

# THE DEAN'S LETTER FOR TUFTS NUTRITION



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## RESEARCH UPDATES

For thousands of years, cattle have been the lifeblood of the region known as the Karamoja in eastern Africa. But in recent decades, their way of life has come under threat as conflict over scarce natural resources like grazing land and water has led to banditry, increased poverty and violent clashes. As part

of a larger initiative to promote stability in the region, researchers at the Feinstein International Center at Tufts have been working with traditional seers, who are looked up to in their communities as possessing powers that allow them to see into the future. Working with this influential group, the FIC team has been able to get warring parties to sit down and talk. Read more about the work of **Christopher Carlson**, a senior researcher at the center, and **Darlington Akabwai**, D.V.M., a veterinarian from Uganda, online at Tufts Journal.

Professor **Johanna Dwyer**, D.Sc., has been named as a consultant to a subcommittee of the FDA's Science Board to review the Center for Science and Nutrition research and support programs and the alignment of the research endeavor with the regulatory responsibilities of the center. The subcommittee should complete its work early in 2010.

Stanley N. Gershoff Professor **Alice Lichtenstein**, D.Sc., and **Nirupa Matthan**, Ph.D., a scientist in the Cardiovascular Nutrition Laboratory at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging, have received a grant from Alcon to study omega-3 fatty acid therapy in the treatment of Meibomian Gland Dysfunction in the eye.

Professor **Joel Mason**, M.D., received a grant from the National Cancer Institute for his project "Folate Modulates Colorectal Cancer through the Wnt-signaling Pathway." For the second year in a row, Mason was selected by *Boston Magazine* as one of the top gastroenterologists in the Greater Boston area.

## AWARDS & ACCOLADES

**Ashley Colpaart**, N10, won an award from the American Dietetic Association for Excellence in Hunger and Environmental Nutrition.

Visiting Professor **Nevin Scrimshaw**, M.D., Ph.D., received the University of Chile's highest award, the Rector's Medal, while attending the Latin Nutrition Society meetings in Santiago,

Chile, at which he gave the opening plenary talk. He also received awards for his support of the Young Nutrition Leaders Program and from the LATINFOODS satellite meeting as the founder of the International Food Data Base System. In October by the New England Healthcare Institute with an "Innovator in Health Award." The award was established to celebrate the achievements of leaders who exemplify the spirit of innovation and collaboration and who have advanced the understanding, connectivity or delivery of health care. In particular,

## HERE & THERE

Professor **Johanna Dwyer**, D.Sc., spoke on micronutrients and chronic disease risk at a meeting of the Brazilian Society of Nutritionists. She also gave two presentations at the annual ADA meeting in Denver: "Conflicts of Interest: Whom Can You Trust?" and "Insights and Lessons Learned on the Feeding Infants and Toddlers Study 2."

Gershoff Professor **Alice Lichtenstein**, D.Sc., was the keynote speaker at the 14th annual meeting of the Israeli Society for Research in Eilat, Israel. She spoke on "Nutrition and Cardiovascular Disease: Dietary Guidance to Reduce Cardiovascular Disease Risk—Where Should the Emphasis Be?" At the plenary session of the Israel Hypertension Society in Tel Aviv, Israel, she spoke on "Current Recommendations for Non-Pharmacological Interventions to Maintain a Healthy Blood Pressure." She gave a talk on "Not All Fats Are the Same: Current Recommendations for CHD Prevention" at the Nutritional Epidemiology Symposium in Tel Aviv, Israel. As a speaker at the American Society for Public Health meeting in Philadelphia, she discussed the "Health Benefits of Fish Derived n-3 Fatty Acids" in a session titled "Benefits and Risks from the Sea, Balancing Nutritional Benefits with Toxicological Risks." She also served as moderator for the cardiovascular seminar "Antioxidant Supplements, Lessons Learned" at the American Heart Association meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Associate Professor **Dyan Mazurana**, Ph.D., of the Feinstein International Center was invited to give presentations to the staff and judges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague. Mazurana's presentations were part of a two-day roundtable discussion on "Reparations for Victims of War Crimes, Crimes against Humanity and Genocide," requested by the judges at the ICC and organized by the International Coalition for Women's Rights in Conflict Situations, Rights & Democracy and Redress, which is an international group that works to ban torture. Mazurana gave a presentation on the physical and psychological harms child soldiers face, the effects on their lives and futures and the kinds of reparation or remedy that might be appropriate for the court to issue in the case of guilty verdicts.

Assistant Professor **Paul E. Milbury**, Ph.D., will be presenting his data on anthocyanin bioavailability to the brain at the 4th International Conference on Polyphenols and Health at Harrogate International Centre in Yorkshire, England. He will also be chairing a session on fruit and juice polyphenols. This year a satellite symposium on "New Approaches to Support Evidence for Health Effects of Phytochemicals" will focus on translating our knowledge on polyphenols and other phytochemicals into practical nutritional advice, with emphasis on the design and interpretation of clinical trials, "omic" technologies and nutritional databases.

Professor **Carole Palmer**, Ed.D., gave a lecture on "Plates, Pills and Beyond—Nutrition/Oral Health Issues through the Life Cycle" to the San Joachin Dental Association in Stockton, Calif.

