

HEALTH POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GW SPHHS
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH POLICY

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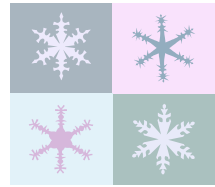
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To submit items of interest, e-mail Rick Mauery at rmauery@gwu.edu before the end of the month.

Thank you to MPH student Arista Salimi, DHP Professors Sara Wilensky and Rick Mauery, DHP Public Affairs Liaison Lee Repasch, and DHP researcher Jennifer Bretsch for their assistance in producing this newsletter.



HEALTH AND MEDICINE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN METRO DC



This is the second installment of our new regular feature of *Health Policy Highlights*—a selection of volunteer opportunities around the Metro DC region. This month, we take note of opportunities to help organizations better serve their clients.

Unity Health Care, Inc. is seeking volunteer patient Greeters who will assist in facilitating consumer-centered care for patients, which includes greeting patients, directing patients to appropriate departments in the health center and serving as the first point of contact. Hours of service: 8:15am to 11:30am, M, T, TH, F, and Wed 11:15am to 2pm. We are also seeking volunteers to participate in our Reach Out and Read program. The volunteers will assist in facilitating a reading corner, which includes reading to patients as they wait in the waiting rooms. Hours of service: any two hours between 8:30am and 5pm, M, T, TH, F, and Wed 11:30am to 7pm. Contact Audrey White at (202) 518-2375.

Bread for the City provides food, clothing, social services, legal assistance and medical care at no cost to low-income DC residents

in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. It is seeking volunteers to conduct client interviews based on a computerized questionnaire. Intake volunteers help to identify a client's needs and provide information about resources that may address those needs. Intake volunteers generally work at least one shift each week, either from 9-12 or 1-4, Monday through Friday. Contact Andrea Messina at (202) 561-8587. Visit www.breadforthecity.org.

VITAS Innovative Hospice Care of Greater Washington is looking for kind and caring people to help terminally ill patients and their families. Friendly visits, simple errands, providing a listening ear and the gift of friendship at a crucial time can make a real difference in another's life. Yours, too! Other VITAS volunteer activities: respite care (sit with a patient while the caregiver takes a break); friendly visits to patients and their families at home or in a nursing home; driving a patient or family member to appointments; accompanying a patient to a church function, wedding, beauty shop, play, ballgame; run errands to the grocery store, drug store, post office; assist with programs and special events. Contact Gwendolyn London at 202-637-7228. Visit www.VITAS.com. (cont. p. 2)

A MESSAGE FROM DHP CHAIR, SARA ROSENBAUM, JD



January 2007 kicks off the spring semester with rested and rejuvenated students, faculty and staff! With the 110th Congress convening and a significant health policy agenda on tap, look for Departmental announcements regarding key events open to students: legislative hearings, open policy conferences, and webcasts.

Best Wishes to All for a Wonderful
Holiday Season and restful Winter Break!



Dept. of Health Policy Professional Mentoring Program

All current SPHHS Health Policy Students and SPPPA students with a concentration in Health Policy are invited to join our Professional Mentoring Program. This program is intended to match health policy students with professionals in the field to provide career advice, networking opportunities, research ideas, and more.

Program Goals

- To provide an opportunity for students to learn from "professional advisors" who are currently working in the health policy field;
- To create a relationship with a mentor who can assist you in making choices about research projects, pro bono opportunities, career paths, future schooling, etc. during and after your time at GW;
- To establish a network of mentors who may be available for formal roles as special projects preceptors and thesis or dissertation advisors;
- To strengthen the ties between students, mentors, and the Health Policy program.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, please review the Mentor and Student guidelines available at:

<http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/healthpolicy/>

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

(continued from page 1)

The Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission is the prevention of cancer through public information and research, seeks interns to man and provide information for a public health exhibit. The exhibit, entitled "Check Your Insides Out," features seven interactive panels covering preventable cancers and will be installed at Union Station in Washington, DC, from January 14 to February 4, 2007. This is an ideal opportunity for public health and medical students to learn about public health information and preventive research, and gain experience interacting with the public. www.preventcancer.org.

Community of Hope: Include helping those less fortunate in your New Year's resolutions. Volunteers needed to tutor homeless children, administer care to the sick, and more. Contact Cassandra Hetherington at (202) 232-7356, or email chetherington@communityofhopedc.org. Visit www.communityofhopedc.org.



