



## Exploring Race and Research

On February 2, 2009, the UHI began a special series of symposia to explore the role of race and research in America.

Leading the first UHI Race and Research event was Harriet Washington, bioethics journalist and author of the award-winning book, Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present. Ms. Washington chronicled her exploration into the history of medical experimentation on African Americans as an origin of racial health disparities. Her lecture, entitled *American Apartheid: Race, Fact and Myth in US Medical Research*, highlighted a range of medical research

abuses, beginning in colonial America and extending to the mid-twentieth century.

Two months later, the UHI hosted the second Race and Research symposium. On Wednesday, April 1, 2009, Dr. Gail Wyatt, professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and an associate director of the UCLA AIDS Institute, presented *The Historical and Cultural Context of HIV Prevention: Knowing Where You've Been Before Knowing Where You Need To Go*. In her lecture, Dr. Wyatt described a model for sexual health based on the cultural context of



Dr. Gail Wyatt leads the second UHI symposium exploring the role of race and research in America.

sexuality and how such a perspective can help to explain racial health disparities and frame strategies to prevent HIV in African Americans.

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## Discussions about Strategies to Improve Community Health at the Community-Faith-Hopkins Forum



Baltimore City health commissioner Dr. Joshua Sharfstein speaks at the fourth UHI Community-Faith-Hopkins forum.

On the afternoon of February 26, 2009, Pastor Frances "Toni" Draper's opening prayer welcomed a group of about 30 participants to the John Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church for the fourth UHI Community-Faith-Hopkins Forum. Of the participants,

some were members of the church's congregation; others were faith leaders from throughout East Baltimore; still others represented community-based organizations, and community health initiatives at Johns Hopkins Institutions (JHI). All were gathered to discuss community health needs and strategies to improve the health of East Baltimore.

To begin the conversation, Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, Baltimore City health commissioner, now FDA principal deputy commissioner, described two recently-released reports by the Baltimore City Health Department intended to help the city understand the major health challenges facing residents and how to best target services and outreach.

The first brings together data about major health outcomes for each of the 55 Community Statistical Areas in the city of Baltimore. Using census

and mortality data, the *Neighborhood Health Profiles* look specifically at life expectancy and leading causes of death across the city.

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# HIGHLIGHTS FROM RECENT EVENTS

## *Community-Faith-Hopkins Forum*

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Findings revealed a 20-year variation in life expectancy across the 55 areas, with an average life expectancy of 71 years, approximately five years below the state average and seven years below the national average. Heart disease and cancer top the list as leading causes of death; for those under age 75, violence and HIV/AIDS rank third and fourth respectively.

The second report, *Ambulatory Care Sensitive Hospitalizations and Emergency Department Visits in Baltimore City*, published by RAND Health in November 2008, indicated that the rate of likely preventable hospitalizations is substantially higher in Baltimore City than in other parts of Maryland. RAND found that a shortage of as many as 150,000 primary care visits in the city each year may be a major cause of the problem, and that some of the highest rates of preventable hospitalizations are in East Baltimore. Dr. Sharfstein described the report as a public health perspective of the health care system.

“The way to keep a population healthy is not to build more hospitals and wait for people to have heart attacks and asthma attacks, but to have accessible health care in communities so that when people start to get sick, they have access to the care and advice they need to stay healthy,” he said. Both reports are available on the Baltimore City Health Department website ([www.baltimorehealth.org](http://www.baltimorehealth.org)).



Dr. Barbara Cook describes *The Access Partnership* (TAP) at Johns Hopkins. Also in this photo, from left to right: Donald Brown, Jr. and Dr. Christopher Gibbons

Dr. Barbara Cook, former president of Johns Hopkins Community Physicians, responded to Dr. Sharfstein’s petition for accessible community health care by publically announcing *The Access Partnership* (TAP) at Johns Hopkins. TAP is an innovative health care delivery program for East Baltimore aimed at

assuring that uninsured residents will have access to primary care and subspecialty health services. Launched on May 1, 2009 and operated out of the East Baltimore Medical Center (EBMC), TAP was inspired by discussions from the second Community-Faith-Hopkins Forum held in November 2007.

