

SECTION I

ERC Summary

The Illinois Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Research Center (Illinois ERC) is a recognized national and global leader in the promotion of healthier and safer workplaces and work. It is the ambition of the Illinois ERC to improve, promote, and maintain the health of workers and communities through innovative and interdisciplinary activities that:

- Educate graduate-level occupational health and safety professionals and researchers
- Ensure professional leadership and best practice through continuing education
- Enhance employer, worker organization, and community expertise via outreach and technical assistance
- Enrich the knowledge base for solving current and future problems

The Illinois ERC comprises five academic programs: Industrial Hygiene (IH), Occupational Medicine (OM), Occupational Safety (OS), Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology (OEE), and Agricultural Safety and Health (ASH-A); Continuing Education in core OSH disciplines (CE) and Agricultural Safety and Health (CE-ASH); an Outreach Program (O); Center Wide Activities including a Center Administrative Core, Diversity Recruitment, and Interdisciplinary Coordination; and two research training programs: Pilot Projects Research Training (PPRT) and Targeted Research Training (TRT).

Public Health Relevance

Everyone has the right to healthy work – a job that pays a living wage, a workplace that is safe, an organization that treats them with respect, and access to qualified occupational safety and health professionals. Our public responsibility and charter require that we give the highest priority to ensuring healthy work for everyone.

Key Personnel

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SECTION II: High Impact Stories

Students and Alumni Making a Difference

Occupational Safety

A PhD student collaborated with a local kinesiologist in Temuco, Chile to provide a workshop for weavers and with a local Lions Club Chapter in Temuco to provide eye exams and glasses for the weavers participating in her study. Two PhD students (OS and IH) received a pilot project grant to conduct a needs assessment for re-employment among users of Salvation Army services. One MPH had a summer internship at a local pharmaceutical company, where she conducted worker training, measured noise exposures, monitored containment systems and conducted office ergonomic assessments.

The ASSE Student Section was jointly active with the AIHA Student Section. Members participated in Chicago beach cleanup events, attended and hosted monthly ASSE Greater Chicago meetings, participated in an ASSE leadership-training workshop, and made presentations to student organizations.

One MPH and one MS student graduated in August 2016 and four MPH students graduated in May 2017. One is working for the UIC Environmental Health and Safety Office; one is an EHS Consultant at SCL Laboratories; one works as an industrial hygienist with Pekron Consulting; two are employed as EHS Advisors at U.S. Compliance Corporation (EHS Consulting Services); and one works as an EHS Supervisor at Unilever.

Alumni serve in leadership positions with the Chicago Section of the American Society of Safety Engineers as Secretary, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and President. The Chicago Section of ASSE partnered with the Illinois ERC to host three meetings, with topics including an OSHA Update; Personnel Development in Today's Workplace; and Student Research Presentations. A recent graduate hosted a group of Illinois ERC students for a local bakery process tour.

Industrial Hygiene

Students were active in the AIHA Student Section, which collaborates on events with the ASSE Student Section (see above). Students interned with the U.S. Navy, TTX Inc. (a railcar pooling company), the Chicago Transit Authority, Abbvie, Illinois OSHA, and the UIC Environmental Health and Safety Office.

Four MPH students graduated in May 2017. One of them is working as a Safety Coordinator at Jel Sert; one works at the UIC Environmental Health and Safety Office; one works at the Chicago Transit Authority; and one is working in private industry in Saudi Arabia.

Occupational Medicine

An MPH student conducted research on climate change perception among physicians in training and will be submitting a manuscript for publication this year. A second MPH student published "The Current State of The Health Effects of BPA," in the World Medical Journal and authored five chapters in the The Encyclopedia of Environmental Health in the 21st Century: From Air Pollution to Zoonotic Diseases.

