



President's Letter



The ACE warmly welcomes the more than 15 Epidemiology Department Chairpersons who have graciously agreed to attend the ACE 2005 Annual Meeting. The theme of this year's meeting, 'Epidemiology and Advocacy in the Real World' inspired organizers to develop a dazzling series of sessions. With New Orleans as the back-drop, pre-meeting workshops entitled "Pharmacogenomics: What's an Epidemiologist to Do?" (the signature free workshop organized by Vickie Mays

and the Minority Affairs Committee), "Determinants of Integrity in Epidemiologic Research" (a free workshop organized by Robert McKeown and the ESOP Committee), and others on multi-level analysis, GIS and other exposure assessment tools, the role of the social environment on health, and the epidemiology of disasters (organized by Javier Nieto) should provide a tantalizing taste of the delectable main meeting fare. Launched by a provocative opening forum organized by Mike Bracken, plenary sessions will provide food for thought as intriguing as any offered in the great surrounding restaurants. Research in the Public Eye, Epidemiology and the Courts, and the Threat of Pandemic Influenza are key themes. In an expansion of last year's popular Meet the Editors session, topics for discussion will include what makes an article attractive and conflict of interest. It will be difficult to choose between two stimulating luncheon main courses: "Epidemiology and Advocacy - Perspectives from Non-Profit Organizations" (moderated by Faith Davis) and "Consortium Epidemiology and the Role of Junior Investigators" (moderated by Ed Trapido). Similarly, a plethora of breakfast delights awaits early birds at the September 20 round-tables. A stirring debate entitled "Money Talks and Other Forces that Shape Scientific Inquiry" should get taste-buds primed for the final course, the Awards Banquet Luncheon. In this special edition of the ACE Newsletter, we proudly feature the 2005 ACE Award winners who will be honored throughout the Annual Meeting. Kudos to the Awards Committee (Chaired by Roger Bernier) for spurring ACE to expand and enhance recognition of leaders of our field at all levels!

Calendar of Events

September 17- 20
[ACE Annual Meeting](#)

October 15
Last date for submission
of proposals for
[Congress symposia](#)

June 21-24, 2006
[2006 Congress of
Epidemiology](#)

Top Stories

Enhancements to the ACE Awards Program

Roger Bernier, Awards Committee chair

Have you always thought that epidemiology awards were something that happened only to other people, particularly to very senior persons? Well think again. It is now possible for more epidemiologists to be honored and more achievements to be recognized!

The ACE Awards Committee has embarked on an ambitious multi-year effort to enhance its award program as an important means of better communicating the value of epidemiology to society and serving the needs and interests of epidemiologists. The new Awards Initiative has multiple components, including the addition of three major Achievement Awards, the addition of cash prizes for each, and more frequent awards for Distinguished Service to the College. An important feature of these awards is that they will be for a specific achievement or a contribution to a particular subject and not for lifetime or career accomplishments. Any epidemiologist regardless of age, notoriety, or seniority is able to compete for these Achievement Awards.



The three new Achievement Awards will be for:

1. Outstanding Contributions to Applied Epidemiology (i.e., to the use or translation of epidemiologic data for public health policy or practice)
2. Outstanding Contributions to Epidemiologic Science (i.e., to understanding the epidemiology or etiology of any health condition, disability, or injury)
3. Outstanding Contributions to Epidemiologic Methods

The awards will be made for relatively recent contributions and not for achievements in previous decades. The goal is to recognize work which is still timely and topical for today's epidemiology community.

These awards will be phased in beginning with the Award for Outstanding Contributions to Applied Epidemiology (*see related article*). Each of the new awards will carry a cash prize of \$2,000. Also, the winner of the Applied Epidemiology Award will be invited as a keynote speaker at the annual meeting where he or she will be encouraged to "tell the story" of how they helped to successfully navigate the often difficult divide between scientific data and public health action.

