

1 August 2005  
Supercourse Newsletter

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Dear Friends,

Wonderful Week:

I must thank you all. Last week was a wonderful week. I was thrilled that we received the Lillienfeld Award for the American Public Health Association meetings for the Supercourse. I was more thrilled with the incredible number of emails thanking me, and thanking the Supercourse. I was reading and writing back to you all about 7 hours a day. I think there were over 300, it made me feel very good, that our efforts here, and world wide are worth it. There were many beautiful and meaningful letter. As you know we love saying

My Spanish saying of "Querer es poder" truly applies to you which literally means "to want is power" and that is the secret of your success. Oscar Villarreal, M.A., MSPH  
PhD Student Public Health

Our Supercourse group badly, badly, badly wants to improve training in prevention in the world. We are therefore powerful. What a wonderful saying. There were 100s of other beautiful notes.

The Award's session at the APHA meeting will be Nov. 7th at 4:30 in New Orleans. We do not as yet know the room. You are all invited as it is your award as well as mine. I was thinking also that if there are enough of us, we would have a Supercourse Award Food Fest in celebration. A food fest is a time when we get together and celebrate. I ask all of you who are coming to bring something to drink from where you live (alcoholic or non-alcoholic), and something to eat. We have had these food fests all over the world, and there has been some major political fights in the vodka tasting area where Eugene Shubnikov and the Russians tell us that Vodka HAS to be frozen, and the Poles swear that polish vodka can only be chilled in refrigerators. We have had some wonderful Caribou pie, and of course some classic French "la Iron City Beer". We get to meet national and international people. It is most fun.

Lecture Globalization: We are rapidly moving forward with the Cutler lectures. I am sending to a small number of you a description that just appeared in the Chronicles of Higher Education. Please tell your friends and others that you know.

We plant to distribute the lecture in several ways. The first will be a streaming web cast which will be live. The second is Eric's presentation saved. The third will be a Supercourse lecture and the fourth will be that we will distribute the slides of his lecture. We would like you to "snowball" the information forward, by sharing this information to as many people as you can.

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Webcast Lecture on Public Health and Disasters May Draw Record Audience

By VINCENT KIERNAN

Chronicles of Higher Education

When Eric K. Noji delivers a lecture in September at the University of Pittsburgh's main campus on the public-health consequences of disasters, lots of people will be watching.

His lecture may reach hundreds of thousands of scholars and students, in fact. The organizer predicts as many as a million.

Needless to say, they won't all be packed into the university's auditorium. Rather, the lecture will be Webcast around the world, live, giving it what organizers predict will be the largest audience for an academic lecture in history.

Dr. Noji, a physician at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who currently is assigned to the Defense Department's Chemical & Biological Defense Program, is expected to discuss how epidemiologists can improve their response to disasters, such as by measuring the extent of a disaster and the effectiveness of assistance offered to its victims.

The university will distribute a live feed of Dr. Noji's lecture to a variety of participating organizations, each of which will redistribute it on their own computer networks. The organizations include Internet2, Egypt's Library of Alexandria, the Medical Library Association, and Unicef.

The university will distribute the lecture free. Producing the Webcast costs the university very little because each of the participants is financing its own efforts, says Ronald E. LaPorte, a professor of epidemiology at Pitt who is leading the project. He hopes that the audience will include both researchers and medical students.

"The idea is to attain global training with a global lecture," says Mr. LaPorte.

Medical research currently takes a long time to find its way into the classroom because of the slow pace of the dissemination of findings, Mr. LaPorte says. But live Internet broadcasts can accelerate that process drastically, he says. "We can get things into the classroom within 5 or 10 minutes."

Recognizing that developing parts of the world probably lack the Internet infrastructure to permit large-scale viewing of the Webcast, Mr. LaPorte's group also will distribute the PowerPoint slides from the lecture, as well as an online course based on the lecture. Those materials will be more easily shared in areas with limited Internet connections, Mr. LaPorte says. He has been involved in the creation of online medical training that can be used in underdeveloped nations.

Mr. LaPorte says he hopes that the event will prod others to try similar projects. "If we can show we can do it here," he says, "why can't we have multiple centers around the world doing the same thing?"

Best Regards from the Supercourse Capital of the Best Lectures: Come to the APHA to eat, drink, and do some Jazz Karaoke

Best regards, and thanks so much again  
Ron, Mr. Kotter, Faina, Mita, Soni, Eric, Arlene, Julia, Vinnie Barbarino, Rania

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