

Society for Epidemiologic Research

SER IS COMMITTED TO KEEPING EPIDEMIOLOGISTS AT THE VANGUARD OF SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT.



Polly A. Marchbanks
SER President

Centers for Disease
Control and
Prevention

President's Corner

"AT EVERY POINT ON THE CAREER LIFE-COURSE, WE ALL HAVE GIFTS TO SHARE, AND WE ALL HAVE LESSONS TO LEARN. THIS IS WHY WE NEED SER, AND THIS IS WHAT SER IS ABOUT—SHARING, LEARNING, AND CONNECTING."

Dear Colleagues and Friends...Greetings! I have been in my new position as President of SER since June 2011, and this President's Corner is my first. From the vantage point of my "inaugural corner", I have three observations:

First, I see a strong and vibrant organization filled with an amazing constellation of epidemiologists along the full maturational spectrum – some of us are beginning students, some are early or mid career professionals, some are senior experts with world-renowned reputations, and some are emeritus epidemiologists with an enduring passion for our field. At every point on the career life-course, we all have gifts to share, and we all have lessons to learn. This is why we need SER, and this is what SER is about – sharing, learning, and connecting.

Second, I see a well-managed organization. The SER Board and SER Staff are a pure delight – they are organized, dedicated, and progressive. Their collective energy and enthusiasm yield a wealth of fresh ideas.

Third, I see a newsletter that is informative and fun. To alert you to a few highlights in this issue... You will read a wonderful synopsis of the 3rd North American Congress of Epidemiology from the 2011 Co-Chairs, Jonine Bernstein and Leslie Bernstein. Although many members of numerous organizations contributed to the success of this conference, we owe Jonine and Leslie a special debt of gratitude for their service. Societies are convening to discuss plans for possible future Congresses. Also, in this newsletter you will learn about an innovative initiative for emerging scholars, updates from our student and post-doc committee, information on our annual student dissertation workshop, and plans for the first ever Student Workshop Reunion Reception. Additionally, you will read a personal history of SER from Lynn Lyon, and get an inside peek into the lives of two leaders in epidemiology: Mary Haan and Noel Weiss. Discover the cities where they were born, where they like to vacation, what advice they give to students, and more.

In closing, I am honored to be President of SER. Thank you for your confidence and support. My own concluding piece of advice is: pay particular attention to Bernie Harlow's article, "Welcome to the Twin Cities". Our next SER meeting will be in Minneapolis, June 27-30, 2012, and Bernie points out excellent reasons why you should attend. Your SER Board is working hard to make this an exciting opportunity to share, learn, and connect. Mark your calendar, and we hope to see you there.

Join SER in Minneapolis, Minnesota June 27(eve) -30, 2012 for our 45th Annual Meeting. Participate in our pre-conference workshops held on June 27th. Visit www.epiresearch.org for more details.

Welcome to the Twin Cities!

Bernard Harlow,
University of Minnesota

The Minneapolis-St. Paul area, collectively referred to as the Twin Cities, is renowned for its cultural and recreational opportunities and beautiful natural surroundings. We're proud that Minnesota is currently ranked as one of the healthiest and most livable states in the nation. We have 136,900 acres of parkland and 950 lakes in just the metro area alone! And, if you love to bicycle, we have over 250 miles of bike trails along former railroad beds and around our lakes with more miles of paved bikeways than any other state. Feel free to take advantage of our new bike rental program where you can pick up and drop off a bicycle at multiple stations around the metro area.

Additionally, the Twin Cities offers a wide selection of cultural and entertainment opportunities. There are several public museums, private

art galleries, music and arts festivals, historic theaters that offer drama, comedy and music, and a plethora of cuisine options suitable for even the most discerning pallet.

The Twin Cities also offer extensive opportunities to shop for many uniquely Minnesotan goods and services. Downtown Minneapolis has two million square feet of retail, one of the highest concentrations of shops in any city its size. The Nicollet Mall, just up from the conference hotel, is a wonderful place to shop, eat, and just enjoy outdoor city life. We're actually famous for our outdoor and roof-top dining which allows for great views of the city and the mighty Mississippi!