The Abraham Lilienfeld award for lifetime contributions to epidemiology will be continued as the College's most prestigious award. It has been given on 22 occasions since 1985 (*see related article*). The award now carries a cash prize of \$5,000 which is believed to be the largest prize given annually by any group of epidemiologists.

The Student Prize paper award will also be continued, and this year will include a companion award for the student's mentor who has successfully produced student prize winners for two years in a row (*see related article*). Recognizing good mentorship is something the Awards Initiative will consider again in the future. The College covers the travel expenses for the annual meeting where the student is invited to present the winning paper in lieu of a cash prize.

Other ideas for enhancements to the Awards Program include reinvigorating the Honorary Fellows Awards which were started several years ago but have not been made on a regular basis. The Awards Committee welcomes other ideas for enhancing the Awards Program of the College. In particular, we invite all members of the College and other colleagues to submit nominations for these existing and new awards. In particular, the ACE is planning to phase in its next new Award for Outstanding Contributions

to Epidemiologic Science and welcomes nominations for that purpose. For more information about these awards and nominations, visit <http://www.acepidemiology2.org/cttes/awards/> at the ACE website.

The members of the ACE Awards Committee responsible for the new Awards Initiative are Irene Hall (CDC), Clark Heath (past chair of the Awards Committee and formerly with the American Cancer Society and CDC), Shirley Thompson (University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health), Philip Nasca (University of Massachusetts at Amherst), Maureen Hatch, (NCI), and Roger Bernier (CDC).

Robert Hoover is the 22nd recipient of Abraham Lilienfeld Award



Robert Hoover can lay undisputed claim to being one of the nation's leading cancer epidemiologists. His career is marked by a 30 year stint at the National Cancer Institute (NCI). He has held a series of positions of ever increasing responsibility within the research infrastructure from staff associate to Director of the Epidemiology and Biostatistics Program, and a resume that contains close to 400 publications, almost all of them devoted to the wide-ranging causes of cancer. This outstanding career accomplishment is being recognized by the ACE in bestowing on Dr. Hoover its most prestigious award for lifetime contributions to epidemiology. Other award winners have included such epidemiologists as Richard Doll, Milton Terris, and Mervyn Susser. A complete list of past winners is available (<http://www.acepidemiology2.org/cttes/awards/>). Dr.

Hoover will speak at a special luncheon event at the Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

Along his career path in cancer epidemiology, Dr. Hoover has made a series of important discoveries about cancer and contributed an impressive list of firsts. He was the first to quantify and characterize the risk of lymphoma and other cancers associated with the use of immunosuppressive drugs. Also, he was the first to quantify the risk of leukemia due to the use of alkylating agents in the treatment of cancer. He was the first to identify work in shipyards during World War II and concomitant heavy asbestos exposure as the major determinant of the high lung cancer rates in various coastal areas of the United States. His identification of relationships between bladder cancer and exposure to motor vehicle exhausts and to drinking water quality established one of the first and most important analytic links between general environmental exposures and cancer risks.

A special focus of his work has been in the area of hormonal carcinogenesis. Dr. Hoover was the first to report that estrogen replacement therapy is associated with increased risks of breast cancer in 1976. He subsequently showed that the estrogen-progestin hormone replacement regimen increases breast cancer risk beyond that associated with estrogen alone, a major finding confirmed by the recent clinical trial of the Women's Health Initiative.

Dr. Hoover has been a major force in designing and deploying interdisciplinary studies to investigate the role of environmental and genetic factors in cancer etiology. His creative approaches to interdisciplinary studies which integrate epidemiologic and laboratory methods have been adopted by epidemiologists throughout the world. He is the primary architect of the cohort consortium, an international coalition of scientist who are pooling data from population cohorts in a coordinated and concerted effort to identify and quantify the role of genetic and non-genetic factors in cancer etiology.

