

AOEC NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF OCCUPATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CLINICS

PRESIDENTIAL COLUMN TEE GUIDOTTI, MD, MPH

It will not be news to most AOEC members that Dr. Gary Greenberg, is the developer and moderator of the Occupational and Environmental Medicine List. At the American Occupational Health Conference this spring, the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine recognized Gary's achievement with its Health Achievement in Occupational Medicine Award. This award is given to the ACOEM member for unique achievement in occupational and environmental medicine. AOEC members too can join in the pride. AOEC has been a primary sponsor of the list since its onset and we help with it as best we can but it is truly Gary's personal success. Over the years, Gary has moderated the list with patience, humility and grace. In that time the list has become one of the strongest bonds that we have, a link that ties us together, regardless of our backgrounds or professional activities. The extent of his contribution was marked by congratulations from around the world after Kathy Kirkland posted news of his award on the list. AOEC does not have a comparable award. Gary, please accept our thanks for the good you have done in the creation of an institution that binds us together!



AOEC itself was recognized as the Year's Outstanding Partner by ATSDR in May, in an awards ceremony in Atlanta. Your President was privileged to receive the award and to receive numerous compliments directed to the organization. It is clear that our contribution is valued and that ATSDR considers its partnership with AOEC as a cornerstone in its own strategy and work plan. It is not necessarily a given that a federation of clinics and practitioners and a government agency with a difficult mandate would work well together. Our culture is mostly academic and we value our autonomy, intellectual curiosity, scholarship and fairness in process. A government agency may respect these values but it has to get the job done, frequently on short notice and under scrutiny. Conflict is always a possibility. In the heat of controversy and the pressure of a community crisis it is not always easy to maintain cordial relations. However AOEC and ATSDR respect one another and know what our respective missions are. We have done remarkably well, between the two of us, in staying effective and focussed. Our colleagues at ATSDR have shown how much they value our teamwork. We are proud to receive this award and look forward to many years of close cooperation with ATSDR, for the good of the community and the advancement of environmental medicine.

We are certainly subdued this year about celebrating the 300th anniversary of the publication of *De Morbis Artificum Diatriba*, Bernardino Ramazzini's *Diseases of Workers*. Oddly, this anniversary has had a very low profile. Aside from meetings by the History of Occupational Medicine of the International Commission on Occupational Health and the Ramazzini Society, there is not much happening in the world to commemorate the seminal text that established occupational and environmental health as a field of practice and scholarship. Ramazzini was a great figure in medicine and showed remarkable insight on a problem that others of his time did not appreciate. Thus it is all the more painful, then, when we see his feet of clay. We expect moral leadership from our great figures and we expect them to transcend the limitations of their times and homelands. However, Ramazzini was a flawed human being who not only reflected the prejudices of his times but spread his own bigotry. I refer, of course, to the section in *Diseases of Workers* on Jewish workers, which is lengthy, virulent and hateful. So, perhaps it is not such a bad thing that we show some reserve in celebrating this book. It did much good and it showed empathy for workers without class distinction, which was certainly enlightened for the time. On the other hand, it spread hate. Let us therefore celebrate the good the book did and the achievements of the man, not the book itself or the person.

A bill was introduced last year in the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (House Bill No. 1528, the Occupational Health Clinics Act) to establish a network of occupational health clinics, modeled on the clinic network in New York. AOEC was pleased to have input into the deliberations on the bill, which was referred to the Committee on Labor Relations. We provided counsel with information on existing clinics in the (Continued p.5)

AOEC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Tee Guidotti, MD, MPH
George Washington University
202-994-1734 FAX 202-994-0011
cohtlg@gwumc.edu

Vice- President

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Cook County Hospital
312-633-5310 FAX 312-633-6442
rrubin@uic.edu

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TJK@fms.uab.edu

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416-443-7669 FAX 416-443-6323
mcook@ohcow.on.ca

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mschenk@med.wayne.edu

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410-614-5140 FAX 410-614-2995
alfriend@jhmi.edu

Drew Brodtkin, MD, MPH
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206-223-3005 FAX 206-223-8247
werd@u.washington.edu

Gary Greenberg, MD, MPH
Duke University Medical Center
919-684-6721 FAX 919-286-1021
green011@mc.duke.edu

