Program Development
The Administrative & Capacity Building Core I is an important part of building the RIMI Program. We are pleased to have had our Internal Evaluation Committee on July 07, 2010 and our distinguished External Advisory Committee members joined us on July 27, 2010 to evaluate the program.

Internal Advisory Committee Meeting
A successful round table meeting, conducted this July by the Internal Advisory Committee, allowed current progress, accomplishments and future RIMI goals to be presented to the committee which included the RIMI Principal Investigator, Dr. Earl G. Yarbrough, Sr., President, Savannah State University.

External Advisory Committee Attendees
Dr. Earl G. Yarbrough, President, Savannah State University
Dr. Chellu Chetty, Associate V.P. of Research and Sponsored Programs
Dr. Himangshu Bose, Mercer University School of Medicine
Debbie Bush, Project Director, Cancer Prevention and Control Research Network,
Center for Health Promotion Disease Prevention at University of NC, Chapel Hill
Dr. Donald Frazier, Professor Emeritus/ Director, Outreach Center for Science & Health Career Opportunities, University of Kentucky
Dr. Wayne Glasgow, Interim Senior Associate Dean, Professor and Chair, Department of Biomedical Sciences, Mercer University, Savannah Campus
Dr. Michael Miller, Director, Research Instrumentation Facility, Auburn University’s Research Instrumentation Facility, Dept of Biological Sciences
Dr. Jamboor Vishwanatha, Dean, Graduate School of Biomedical Science Professor, Molecular Biology and Immunology and Director, Texas Center for Health Disparities, University of North Texas Health Science Center
Dr. Diane Weems, Chief Medical Officer, Coastal Health District/Chatham County Health Department
**CORE IV: RESEARCH FACULTY DEVELOPMENT CORE**

**Current Sub-Projects**

**Dr. Cecil Jones**: Sub-project on “Photodynamic Therapy for Cancer Treatment, Fluorescence Kinetics of Complex Formation between Human Serum Albumin and Zinc Phthalocyanine Tegrasulfonic Acid.” A peer reviewed manuscript by Dr. Jones has been accepted for publication in The Journal of UG Chemistry Research. The title of the paper is “Fluorescence Kinetics of Complex Formation between Human Serum Albumin and Zinc Phthalocyanine Tetrasulfonic Acid.” A 2nd manuscript is pending biological assays to be conducted.

**Dr. Hua Zhao**: About one million people are infected with HIV viruses in the US; however, 25% of them are unaware of their infection. Betulinic acid is a natural compound with various biological properties including anti-HIV activities. However, its low water solubility has limited the clinical applications of this natural drug. Therefore, it is important to develop derivatives of betulinic acid that are more water-soluble and maintain the same cytotoxicity towards HIV viruses. The major objective of this project is to produce ionic forms of betulinic acid with high water solubilities and high biological activities against HIV viruses.

**RIMI Research Update:**

Himangshu S. Bose, PhD, Professor, Mercer University School of Medicine and NIH-RIMI Senior Visiting Scientist, Savannah State University, has been conducting weekly research review meetings to develop the Research Faculty Development Core. RIMI Research Subprojects are benefiting from the knowledge and expertise of each of the scientists involved, as well as from guidance of Dr. Bose.

**Request for Proposals (RFPs)**

A primary RIMI program objective is to build the competencies and skills of junior faculty as independent investigators who can successfully compete for future research funding and to advance the scientific knowledge in health disparities. Each year, the RIMI program provides research funding for junior faculty for three (3) subprojects in the area of health disparities and approximately two (2) mini-grants each year. Mini-grant awards enable junior faculty to conduct health disparities research as small-scale pilot projects to develop the preliminary data with which to prepare future, new, competitive proposals in behavioral science and biomedical/health disparities areas. RFPs for both subprojects and mini-grants have been issued. **The deadline for the RIMI proposals is Thursday, December 23.** For more information contact Linda Meier.
Core II – Academic Enrichment Core

New courses

New academic courses are being developed as a part of the Academic Enrichment Core. The courses include GEOG 3302 - Geospatial Analysis of Health Disparities & Disparities, Health Biostatistics and SOCI 3202 - Environmental Health Disparities, & Bioethics and Research Ethics. All courses should be delivered by Spring 2012.

RIMI Interns

Tyquan Barney and Alton Render are involved in the RIMI project under the supervision of Dr. Deden Rukmana. They have been working on the development of a health disparities database. Data have been collected and compiled from OASIS, a web-based tool for public health and policy data analysis. The OASIS is available at http://oasis.state.ga.us/. In addition, they collected data for emergency room visit rates.

Rechia Goodly & Lana Thomas are being mentored by Dr. Cecil Jones. Both students are supporting the research project “Photodynamic Therapy for Cancer Treatment, Fluorescence Kinetics of Complex Formation between Human Serum Albumin and Zinc Phthalocyanine Tegrasulfonic Acid”. Lana Thomas won 3rd place for her oral presentation, titled “pH Dependence of Metal Phthalocyanine -Human Serum Albumin Interactions”, at the PSLSAMP Conference, University of Georgia, in Athens.

Roshini Mohan and Courtney Wright are currently working with Dr. Johnny Johnson, and are researching protocols for detecting the serum Estrogen and GLP-1 levels in human blood. They are also in the process of acquiring blood samples from a blood bank in order to establish a relative standard for comparing the assays that will be used for hormone detection, mainly ELISA’s.
RIMI Interns Continued

Rahja’ Sharp is working with Mr. Robert Thornton, Chief Epidemiologist, Coastal Health District, to monitor health status, identify community health problems, and diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.