If you decide to extend your stay, Minnesota is a mecca for outdoor enthusiasts. The state is full of picturesque parks and stunning lakes-playgrounds for those who enjoy



canoeing, hiking, camping or merely sightseeing along the North Shore of Lake Superior. For example, Minnesota hosts Voyageurs National Park, the only water-based national park in the U.S., two national forests (Superior and Chippewa), 72 state parks, and 58 state forests. And of course, we relish in our Boundary Waters Canoe Area, a wilderness park that has remained unchanged since the time of the French Voyageurs.

Come and enjoy our stimulating conference and then spend some time exploring our magnificent outdoors!

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Future Meetings

2012 - Minneapolis, MN (June 27-30), Hyatt Regency Minneapolis
2013 - Boston, Massachusetts (June 18-21), Boston Park Plaza Hotel
2014 - Seattle, Washington (June 24-27), Seattle Westin Hotel

2012 Membership Renewal—Now Open

Visit www.epiresearch.org/membership.html to renew online. Renew before December 20th in order to receive the AJE without interruption. Renewal notices were emailed on November 1st. Look for your email which includes your membership id and password for online renewal.

Emerging Scholar Initiative

SER is pleased to announce a new initiative to foster the professional development of Early Stage Investigators (ESIs), defined as junior faculty in academia and early stage professionals in governmental positions or the private sector. Helping ESI's grow and meet career goals is a critical mission of SER and we as a society are well positioned to use our membership, annual meeting, and other resources to play a significant role in facilitating this effort. We are at the beginning of developing a plan for an ESI session at the upcoming annual meeting.

If you have any comments or suggestions pertaining to particular topics of great importance for our ESI's, please don't hesitate to shoot one of us an email. Stay tuned for more information as we begin to develop this important new initiative.

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Andy Olshan
Board Member

University of
North Carolina



Bernard Harlow
Board Member

University of
Minnesota

Student and Post-Doc Committee President's Corner



Stella
Aslibekyan
SPC President

University of
Alabama at
Birmingham

You know it is an exciting year to be an epidemiologist when even Hollywood has jumped on the bandwagon and *Contagion*, a movie about the personal and public health response to a deadly virus, is breaking box office records! Here at SER-SPC, we like to keep things exciting as well—here is a glimpse of what we are working on in 2011-2012.

We are kicking off this school year with our first annual web meeting, the Epidemiologic Methodology Applications Conference, which will take place on November 5th and is open to all students, post-docs, and trainees. The meeting will begin with a live plenary session featuring a debate featuring two methodology experts—Dr. Malcolm Maclure (UBC) and Dr. Charles Poole (UNC), followed by students' real-time oral presentations on topics ranging from study design to statistical analysis to novel tools of communicating epidemiologic results. (To learn more about the web meeting, go to page 6.) We are currently reviewing many high-quality abstracts, and look forward to picking the three winners who will receive travel scholarships to next year's meeting in Minneapolis.

And speaking of web-based features, this year we are also working to expand our presence in social media. You can already find us on Twitter (@SER_SPC) and a Facebook page is in the works; follow us to learn of new events in the epidemiolo-

gy world, read noteworthy articles, connect with our community, and offer suggestions on how we can best serve our members. We will also use social media tools to keep you posted on the 2012 meeting planning, leadership opportunities with the SER-SPC board, and even more travel scholarships.

As we brainstorm plans for student and post-doc programs that we will be offering at the Minneapolis meeting and beyond, we cannot value your input enough. In a few weeks, we will be sending out our fall survey. This is a great opportunity to suggest topics, workshops, and speakers that would enrich our members' experience at the meeting—not to mention to win a \$50 gift card to Amazon.com, which could come in handy when that *Contagion* DVD (or the next edition of *Modern Epidemiology*?) comes out.

We look forward to meeting you in Minneapolis!
Sincerely,
Stella Aslibekyan, PhD
2011-2012 SER-SPC President

To subscribe to our list-serv, please visit:
<http://www.epiresearch.org/students/listserv.html>
To learn more about student membership in SER and to join us, please visit:
<http://www.epiresearch.org/students/>

SER - A Brief Personal History

I attended my first SER meeting in June 1973, 6 years after its founding. It was held at a small hotel on the Berkley side of San Francisco Bay. The plenary session fit comfortably into a room with 100 chairs. Despite the small size, we heard Thomas Chalmers give his memorable talk on “Randomize the First Patient”.

