

News



President's Letter

By Jonathan Samet



The just-held Congress of Epidemiology in Toronto was a landmark event, the largest gathering of epidemiologists ever in North America. The meeting was remarkable for its size, diversity, and vibrancy and for being held in a wonderful venue – Toronto. The scientific program covered the full spectrum of topics and issues encompassed by contemporary epidemiology; the poster sessions were large, crowded, and lively. The Congress offers an important model for the future; there was widespread support for another combined meeting, perhaps three or four years in the future. We all owe thanks to Michael Bracken who took the lead in organizing the meeting, and to Marlene Goldman, Dick Kaslow, Rosanne McTyre, Bob Hiatt, and Dale Sandler who represented ACE, including organizing the highly successful pre-Congress workshops. Another important process began at the Congress with a meeting of many of the professional societies of epidemiologists.

At the ACE business meeting, a motion to increase dues was approved. For members, the increase is to \$150 and for Fellows to \$195. This increase, the first since 1994, reflects the need to support the activities of ACE and an anticipated, small increase in subscription costs for the *Annals of Epidemiology*. The *Annals* continues to evolve under the leadership of its new editor, Richard Rothenberg. We plan progressive increases in the number of pages and issues, so that the *Annals* will be monthly by 2006.

Remember that the Congress replaced our 2001 Annual Meeting but we are scheduled to be in Albuquerque, September 23-24, 2002. The working title is “Understanding the Influence of Race, Gender, and Ethnicity on Health”.

Toronto Hosts 2001 Epidemiology Congress

By Rosanne McTyre

ACE played a major role in the June Congress in Toronto, attended by 1600 epidemiologists, contributing well-attended pre-meeting workshops and breakfast roundtables as well as important scientific presentations.

Six pre-meeting workshops were offered. One of the most well-attended workshops was taught by Jack Taylor; the focus was “Molecular Genetics for Epidemiologists: From the Basics to More Advanced Topics.” After covering the basics of understanding the language and the general field, Taylor highlighted specific advances that emphasized approaches to getting large amounts of important information on very limited amounts of material, a subject



Patricia Murphy, EPA and Lucina Suarez, Texas Dept. of Health share ideas during the **Poster Session**. (Photo by Richard Kwok)

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Toronto 2001: A Perspective

By Paul Levine

The joint epidemiology meeting, which attracted approximately 1600 epidemiologists to Toronto in mid-June, really helped to identify the personalities of the different epidemiologic associations and what is unique about ACE, as well as what is common among epidemiologists in all organizations.

The ACE-organized workshops and the scientific meetings, including poster sessions, emphasized the importance of scientific quality, the diversity of opinions on a broad range of topics, and the importance of opportunities for investigators with differing views based on diverse databases having full discussions on how to improve our understanding of the issues.

It is not feasible to cover all of the highlights of this meeting, particularly since excellent competing sessions kept me from being at all of them. But there are ACE-specific highlights worthy of note.

First, the Board meeting on Tuesday covered a number of important issues, many of which are covered elsewhere in

this issue. Second, the traditional pre-meeting workshops and Breakfast Roundtables demonstrated the continuing popularity of these sessions, which are likely to continue in future meetings as well. My own knowledge base was greatly enhanced by the molecular epidemiology workshop run by Jack Taylor. It allowed me to significantly adjust my new project on inflammatory breast cancer to obtain important laboratory data on paraffin blocks in a cost-effective manner. The Breakfast Roundtable I attended, facilitated by Sarah Patrick from North Dakota, opened my eyes to important potential collaborations between state Public Health departments and University School of Public Health Programs, which include the need to make graduating MPH students aware of the possibilities out in the field.

In regard to future meetings, the exciting program being planned for Albuquerque, New Mexico in September 2002 generated considerable discussion. The theme title has been

somewhat fluid. The candidate I liked was suggested by Patricia Hartge: "Age, Race and Sex: They are not what they used to be" ... but the message is clear. See the article on Page 5. Emphasizing the thrust of the molecular epidemiology workshop run by Jack Taylor and a number of other sessions at the meeting, objective laboratory measurements need to be wedded to sound epidemiologic study design to achieve optimal information. Take the issue of Age, the topic of the first panel. Age used to be any easily measured parameter...all you needed was a date of birth and date of study. Now, though, it is clear that chronological age is far less significant than biological age. Many factors affect aging, both genetic and environmental. A number of studies document that. But what are the best measures of biologic age? Panel 1 will address that, and other topics are indicated on Page 5. The program and the setting should make this a very attractive meeting. We hope to see you there.