Two graduates are working in hospital-based occupational medicine clinics in Toledo, Ohio and Rockford, Illinois. A recent graduate was appointed Program Director of the Occupational Medicine Residency at the University of Colorado and continues research at the nexus of occupational and non-occupational transportation and total worker health. She recently published a paper on "The Gig Economy and Contingent Work: An Occupational Health Assessment," in the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology

One PhD student graduated and accepted a position as a Senior Consultant Epidemiologist at the Booz Allen Hamilton consulting firm in Virginia. A recent graduate is a Research Assistant Professor in the UIC School of Public Health, supported by an interagency personnel agreement from NIOSH to perform work on a pilot grant linking NIOSH and DOL data sets. She works with Dr. Cohen (OEE faculty) on several grants focused on miners' health and safety.

Agricultural Safety and Health

One PhD student and one MS student graduated. The PhD student took a public health postdoctoral research associate position at the University of Virginia. The MS student took a position as a research associate in the Agricultural and Biological Engineering Department at the University of Illinois. We currently have 3 PhD and 2 MS student trainees.

One recent trainee with a DVM from UIUC campus and an MPH from UIC is a senior zoonotic disease epidemiologist at the Washington, DC Department of Health, responsible for investigating pathogen outbreaks impacting animal and human populations. A recent UIC OHS MS graduate first developed an interest in OHS as an undergraduate agricultural safety and health trainee; he is currently an industrial hygienist with Pekron Consulting in Chicago.

A student who was an agricultural safety and health trainee while completing both her M.A. and Ph.D in Economics with a primary focus on health economics is currently an economist with USDA Economic Research Service in Washington, DC. She conducts research on the health of farm and rural populations involving issues of morbidity, mortality, injury and aging. Her work has included the evaluation of 3 primary national data basis for identification of the extent and type of injuries and disability among the U.S. farm population. She recently helped develop farm injury and disability questions for the USDA agricultural census.

Pilot Projects Research Training Program

Three of the four 2016-17 pilot project awardees described the positive impacts of the grants on their research and professional development. Dr. Hebert-Beirne, PI (Community Health Sciences, UIC SPH) notes that the introduction of community-driven concept mapping to a Chicago high-hardship neighborhood has made a positive impression on community partners, leading one to launch a separate initiative to introduce community members to research. These funds allowed us to complement similar activities in a nearby neighborhood. Dr. Alfreda Holloway-Beth (EOHS, UIC SPH) states that the grant "helped me to explore a subject that has been of great interest to me for many years. Hair braiders have garnered very little attention among OHS researchers; it is my hope that this pilot project will lead to more research collaborations, identification of prevention techniques, and intervention for this work cohort. I presented my preliminary results at the 23rd International Symposium on Shiftwork and Working Time in Australia. I also receive a fellowship from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Research at Washington University School of Medicine Division of Biostatistics and was made a Visiting Faculty Fellow at Harvard University School of Public Health. I also delivered ERC webinars: "Inclusion in Occupational Health - Bringing Workers, Community and Professionals for action on Health Equity" and "Navigating the 2017 American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference & Other Tips for Those New to Public Health." Dr. Jing Zhang (EOHS, UIC SPH) describes the pilot project grant as "a valuable experience that opened up a research opportunity aligned with my interest in learning more about occupational health and safety. I delivered a poster presentation at the Regional ERC Research Symposium at the University of Michigan and made a presentation at the Trans Fed Extreme Events and Environmental Health Workshop at EPA on "Acculturation and Senior Health among Asian Communities."

Student and Faculty Participation in Research Conferences, Workshops & Committees

Industrial Hygiene

Dr. Rachael Jones transitioned from the role of vice-president to president of the Journal of Occupational and Environmental Hygiene (JOEH), LLC Board of Directors; she led an update of journal operations policy and chaired the search for the new Editor-in-Chief. Dr. Jones also participated in Ontario's Occupational Health & Safety and Infection Prevention & Control Innovation Forum in Toronto, which sought to identify opportunities and innovations to protect healthcare workers from acquiring infectious disease at work. Dr. Lisa Brosseau participated in the biannual meeting of the National Advisory Council on Occupational Safety and Health; she co-leads a workgroup developing recommendations for OSHA to expand and ensure the pipeline of OSH professionals.

