



## Cone Hall Renovation Completed: JPHCOPH Opens the 2008-2009 Academic Year in New Home



*The photo above shows the faculty of the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health as they gathered for a group portrait on Convocation Day*

On August 13th, the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health held Convocation. Though it was held in the Hollis Building, the meeting represented a milestone for our College in that it marked the beginning of the first full Academic Year (AY) in our new home, Cone Hall. The reconstruction, classified as an “historic renovation and rehabilitation” of the building, was a joint venture between Christman Constructors, Inc. of Lansing, MI, and Garbutt Construction of Dublin, GA, at a cost of just under four million dollars (see pp. 6-7 for a closer look at photos taken during and after the renovation).

The University Convocation followed the College’s meeting, and featured the “State of the University” address, given by GSU’s President, Bruce Grube. Following a luncheon hosted by the President, the JPHCOPH faculty and staff gathered in Cone Hall for individual portraits and a collective photo (see above).

At the JPHCOPH Convocation, Dr. Charles J. Hardy, Dean of the College, welcomed all faculty and staff; he also provided comments regarding the development of our College, as well as a detailed review of accomplishments made AY 2007-2008. A spirit of action -- i.e., “Git-R-Done!” -- and teamwork was evident as faculty, staff, and students set forth an ambitious agenda, a great start to the upcoming year.

New faculty were also introduced by Dean Hardy, including: Dr. Evans Afriyie-Gyawu (ENVH); Dr. Jacob Warren (EPID); and Dr. Jian Zhang (EPID). Dr. Kim Coleman (COHE), who is the first faculty member with a joint-appointment, was also formally introduced as such to attendees (*NB*: Dr. Coleman also serves in the College of Health and Human Sciences in the Department of Health & Kinesiology). In addition, Kristen Harper, Coordinator of the Center for Addiction Recovery and Russ Toal, Clinical Associate Professor in Health Policy and Management and Director of the Center for Rural Health and Research were introduced.

## Dr. Karl E. Peace Receives University's Award for Excellence in Research

During this year’s University Convocation ceremonies, held on August 13th, the University recognized a select group of faculty for their excellence in service, and their contribution to instruction and research/creative scholarly activity. The Award for Excellence in Research/Creative Scholarly Activity seeks to recognize those who excel in their research efforts, while also fulfilling regular full-time teaching responsibilities. Dr. Karl E. Peace, senior research scientist and professor of biostatistics, was presented the Excellence in Research Award.

Each recipient receives a summer contract to continue his or her instructional, research or service activities, and develop a mechanism for sharing their expertise with faculty, staff, and students. In addition, each recipient is invited to deliver a lecture to faculty, students, and staff which highlights this work. Dr. Peace will present his lecture, entitled “Fruits of a Purpose-Driven Life” on March 31, 2009 in Room 3301 of the Professional Development Center (PDC), located within the College of Information Technology.



*Excellence Award Medallion Created by Pat Steadman*

## Dean's Message...



*Dr. Charles J. Hardy  
Professor and Founding Dean*

Greeting from JPHCOPH! As the 2008-2009 academic year begins, I am proud of the progress that we have made as a College. In this issue of *Public Health Matters*, you will read a sampling of the many great things that are happening at JPHCOPH. The start-up of a new academic year is always an exciting time. In the upcoming academic year will celebrate our 1,000th day as a College (September 26th) and the beginning of our fourth year of existence (January 1st). We have made great progress as a College, and this year will be critical as we plan on submitting our application for accreditation to the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). Should all go well, the application will be accepted and we will be permitted to start the formal accreditation process. This process will involve development of a self-study, followed by a site visit. Our target for accreditation by CEPH remains 2011.

As you will read, we keep adding to our faculty. A special welcome to the following new members of the JPHCOPH; Evans Afriyie-Gyawu, in Environmental Health Sciences; Kristen Harper, who will serve as Coordinator of the Center of Addiction Recovery; Russ Toal, Director of the Center for Rural Health and Research; and Jacob Warren and Jian Zhan, who join the Epidemiology faculty. Please take some time to get to know each of these individuals through the bio-sketches included in this issue of *PHM*. Moreover, it is my fervent hope that you will make it a point to visit with each of them and find ways in which you might collaborate with them in our teaching, research and service roles.