Panelists described several other community health initiatives. Dr. Christopher Gibbons, UHI associate director, gave an

update on the UHI’s Community Health Worker (CHW) Program. Since 2004, 30 CHWs have worked throughout East Baltimore conducting health screenings and providing individualized patient education, lifestyle and health coaching, and care coordination to more than 7,000 residents. The CHWs are also working in collaboration with obstetricians at EBMC to help keep pregnant women in prenatal care, substantially increasing numbers of mothers who choose to breastfeed their newborns and greatly decreasing the incidence of premature births.

Donald Brown, Jr., prevention program manager at Sisters Together And Reaching, Inc. (STAR), talked about STAR’s history as a Christian-based/community-based organization that provides spiritual support, direct services and prevention education to the HIV infected, affected and at risk communities in a holistic woman-centered environment.

Dr. Phyllis Sharps, professor and chair of the Department of Community-Public Health at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing, highlighted several free services offered by the School of Nursing. As part of a community outreach program, nursing students offer free services in more than 30 agencies throughout the city. Through their *Birth Companion* service, expectant mothers are matched with student nurses who provide physical, emotional and educational support and attend births at the hospital of the mother’s choosing. The Department of Community-Public Health also operates three nurse-managed community centers.

Pastor Thomas Schwind of New Covenant Tabernacle concluded the panelists’ discussion by reminding the group that each perspective—medical, economical, political, theological—is essential in developing strategies to improve health outcomes. He also reminded the clergy of their responsibility to “bring critique without cynicism” in order to continue to work together and to “proclaim and explain in order to pastor our communities.”

The Community-Faith-Hopkins Forums promote dialogue among leaders from the East Baltimore faith communities, neighborhood leaders and JHI. The forums are co-planned with faith and community leaders, with the goal of strengthening ties between Johns Hopkins and surrounding communities.

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM RECENT EVENTS

## *Exploring Race and Research*

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Panelists at the first UHI Race and Research symposium. *Left to right:* Harriet Washington, David Lacks, Dr. Thomas LaVeist, Dr. Alan Green, Dr. Neil Powe

Both presentations were followed by commentary from a panel of invited guests and concluded with questions and reaction from the audience.

Panelists responding to Ms. Washington included Dr. Neil Powe, director of the Welch Center for Prevention, Epidemiology and Clinical Research; Dr. Thomas LaVeist, director of the Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions; Dr. Alan Green, associate director of the UHI; and very special guest, David Lacks, son of Henrietta Lacks. Henrietta Lacks was a cervical cancer patient in the early 1950s at Johns Hopkins Hospital, where cells taken from her tumor led to a breakthrough in cell research and have been used for research into cancer, AIDS, the effects of radiation and more. Until the death of one of the head researchers in 1975, Mrs. Lacks' family was unaware that her cells, now known worldwide as 'HeLa' cells, had been used for research.

Dr. Charlene Brown, acting deputy commissioner for medical operations at the Baltimore City Health Department; Rev. Debra Hickman, president and CEO of Sisters Together And Reaching, Inc.; and Dr. Maria Trent, assistant professor of pediatrics in the Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine were on hand to offer reaction and answer questions following Dr. Wyatt's presentation.

The intent of the Race and Research Series is to confront the distrust and skepticism toward biomedical research that exists within the African American community and to engage Johns Hopkins researchers in conversations with the community to discuss what is needed to move forward. Both symposia are available in their entirety on the UHI website.

## *Not Your Typical Research Day*

In an effort to connect the diverse needs of city agencies and community-based organizations with the valuable research conducted at universities across Baltimore, the UHI hosted Reverse Research Day on Friday, March 13, 2009. Dr. Bernard Guyer, Zanvyl Krieger Professor of child health at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, and Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, Baltimore City health commissioner, now FDA principal deputy commissioner, co-chaired the event.