Dr. Hoover graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1964 and went to medical school at Loyola University of Chicago. He finished medical school in 1968 and then did an internal medicine internship at Cook County Hospital and a preventive medicine residency at the Harvard School of Public Health. It was during that residency that he completed masters and doctoral degrees in epidemiology in the 1970's. He joined the NCI in the mid-1970's and has been there throughout his career.

Godfrey Oakley is the First Winner of the Outstanding Contributions to Applied Epidemiology Award

Sometimes referred to as the “folic acid ambassador” Godfrey P. Oakley Jr., research professor of epidemiology at the Rollins School of Public Health of Emory University and former head of the Birth Defects Division at CDC, has been selected as the first winner of ACE’s Award for Outstanding Contributions to Applied Epidemiology. The new award is meant to recognize the outstanding achievements of epidemiologists who generate or make use of epidemiologic data in the most effective ways to prevent or reduce the impact of disease in human populations. As a strong advocate to have synthetic folic acid added to all grain products, Dr. Oakley helped persuade the FDA to issue new regulations in 1996 requiring that folic acid be added to enriched grains. Since that time, fortification of the US food supply with folic acid has resulted in a 26% reduction in neural tube disorders. Dr. Oakley will recount his odyssey in helping translate data into public health policy and practice at the Annual Meeting.



He knows exactly when the data convinced him that folic acid could prevent neural tube defects, and since that time he has been engaged in a tireless, data-driven effort to connect the dots for other people. It was 5:00 PM on June 24, 1991 when he received a call from Britain’s Nicholas Wald informing him that a randomized controlled trial of folic acid had successfully reduced the incidence of neural tube defects by 72%. He once remarked to an interviewer, “when I heard the news in 1991, it was as if someone handed me the polio vaccine, and only about half a dozen people in the world understood what had just been handed to us.” That same evening, he concluded with other colleagues that what needed to happen is for every woman in the world to consume 400 micrograms of folic acid. He has been pursuing that goal in one creative way after another ever since.

Dr. Oakley attended Duke University and Wake Forest University School of Medicine graduating in 1965. He completed pediatric training at Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital in 1968 and joined the CDC’s Epidemic Intelligence Service that year. He was assigned to work on birth defects and became most interested in spina bifida because it varied dramatically by time, place, and person, suggesting a possible environmental cause. He earned a master’s degree in preventive medicine in 1972 from the University of Washington and spent the majority of his career as an epidemiologist finally retiring from CDC in 1998 as Director of the Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities Division.

Dr. Oakley has been the recipient of numerous awards for his contributions to public health and was elected to the Institute of Medicine in 2003. At that time, Dr. James Curran, dean of the Rollins School of Public Health, stated “Dr. Oakley is a shining example of a scientist who has translated the knowledge gained through his research into practical applications that have had a tremendous impact on the lives of fellow human beings.”

The ACE concurs with Dr. Curran’s assessment and trusts that Dr. Oakley’s selection as the first winner of this new Applied Epidemiology Award will serve as a strong inspiration and model for other epidemiologists dedicated to making a difference for health, a core value at the heart of the profession of epidemiology.

ACE Recognizes Marlene B. Goldman Distinguished Service Award

Marlene Goldman, a Fellow of ACE and member of the Board of Directors during 2000-2003, has served on the Education Committee since 1999. She organized, moderated, and was a featured speaker in ACE Annual Meeting Plenary sessions during 2002-2004, and hosted the Annual Meeting in Boston in 2004. Dr. Goldman single-handedly oversaw the abstract review and poster judging at the Annual Meetings until these tasks were transferred to the Publications Committee in 2002. Dr. Goldman’s extraordinary contributions to the ACE Annual Meeting poster sessions were so substantial that it required an entire team of hard-working ACE Fellows to complete all of the tasks she performed singlehandedly.



For more than 20 years, Marlene Goldman has led epidemiological studies to examine the influence of environmental, occupational, and lifestyle factors on reproductive health. Recently she has directed randomized clinical trials to identify optimal treatment strategies for infertility in women. Dr. Goldman is currently supervising a controlled trial to evaluate the role of teamwork in reducing adverse outcomes and improving process measures and satisfaction in obstetrics. Her work also includes novel and practical efforts to reduce invasive breast cancer and fatal coronary heart disease in women through development of a video on the importance of mammograms and a CD-ROM on prevention and detection of coronary heart disease.

