Greetings From Our Director

Welcome back from the summer break! This issue of InFocus marks the beginning of our 10th anniversary as a research center. Many of the SIRC team members have been working together since 1996 but in 2001 we received the five year long NIDA/NIH award to start the development of SIRC. In 2007 we were funded by NIMHD/NIH as an Exploratory Center of Excellence in Minority Health and Health Disparities. I have had the privilege of serving as the founding center director since 2001 and have witnessed the growth and diversification of our research portfolio. I wish to congratulate the Community Advisory Board, the Executive Council, the International Scientific Advisory Board, the SIRC core team and staff. In addition I would like to thank Arizona State University for their ongoing support of our vision. I would also like to thank the faculty research affiliates and students for their invaluable contributions to advancing our mission to reduce and eliminate health disparities.

Our 10th anniversary as an NIH funded research center provides opportunities for celebration, reflection, and planning. This anniversary is by itself a milestone; it speaks of the strength, depth, and success of the ongoing collaboration between numerous research community partners and researchers from many disciplines. I invite you to join me in a process of discernment during this year guided by the following overarching questions: 1) where do we want to go from here? 2) What are our main assets and opportunities? 3) What are the new challenges and priorities we want to undertake as we enter our second decade as a research center?

I would like to thank Linda Madrid who served as the editor of InFocus for many years and welcome Kristen Baird-Romero, SIRC’s coordinator of health literacy programs, as the new editor. In Focus will continue to be a main source of connection between SIRC members and friends, provide translational research updates, and make key research findings and research capacity opportunities available to all.

Enjoy this issue of InFocus and become familiar with the many stimulating activities we have planned for the year. Remember to visit our webpage often: http://sirc.asu.edu. I hope to have the opportunity to say hello in person very soon, in the meantime be well and keep up the good work towards improving the well-being of our communities.

Best wishes for a fruitful school year,

Flavio F. Marsiglia, Ph.D., SIRC Director
Distinguished Foundation Professor of Cultural Diversity and Health School of Social Work, College of Public Programs

SIRC Activities

The Data Analysis Clinic (DAC) provides on-going methodological and statistical support and training to investigators, students and community members every Wednesday from 1:00-1:45 PM

The Advanced Statistical Analysis Work Group (ASAWG) is a user’s group for advanced students, faculty, and community partners addressing more complex methodological and statistical analysis. This group meets every Wednesday from 1:45 – 2:30 PM

The Health Disparities Journal Club reviews journal articles and supporting material to stimulate discourse on health inequalities. The Health Disparities Journal Club’s aim is to increase public awareness of socioeconomic and racial/ethnic inequities in health and their human and financial costs. The Journal Club meets first Wednesday of the month at noon.

The SIRC Lecture Series invites local, national and international experts in health disparities to present their prevention and intervention research work during the academic school year. Presenters are also paired with investigators to provide consultation in their areas of expertise. Everyone is welcome to attend. Typically these lectures are scheduled on Wednesdays at noon.

Upcoming SIRC Events

Visit http://sirc.asu.edu/events for event updates

09/28/2011 | SIRC Health Disparities Lecture Series
A Global Health Initiative: Contaminants of Lagos Coastal Waters and Implications on Health in Nigeria by Ngozi Margaret Oguguah, MSc, Ph.D. student at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

Wednesday, Noon - 1:00 PM
UCENT – SIRC Suite 720

10/12/2011 | SIRC Health Disparities Lecture Series
Addressing Health Disparities for Individuals with Serious Mental Illness through the use of Integrated Health Homes by Dr. Laura Nelson, Chief Medical Officer for Arizona Department of Health Services.

Wednesday, Noon - 1:00 PM
UCENT – SIRC Suite 720

10/19/2011 | SIRC Health Disparities Lecture Series
The Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group: Data for Decision-Making by Wendy Wolfesteig, Ph.D., SIRC Assistant Director of Evaluation & Partner Contracts.

Wednesday, Noon - 1:00 PM
UCENT – SIRC Suite 720

11/9/2011 | SIRC Health Disparities Lecture Series
National Plan for Action (NPA) to Eliminate Health Disparities: Update and Activities in Arizona by Zipatly Mendoza, MPH, Office Chief for the Arizona Health Disparities Center (AHDC) within the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Wednesday – Noon to 1:00 PM
UCENT – SIRC Suite 720

11/16/2011 | SIRC Health Disparities Lecture Series
The Functional Relationship of Gender Roles and Substance Use in Mexican American Adolescents by Julie Nagoshi, Ph.D., SIRC, Arizona State University

Wednesday – Noon to 1:00 PM
UCENT – SIRC Suite 720
Science in the City

"I learned lots of new things like how the environment and our decisions affect health…being a researcher sounds fun." – Vinny V., student Grade 7

The SIRC Community Engagement and Outreach Core (CEOC) under the direction of Dr. Olga Davis and Kristen Baird-Romero, hosted three half-day workshops in June on health disparities as part of the Phoenix Union High School District “Science in the City” summer program for over 60 students and teachers.

