

**University of Alabama at Birmingham
Auburn University
Deep South Center for Occupational Health and Safety
Annual Program Highlights
Reporting Period: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016
Principle Investigator: Claudiu T. Lungu, PhD**

**Center Wide Activities
Center Director: Claudiu T. Lungu**

We offered a free screening of A Day's Work, a film that highlights the plight of Temporary Workers. This powerful film tells the tragic story of Day Davis, a temp worker who died on his first day on the job at a Bacardi bottling plant in Florida. "Day Davis was killed 90 minutes into his first shift," said Dave DeSario, Executive Producer of the film. "And he's not the only one. There is a silent health and safety epidemic facing millions of American workers who are exposed to hazardous conditions every day without proper training, equipment or support." The screening was held at the historic Alabama Theatre. We invited the local ASSE and AIHA, and industry professionals to join us on this day. We also invited Ramona Morris, OSHA Area Director, to discuss the OSHA initiative for Temporary Workers. She also joined the film producer in a roundtable discussion about Temporary Workers. Later that day, we listened to Ron Haynes, founder of the Fight Project. Ron is the Special Advisor for the US Senate Labor Committee and has testified many times in the US House and Senate. Ron has won many awards for his work and has been featured in many TV, Radio, Magazine and print media outlets. He provides motivational workshops, proactive safety training classes and speaks at many different venues. Ron has helped over 800 families through the grief process after an injury or death in the workplace.

This year the ERC had the unique opportunity to send two of our Occupational Safety & Ergonomics student to travel with the NYNJ ERC students on their annual ERC Historical Perspectives Tour, otherwise known as the "Toxic Tour." This is the NYNJ ERC's interdisciplinary project. The 4 day trip featured traveling to sites in the Northeast to experience various industries and explore them as a group. During this trip students participated in identifying solutions to occupational issues from a multi-disciplinary approach.

**Continuing Education
Outreach and Diversity Recruitment
Program Director: Allyn Holladay**

The continuing education program enjoyed multiple achievements during 2015-2016 reporting period. We offered 67 courses/workshops/outreach and professional development events serving 2703 attendees. Numerous courses were requested by region industries/companies such as Alabama Power, Southern Nuclear and JFMC (a private medical practice in Mississippi) to be held at their various locations. We continue to be a source for CEUs for our area ASSE Chapters (Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Auburn and parts of Southern Mississippi). This has been recognized as an added value to monthly and quarterly safety meetings for this group of professionals.

In an effort to broaden our reach and find meaningful ways to expand our audience, our ERC continues to grow through collaboration. DSC provided support, content or both, to events shared with Kentucky, Florida and North Carolina's ERCs as well as the OHN Nursing Network (SouthOn) and regional businesses and groups providing education to our professionals, such as the Manufacture Alabama, Veterans Disability Symposium and PESCA Conference.

Being proactive, the CE Director requested that the Spirometry Team work to update materials. During the process, NIOSH took notice and suggested that DSC renew our course early and invite an audit in order to maximize the efforts of the team. Both the updated and new material and the actual course were approved and successfully cleared an audit. The NIOSH audit team declared the DSC's Spirometry Course as "one of the best in the country".

The Outreach program has expanded our list of collaborators to include the Tuscaloosa Area Health Education Centers (AHEC). The AHEC program is committed to growing the health care workforce, maximizing diversity and facilitating distribution, especially in underserved communities. AHECs were created by Congress in 1971 to increase the quantity, diversity and distribution healthcare professionals, especially in rural and underserved areas. The ERC has partnered with the Tuscaloosa AHEC to host several events for the community throughout Alabama. These events included the 2nd Annual Mental Health Summit (Aug 2015), You are the key to HPV Prevention (March – July 2016) and the First Aid Mental Health Workshops (Dec 2015 – July 2016). These programs were free to the public and was well-attended by healthcare professionals, social workers and MDs. Ms. Paulisha Holt was invited to host a short seminar for the Dixie AHEC Scholars Program (July 2016) at the University of West Alabama. Ms. Holt's presentation featured hearing safety using the dangerous decibels and Youth@Work: Talking Safety curricula.