For a comprehensive listing of a diverse array of volunteer opportunities in the Metro DC area, please visit:

www.volunteermatch.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

January

January

1/31 – Department Seminar with Gail Wilensky, Ruth Lopert, and Avi Door

Topic: Comparative Clinical Effectiveness

Time: 12-2pm

Location: Department of Health Policy, Large Conference Room

Limited Seating Available (will have registration system)

February

TBA – Career Panel

2/6 – Chat with the Chair

Time: 8:00-9:00am

Location: Dept. Health Policy

2/7 – Department Seminar with Rebecca Katz

Topic: Chemical/Biological Weapons Attacks in S.E. Asia and Afghanistan

Time: 12:00-1:00pm

Location: Department of Health Policy, Large Conference Room

SPOTLIGHT ON DHP FACULTY AND STAFF: PHYLLIS C. BORZI, JD, MA

Phyllis C. Borzi, JD, MA, is a Research Professor in the Department of Health Policy and leads projects at the Center for Health Services Research and Policy, The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. She also is involved in the continuing education programs for the Hirsh Health Law and Policy Program, including serving as Program Director for the Graduate Certificate Program in Healthcare Corporate Compliance, a collaboration between the SPHHS, the University's College of Professional Studies, in partnership with the law firm of Feldesman Tucker Leifer Fidell LLP. This program is certified by the Healthcare Compliance Certification Board and enrolls a new cohort of students twice a year. The program is the first academically-based healthcare compliance certificate program in the nation to integrate two campus-based residency courses with a 6-credit distance learning course.

In the Department, Ms. Borzi is involved in legal and policy analysis relating to employer-sponsored employee health benefits, health insurance, legislative and regulatory issues, managed care and large group purchasers, and access to health care for workers, retirees, and their families. She also teaches the Managed Care course. Ms. Borzi is also Of Counsel as a practicing lawyer at the Washington, DC, law firm of O'Donoghue & O'Donoghue LLP where she specializes in employee benefit plan issues, including health and pension benefits and discrimination based on age and disability. *(cont. p. 4)*

HEALTH POLICY IN THE NEWS

FDA Proposes Revised Guidelines on Allowing Seriously Ill People To Use Experimental Medicines

The Food and Drug Administration has released a proposal that would ease access to unapproved medications for certain patients and allow pharmaceutical companies to charge patients for the drugs in some cases. Since the 1970s, FDA has made experimental drugs available to individuals or groups of patients under compassionate-use programs. The new guidelines offer additional details on the circumstances under which experimental drugs can be made available.

Under the new guidelines, FDA would clarify that drugs could be available during all stages of drug development, including dur-

ing Phase I testing. The proposal includes measures to allow patients to find out more easily how to access experimental drugs.

The guidelines also would give scientists, small research organizations and drug companies a method for calculating how much they can charge patients for the experimental drugs, possibly allowing them to make the treatments available to more people. The rules would allow manufacturers to charge for the cost of making and providing an experimental drug, but they would not be permitted to make a profit. The proposed guidelines will be subject to public comment for 90 days.

Source: Kaiser Daily Health Policy Report, December 12, 2006.

"FDA hopes this proposal will increase awareness in the health care community of the range of options available for obtaining experimental drugs for seriously ill patients."

Janet Woodcock, FDA Deputy Commissioner for Operations.

"It seems like it could be unleashing some floodgates that could do more harm than good for a number of people."

Sidney Wolfe, Public Citizen's Health Research Group.

MEET RUTH LOPERT, MD COMMONWEALTH FUND HARKNESS FELLOW IN HEALTH CARE POLICY



Dr. Ruth Lopert is a 2006–07 Commonwealth Fund Harkness Fellow in Health Care Policy. The title of her project is, *Comparing Cost, Coverage and Access to Pharmaceuticals under Australian and U.S. Policy Framework*, using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

The Harkness Fellowship provides an opportunity for mid-career health services researchers and practitioners from Australia, New Zealand, the U.K., Germany, and the U.S. to spend 12 months in the U.S. conducting original health policy research and working with U.S. Health Policy experts. The Commonwealth Fund introduced Ruth to Sara Rosenbaum, Chair of the DHP, who serves as her primary mentor/supervisor, and the DHP provides a home and support for Ruth's work. Dr. Bruce Stuart of the University of Maryland/Baltimore and Dr. Marilyn Moon of the American Institutes for Research also provide mentoring guidance. Following completion of her project in August 2007, Ruth will disseminate her findings via conference presentations and articles for peer-reviewed journals.