Science in the City is geared towards stimulating minority students during the summer by enhancing their exposure to various science outlets in the community with partner organizations. Program sessions at SIRC focused on how health can affect our local community and what we can do to make healthier choices to eliminate disparities.

Students played health disparity words games, discussed themes from PBS Unnatural Causes segment "Bad Sugar," and searched for hidden facts from research posters with the help of volunteers from the community and Arizona State University.

Dr. Elizabeth Anthony, Jaime Booth, Doug Hirano, Dr. Kelly Jackson, Dr. Teri Kennedy, Mayra Lozano Porras, Amy Ma, Marcos Martinez, Jennifer Valdez, Mark Wardian, and Kris Whitman engaged students during sessions and got a chance to work with these talented researchers of tomorrow.

In the Media: Steven Haas

Dr. Steven Haas, a SIRC faculty research affiliate, recently was featured as an op-ed contributor in the June 2, 2011 New York Times article “Heavy in School, Burdened for Life.” Haas’ research findings from The Skinny on Success: Body Mass, Gender, and Occupational Standing Across Life, contributes to the perspective on the economic effects of obesity for males versus females in the job market. For more on this article visit: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/03/opinion/03glass.html

SIRC Leadership Award

In addition to sharing use-inspired research in health and health disparities at the Annual Research Conference in April, SIRC recognizes individuals that are involved in their community to help minimize the effects of health disparities and maximize the hope for better health.

Community Leadership Award

For Outstanding Contributions to the Elimination of Health Disparities within the Community

Jeanne Francoise Nizigiyimana received the SIRC Community Leadership Award for her dedication to empower women and eliminate disparities by providing quality and culturally appropriate care for women within the local refugee community as Women’s Health Clinic at Maricopa Integrated Health System.

Program Manager for the Refugee Women’s Health Clinic at Maricopa Integrated Health System.

Legislative Leadership Posthumous Award

For Outstanding Contributions to the Elimination of Health Disparities through Policy and Legislative Action

Honoring the late State Senator Jorge Luis Garcia (9/10/1953-10/15/2010), his wife Maria Garcia and his mother Conception Garcia accepted the award for his long-standing contributions to help vulnerable populations in Arizona. Senator Garcia earned his MSW Degree from Arizona State University School of Social Work-Tucson Component in 1981.

Senator Garcia commissioned SIRC to produce a landmark study entitled, “The State of Latino Youth’s Behavioral Health in Arizona.” The results of the study were presented and discussed with the Latino Legislative Caucus. Senator Garcia’s dedication to issues of social justice and his passion to help minority and vulnerable populations inspire and motivate all of us to continue our work in his memory.

SIRC 9th Annual Research Conference

SIRC hosted its 9th Annual Research Conference Moving Forward: Translating Health Research into Policy and Practice on April 15, 2011 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Phoenix, AZ. Participants were enthusiastic in their evaluations of SIRC and the contents of the 9th Annual Conference.

Over 200 attendees were present for the keynote address delivered by Thomas LaVeist, Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University entitled Bringing Health Disparities to the Health Reform Table: Concrete Approaches for Addressing Disparities in the Context of Reform. Dr. LaVeist is the Founding Director of the Center for Health Disparities Solutions and William C. and Nancy F. Richardson Professor in Health Policy & Management at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, MD.

The conference consisted of 6 breakout sessions and afternoon community panel featuring the work of 14 researchers from across the United States, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. The research poster exhibition included twenty posters created by SIRC graduate students, faculty, affiliates, and community partners.

SIRC Leadership Institute

2010 marked the first SIRC Leadership Institute a preliminary event to the Annual Research Conference. The Institute benefited managers and leaders working in behavioral and mental health, safety and law enforcement, policy, and community coalitions. The keynote speakers James G. Hodge Jr., J.D., LL.M. and Marion Kelly, Director of Community Outreach, Mayo Clinic encouraged attendees to create a strong and healthy Arizona.
Behind the Scenes: 
Every Little Step Counts, Making Healthier Futures for Latino Youth

Gabriel Q. Shaibi, Ph.D., is an assistant professor and South-west Borderlands Scholar at Arizona State University and Early Career Faculty Fellow in health disparities research at SIRC. He serves as the principal investigator for the pilot study: Community-Based Participatory Research to Improve Health and Quality of Life of Latino Youth: Every Little Step Counts (ELSC).

