In this issue of the newsletter you will be introduced to our new graduate research assistants. The dramatic increase in our graduate student involvement in the Colorado Injury Control Research Center is a direct result of the new collaborative Colorado School of Public Health.

The Master of Public Health (MPH) program at Colorado State University enrolled the first cohort of students in the fall of 2008. There were four students in the cohort; two of them worked as graduate research assistants with the CICRC. In the fall of 2009 an additional 19 students enrolled in the MPH program at CSU. From this group, we hired six students to work on CICRC programs.

You can read about the specific research and program activities they are involved with for 2009-2010. The activities include bicycle safety, suicide prevention, traumatic brain injury rehabilitation, and violence prevention. It is exciting to have the opportunity to expand our programs with our community and academic partners through the involvement of this dedicated and energetic group.

International Updates

China

The third USA-China Agricultural Injury Research Training program was held in Chengde, China on August 9th - August 14th, 2009. A total of 24 Chinese scholars from 10 universities attended the training, as well as regional and national Centers for Disease Control and a burn hospital.

In October, a trainee from last year’s class of scholars arrived in Columbus, Ohio to spend three months working with Dr. Huiyun Xiang at the Center for Injury Research and Policy.

The overall goal of the project is to increase training and research related to farm injuries in China.

Costa Rica

In May, 2009, Dr. Stallones traveled to Costa Rica to work with colleagues from the Universidad Nacional in Heredia developing a research proposal on self harm and organophosphate pesticide exposures. She presented a seminar to the Regional Institute for Studies on Toxic Substances entitled “Pesticides and self harm”.

Director's Message

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2009 CICRC Graduate Students

Ben White is a second year graduate student at Colorado State University. Ben received his B.A. in Anthropology (emphasis archaeology/biological) with a minor in Broadcasting and Electronic Communications in 2007 from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Ben’s future career goals include utilizing GIS, remote sensing, and other spatial data to map and model barriers to public health, such as infectious agents or water pollutants. At the CICRC Ben has used GIS mapping for the USA-China Agricultural Injury Research Training program, to track crashes along Interstate 70, and is currently mapping poverty in Larimer County, Colorado.

Brenna Wozniak obtained a degree in nutrition at the University of Texas at Austin. She realized she wanted to pursue a master degree that she could eventually apply to cycling, specifically to help make cycling safer for everyone. Therefore, she will complete her MPH degree in Fort Collins, a great city for cycling of all kinds. Her work at the CICRC will be to research effective methods and programs to help make cycling safer and prevent injuries, and to implement these programs in the community. This is basically her dream job and she is extremely excited to be part of the CICRC graduate research team.

Desiree Bayliss is a first year student in the MPH/DVM program at CSU. Desiree graduated from Texas Tech University in May 2009 with a Bachelor degree in Zoology and Masters in Microbiology. Desiree would like to apply her veterinary and public health degree to the study and control of zoonotic diseases. At the CICRC she will be working on secondary prevention of injuries among farmers with disabilities including brain injuries.

Jamie Kleman was inspired to work in the field of public health while volunteering with the Peace Corps in Malawi. Upon returning to the states Jamie worked as a Medical Assistant at a community health center in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. This job solidified her decision to pursue graduate school in Public Health with a focus in Global Health/Health Disparities. At CICRC Jamie will be working on issues related to preventing sexual violence.
2009 CICRC Graduate Students

John Brooks graduated in May, 2009 from University of Wyoming. John received his bachelor degree in Psychology with a minor in Statistics. Currently he is pursuing a Masters in Public Health with a focus in Epidemiology at CSU. His public health interests include infectious disease and mental health. At the CICRC John will be focusing on suicide prevention programs.

Lorin Scott-Okerblom received her undergraduate degree in Nutrition Science and Exercise Biology at the University of California, Davis. While at Davis, Lorin was a member of the cross country track and field team. As a part of this program Lorin developed her passion and love for health and exercise, which lead her to pursue an MPH degree at CSU. In the future Lorin would like to work with government and non-government agencies to create health promotion programs and policies that promote healthy lifestyles. At the CICRC Lorin will be working community partners involved in bicycle safety.