Ruth is a public health physician and pharmaco-epidemiologist, and is currently Principal Adviser of the Pharmaceutical Policy Taskforce in the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing in Canberra, Australia.

Prior to the establishment of the Taskforce in 2005, Ruth held the position of Senior Medical Adviser in the Pharmaceutical Benefits Branch of the Department, providing clinical and policy advice in relation to the operation of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and acting as an adviser to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC). Previously, she was a senior lecturer in the Department of Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Newcastle, NSW where she was involved in the clinical and economic evaluation of new drugs proposed for listing on the Australian PBS.

She is a member of the WHO Expert Advisory Panel on Drug Policies and Management, and was a key negotiator of the pharmaceutical provisions of the Australia United States Free Trade Agreement. She has published and presented internationally in pharmaco-economics and has particular interests in pharmaceutical policy, pharmaceutical IP, drug pricing and access to medicines.

Ruth, a citizen of Australia, has enjoyed a uniquely distinct variety of careers. She is a physician, and has worked as a trade negotiator, management consultant, marketing professional, IT systems engineer, academic, and even a radio DJ! Such an interdisciplinary background bodes well for her ongoing success. We in the DHP are delighted to have her working here.

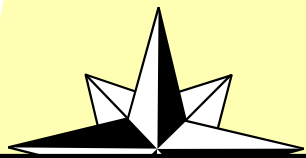
DHP Online Jobs List

The Department of Health Policy maintains an online job list as a way to connect students with job opportunities throughout the world of Health Policy (and elsewhere). You may view the jobs by job category, as well as all at once:

- Full-Time jobs
- Part-Time jobs
- Internships
- Fellowships

For more information, visit:

<http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/healthpolicy/jobs.html>.



The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy

is a special initiative of The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. This program was established in 2004 to honor Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, pioneers in community health practice and tireless advocates for civil and human rights.

Through education, research, and training in community practice and leadership, the program aims to develop the next generation of community health leaders. Particular emphasis is placed on the study of community health centers.

<http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/healthpolicy/geprogram/>

HEALTH AFFAIRS JOINS THE BLOGOSPHERE (EXCERPTED FROM JOHN IGLEHART'S POST)

"I am pleased to announce that after twenty-five years as a bimonthly print journal and six years in online publishing, *Health Affairs* has entered the blogosphere as a new means of engaging readers in the health policy debate. The journal is all about an ongoing dialogue on health policy issues of concern to a diverse audience of interested readers.

This blog should enable the journal to move beyond the 4,000-word research paper into a new realm: thoughtful, focused comments in

the 500-to-1,000-word range on topics that scan the health policy horizon. These are the kinds of comments one would share in a conversation, at a meeting, in a strategy session, in a letter to the editor. But now a much wider audience can join the conversation in an interactive online format.

Unlike *Health Affairs'* current print and online content, the blog will not be peer-reviewed, and we are cognizant of the concerns some might have about whether this move would detract

from the work of a scholarly journal. However, to our way of thinking, this blog provides a timely opportunity to extend the kind of debates journals have long presented in Letters to the Editor, but in a new online medium and to a more far-reaching community."

To read Iglehart's complete post, visit *Health Affairs'* new free blog site: <http://www.healthaffairs.org/blog/>.

UPCOMING HEALTH POLICY CONFERENCE



AcademyHealth National Health Policy Conference February 12-13, 2007 Washington, D.C.

Prepare for the broad policy agenda and gain insight on targeted issues following on of this year's conversation topics:

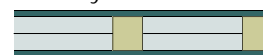
- Driving Quality Improvement
- Addressing Coverage Issues and Evolving Strategies
- Strengthening the Workforce
- Advancing Public Health

HHS Secretary Michael Leavitt, Julie Goon, Special Assistant to the President for Economic Policy, Craig Vanderwagen, Assistant Secretary for Public Health and Emergency Preparedness are the invited speakers.

www.academyhealth.org/nhpc/index.htm

Phyllis C. Borzi, JD, MA (cont. from p. 2)

