

THE DEAN'S LETTER FOR TUFTS NUTRITION



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RESEARCH UPDATES

Although the obesity epidemic is recognized as a nationwide problem, Friedman School researchers have put together a first-of-its-kind comprehensive report analyzing childhood obesity specifically in Massachusetts, Maine and New Hampshire. **Christina D. Economos**, Ph.D., holder of the New Balance Chair in Childhood Nutrition, co-authored the

report with **Jeanne Goldberg**, Ph.D., professor of nutrition and director of the Nutrition Communication Program, along with **Jennifer Sacheck**, Ph.D., assistant professor of nutrition, and **Sara Folta**, Ph.D., research associate and adjunct assistant professor.

Kathleen Cappellano and **Valerie Clark** played a major role in data gathering and analysis for the project. "This project gave us the opportunity to get to know our communities and states in a way no national report ever does," Goldberg told the Boston *Metro* newspaper. The report, compiled for the Harvard Pilgrim Healthcare Foundation, is available at: https://www.harvardpilgrim.org/portal/page?_pageid=213,256650&_dad=portal&_schema=P ORTAL

The latest piece to come out of the Feinstein International Center's research on Darfur finds that while the some of the region's most important trade markets are now defunct, new ones are emerging. Trade in cattle and gum arabic have been shut off, but new sectors, such as a timber trade and property market, have opened up in response to urbanization and the influx of international humanitarian workers. The orange trade has also hung on, despite dealers who must negotiate through frontlines, moving from rebel-controlled areas of production to government-controlled urban markets. Authors **Margie Buchanan-Smith** and **Abduljabbar Abdulla** note the people of Darfur have historically found ways to adapt, be it to changing rainfall or changing regimes. Read more about "Adaptation and Devastation: The Impact of the Conflict on Trade and Markets in Darfur" at <http://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/FIC/Reports>.

Susan Harris, D.Sc., received a three-year, \$455,000 grant from the American Diabetes Association to study Vitamin D, glucose control and insulin sensitivity in African Americans. Harris is a senior scientist in the Bone Metabolism Laboratory at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging (HNRC) and an adjunct associate professor at the Friedman School.

The Nestle Foundation has awarded a grant for a two-year study on "Improving Micronutrient Status of Chinese Children Using Dietary Spirulina" to Shian Yin of the National Institute of Nutrition and Food Safety at the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Beijing, China, and co-investigator **Guangwen Tang**, Ph.D., an HNRCA scientist and an associate professor at the Friedman School.

AWARDS & ACCOLADES

The American College of Nutrition (ACN) selected **Jacob Selhub**, Ph.D., for its Nutrition Award, which recognizes a lifetime of achievement in the field of nutrition. The award will be presented at the ACN's annual meeting in October, where Selhub will lecture on folic acid intake and the exacerbation of vitamin B12 deficiency. Selhub is a professor at the Friedman School and director of the Vitamin Metabolism Laboratory at the HNRCA.

HERE & THERE

Lynne Ausman, D.Sc., the Saqr bin Mohammed Al Qasimi Professor in International Nutrition, has been named director of the Friedman School's Biochemical and Molecular Nutrition Program.

Timothy Griffin, Ph.D., has joined the Friedman School as an associate professor in the Agriculture, Food and Environment Program. Griffin was most recently a research agronomist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service at the University of Maine, where his work focused on high-value food products in the Northeast, including potatoes and dairy. From 1992 to 1998, Griffin held positions with the Extension Service, and has the distinction of having been appointed the first Sustainable Agriculture Extension Specialist in the United States. Griffin earned a Ph.D. from Michigan State University in crop and soil science, and an M.S. in agronomy and a B.S. in forage and range management, both from the University of Nebraska.

The Trustee Academic Affairs Committee approved the creation of two academic departments—and the appointment of two department chairs—at the Friedman School. **Daniel G. Maxwell**, Ph.D., the director of research for the Feinstein International Center, was named chair of the Department of Food and Nutrition Policy. **Sarah L. Booth**, Ph.D., director of the Vitamin K Laboratory at the HNRCA, was named chair of the Department of Nutrition Sciences.

José Ordovas, Ph.D., professor of nutrition and genetics, has been appointed to the Science Advisory Board of the National Center for Toxicological Research of the FDA.

Professor **Carole A. Palmer**, Ed.D., R.D., joined more than 100 other professors and graduate students from universities throughout the U.S. and Canada to participate in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Dietary Supplements course, "Dietary Supplement Research Practicum 2008." Experts from the NIH, academic institutions and federal regulatory agencies such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration served as speakers.

Harry Pino, Ph.D., an assistant adjunct professor at the Friedman School and an assistant professor at Tufts School of Medicine, has been named president of the Massachusetts Association of Clinical Exercise Physiologists. He was also named chair of the communication committee of the New England chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Peter Walker, Ph.D., the Irwin H. Rosenberg Professor of Nutrition and Human Security and director of the Feinstein International Center, spoke at the annual Global Humanitarian Platform in Geneva, a meeting of the chief executives of the world's 40 largest aid agencies. His presentation on the future of humanitarian assistance in the face of climate change and economic liberalization is available at <https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/FIC/Peter+Walker>.