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ACE web site is attracting attention

By Victor Schoenbach

In May 2001, the ACE web site hosted about 100 visitors a day, over twice that from the same time last year. The most visited page was the ACE Policy Committee's discussion of the electronic data privacy regulations under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), with over 800 visitors.

Other popular destinations were Membership information (170), the Spring 2001 Newsletter (125), Meetings and workshops (100), Committees (90), the Ethics Guidelines (80), and the list of Honorary Fellows (70). Large numbers of visitors came to the site via search engines, most from searches related to HIPAA.

The most prominent other referring sites were the EPI2001 web site (106 visitors came from there), the APHA Epidemiology Section (40), UCSF (40), and the UNC Minority Health Project (40). If you have a web site, please consider adding a link to www.acepidemiology.org. Also, send your suggestions of things you'd like to find on the College's web site to info@acepidemiology.org. The College's web presence is now solidly established, so it's time to think of how we can put it to best use.

Awards 2001

By Clark Heath

In helping to plan for the 2001 Congress of Epidemiology, ACE played a leading role in selecting winners for the Lilienfeld Award and the Student Prize Paper Award. To do this work, the five members of the ACE Awards Committee (Clark Heath, Carol Macera, Dan McGee, Phil Nasca, and Shirley Thompson) were joined by representatives from the other three organizations sponsoring the Congress (Julie Buring for the Society for Epidemiologic Research, Jennifer O'Loughlin for the Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics, and Stan Weiss for the American Public Health Association Epidemiology Section) to form a special expanded working group in the fall of 2000. A total of nine nominations was received for the Lilienfeld Award from members-at-large of the three organizations and 21 papers for the Student Prize from students at 16 different institutions. The Committee completed the process of selecting winners in March 2001. The Awards were presented at a special Awards Luncheon during the meeting of the Congress in Toronto in June.

The Lilienfeld Award

The Lilienfeld Award is given in honor of Abraham Lilienfeld, the principal founder of ACE, an outstanding teacher and scholar of epidemiology, and a pioneer leader in the promotion of epidemiologic research and the application of epidemiologic principles to the practice of public health. The Award has been given by ACE each year since 1985 (following Dr. Lilienfeld's death in 1984). A similar award in Dr. Lilienfeld's name has also been given by the APHA Epidemiology Section annually since 1988. This year the Congress gave the Award jointly to Brian MacMahon and Anthony Miller, honoring the remarkable contributions that each has made to epidemiologic teaching, research, and practice over the years.



Anthony Miller, University of Toronto, accepts the 2001 Lilienfeld Award from Michael Bracken. (Photo by Richard Kwok)

In a distinguished career contemporary with that of Dr. Lilienfeld, Dr. MacMahon has been to epidemiology at Harvard what Dr. Lilienfeld was at Johns Hopkins. He is presently retired, holding the title of Henry Pickering Walcott Professor of Epidemiology Emeritus at the Harvard School of Public Health. Born in England, he received his doctoral training in epidemiology, medicine, and public health at the University of Birmingham. He came to the United States in 1952 and headed the Epidemiology Department at Harvard from 1958 until his retirement in 1989. During his career, Dr. MacMahon has been continuously active in many national and international public health and disease research organizations and has received many academic honors. In addition to his great influence on public health and epidemiology through his talents as a teacher, he has had at least an equal impact through his own epidemiologic research and his abiding interest in epidemiologic research methodology, especially with respect to chronic diseases. He has authored well over 200 scientific publications, the centerpieces being two textbooks on epidemiologic methods (published in 1960 and 1970) that have had profound and lasting

influence on epidemiologic teaching and research. His research interests have ranged widely, including birth defects, cancers, diabetes, heart disease, and psychiatric disorders, with special interest in reproductive risk factors for breast cancer as well as various environmental causes of cancer.

