Newsworthy Publications & Presentations

Amy Millen, assistant professor of Social and Preventive Medicine, is first author of a recently published article entitled *Vitamin D Status and Early Age-Related Macular Degeneration in Postmenopausal Women*. The article, published in the Archives of Ophthalmology, presents results from her “Carotenoids in Age-Related Eye Disease Study (CAREDS)”. Using data from 1,313 women, the study found that in women younger than 75 years, those who had vitamin D concentrations lower than 38 nanomoles per liter were more likely to have age-related macular degeneration than women with vitamin D concentrations greater than 38 nanomoles per liter. Amy’s research has received wide coverage in domestic and international news outlets that include ABC News, Consumer Reports, Baltimore Sun, Web MD, MedPage Today, Marie Claire, UPI, and CBC News in Canada. For further information, please see [http://www.buffalo.edu/news/12463](http://www.buffalo.edu/news/12463)

Elie Akl, research associate professor of Social and Preventive Medicine, is lead author of the first systemic review of the prevalence of waterpipe smoking across countries, age groups and genders. The paper, entitled *The prevalence of waterpipe tobacco smoking among the general and specific populations: A systemic review*, identified 38 relevant studies conducted in the U.S., the United Kingdom, Australia and Estonia, as well as countries in the Arab Gulf. The review revealed the highest rates of waterpipe smoking in Middle Eastern and Asian countries where the practice is a centuries-long tradition. Researchers also found waterpipe smoking increasing in the U.S. and other western countries. The results of the review, which is published in Biomedical Health Central Public Health, “should be a wake-up call to public health agencies that should directly address waterpipe smoking in their tobacco-control strategies” says Elie. For further information, please see [http://www.buffalo.edu/news/12509](http://www.buffalo.edu/news/12509)

Katharine Dobson, MPH, epidemiology doctoral student and research assistant in Social and Preventive Medicine, is lead investigator of study in which data collected from the Western New York Exposures and Breast Cancer (WEB) study were analyzed. Data was collected from 1,170 women with recently diagnosed breast cancer and 2,116 healthy women who lived in Erie and Niagara Counties between 1996 and 2001. Research findings indicated that exposure to air pollution early in life and when a woman gives birth to her first child may alter her DNA and may be associated with premenopausal breast cancer later in life. Katharine’s poster, entitled *Air pollution exposure and promoter methylation of E-cadherin, p16, and RAR-β in breast cancer tumors from cases in the WEB study*, was presented at the annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research in April. Social and Preventive Medicine faculty who worked with Katharine include Jo Freudenheim, professor and chair, Matthew Bonner, assistant professor, Jing Nie, research assistant professor and Menghua Tao, research assistant professor. For additional information, please see [http://www.buffalo.edu/news/12494](http://www.buffalo.edu/news/12494)
NIH Notices

NIH Fiscal Policy for Grant Awards – FY 2011
To address the 1% increase received by the NIH in the recently passed federal budget, the NIH has recently released a Fiscal Policy for FY2011. In summary, NIH continuation awards may be reduced by 1% - 3% of the FY 2010 award level (the level of reduction may depend on the NIH Institute). Any such reductions will be made through the NIH award notice. The RAS staff is prepared to work with PIs and SPS on re-budgeting the award, if necessary, when it is received. The UB Vice President for Research asks that if you receive a budget reduction that will impact your ability to complete your project as originally planned, that you work with SPS to communicate that to the NIH. Also, contact SPS for any re-budgeting actions that may require NIH approval. The RAS staff also is available to assist you in such cases. For further information, please see NIH notice: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-11-068.html

Special Emphasis Notice - AHRQ Announces Interest in Grants Focused on Health Issues of Minority Women
The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) encourages grant applications that propose research that focuses on minority women in health research designed to (1) improve clinical practice; (2) improve the health care system’s ability to provide access to and deliver high quality, high value health care; and (3) provide policymakers with the ability to assess the impact of system changes on outcomes, quality, access to, cost, and use of health care services. AHRQ will utilize its current R01, R18 and R03 mechanisms for applications in this area of interest and applications should be submitted on regular R01, R18 and R03 grant application receipt dates. Applicants are encouraged to indicate in their applications that they are responding to this notice by including the Special Emphasis Notice title and number and to include a cover letter stating their interest in this SEN. For further information, please see NIH Notice: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HS-11-013.html

