

# UNC SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AWARDS & RECOGNITION

2006 – 2007

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## WITHIN THE SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY:

**Susan T. Ennett, PhD**, associate professor of health behavior and health education, and **Aaron E. Blair, PhD**, an alumnus of the School who earned his MPH from the Department of Epidemiology, were this year's recipients of two prestigious School honors, the **Greenberg Alumni Endowment Award** for excellence in teaching, research and service and the **Barr Distinguished Alumni Award** for achievements and contributions to the field of public health.



Dr. Lawrence Kupper

**Lawrence Kupper, PhD**, Alumni Distinguished Professor of biostatistics, received UNC's 2007 Distinguished Teaching Award for Lifetime Achievement, in recognition of teaching excellence.

**Karl Umble, PhD**, program planner and evaluator for the North Carolina Institute for Public Health (NCIPH), received the 2007 Balderson Award for Support of Public Health Leadership Development at the National Public Health Leadership Network annual conference in St. Louis. The award honors an individual who promotes training programs for public health leaders.

The University named five endowed **distinguished professorships** in the School of Public Health in 2006-07:

**Gerardo Heiss, MD, PhD**, Kenan Distinguished Professor of epidemiology

**Joseph Ibrahim, PhD**, Alumni Distinguished Professor of biostatistics

**Barry Popkin, PhD**, Carla Smith Chamblee Distinguished Professor of global nutrition

**Mark Sobsey, PhD**, Kenan Distinguished Professor of environmental sciences and engineering

**June Stevens, PhD**, American Institute for Cancer Research Distinguished Professor of nutrition

## ACROSS THE NATION AND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD:

**Michael D. Aitken, PhD**, chair of the School's Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering (ESE), has been named a board-certified member of the American Academy of Environmental Engineers. He joins fellow ESE professors Drs. Phil Singer and Francis DiGiano in this prestigious professional society.



Dr. Margaret Bentley

**Margaret "Peggy" Bentley, PhD**, associate dean for global health and professor of nutrition, was selected as an ambassador in the Paul G. Rogers Society for Global Health Research at

Research!America. Ambassadors support research efforts by reaching out to policy makers, media and the public and explaining the hope and importance of research.

**Francis DiGiano, PhD**, professor of environmental sciences and engineering, received the A.P. Black Award from the American Water Works Association for outstanding



**Peggie Dilworth-Anderson, PhD**, professor of health policy and administration and director of the Center for Aging and Diversity in the UNC Institute on Aging, has been appointed to the National Advisory Council on Aging ([www.nia.nih.gov/AboutNIA/NACA](http://www.nia.nih.gov/AboutNIA/NACA)), which advises the National Institute on Aging, part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health. The appointment was effective January 1, 2007, and runs through December 31, 2010.

**Daniel A. Okun, PhD**, UNC Kenan Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of environmental engineering, was honored in September 2006 with the International Water Association's prestigious Grand Award, a tribute to his outstanding international achievements as a water engineer and scientist. Okun accepted the award at the opening ceremony of the World Water Congress in Beijing, China.

In May 2006, he also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Environmental and Water Resources Institute of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

A pioneer of integrated water management, Okun spent much of his career studying the interdependencies between water supply and waste water disposal. His extensive résumé includes global experience in water resource management, a wide variety of consultancies, and an extensive list of honors and publications. His contributions have been both diverse and farsighted.

Okun served as chair of the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering at the UNC School of Public Health from 1955-1973.



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He retired from teaching in 1982 but continued to consult with engineering firms, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, and the U.S. Agency for International Development, and he provided services to water-related organizations in 89 countries throughout the world.

achievement in water supply research. The award recognizes outstanding research contributions to water science and water supply, rendered over time. Former winners from UNC include **Drs. Russ Christman** (1987), **Phil Singer** (1995) and **Mark Sobsey** (2001).

**Michael Kosorok, PhD**, professor and chair of the Department of Biostatistics, was elected as a fellow of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics. Kosorok joined four faculty in the department who have received this honor, including Drs. Joseph G. Ibrahim, Alan F. Karr, Danyu Lin and Pranab K. Sen.



Dr. Lisa LaVange

**Lisa LaVange, PhD**, professor of biostatistics and director of the UNC Collaborative Studies Coordinating Center, is president of the Eastern North American Region (ENAR) of

the International Biometric Society (IBS). UNC School of Public Health has a strong history of leadership in the society, with four School alumni or faculty—including Jim Grizzle, Peter Imrey, Gary Koch, and the late Bernard Greenberg—having served as the society's president. IBS is the largest

professional organization of biostatisticians in the world, drawing its 5,800 members from more than 25 countries.