Glenn Pransky, MD, MOccH
Univ. of Massachusetts Medical School
Liberty Mutual Research Center
508-435-9061 x 234 FAX 508-435-8136
glenn.pransky@libertymutual.com

Cathy Simpson, MD, MPH
Wayne State/Dept. of Family Medicine
313-577-1420 FAX 313-577-3070
csimpson@me.d.wayne.edu

The AOEC News is published by the Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics, 1010 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 513, Washington, DC 20005. Editor: Katherine Kirkland, Exec. Dir. Comments and questions should be directed to the AOEC office at 202-347-4976, FAX 202-347-4950, e-mail aoec@aoec.org; Internet: <http://www.aoec.org>.

WORK, SMOKING AND HEALTH - A NIOSH SCIENTIFIC WORKSHOP

On June 15-16, 2000 more than 50 health and public policy experts assembled in Washington, DC to discuss the interactions between work environments and tobacco use. After hearing intriguing presentations on environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) in the workplace and interventions to reduce ETS exposure, the group was divided into two sections, one focusing on the interactions between tobacco and other occupational health hazards and the other on reducing tobacco-related health effects through workplace-based programs, policies, and regulations.

The outcomes and recommendations from this workshop will be published by NIOSH. For further information contact Gregory R. Wagner, MD, Director, Division of Respiratory Disease Studies, NIOSH, Morgantown, WV.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOR NURSES IN WEST VIRGINIA AND MONTANA

AOEC and ATSDR plan to present a program of environmental health education for nurses in Charleston, WV on September 22, 2000. This program, a follow-up to the AOEC-ATSDR workshop for nurses in Charleston in May, 1998, will address current environmental issues in West Virginia. Presenters will include clinical personnel from the AOEC WV clinics at WVU and Marshall University and personnel from the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department and the WVDEP. The audience will include nursing graduate students and faculty from WVU and Marshall University and public health nurses.

AOEC member and Montana State University College of Nursing Associate Professor Patricia Butterfield, PhD, RN has organized a five-day course "Moving Upstream: Environmental Health and Nursing" to be offered in Bozeman, MT, July 26-30, 2000. AOEC is co-sponsoring this program and AOEC staff member Sheila Arbury, RN, MPH will attend and present an overview of AOEC and its resources. This will be AOEC's second collaboration with Dr. Butterfield and the MSU College of Nursing; in August, 1998 AOEC and ATSDR, with Dr. Butterfield's assistance, presented a program of environmental health education for Montana nurses in Bozeman on the MSU campus. AOEC is pleased to note the continuity of environmental health education for nurses in both West Virginia and Montana.

Summer is in full swing in DC which in an election year means more than just the weather is getting hot. Since all the House and a third of the Senate are up for re-election, this is a good time to get their attention on topics of interest to our field. Let them know what you think and why. If you need the address or e-mail of your representative, feel free to contact the AOEC office or go out to the Congressional web sites at www.senate.gov, www.house.gov or www.loc.thomas.gov for links to even more information.



Another election cycle of interest to AOEC members is our annual Board election. This year we have two clinic slots and one individual slot being contested. Both Glenn Pransky, MD, MOccH and the University of Washington/Harborview have served two terms and are not eligible to run again for at least one year. (Yes, for those of you new to AOEC, we do have term limits but we find they are reasonable ones.) Cook County Hospital will be running again. Serving on the Board is a great opportunity to provide direction for AOEC.

VIEW FROM VERMONT AVE.
-KATHERINE KIRKLAND, MPH

It has been a busy year for AOEC with a number of projects underway. We have sent out over half a dozen RFPs for various projects this year including one for B-readers for Libby, MT, two for nursing education projects, three new Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units (PEHSU) and one for consultation services for a lead monitoring project in Montana. In addition, we've been asked by ATSDR to work with them on two directed projects involving community and professional outreach related to the Los Alamos National Laboratory and spirometry testing in Libby, MT. These two projects are being conducted by the University of New Mexico and National Jewish Medical and Research Center (NJMRC).

Next year is shaping up to be just as busy. The PEHSUs project will continue and we're working on development of an RFP for a project involving the communities around the Oak Ridge nuclear facilities. The Oak Ridge project will begin with a community needs assessment. ATSDR is anticipating more site specific projects.

