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From the Director's Desk

A bit of history: Carter G. Woodson (1875-1950), the son of former slaves, worked in Kentucky coal mines as a youth. He enrolled in high school at age twenty, graduated two years later, and subsequently earned a Ph.D. degree from Harvard. In his studies, Dr. Woodson realized that the significant contributions of African-Americans to the social, artistic, and economic fabric of America had been marginalized – if not systematically ignored – in the history books of his time.

Dr. Woodson led numerous initiatives to correct this oversight. One such action was the creation of Black History Week in 1926, to bring national attention to the contributions of black men and black women to American history. The second week of February was chosen because it included the birthdays of two men – Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln – who had a major influence on the course of African-American history. This observance later became Black History Month.

Every February, Black History Month provides an opportunity to understand, appreciate, accept, and celebrate America's diversity, including the growing diversity of the U.S. workforce. NIOSH is committed to exemplary occupational safety and health research that will serve the needs of this changing demographic. Internally, diversity also guides our vision of an inclusive research organization that embraces, values, and respects all individuals.

By increasing the diversity of our own workforce, and by recognizing and using the skills and talents that different people bring to our common mission, we will better accomplish our shared goal of safety and health at work for all people through research and prevention.

I am pleased that NIOSH has an ongoing Diversity Steering Committee. The committee provides a vehicle through which, organizationally, opportunities for a more diverse NIOSH can be suggested, formulated, and pursued. More information about our mission, vision, and goals for internal diversity can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/pgms/diversity>.

As our current generation of scientists enters retirement age, it is critically important to nurture a new cadre of talented men and women who will reflect the diversity of the U.S. workforce as a whole. One of the ways in which NIOSH is attempting to do this is through a longstanding cooperative agreement with Morehouse College, one of the Nation's pre-eminent Historically Black Colleges and Universities. For more than a decade, this agreement has enabled talented minority students to work with NIOSH researchers on current projects. This program has introduced students to occupational safety and health, stimulated their interest in our field, and provided opportunities for mentoring. This exchange of learning has benefited both students and their NIOSH mentors. We look forward to establishing additional partnerships that will further enrich the diversity of our field in the 21st Century.

Do you have additional insights into the opportunities and challenges created for occupational safety and health professionals by the growing diversity of today's workforce? Or suggestions for ways in which NIOSH can further promote diversity within our own organization? If so, please share them with us.

President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2009 Submitted

The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2009 was submitted to Congress on February 4. The request includes \$326 million for NIOSH research. Details of the funding requested for NIOSH in the President's Budget Request are available under "Occupational Safety and Health" on the U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web page at http://www.cdc.gov/fmo/PDFs/FY07-09_Functional_Table.pdf and in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) "Budget in Brief" at <http://www.hhs.gov/budget/09budget/2009BudgetInBrief.pdf> (pp. 28 and 32). Note: The level of requested funding shown in the HHS "Budget in Brief" includes \$55 million for NIOSH activity that supports the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program. The \$55 million is shown separately in the CDC budget.

NIOSH Delivers Research Report on Coal Mine Refuge Alternatives

On January 23, NIOSH delivered the "Research Report on Refuge Alternatives for Underground Coal Mines." The report responded to a provision in the Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act of 2006 (the MINER Act) requiring NIOSH to conduct research, including field tests, concerning the utility, practicality, survivability, and cost of various refuge alternatives. Such alternatives are intended to provide safe refuge to miners who are trapped underground, awaiting rescue, after a mine explosion or roof collapse. The report is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/pubs/pubreference/outputid2643.htm>.

Participate in the NIOSH Emergency Preparedness Response Office Town Hall Meeting

The NIOSH Emergency Preparedness Response Office invites you to attend its Research Portfolio Town Hall Meeting on:

Tuesday, March 25, 2008
Hyatt Regency Crystal City Hotel and Resort
2799 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202
From 8:30AM – 5:00PM
(703) 418-1234

NIOSH has developed strategic goals to address important issues surrounding the health and safety of emergency responders. The conference will provide an overview of the Emergency Preparedness and Response portfolio and will solicit public comments regarding priorities of the strategic goals. For more information on these strategic goals, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/epr/goals.html>. For information on conference registration, please visit our Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/epr/townhall.html>.