Special Emphasis Notice - AHRQ Announces Interest in Priority Populations Research
The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) encourages grant applications that propose research that focuses on the health care for AHRQ priority populations (e.g., women, children, racial and ethnic minorities, populations with special health care needs [chronic illness, disabilities and end of life care needs], the elderly, low-income, inner-city, and rural populations) with specific emphasis in the following areas: (1) explaining disparities in health care and clinical practice; (2) implementation of research and interventions that aim to reduce disparities in priority populations and settings; (3) addressing known gaps in research dealing with priority populations; 4) development of methods to address the heterogeneity of priority populations, small sample sizes and to improve outcomes for priority populations in AHRQ sponsored research; 5) research on cross cutting issues involving multiple priority population groups and settings (for example, disabled children, minority women, rural maternal and child health, etc); and 6) development of innovative service delivery models for settings in which priority populations receive care. AHRQ will use its currently open Funding Opportunity Announcements for applications in this area. Applicants are encouraged to indicate in their applications that they are responding to this notice by including the Special Emphasis Notice title and number and to include a cover letter stating their interest in this SEN. For further information, please see NIH Notice: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-HS-11-014.html

Notice of Intent to Reissue a Request for Applications on Research on Hearing Health Care (R21/R33)
The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) intends to reissue RFA-DC-10-002 to encourage research and increase infrastructure support leading to accessible and affordable HHC. The FOA will solicit applications responsive to the NIDCD research working group on accessible and affordable hearing health care for adults with mild to moderate hearing loss. The overarching emphasis of the FOA will be on the acquisition of knowledge that can be rapidly translated into new or enhanced approaches for access, assessment or interventions with a goal to delivering better HHC outcomes. Applications should seek quality approaches that are effective, affordable and deliverable to those who need them as well as implementable and sustainable in settings beyond the research environment. This Notice is being provided to allow potential applicants sufficient time to develop meaningful collaborations and responsive projects. The FOA is expected to be published in summer 2011 with an expected receipt date in early fall 2011. For further information, please see NIH Notice: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-DC-11-005.html
Notice to Clarify Instructions for PAR-10-020, Drug Abuse Dissertation Research: Epidemiology, Prevention, Treatment, Services, and/or Women and Sex/Gender Differences (R36)

In Section IV part 6, “Other Submission Requirements” of the FOA, the need for two letters is described. One required letter is the "letter of certification" from the faculty committee or university official directly responsible for supervising the development and progress of the dissertation research. This typically comes from the student’s dissertation committee chair or program chair. The second required letter is the “letter of recommendation”. This is typically written by the student’s program advisor or program chair. Cases in which the certification and recommendation letters are to be provided by the same person, one letter addressing both issues will be acceptable.

The information requested under the subheading “Project Description,” should be included in the Specific Aims (c.) and Research Strategy (a., b., d., e.) sections of the SF424 application. The subheadings within the Research Strategy Section of the applications should remain Significance, Innovation, and Approach as described in the SF424 Application guide, but the expectation is that the information outlined within the Project Description (a., b., d., e.) of this FOA will be conveyed within that portion of the application. All other aspects of the FOA remain the same.


Appeals of NIH Initial Peer Review

Recent revisions in NIH policy concerning appeals of the initial peer review process will become effective for all competing applications received for the January 25, 2011 due date (October 2011 Council round) and thereafter.

