

Training Project Grants
Annual Report
Reporting Period: July 1, 2016 – June 20, 2017

Institution: University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

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SECTION I

TPG Summary: The Department of Occupational and Environmental Health (OEH) at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) College of Public Health provides graduate education leading to the Master of Science (MS) degree in Industrial Hygiene and Environmental Health Sciences (IH/EHS). The goal of the IH/EHS program is to prepare professional practitioners to apply scientific knowledge to the anticipation, recognition, evaluation, and control of environmental hazards or stresses affecting human health. The IH/EHS degree has been prized by employers and students because graduates are prepared to direct environmental compliance programs as well as occupational health and safety programs.

The IH/EHS program at OUHSC is one of only four ABET-accredited masters level industrial hygiene programs in the south central United States. The program has been accredited by the Applied Science Accreditation Commission (ASAC) of ABET since 2000. The curriculum consists of 48 semester hours of coursework, including masters thesis research and a field practice experience, and can be completed in 21-24 months of full-time study. The OEH Department consists of 6 full-time faculty with diverse research interests and rich experience in professional practice in industry, government, the military, and consulting. The Department is well equipped with laboratory and field sampling instruments in support of the training program.

The specific aims of the NIOSH training project grant (TPG) are: (1) to attract highly qualified and motivated students, including individuals with cultural or linguistic fluency related to underserved populations, into the industrial hygiene profession and (2) to recruit students with diverse technical backgrounds who are interested in entering the industrial hygiene field. TPG funds are used to support four traineeship slots per year, to be filled by full-time masters-level trainees. Trainees may be supported on the TPG for up to 24 months.

The program has traditionally drawn well-prepared applicants from a number of undergraduate programs in the region. Oklahoma colleges have relatively high American Indian enrollments reflecting the state's unique ethnic mix, presenting an excellent pool of well qualified prospective trainees from under-represented minorities. Recruitment also targets individuals with work experience in the health professions, engineering, chemistry, and environmental science who wish to make the transition into industrial hygiene practice.

Relevance: Currently there are not enough trained industrial hygienists to meet the need for these specialists, who work throughout all industrial sectors to protect workers from occupational hazards that could cause illness or death. The training project grant helps to attract students of diverse technical backgrounds and cultural competencies into the Master of Science program in Industrial Hygiene and Environmental Health Sciences at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

Key Personnel:

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The core Industrial Hygiene faculty members are Dr. Phillips; Professor and Department Chair David L. Johnson, PhD, PE, CIH; Assistant Professor Evan Floyd, PhD; and Assistant Professor Jun Wang, PhD, PE. Associate Professor Robert Lynch, who retired in March 2017, contributed to teaching and mentoring primarily in environmental health sciences. A national search has been opened for a new tenure-track assistant or associate professor with research and teaching interests in environmental health or industrial hygiene.

TPG web link:

<http://publichealth.ouhsc.edu/AboutUs/Departments/OccupationalEnvironmentalHealth.aspx>

SECTION II**High Impact Stories:**

A Hispanic-American NIOSH trainee who graduated in May 2017 is continuing in the department for a PhD in Occupational and Environmental Health. She plans to extend her masters thesis research on airborne spread of *Clostridium difficile*, a dangerous nosocomial pathogen. She has been awarded a Hudson Fellowship in Public Health by the University of Oklahoma College of Public Health to support her doctoral studies.