His talk set the tone of SER for me. I came to expect great speakers, new and interesting findings, a place for students to make their first ever presentations, and opportunities for very junior people like me to interact on a personal level with the major epidemiologist whose work I had only read.

SER began its existence in 1967 when three of the early leaders in the field of chronic disease epidemiology, Brian MacMahon at Harvard, Milt Terris at Columbia, and Abe Lilienfeld at Johns Hopkins created an organization where students could present their research ideas and findings and receive comments (and criticisms) from any and all who attended, in a friendly, constructive manner. This has been the underlying theme of SER annual meeting ever since.

It was a simple concept, but like many simple concepts it also captured a long overlooked need, and provide place for the nascent chronic disease epidemiology types to find friends and validate their methods and findings. Since 1967 chronic disease epidemiology as a discipline has expanded from a handful to thousands, and our meetings have reflected this expansion.

The student-friendly atmosphere in which SER began meant costs had to be low. The meeting date was always in the middle of June, the week after university commencement closed for the summer, because usually SER met in University classroom and housed most everyone, in dorm rooms.

This pattern was followed (with occasional exceptions such as the 1973 Berkley meeting and the 1981 meeting at Snowbird, Utah) until the 1987 meeting at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. SER found it had outgrown the founder’s model for successful meetings. The accommodations for attendees were scattered over 20 miles, and somehow United Airlines over-booked every flight out of Hartford, Connecticut giving many attendees the opportunity for an unplanned (and less than memorable weekend) in Hartford.

The SER board, with great reluctance, decided we had to abandon the physical model put together by the founders, recognize the success of chronic disease epidemiology and the increase in the number of people wanting to attend the annual meeting, and look for a larger venue. Since 1987 our meetings have been held at hotels capable to accommodating up to 1000 attendees.

This transition was not without problems. The financial commitments necessary for a successful meeting at a hotel are much different from the university-dorm environment in which SER began. We had a steep learning curve, and nearly went bankrupt in the early 1990’s until we realized we could no longer rely on the local hosts at our meeting site to make all the arrangements, but had to have a single person reporting to the SER executive committee who was responsible to plan and run our annual meetings. It was this transition in 1996 that provided us with financial stability that has allowed us to create the student caucus, and to be the principal financial sponsor of the three North American Epidemiology Congresses.

The other factor that increased the membership of SER occurred in the mid-1970’s when we agreed to become a joint sponsor of the American Journal of Epidemiology. Membership dues increased, but you received a copy of the journal every month. This arrangement continued until 2001 when Johns Hopkins University and SER entered into an agreement with Oxford University Press to publish the journal. As part of this agreement SER had to take over the responsibility for the membership and journal subscriptions (collecting dues, renewing subscriptions, etc.).

As I wandered through the poster sessions at the Montreal meeting I reflected back to the 1973 meeting. There were more posters in one session than all the presentations at the 1973 meeting. As ever, it was enjoyable to see and talk with colleagues, friends and former students and hear of their lives. The energy and enthusiasm of the students were also wonderful. Chronic disease epidemiology has come a long way since 1967, and SER is a reflection of this journey.



Joseph Lynn Lyon
Secretary/Treasurer

University of Utah

Student Dissertation Workshop

"SER will be holding at the Minneapolis meeting our first annual Student Workshop Reunion Reception."

SER began in 1968 as a joint effort of the Johns Hopkins, Columbia, and Harvard Schools of Public Health. As the oldest and largest organization of epidemiologists in the world, one of SER's primary objectives is to encourage and foster the professional development of students of epidemiology and young investigators. One way of meeting this objective was felt to be to provide a forum in which doctoral-level students working on theses that utilize various types of epidemiology studies, using a range of epidemiologic methods, could interact with other graduate students and senior epidemiologists. This has been accomplished by conducting annually an in-depth Student Workshop for 12 students which is funded by a National Cancer Institute Education Grant. This workshop is held the day prior to SER's annual scientific meeting in June each year. The workshop, which first took place in 1977, has been conducted continuously for over 30 years. Its purpose is to have their thesis work reviewed, critiqued, and discussed in a supportive and constructive atmosphere by highly respected senior epidemiologists and faculty who are productive researchers in the "real world" and who have a variety of epidemiologic, clinical, and methodological expertise.