She is known nationally for her expertise in issues arising under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), a federal law covering private sector employee benefit plans. She holds leadership positions in several sections of the American Bar Association, including the Sections of Health Law; Labor and Employment Law; and Taxation. She is currently the chair of the Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Subcommittee of the ABA's Joint Committee on Employee Benefits, the immediate past president of the American College of Employee Benefit Counsel, and the co-chair of the Advisory Board of the BNA Pension and Benefits Reporter. She has been a member of the DC Bar Association's CLE Committee for the past five years and coordinates the Department's Hirsh Program's participation in various DC Bar CLE activities. In addition, Professor Borzi frequently chairs and/or participates on the faculty of continuing education programs for lawyers, health professionals, employers, consumers and others involved in employer-sponsored employee benefit plans. Ms. Borzi received a BA from Ladycliff College, a MA from Syracuse University and a JD from the Catholic University Law School.



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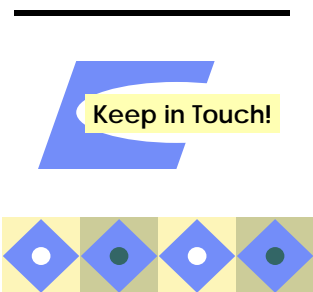
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your most current
contact informa-
tion.

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or e-mail address
changes, please
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Professor
Taylor Burke
taylorb@gwu.edu

The Department of Health Policy is the home for health policy studies and research at The George Washington University and its School of Public Health and Health Services. The Department focuses on virtually all phases of U.S. health policy -- both public health and health services -- and emphasizes preparing students to understand and analyze health policy matters in a broad, cross-cutting, and real-world context. Among Schools of Public Health, the SPHHS Department of Health Policy is unique; it has been created to take maximum advantage of our location in Washington D.C., the nation's health policy-making epicenter. The Department offers lectures and symposia on emerging issues in health policy throughout the academic year for students, graduates, and DC's health policy community. The Department's courses are taught by both core faculty, as well as faculty drawn from Washington D.C.'s health policy leadership. The curriculum is structured to train students in the methods and tools of health policy analysis, including qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques, legal analysis, economic analysis, and the preparation and presentation of research results and policy options to health policy makers.

Suggestions?
*Do you have a suggestion for a DHP Activity
or for Newsletter Content?*
We'd love to hear from you!
*Please send an e-mail to Lee Repasch,
lrepasch@gwu.edu.*

Prevent Overeating This Holiday Season

By John Riddle

from *eDiets.com*

http://www.ediets.com/news/article.cfm/cmi_767842/cid_28

"The holiday season has been called the most wonderful time of the year. Around the holidays, the calendar quickly fills up with shopping, baking, cleaning, school activities, parties and extra chores. It is also an extremely stressful time, particularly for people who tend to overeat when they become stressed. The extra work that comes with the holiday season is enough to drive anyone a little crazy, but the trick is to not let the stress interfere with the fun. And not let the stress drive you to overeating.

[...]

Is it possible to enjoy the holidays, combat the stressful activities and enjoy the festivities at the same time? 'Good times shared with family and friends are the best aspect of the holiday season,' said Dr. Jennifer Shroff Pendley, a behavioral health psychologist at the Alfred I. duPont Hospital in Wilmington, Delaware. She advises people to step back and take a deep breath as the holiday season begins. 'These good times are often accompanied by good food, but as long as you remain calm and peaceful, you will not be tempted to overeat,' she said.

Eating healthy and taking time for some exercise during the holiday season are two ways to ensure you won't find yourself overeating when faced with stressful situations.

Keep these tips in mind and you will make this

holiday season one that you will not forget:

- Keep a sense of humor. Laughter is important, so make sure you find something funny to read or view each day.
- Create a sense of balance. Take time to relax, spend time with friends and relatives, and take care of yourself.
- Watch your eating habits over the holidays. It is okay to indulge with a few treats, but don't overdo it.
- Remember that fresh fruits and vegetables are just as important over the holiday season as they are in the summer months.
- Take time for exercise each day. If you are at the mall, take time to do some brisk walking while you are window shopping.
- Know that you are not alone. Many people feel alienated during the holidays, so find a support group of friends, co-workers, or relatives to share holiday war stories with.
- Get enough sleep. The holidays will be a busy time for most people, but if you get enough sleep at night, you will find less stress in your life.
- Shift your focus from food to the real meaning of the holidays: joy, family, fellowship, thanksgiving, celebration and love."