

# THE DEAN'S LETTER FOR TUFTS NUTRITION



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SEPTEMBER 2009

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## WELCOME TO A NEW CLASS

The Friedman School welcomed its newest class of 98 students on September 1. The 88 women and 10 men hail from all over the United States as well as Armenia, Canada, Eritrea, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Korea, Mexico, Russia, Taiwan and Uganda. Eighty-seven are master's degree candidates while 11 will pursue doctorates. The Food Policy and Applied Nutrition Program can claim the most students, with 29, although the Agriculture, Food and Environment

Program is a close second, with 28 devotees.

## ON THE RADIO

The **Nutrition Internet Radio Program** presents the second episode of "Nutrition Talk," an Internet radio program written and produced by students at the Friedman School. You can listen to the prerecorded broadcast at (<http://www.nutritioninternetradio.org>) or if you have an iPod and use Apple's iTunes service, you can search for "Friedman Nutrition" in the iTunes Store to download the broadcast to your iPod. You can also find it under the "Health - Fitness and Nutrition" area of the Podcast area of iTunes. All downloads are free.

This episode focuses on the economic downturn and its impact on food prices and consumer choices. To help sort out the facts, **Parke Wilde**, Ph.D., a food economist and an associate professor in the Food Policy and Applied Nutrition Program, and Professor **Jeanne Goldberg**, Ph.D., director of the Nutrition Communication Program, explain food economics and the impact it has on food prices and availability at the grocery store.

In the second half-hour of the program, the students talk with registered dietitians Joan Salge-Blake, a nutrition author and American Dietetic Association spokesperson, and Carrie Taylor, a dietitian for Big Y Foods and a Massachusetts Dietetic Association board member, about the role health-care providers play in providing consumers with advice for eating healthfully during such a financially difficult time.

More episodes will be available this fall and directed study opportunities are available to students who wish to participate in the program. For more information, please contact Assistant Professor **Paul Giguere**, Ed.D., at [paul.giguere@tufts.edu](mailto:paul.giguere@tufts.edu) or 617.636.3750.

## HERE & THERE

Associate Professor **Tim Griffin**, Ph.D., has been named director of the Agriculture, Food and Environment Program.

Associate Professor **Susan Harris**, D.Sc., and Gershoff Professor **Alice Lichtenstein**, D.Sc., traveled to Ras Al Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates to take part in a conference on nutrition and diet as part of a healthy lifestyle in the UAE. Tufts University and RAK Hospital organized the event, which coincided with the start of Ramadan. The topics ranged from the benefits of vitamin D in preventing chronic diseases to nutrition and bone health. The Friedman School offers a one-year online master's degree in nutrition, which includes three classroom sessions held in Ras Al Khaimah.

In June, Assistant Professor **Paul Milbury**, Ph.D., gave a presentation on "Xenobiotic Metabolism and Berry Flavonoid Transport across the Blood Brain Barrier" at the 2009 International Berry Health Symposium in Monterey, Calif. He showed data on blueberry anthocyanin bioavailability to brain tissue and possible mechanisms of action in promoting brain health based on available flavonoid concentrations. His will be included with other symposium papers in a special edition of the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

**Chris Peters** will be joining the Friedman School faculty in January, with primary teaching and research responsibilities in the Agriculture, Food and Environment Program. Peters completed his Ph.D. in soil and crop science at Cornell University in 2007. His dissertation was titled *Mapping Potential Local Foodsheds in New York State: A Spatial Analysis of the Capacity to Produce Food Closer to the Point of Consumption*. He has been working at Cornell as a postgraduate fellow for the past two years, broadening his analysis of the potential of local food systems and developing models to map local food systems potential in New York State.

Associate Professor **Guangwen Tang**, Ph.D., gave a talk on golden rice as a food source of vitamin A to the Micronutrient Forum in Beijing, China, in May. Also in May, she was invited to speak on golden rice feeding trials in China for the Grand Challenge #9 of the Gates Foundation. She traveled to Barcelona, Spain, in June to make a presentation to the European Micronutrient Recommendations Aligned RA3 conference, speaking on the bioconversion of provitamin A carotenoids to vitamin A in humans. Her July presentation to the 25th Hohenheim Consensus Conference at the University of Hohenheim in Stuttgart, Germany, was on b-carotene is an important vitamin A source for humans.

## RESEARCH UPDATES

The Adjunct Professor **Judy Ribaya-Mercado**, D.Sc., was in Kenya in June for the Action Against Hunger–USA project studying the impact of blanket feeding of a ready-to-use supplementary food on the nutritional status of children ages 2 months to 2 years in Mandera, in northeast Kenya.

Professor **Bea Rogers**, Ph.D., is initiating a study in Honduras of "exit strategies," the

methods that nongovernmental organizations can use to ensure that the activities and impacts of their food assistance programs are sustained once the programs themselves shut down. The study is one of three long-term country studies funded by USAID, Office of Food for Peace, being conducted by the Friedman School under the FANTA2 program. Rogers was in Honduras conducting preliminary field work and holding meetings with USAID and NGO staff at the time that Honduran President Manuel Zelaya was ousted from power in June, and had a front-row view (from the ninth floor of her hotel) of demonstrations being carried out on the street just below. The Honduras study is on hold pending resolution of the political situation, while the Bolivia study (with Rogers as principal investigator) and Kenya study (with **Jennifer Coates** as PI) are proceeding as planned.