### FRIEDMAN FACULTY IN THE NEWS

Research by **Bess Dawson-Hughes**, M.D., director of the Bone Metabolism Laboratory at the HNRCA, was featured in a *New York Times* article about low-acid diets as a means of preventing osteoporosis. The article singles out a January 2009 study in which Dawson-Hughes and her colleagues found that people who were given bicarbonate equal to nine servings of fruits and vegetables per day excreted less calcium in their urine than those who consumed no bicarbonate.

For an article on WebMD.com, Gershoff Professor **Alice Lichtenstein**, D.Sc., said that recent studies on vitamin D add to evidence suggesting a link between vitamin D insufficiency and cardiovascular disease. But until well-designed studies show that vitamin D can improve heart health, people should refrain from taking mega-supplements on their own, she said. "People sometimes think if a little is good, a lot is better. But that's not always true. Too much vitamin D can build up and be toxic to organs like the kidneys," she said.

Assistant Professor **Diane McKay**, Ph.D., spoke with the *Chicago Tribune* for an article on health product myths. She pointed out that although some fruits juices may score high on the Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC) scale developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, drinking lots of them won't guarantee health benefits. "Even if one beverage ranks higher than all the others, that doesn't necessarily mean it will increase the antioxidant capacity of your cells, for example," she said.

Professor **Susan Roberts**, Ph.D., talked to National Public Radio's *Here and Now* program about weight gain during the holidays. She explained that a laden Thanksgiving table triggers a response in the body. "When you have a huge spread of food in front of you, you have an enormous physiological response," Roberts said. "The sight and the smell start this whole process of a physiological drive to eat more, but then that first bite just amplifies it, and that's why you can't eat just one bite."

An article in the *Boston Globe* explained the concept of positive deviance and noted Visiting Lecturer **Monique Sternin's** leadership of the Rockefeller Foundation-funded effort to cut down on hospital infections.

Assistant Professor **Andrew Wilder**, Ph.D., a research director at the Feinsein International Center, was interviewed for a five-minute segment on aid to Afghanistan that aired on National Public Radio's *Morning Edition*. He explained why humanitarian aid isn't necessarily "winning the hearts and minds" of the Afghan people. "My research is showing that not only is it not winning hearts and minds, but often, perceptions of aid and aid actors are largely negative," Wilder said. "There's a strong perception that most of the aid programs are going to benefit one tribe, which not coincidentally happens to be the tribe of the president."

## ALUMNI UPDATE

### In Navigating Networking

Twenty-five students and alumni attended the Alumni Association Career Panel, "Networking 101: The How, Why and When Guide," on October 22.

The alumni panelists were: **Jennifer Bourbeau**, N06, director of communications for the New England Dairy and Food Council; **Michael DeAngelis**, N00, MPH00, vice president and nutrition director for Porter Novelli; and **Helene Fuchs**, G75, principal at Helene Fuchs Associates. **Carole Palmer**, G69, moderated the two-hour discussion, in which the panelists offered tips for making new connections and maintain existing ones. An audio recording of the career panel is available on [alumni.nutrition.tufts.edu](http://alumni.nutrition.tufts.edu)

### Last Call for Friedman Alumni Awards

Help us honor our alumni's great accomplishments by nominating someone for an alumni award. Awards are given for Leadership, Expertise and the new International award in remembrance of **Leah Horowitz**, N06. A few of Leah's classmates, **Sally Abbott**, **Julia McDonald** and **Aimee Witteman**, worked on developing the award criteria as a way to honor Leah's life and Friedman alumni who follow in her footsteps.

Anyone can nominate alumni who have excelled in their areas of expertise. Nominations are being accepted through December 15. Submit your nominations at [alumni.nutrition.tufts.edu](http://alumni.nutrition.tufts.edu) or send an email to [sean.devendorf@tufts.edu](mailto:sean.devendorf@tufts.edu).

### Reunion 2010, Picture Perfect

The Friedman School All-Alumni Reunion will be April 10–12, 2010, and we are looking for alumni to send in photos from their school days to use on the invitation. Send your best Friedman photos to [Lindsay.Schoonmaker@tufts.edu](mailto:Lindsay.Schoonmaker@tufts.edu). Whether it's a photo of a group outing to Jacob Wirth's, or a fieldwork photo from Indonesia, we want to customize this year's invitations with your visual memories.

Also at the 2010 reunion, we will be honoring all graduates of the Food, Policy and Applied Nutrition and Social Science of Food Policy and Nutrition programs. Please email [sean.devendorf@tufts.edu](mailto:sean.devendorf@tufts.edu) to join the subcommittee and help recruit your classmates back to campus.

### A Recipe for Holiday Giving

Take:

207 students

159 faculty members

Add:

1 compelling mission

Your generous gift

Allow to interact in a professional, engaging environment for the academic year and enjoy an institution that is passionately advancing the nutritional wellbeing of people worldwide through excellence in research, teaching and the shaping of public policy.

Your gift to the Friedman School Annual Fund before December 31 allows the school to

accomplish its mission by providing student financial aid, internship support and needed funding for nutrition research initiatives.

A big thank you to the 700 donors who have already given this year!

The deadline for the next issue of the *Dean's Letter for Tufts Nutrition* is Wednesday, January 6, 2010. Please send your submissions to Julie Flaherty at [julie.flaherty@tufts.edu](mailto:julie.flaherty@tufts.edu).