National Academies Seeks Input for its Evaluation of the NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation Program

A committee of the National Academies is soliciting input from NIOSH stakeholders about the relevance and impact of NIOSH's health hazard evaluation (HHE) program. The input is part of the committee's evaluation of the HHE program, which in turn is one of several evaluations being conducted by the National Academies to examine NIOSH programs with respect to their impact, relevance, and future directions. If you are interested in providing input, we encourage you to do so at the following National Academies Web site: <http://www8.nationalacademies.org/survey/dels/nioshhhe.htm>.

Comments Requested on WorkLife Initiative

NIOSH is requesting public comment (Docket Number NIOSH 132) on a new resource document intended to facilitate the development of workplace programs, policies, and practices to sustain and improve workforce health: *The Essential Elements of Effective Workplace Programs and Policies for Improving Worker Health and Wellbeing*. The development and dissemination of these *Elements* as a useful tool is a key effort of the NIOSH WorkLife Initiative, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/worklife>. You may find instructions for submitting comments here, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/132>.

Workshops on Self-Contained Self-Rescue Breathing Systems (SCSR)

Workshops to solicit information from self-contained self-rescue (SCSR) user groups and technology developers will be held on February 12 in Wheeling, WV, and on March 11 in Denver, CO. Information obtained will be considered in the development of redesign criteria for the next-generation SCSR. Each one-day workshop will include discussion on lessons learned from recent mine disasters, impact of the MINER Act and the S-MINER Act on SCSR development, and development of a course of action. Registration for this workshop is free, will be accepted on a first-come, first served basis, and is required since space is limited. Additional information and registration is available at <http://www.nttc.edu/clients/niosh/workshopinfo.asp>.

Studies Show Contingent Workers at Higher Risk, NIOSH Researchers Report

U.S. and European studies suggest that contingent workers such as part-time, temporary, or contract workers are at higher risk for occupational injuries and illnesses than workers in traditional employment situations, NIOSH researchers report. Several possible reasons for the higher risk are suggested in the increasing scientific evidence, and warrant further scientific investigation, the researchers stated. The article, "Contingent Workers and Contingent Health: Risks of a Modern Economy," by Kristin J. Cummings, M.D., M.P.H., and Kathleen Kreiss, M.D., was published in the January 30 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The report is available on line at <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/299/4/448>.

NIOSH and the American Industrial Hygiene Association Host TeleWeb

Two NIOSH Scientists, Ziqing Zhuang, Ph.D., and William Newcomb, will participate in American Industrial Hygiene Association's (AIHA) Distance Learning Program by presenting "The Value of Anthropometrics" and "How to Improve and Apply Respirator Fit Testing" in a TeleWeb on Thursday, March 20, 2008, from 2:00 PM - 4:30 PM ET. The course will provide an overview of fit testing, NIOSH respirator certification, discussion of a new [respirator fit test panel](#), and the results of testing using the new panel. Students will be provided with tools to better able them to understand the value of fit testing, categorize facial characteristics which can affect respirator use, and identify applicable fit testing methodologies that can be applied within their own organization. For more information visit the AIHA Web site at <http://www.AIHA.org>.

Update from the NIOSH National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL)

NIOSH's NPPTL Seeks Public Comment on PAPR concept and Positive Pressure CC SCBA

Comments on a concept paper for powered air-purifying respirators (PAPR) performance requirements, NIOSH Docket Number 008, will be accepted through March 28, 2008. Details can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/resources/pressrel/letters/ltr-010308.html>. Comments are invited on any topic related to this concept paper.

NPPTL is also reevaluating its limitations on and precaution for safe use of positive-pressure closed-circuit self-contained breathing apparatus. Public comment on this document, NIOSH Docket Number 123, will be accepted until April 10, 2008. The full document can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/review/public/123>.