**Sheila Leatherman, MSW**, health policy research professor at the School, was awarded the title of Honorary Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Leatherman received the honor in recognition of her valuable contribution to reform of the British National Health Service.

**Danyu Lin, PhD**, and **Donglin Zeng, PhD**, professors in the School's Department of Biostatistics, were accorded a rare honor for non-Britons—to read a paper to the Royal Statistical Society (RSS). The paper, given at the RSS Ordinary Meeting in London in January 2007, presented a new statistical methodology used to solve difficult public health problems such as reliable assessments of treatment effectiveness, precise descriptions of the effects of environmental and genetic factors on disease development, and accurate predictions of patient outcomes. Lin is the Dennis Gillings Distinguished Professor of biostatistics.

**Thomas Ricketts III, PhD**, professor of health policy and administration and director of the North Carolina Rural Health



Dr. Thomas Ricketts III

Research Program and Program on Health Policy Analysis at UNC, has been named editor of the *North Carolina Medical Journal*. Ricketts has been associate editor for the past four years.

**Philip Singer, PhD**, Daniel A. Okun Distinguished Professor of environmental engineering and director of UNC's Drinking Water Research Center, received the acclaimed Athalie Richardson Irvine Clarke Prize for excellence in water research from the National Water Research Institute. The prize recognizes outstanding research scientists who have demonstrated excellence in water-science research and technology. Singer also received the 2006 Gordon Maskew Fair Award from the American Academy of Environmental Engineers (AAEE), given to a board-certified member of the Academy judged to have made a substantial contribution to environmental engineering through exemplary professional conduct, recognized achievements, and significant contributions to the control of the quality of the world's environment.



Dr. James A. Swenberg

**James A. Swenberg, DVM, PhD**, Kenan Distinguished Professor of environmental sciences and engineering, received the Society of Toxicology (SOT) Merit Award, presented in recognition of his

distinguished career in toxicology.

**Steven Zeisel, MD, PhD**, Kenan Distinguished Professor of nutrition and pediatrics, received the Bristol-Myers Squibb/Meade Johnson *Freedom to Discover* Award for Distinguished Achievement in Nutrition Research. Zeisel was recognized for landmark contributions to understanding of metabolism and the function of choline, an essential nutrient that influences human development and brain, liver and muscle function. Zeisel also received the American College of Nutrition Award for distinguished achievements over a lifetime in the field of nutrition at the annual meeting of the organization on September 27, 2007, in Orlando, Fla.

## STUDENTS AND RECENT ALUMNI:

Several students from the School were honored at spring 2007 student recognition ceremonies for their research, leadership and service. Among winners of the UNC Graduate School's Impact Awards were **Lynnette Phillips, Danielle Haley, David Rosen, Sheryl Abrahams, Emily Bobrow, Melissa Roche** and **Katherine Karriker-Jaffe**. Phi Beta Kappa inductees this year included **Lily Penelope Clark**, of Washington, D.C.; **Victoria Yizhi Ding** of Hattiesburg, Miss. and Raleigh, N.C.; and **Kristen Elizabeth Ziara**, of Okemos, Mich.

**April Clark, Robin Hunt** and **Jessica Thompson**, graduate students in the School's Department of Health Policy and Administration, won third place in a national health care competition sponsored by the National Association of Health Services Executives.

Doctoral candidates **Elizabeth J. King** (health behavior and health education), **Abigail Norris Turner** (epidemiology) and **Emily Bobrow** (maternal and child health) presented research at the Global Health

Council's 34<sup>th</sup> annual international conference on global health, May 29–June 1, 2007, in Washington D.C. The presentations completed the students' participation in the National Investigators in Global Health (NIGH) Program, a competitive abstract submission and selection program designed to highlight exemplary research, policy and advocacy initiatives of new and future leaders in global health and empower participants with global health advocacy skills. GHC selected 14 out of 300 abstracts for inclusion in the program. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill had three participants, the highest number from any university.



Brad Wright

**Brad Wright**, doctoral candidate in health policy and administration, received an award from Kaiser Family Foundation for an essay outlining the health policy platform of an

imaginary 2008 presidential candidate and proposing a strategy for communicating the plan to the public.