Shaletha Holmes is working with Dr. Hua Zhao on the project, “Developing Novel Derivatives of Betulinic Acid for Fighting HIV”. The project’s main objective is to produce ionic forms of betulinic acid with high water solubilities and high biological activities against HIV viruses.

Emerald Haynes is working with Dr. Nicole Oretsky by contributing and developing the Healthcare Reform Symposium as well as Housing Health Training Program outreach and registration; advertising and environmental justice library research. Haynes intern project is titled, “The Housing Health Training Program & Environmental Justice Project.”

Eric Corbett is working with Dr. Nicole Oretsky to assist with the design and construction of a website, database development, registration, payment functionality, and information management. Corbett’s project focuses on designing and constructing the website for “The Housing Health Training Program & Environmental Justice Project.”

Olivia McIntosh, graduate student in Urban Studies and Planning, is assisting Dr. Nicole Oretsky on library research, primary interviews and registration and outreach for the Housing Health Training Program. The projects include Health Disparities and Childhood Lead Exposure in the Benjamin van Clark Neighborhood, Savannah, Georgia; Environmental Justice Project; and Housing Health Training Program.

SHARED RESEARCH RESOURCES CORE:

Health Disparities Database: Led by Dr. Deden Rukmana with assistance from RIMI interns, the team has collected and compiled trend data from OASIS for death rates and duplicated discharge rates by gender, race and age groups for nine conditions: obstructive heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, colon cancer, prostate cancer, lung cancer, diabetes, HIV and respiratory diseases. The data were presented to the RIMI Community Advisory Board on October 20, 2010, and is available on the RIMI website.
WORKSHOPS

Health Disparities Workshop
10/26/2010
Ella Williamson
Williamson Intercultural Speakers Enterprise

Topic: Health Disparities and Cultural competence:

Learning Objectives:
* To define and demonstrate how health disparities are measured
* To provide proof of health disparities
* To define cultural competence
* To differentiate cultural competence and linguistic competence
* To describe efforts to reduce health disparities and improve cultural competence skills

RIMI Seminars Series

6/24/2010 Wayne C. Glasgow, PhD, Interim Senior Associate Dean; Chair, Department of Biomedical Sciences and Professor of Pharmacology, Mercer University School of Medicine, Savannah Campus
Mercer: Meeting the Healthcare Needs of Medically Underserved Georgia

9/29/2010 Sara Plaspohl, DrPH, CIM, CIP Research Ethics Officer, Memorial Health University Medical Center
Introduction to Who, What, When, Where, and How IRB Functions in the Production of Human Subjects in Research

10/11/2010 Robert Vogel, PhD, Professor of Biostatistics, Georgia Southern University
Understanding Risk in Health and Health Disparities through the Use of Biostatistics

FUTURE SPEAKERS INCLUDE

Donald Frazier, PhD, Professor Emeritus, University of Kentucky College of Medicine, Director, Outreach Center for Science and Health Career Opportunities.

01/21/2011
Hubert A, Stem Center 109
Grants Writing Seminar 9:00-11:00
Outreach Development 11:00-1:00
Renovations

Environmental Health Lab/Mock Crime Scene Facility/ Dark Room

**Phase I** of the renovation work took place in the Hubert D Technology building in Rooms 444 and 450. Room 444 was renovated for the New Forensic Science Program. Room 450 was converted into a new Dark room.

**Phase II** of the renovation took place in the Hubert B Technology building in Room 225. A portion of Room 225 was converted to a new auditorium class room and a laboratory.

**Phase III** includes renovation work already started in the other half of the Hubert Technology building in Room 225, which will house the Environmental Hydrology / Health Lab and is expected to be completed by the end of 2010.

Faculty Presentations

10/26/2010, Nicole Oretsky, PhD, Assistant Professor, Urban Studies & Planning and Chair, RIMI Community Advisory Board, presented at the Columbia University Lectures in Planning Series. The title of her presentation was “Health Disparities and Childhood Lead Exposure in the Benjamin Van Clark Neighborhood”, Savannah, GA.

Community Advisory Board Presentations

The Community Advisory Board meetings are held monthly (3rd Wednesday of each month) on the SSU campus. 11:30-1:00PM

The presentations for the last period include:

Chuck Powell, Community Cardiovascular Council
- *Health Disparities in Cardiovascular Disease - the Burden on the African American Population, Addressing Cardiovascular Disease Prevention for our Most At-Risk Group*

Dr. Hua Zhao, SSU, Chemistry Professor
- *Developing Novel Derivatives of Betulinic Acid for Fighting HIV*

Dr. Johnny Johnson, SSU Biology Professor
- *Impact of Weight Reduction on Estrogen and GLP-1 Levels in Obese African American Females*

Robert Thornton, Chief Epidemiologist, Coastal Health District
- *Health Disparities and Collaborative Work*

Dr. Deden Rukmana, Urban Studies and Planning
- *Health Disparities in Chatham County and the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project (H-CUP)*

Presentations are available on the RIMI website. [http://linux.savannahstate.edu/rimi/newpresent.htm](http://linux.savannahstate.edu/rimi/newpresent.htm)