Professor **Bea Rogers**, Ph.D., facilitated a three-day workshop in Honduras to assist non-governmental organizations currently administering food aid programs in developing their plans for sustaining the effects of their food aid interventions once aid is withdrawn. U.S. food assistance under the Agricultural Trade Development Assistance Act, also known as "Food for Peace," is scheduled to end by September 2009 for most current recipient countries, including Honduras. The workshop built on Rogers' previous work with **Kathy Macías**, N01, F02, on exit strategies, based on interviews and a review of published and unpublished literature, and recommendations about the effectiveness of various approaches to program exit. The workshop was sponsored by USAID/Honduras and funded through the Friedman School's subcontract with the federal Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) Project.

FRIEDMAN FACULTY IN THE NEWS

Professor emeritus **Robert Russell**, M.D., **Irwin Rosenberg**, M.D., University Professor and the Jean Mayer Professor of Nutrition, and Professor **Allen Taylor**, Ph.D., were quoted in an article in *Science* magazine about the HNRCA and another academic center that were originally funded by earmarks. It concludes that the two centers have "stood the test of time" and come to occupy "unique niches" in the scientific world. Taylor's work as director of the Laboratory for Nutrition and Vision Research was highlighted.

Peter Walker, Ph.D., director of the Feinstein International Center, was quoted in a *USA Today* article on famine in Ethiopia, which he called "a ticking time bomb." Walker said the nation suffers from a centralized agricultural policy that does not encourage small private enterprise or even allow small farmers to own their land. He said federal officials "issue well-meaning edicts (such as), 'Increase food production 30 percent in your district.'" Local officials may report good results, Walker said, but "the reports we get are that production is down."

The New Entry Sustainable Farming Project was featured in an article in the *Boston Globe*. "The average age of farmers in the U.S. now is 55, and getting older," said **Jennifer Hashley**, project director. "And people's children aren't going into farming, so what do they do when all of their assets are in the land? Who takes over the land and keeps it in production, when everybody's saying, 'Oh, you can cash it in and put condos on it'? If they

don't have someone to pass the farm and business to, they're not left with a lot of options."

In a *USA Today* article inspired by the fitness of 41-year-old Olympian Dara Torres, Associate Professor Miriam Nelson, Ph.D., said: "We don't have the full picture yet, but data are emerging that suggest that you can preserve much of your strength and fitness well into your 60s and beyond if you work hard enough at it."

University Professor Irwin Rosenberg, M.D., was quoted in *Consumer Reports on Health* for a page-one story on supplements. "The observational evidence is overwhelming that richly colored foods reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer," he said. "But the idea that we can reproduce that in pills is flawed. It's becoming increasingly apparent that there are a lot—probably thousands—of substances in food that we haven't identified yet."

COMING RIGHT UP

Dean's Medal Ceremony

Tufts University Provost and Senior Vice President Jamshed Bharucha, Ph. D., and Dean Eileen T. Kennedy, D.Sc., invite you to attend the Friedman School's Dean's Medal Ceremony. The ceremony will honor Joan M. Bergstrom, Ed.D., J62; Edward H. Budd, A55, J80P, J86P; and Nevin Scrimshaw, M.D., Ph.D., for the outstanding contributions they have made to the school. The event will take place on Tuesday, September 23, in the Jaharis Center, Behrakis Auditorium, at 3:30 p.m. Please reply to rsvpevents@tufts.edu.

Register for the Friedman Symposium

There is still time to register for the Friedman Symposium taking place September 24-26 at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel. "Nutrition Agenda 2008 & Beyond" will feature leading national and international experts discussing subjects that will affect food policy and industry in the coming years. A complete list of speakers and topics is available at www.friedmansymposium.com. All attendees are eligible for 16 continuing education units. Friedman School alumni are eligible for a special registration rate—visit <http://www.friedmansymposium.com/alumni>.

Alumni Association Reception at ADA in Chicago

The Friedman School Alumni Association invites all alumni and friends of the Friedman School to its annual cocktail reception during the American Dietetic Association's Annual Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo on Sunday, October 26, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. [Click here to register.](#)

Joint Friedman School and MPH Reception at APHA in San Diego

Save the date for the Tufts University School of Medicine's Public Health & Professional Degree Programs and the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy Alumni Reception being held during the 2008 American Public Health Association (APHA) annual meeting and exposition. The reception will be Monday, October 27, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the Carlsbad Room at the San Diego Marriott Marina. E-mail lindsay.schoonmaker@tufts.edu if you are interested in attending.

New Friedman School Office of Development and Alumni Relations Web Pages

The Friedman School Office of Development and Alumni Relations is pleased to announce we've updated our web pages! Please come and check out our new and improved site at: <http://alumni.nutrition.tufts.edu>. If you have any feedback, comments or other ideas, please send them to Lindsay Schoonmaker at lindsay.schoonmaker@tufts.edu.

SAVE THE DATE

Please mark your calendars for the 7th Annual Friedman School All-Alumni Reunion, which will take place April 4-6, 2009. The reunion committee is hard at work planning a fantastic weekend that will feature the 2009 Alumni Association Awards, discussions of critical issues in nutrition and the opportunity to reconnect with old friends and mentors. There will also be a reception just for Friedman School graduates from the last five years (2003 to 2008). More information will be posted on <http://nutrition.tufts.edu/reunion> soon. If you have any questions, please email sean.devendorf@tufts.edu.

The deadline for the next issue of the *Dean's Letter for Tufts Nutrition* is Wednesday, October 15. Please send your submissions to Julie Flaherty at julie.flaherty@tufts.edu.