Applicants should consider the comments in the summary statement prior to submitting an appeal letter. After reviewing the summary statements, applicants should then contact the appropriate NIH Program Official (PO). The PO can answer questions about the summary statement and review outcome, and provide advice to the applicant. Following discussion with the PO, if the applicant wishes to proceed with an appeal, he or she should contact their authorized organization representative (AOR). The AOR must concur with the appeal in order for it to be accepted by NIH. For further information, including what is required in an appeal letter and the acceptable basis for appeals, please see NIH notice:


Additional Extension of Comment Period on Proposed Adoption and Implementation of the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals: Eight Edition and Removal of Character Limits for Comments

The comment period on NIH’s proposed adoption and implementation of the 8th edition of the Guide has been extended an additional 30 days until May 24, 2011. Additionally, character limits on the comment form fields have been removed. For further information, including the link to post your comment, please see NIH notice:


All About Cover Letters

From All about Grants podcast, February 18, 2011


Megan Columbus, Office of Extramural Research, NIH

Anne Clark, Center of Scientific Review’s Division of Receipt and Referral

- What should a PI include in a cover letter?
  The big picture is that a cover letter helps the people who are assigning your application get it to the right place at the right time. You can list one or more institutes or centers, as well as one or more review groups, which you would like to have your application be considered by.

- How would one go about determining which review group to suggest in that cover letter?
  If the application is going to be reviewed by the Center for Scientific Review (CSR), it’s useful to go to the CSR home page and find specific descriptions for the various review groups. From there, one can choose a review group or groups that seem most suitable.

- What do I do if I think I’m going to have a conflict with a reviewer?
  If there are individuals you think should not be involved in the review of your application, it would be useful to list those individuals and a brief description of why they should not be involved.

Continued on next page
Cover Letters, con’t

- What about the converse? What if I want to say I know who would be perfect for this application? That is something that you should probably not do. The better thing to do would be to list the areas of science that you think would be needed to review your application, particularly if it’s a multi-disciplinary area.

- If I am submitting a late application, how much detail is expected in the cover letter? A very brief description is usually sufficient. If more information is required, it can be asked for, but basically, just a reasonable description of the situation. The cover letter is a relatively confidential piece of information. Only the staff who would be assigning your grant application, as well as staff who would be setting up the review of your applications are able to view your cover letter.

- Basic format of a cover letter:
  * List one request per line.
  * Place Institute/Center (IC) and SRG review requests (if both are made) on separate lines.
  * Place positive and negative requests (if both are made) on separate lines.
  * Include name of IC or SRG, followed by a dash and the acronym. Do not use parentheses.

Example of a Cover Letter

Please assign this application to the following:
Institutes/Centers:
- National Cancer Institute - NCI
- National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research – NIDCR

Scientific Review Groups:
- Molecular Oncogenesis Study Section – MONC
- Cancer Etiology Study Section – CE

Please do not assign this application to the following:
Scientific Review Groups:
- Cancer Genetics Study Section – CG

The reasons for this request are [provide a narrative explanation for the request(s)].

NIH Funding Opportunities: RFAs

RFA (Requests for Applications)

RFA-MD-12-001
**NIMHD Health Disparities Research (R01)**
The purpose of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is to solicit innovative research that can directly and demonstrably contribute to the elimination of health disparities. Research aims may include, but are not limited to, biological mechanisms; behavioral strategies; lifestyle factors; environmental, structural, and economic factors; cultural and family influences; delivery system interventions; medical procedures and regimens (including alternative therapy), and medical assistive devices and health information technologies. Projects may involve primary data collection or secondary analysis of existing datasets.

**Application Due Date(s):** June 14, 2011

Continued on next page
RFA-HL-12-009
**Anchoring Metabolomic Changes to Phenotype (P20)**
The purpose of this FOA is to facilitate the capture of molecular information that is most proximal to a cardiovascular or lung disease phenotype of interest and use that to gain mechanistic understanding of the pathways and mediators involved in the expression of the phenotype. Given the complex nature of cardiovascular and lung diseases, evaluation with more comprehensive high-throughput analytical methodologies coupled with mechanistic studies is necessary to help provide needed insights into biochemical and physiological underpinnings of the disease process and to gain comprehensive understanding of the expressed phenotype. This initiative proposes a multidisciplinary and integrated program with two interacting components, the metabolomic component and the mechanistic component, each of which informs the other in an iterative manner. The initiative also proposes an administrative core to facilitate coordination, integration, interaction and leveraging of resources among the programs.