The Student Workshop is chaired each year by the President-Elect of SER, with a co-Chair specifically chosen by the Chair for his or her known expertise in cancer epidemiology. As part of the grant, the participants in the workshop also receive free registration for the SER meeting. See workshop Ad on page 10 for 2012 details.

Beginning December 1, 2011 applications for the 2012 Student Workshop will be accepted. The workshop will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota on June 26-27, 2012. In addition, SER will be holding at the Minneapolis meeting our first annual **Student Workshop Reunion Reception**. This reunion will include all previous participants of the Student Workshop dating back to 1977. If you were a workshop participant – either as a student or as a faculty member - please contact Sue Bevan (sbevan@epiresearch.org) and indicate the year you participated in the workshop. Additionally, you can visit www.epiresearch.org for more reunion details.



Julie Buring, Sc.D.
Board Member

Harvard Medical School
Brigham and
Women's Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

Social Media

Many of us have seen or heard about *The Social Network*. We have all witnessed the power of social media to affect profound change, as exemplified by recent democracy movements in the Middle East. At their best, outlets like Twitter, Facebook, and blogs represent a new, real-time way for communities to connect and share knowledge—in short, "all the cool kids are doing it." Here at SER, we are ready to harness that emerging power, and would greatly appreciate your feedback as we continue to develop our presence in social media!

Our first foray into social media has been led by the Student and Postdoctoral Committee (SER-SPC). At the @SER_SPC Twitter account, you can find announcements of upcoming meetings (both web-based and "in person"); links to members-only services like the Job Board and room sharing arrangements during the Annual Meeting; and ways to connect with worldwide epidemiologists and public health groups using social media. Over the next few months, SER-SPC plans to

incorporate even more resources, including links to noteworthy peer-reviewed articles, members' blogs, and opportunities to get involved with our social media initiatives. Together with the parent SER organization, we will also be setting up a Facebook page to facilitate communication among our members, share announcements about the Annual Meeting, and offer relevant content. Additionally, plans for a LinkedIn page are in the works to promote networking in the epidemiology community.

Have a blog that you would like to be included? Interesting content ideas? Suggestions for how SER can engage members and others via social media? Any feedback would be welcomed—e-mail the SER-SPC President, Stella Aslibekyan, at saslibek@uab.edu or message her on Twitter @saslibek. See you online!

eMAC Web Conference

"Each of the three presenters will have this work highlighted at a spotlight session at the upcoming SER conference in Minneapolis, and were awarded travel scholarship to attend the conference this summer."

On November 5th, the Student and Postdoc Committee hosted its very first annual electronic epidemiologic methodology applications conference (eMAC). The meeting was a resounding success, highlighting the potential for new media in teaching, learning, and communication in epidemiology.

The meeting opened with a fascinating debate about relative and absolute difference measures in epidemiologic research with Drs. Charlie Poole and Malcolm Maclure. The topic was engaging and the examples employed were thoughtful. The agenda then moved to presentations of the three most highly-rated student and trainee abstract submissions. The presentations were excellent, highlighting the thoughtful research of SER-SPC members. Meena Subbaraman opened the presentations talking on targeted maximum likelihood estimation for direct and indirect effect analysis. She was followed by Joshua Rosenbloom, who presented his work on propensity scores from multinomial logistic regression. Finally, Maral DerSarkissian concluded the conference with her presentation about using robust models for disagreeing collaborators. Each of the three presenters will have this work highlighted at a spotlight session at the upcoming SER conference in Minneapolis, and were awarded travel scholarships to attend the conference this summer. Accompanying the live presentations were several recorded "e-posters" of other submitted abstracts showcasing the work of SER-SPC members.

The meeting was the product of many hours of diligent effort and persistence. We thank several of our past presidents, including Arijit Nandi and Edgar Simard for their vision for the project and their help in seeing that vision through. Also instrumental was Jackie Brakey, whose support and hard work in coordinating the meeting, the online venue, and the abstract submission processes were inestimable.