Since health limitations prevented Dr. MacMahon from attending the Congress, Walter Willett accepted the Award on his behalf. In addition to noting Dr. MacMahon's profound impact on epidemiologic teaching and research, Dr. Willett spoke warmly of Dr. MacMahon's special devotion to his students. He indicated that Dr. MacMahon enjoys hearing from his colleagues, and that personal notes of congratulations would be warmly received. (Dr. MacMahon's home address is 89 Warren Street, Needham, MA 02192.)

Dr. Miller, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Toronto, is presently head of the Division of Clinical Epidemiology at the German Cancer Research Center in Heidelberg. Internationally known for his work in cancer control research, he has been a prominent leader in academic and applied epidemiology in Canada through his long association with the National Cancer Institute of Canada (NCIC) and with the University of Toronto. Born in England, he qualified in medicine at Cambridge University in 1955 and worked in the UK and abroad conducting clinical trials of tuberculosis and lung cancer treatment prior to his move to Canada in 1971. Until 1986 he directed the NCIC Epidemiology Unit, with research emphases on diet and cancer, cervical and breast cancer screening, and the improvement of national cancer registry resources (leading to the creation of Canada's

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Career Development Workshop at the 2001 Congress of Epidemiology

By Michelle Canham-Chervak, MPH

We've all experienced it. You have career-related questions and you're not sure where to get the answers. You're wondering, how does this grant review process work anyway? How do I improve my chances of getting a grant funded? How do I select co-authors for a paper? How do I appropriately respond to reviewer recommendations with which I disagree? One of the workshops offered prior to the start of the 2001 Congress of Epidemiology presented an opportunity to obtain answers to these questions.

The career development workshop, titled "Career Development: Uncovering How the System Works. A Focus on Grants and Publications," consisted of two panel discussions. The first session focused on the NIH grant application process. Dr. David Monsees from the Center for Scientific Review described the details of the grant review process. Drs. Andrew

Olshan, Marilie Gammon, Jo Freudenheim, and Meir Stampfer presented their experiences with and insights into this process. Useful advice included contacting the funding agency for help directing a grant application to a specific study section and making sure that the application's background section cited relevant articles published by the study section reviewers. They also recommended using graphs and figures to break up the endless lines of text and to present the data more clearly, particularly in the preliminary studies section.

During the second session, Drs. Jonathan Samet, Kenneth Rothman, and Julie Buring offered candid advice related to publishing. Topics included their thoughts on how to begin writing a journal article, what to cover in the introduction and discussion, how to decide where to submit a manuscript, and what to look for when

reviewing a manuscript submitted for publication. A valuable tip about manuscript writing was to begin early, even before analyses were completed. The panelists also suggested using the cover letter as an opportunity to sell the manuscript directly to the journal editor by stating the unique strengths of the research as relevant to the journal's areas of interest. They also recommended that authors not describe their findings using "priority comments," as rarely is a study ever "the first."

The workshop was well received by conference attendees, as evidenced by active participation from the audience of nearly 100. Many thanks to the organizers, Drs. Diana Buist, Shine Chang, Amy Trentham-Dietz, Mary Beth Terry, and Mary Reid, for recognizing the need for such a workshop and for their efforts in putting it together.

Emory University Professor the Recipient of an ACE/ACC Early Career Development Grant

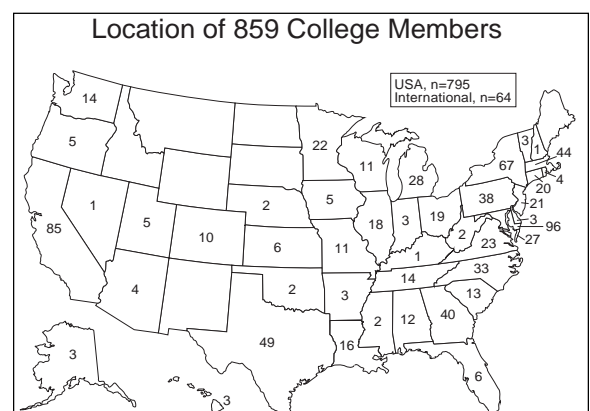
By John Acquavella

Dr. Robert Lyles, from Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health, was awarded a \$100,000 early career development grant in a unique partnership between the American College of Epidemiology (ACE) and the American Chemistry Council (ACC). The partnership was built around a mutual interest in the development of epidemiologists who have worked less than 5 years in the field of epidemiology.

