lifetime Achievement Award

**Priscilla Guild, MSPH** - Effective Practice (Regional Level) Award

**Brian Castrucci, MA** - Young Professional Achievement Award

**MCH Epidemiology Unit - Alaska Department of Health & Social Services, Division of Public Health** - Effective Practice (State Level) Award

### Abstract Reviewers Needed

If you are interested in reviewing abstracts for the annual meeting and did not already volunteer (on the membership renewal form), contact Penny Howards (penelope.howards@emory.edu) by 2/6/10. Please note that only members who have paid their 2010 dues are eligible to review abstracts. Thanks!

### SPER is now on Facebook!

Become a fan of the Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiologic Research at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Society-for-Pediatric-and-Perinatal-Epidemiologic-Research/135879141953>