## AWARDS & ACCOLADES

The British Veterinary Association's Overseas Group has awarded **Andy Catley**, Ph.D., research director for policy process at the Feinstein International Center, the Trevor Blackburn Award for 2009 in recognition of the dedication and professionalism he has shown to the strengthening of veterinary services in developing countries over the past two decades. His most recent work includes the design and facilitation of policy reform processes around livestock relief and development and pastoralism in the Horn of Africa.

The **New Entry Sustainable Farming Project** was honored at the annual World Hunger Year event in June in New York City. The project received a Harry Chapin Self-Reliance Award for providing innovative solutions to hunger and poverty. This award will be used to purchase the supplies that will aid new farmers in beginning their projects. In other NESFP news, thanks to generous contributions from dozens of individual World PEAS shareholders, nine World PEAS CSA shares, valued at more than \$5,000, will be provided for low-income families receiving services through the East Boston Neighborhood Health Care Center for the 2009 season.

## FRIEDMAN FACULTY IN THE NEWS

Professor **Jeffrey Blumberg**, Ph.D., was quoted in a National Public Radio segment about the way food preparation affects nutrient absorption. While absorption levels can vary depending on cooking method, Blumberg says, "What's important is that you find a way to cook that's palatable to you so you're getting lots of plant foods."

In a *Los Angeles Times* article looking at "anti-inflammation" diets that claim to quiet and an overactive immune system, reducing damage to tissue and ideally reducing the risk of heart disease or neurological disorders, Assistant Professor **Andrew Greenberg**, M.D., discussed the research results. "If you feed rodents different diets, you can very strongly modulate inflammation," he said. "Fish oil, for example, ameliorates inflammation in rodents."

A letter to the editor by Professor **Alice Lichtenstein**, D.Sc., was published in the June 24 issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. In it, she suggests two often-overlooked ways to improve diet quality in the United States. "First, provide tax incentives to encourage large supermarkets to locate in economically disadvantaged areas ... Second, bring back basic food-preparation skill instruction to our schools, a version of 'hunting and

gathering' in the 21st century."

An Allure/MSNBC.com article claimed in its headline to be about cheating on your diet, but quoting from Professor **Susan Roberts**, Ph.D., and taking in inspiration from her book, *The Instinct Diet*, it actually offered guidelines for fitting calorie-dense foods into a healthy lifestyle. "You can have it all—just not all in one day," Roberts said.

A study by Professor **Patrick Webb**, Ph.D., and Associate Professor **Steven Block**, Ph.D., that looked at the impact of tobacco use on the nutrition of families of Indonesia was written about by a number of medical blogs and online journals, including scienceblog.com.

Assistant Professor **Andrew Wilder**, Ph.D., and Instructor and Senior Researcher Antonio Donini were featured guests on the Wisconsin Public Radio show *Here on Earth*. They discussed the situation in Afghanistan, drawing on the research conducted by the Feinstein International Center about humanitarianism, security and livelihoods in that country.

## COMING RIGHT UP

### Research Day on Global Health

The Tufts Office of the Vice Provost is hosting a series of Research Days to showcase current work on the university's three campuses and at its affiliated hospitals. The next event, "Global Health and Infectious Disease," will feature talks on water and food pathogens, preventive strategies, vaccines, emerging infectious diseases, as well as poster presentations. The event will also feature a special guest speaker, Gerald Keusch, M.D., of Boston University, who will give an overview of issues in global health. The forum will be held on Monday, October 5, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging in Boston. Please respond by September 18 to [ovp-rsvp@tufts.edu](mailto:ovp-rsvp@tufts.edu) or (617) 627-3834.

Please join the Friedman School on Wednesday, September 30, for a **screening of the documentary *Food, Inc.* with Gary Hirshberg**, chairman, president and "CE-Yo" of Stonyfield Farm. Following the screening, Hirshberg, who is featured in the film, will take questions from the audience. The evening ends with light snacks and refreshments in the Jaharis Center cafe. The event, which is free, runs from 4 to 7 p.m. in the Jaharis Center's Behrakis Auditorium on the Boston campus.

Network, socialize and reconnect with the Friedman School at the **Alumni & Friends Reception at the American Dietetic Association Annual Conference** on Monday, October 19. The event runs from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency in Denver, Colo.

The **4th Annual Alumni & Student Picnic** will be held on Saturday, October 24, from 3 to 6 p.m. in Concord, Mass. Join Friedman students, faculty, alumni and our generous hosts, Geeta and BC Krishna, for a fall picnic. Come out to enjoy the crisp fall air, homemade Indian food and other treats, as well as the great company of your colleagues and friends. Families are welcome.

The Friedman School Alumni Association's Washington, D.C., chapter invites you to an

**informal reception at Urbana Restaurant & Wine Bar** during the Obesity Society conference. Join local friends and colleagues in town for the conference for some drinks, light appetizers and networking/socializing on Monday, October 26, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

The Friedman School and the Tufts School of Medicine Public Health and Professional Degree Program invite you to an **Alumni & Friends Reception during this year's American Public Health Association annual meeting**. Even if you are not attending APHA but live/work in the Philly area, please feel free to stop by and say hello on Monday, November 9, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown.

The deadline for the next issue of the *Dean's Letter for Tufts Nutrition* is Wednesday, October 14. Please send your submissions to Julie Flaherty at [julie.flaherty@tufts.edu](mailto:julie.flaherty@tufts.edu).