

Training Project Grants
Annual Report
Reporting Period: July 1, 2014 – June 20, 2015

Institution: University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

PI Name: Margaret L. Phillips, PhD, CIH

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 7 full-time faculty with diverse research interests and rich experience in professional practice. 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.

Public Health 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:

Margaret L. Phillips, PhD, CIH
Associate Professor and Industrial Hygiene Program Director
Department of Occupational and Environmental Health
College of Public Health
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
801 NE 13th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
margaret-phillips@ouhsc.edu
Phone: 405-271-2070 extension 46764
Fax: 405-271-1971

TPG web link: <http://coph.ouhsc.edu/departments/oeh/programs/ms.aspx>

SECTION II

Program Highlights:

Two students in the IH/EHS masters program at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center were awarded nationally competitive scholarships in 2015. A NIOSH-supported trainee won a 3M OEHS Scholarship. The NIOSH trainee is a non-traditional student with nearly 18 years of active service in the Air Force during which she received training in environmental health and safety as a newly enlisted airman fresh out of high school. After graduating with her masters degree, she plans to seek a commission in the U.S. Public Health Service or other uniformed service and to become a Certified Industrial Hygienist. Another student in the program won an AIHF Scholarship. This student has a bachelor's degree in occupational safety and works for a health and safety consulting firm. He is enrolled in our master program to expand his knowledge base to include industrial hygiene. He plans to seek certification as a Certified Safety Professional.

Publications:

Cooper JH*, Johnson DL, Phillips ML. Respirable silica dust suppression during artificial stone countertop cutting. *Annals of Occupational Hygiene*. 59:122-126 (2015)
doi: 10.1093/annhyg/meu083

Lynch RA, Hollen H*, Johnson DL, Bartels J**. The effects of pH on the migration of melamine from children's bowls. *International Journal of Food Contamination* (2015) DOI 10.1186/s40550-015-0017-z

*Former NIOSH trainee

**Student not supported by NIOSH