Reverse Research Day was a new approach for sharing research. Through an interactive poster session, city agencies and community-based organizations led the event by raising research questions based on their specific research needs.



Special guest speaker Dr. Thomas Burke, associate dean for public health practice and training at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, commented on the importance of practitioner/community-driven research for developing social programs and influencing policy.

Over 100 researchers, including students, visited

Reverse Research Day to connect with the participating agencies and organizations. Feedback from the event revealed many new connections and ample opportunities for collaboration. The UHI plans to hold the second Reverse Research Day in November 2009. Visit the UHI website for a complete list of participants in the inaugural Reverse Research Day.



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# NEWS AND UPDATES

## *2009 Small Grants Recipients*

The Urban Health Institute was pleased to announce the recipients of our 2009 Small Grants for Research, Program Development, and Education. Thirteen grants were awarded to faculty and staff across Johns Hopkins University in three categories: 1) student-community research or program development, 2) faculty-community research, and 3) new course development. Applicants were required to partner with a community agency or community leader and submissions were reviewed by a team of faculty and community leaders. In addition to providing funding for these projects, the grants are intended to advance university-community collaborations.

Visit the UHI website to learn more about each project/program.

### **Student-Community Grants**

#### *Self-made Families: Gangs and Latino Youth in East Baltimore*

Precious Ann Ventura Fortes, undergraduate student  
Krieger School of Arts and Sciences

Community Partner: Gina Baez  
Mi Espacio After-School Program

#### *The Family Employment and Support Program (FESP) Men's Group*

Janet Glover-Kerkvliet, graduate student  
School of Education

Community Partner: Cheryl J. Harris  
Circuit Court for Baltimore County

#### *Reverse the Trend™: Healthy Trendsetters Movement*

Chandra L. Jackson, PhD candidate  
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Shawn McIntosh  
American Diabetes Association

#### *Public Education Partnerships*

Luigi LaPietra, undergraduate student  
Krieger School of Arts and Sciences

Community Partner: Matthew Wernsdorfer  
Baltimore Civitas School

#### *Joy Wellness Center*

Lakha Mathewkutty, graduate student  
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Jack VandenHengel, Shepherd's Clinic

#### *From Promise to Practice: Keys to Successful Implementation of Street Outreach for Youth Violence Prevention*

Jennifer Mendel, PhD candidate  
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Leon Faruq, Safe Streets East

#### *Trajectories of Mental Health Treatment among African American Men in Impoverished Areas of Baltimore City*

Anne Sawyer, PhD candidate  
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Deborah Agus  
Mental Health Policy Institute for Leadership and Training

#### *City Scholars: Self-Discovery Through Adventure: Leadership Training for Baltimore Boys*

Yetsa Tuakli-Wosornu, graduate student  
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Valencia Warnock  
Carmelo Anthony Youth Development Center

### **Faculty-Community Grants**

#### *Data Driven Urban Health Initiatives*

C. Debra Furr-Holden, assistant professor  
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Jeanetta Churchill  
The Family League of Baltimore City

#### *Data Driven Capacity Building for the Baltimore City Fire Department*

Andrea Gielen, professor and director, Center for Injury Research and Policy, Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Raymond O'Brocki,  
Baltimore City Fire Department

#### *Improving the Food Environment in Baltimore City Recreation Centers*

Joel Gittelsohn, associate professor  
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Steve Vassor  
Baltimore City Recreation Bureau

#### *Evaluation of an Interactive Safety Decision Aid for Victims of Domestic Violence*

Nancy Glass, associate professor  
School of Nursing

Community Partner: Terri Wurnser, House of Ruth

### **Faculty-Community Course Development**

#### *Health and Well-Being in Baltimore: A Public Health Perspective*

Philip Leaf, professor  
Bloomberg School of Public Health

Community Partner: Grady Dale, Jr.  
The American Institute for Urban Psychological Studies, Inc.

## *Highlight on 2008 Small Grants Recipients: Hopkins4Playgrounds*

As an undergraduate physics major at the Krieger School of Arts and Sciences, Birju Patel would hit the books well into the wee hours of the morning so he could save the daylight for another venture—Hopkins4Playgrounds, a student-initiated project established in 2007 to provide recreational spaces and safe havens for Baltimore children by building outdoor community centers.