She also conducted seminal work to examine risk of breast and other cancer mortality in women with thyroid disease. Dr. Goldman conceived and edited the award-winning comprehensive reference text entitled *Women and Health*, a reference text for researchers, teaching faculty, and clinicians that focuses on the role of gender in understanding disease occurrence, diagnosis, treatment, and priority setting. She also co-edited a text on study designs and statistical approaches for infertility research.

Dr. Goldman is a Fellow of the ACE; a recipient of a FREDDIE Award (for her videotape on "Mammograms for Life" from Time Inc. Health's 2000 International Health and Medical Film Competition) and an Award of Excellence in Medical Science from the Association of American Publishers for her textbook "Women and Health"; a Mellon Foundation Faculty Development Award winner; and recipient of numerous fellowship and teaching awards including an Exxon Corporation Fellowship in Epidemiology, a Bok Teaching Innovation Grant from the Harvard School of Public Health, a competitive Junior Faculty Sabbatical Award, and designation as a Health Sciences Fellow, Mary Ingraham Bunting Institute, at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University.

Dr. Goldman graduated from Colby College with Bachelor of Arts degree in 1970. She received a Master of Science degree in Epidemiology from Harvard University in 1978. In 1984 she completed requirements for her ScD degree in Epidemiology at Harvard University. Since 2000, she has been an Associate Professor of Obstetrics, Gynecology, and Reproductive Biology at the Harvard Medical School. Dr. Goldman has served as Director of Epidemiology and Outcomes Research in the Division of Reproductive Endocrinology, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center since 2004.

ACE Recognizes Jess F. Kraus Distinguished Service Award

Jess F. Kraus participated in early discussions that ultimately led to the founding of the ACE. Dr. Kraus served as the first Treasurer beginning in 1980, was elected to Fellow in that same year, and assumed the additional role of Secretary of the College in 1986. He served as Secretary/Treasurer until 1992. He chaired the Scientific Program Committee for the 9th Annual Meeting, which he also hosted in Los Angeles in 1990. As the first long-time Secretary-Treasurer of ACE, Dr. Kraus's vision and leadership has contributed to the strong scientific and educational foundation of today's vibrant College.



In his long and distinguished career, Dr. Kraus has focused his research studies in the field of injury epidemiology on identification of the determinants of injury-related morbidity and mortality as well measures to reduce or prevent resultant serious health outcomes in diverse populations. His epidemiological research has examined a broad range of issues including the determinants and biomechanics of injuries and crime prevention. Dr. Kraus has studied injuries to a wide range of anatomic sites, with a particular emphasis on neurological injuries to the brain and spinal cord, and musculoskeletal injuries of the lower back and other sites. Other long-standing emphases of Dr. Kraus' research include studies of sudden infant death syndrome, and determinants and control measures for hypertension.

Dr. Kraus is a Fellow of the ACE, a member of the American Epidemiology Society, the Delta Omega Honorary Public Health Society, and the University of California, Davis Chapter of Sigma Xi; winner of the 1993 UCLA, School of Public Health Alumni Association Faculty of the Year Award; and a recipient of the Distinguished Career Service Award of the American Public Health Association.

Dr. Kraus graduated from Sacramento State College with Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees in 1959 and 1963, respectively. He received a Master of Public Health degree in Occupational Health from the University of California, Berkeley in 1964. In 1967 he completed requirements for his PhD degree in Environmental Epidemiology at the University of Minnesota; where he went on to complete post-doctoral training. He was the recipient of a Research Fellowship from the IARC to conduct research in cancer epidemiology at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. Dr. Kraus first worked at the US Public Health Service Environmental Epidemiology Branch in Cincinnati, Ohio where he also was an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Division of Preventive Medicine, University of Cincinnati School of Medicine. Subsequently, he was an Assistant and then Associate Professor in the Department of Community of Medicine at the University of California, Davis. From 1980 to the present, Dr. Kraus has been Professor of Epidemiology at the School of Public Health at the University of California, Los Angeles. He has served as Director of the Southern California Injury Prevention Research Center since 1989.