We have increased involvement with the Database project. The new reporting program will be distributed later this month to all participating clinics. The reporting program will enable clinics to analyze their own data without conversion to SAS or other programs. It also enables the AOEC office to immediately respond to queries about exposures, diagnoses, jobs, etc. from the aggregate data currently in the AOEC database. For example, if you wish to know if anyone else has seen asthma related to sesame seeds in the baking industry, or asbestos related disease cases involving men under age 50, contact the AOEC office. There is funding available for AOEC clinics to participate in the database project and staff is willing to travel to train clinic personnel on the software. We gladly welcome new clinics to the project, just contact the office if you are interested.

The seven existing Pediatric Environmental Health Speciality Units (PEHSU) have been very successful in promoting children's health by increasing the knowledge of environmental specialists about the special needs of the pediatric population as well as increasing the knowledge of pediatricians about environmental health concerns. In April, 2000, AOEC sent out requests for proposals to add PEHSU sites in EPA Region 6 (NM, OK, AK, LA, TX) and Region 3 (PA, DE, MD, WV, VA, DC). It is anticipated that these new sites will be operating by early this fall.



The goal of the Great Lakes Scholars program is to promote environmental health awareness among students and primary health providers in the Great Lakes area. Five faculty members at universities in the Great Lakes area have been selected to serve as resources for environmental health education to health professional students in their institutions and to health care providers in their communities. After many telephone conference calls, the scholars gathered in Chicago June 7-8, 2000 for their first face to face meeting. The meeting was hosted and facilitated by the academic director for the Great Lakes Scholars program, Peter Orris, MD, MPH, Cook County Hospital. The scholars observed an OEM clinic session at Cook County Hospital and participated in case review sessions with occupational medicine residents and toxicology residents. The scholars discussed didactic activities and strategies conducted with their respective students and colleagues and their plans for continuing to enhance OEM education and practice. The group is considering utilizing a internet-based interactive case study assignment in Fall 2000 that would be incorporated into the curriculum of their respective nursing and medicine programs. The project year for this group of scholars ends in December, 2000.

Several Activities Conducted by Great Lakes Scholars:

- ▶ Nursing scholars conducted OEM lectures for undergraduate and graduate nursing students that included case studies with pre and post-tests.
- ▶ Scholars provided presentations to physicians, employer groups and academic colleagues to increase awareness about occupational and environmental medicine.
- ▶ As a class assignment, advanced practice nursing students analyzed an environmental case study and provided feedback to the class instructor by electronic mail. This was a successful use of technology to aid student access.



NEW ADDITIONS TO THE AOEC-ERL

To keep pace with technology and to expand the availability of our educational resources, AOEC plans to put selected educational modules on our website: www.aoec.org. The modules presently accessible are:

- ☞ “Occupational Asthma” by William Beckett, MD, MPH and Dina Markowitz, PhD of the University of Rochester School of Medicine. This presentation, which includes an audio feature, is a comprehensive introduction to occupational asthma for primary care physicians and medical students.
 - ☞ “Pediatric Environmental Health History” by Rose Goldman, MD, MPH of Cambridge Hospital and Michael Shannon, MD, MPH and Alan Woolf, MD, MPH of Children’s Hospital in Boston.
 - ☞ “Introduction to Ergonomics” by Sandra Mohr, M.D., MPH and Richard M. Lynch, PhD of the Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences Institute, UMDNJ. Dr. Mohr is presently at the National Jewish Medical Research Center in Denver.
- : These modules are also available in the AOEC-ERL in slide format. “Occupational Asthma” and “Pediatric Environmental Health History” are also available on CD. In response to a unanimous request by members completing our member survey, AOEC will continue adding more modules to the web site.

(cont'd from p.1)

US and Canada and how they typically operate. Whether Pennsylvania will get its network remains to be seen – we understand that the bill is a long shot. However, it is nice to see progress and for AOEC to have the opportunity to play a constructive role in helping, through education, the legislative process.