Comments submitted by e-mail or mail should be addressed to the "NIOSH Docket Officer" and should specify the appropriate Docket Number and identify the author(s), return address, and a phone number, in case clarification is needed. Comments can be submitted by e-mail to niocindocket@cdc.gov. If submitting comments by e-mail, they may be provided as e-mail text or as a Word file attachment. Printed comments can be sent to: NIOSH Docket Office, Robert A. Taft Laboratories, MS-C34, 4676 Columbia Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45226.

Stakeholders' Meeting on Personal Protective Technology

NIOSH's NPPTL will conduct a stakeholder meeting on March 6, 2008, in Pittsburgh, PA. Discussion will include current and future research projects on personal protective technology and an opportunity for discussion following the presentations, including a poster session. More information, including the agenda, is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/resources/pressrel/letters/ltr-012508.html>.

Sample Standard Colors for Respirator Labeling

NIOSH's NPPTL has posted standard samples of colors specified for respirator labeling, along with acceptable tolerances for each specified color. More information can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/resources/pressrel/letters/ltr-011708.html>.

MMWR: Investigation of Progressive Inflammatory Neuropathy Among Swine Slaughterhouse Workers – Minnesota, 2007-2008

An article in the January 31, 2008, issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* describes ongoing health-investigation and outbreak-control measures taken to characterize neurological illnesses among a group of swine slaughterhouse workers. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm57e131.pdf>.

Public Comments Posted to NIOSH Docket

Comments NIOSH has received on a feasibility assessment for a cancer study among former IBM employees at a plant in Endicott, NY (NIOSH Docket Number 103) have been added to the Web site, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docket/nioshdocket0103.html>.

NIOSH Science Blog

Be sure to check out and comment on the latest NIOSH Science Blog topics. Posted on January 22, 2008, Larry Elliott, director of the NIOSH Office of Compensation Analysis and Support, describes the history and methodology of the NIOSH dose reconstruction program. http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog/nsb012208_dose.html. A February 4, 2008, posting discusses body artists' potential work-related exposures to bloodborne pathogens. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/blog/>.

r2p Corner

Commercial Partner for the E-Stop

Research by NIOSH, commercial fishermen, and the commercial fishing industry has resulted in the development of a critical safety device for commercial use. In November 2007, NIOSH entered into a partnership with Emerald Marine Products, Seattle, WA, to develop the "e-stop" – an emergency device that can be used to quickly stop a deck winch if a fisherman becomes entangled or is about to become entangled in the winch. The e-stop can be retrofitted onto any winch and has been installed and tested on three fishing vessels in Washington and Alaska. Details about the e-stop are available from Emerald Marine at <http://www.go2marine.com/product.do?no=162904F>. For additional information, please contact Jennifer Lincoln, NIOSH, at JLincoln@cdc.gov or Robert McKibbin, NIOSH, at RMcKibbin@cdc.gov. Mention of a company name does not imply commercial endorsement by NIOSH.



NORA

NORA Liaison Committee recognizes outstanding research: Nominations due April 30, 2008

NIOSH invites you to nominate an outstanding research project for one of two National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) awards to be presented at the NORA Symposium on July 29, 2008, in Denver, CO. The NORA Partnering Award for Worker Health and Safety honors organizations that work together to demonstrate teamwork, innovative thinking, and strong science in the interest of worker health and safety. The NORA Innovative Research Award for Worker Health and Safety recognizes researchers for pioneering and creative occupational health and safety research in a NORA priority area. Candidates may be affiliated with a university, industry, government agency, labor union, or a private organization. Awards will be presented by the NORA Liaison Committee. Nominations are due April 30, 2008. For more information, including nomination guidelines, go to the NORA Web site <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora> and click on "Apply for NORA Awards."



