Greetings,

I would like to welcome you to the first Director’s Newsletter, which will highlight all the happenings at the HNRCA, from recent publications to awards and symposia.

We appreciate the contributions from all of our scientists and staff. Please remember to send any new developments from your respective labs/units to our office and we will make sure it is included in an upcoming newsletter! Thank you for your efforts in helping the HNRCA exceed as a world renowned nutrition center. I would like to thank Tristan Mangindin for putting this issue together as well as Sarah Booth and Mohsen Meydani for their comments on content and design.

With best wishes for a great summer,
Simin Nikbin Meydani

2009 HNRCA Award Winners

Robert M. Russell Scientific Achievement Award:
Awarded annually to HNRCA scientist or past scientist whose primary paper (not review article), published between January 1 and December 31st of the year three years prior to the search that had the greatest number of citations in the literature. 2009 Winner: Ernst J. Schaefer, M.D.


Hamish N. Munro Award for Excellence in Postdoctoral Research:
In honor of their research excellence, this is awarded to scientists who are post-doctoral fellows or have recently completed their postdoctoral research at HNRCA. 2009 Winner: Bradley Bolling, Ph.D. (Flavonoids and Health)

Irwin H. Rosenberg Award for Excellence in Predoctoral Research:
For research excellence for a graduate student at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University who has conducted research at HNRCA with a HNRCA scientist and mentor and who will receive his/her PhD during the year of the award. 2009 Winner: Fumiaki Imamura, Ph.D. (Diet and Diabetes)
Need Herbs for Dinner? Stop by the Director’s Office!

We recently had to uproot the 30 year-old jade plant in the Director’s Office planter box as its time had sadly passed. However, based on a suggestion by Alice H. Lichtenstein, D.Sc, Director of Cardiovascular Nutrition Laboratory, we’ve acquired several herbs, including thyme, lavender, basil, tarragon, garlic chive, oregano, and chamomile which have been planted in its place. Feel free to stop by to check them out!

A special thanks to the Friedman School of Nutrition’s Agriculture, Food and Environment Program students Jennifer Obadia ’11, and Stephanie Bostic ‘10, for helping design and plant the garden, and to Dr. Paul C. Leavis from the Boston Biomedical Research Institute for donating all of the herbs!

New HNRCA Advisory Committees

We have initiated four new advisory committees to help guide the mission and interests of the Center. If you have any suggestions that apply to any of the committees, please feel free to let one of the members know.

**Fundraising Advisory Committee:**
This committee will work with the Center Director to help with fundraising from many sources, in addition to NIH, such as corporate, foundations, and individuals.

- Jeff Blumberg
- Joel Mason
- Ed Saltzman
- Ernst Schaefer
- Allen Tylor

**Scientific Advisory Committee:**
The overarching mission of this committee is to assist the Center Director in focusing the Center’s scientific priorities, and will be helpful in several ways: 1) Identify themes for which the Center can submit program projects and center grants. 2) Find ways to incentivize investigators to submit more program projects. 3) Help with initial stages of the strategic planning process.

- Sarah Booth
- Andy Greenberg
- Jose Ordovas
- Irv Rosenberg
- Roger Fielding
- Alice Lichtenstein
- Susan Roberts
- Katherine Tucker

**Equipment Advisory Committee:**
This group will evaluate the Center’s needs in regards to replacing old equipment or identifying any critical pieces of equipment the Center would need to obtain in order to conduct cutting-edge research. The committee will help shape a five-year plan to address the Center’s equipment needs.

- David Clark
- Mohsen Meydani
- Jacob Selhub
- Greg Dolinkowski
- Gayle Petty
- Xiang-Dong Wang

**Seminar Series Committee:**
This committee will work with Center Director and Associate Director to help improve the weekly Seminar Series by creating new formats for the series and implementing changes that will help increase attendance.

- Sang-Woon Choi
- Martin Obin
- Larry Parnell
- Aron Troen
The HNRCA was represented very well at Experimental Biology 2009. Several of our scientists won awards and/or gave presentations. Thank you to everyone who presented their work at EB 2009!

- **Susan B. Roberts, Ph.D.** was honored by The American Society for Nutrition with the E.V. McCollum Award during the 2009 Experimental Biology meeting. The award is given to a clinical investigator who is perceived as a major creative force, actively generating new concepts in nutrition and personally seeing to the execution of studies testing the validity of these concepts.