The subject matter for the award, methodologic research in environmental epidemiology, was chosen by ACC in recognition of a lack of funding for methodologic research per se and the widespread benefits of advances in methodologic research. ACE solicited proposals from qualified applicants, set up procedures to select the award recipient,

and will administer the funds provided by ACC during the two year award period. The review of proposals was conducted under the auspices of the Awards Committee through a subcommittee headed by Dr. Philip Nasca of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Subcommittee members included Drs. David Savitz (president of SER), Irva Hertz Picciotto, John Vena, Harris Pastides, and John Acquavella.

Dr. Lyles proposal "Missing and Mismeasured Exposure Data in the NHEXAS and Sophia Studies" was selected from among 8 high quality grant



ACE/ACC Early Career Award recipient Robert Lyles with John Acquavella (left) and Jonathan Samet, ACE President. (Photo by Richard Kwok)

2002 Meeting in Albuquerque

By Patricia Hartge and Rosanne McTyre

The College will meet next on September 22-24, 2002 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Three scientific symposia will tackle the newest ideas on three venerable concepts, once routinely summarized as "Age, Race, and Sex." Age and Aging will examine the biologic insights into aging emerging from molecular studies, the cultural definitions of what it means to be old in different societies, and the implications for epidemiology. Gender and Health will illuminate the problems epidemiologists face in studying gender and health, using case studies in the epidemiology of neurologic, vascular, immunologic, and neoplastic diseases. In Ethnicity and Epidemiology, panelists will highlight the biologic and social constructs of race and ethnicity, often entangled with social class. Case studies of the associations between ethnicity and particular diseases will be used to propose how epidemiologists can best study this multi-faceted risk predictor.

Scientific poster sessions will feature presentations on any epidemiologic topic. These sessions have won praise over the years, in part because all of the contributed scientific presentations at ACE are given as posters. The 2-hour poster session and reception allows for in-depth conversations with the presenters and a chance to look at current work in a wide variety of research areas.

Policy luncheon roundtables provide a forum for open discussion of one challenging, current policy problem, chosen by the ACE Policy Committee for its impact on epidemiology. At each table, a Fellow leads an informal conversation about the topic over lunch. After lunch, the tables share their observations and offer suggestions for the role ACE might play in shaping that policy.

Sunday Workshops

These popular half-day and full-day workshops, chaired by Carol Burns, provide continuing education for the novice and the experienced epidemiologist. New this year is a daylong workshop on Community and Epidemiology Collaborations to Reduce Health Disparities, led by Vicky Mays. This workshop will bring members of the community together with epidemiology to work as partners in the effort to reduce health disparities.

The Ethics Debate, a perennial favorite of the annual meeting, is organized by the ACE Committee on Ethics and Standards of Practice. Pass along your suggestions to them for topics and speakers. The Breakfast Roundtables cover an enormous variety of topics, change every year, and provide an informal setting to cover a

topic in some depth. The Awards banquet features a talk given by the winner of the Lillienfeld Prize, always providing perspective, humor and a sense of appreciation for our discipline, as seen through the eyes of an accomplished leader in the field.

ACE Awards

The Lilienfeld Award will be given in honor of Abraham Lilienfeld, outstanding teacher and scholar of epidemiology, and pioneer leader in the promotion of epidemiologic research and the application of epidemiologic principles to the practice of public health. ACE members are invited to nominate appropriate candidates for this honor.

Student Prize Paper Awards will recognize outstanding scientific contributions by students of epidemiology. Students undertaking doctoral training in epidemiology are invited to submit a paper, as are students with a doctoral degree in a field relevant to epidemiology who are undertaking formal training in epidemiology of at least one year's duration, equivalent to a Master of Science degree. Please send nominations for both the Lilienfeld Award and the Student Prize Paper Awards to: Clark W. Heath, Jr., M.D., Chair, Awards Committee, American College of Epidemiology, 1500 Sunday Drive, Suite 102, Raleigh, NC 27607.