ACE Recognizes Pauline Mendola for Excellence in Student Mentoring

Her students have won best student prize paper two years in a row.



It is too unlikely to be mere a coincidence. The faculty mentor of this year's winner of the ACE Student Prize Paper was also the mentor for the winner in 2004. Such achievements do not come easily, and in recognition of her outstanding contributions to student development, the ACE has created a special award this year to recognize Pauline Mendola of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Research Triangle Park as its first Model Mentor.

Asked what her secrets to success might be, Mendola was quick to respond "Think of the student as a person," she said. "It's about their careers, and you have to ask yourself what it is they need to stretch their wings and to learn experientially. They get the book learning from UNC, but here at the EPA they get to try out things in a real world setting," she added. She also gives credit for her mentoring achievements to Germaine Buck (University at Buffalo) who was her mentor. We see that excellence comes full circle. It is probably no coincidence that Dr Mendola herself won the ACE Student Prize Award in 1994.

It seems clear that Mendola is a hit with her students. "She's a phenomenal mentor," said Suzanne Gilboa, the winner of the 2005 ACE prize. "I will be lucky if I ever get anyone close to her ever again," Gilboa added "She's good at helping you to focus in on a project, and to pick one that is doable. She gives excellent feedback on your writing and on your thoughts. She knows how to give students the attention they need, and she gives guidance while allowing you to explore your own ideas." According to Richard Kwok, the 2004 winner, "She is a wonderful and caring mentor. Both Suzanne and I very much appreciate all the guidance and wisdom that we received from her while we were students at UNC and EPA."

Asked about her motivation to engage in mentoring, Mendola says that she enjoys it. "Being a teacher is a lot of fun," she finds. "It keeps you fresh, exposes you to interesting ideas, and the students are quick thinkers. I would miss it if I did not do it." She considers training to be part of the legacy that she can leave for the field. It certainly helps her that part of EPA's mission is to develop strong researchers.

Her mentoring style is to give students opportunities to explore ideas and to learn while doing. For example her students must gain approvals to do research and navigate the bureaucracy. She is there to serve as their "safety net" so that the students are not thrown into these real world situations with no support. One helpful device she uses is to develop annual training plans for her students. These are

reviewed and revised as needed.

Mendola received all of her education and training at the State University of New York at Buffalo. She obtained her undergraduate degree there in 1985, went on to earn a Masters degree in 1990, and her PhD in Epidemiology and Community Health in 1994. At EPA, Mendola is head of the Epidemiology and Biomarkers Branch of the National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory in the Office of Research and Development.

ACE Awards Suzanne Gilboa Student Prize Paper Another UNC Graduate Wins

Suzanne Gilboa, a graduate of the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Public Health, was selected as the winner of the 2005 Student Prize Paper for her study entitled "Relationship between Ambient Air Quality and Selected Birth Defects, Seven County Study, Texas, 1997-2000". The population based case control study investigated associations between exposure to air pollution during the early weeks of pregnancy and a variety of birth defects among more than 7,000 live births and fetal deaths in seven Texas counties. Gilboa also has won the student prize paper award from the Society for Epidemiologic Research.



As a pre-doctoral grantee with the Environmental Protection Agency, Gilboa knew she would be studying some environmental exposure. As a former Peace Corps Health Volunteer in Nicaragua, she had an interest in women's health and reproductive outcomes. Her specific choice of research topic was triggered by a paper published in the American Journal of Epidemiology (AJE) by Ritz et al. which looked at air pollution and birth defects. While considerable work had been done on air pollution and birth weight outcomes, looking at birth defects "was a new and exciting idea" said Gilboa.