- **Jimmy Crott, Ph.D.** received The 2009 Bio Serv Award in Experimental Animal Nutrition, which is given for meritorious research in nutrition accomplished by an investigator within ten years of postgraduate training.

- **Sarah Elizabeth Belisle, Ph.D.** won the Nutritional Immunology Research Interest Section (RIS) Poster Competition for her presentation entitled “SNPs at IL-2 and IL-10 genes are associated with respiratory infection in the elderly and may modulate the effect of vitamin E on lower respiratory infections in elderly women”. Her co-authors were Davidson Hamer, Lynette Leka, Jerry Dallal, Javier Delgado-Lista, Basil Fine, Paul Jacques, Jose Ordovas, and Simin Meydani.

- **Bradley Bolling, Ph.D.** won the American Society of Nutrition Dietary Bioactive Research Interest Section (RIS) Postdoctoral Poster Competition at the Experimental Biology 2009 for his presentation on “Harvest year and growing region but not processing affect flavonoid content and antioxidant capacity of California almond skins” His co-authors were Greg Dolinkowski, Jeff Blumberg and Oliver Chen.

- **Josiemer Mattei, PhD, MPH** received the best graduate student poster award at the American Society of Nutrition’s Nutritional Epidemiology Research Interest Section for “Apolipoprotein A5 polymorphisms interact with dietary fat intake in association with markers of metabolic syndrome in the Boston Puerto Rican Health Study.” The co-authors were Jose Ordovas, Serkalem Demissie, and Katy Tucker.
Thesis Defenses

Hyeran Jang, M.S., graduate student, successfully defended her Ph.D. thesis, entitled '1-carbon metabolism modifies histone methylation and acetylation in human colonic epithelial cells'. Dr. Sang-Woon Choi is her advisor.

Awards

❖ Jose M. Ordovas, Ph.D. was named the recipient of this year's Friedman School Distinguished Faculty Award. The award was presented in the Behrakis Auditorium at 4 p.m. on Friday, May 1. Now in its fourth year, the award recognizes outstanding contributions to the school and its students and is the highest honor bestowed upon a member of the faculty by his or her peers.

❖ Joel B. Mason, M.D., Scientist I, was lead author on the most highly cited paper in the journal Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers, and Prevention over the past year. The paper, published in 2007, is entitled “A Temporal Association between Folic Acid Fortification and an Increase in Colorectal Cancer Rates May Be Illuminating Important Biological Principles: A Hypothesis”.

❖ Chung-Jung Chiu, DDS, Ph.D., Scientist III, has been selected to receive first place in the 2009 ARVO- AFER/Merck Innovative Ophthalmology Research Award in the Back of the Eye category. Dr Chiu was selected based on his manuscript “Diet, Supplement and Risk of Age-Related Macular Degeneration in the Age-Related Eye Disease Study”. The award was presented on May 3 during the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology Annual Meeting

❖ Winifred W. Yu, M.S. won the Friedman School student poster competition and presented the poster of the same title at the Friedman School All-Alumni Reunion on 4/5/09. She was also selected to receive an award to attend the Dietary Supplement Research Practicum at the National Institute of Health which was held on June 1-5.

Recent Publications

These are publications from late April and May. Please make sure you let us know of any new publications so we may acknowledge them here!


Scientist Spotlight

Susan B. Roberts, Ph.D. has worked at the Tufts HNRCA for over two decades, serving as Director of the Energy Metabolism laboratory since 1998. Her new book, The Instinct Diet: Use Your Five Food Instincts to Lose Weight and Keep it Off, was released last December to rave reviews. She recently conducted an interview with National Public Radio’s ‘Talk of the Nation’, and keeps an adjunct blog regarding her work:


Recently, Tristan Mangindin had a chance to interview Dr. Roberts regarding her work:

1) When you realized the five food instincts, when did you know you wanted to turn it into a book?
The Energy Lab has been trying to make weight control a more effective process for almost 17 years. I have done quite a lot of reviews for Nutrition Reviews on different aspects of food and weight regulation, and it gradually became apparent that there were 5 topics in weight regulation where all the studies gave really consistent results, which was a startling contrast to all the many controversial areas of nutrition. These areas of consistency got me thinking about basic biological drives in food regulation, and when I started talking about what we all agreed on it became clear that this was a very useful way to present the subject. The book really grew out of realizing the concept of basic biological drives, and the book grew out of that. It was very exciting really to realize that we had a new organizing principle to think about weight regulation that might actually help people better with weight, and these 5 basic principles a few years ago, and it was clearly such new information for people that I realized it was something I wanted to bring together in a book to try and help individuals control their weight better.