Speaking of legislation, the OSHA ergonomics standard remains a tough battle. This newsletter does not come out sufficiently often to keep members up to date and most of us undoubtedly have our own sources of information on the issue. So, we will not attempt to update you on the hair-raising twists and turns of legislation designed to block implementation of the standard. The crucial significance of this battle, however, should not be lost on us. This standard, and the Supreme Court review of EPA's proposed standard on particulate air pollution, will together define the sufficiency of evidence and the limitations within which regulatory agencies can exercise their mandate. The stakes are high and of concern to us all.

The XXVI International Congress on Occupational Health "Healthy Workers, Healthy Workplace: A New Millennium!" will be held 27 August to 1 September 2000, Singapore: information is available on the website www.icoh.org.sg/icoh2000.htm. Sponsored by the International Commission on Occupational Health, this Congress is a special, millennium edition of the triennial "ICOH" meetings with an expanded scientific program and exhibitions. There will be scores of minisymposia, invited papers, submitted papers, poster sessions, and exhibits during the meeting. A pre-congress symposium on thermal factors and heat stress will be held 26-27 August and a post-congress symposium on the history of occupational and environmental prevention will be held just following (in Brisbane, Australia). Keynote speakers include Jorma Rantanen (on the impact of globalization), Jean-Francois Caillard (on occupational health across the twentieth century), Linda Rosenstock (on the role of institutes), Fu Hua (on prevention of occupational cancer), Ruddy Fauci (on developing countries), Bengt Knave (on EMF), Malcolm Harrington (on social views of occupational health that treat it as a commodity), Masaharu Kumashiro (on new technologies) and Anders Johansson (on changing work organization). ICOH has received more than its share of criticism in recent years, some of it deserved and much of it not, in my opinion. (See the recent OEM List string on messages about ICOH for details, if you are interested.) This meeting will show what ICOH can do and will be a gathering place for the best in international occupational health. The Congress should be an event of great significance for world occupational health and we should be there if we can.

The Institute of Medicine has just released its report *Safe Work in the Twenty-First Century: Education and Training Needs for the Next Decade's Occupational Safety and Health Personnel*. Considerable alarm has been raised over Recommendation 4, which calls for the reintroduction of the alternative pathway to certification by the American Board of Preventive Medicine. This would prolong the anomaly that occupational medicine is the only medical specialty in which one may achieve certification piecemeal and outside a formal residency. However, the bigger surprise, to me, is how conservative the report turned out overall. The IOM committee had a mandate to

examine the role of occupational health professionals in the context of fundamental changes in the workplace and the organization of work. One response would have been to rethink occupational health professionals in the context of their new demands and role; they chose instead to tweak the existing system. Lost was an opportunity to address numerous fundamental issues: the adequacy of professional training (a three year residency for a field as complicated as occupational medicine, for example), the relationship with human resources, the balance between prevention and case management, teamwork and competition among health professions, cross-training and the implications of workers' compensation. I do not fault the members; I serve on an IOM committee myself and I know how difficult and time-consuming such service can be. However, this was a missed opportunity to bring fresh air to a stale debate.

A reminder that the deadline for Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) applications for next year is rapidly approaching. While most of the publicity for the EIS deals with their infectious disease work, there are great opportunities for occupational health professionals as well. EIS officers who choose to work with NIOSH can be involved in health hazard evaluations, surveillance, and epidemiologic field studies. NIOSH currently has assignments for EIS officers in Morgantown, WV, Cincinnati, OH, Denver, CO and Anchorage, AK, with the potential for travel to investigation sites throughout the US and occasionally abroad. The program is open to physicians, dentists or RNs with MPH or equivalent degrees, professionals with doctoral-level degrees in health related fields (e.g. epidemiology, toxicology, biostatistics, etc.), and veterinarians with MPH or equivalent degrees.

EIS Officers serve a two-year assignment. They are part of the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service. The deadline for applying is **September 15, 2000** for assignments beginning in July 2001. **Application information can be found at the CDC web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/epo/dapht/eis/index.htm>. To ask questions about the NIOSH programs, please contact Richard Ehrenberg, MD at 404-639-3346, e-mail: RLE1@cdc.gov.**

Fallon Clinic in Worcester, MA is recruiting for a **full-time occupational health nurse practitioner** or **physicians** assistant to join a large, comprehensive occupational health program. Responsibilities include assessment and care of employees with work-related injuries/illnesses, medical surveillance and fitness-for-duty services, consultation with employees and managers regarding occupational health issues, and participation in education and research. The ideal candidate will have at least 2 years experience, occupational health background. Contact: Robert Swotinsky, MD, Fallon Clinic, 630 Plantation Street; Worcester, MA 01605; fax: 508-853-4867; www.fallon-clinic.com

The Rhode Island Dept. of Health, Environmental Health Div., is seeking an **industrial hygienist** with responsibilities including general environmental health issues such as dioxin contamination in a local community, a rash outbreak in East Greenwich schools, the RI lead program. Contact: Dr Robert Vanderslice, RIDOH, 401-222-4948x2103, e-mail Bobv@DOH.state.ri.us.