**Application Due Date(s):** June 17, 2011

RFA-HL-12-019
**Pilot Studies to Develop and Test Novel, Low-Cost Methods for the Conduct of Clinical Trials (R01)**
The funding announcement solicits R01 applications that develop and test new, low cost methods to conduct clinical trials. Responsive applicants will address four challenges to the conduct of clinical trials: (1) minimize specialized infrastructure, (2) minimize visits designed solely for the trial, (3) explore novel methods of obtaining consent that minimize burden, and (4) employ low-cost methods of monitoring study conduct. The proposed methodology must be tested in a pilot trial. New and innovative designs that have not been tested in previous studies but hold potential for increasing the efficiency and reducing the cost of conduct of clinical trials are especially encouraged.

**Application Due Date(s):** October 13, 2011

RFA-AA-12-002
**Specialized Alcohol Research Centers (P50)**
The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) invites applications for Specialized Alcohol Research Centers using the P50 mechanism. The overall purpose of the NIAAA Alcohol Research Center program is to provide leadership in conducting and fostering interdisciplinary, collaborative research on a wide variety of topics relevant to the Institute’s mission. These topics include, but are not limited to: the nature, etiology, genetics, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of alcohol use disorders and their biomedical, psychosocial, and economic consequences across the lifespan. Centers also are regional or national resources that contribute to the development of new research methods, technologies and approaches that sustain innovative goal-directed research.

**Application Due Date(s):** December 7, 2011

RFA-AA-12-003
**Comprehensive Alcohol Research Centers (P60)**
The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) invites applications for Comprehensive Alcohol Research Centers using the P60 mechanism. The overall purpose of the NIAAA Alcohol Research Center program is to provide leadership in conducting and fostering interdisciplinary, collaborative research on a wide variety of topics relevant to the Institute’s mission. These topics include, but are not limited to: the nature, etiology, genetics, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of alcohol use disorders and their biomedical, psychosocial, and economic consequences across the lifespan. Centers also are regional or national resources that contribute to the development of new research methods, technologies and approaches that sustain innovative goal-directed research.

**Application Due Date(s):** December 7, 2011
PAR (Program Announcement Reviewed by an Institute)

PAR-11-152 (U01)
The Role of Microbial Metabolites in Cancer Prevention and Etiology
Application Due Date(s): November 15, 2011; November 15, 2012
Expiration Date: November 16, 2012
This FOA encourages the submission of grant applications that characterize the effects of microbially generated metabolites of dietary components on host cell biology. Specifically, this FOA seeks to characterize microbially generated metabolites and better understand their molecular mechanisms of action that affect host cell proliferative/apoptotic responses, cytokine production, inflammatory and immunomodulatory effects. This research is necessary to better understand the role of dietary components in cancer etiology, prevention, and cancer health disparities to identify who might benefit from specific dietary recommendations and who might be placed at risk. One of the goals of this program will be to facilitate interdisciplinary collaborations among scientists engaged in nutrition, cancer prevention, cancer cell biology research, and cancer disparities research with those conducting studies with gut microorganisms. All applications must include multiple principle investigators with different areas of expertise such as microbiology, nutrition, cancer biology, analytical chemistry, or genetics.

PAR-11-203 (Interagency U01)
Predictive Multiscale Models for Biomedical, Biological, Behavioral, Environmental and Clinical Research
Expiration Date: February 1, 2014
The goal of this interagency funding opportunity announcement (FOA) is to support the development of multiscale models to accelerate biological, biomedical, behavioral, environmental and clinical research. The NIH, DOE, FDA, and NSF recognize that to efficiently and effectively address the challenges of understanding multiscale biological and behavioral systems, researchers will need predictive, computational models that encompass multiple biological and behavioral scales. This FOA also encourages the development of new, non-standard modeling methods and experimental approaches to facilitate multiscale modeling.