Faculty and all MPH students attended the American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Expo. Dr. Sietsema presented a talk on "Respirator Fit: After the Fit Test," where an MPH student gave a poster on "Exposure to Glyphosate in the Agricultural Sector: A Critical Review and Comparison of Biomonitoring Results and Potential Exposures." A PhD student had a poster at the APHA conference: "I Do Have Right: Taking Action

Against Hazardous Conditions in the Temporary Services Industry.”

Occupational Medicine

Faculty and residents attended conferences held by the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, American Public Health Association and the Central States Occupational Medicine Association. A resident made a presentation at the Medical Directors Club of Chicago on the “Health Effects of BPA.” Faculty presentations included: a poster on the characterization of seafood consumption and mercury exposure in Chicago Asian communities” and “Beliefs about seafood consumption correlate with fish consumption behaviors among Asians in Chicago” at the International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant (Dr. Buchanan); “Energy Generation: Health Co-Benefits” in South Korea and “The Economics of Hospital Sustainability Interventions” in Seoul (Dr. Orris). Dr. Orris was also an invited panelist at the UIC Minority Health Conference: “Systems of Power and Disrupting the Repetition of History.” Dr. Sam Dorevitch presented a poster on “GIS method and the Social Vulnerability Index in Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment” at the APHA conference and participated in an NIEHS workshop with presentations on “Frameworks for protecting public health in the context of surface water recreation: implications for karst research” and “Karst, groundwater contamination and public health.” He also gave an oral presentation on “Water Quality at Five Chicago Beaches” at the US EPA Office of Science and Technology’s. Recreational Waters Conference. Dr. Linda Forst was an Invited Speaker at the Communities Coalitions Annual Conference on “Safe University-Community Collaborations National Safety Council,” as well as the American Occupational Health Conference on “Interventions for Low wage Working Populations” and presented a workshop on “Concept Mapping for Public Health Professionals” at the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists.

Occupational Safety

MPH, MS and PhD students made presentations at an annual student night event sponsored by the Chicago AIHA Chapter. Students presented posters at ASSE: “Work-Related Injury Among Hispanic/Latino Workers in Illinois,” UIC School of Public Health Research and Practice Awards Day; the World Federation of Chiropractic Biennial Congress; and the APHA conference.

Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology

Students published 12 papers and made 8 presentations at scientific meetings; faculty published over 30 scientific papers.

In partnership with the University of Chicago, several faculty received an NIEHS P30 grant to establish the ChicAgO Center for Health and Environment (CACHET). Faculty also received funding from HRSA to establish a Black Lung Clinic and Black Lung Center of Excellence and from the Alpha Foundation for the Improvement of Mining Safety and Health, Inc - “Linkage of Active Miner Surveillance, Former Miner Disability Evaluations, and Mortality Data Sets to Evaluate and Prevent Lifetime Risk of Cardiopulmonary Disease in U.S. Miners.”

Agricultural Safety and Health

Drs. Aherin and Petrea and a PhD student participated in the International Society of Agricultural Safety and Health (ISASH) annual conference. A PhD agricultural safety trainee student was appointed by the ISASH president to be co-chair of the organization’s public relations committee. Dr. Aherin and one graduate student participated in the Midwest Rural and Agricultural Safety and Health (MRASH) annual conference, presenting technical papers about the OSHA-funded grain safety national training project. They are currently conducting an impact evaluation of this project. Dr. Aherin and two students participated in the National Grain Operations & Entrapment Prevention Symposium

Continuing Education in Agricultural Safety and Health

We continued to lead the development and implementation of a national grain safety training program. A national webinar was held on a new older youth grain safety training program. Two 1 hour web based grain safety certificate training programs are nearly completed and will be available in 1 to 2 months for training of both elevator and farm workers.

