

## **10/21/2005 UW-MADISON ESTABLISHES CENTER FOR GLOBAL HEALTH**

Madison – The University of Wisconsin-Madison has established a Center for Global Health. The center is a joint initiative of the UW schools of medicine, nursing, pharmacy and veterinary medicine, and the Division of International Studies. It will be located administratively in the Medical School.

The center's mission is to develop and support global health education, research and partnerships by building on UW-Madison's extensive expertise in the health sciences and area and international studies. This is believed to be the first center of its kind in which four health sciences schools and an international studies unit on a single American university campus have come together to advance global health.

According to Cynthia Haq, MD, UW Medical School professor of family medicine and the center's director, the initiative comes at an important time.

"We now have a single world in terms of health," Haq says, adding that globalization has brought a host of changes that impact healthcare education and delivery systems worldwide. As borders have become more porous and transportation networks more extensive, people have been able to travel farther and faster. Diseases now can move quickly around the world.

Haq says that today's health professionals increasingly need to have an understanding of global health issues and of the cultures and peoples of the world. "Global health is good for Wisconsin. It's not just over there, it's here," Haq says.

The center will:

- Establish global health education programs, including a broad range of study-abroad options; interdisciplinary global health courses and programs for undergraduate, graduate and special students; a certificate in global health, and global health tracks or concentrations for masters and PhD candidates.
- Facilitate and encourage global health research by serving as a catalyst and clearinghouse for information sharing and networking among UW-Madison faculty and staff, and by fostering global health research projects.
- Enhance global health service programs, partnerships and exchanges through long-term global health partnerships with key institutions.

UW-Madison offers field experiences and study tours for students in Uganda, Belize and Ecuador, as well as study abroad opportunities for medical students in several countries. For example, two UW-Madison health sciences students participated in internships at the World Health Organization headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, in summer 2005, while one student conducted HIV/AIDS research in Botswana.

Many UW-Madison faculty and staff are involved in global health research and partnerships in several countries, including Uganda, Afghanistan, Ecuador and Mexico.

Examples include:

- Curtis Johnson, PharmD, RPh, a professor emeritus in the School of Pharmacy, has supervised pharmacy students doing independent study activities in Ecuador, where a summer field school in the health sciences is entering its fourth year.
- Christopher Olsen, DVM, PhD, a professor of public health in the Department of Pathobiological Sciences of the School of Veterinary Medicine, studies the transmission of influenza viruses between species of animals and between animals and people--work that may someday help us understand how and why pandemic influenza viruses develop. He also teaches each year in the Ecuador field school program.
- Linda Baumann, PhD, a professor in the School of Nursing who focuses on health disparities of race, ethnicity and income, has expanded her research to developing countries, including Vietnam and Uganda, and is training nurses to care for people with diabetes.
- A developing interdisciplinary partnership with the University of Guadalajara (UDG) has enabled faculty from medicine, nursing, pharmacy and veterinary medicine to interact through video-conference and faculty exchanges. Currently, Mario Salguero, MD, of UDG, is spending a year in Madison collaborating with David Rakel, MD, in the area of alternative medicine. Plans for health science student exchanges to Mexico through the partnership are under way.

Earlier this year, Haq spent six months as a Fulbright fellow and visiting professor at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. She worked with faculty and government officials to develop curricula and promote regional efforts to strengthen primary healthcare.

Haq's colleague, Douglas Laube, MD, chair and professor of obstetrics and gynecology, has been a consultant to a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services project designed to improve the health of women and children in Afghanistan. Haq explains that Laube is leading efforts to strengthen the education of physicians, nurses and hospital personnel in a teaching hospital in Kabul. He has initiated programs to save the lives of hundreds of women in a country that has one of the highest recorded rates of maternal mortality.

Faculty and staff affiliated with the UW International Institute--including the African Studies Program, the Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies Program--and the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences have worked collaboratively with health sciences faculty.

"The new Center for Global Health is the culmination of years of effort by many of our faculty, staff and students," says Philip M. Farrell, MD, PhD, dean of UW Medical School. "The

center will facilitate collaboration among members of the health sciences schools, the Division of International Studies and others so that new cross-disciplinary global health programs can grow and thrive.”

Gilles Bousquet, PhD, dean of International Studies, adds: “The Center for Global Health symbolizes everything that’s right about international education on the UW-Madison campus. It marries the health sciences, social sciences and humanities to ensure that our students, whatever their area of specialization, will benefit from a broad understanding and experience of the world around them and be able to respond to global health challenges at home and abroad.”

Other UW-Madison deans offer unqualified support of the center. “This initiative will enhance opportunities for students to gain expertise in global health,” says Katharyn A. May, DNSc, RN, dean of the School of Nursing. “Nurses have always practiced on the international stage, starting with Florence Nightingale, but the new center enhances an already world class environment for our students. I’m really pleased that the School of Nursing was in a position to contribute some campus leadership.”

Daryl D. Buss, DVM, dean of the UW-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine, elaborates: “Veterinarians play a critical role in animal and human health and well-being around the world. The heightened risk for inadvertent or deliberate introduction of devastating diseases affecting animals and humans emphasizes the need for a global perspective for veterinary medicine as part of the healthcare team.”

Adds Jeanette C. Roberts, PhD, MPH, dean of the School of Pharmacy: “All the global health activities are being designed as interprofessional, collaborative research and learning experiences, with additional benefit for all involved. We are pleased to provide expertise in the basic, social and clinical sciences of pharmacy and to learn from our disciplinary partners within the goal of improving the health of the global community.”

The Center for Global Health will be inaugurated on December 7, 2005, at the Second Annual Global Health Symposium from 5 to 8 p.m. in the Health Sciences Learning Center, 750 Highland Ave.

Following the inauguration, the symposium--with a theme of “Global Health and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)”--will focus on the global health efforts of UW-Madison faculty, students and health professionals from the greater Madison area. It also will raise awareness about the MDGs for human development as proposed by the United Nations and other international organizations. The keynote speaker will be Frances R. Westley, PhD, director

of UW-Madison's Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies. Attendance is free and no registration is required.

The center also sponsors a monthly global health seminar featuring national health sciences experts, as well as Madison-area health sciences professionals. The talks are free and open to the public.

Interested faculty, staff and community health professionals are encouraged to join the efforts as global health affiliates. For more information, contact Melissa Coons, [mcoons@wisc.edu](mailto:mcoons@wisc.edu) or visit the center Web site at <http://www.pophealth.wisc.edu/gh>.