NORA Liaison Committee Meeting

NORA Liaison Committee meetings have afforded an opportunity for representatives of organizations with a national scope (employers, unions, professional associations and others) to learn about the progress of

NORA and identify possible partnerships with each other or NIOSH to advance NORA priorities. With 21st century technologies, more organizations can participate in these meetings without traveling to Washington, DC. Please contact the NORA Coordinator (noracoordinator@cdc.gov) for more information if your organization is interested in the next meeting on February 27.

Call for Posters

The NORA 2008 Symposium Call for Posters is open through March 7, 2008. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora/symp08/callforposters.html>

News From Our Partners

AIHA Launches OEHS Library Central

The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) has launched a new digital library for occupational and environmental health and safety professionals called OEHS Library Central. This resource offers downloadable versions of all AIHA print publications to subscribers and links to abstracting and databases for more than 150 science and technical journals. Further information is available at <http://www.oehslibrary.org>.

Communication Products

“Got Everything Covered?” poster, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2008-109, provides helpful tips on protecting workers from the hazards of isocyanate exposure during spray-on truck bedliner applications. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2008-109>.

NIOSH has developed a series of post cards and posters containing health information for reducing bloodborne pathogen exposure among body artists and health care workers at correctional facilities.

Body Artists

“Let Art Be Your Legacy” post card, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2007-137, provides information about Hepatitis B. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-137>.

“Good Clean Art” post card, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2007-138, provide information on reducing cross-contamination. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-138/>.

“Look Sharp” post card, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2007-139, addresses the handling and disposing of sharps. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-139>.

Health Care Workers at Correctional Facilities

“Read, Wear and Report” poster, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2007-156. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-156>.

“Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure” poster, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2007-157. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-157>.

“Protect Your Employees with an Exposure Control Plan” brochure, DHHS (NIOSH) Publication Number 2007-158, provides information to medical service administrators and supervisors about improving facility Exposure Control Plans. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-158>.

“Encourage Your Workers to Report Bloodborne Pathogen Exposures” brochure, DHHS (NIOSH)

Publication Number 2007-159, provides information for encouraging the reporting of worker bloodborne pathogen exposure in correctional facilities. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2007-159>.

Health Hazard Evaluation

Manufacturing Sector: Evaluation of heat-related illnesses

NIOSH responded to a confidential employee request at a glass bottle manufacturer concerning heat-related illnesses among employees in the forming department. Researchers found that employees were not exposed to excessive heat at the time of the NIOSH investigation, but may be exposed to higher heat levels during the summer months. HHE program researchers recommended that facility managers develop and implement educational and surveillance programs regarding hot work environments, and allow employees to take unscheduled breaks if they feel ill due to the hot conditions. Researchers also recommended that a preventative maintenance schedule be set up for facility coolers. HHE program researchers recommended that employees alert their supervisors if they begin to feel ill due to the heat, drink plenty of fluids, and create a buddy system to watch for signs of heat-related conditions in coworkers. The final report is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2003-0311-3052.pdf>.

Upcoming Events

Look for Us

The NIOSH Exhibit Booth will be at these upcoming conferences.

Construction Safety Council – Booths 412 and 414

Rosemont, IL, February 12 – 14, 2008

http://www.buildsafe.org/confnews/2008/conf_dx.html

Society of Mining Engineers (SME) Annual Meeting and Exhibit – Booth 1535

Salt Lake City, UT, February 24 – 27, 2008

<http://www.smenet.org/meetings/details/?meeting=2008%20SME%20Annual%20Meeting%20%26%20Exhibit>

CONEXPO CON/AGG 2008

March 11-15, 2008, Las Vegas, NV

Visit the NIOSH Safety Zone to learn more about NIOSH research on ways to protect workers from being struck by operating construction equipment and personal protective technologies and equipment to prevent work-related illness and injury. The NIOSH Safety Zone will have static demonstrations covering equipment blind areas, proximity warning systems, internal traffic control plans and asphalt fume reduction.

Complimentary hearing tests will also be available at the NIOSH Hearing Loss Prevention Unit, Tuesday - Friday from 9:00AM – 12 Noon and from 1PM – 4PM, and on Saturday from 9AM – 3PM. NIOSH Researchers will also present their research at several of the 2008 CONEXPO-CON/AGG Education Program Workshops. For more information, contact Charlene Maloney at CMaloney@cdc.gov.