We sponsored the National Grain Operations & Entrapment Prevention Symposium; Dr. Aherin served on the symposium planning committee. Dr. Petrea was involved in planning the national ISASH conference that Illinois ERC 2016-2017

attracted over 200 agricultural safety professionals from the U.S. and other parts of world to a 4 day program in Logan, Utah. He also continued to serve as ISASH's national secretary. Dr. Aherin conducted a 3 hour training program on agricultural safety and health issues for medical students in the University of Illinois rural medicine program.

Dr. Aherin continued to lead the Grain Safety and Health Coalition that coordinates and provides training on safety and health practices in farming and the grain industry.

Continuing Education (Core Disciplines) and Outreach

The ERC co-sponsored a NIOSH Total Worker Health webinar that included Dr. Lisa Brosseau: A New Look at the Way We Work: Nonstandard Work Arrangements and Their Impacts on Worker Safety and Health attended for more than 100 people (Recording: <https://niosh-connect.adobeconnect.com/pyyq7jid4t66/?proto=true>)

Domestic workers participated in ongoing health and safety training about green cleaning, ergonomics and psychosocial stress reduction mentored by Marsha Love in collaboration with worker center partners - ARISE Chicago for Polish workers, AFIRE for Filipina workers and Latino Union for Spanish and English speaking workers.

Funds were provided to expand the reach of training provided by the Grain Handling Safety Coalition. In collaboration with the UIC SPH MidAmerica Center for Public Health Practice and with funding from an OSHA Susan Harwood grant, Dr. Bob Aherin provided leadership and content expertise for on line training modules to provide foundational level grain handling health and safety topics in an asynchronous internet based program.

Raise the Floor, a coalition of eight workers centers in Northern Illinois, and Outreach, Advancement and Innovation in Workforce Development (OAI) collaborated with the ERC to expand the training capabilities of worker participants of workers centers. Raise the Floor identified a need for OSHA 10 Hour General Industry and Lead Safe Work Practices training; OAI provided the training at no cost to the worker center members; Raise the Floor recruited and paid stipends for 56 participants. An evaluation of this training is being conducted by members of an ERC targeted research training group.

Black lung prevention, diagnosis and treatment was the focus of National Coalition of Black Lung & Respiratory Disease Clinics' national and regional conferences coordinated by Dr. Robert Cohen (OEE faculty) and Marilyn Bingham (CE Registrar). The ERC ensured CE credits for participants and facilitated event logistics. Attended by more than 300 allied health providers, legal professionals, benefits counselors and miners and their families, content was focused on current data and resources on mining health and safety regulations, newly enacted government regulations and black lung benefit claims processes.

The ERC and the MidAmerica Public Health Training Center sponsored two national webinars hosted by the APHA Occupational Health Section: The Effect of Climate Change on Health (<http://uofil.adobeconnect.com/p7o70fmt9qu/>) and Diversity and Inclusion in Occupational Health (<http://uofil.adobeconnect.com/pjvrewistwxk/>),

Domestic workers offering elder care, cleaning services and child care participated in ongoing health and safety training about green cleaning and psychosocial stress reduction mentored by Marsha Love in collaboration with worker center partners ARISE Chicago for Polish workers, and Latino Union for Spanish and English speaking workers. Forty-eight workers participated in four sessions.

Twenty-five professionals attended a Chicago American Industrial Hygiene Association Professional Development Seminar - "Confined Spaces Planning and Preparation for Industrial Hygienists," conducted by Salvatore Cali (IH faculty) and partners; cosponsored by the Illinois ERC.

Awards and Recognition

Occupational Safety

An MPH student received the grand prize poster award at the ASSE Safety Conference and another received Honorable Mention. A PhD student received a Special Recognition Award from the Chiropractic Care Section for her service at the APHA. Dr. Darabi received the University of Illinois at Chicago 2017 Award for Excellence in Teaching, which recognizes excellence in teaching as measured by course evaluations, letters from students and colleagues, and contributions to teaching effectiveness through service, curriculum development

and publications related to teaching and education. Dr. Darabi is the principal investigator of a new education grant, An Integrated Program for Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation of Academically Talented Low Income Engineering Students, funded by the National Science Foundation.