ACE/ACC Early Career Development Grant

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applications from the U.S. and Canada. According to Dr. Nasca, "The proposals were noteworthy for their high degree of innovativeness and they addressed a wide range of research problems." Dr. Lyles' proposal involved a sophisticated statistical approach to advance research into health effects of air pollution under real world conditions where data are often missing or mis-measured. The results of his research should have general applicability to environmental health research. For Dr. Lyles, the award offers him the opportunity to put greater emphasis on methodologic research over the next two years.

The award was presented to Dr. Lyles by Dr. Jonathan Samet, president of ACE, at the recent Congress of Epidemiology in Toronto. Under stipulations of the award agreement, Dr. Lyles will be required to submit his results for publication and to present at least one paper based on his work at a future ACE annual meeting.

According to Dr. Samet, "Through our partnership with ACC, we've given a boost to academic scientists early in their career who are interested in research to further improve the methods used in epidemiological research."

The meeting will be held in Albuquerque's Old Town, the original Spanish plaza for the city. Restaurants, shops and museums are a short walk away; of course, the New Mexico cuisine is superb and spicy. Santa Fe, with its museums, galleries, and restaurants, is only one hour by car. For those wanting a mountain hike, the Sandia Mountains are at the eastern edge of Albuquerque, offering hiking trails and a tram ride to the crest of the mountains, with spectacular views. The Rockies end at Santa Fe with the Sangre de Cristo range. The drive from Santa Fe to Taos offers spectacular views. Also nearby are Los Alamos and Bandelier National Monument and the Sky City of Acoma Pueblo to the West.

Who Belongs to ACE?

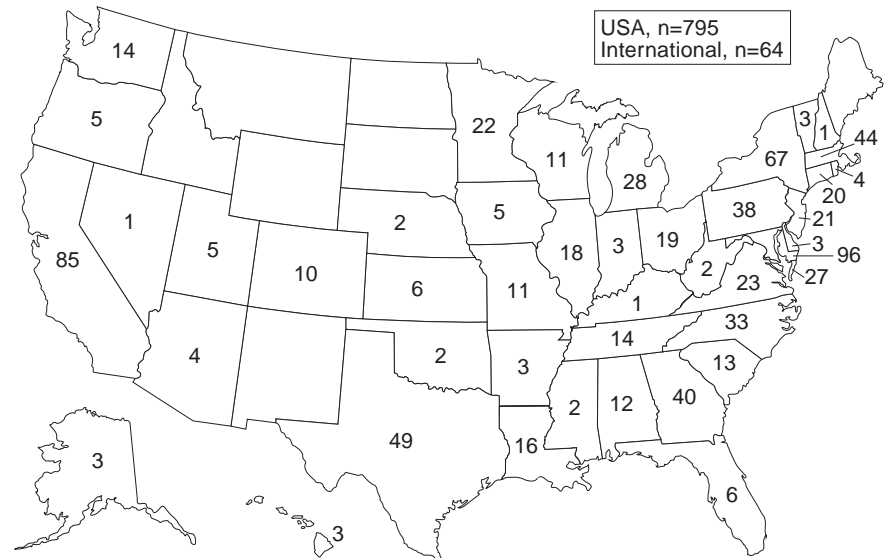
By Carlos Camargo

Every year when you complete your ACE dues statement, you are asked to complete a one-page form concerning contact information, demographic characteristics, interests, and more. These data are used by the College's management company for mailing of announcements, dues requests and other important matters. With the approval of the ACE Board, Carlos Camargo and Sunday Clark (Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston) have cleaned these data and begun to combine them with other relevant data (e.g., attendance at the Annual Meeting). The goals of this unfunded effort were: 1) to better understand who belongs to ACE and how the College might best serve its membership, and 2) to create a database that would help ACE committees do their work. Dr. Camargo presented a summary of this information at the 2001 Epidemi-

ology Congress in Toronto and is currently preparing a formal report for the Board. For the Newsletter, he has submitted the figure below, which shows

the location of ACE members as of January 1, 2001. For additional information, please contact Dr. Camargo (ccamargo@partners.org).