As part of the Deep South ERC objective to increase diversity through improved recruitment, the ERC participated in several career fairs at local HBCUs. Ms. Paulisha Holt was invited to attend career fairs at both Alabama State University (Sept. 24, 2015) and Tuskegee University (Oct. 15). The fairs provided a great opportunity for Ms. Holt to discuss the ERC's Annual Summer Institute and the ERC's academic programs. During the career, fair Ms. Holt was able to successfully recruit Kennedy Wekesa, PhD, the Dean and Professor of Biology, to join the ERC's Advisory Board. Also, the ERC collaborated with Dr. Weskesa and Advisory board member Carlos Robinson, CIH, MBA, to host a short seminar at Alabama State University on January 28, 2016. Mr. Robinson talked with undergraduate students about opportunities available through the ERC.

**Occupational Health Nursing
Program Director: Karen Heaton**

Dr. Karen Heaton, Associate professor, was appointed Director of the Occupational Health Nursing program replacing Dr. Jennan Phillips. Dr. Heaton was previously director of this program and her return has elicited a smooth transition. She is exceptionally well qualified, has a very active research program and was recently selected as Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. Dr. Heaton's research on truck drivers was featured in local and national media.

NP faculty Hammond and Barrett assisted OHN NP students obtain preceptors and clinical practicum sites with both primary care and occupational health providers. The adult/gero nurse practitioner with OHN specialization program of study was revised to add the Department of Transportation Medical Examiner's Certification Review Course to meet the current demand for certified DOT medical examiners nationwide. Dr. Heaton serves as the coordinator of the PhD Program, and therefore has oversight of the implementation of the PhD curriculum and research immersions for all students. Therefore, she plays a significant role in OHN PhD student oversight, substantive core course (elective) selections, and course revisions from the perspective of OHN-therefore, strengthening the OHN PhD Program. Dr. Pryor is also actively involved in the advisement of students and in review and participation of implementation of the PhD curriculum, particularly the statistics courses, as she is a PhD-prepared epidemiologist.

Industrial Hygiene

Program Director: Claudiu T. Lungu

The IH program has enjoyed productive research and training during the performance period. Industrial hygiene faculty members received a number of small research grants and are involved as co-investigators in other grants which were submitted during the reporting period. The publishing productivity was also solid, consisting of 9 published peer reviewed journal articles and 4 submitted articles. The faculty and students presented more than 25 posters and presentations at local, national, and international conferences and had another abstract accepted for an international conference. Jonghwa Oh, Industrial Hygiene PhD student, was invited to submit an abstract for a podium presentation at CIMTEC 2016 (International Conferences Materials and Technology) held in Perugia, Italy June 5-9, 2016. The title of the presentation was: Adsorption Characterization of Fabricated Buckypapers (BPs) for Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Sampling and Analysis. Authors: J. Oh* and C. T. Lungu, University of Alabama at Birmingham, Birmingham, AL USA; E. L. Floyd, University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK, USA.

Occupational Safety and Ergonomics

Program Director: Richard Sesek

Occupational Injury Prevention Highlight

Director: Sean Gallagher

The OSE and OIP programs have been actively collaborating on interdisciplinary research projects with numerous partners both within and outside the Deep South Center (DSC). Partnerships outside the DSC include Kinesiology, Psychology, Audiology, and Mechanical Engineering. These efforts have resulted in both scholarly outputs (journal submissions, conference proceedings, and presentations at international conferences) and extramural grant submissions.

We are particularly proud of our outreach efforts which include significant expansion of the Occupational Safety and Ergonomics Graduate Certificate (OSE GC) which represents an emphasis area for the College of Engineering new Engineering Management degree.

OSE faculty continues to pursue extramural research grants which facilitate participation by students from the entire OSE program. For example, during the project period virtually all OSE students participated in data collection and analysis for a study of vehicle ingress and egress sponsored by Hyundai America Technical Center (HATCI).