Volunteers prep and landscape the lot near Reaching the Unreached Ministries.

struggling in math or reading to the Homewood campus for tutoring with the undergraduates.

“I remember thinking about the dichotomy of experiences between inside the bus and outside,” says Patel. “On the inside, the kids were in a safe, supporting environment and removed from many of the pressures they feel in real life. Outside the bus, the kids deal with the real pressures facing young residents of East Baltimore—a world that provides rich experiences through sometimes hard barriers. My goal was to reach out with some of the resources that I had access to as a Hopkins student to change a small part of the outside world, to create a permanent and meaningful space for kids to feel safe near their homes.”

With support from the UHI Small Grants Program, Patel and project co-leader Jasmine Ainetchian, were able to begin making their vision a reality. Under the supervision and guidance of Bill Tiefenwerth, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Social Concern, the group identified a vacant lot near Reaching the Unreached Ministries in the Barclay community of Baltimore City. Then, with Reverend Dr. Andre Humphrey of Reaching the Unreached Ministries on board, construction began. But construction of a typical playground was not adequate to accomplish all the objectives of Hopkins4Playgrounds. Because the group intends the space to be used as an outdoor community center, construction plans include a small amphitheater-like pavilion to promote family and neighborhood involvement, a concession stand

Patel says the project was inspired by his rides on a school bus through East Baltimore for the Johns Hopkins Tutorial Project, a program that brings about 150 city elementary school students who are

to teach children entrepreneurial skills, and a playground to give children a safe place to play. To date, the lot has been landscaped and decorated with a cheerful mural.



With the help of volunteers from the community and Johns Hopkins, the mural at the Barclay playground was completed in May 2009.

urban service corps) prepped and landscaped the lot. Volunteers from the community and Johns Hopkins helped to complete the work. Patel says that for a couple sessions middle school students from Barclay and Baltimore County teamed up to improve the space.

Now a first-year medical student at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Patel has had time to reflect on his experience. He says that the most rewarding aspect of the project was when some of the youngest residents of the community asked to help.



Neighborhood children help to paint the mural at the Barclay playground.

Planning for the Barclay playground involved research into best practices for developing and maintaining urban spaces as well as community forums and questionnaires to determine the wants and needs of the community. Once the final design was approved, the community lot team at Civic Works (Baltimore’s

urban service corps) prepped and landscaped the lot. Volunteers from the community and Johns Hopkins helped to complete the work. Patel says that for a couple sessions middle school students from Barclay and Baltimore County teamed up to improve the space.

Now a first-year medical student at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Patel has had time to reflect on his experience. He says that the most rewarding aspect of the project was when some of the youngest residents of the community asked to help.

“Giving them an opportunity to help shape their own community and feel ownership over parts of it was incredibly gratifying,” he says.

Patel is still involved with Hopkins4Playgrounds and is working with Bill Tiefenwerth to

determine the best ways to stay in contact with the community and foster future leadership from new students.

*For more information about Hopkins4Playgrounds, contact Bill Tiefenwerth at the Johns Hopkins Center for Social Concern, [btief@jhu.edu](mailto:btief@jhu.edu).*

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# NEWS AND UPDATES

## *UHI Helps to Expand Summer Job Opportunities at Johns Hopkins for High School Students*

As the largest employer in Baltimore City and a national leader in academics and healthcare, Johns Hopkins Institutions offers an extraordinary opportunity for young adults to learn life and work skills while earning a paycheck. The UHI has joined efforts with Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions and YouthWorks—a city campaign to connect Baltimore City youth with summer jobs—to expand summer employment opportunities at Johns Hopkins.

The goal of the program is to provide meaningful summer employment opportunities for high school students in Baltimore. The expanded program builds upon the success of the Hospital's summer jobs program to engage the Schools of Arts and Sciences, Education, Business, and Engineering. With matching support from the Provost, the UHI facilitates employment opportunities within the University and provides funding to support students during the summer.