Nicole Swaggerty received her undergraduate degree in Health Promotion at Boise State University. This is Nicole’s first year in the MPH program at CSU with an emphasis in Animals, People and the Environment. Upon graduation her hope is to work with an organization that is involved in creating a sustainable food system. At the CICRC Nicole will determine how practitioners utilize academic information to inform selection and development of programs, determine best practices and evaluation methods.

Sarah Drobek is a graduate student in the Colorado School of Public Health’s MPH program. Sarah completed her undergraduate work in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Bachelor of Art in French from Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. Since 2006 Sarah has worked at the Larimer County Health Department in family planning and reproductive health. She has a variety of interests in public health which include infectious disease control, policy development, global health, and health disparities. At the CICRC Sarah has worked on suicide prevention projects and is currently interested and working on issues surrounding human trafficking.
Dr. Carolyn DiGuiseppi, Associate Director for Research, Colorado Injury Control Research Center, is collaborating with Ms. Sallie Thoreson, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and Dr. Lauren Clark, University of Utah, to test whether social marketing can persuade older adults to attend balance classes in order to improve their balance and prevent falls.

Each year in the U.S., one of every three adults age 65 and older is injured in a fall. Consequences can include reduced independence and mobility, disability, institutionalization, and death. Fall injuries in 2000 resulted in total lifetime costs of more than $19 billion in 2000.

There is good evidence that community-based group exercise classes focusing on balance prevent older adult falls, but uptake by older adults is limited. This study will test the use of social marketing to promote participation in balance classes, targeting older adults in churches, where many older adults meet regularly and spend time.

The research team met with local stakeholders and conducted focus groups and key informant interviews, to gain a research-based understanding of church members aged 60 and older, and those who influence them, to explore facilitators and barriers to balance class participation. Four themes expressing community perceptions emerged: emphasizing increased strength and independence, moving older adults out of their “comfort zones” through class participation, relationships that initiate and sustain fall-prevention activities, and gender-based differences in fall prevention approaches.

Data analysis framed by social marketing principles identified preferred program attributes regarding place in the community, promotion to older adults, a tolerable price, and the balance class product itself. From this formative research, a targeted social marketing program and ‘toolkit’ were developed to increase class attractiveness, usability, and uptake by reducing barriers or costs and using incentives or other benefits to promote and reinforce participation.

The team is currently enrolling churches in two Colorado counties characterized by small towns and rural areas, collecting baseline data about the congregations and their leaders, and randomizing the churches to intervention (marketing program) or control groups. The marketing program will be launched early next year. The trial will test whether seniors from intervention churches are more likely than seniors from control churches to join balance classes, assess characteristics that predict participation, and examine intensity, diffusion, message penetration and acceptability of the marketing program, and persistent facilitators and barriers.

If the marketing program proves effective, it can be tested and replicated in other locales. Motivating more older adults to participate in balance classes will prevent falls, resulting in decreased fall injuries and their serious adverse consequences.

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**Focus on Community Partners**

**Safe Kids Larimer County (Co.) Receives Grant**

Safe Kids Larimer County recently received a $49,000 grant from the Colorado Department of Transportation. The grant will support a car seat education and distribution program for low-income and Hispanic families. Funds will also be used to establish a hospital fitting station where the coalition will check car seats prior to new babies being discharged from the hospital.

*Safe Kids, USA: Extranotes, September 17, 2009*

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**SAMHSA Awards Grants to State and Tribal Youth Suicide Prevention Programs Across the Country**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has awarded up to $26.2 million in grants to assist state and tribal efforts to develop and enhance services to prevent suicide among young people. The grants will help fund crucial suicide prevention efforts especially geared for youth including early intervention and assessment services, referrals to mental health care and treatment, and information and outreach campaigns. The grants will also help promote training for communities on the latest youth suicide prevention services and approaches, as well as provide support to families of youth who may be at risk for suicide. **Region VIII** awardees include: Montana Tribal Leaders Council, Wyoming State Department of Health, South Dakota Department of Human Services, and Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). **CICRC** is pleased to work with the CSU SMART team on the evaluation of Project Safety Net, a suicide prevention project of CDPHE.