With fairly smooth sailing, Gilboa's project idea came together in the summer of 2002, was presented as a proposal in the winter of 2003, and the record linkage data analysis completed in the fall of 2004. She defended her thesis in January of this year and her paper was published August 1, 2005 in the AJE along with her co-authors representing four separate institutions. According to the authors, evidence that air pollution exposure influenced the risk of oral clefts was limited. Suggestive results supported a previously reported association between ozone exposure and pulmonary artery and valve defects.

Suzanne Gilboa graduated from Harvard in 1995 with a BA in anthropology. After her stint in the Peace Corps, she earned an MHS degree from the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health in Population and Family Health Sciences in 2000 and her PhD from UNC in 2005.

Asked how she became interested in epidemiology, Gilboa said that mid-way through her master's degree she started taking epidemiology courses and realized that she liked being stronger in methods. This allowed her more flexibility to work in different content areas. As of September 1, 2005 Gilboa will be employed as an epidemiologist in the Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities at the CDC.

In the News

ACE Meeting Article Published in July Epidemiology Monitor

Check out the story by ACE's Roger Bernier, published in the July Epidemiology Monitor, on the ACE Meeting in New Orleans. The theme of the meeting is "Epidemiology and Advocacy In The Real World" and organizers have scheduled an opening forum with several well known epidemiologists, including Carol Hogue, Kay Dickersin, Raymond Neutra, and the FDA's now famous David Graham.

ACE Meeting In New Orleans

"Story by Roger Bernier, published in the Epidemiology Monitor, July 2005"

Upcoming ACE Meeting In New Orleans Will Focus On Epidemiology And Advocacy In The Real World

Always a standout for its topical presentations, the American College of Epidemiology will not disappoint those planning to attend its 2005 annual meeting in New Orleans in September. The theme of the meeting is "Epidemiology and Advocacy In The Real World" and organizers have scheduled an opening forum with several well known epidemiologists, including Carol Hogue, Kay Dickersin, Raymond Neutra, and the FDA's now famous David Graham. Graham has been much in the headlines this past year for speaking publicly on the need for post marketing drug safety reforms within FDA. In New Orleans, he will speak on "Drug Safety in America: A Cause In Need Of Advocacy".

Also on opening day, the ACE has scheduled a plenary session on Research In The Public Eye that will feature presentations on the Long Island Breast Cancer Study and the Gulf War Illness Study. The Long Island study presentation led by Marilie Gammon of UNC will be particularly relevant for the theme of the meeting since it will focus on insights derived from researchers, the advocacy community, and the public which interacted intensively in the Long Island study.

During Roundtables at lunchtime, participants will have the opportunity to speak directly with advocates from non-profit organizations who will share their perspectives on epidemiology and advocacy.

A third plenary session on opening day will focus on Epidemiology and the Courts. Organized and moderated by Johns Hopkins' Steven Teret with a degree in law and public health, the session will include several provocative topics including, "When Science Promotes Justice: Injury Prevention and Litigation", "When Emotions Overcome Science In The Courtroom", and "When Judges Struggle With Epidemiology".

On the second day of the conference, the ACE will initiate a new award program for Outstanding Contributions to Applied Epidemiology and make its first award to Emory University's Godfrey Oakley for his use of epidemiologic data on folic acid to help reduce neural tube defects. Oakley will describe the "story of folic acid" and how fortification of the food supply in the US has led to a significant decrease in birth defects.

Other award highlights on the second day include the Abraham Lilienfeld award to NCI's Robert Hoover for his outstanding lifetime contributions to epidemiology and the student prize paper to Suzanne Gilboa from UNC who won both the SER and the ACE student competition this year. Both Hoover and Gilboa will speak at the meeting.

In addition to the awards, the second day will feature a plenary session on Pandemic Influenza addressing the question of how prepared are we for this expected pandemic and a debate on the theme "Money Talks And Other Forces That Shape Scientific Inquiry".