Given the success of this first eMAC, we look forward to growing the venue and to many more successful e-conferences in years to come!



Abdulrahman El-Sayed
Student & PostDoc
Treasurer/Abstracts
Committee Chair

Columbia University
New York

THE SER ABRAHAM LILIENFELD PRIZE PAPER COMPETITION

Deadline: February 3, 2012

Abraham Lilienfeld was one of the key architects of modern epidemiology. To honor his memory, the SER makes an annual award of \$1,000 plus travel expenses to the SER meeting for the best submitted paper by a student in a doctoral program with a concentration in epidemiology. Please bring this competition to the attention of potential applicants.

The winner will present his or her research in the SER Annual Meeting in a plenary session. The paper will be considered for early publication in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*. The work must have been completed during the two years prior to the June 2012 meeting in Minneapolis, MN and must be unpublished at the time of the Annual Meeting. The applicant need not be a student at the time of the submission. No prize will be awarded if the review committee decides that none of the manuscripts is of superior quality.

Electronic copy (in English) must be **RECEIVED** no later than February 3, 2012. Authors must include their telephone number, address and current position, a statement indicating the date the work was completed, their academic doctoral advisor's name and signature, and the name of their department chair or head. Email papers in PDF to: Sandro Galea (sgalea@columbia.edu), copy to Sue Bevan (sbevan@epiresearch.org).

Reflections on Congress



Jonine
Bernstein

Memorial
Sloan-Kettering
Cancer Center



Leslie
Bernstein

City of Hope
National
Medical Center

The 3rd North American Congress of Epidemiology was held in June 2011 in the beautiful city of Montreal. The meeting, by every metric, was a huge success. Nearly 1600 epidemiologists from over 34 countries attended; more than 400 Congress faculty members collaborated to organize the meeting, making this the largest and most diverse meeting of its kind ever held. In addition to SER, three other societies sponsored and assumed financial responsibility for the Congress ensuring its success: The American College of Epidemiology (ACE), The American Public Health Association-Epidemiology section (APHA-EPI), and The Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics (CSEB). Along with SER, in support of the Congress, ACE and CSEB cancelled their annual meetings. More than 20 other epidemiology societies co-sponsored the meeting by supporting workshops, symposia, and advertising as well as designating representatives to serve on program planning committees. The senior leadership of each participating society, together with the Congress Faculty, developed a comprehensive program celebrating the science of modern epidemiology. The sole theme of the meeting was "Epidemiology". The purpose was to showcase and promote the diversity of epidemiologic study, practice and policy and to identify areas of common interest across different specialties in our field.

In a nutshell, the meeting and pre-meeting workshops were jam-packed; 13 pre-Congress workshops were attended by 640 people. The meeting itself included: 37 Symposia, which were selected from over 85 proposals that were submitted, representing the full range of disciplines in our field; 34 Spotlight Sessions organized by leaders in the field who organized sessions from the more than 1200 abstracts that were submitted; and 4 comprehensive Poster Sessions with over 1000 posters presented. Each day began with invited plenary talks. In all, 10 visionary leaders in epidemiology challenged the audience with thought-provoking presentations spanning the modern, global, environmental and genomic history of our field. Three of these talks were given by the eminent epidemiologists who were honored with the Congress-wide Awards recognizing their lifetime achievements in our field. The daily "Special Sessions" focused on controversial topics such as the IARC consensus panel report on

cell phone use as a cause of brain cancer, discussions about communicating epidemiology to the broadcast and print media, and ways to translate epidemiologic data to motivate biologic mechanistic studies. Lastly, sessions were held in which editors from 13 leading scientific journals discussed their perspectives on our evolving field; and 16 "Meet the Experts" sessions led by prominent scientists focused on provocative topics.