Location of 859 College Members



Awards 2001

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National Death Index, several years before the development of such an Index in the U.S.). In 1972 he developed the Canadian National Breast Screening Study, a study that he continues to direct.

He became Director of the Epidemiology Program in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Biostatistics at the University of Toronto in 1986, and upon his retirement from that position in 1996, he served first in the Division of Cancer Prevention at NCI and then as Senior Epidemiologist at IARC in Lyon from which he was seconded in 1999 to his present position in Ger-

many. Dr. Miller has authored more than 200 scientific articles, 20 books, and 100 text-chapters in the course of his remarkably productive and influential career. In his remarks at the Awards Luncheon, Dr. Miller expressed his particular appreciation for long-standing cooperative interactions with U.S. colleagues that have greatly benefited epidemiologic work in Toronto and throughout Canada.

Student Prize Paper Awards

ACE has given a Student Prize Paper Award every year since 1991. For the 2001 Congress, it was decided to give

awards to the three best papers, including cash awards of \$600, \$400, and \$200. As in the past, travel and accommodation expenses to the Congress are provided for the first place winner, who presents his or her paper at the meeting and has the opportunity for expedited publication in ACE's *Annals of Epidemiology*.

Selecting winners in the 2001 competition proved to be a most difficult task. An exceptionally large number of high quality papers were submitted, and in the end the Awards Committee decided

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Toronto Hosts 2001 Epidemiology Congress

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pertinent to a considerable proportion of current epidemiologic research.

ACE President Jon Samet was one of the four participants in the opening presentation, the other speakers representing the Epidemiology Section of the American Public Health Association, the Society for Epidemiologic Research, and the Canadian Society for Epidemiology and Biostatistics. The quality of the program was excellent and the most challenging

aspect was deciding between concurrent sessions (See Editorial).

The Breakfast Roundtables were also quite successful; the discussion on racism in epidemiology, headed by Camara Jones, was opened up and had more than 30 enthusiastic participants.

During the days before the Congress, the ACE Board met, reviewing and approving the budget and hearing from the ACE standing committees. The Board also discussed a new mentor program, the Albuquerque meeting in September of 2002, changes in the *Annals of Epidemiology*, and the proposed dues increase.



Richard Peto, University of Oxford, Walter Willett of Harvard University, and Sander Greenland of UCLA. (Photo by Richard Kwok)



Tony Blakely (Wellington School of Medicine), Barbara Kringold (Center for the Advocacy of Health), Camara Jones (CDC), Wael Al-Delaimy (Harvard), and Alistair Woodward (Wellington School of Medicine) pose for a photo. (Photo by Richard Kwok)

Awards 2001

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to make not only first, second, and third place awards but two honorable mention awards as well. The first place winner was Dora Il'yasova for her paper entitled "Black Tea Consumption Reduces Risk of Rectal Cancer among Women in Moscow". Ms. Il'yasova is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Epidemiology of the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Second place went to Unhee Lim at Cornell University ("Homocysteine and Blood Pressure in the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III; 1988-1994)"), and

third place to Rui Jiang at the Harvard School of Public Health ("Joint Association of Alcohol and Folate Intake with Risk of Major Chronic Diseases in Women"). The two honorable mention awards went to Jennifer Peck at the University of North Carolina ("Steroid Hormones during Pregnancy and Incidence of Maternal Breast Cancer") and to Tien Yin Wong at the University of Wisconsin and Johns Hopkins University ("Retinal Arteriolar Diameter is Related to Incident Coronary Heart Disease in Women but not Men: The Atherosclerosis Risk in Communities Study").

Ms. Il'yasova presented her paper at the Congress on June 16 in the Contributed Paper Session concerning Persistent Organic Pollutants. Her paper was particularly remarkable for its international setting as well as for the fact she was directly responsible for the design of the study and for overseeing its conduct in Moscow. Trained as a biochemist in Moscow, Ms. Il'yasova emigrated to the U.S. in 1991 and later enrolled in the PhD program at UNC where she developed the study proposal from which her prize paper eventually evolved.

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