2) How will the Instinct Diet, compared to other so-called fad diets, eventually transition into a complete lifestyle change?
I hope it will never be considered a fad diet! Effective, yes. Lasting yes. But not a fad, which implies something that will attract people but then not work. There are so many diet books out there written by non-professionals, and they are often ineffective ways to lose weight and give the field of weight loss a bad name. I’m hoping this one will be around for a good long time, until we or other scientists come up with something even better.

3) Do you have any out-of-book advice for those attempting the instinct diet?
If you want to lose weight, I think what works best is to follow the structured menus in Instinct really, really carefully without trying to change them (there are four menus, so lots of food options). We do say in the book that you can design your own menu if you like, but having had the experience of seeing people do even better than I thought possible when following the menus, I think that is truly the easiest way to lose weight. The Instinct menus are very carefully balanced for different weight regulation factors across days, between meals and so forth, and dieters are reporting they are incredibly effective for not only losing weight but also eliminating hunger, cravings and temptation. And oftentimes dieters come to appreciate these other things as much as the weight loss. So the menus are even more helpful than I expected so I encourage them more now, and of course they also serve as an example of what to eat that teaches you exactly what works.

4) What do you enjoy the most about working for the HNRCA and at Tufts University?
I feel incredibly lucky to have called the HNRCA and Tufts my scientific home for so many years. It really is an amazing place. There are so many great scientists here that you can collaborate with to make cross-disciplinary
research really work, and people are very supportive of each other. We also have amazingly good core facilities, and I include Jerry Dallal in this because he is easily the best statistician I have ever worked with. Finally I would say I love the sense of purpose here, which our Directors over the years have fostered. To know that everyone here is doing important work and believes in our mission makes for great energy as you go about your daily life.

5) Looking to the future, is there a different aspect of your research and expertise you would like to turn into a follow-up/next book?

After my first book, Feeding Your Child for Lifelong Health, I promised myself I would never write another book ever... it was just too much work, and then I got to the point of having something else I thought it was important to say, so I had to write again (that was Instinct). Right now I’m immersed in starting up new studies in the lab and can’t see another book for a while at least. Writing a book is a huge amount of work. I think the important thing is not to write books for the sake of writing books, but to wait until you feel you have a compelling story that you have to tell, and that makes all the hard work seem worthwhile.

HNRCA Scientists in the News & Media

Several of our scientists have been featured in the news and other media. Here are some of their appearances from the month of May. Please let us know if we have missed any of your appearances and we will include them in the next issue.

- **James Joseph, Ph.D.**: The color purple: Disease fighter
  The Chicago Tribune
  April 1, 2009, By Janet Helm
  [http://www.chicagotribune.com/features/food/chi-0401-health-purpleapr01,0,7035624.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/features/food/chi-0401-health-purpleapr01,0,7035624.story)

- **Jeffrey B. Blumberg, Ph.D.**: Multivitamins: Do his and hers make a difference?
  The Los Angeles Times
  April 6, 2009, By Chris Woolston
  [http://www.latimes.com/features/health/la-he-skeptic6-2009apr06,0,4095550.story](http://www.latimes.com/features/health/la-he-skeptic6-2009apr06,0,4095550.story)

- **Jose M. Ordovas, Ph.D.**: 27+ Anti-Aging Superfoods
  More Magazine on-line
  April 7, 2009, By Nicci Micco
  [http://www.more.com/2030/2538](http://www.more.com/2030/2538)

- **Diane L. McKay, Ph.D.**: Walnuts ward off breast cancer in mice
  Scientific American online/60 second science blog
  April 22, 2009, By Coco Ballantyne

- **Diane L. McKay, Ph.D.**: Health Benefits of Green Tea
  WebMD
  April 16, 2009, By Julie Edgar