This was the 3rd North American Congress of Epidemiology. These special meetings are held once every five years, and require substantial dedication and commitment on the part of many. We Bernsteins (unrelated, however) had the great honor of serving as co-chairs of this inspiring event. Throughout the three years of planning, we worked with hundreds of Congress Committee Members, Congress Faculty, Abstract Reviewers, and Volunteers, all of whom devoted a great deal of time in planning, developing, and carrying out this exciting meeting. The result was what makes the Congress unique -- the great depth, breadth, and excellence of the scientific sessions highlighting the research of the distinguished senior faculty, rising stars, and outstanding trainees who presented. All who attended appreciated the opportunities for networking and enriching the science of our work. Not only was it vastly larger than the annual epidemiology meetings, but it was a true collaboration that benefitted from the exceptional collective effort, expertise, and enthusiasm of epidemiologists across the discipline committed to the profession and the Congress.

In closing, we wish to express our appreciation to all of you who participated and to thank the wonderful team involved in bringing the meeting to its grand conclusion for their tremendous efforts and endless devotion. Without the support and help of each and every one of you, the 3rd North American Congress of Epidemiology would not have been as memorable and wholly successful as it was.

Thank you,
Jonine Bernstein and Leslie Bernstein
2011 Congress co-Chairs

Inside Peek

Our new "Inside Peak" section features spotlights of our leaders in Epidemiology. If you are interested in seeing an individual featured in our "Inside Peak" section, please email sbevan@epiresearch.org.

What sparked your decision to become an epidemiologist?

I was in medical school in the 1960s, and toward the end I began to think about doing work relating to the health of populations rather than that of individual patients. I had some vague ideas about influencing the structure of medical care in the US and abroad. I was encouraged to study public health, and enrolled in the Harvard School of Public Health in the fall of 1968. While there I was exposed to some great teaching in epidemiology and biostatistics, and decided that it was in these areas that my interest (and talents) lay. It was then that I decided to become an epidemiologist, and specifically an epidemiologist who would work in a school of public health setting so that I could be involved in graduate education.

Where is your favorite place to vacation?

Hawaii – any island. Any person who has spent December and January in Seattle will understand this!

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing epidemiologists in the next five years?

Obtaining funding, of course. During my forty years in the field, there has never been a period such as the past several years in which it has been so difficult to obtain resources to conduct research.

Personal history?

I was born in Chicago, grew up in Los Angeles, received my medical degree from Stanford and my Masters of Public Health and Doctor of Public Health degrees from the Harvard School of Public Health. I am married to Chu Chen, PhD, a biochemist/clinical chemist who is a faculty member at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle. We have two children, Jessica born in 1981 and Jeremy born in 1985. Neither has become an epidemiologist (alas), but both are off to good starts in their careers in political science and bioinformatics, respectively.

Do you have any pets?

I am a cat person, but also a woman person. So, when a number of years ago my wife became allergic to our cats, they left (to good homes) and she stayed.

Outside of epidemiology what do you enjoy doing?

I'm active in a variety of sports (tennis, racquetball, golf, softball) and will continue to do so until my body gives out – probably not too long from now! When I'm recuperating from my various aches and pains, I read about history, play the clarinet, and enjoy crossword puzzles and word games.

Why did you join SER?

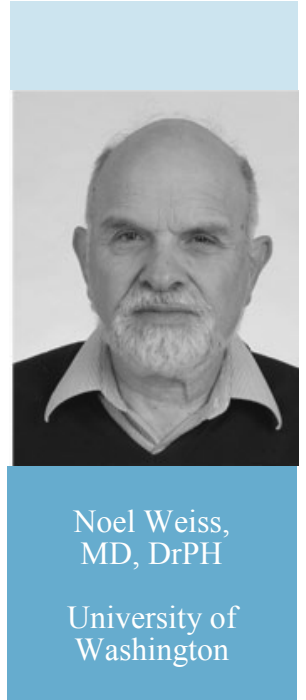
I first joined SER in the early 1970s, and have been a member on and off (mostly on) since that time. I come to most of the annual meetings because they are interesting and fun. The extensive student involvement in SER is unique among the epidemiologic organizations. The presence of those young faces and young minds is energizing to many of us who have been around for a long time.

What advice do you give students who want to become epidemiologist?

1. Remember to always (almost) adjust for age.
2. Try to view epidemiology with a mixture of awe and humility. Awe, in the sense that it is remarkable how simple observations that we make in our research can lead to inferences that in turn can lead to actions that have a profound impact on the public's health. Humility, in the sense that not all etiologic questions can be addressed well by epidemiology at a given point of time. We may not know which exposures to investigate; we may not be able to measure even those exposures that are relevant with enough accuracy to obtain valid information; and the non-randomized nature of much of our research often precludes an unbiased assessment of a given exposure on health.