The **Rollins School of Public Health of Emory University**, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, seeks to build its faculty expertise in toxicology, industrial hygiene, risk assessment, EOH policy, and general environmental health science. The department anticipates hiring three to four **faculty members** over the next two years, at a range of seniority levels, to build this expertise. The ideal candidates will have excellent training, be dedicated to the School's mission of research, teaching, and service, be experienced at securing external grant support for research, enjoy collaborative, cross-disciplinary work, and have research interests that complement those of the current faculty. Salary and rank will be commensurate with experience. Interested persons should mail a hard copy letter of interest and C.V. to Howard Frumkin, MD, DrPH., Chair, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, Rollins School of Public Health, 1518 Clifton Road, Atlanta GA 30322.

The **University of Massachusetts, Worcester** is seeking a **physician** for a combined position as Medical Director of the UMMHC Employee Health Service and as faculty in the Occupational and Environmental Health Program. Candidates should be BC/BE occupational medicine or BC in another medical specialty (ABFP, ABIM) with extensive experience in occupational health and/or hospital employee health. Send CV with cover letter to Thomas Hicks, MD, MPH, Associate Director, OEH Program, Dept of Family Medicine and Community Health, UMMHC, 55 Lake Avenue, Worcester, MA 01655; 508-856-2322; fax 508-856-1680; e-mail: spencers@ummh.org.

West Virginia University School of Medicine, in partnership with the Bureau of Employment Programs for the State of W. Virginia, seeks an **Associate Medical Director** for Insurance Services. The Bureau regulates all non-federal workers' compensation in the state and directly covers 500,000 workers for medical and disability benefits. The Assoc. Med. Director is responsible for utilization review and claims-team medical support, aimed at ensuring access to quality, cost-effective care. The Assoc. Med. Director will review Permanent Total Disability claims, assist in the Quality Assurance aspects of the Independent Medical Evaluation prg, coordinate training for occupant med residents, and communicate with state medical groups to optimize care. Opportunity exists for a candidate to collaborate in research supporting these areas with the Inst. of Occup. & Environ. Health at the WVU School of Medicine. The most desirable candidates will have experience in injury care under Workers' Compensation and medical insurer utilization review. Board Certification is a requirement; certification or eligibility in Occupational Medicine is desirable. Team building is a crucial aspect of this job. The ability to work with internal staff including professional physicians and other medical professionals as well as claims and administrative staff is essential. The incumbent will work at the Workers' Compensation Division in Charleston. CV, letter of interest & the names of three references to: Dr. Edward Doyle, Director, Inst of Occup & Envir Health, P.O. Box 9190, Health Sciences Center, Morgantown, WV 26506, Phone: (304) 293-3693; Fax (304) 293-2629; Email: edoyle@hsc.wvu.edu.

The Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers, Inc. (OHCOW), a network of occupational health clinics funded by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, is seeking **Occupational Health Physicians** on a part-time basis (up to 3 days per week) to join their professional staff. Physicians working in a multi-disciplinary environment will diagnose occupational illnesses and injuries, evaluate worksite conditions and be actively involved in health promotion programs for unions, employers, and health professionals. Emphasis is on determination of work-relatedness and prevention. Candidates should possess a BC in occupational medicine or another medical specialty and/or extensive experience in occupational health and/or community health. Research opportunities are available. Send CV with cover letter to Mary Cook, Managing Director OHCOW, 15 Gervais Drive, Suite 603, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1Y8; fax 416-443-6323.