For the summer of 2009, nearly 250 students have been hired throughout Johns Hopkins Institutions, including 100 at Johns Hopkins University, more than six times the number of students employed by the University in 2008. Students have the opportunity to work in many different capacities to suit their individual interests and talents.

Destiny, a senior at a local Baltimore high school, plans to study obstetric nursing in college and hopes to spend the summer months working in the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics.

Connor, a sophomore whose favorite subject is AP Physics, hopes to earn a paycheck this summer while working in the Whiting School of Engineering.

*For more information about this program, contact Sha'Pell Peterson in the Johns Hopkins Health Systems Department of Human Resources at 410-502-3070 or [speter25@jhmi.edu](mailto:speter25@jhmi.edu).*



*Top:* On Saturday, April 4, 2009, anxious students wait for their opportunity to interview with a Johns Hopkins representative.

*Middle:* A student describes her interests and talents during the interview session.

*Bottom:* Students relax after interviews.

## *Meet the UHI's Community-University Collaborating Committee (CUCC)*



Pamela Paulk is a busy woman. As vice president of human resources for Johns Hopkins Health System (JHHS) and The Johns Hopkins Hospital (JHH), she is responsible for the human resources functions for more than 16,000 employees.

As a human resource and medical services management professional, Ms. Paulk has been able to apply her professional skills to maximize the potential for the gainful employment of Baltimore residents. Under her leadership, the JHHS/JHH department of human resources administers a number of community partnership programs to empower current employees, youth and residents of the greater Baltimore communities, and especially East Baltimore. In fact, it is Ms. Paulk's department that has managed the recently expanded Summer Jobs Program.

In addition to her VP duties, Ms. Paulk is president of the Community Mediation Board of Directors, member of the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board, and co-founder and chairperson of the Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH). BACH is made up of local hospitals, foundations, educational institutions, public workforce organizations and workforce intermediaries and focuses on helping local residents gain skills to meet local health care needs.

The UHI is fortunate to have Ms. Paulk's counsel as we work to strengthen the capacity of the Baltimore community. For her many accomplishments, she was recognized as one of Maryland's Top 100 Women in 2004.

*The CUCC provides guidance and assistance to the UHI by ensuring that the priorities of the UHI are in line with those of the University and the community.*

### **Program Evaluation Workshop for Community-Based Organizations**

Need help writing the program evaluation section of your grant proposal? Join the UHI on Friday, September 25, 2009 for our capacity building workshop, *How to Write the Program Evaluation Section of your Grant Proposal*. Dr. Clea McNeely, assistant professor at the Bloomberg School of Public Health and expert in community-based participatory research and evaluation, will lead the workshop in which participants will learn evaluation strategies as well as how to determine which evaluation strategies are best for their program.

*This workshop is designed and intended for local community-based organizations; a limited number of spaces will be available for Johns Hopkins personnel.*

*Registration for this workshop will open in August 2009. For more information, contact Catonya Lester at [clester@jhsph.edu](mailto:clester@jhsph.edu).*

# DATES TO REMEMBER

Date	Event	
Tuesdays, 12pm - 1:30pm (3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of month)	UHI Third Tuesday Seminar	Upcoming Seminar Dates: July 21, Aug 18, Sept 15
Wednesdays 11am - 1pm	Community Health Workers at Northeast Market for blood pressure screenings	Northeast Market 2101 E. Monument Street
Wednesdays 10am - 2pm	Workforce Wednesdays (1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of month)	EBDI Community Center 1731 E. Chase Street
July 3 - July 5	African American Heritage Festival	333 Camden St. Baltimore, MD 21201 <a href="http://www.aahf.net/2008">www.aahf.net/2008</a>
Wednesday, September 16	UHI Community Forum on Best Practices for Effective Schools	Details to come!
Friday, September 25 8:30pm - 5pm	UHI Capacity Building Workshop: <i>How to Write the Program Evaluation Section of your Grant Proposal</i>	



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