Industrial Hygiene

An MPH student received three awards for his poster “Exposure to Glyphosate in the Agricultural Sector: A Critical Review and Comparison of Biomonitoring Results and Potential Exposures”: 2017 Best Student Poster [Second Place], Social Concerns Committee, American Industrial Hygiene Association; 2017 Best Student Poster [First Place], Biomonitoring Committee, American Industrial Hygiene Association; and 2017 Best Use of UIC Library Research Tools and Materials Award.

An MPH student received a scholarship from the Chicago Local Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association. An MPH student attended the American Industrial Hygiene Association Leadership Workshop in Washington, DC where he received leadership training, met with leaders of the AIHA, and learned about current AIHA Initiatives, including outreach to high-school school students. Two doctoral students (one IH and one OS) were awarded a Pilot Project Research Training grant.

Dr. Preethi Pratap (faculty) published a paper on Occupational Safety and Health in the Temporary Services Industry A Model for a Community–University Partnership, describing a project bringing together worker centers and investigators to build a corps of Occupational Health Promoters (OHPs) testing a survey tool for identifying hazards and raising awareness among workers employed by temporary staffing companies. She also co-authored a paper - Translation Research in Occupational Safety and Health: A Proposed Framework, with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), which describes a roadmap for effective translation of products of basic and applied OSH research into practice.

Occupational Medicine

A resident won the “Wayne Burton Excellence in Research Award” at UIC for his work on Climate Change Perception in Doctors in Training. Dr. Peter Orris was the recipient of the 2017 “Lifetime Achievement Award” at the World Federation of Public Health Associations and Elected to Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. Dr. Daniel Bakston (Program Director) was elevated to the status of Fellow in the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine.

Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology

Doctoral students received awards from the UIC School of Public Health Annual Research Doctoral Student Poster and an EOPH Scholarship Award at the American Thoracic Society Meeting.

Continuing Education and Outreach

Dr. Joseph Zanoni received the UIC Silver Circle Excellence in Teaching Award for his work in Using the Public Health Toolbox course for UIC undergraduate seniors.

Effective Outreach Activities

Industrial Hygiene

The program sponsored Dr. Paul Hewett to pilot test a new professional development course about exposure modeling methods, including a new tool to implement stochastic simulations of contaminant transport models, attended by two faculty, twelve students and four industrial hygiene professionals from the Chicago area.

Occupational Medicine

Dr. Orris lectured on “Greening of Health Care, Research and Training Centre for Community Development in Hanoi, Vietnam as well as on “Climate Change and Health, at the Escuela Nacional de Salud Pública” in Cuba. Additionally he gave lectures on Community Environmental Epidemiology & Public Policy, Center for Technology and Policy at the Indian Institute for Technology and Epidemiology & Public Policy at Northwestern University Public Health Institute. He co-authored a monograph on “Climate-Smart Health Care: Low-Carbon

and Resilience Strategies for the Health Sector, Investing in Climate Change and Health Care Series,” published by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.

Dr. Susan Buchanan published a paper on “The Goldilocks Conundrum: Eat fish that are just right” in the Illinois Family Physician. She presented a one-day course on occupational and environmental health for 25 UIC medical students in the Urban Medicine Program and taught a Family Medicine Selective on occupational and environmental medicine every 6 weeks to UIC medical students on a Family Medicine clerkship rotation (16 sessions per year, 5-10 students each rotation).

A Resident presented on cadmium surveillance to the Army in Alabama and the Navy in Puget Sound during an OSHA rotation. She served as a mentor for underrepresented minorities in the Chicago public high schools and undergraduate institutions.