- **Joel B. Mason, M.D.**: Folic acid may raise cancer risk in offspring
  The Globe and Mail (Toronto)
  April 20, 2009, By Carly Weeks
o **Joel B. Mason, M.D.**: Folic Acid: Too Much of a Good Thing?
   Reader's Digest
   May 2009, By Janis Graham

o **Joel B. Mason, M.D.**: Folic acid might be losing its sheen
   Los Angeles Times
   May 8, 2009, By Emily Sohn
   [http://www.latimes.com/features/health/la-he-folate11-2009may11,0,4656570.story](http://www.latimes.com/features/health/la-he-folate11-2009may11,0,4656570.story)

o **Alice H. Lichtenstein, D.Sc.**: Which Fish Is the Best Fish? Consider Omega-3s, Sustainability, and Mercury
   U.S. News & World Report on-line
   May 11, 2009, By Katherine Hobson

o **Elizabeth J. Johnson, Ph.D., (Johanna Seddon)**: Fish, olive oil, nuts good for eyes too, more studies find
   Health.com/CNN.com
   May 11, 2009, By Anne Harding

o **Susan B. Roberts, Ph.D.**: Why a calorie isn't just a calorie
   The Boston Globe, p. G20
   May 13, 2009, By M.E. Malone

o **Chung-Jung Chiu, D.D.S., Ph.D.**: Certain foods may thwart age-related vision loss
   Reuters
   May 13, 2009, By Amy Norton
   [http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSTRE54C5J120090513?feedType=RSS&feedName=healthNews](http://www.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUSTRE54C5J120090513?feedType=RSS&feedName=healthNews)

o **Ernst J. Schaefer, M.D.**: Eat freshplants to live better and longer
   Statesman Journal (Salem, OR)
   By Jeanine Stice, May 21, 2009

o **Susan Harris, D.Sc. (Ken Getz)**: These trying times send more to medical studies
   The Boston Herald
   By Carley Thornell, May 24, 2009

o **Alice H. Lichtenstein, D.Sc.**: WebMD examines the health dangers and benefits of eating red meat.
   WebMD
   May 26, 2009, By Elizabeth Lee
New Grants

Below are the grants our scientists at the HNRCA have received since January 2009. Congratulations to everyone! If you have received a new grant please let us know.

- **Jeffrey B. Blumberg, Ph.D.**: A Double-blind, Randomized, Controlled Crossover Trial to Assess the Digestive and Physiological Effects of an Arabino-Xylan-Oligo-Saccharide Extract from Wheat Bran in Healthy Men and Women. The main sponsor is Kellogg’s.

- **Sarah L. Booth, Ph.D.**: Prediction of warfarin dosing using clinical and genetic factors. The main sponsor is United States Department of Health and Human Services.

- **Chung-Yen (Oliver) Chen, Ph.D.**: The Photoprotective Effect of Almond Extracts and Constituents in a 3-Dimensional Model of Human Skin In Vitro. The main sponsor is the Almond Board of California.

- **Bess Dawson-Hughes, M.D.**: The role of dairy foods in enhancing central fat loss and weight loss with moderate energy restriction in overweight and obese adults. The main sponsor is the USDA.

- **Roger A. Fielding, Ph.D.**: Metabolic markers to develop assays and optimize warfighter fitness. The main sponsor is the Department of Defense.

- **Andrew S. Greenberg, M.D.**: TPL2 regulation of cytokine release in obesity impacts the progression of fatty liver and insulin resistance. The main sponsor is the American Diabetes Association.

- **Elizabeth J. Johnson, Ph.D.**: The Georgia Centenarian Study (2001-2008), NIA Program Project. Relationships between serum vitamins A and E and carotenoids and cognitive measures and neurocognitive reserves in centenarians. The main sponsors are the University of Georgia, the National Institute on Aging and the National Institutes of Health.

- **Nirupa Matthan, Ph.D.**: Omega 3 fatty acid therapy in meibomian gland dysfunction. The main sponsor is Alcon.

- **Mohsen Meydani, D.V.M., Ph.D.**: Adiposity and local outcomes of clinically localized prostate cancer. The main sponsors are the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Cancer Institute.

- **Simin Meydani, D.V.M., Ph.D. and Dayong Wu, M.D., Ph.D.**: Effect of dietary supplementation with wolfberry and probiotics on viral infection. The main sponsor is Nestle Ltd.

- **Jose M. Ordovas, Ph.D.**: Aragon Workers Cardiovascular Health Study (AWCHS). The main sponsor is Centro Nacional de Investigacion.

- **Jacob Selhub, Ph.D**: Folic Acid for Vascular Outcome Reduction In Transplantation (FAVORIT II). The main sponsors are the Department of Health and Human Services and Rhode Island Hospital.

- **Katherine L. Tucker, Ph.D.**: Printing and Processing of Delta NIRI Food Frequency Questionnaires. The main sponsors are the Department of Health and Human Services and the University of Southern Mississippi.