

Major grants

IN FISCAL YEAR 2009, despite a major economic recession, more than 400 grants and contracts, totaling more than \$150 million, were awarded to faculty members with a primary appointment in the School—a 45 percent increase from the previous year.

Among the highlights:

Gates Foundation grant for urban reproductive health

THE BILL & MELINDA GATES Foundation awarded more than \$22 million for a new project to improve reproductive health of the urban poor in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Ilene Speizer, PhD, research associate professor of maternal and child health, is one of the two leaders of “Measurement, Learning and Evaluation for the Urban Reproductive Health Initiative,” which will be run by UNC’s Carolina Population Center. Working with the center on the project are the African Population and Health Research Center, based in Nairobi, Kenya, and the Population Reference Bureau in Washington, D.C. The project will help identify which urban reproductive health approaches and interventions are most effective and likely to have the biggest impact.

Statistical Methods for Cancer Clinical Trials

MICHAEL R. KOSOROK, PHD, professor and chair of the biostatistics department, will lead researchers from UNC, Duke University and N. C. State University to find ways to design more powerful clinical trials for cancer treatments. Their aim is to more quickly and effectively deliver better, more personalized new therapies to cancer patients. “Statistical Methods for Cancer Clinical Trials,” a \$12.5

million, 5-year grant from the National Cancer Institute, is designed to develop new methods for the design and analysis of cancer clinical trials. Co-investigators from the School include Joseph Ibrahim, PhD, Alumni Distinguished Professor of biostatistics; Jianwen Cai, PhD, biostatistics professor and associate chair; and Danyu Lin, PhD, Dennis Gillings Distinguished Professor of biostatistics.

Center of Excellence in Genomic Science

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES of Health’s National Human Genome Research Institute and National Institute of Mental Health have awarded UNC an \$8.6 million, 5-year grant to establish a Center of Excellence in Genomic Science. The center will explore how genes and the environment interact and affect certain mental diagnoses, including autism, depression, anxiety and adverse reaction to antipsychotic medicines. Public health researchers include Daniel Pomp, PhD, nutrition professor; and Fred Wright, PhD, professor, Fei Zou, PhD, associate professor, and Wei Sun, PhD, assistant professor, all in biostatistics.



Dr. Daniel Pomp

Sobsey presents water test idea to NASA, USAID and others

MARK SOBSEY, PHD, Kenan Distinguished Professor of environmental sciences and engineering, is one of 10 innovators who participated in the first LAUNCH

event, held March 16–18, 2010, at Kennedy Space Center in Florida. LAUNCH sponsors include NASA, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. State Department. The inaugural event focused on water supply and quality.



Dr. Mark Sobsey

Sobsey presented a proposal for simple, accessible, affordable tests to assess

water quality and safety to the 30-member LAUNCH Council, a diverse group of entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers and others who advised presenters about how to move their innovations forward into commercial production, field deployment and use.

Sobsey received a Gillings Innovation Laboratory to develop portable field tests to detect fecal contamination in water. He and an international team are designing reliable fecal microbe tests that will not require sophisticated laboratory equipment, electricity or advanced training of test users. ■