Dr. Sam Dorevitch (faculty) gave several media interviews – WTTW television interview for Chicago Tonight: “UIC Expands Rapid Water Testing at Chicago Beaches” and “Mitigating Mosquitos after Heavy Rain.” The Chicago Tribune interviewed Dr. Dorevitch on an article titled “Scientists say record floods could brew bad batch of mosquitos and he gave an Associated Press interview on public health consequences of Hurricane Harvey. Dr. Dorevitch has ongoing outreach through the BRACE project to several Illinois health departments regarding climate change.

Dr. Linda Forst (faculty) authored papers on “Occupational Hazards among Artisanal and Small Scale Gold Miners,” “Burden of Occupational Injury on Communities,” “Occupational Health in the Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System,” “Industry and Occupation in the Electronic Health Record: An Investigation of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Industry and Occupation Computerized Coding System,” “Risk factors associated with legal interventions,” “Occupational Injury Surveillance among Law Enforcement Officers Using Workers’ Compensation Data” and “Temp Workers Health and Safety.”

Agricultural Safety and Health – Continuing Education

The ASH-CE program developed a 4-minute video - "Following Proper Grain Bin Entry Procedures Saves Lives" - highlighting the importance of following recognized current safe work procedures. A procedure for establishing a lifeline when entering a grain bin to reduce the risk of entrapment and engulfment (a leading cause of death during grain handling) was developed and tested and is now an OSHA-approved method. The video also promotes training resources available through the program’s website: www.grainsafety.org and is included on the NIOSH Agricultural Centers You Tube channel. It was recently reported to be the most popular video BY FAR with over 40,000 views of the 120,000 total views for the available 100 videos.

Continuing Education (Core Disciplines) and Outreach

An MPH intern recently graduated from the UCLA ERC was supported by the Outreach Program in the Occupational Health Internship Program (OHIP) sponsored by AOEC. She explored gender-based violence among low wage Latina immigrant women workers in service and manufacturing jobs. This project was designed by the Chicago Workers Collaborative, a worker center focusing on temporary workers. The intern, a Latina American, conducted in- person interviews, telephone interviews and a focus group to identify barriers and facilitators towards engaging collectively to deal with gender based violence at work. The project design was informed by an innovative approach, called community accountability, advocated by the internship field supervisor, which poses an alternative to the criminal justice system in preventing and responding to gender violence. The interview results and worker stories are being incorporated in a toolkit that the worker center will use in collaboration with community service providers.

The Illinois ERC continues to participate in monthly calls and an annual scientific symposium with regional ERCs at the University of Cincinnati and the University of Michigan. This year’s symposium was held at the University of Michigan and was attended by three faculty, three staff and three students from the UIC ERC, some of who delivered oral presentations and posters. Several UIC attendees participated in a tour of the Ford Rouge plant the day following the symposium.

The three regional ERCs also collaborated with Occupational Health Without Borders – US on an R13 conference grant, submitted to NIOSH, to build capacity of this organization for enhancing knowledge and Illinois ERC 2016-2017

expertise of occupational health and safety professionals to deliver effective interventions for workers with precarious jobs.

Targeted Research Training Teams

Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology

The OEE TRT met monthly. Activities included students describing their work in progress (dissertation proposals and preliminary research findings); debate over contemporary controversies such as the potential carcinogenicity of the herbicide glyphosate; and meetings with representatives from SEIU to discuss possible studies of workers' health complaints at O'Hare International Airport.

Underserved Workers

The team focused on activities with worker centers and Asian home care workers. We created a qualitative evaluation focus group guide for the Raise the Floor and Opportunities, Advancement and Innovation in Workforce Development (RTF – OAI) partnership. Dr. Jing Zhang made a presentation describing her pilot project research asking Asian home care workers and their employers about health and safety training needs and working conditions. Our team provided feedback and support for her data collection process.

Sensor Technology

Drs. Jones, Brosseau and Conroy worked with 6-8 students on bi-monthly activities related to sensor technologies, which included a student-led lecture on circuit designs and building PM2.5 sensors.