Fire Department Instructors Conference – Booth 248

Indianapolis, IN, April 9 – 12, 2008

<http://fdic08.events.pennnet.com/fl//index.cfm>

Call for Abstracts

“Safety 2008 Professional Development Conference and Exposition”

June 9 – 12, 2008, Las Vegas, NV. Deadline is March 17, 2008. Abstracts should be submitted to

Stephanie Rennie-Sanchez at srennie-sanchez@asse.org.

“14th International Society for Respiratory Protection”

September 14 – 18, 2008, Dublin, Ireland. Deadline is June 30, 2008. <http://www.isrp.com/dublin/index.html>.

Upcoming Conferences

“International Roofing Expo 2008”

February 21 – 23, 2008, Las Vegas, NV. <http://www.theroofingexpo.com/Roofing07/public/Content.aspx?ID=6980&left=0&Nav=0>

“Work, Stress, and Health 2008: Health and Safe Work Through Research, Practice, and Partnerships”

March 6 – 8, 2008, Washington, DC. <http://www.apa.org/pi/work/wsh.html>.

“8th Annual Safety Patient Handling and Movement Conference”

March 10 – 14, 2008, Orlando, FL. <http://www.cme.hsc.usf.edu/sphm>.

“Semiconductor Environmental, Safety and Health Association (SESHA) Annual Symposium and Expo”

March 25 – 29, 2008, Portland, OR. <http://www.seshaonline.org/meetings/2008/index.php3>.

“Fire Department Instructors Conference 2008”

April 7 – 12, 2008, Indianapolis, IN. <http://fdic08.events.pennnet.com/fl//index.cfm>.

“9th Annual Transforming Fall Prevention Practices”

April 21 – 25, 2008, Clearwater, FL. <http://www.cme.hsc.usf.edu/sphm>.

“American Association of Occupational Health Nurses”

April 25 – May 2, 2008, Salt Lake City, UT. <http://www.aaohn.org/education/symposium-expo/index.cfm>.

“International Association of Fire Chiefs 2008 International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference”

May 29 – June 1, 2008, Hunt Valley, MD. <http://iafc.confex.com/iafc/haz08/cfp.cgi>.

“2008 American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exposition”

May 31 – June 5, 2008, Minneapolis, Minnesota. <http://www.aiha.org/aihce08/>.

“NSTI Nanotech Annual Conference”

June 1 – 5, 2008, Boston, MA. <http://www.nsti.org/Nanotech2008>.

“2008 World Safety Conference and Exposition”

June 2 – 6, 2008, Las Vegas, NV. <http://www.nfpa.org/wsce>.

"American Society of Safety Engineers “SAFETY 2008” Professional Development Conference and Exposition"

June 9 – 12, 2008, Las Vegas, NV. <http://www.asse.org/speakerpage08>.

“12th US/North American Mine Ventilation Symposium”

June 11 – 18, 2008, Reno, NV. <http://www.unr.edu/ventsymp2008>.

“International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire Rescue International 2008”

August 14 – 16, 2008, Denver, CO. <http://www.iafc.org>.

“2008 National Occupational Injury Research Symposium (NOIRS)”

October 21 – 23, 2008, Pittsburgh, PA. <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/noirs/2008>.

“PCIH 2008”

November 8 – 11, 2008, Tampa, FL.

<http://www.aiha.org/pcih08/>.

“8th Conference of the European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology”

November 12 – 14, 2008, Valencia, Spain. <http://www.ea-ohp.org>.

Word of the Month

Respirator Fit Test Panel: A selection of men and women who participate in the fit-testing of respirators. The testing is intended to ensure that a respirator, fitted according to the manufacturer's instructions and passing the manufacturer's prescribed user seal check, will protect as expected and maintain a proper fit.

[NIOSH eNews on the Web: www.cdc.gov/niosh/enews/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/enews/)

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