



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Addressing Global Challenges Through International Research
Sponsored by the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance
February 17, 2012

8:30-4:00pm (registration begins at 8am)
Coffman Memorial Union, 3rd floor and theater
<http://global.umn.edu/spotlight/conference/index.html>

U of M/Augsburg College Nobel Peace Prize Forum
"Peace Through Health Workshops"
Saturday, March 3rd at Augsburg – more info to follow

Annual Wesley W. Spink Memorial Lecture
Thursday, April 5th 12:00-1:00pm
Guest Speaker: Jan Verhoef, Netherlands
Recipient of the 2010 University of Minnesota Distinguished Leadership Award for Internationals. Read more about Dr. Verhoef at the link below:
http://global.umn.edu/honors/dlai/10_verhoef.html

Congratulations!

Honored International Academician Award
To Dr. Jacob Farbstein

Dr. Jacob Farbstein has served as the Poriya Hospital (Israel) leader of the U of M/Poriya Hospital Exchange Program since its inception in 1999. In recent years, Dr. Marshall Hertz has been the Minnesota leader of the "Quie/Farbstein Healthcare in Israel" program, an innovative medical and cultural experience for U of M medical students.



Pictured above: Shannon Besnon, Frank Cerra, Molly Portz, Marshall Hertz, Paul Quie, Jacob Farbstein, Jamie Gavisner, Nakhoul Farid, Phil Peterson, Ilana Farbstein, Michael Mauer

If you are interested in nominating a colleague for either the Distinguished Leadership Award for Internationals or the Honored International Academician, visit the Global Programs and Strategy Alliance website at:
<http://global.umn.edu/honors/index.html>



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

IMER Medical Student Travel Award Applications

Deadline: April 30th, 2012

Applications for the Gault, Carlson, Jacobson, Kersey, Scheffler, Spink, Seoul National University and Niigata University Travel Awards are available at: www.meded.umn.edu/IMER/index.html Stop by the IMER Office to learn more about the purpose of each of these travel awards and about the history of the outstanding faculty and community leaders who have made these awards possible.

Affiliation Agreement Renewal

University of Minnesota Medical School and Niigata University Medical School, Japan

On Monday, December 19th, a delegation from Niigata University spent the day at the U of M meeting with colleagues to discuss expanding relationships and renew the affiliation agreement for the exchange of medical students. This exchange was established in 2003 and is unique as Niigata University provides a scholarship of \$2,500 to visiting U of M students when they arrive in Japan. For more information regarding this exchange please visit the IMER office.



Pictured above at left: Dean Aaron Friedman and Dean Sugata Takahashi signing the agreement renewal



Pictured above at right: Phil Peterson, Tadashi Yamamoto, Mark Paller, Sugata Takahashi, Aaron Friedman, Paul Quie, Akihiko Saito

Global Health Impact Group (GHIG) Global Health Networking Night

On December 1st the student-led group, GHIG, hosted together with the Interdisciplinary Perspectives on International Development (IPIID) student group from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, a Global Health Networking Night. This event brought together over 100 students from across the U of M for a night of informal networking and socializing with area physicians, researchers, and alumni with global health-related experiences and with refugees and immigrants in Minnesota.



Panel pictured above: Bill Gamble, Chavanne Peercy, Katherine Fennelly, Amy Finnegan, Mike Westerhaus, Bill Toscano

Register your International Travel Plans – Policy Change

There has been a change to the University Travel Policy, which now requires pre-travel registration of all staff/faculty international travel for University purposes. The policy is available at:
<http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Finance/Travel/TRAVEL.html>



The Issue

Asbestos has been used since the early 1800s and is still present in a variety of products around the world. In the U.S. asbestos is highly regulated to maintain safe workplaces; however, Occupational Medicine is a fledgling field in many countries and is still struggling to be recognized. In India for example, thousands of workers are at risk from high levels of asbestos exposure. While domestic production of asbestos has decreased in recent years, imports from Russia and Canada are increasing and account for over 70% of asbestos used in India. The imports are chrysotile, a less pathogenic form of asbestos, but exposure may lead to disease. While potentially safe with the use of proper personal protective equipment, workplace practices are not safe. Inadequate regulation and enforcement have left unorganized workers in the mines and mills in India with few options. Proof of employment, which the majority of unorganized workers cannot provide, is necessary for compensation adding to vulnerability of workers.

These were the issues presented to the Schools of Medicine and Public Health by researchers at the TATA Institute in Mumbai, India.

Our Work

We worked with the Center for Lung Health and Science and the Environmental Health Department of the School of Public Health to develop a working relationship with TATA Institute investigating the impact of asbestos exposure on mill workers. The main purpose of our work was to obtain information about the current issues and impact of asbestos in India. Hopefully this information will provide a foundation for future SPH and medical students from Minnesota to continue research on this global health issue.

We worked directly with Drs. Nobhojit Roy and V. Murlidhar, who are both volunteers of the Occupational Health and Safety Centre (OHSC). The OHSC is a non-governmental volunteer organization that was established in 1988. Volunteers in this organization have collaborated with worker's unions to help identify and advocate for compensation for workers suffering from byssinosis, silicosis, asbestosis and noise-induced hearing loss.

With the help of OHSC, we were able to review data and x-rays obtained from asbestos mill workers between 2008-2011. We had opportunities to interview members of OHSC and other advocates to learn more about the social and legal challenges that many workers face and learn more about political pressures against recognizing asbestosis as a prevalent health problem in India.

Dr. Jeff Mandel from the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota is advising us as we hopefully paint a clearer picture of the impact asbestos exposure on the mill workers' health.

Traveling in India allowed us to participate firsthand and better understand challenges faced by thousands of industrial workers exposed to respiratory toxins. We were able to develop relationships with many concerned individuals in Mumbai and have developed a greater appreciation for the most salient issues. Our experiences were very rewarding and continue to shape our work and practice at the U of MN Medical School and School of Public Health.