What is something that not many people know about you?

In the summer of 2011, I was the pitcher for the men's intramural softball champions at the University of Washington, the Residuals. Much of the success of our team that season was no doubt due to the fact that the opposing players couldn't take seriously the idea of competing against someone more than 40 their age. Still, that does not diminish my pride in this accomplishment!



Inside Peek

What sparked your decision to become an epidemiologist? Was there a watershed moment, or a gradual decision?

Before grad school, I was an advocate against community health hazards. I won a national prize from the Robert F. Kennedy Foundation for investigative reporting I did about cancer in workers at a local asbestos plant. I so enjoyed doing that investigation that I decided to 'go professional'. While I was in public health school, I 'discovered' epidemiology. I fell in love with the field right away and have not regretted it. At that time, I realized that epidemiology is the core science of public health and can really help people and their communities and change the world. I still feel that way about it.

Why did you join SER? What keeps you coming back?

I joined SER in 1986 right out of grad school so I could be a part of serious epidemiologic research and meet people in the field. I've seen the organization grow and change with the times. I think our extensive support and encouragement of young/new epidemiologists sets us apart from other organizations and I like contributing to the future of our field. I've served as a Board member and as President. SER feels like home to me and I hope I've done a lot for it and can continue to do so.



Mary N. Haan
SER Past-President

University of
California
San Francisco

What advice do you give students who want to become epidemiologists?

There are so many things you can do as an epidemiologist that there are always opportunities to learn something new. As an epidemiologist you can do original research at the highest levels or you can work 'in the streets' to prevent disease and disability in populations, communities and people. Learn as much as you can about the basic tools of our trade. More important, imagine a better future in public health to which you can contribute and go for it.

What do you see as the biggest obstacle facing epidemiologists in the next 5 years?

These are very perilous economic times and I am afraid that both the public health and research missions of epidemiology will be severely compromised by funding cutbacks. This especially affects new epidemiologists trying to get their start.

Where is your favorite place to vacation?

The garden island of Kaua'i! I lived in Hawai'i as a very little girl and remember it as a paradise that was always warm and full of flowers, with wonderfully different kinds of people and a lot of freedom to play. I also love Santa Fe, New Mexico for its deep western culture, great food, beautiful landscape and mystical side.

Personal History and likes

I am descended from resolute but impoverished Dutch immigrants and from >5 generations of Western pioneers. One of my great grandparents set up the first lodge in Yellowstone in 1872.

I was born in San Francisco, California and lived my very early life in Utah and Hawai'i but mostly in the SF East Bay where I went to school, and attended UC Berkeley. I spent nearly 10 years at the University of Michigan as a faculty in epidemiology. That was way too cold for my Western soul and I live now in a warmer, more diverse community in the San Francisco East Bay and work at UCSF. I am married with 3 grown children. I love dogs but don't have one because I am too busy to take care of any. I visit my son's dog instead. I have a 3 year old grandson who is the center of the known universe to me and who I see nearly every day. He's smart as a whip, has a great sense of humor and cracks jokes all the time. Right now my favorite thing to do is to spend a lot of time with him. I love going to movies, cooking at home and eating out. Almost anything outdoors is great in the SF Bay Area. I like bicycle riding and hanging out with friends.

Tell a funny story about yourself or something unique about you that not many people would know.

I have traveled in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge by boat carrying 25+ pounds of camera equipment to photograph wildlife. I photographed a trusting musk oxen from about 25 feet away! I also have kayaked and canoed in Baja Mexico and British Columbia. Wilderness travel is good for the body and spirit.

SER ANNUAL WORKSHOP ON METHODS FOR EPIDEMIOLOGY DOCTORAL STUDENTS

June 26-27th 2012, Minneapolis, MN

SER is seeking applications from students who want to participate in a workshop on epidemiologic methods related to their dissertation research. The workshop will be held immediately preceding the 45th annual SER meeting (June 27-30, 2012). Dr. Sandro Galea, SER President-Elect from Columbia University, will be the workshop coordinator. Four additional faculty members with expertise in epidemiology, biostatistics, cancer, and various other substantive areas will conduct the workshop.