PAR-11-020 (R01) and PAR-11-021 (R21)
Technologies for Healthy Independent Living
Expiration Date: September 20, 2013
This FOA encourages applications for research and development of technologies that monitor health or deliver care in a real-time, accessible, effective, and minimally obtrusive way. These systems are expected to integrate, process, analyze, communicate, and present data so that the individuals are engaged and empowered in their own healthcare with reduced burden to care providers. The development of these technology systems has the potential to significantly improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, people aging with mild impairments, as well as individuals with chronic conditions.

PAR-09-088 (K05)
Established Investigator Award in Cancer Prevention & Control
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: January 8, 2012
The NCI Established Investigator Award (K05) provides qualified cancer prevention, control, behavioral, and/or population scientists with protected time to devote to research and to mentoring new investigators. The award requires the candidate to devote a minimum of 25 percent of full-time professional effort towards conducting the experimental research plan and the mentoring activities described in the application.
PA (Program Announcements)

PA-11-200 (R01), PA-11-201 (R13) and PA-11-202 (R21)
Research on Children in Military Families: The Impact of Military Deployment and Reintegration on Child and Family Functioning
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: May 8, 2014

PA-11-016 (R01) and PA-11-018 (R21)
Epidemiology and Prevention in Alcohol Research
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: January 8, 2014

PA-11-178 (R01) and PA-11-179 (R21)
Circadian Rhythms and Alcohol-induced Tissue Injury
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: May 8, 2013

PA-11-198 (R01)
Understanding Clinical Information Needs and Health Care Decision Making Processes in the Context of Health Information Technology
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: July 6, 2014

PA-11-190 (K01)
Mentored Research Scientist Development Award
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: September 8, 2014

PA-11-191 (K02)
Independent Scientist Award
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: September 8, 2014

PA-11-192 (K07)
Academic Career Award
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: September 8, 2014

PA-11-197 (K99/R00)
NIH Pathway to Independence Award
Application Due Date(s): Standard dates apply
Expiration Date: September 8, 2014

Funding Opportunities: Foundations

Alzheimers Drug Discovery Foundation

The ADDF is interested in novel targets and therapeutic approaches for Alzheimer's disease, related dementias and cognitive aging. These areas include, but are not limited to: non-amyloid/tau biomarkers, myelin degeneration, oligodendrocytes and their interaction with neurons and synapses, synaptic dysfunction/dysmorphology, calcium dysregulation, inflammatory responses, energy utilization/mitochondria dysfunction, ischemia and oxidative stress, vascular injury, and the bloodbrain barrier interface. The ADDF funds four different categories of research: Drug Discovery (target validation; high throughput screening; medicinal chemistry, including hit to lead development and lead optimization; in vitro and in vivo studies of efficacy, ADME, toxicology, pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics; and in vivo proof-of-concept with lead compounds and biologics), Early Detection (development of biomarkers to accelerate drug development and early diagnosis), Clinical Trials (innovative pilot clinical trials) and Prevention (targeted pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches to prevention).
Deadline to Apply: July 5, 2011 and October 5, 2011
http://www.alzdiscovery.org/index.php/research-programs/grant-opportunities
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Assuring the Future of Public Health Systems & Services Research: Junior Faculty Program
In the fall of 2005, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded the University of Kentucky College of Public Health to develop a database for Public Health Systems & Services Research (PHSSR) in conjunction with the National Library of Medicine (NLM) to strengthen the capacity to conduct research in the emerging field of public health systems. One of the project objectives was to disseminate information about the new NLM PHSSR database to the research community. The goal of our initial Call for Proposals was to assure the future of Public Health Systems & Services Research by encouraging young investigators to engage in research using datasets described in the PHSR subset of Health Services Research Resources (HSRR). Since that initial Call for Proposals, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has provided additional funding to continue to grow the field of PHSSR. This new round of funding is intended to fund promising young investigators who will engage in research using data sets contained in the PHSR subset of NLM's Health Services Research Resources (HSRR), other relevant data sets that may be available, or data collected by the researcher. Junior faculty applicants should be within 3 years of their initial appointment.

