

Supercourse Newsletter:
July 20 2012
www.pitt.edu/~super1/

Dear Friends

For our Friends in Muslim Countries, Happy Ramadan

Global Health, Camel's Milk, and Kazakhstan

For the past two weeks we gave a seminar at Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan. It was a very rewarding experience. We had 6 faculty teaching 50 students. Our hosts were Drs. Sharman, Zhumaday and Katsu.

Two wonderful young people, Sholpan Askarova, and Sharkler Adambevov were incredible coordinators of the program. We stayed in the dorms so that we were available to students day and night. We wanted to thank USAID for supporting the program. The concept was to provide information to the students as to how to conduct research in the area of global health, including statistics, epidemiology and computer programs. Also we had great fun working to have the students understand creativity in science, and to let their imagination take them forward to develop high risk, high gain research. The students were astonishingly bright. By the time the faculty got back to their rooms at night we were drained as the students were sucking the knowledge from our heads. It was truly a wonderful experience. We also had the opportunity to sip camel milk and to eat the national dish of horse meat. The vodka was most outstanding. You can see the agenda of the meeting at:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/CentralAsia/workshop2.htm>

One of the major requirements of the course is that the students take our Global Health Lecture and they teach at least one slide to 40 of their students. We especially want the students to teach the WHO Definition of health. We would appreciate if each one of you also teach the lecture to your students and share the lecture with others so that we continue to promote global health in the medical, nursing, public health, and all universities and colleges. Everyone should know what health is, everyone should know something about global health.

<http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/collections/collection2.htm>

Epidemiology and Statistics Help Desk: What we discovered in Kazakhstan

were many extremely bright people who wanted to do top quality science.

This also was the case for those in government. However, they had little training in research, research design and epidemiology. This is similar to most countries. It will probably take 5 years to make a dent in the development of research manpower in quantitative science. We discussed this with the US Ambassador Fairfax and came up with a means to address this problem, a Supercourse Epidemiology and Statistics help desk. As presented in Wiki, Help desks are primarily used with computer systems to answer hardware and software problem. Why couldn't we develop a program like this to provide global assistance in research and design?

The model of the computer help desk is simple, junior level people man the help desks and take care of most of the questions. For an epidemiology and research design Supercourse we could have say junior faculty or upper level Ph.D. students and post docs. For questions that they cannot answer, they refer the questions to professors on our list of 50,000 to help the budding researchers across the world. This could be run through our WHO Collaborating centers, or our

WHO Collaborating Centre could partner with global health centers. In most countries, there is not the need for full time epidemiologists or statistical experts, however, when people want to do research they are deeply frustrated with the lack of research tools to which we as a global faculty can provide. We are discussing developing this first in Central Asia and then broadening it to the world.

We would like to build a global group to see if it is possible to build a sustainable global health research help desk

July 4

We thank you all for disseminating the information concerning mVET. We reached many thousands of people, and we learned much about the science of making public health messages go viral

Wen-Ta Chiu, M.D. I am very proud that my former student, Wen Ta Chiu, M.D. is Minister of Health of Taiwan. He recently present at the World Health Organization Assembly. I am pleased that two students of mine have become Ministers of Health. As said reported in Science a long time ago "The best mentors are those whose students surpass them". Most of my students have surpassed me in their areas, and I am most proud of this.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMEXI_oiAgM&feature=player_embedded#!

Running for the Gold: Steve Blair just had one of the coolest experiences. He was one of the runners carrying the Olympic torch: "It was a great honor and pleasure to be selected to run with the Olympic Torch. The Coca-Cola Company, a major Olympic sponsor for decades, nominated me for my research on active, healthy lifestyles. It is great to be recognized for the work I have been doing for several decades. It was a lot of fun to carry the torch and have so many people, from young children to people even older than I, cheering and taking pictures." You can see a picture of Steve the Olympic runner at.

<http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/board/board.htm>

John Last has achieved a very prestigious award, as he was just appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada

"Dr John Last is perhaps the most distinguished public health physician in Canada today, and one of the most distinguished ever to grace this land.

He is considered a giant in the field of public health. His voluminous writings display a wide and comprehensive view of public health, including the global environment. For more than 40 years he has been a Professor and since 1992 Emeritus Professor of Epidemiology and Community Medicine at the University of Ottawa, where he has inspired generations of students.

Combining passion with academic rigour, he continues to be vitally engaged in the profession to which he has dedicated his life. His interests today include the interactions of ecosystem health with human health (in 2002 he was editor for WHO of papers on 'Sustainable development and health' for the UN Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg), and ethical problems arising in public health sciences and practice" You can read

more about John Last at: <http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/board/board.htm>

Lecture of the week: Maritime Epidemiology

We recently included into the Supercourse a fascinating lecture by Olaf Jensen about a field that is rarely mentioned in epidemiology, Maritime Epidemiology. We did not know that this existed. It is a most fascinating field as sailors are exposed to rigors that few see, and have problems quite different than others. Not unexpectedly there is a high risk of drowning. However the injury rates are very high as are hypothermia. It is a fascinating area of research, that you might want to teach about in your classrooms. Epidemiology goes swimmingly along with this field.

<http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec47341/index.htm>