The workshop meets the afternoon and evening of June 26th and all day June 27th. There is intensive interaction between students and faculty at the workshop. The thesis must be in progress and not completed so that the workshop may affect how the project is actually conducted. Cancer epidemiology is a major focus of the workshop but papers on other substantive areas or methodologic topics that would be applicable to cancer research are acceptable.

The 12 students selected for participation will receive a fellowship to cover the cost of travel, three days per diem, and registration fees for the SER meeting. Students from under-represented racial and ethnic groups are particularly encouraged to apply. Only doctoral students in epidemiology, or related doctoral programs whose thesis involves an epidemiologic study, are eligible. An application form can be downloaded from www.epiresearch.org/studentwkshp.pdf. Further Instructions are on the website.

Please send the completed application by e-mail to: Julie Buring, ScD, at jburing@rics.bwh.harvard.edu. An advisor's signature is needed, and can be sent either electronically with the application, or a hard copy with the advisor's signature can be mailed. The mailing address to send the hard copy is Julie Buring, Division of Preventive Medicine, Brigham and Women's Hospital, 900 Commonwealth Ave – 3rd floor, Boston, MA 02215.

You may contact Dr. Buring for questions about the submission process or Workshop organization by phone: (617) 278-0863 or email: jburing@rics.bwh.harvard.edu; or Dr. Sandro Galea at sgalea@columbia.edu for questions about the Workshop itself.

**Applications must be RECEIVED BY EMAIL
by the end of Friday, February 10, 2012,
followed by a mailed hardcopy with advisor's signature if
signature was not already sent electronically.**

Call for Abstracts for the 45th Annual SER Meeting

June 27(eve) - 30, 2012 * Minneapolis, MN

Abstract Submission Guidelines

Abstracts are requested for consideration for spotlight and/or poster presentations for the 45th Annual SER Meeting in Minneapolis, MN. Accepted abstracts will be distributed at the June meeting and will also be published in a Supplement issue of the *American Journal of Epidemiology*.

The following rules are AJE policies and must be adhered to precisely:

1. Abstracts are required to be submitted online:

Please use the form located at <http://www.epiresearch.org/abstracts/>. Begin the abstract in the box with a title, a complete list of authors (with presenter noted with an asterisk), and the institution at which the work was done. **EXAMPLE: A Study of Exposure to Disease. I Smith, *S. Jones, and P. Gold (University, City, State, Zip Code.)** Please leave a space between the heading and the abstract.

2. A letter of notification of acceptance or rejection will be emailed to the authors no later than May 1, 2012.
3. **General Rules about the abstracts:**
Please read these instructions carefully. Do not include figures, tables, or mathematical equations in the abstract. **The abstract should not exceed 1,935 characters, which includes title and author information.** Avoid acronyms. If you use references, provide the journal, volume, year, and page numbers. Spell out abbreviations (including OR or RR) the first time you use them. If you calculate confidence intervals, specify whether they are 90%, 95%, etc. Choose one topic area from the list below. If applicable, also choose a special highlight topic area. These special topic areas will be the focus of this year's spotlight sessions.
4. Presentation of specific data and methodologic details assist reviewers in judging the quality of the research. New findings are of **greater** interest than confirmation of known relations. Clarity and brevity of writing will allow evaluation of the importance of the research. Each abstract is scored by two reviewers. An overall acceptance proportion is applied to each subject area. The allocation of papers therefore represents the number of abstracts submitted for the subject areas.

All abstracts must be received in final form no later than February 3, 2012.

General Topic Areas (used for review):

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|------------------|
| •Aging | •Behavioral | •Biomarkers | •Birth Defects | •Cancer |
| •Cardiovascular/Stroke | •Diabetes | •Environment | •Ethics | •Female Cancer |
| •Genetics | •Health Services | •Infection | •Injury | •Methods |
| •Nutrition | •Occupational | •Other | •Pediatrics | •Pregnancy |
| •Psychiatric | •Reproductive | •Screening | •Social | •Substance Abuse |
| •Women's Health | | | | |

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