Our student body is also growing steadily. If early reports are accurate, we will have over 100 students enrolled for the Fall 2008 semester. At this point in our development, we have students enrolled in each of our degree programs, and are on-track to have graduates in each MPH program concentration this term. We have also accepted our second cohort of DrPH students, which brings total enrollment in our doctoral program to 28! The College's Public Health Student Association is thriving under the leadership of President Katie Burkett and Faculty Advisor Laura Gunn; be on the lookout for opportunities to get involved in the activities and projects of the PHSA.

Our research efforts continue to develop. During the 2008 fiscal year (FY), JPHCOPH faculty submitted 15 proposals totaling \$1,865,912.00. Awards during this period totaled 13 with total funding equaling \$717,205.00. This represents a significant increase in the number of proposals submitted during FY 2007 (50%), as well as a 259% increase in dollars awarded during that period. I am very proud of our faculty for their work in this important area; future issues of *Public Health Matters* will provide summaries of faculty-funded research activities.

As we continue our journey of developing the JPHCOPH, I am mindful that we need your support to be successful in building a sustainable college of public health. I thank you for all that you do to help advance the JPHCOPH. Please continue to invest yourself in helping us help rural and underserved communities improve their health outcomes.

Yours in Health,



Charles J. Hardy, PhD  
Professor and Founding Dean

## Dean's Student Advisory Committee AY 2008-2009



*Members of the AY 2008-09 Dean's Student Advisory Committee include (Left to Right) Dean Charlie Hardy, Brian Kennebrew, Emmanula Clottey, Clarence Eldridge, Carolyn Woodhouse, Nidhi Patel, Sokny Lim, Elizabeth Lanuza, Matthew Hutcheson, Tempest Hill, Dr. Karl E. Peace, Heidi Hulsey, and Tamara Rosas. Members not pictured include Ryan Butterfield and Elizabeth Milmine.*

The Dean's Student Advisory Committee (DSAC) provides a forum for students to have input into the management and leadership postures of the JPHCOPH. The DSAC is dedicated to serving and promoting communication between the administration, faculty, staff and student body. Members are selected by the Dean based on recommendations of faculty, staff, and students. The DSAC meets on a monthly basis throughout the academic year.

## New Faculty Spotlight...



*Dr. Evans Afriyie-Gyawu  
Assistant Professor  
Environmental Health Sciences*

Dr. Evans Afriyie-Gyawu -- Dr. Evans -- is a new Assistant Professor of Environmental Health Sciences. He is a native of Ghana, on the West Coast of Africa. He completed both his Ordinary and Advanced Levels of secondary education at the Kumasi Academy, in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. In 1990, Dr. Evans received a scholarship to pursue university education, in Poland. After completing two academic years he came to the United States. He studied at Binn College in Texas, and later at Texas A&M.

He obtained the baccalaureate, MPH, and PhD at A&M; his research focused on developing practical, safe, effective, culturally acceptable, economically feasible, and sustainable enterosorbent strategies for protecting populations that are at high-risk for aflatoxicoses, particularly in the developing countries; upon graduation he pursued post-doctoral study on aflatoxin-entersorbent research in humans.

Since then, he has been able to combine his backgrounds in public health and toxicology to conduct research involving human and animal subjects, and has presented his research at scientific conferences and meetings in the United States and abroad. At the time of this writing, he has authored 13 peer-reviewed research papers and three book chapters; he has also had over 30 abstracts that have been published in conference proceedings. Dr. Evans has served as scientific reviewer for *Food Additives and Contaminants*, a London-based journal. He is also a member -- and Vice-President -- of the African Society for Toxicological Sciences.

Prior to his appointment at Georgia Southern, he assumed a position as Research Scientist at Prairie View A&M University at the Cooperative Agricultural Research Center; while there, his research primarily involved developing microbiological assays to elucidate the viability of synthesized compounds to protect certain organisms against environmental factors, and conducting synthetic biology experiments.

Dr. Evans is excited about joining the faculty of GSU, since he teaches and conducts research in environmental health and toxicology within the context of public health; he is also very much looking forward to mentoring students.

Dr. Evans enjoys spending time with his family and friends, traveling, meeting new people, bowling, and reading. He is proud and happy to be part of the JPHCOPH faculty, as well as the GSU family as a whole.