The Department of Occupational and Environmental Health at **The University of Iowa, College of Public Health**, invites applications for a tenure track **faculty position in Industrial Hygiene** at the level of Assistant or Associate Professor. The University of Iowa and the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health contain the NIOSH-funded Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health, the CDC-funded University of Iowa Injury Prevention Center, and the NIEHS-funded Environmental Health Sciences Research Center. The Industrial Hygiene program provides training for both masters and doctoral level students, is supported by a NIOSH training grant, and is fully accredited by ABET. The Industrial Hygiene faculty members have established research in exposure assessment and control, ergonomics, aerosol physics and toxicology. Areas of research emphasis include agricultural and rural health; work environments such as construction, metals machining, energy production, and indoor environments; and environments contaminated with bioaerosols and aeroallergens.

Applicants must hold a Ph.D. or other doctorate in industrial hygiene or a relevant science or engineering field and should also be ABIH certified or in the process of obtaining certification. Experience in the practice of industrial hygiene is highly desirable. Applicants should have an academic research focus compatible with the research and programmatic interests of the Dept of Occupational and Environmental Health. The successful applicant will be expected to teach graduate courses in industrial hygiene, direct graduate thesis research, and develop an extramurally-funded research program. Please send a curriculum vitae, a statement of research interest, and names of three references to: Dr. Peter S. Thorne, Chair Industrial Hygiene Search Committee (#F1779), Department of Occupational and Environmental Health, The University of Iowa, 100 Oakdale Campus, #176 IREH, Iowa City, IA 52242-5000.

AUGUST 10, 2000, 12:00-2:30PM ET - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: A NURSING OPPORTUNITY.

CDC and ATSDR will broadcast this program by satellite. The content emphasizes the opportunity nurses have to protect people from adverse health effects that may be caused by exposure to hazardous substances in their environment. AOEC members Grace Paranzino, MPH, RN and Pat Butterfield, PhD, RN serve as presenters with the participation of other environmental health professionals. Detailed information is available at www.cdc.gov/phtn/envhealth/nursing.htm.

AUGUST 27-SEPTEMBER 1, 2000 - INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH. SINGAPORE.

The 26th of the triennial congresses of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH), a forum for sharing knowledge and experience in occupational health. Contact: email icoh2000@post1.com

GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS

The Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP) is a marvelous way to introduce medical students to the world of public health in general and occupational health in specific through NIOSH opportunities.

JRCOSTEP is a program involving most of the Public Health Service including the CDC. NIOSH is particularly interested in medical students, graduate nursing students and physician assistants. Internships are available throughout the year, including during summer break. Opportunities exist to assist with health hazard evaluations, to work alongside senior NIOSH scientists conducting epidemiological studies, surveillance and other investigations and to learn first hand what occupational health professionals can do.

Students are commissioned as Junior Assistant Health

Service Officers (Ensigns) in the U. S. PHS. The assignments may last between 31 and 120 days. They are provided with a nice stipend for their efforts and academic credit for some JRCOSTEP experience is also available. For information regarding the NIOSH program, please contact Rosemary Sokas, MD, MOH at 202-205-8556 or e-mail rrs8@cdc.gov.

Call 1-800-279-1605 or 301-594-2633 to obtain additional information and an application package or to speak with a PHS recruiter. Additional information can also be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/hmo/intshps4.htm> (or search the CDC web site for JRCOSTEP) December 31 is the application deadline for the May 1 - August 31 assignment cycle. April 30 is the application deadline for the September 1 - December 31 assignment cycle. September 30 is the application deadline for the January 1 - April 30 assignment cycle.

AOEC is very pleased to announce that the **Region VI PEHSU** will be the University of Texas at Tyler. Their proposal involves a collaboration between their Occupational Medicine Clinic and the Departments of Pediatrics and Allergy. In addition, they have assembled a team which includes the Texas Poison Control Center Network and its North Texas Poison Center, the New Mexico Poison and Drug Information Center and the Program of Occupational and Environmental Health at the University of New Mexico.

Jeffrey Levin, MD, MSPH and Larry K. Lowry, PhD will serve as Co-Principal Investigators. The PEHSU will be starting on September 1, 2000. Contact information for the PEHSU will be sent out prior to that date. In the interim, Drs. Levin and Lowry can be reached through the University of Texas Health Center at Tyler at 903-877-5919 FAX 903-877-7060. (For more on PEHSUs, see p. 3)

AOEC