To get more information about the meeting, visit www.acepidemiology.org

From the Board of Directors

Election Results!

Elections for officers and directors of ACE were held in July. The new **President-Elect** of ACE is **John F. Acquavella, PhD**, Senior Director for Epidemiology at Amgen Inc. in Thousand Oaks, California. He worked previously for the Environmental Protection Agency, the University of California, Exxon Biomedical Sciences, and Monsanto Company. Newly elected to the Board of Directors were **Denise M. Oleske, PhD** (Professor, Departments of Health Systems Management and Preventive Medicine and Associate Chair of the Department of Health Systems Management, all at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago), **Robert Spirtas, MS, DrPH** (Chief of the Contraception and Reproductive Health Branch, Center for Population Research, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NIH, DHHS, Bethesda, MD), **David E. Lilienfeld, MD, MPH, MEngin, MBA, FACE, FISPE, FAHA** (Senior Director and Head of Drug Safety at Protein Design Labs, Inc, a biotechnology company in

Fremont, California), and **Jorge Ibarra, MD, MPH**. (County Epidemiologist in Tucson, Arizona and Co-Director of Mesa Public Health Associates, a consulting firm in the US-Mexico border region). Also elected to the ACE BOD by members of the Board was **Jennifer Fergenbaum, MSc**, a doctoral student at the University of Toronto and first Associate Member of the ACE BOD.

Committees

Policy

Roberta Ness, MD, MPH
Chair, Policy Committee

As usual, the Policy Committee has involved itself in several major policy issues of the day affecting epidemiologists. These activities have taken several forms including letter writing on “hot button” issues, providing invited public comment to governmental agencies on behalf of the College, and taking a lead on issues concerning the ACE membership. Examples of activities by the Policy Committee within the past year are listed below:

Commentary in the Annals of Epidemiology entitled “Administration quells scientific dissent.” Signed by ACE Policy Committee Members: Ness, Bondy, Branas, Camargo, Rothenberg, Samet, Sandler, Swanson, Strom.

- Friends of AHRQ: signed on to several letters, including letter to House and Senate appropriators (Chairman Spector and Senator Harkin) in order to ensure adequate funding for AHRQ, the Friends of AHRQ support a funding level of \$443 million for the agency in FY 2005. We requested that the Budget Committee increase the discretionary funding for public health through the Function 550 budget allocation by 12 percent in order to ensure adequate funding for AHRQ.

Increased media attention to the adverse effect of HIPAA on epidemiology research – e.g., articles in Science (news section), San Francisco Chronicle, and Philadelphia Inquirer.

- Editorial published in the Annals of Epidemiology including first data to demonstrate the adverse effect of HIPAA on recruitment into research.
- Letter outlining concerns about NCHS policy to restrict public access to data sent as part of public comment period.
- Letter sent to Administration officials regarding National Academies report recommending an approach to resolve politicization of science.
- Policy Committee members Sulsky and Camargo planning a policy symposium for 2005 annual meeting in New Orleans on the interaction of industry and academia in epidemiology.
- Letter in development regarding the committee’s suggestions on how to modify/improve FDA oversight.

Commentary

ACE can be proud of the accomplishments of our members. The award winners featured in this issue are an example of the outstanding strengths of our colleagues, at all stages of their careers. Please welcome Richard Kwok (rkwok@rti.org) as our new photo editor. Do send him your group shots at Jackson Square or other Annual Meeting locales for use by the College. Don't forget to provide names of those photographed! Thanks. *Carol Burns, Editor* (cburns@dow.com).

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Editor: Carol Burns, cburns@dow.com

For e-mail or other address changes, contact Anglea Stockburger, astockburger@olsonmgmt.com

Visit the ACE website at www.acepidemiology.org

ACE

1500 Sunday Drive, Suite 102, Raleigh, NC 27607

Phone (919) 861-5573, Fax (919) 787-4916