ELSC is a 12-week culturally grounded diabetes prevention program for obese Latino adolescents ages 14-16 partnering with two local agencies in Phoenix, the St Vincent de Paul Medical and Dental Clinic and the Downtown Lincoln Family YMCA. The intervention includes weekly lifestyle education for parents and youth and 3 sessions per week of individual and group exercise for the youth.

SIRC sat down with Shaibi to find out more about the ELSC program.

SIRC: How has your clinical and academic background contributed to your understanding of health disparities?

Shaibi: I come from a Biologically oriented background. I was very clinically focused and trained that health disparities were primarily the result of biological differences between racial and ethnic groups. However, working with SIRC and my community partners, I have come to appreciate how social, cultural, and contextual factors contribute to health and health outcomes. I believe in order to close the health disparities gap, we must address these broader issues that are in play. Well-designed approaches will be both culturally and biologically meaningful and, most importantly, readily translatable into real-world settings.

"By engaging the community through a public health prevention model focused on youth, we may be able to delay or even prevent the onset of disease for years to come."

SIRC: Can you name a couple factors that set ELSC apart from other diabetes interventions in the past?

Shaibi: ELSC is based upon a multi-level model that acknowledges that obesity-related health disparities are not just about individual level factors. We have a transdisciplinary team of diverse scholars and are collaborating with community partners who serve as critical members of the research team. They have contributed to every stage of the project including planning, implementation, evaluation, and now dissemination. Lastly, although we employed rigorous clinical tests to evaluate the program, the intervention was delivered in the community by the community for the community.

SIRC: Finally, what do you hope to see in the future of your current research?

Shaibi: Moving forward, we would like to test this program in a randomized control trial over a 12-month period to test the efficacy, and make sure the health improvements we found are sustainable over time. We will also look at the cost effectiveness of the program which will help make the case for expanding similar programs to other communities.

For more information on current SIRC research please visit:
http://sirc.asu.edu/research

SIRC In the Community Dale Rinard

Dale Rinard, a long standing member of the SIRC Community Advisory Board, was recognized by the ASU Center for Applied Behavioral Health Policy (CABHP) as a recipient of the 2011 Arizona Behavioral Health ‘Founders Award’ at the Seventh Annual Arizona Behavioral Health Awards Gala. Rinard serves as the President/CEO of TERROS Behavioral Health Inc., a community-based behavioral health organization that helps people recover from substance abuse, mental illness, and other behavioral health problems throughout Maricopa County, AZ. Rinard was recognized for his dedication to meeting and exceeding the local behavioral health needs of citizens through his continuing mission and vision of TERROS.

SIRC Spotlight: Meghan Garvey

2011 National Hispanic Science Network on Drug Abuse IRTI Fellow

Meghan Garvey is one of ten national recipients of the Interdisciplinary 2011 Research Training Institute (IRTI) fellowship sponsored by the National Hispanic Science Network (NHSN). The IRTI fellowship, a competitive two year award funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), promotes career development through training, mentoring, and networking of pre-doctoral, post-doctoral, and early career scientists interested in research on drug abuse among Hispanics.

As an IRTI fellow, Garvey participated in an intensive 11-day IRTI Summer Training Program in Houston, TX led by NIDA funded scientists to meet and receive research consultation by experts. At the conclusion of training she presented her research prospectus to a panel of National Institute of Health (NIH) researchers about her interest to examine marijuana use among Latino youth in the Southwest.

“I greatly enjoyed meeting with nationally renowned faculty to advance research ideas and developing supportive networking relationships with other fellows,” said Garvey.

In addition to a stipend, Garvey will work along with mentors in her area of study to attain personal professional goals of scientific publications in peer reviewed journals and submission of a NIH grant application for future funding possibilities.
Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center
School of Social Work, College of Public Programs

Mission Statement
To generate use-inspired knowledge through Community Based Participatory Action Research on the cultural determinants of health in order to prevent and reduce the burden of health disparities in the overall quality of life of communities of the Southwest.

SIRC is Funded by:
- The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities and the National Institutes of Health (NIMHD/NIH), award: P20MD002316
- The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities and the National Institutes of Health (NIMHD/NIH), award R01MD006110
- Arizona State University
- Evaluation contracts with community partners

Visit our website for more information http://sirc.asu.edu

Hot off the Press!
A Sample of Recent SIRC Publications

- Strategies to resist drug offers among urban American Indian youth of the Southwest

- Hopelessness, family stress, and depression among Mexican-heritage mothers in the Southwest

- When to intervene: elementary school, middle school, or both? Effects to keepin’ it REAL on substance use trajectories of Mexican heritage youth.

- Boys must be men, and men must have sex with women: A qualitative CBPR study to explore sexual risk among African American, Latino, and white gay men and MSM

- Using CBPR to create a culturally grounded intervention for parents & youth to prevent risky behaviors

For a complete listing of our publications and presentations, visit our website at: http://sirc.asu.edu