Deadline to Apply: June 1, 2011
http://www.rwjf.org/applications/solicited/cfp.jsp?ID=21365&cid=XEM_206615

American Heart Association

National Innovative Research Grant
The objective of this announcement is to support highly innovative, high-risk, high-reward research that could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancements that will accelerate the field of cardiovascular and stroke research. Research deemed innovative may introduce a new paradigm, challenge current paradigms, look at existing problems from new perspectives, or exhibit other uniquely creative qualities. The Innovative Research Grant (IRG) promotes new ideas; therefore, proposals need not include preliminary data. However, a solid rationale for the work must be provided. Proposed work should not be the next logical step of previous work, but should have a high probability of revealing new avenues of investigation, if successful. This program aims to provide pilot or seed funding that should lead to successful competition for additional funding beyond the pilot period.

Deadline to Apply: July 8, 2011
http://my.americanheart.org/professional/Research/FundingOpportunities/ForScientists/National-Innovative-Research-Grant_UCM_321936_Article.jsp

National Established Investigator Award
The objective of this announcement is to support mid-career investigators with unusual promise and an established record of accomplishments; candidates have a demonstrated commitment to cardiovascular or cerebrovascular science as indicated by prior publication history and scientific accomplishments. A candidate's career is expected to be in a rapid growth phase. The scientific focus should be broadly related to cardiovascular function and disease and stroke, or to related clinical, basic science, bioengineering or biotechnology, and public health problems, including multidisciplinary efforts.

Deadline to Apply: July 8, 2011
http://my.americanheart.org/professional/Research/FundingOpportunities/ForScientists/National-Established-Investigator-Award_UCM_321935_Article.jsp
American Heart Association

Scientist Development Grant Program
The objective of this announcement is to support highly promising beginning scientists in their progress toward independence by encouraging and adequately funding research projects that can bridge the gap between completion of research training and readiness for successful competition as an independent investigator. Applicants may apply at either the National level or the Founders Affiliate level.
Deadline to Appy:  July 8, 2011 (National)
                   July 26, 2011 (Founders Affiliate)
http://my.americanheart.org/professional/Research/FundingOpportunities/SupportingInformation/National-Scientist-Development-Grant-Program-Description_UCM_321916_Article.jsp
http://my.americanheart.org/professional/Research/FundingOpportunities/ForScientists/Founders-Affiliate-Scientist-Development-Grant-Program-Description_UCM_321914_Article.jsp

UB’s 2011 Postdoc Research Symposium

Registration and abstract submissions for the Poster Presentation are now being accepted. Participants must be postdoctoral scholars at UB, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Research Institute on Addictions or Hauptman-Woodward Institute. Awards recognizing abstract/poster submissions will be presented. In addition, the Third Annual Distinguished Postdoc Mentor Award will be presented at the Symposium.
Date:  June 7, 2011, 2:00-6:00pm
Registration Deadline:  May 27, 2011
To register for the Symposium, or nominate a mentor for the Distinguished Mentor award, please visit http://www.grad.buffalo.edu/postdocs/symposium

Network in Aging of Western New York

Call for Abstracts
As part of NIA’s 31st annual meeting and conference in November (specific date TBA), a poster session will be held. This event is open to UB students who are involved in research or literature reviews on issues relevant to aging in our society. Students are invited to submit abstracts on various topics about aging. An educational panel will review the abstracts and notify students regarding their acceptance. Three cash prizes of $100 each will be given for the best student posters. Abstracts should be submitted by October 3, 2011 to Dr. Mary Matteliano, mmatte@buffalo.edu. For questions regarding the abstract submission, please contact Dr. Matteliano. For questions regarding the meeting and registration, please contact JoAnn Lewandowski at jlf7@buffalo.edu. Further information can be found on their website, http://www.networkinaging.com

Words to Live By:
“Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending.”
-- Maria Robinson (Maria Robinson is an Author, Motivational Speaker/Management Consultant)

Please submit your comments/suggestions to Traci Jackson, jacksont@buffalo.edu or Pam Sturtz, pjsturtz@buffalo.edu, 106 Kimball Tower