*SAMHSA Press Release: September 22, 2009*

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**Colorado Motor Vehicle Safety Symposium: Protecting Our Children and Teens**

The symposium, held at the Children’s Hospital in Denver, Colorado on July 17, 2009, was the first to focus specifically on motor vehicle safety efforts towards teens and children. Over 165 members of the motor vehicle safety community shared successes and ideas on how to improve the motor vehicle safety of children and adolescents in Colorado. The symposium was sponsored by CDPHE, in partnership with Drive Smart Colorado, Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado State Patrol, **Colorado Injury Control Research Center**, and numerous other traffic safety advocates across the state.

**Bridging the Divide: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Summit**

Over 200 participants attended the conference, which was held at Regis University in Denver, Colorado on May 27-28, 2009. Jarrod Hindman, Director of the Office of Suicide Prevention at CDPHE, stated the mission of the conference was to “bridge the gap among disciplines and resources to create a united front of stakeholders addressing this critical public health problem.” The **Colorado Injury Control Research Center** is proud to be the 2010 host site for this conference, which will be held at Colorado State University on May 21, 2010.
Focus on CICRC Faculty Associate: Interview with Dr. Eric J. Sigel

Eric Sigel, MD, earned his medical degree in 1989 from Case Western Reserve University. He completed his Pediatric Residency in 1992 at Rainbow Babies and Children’s Hospital/ CWRU in Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Sigel completed an Adolescent Medicine Fellowship in 1993 at Children’s Hospital in Boston.

Dr. Sigel joined the faculty of the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Colorado Denver School of Medicine (UCDSOM) and The Children’s Hospital in 1994 in the section of Adolescent Medicine. He has been the Clinic Director of the Adolescent Medicine Clinic and Co-Director of Eating Disorders Program at The Children’s Hospital. Currently Dr. Sigel is Fellowship Director of Adolescent Program at The Children’s Hospital.

During the first decade of his career the majority of his time was focused on teaching and clinical work. In 2004, he decided to develop a research path, beginning with a Primary Care Research Fellowship through UCDSOM. Dr. Sigel has always had a strong interest in working with at-risk, violence involved youth. He has monitored two teenagers through Metro Denver Partners and has been an adult advisor to the Gang Rescue and Support Project (GRASP) during the last ten years. Dr. Sigel’s interest in preventing violence involvement in the adolescent population led to his first research project, supported by CICRC, which led to the development of a violence injury and perpetration screening tool that identifies adolescents who are at risk for future violence involvement. Subsequent to his initial grant he received a Career Development Award from the Center for Disease Control’s National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. He has expanded his violence screening to the school setting and is working on interventions targeting youth violence in the clinical and school settings. Additionally, he is a co-investigator studying the effects of Risperidone in patients with anorexia nervosa.

Dr. Sigel is a popular guest speaker locally, regionally and nationally on topics like violence, gangs, substance use and eating disorders. He has written numerous chapters on these areas and is just beginning to publish his research findings in medical literature. Dr. Sigel has been a regular guest on the “What’s Up with Tony V” radio program, aired on Denver’s most popular radio station 107.5, addressing teen health issues.

In 2002, Dr. Sigel was nominated for the Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA) “We Count on You” award. As well, he was recognized in The Children’s Hospital Association quarterly magazine with an article entitled “Hero for Kids: Eric Sigel Goes to Bat for His Patients.” His Eating Disorders team received the Children’s Choice award from The Children’s Hospital in 2000. In addition, Dr. Sigel is consistently named as one of the “Top Doctors in Denver” by 5280 Magazine.

Dr. Sigel is board certified in Pediatrics and subspecialty certified in Adolescent Medicine.

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