## New Faculty Spotlight...



*Dr. Jacob Warren  
Assistant Professor  
Epidemiology*

Dr. Jacob C. Warren is a native of Georgia and an alumnus of Georgia Southern University, earning the baccalaureate in Mathematics as a member of the first graduating class of the University Honors Program. He remained at GSU, and earned a second baccalaureate in Biology before pursuing graduate studies. His interest in research was sparked by his participation in the National Science Foundation's REU Program (Research Experience for Undergraduates) during which time he developed new methodologies for extinction modeling in endangered species. He earned a PhD degree in Epidemiology in the Medical School at the University of Miami; his dissertation research focused on the creation of a mathematical model of mortality so that health disparities can be identified in the United States by race and region of residence.

While working on his doctorate, he served as a research associate in the Behavioral Health Promotion Program, a grant-funded research group dedicated to designing and testing novel drug use and HIV prevention interventions among Hispanic populations. A major focus of BHPP was investigating the use of the internet as a recruitment tool and as an intervention delivery modality. Upon completion of his doctorate, he remained with BHPP for two years as a research assistant professor, serving as co-investigator on three NIH-funded grants, and as project director at one of six sites on a CDC-funded intervention study.

Dr. Warren's research interests include behavioral health, obesity, risk-taking behavior, population-level health, HIV prevention in minority populations, health disparities, the application of mathematical models to epidemiology, and use of the internet in study recruitment and intervention delivery.



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## New Faculty Spotlight...



*Dr. Jian Zhang  
Associate Professor  
Epidemiology*

Dr. Jian Zhang, Associate Professor of Epidemiology, was trained as a physician, and received his MD from Shanxi Medical University in China in 1989. Earlier, he served as an epidemiologist in the National Center of Immunization, China's Centers for Disease Control, located in Beijing. He spent most of his time conducting field investigations of poliomyelitis outbreaks in poor, remote, and rural areas of China. His holistic approach to training local physicians and other health professionals earned recognition by the Chinese Ministry of Health; in 1996, he was awarded the National Accomplishment Award, the highest honor given to health professionals in China. His tireless dedication to eradicating polio won him international recognition as well, sharing China's "lessons learned" by presenting his work at numerous international conferences, and publishing his work in several prestigious professional journals.

In 1996, he joined the World Health Organization (WHO) as Program Officer responsible for the day-to-day operations of projects including STD/HIV, iodine deficiency disorders, and immunization programs. Dr Zhang enjoyed the exciting experiences at WHO, but decided to pursue his advanced degree in the US (at the University of South Carolina) after two years of service. Upon graduation, Dr. Ziang remained at South Carolina, as an epidemiologist at the Institute for Family in Society. Prior to joining the JPHCOPH faculty, he worked at our CDC as a scientific analyst with the Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

Dr. Zhang's research focuses on population-based studies to assess and qualify the influence of nutrients/diet (which is the most likely contributing modifiable factor) on neuro-psychological health. His future research efforts will also assess the nature, persistence, and functional significance of the associations obtained previously; the ultimate goal is to establish a nutritional neuroscience program that will provide excellent research opportunities to students.

He is married to Yanfeng, his classmate in medical school. He enjoys his family and loves playing basketball and teaming up with his 3 year-old son, Evan, against the team led by his wife and supported by his 12-year old son, E.J.

## New Faculty Spotlight...



*Kristen Harper  
Coordinator  
Center for Addiction Recovery*

Kristen Harper has been named as the first Coordinator of the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health Center for Addiction Recovery (CAR). The Center is a new addition to the Georgia Southern campus, opening this Fall. Mrs. Harper's office is located in Cone Hall on the main floor.

Kristen was born in Denver, Colorado in the middle of a snow storm. Even though she would love to claim Colorado as her home, she can't. Kristen spent most of her life in a little town about 125 miles west of Statesboro, called Macon. In 1994, she was a member of the People-to-People Exchange Program, in which she was able to travel to Scotland, Ireland, England, and Wales in an effort to bring cultural understanding back to Georgia. After graduating from Mt. deSales Academy, Kristen went to the College of Charleston in South Carolina. It was there that she developed a love of music and began to follow a local Georgia band across the South.

After moving back to Macon, she returned to her studies and graduated with a baccalaureate degree in Communications from Mercer University. During this time, Kristen traveled to Italy, where she participated in philosophy and art classes at the feet of Michelangelo and Botticelli. She entered the workforce as a kindergarten teacher in the Bibb County Public Schools in 2004; she also taught special education (third grade). While in her final year in Bibb County, she returned to Mercer and earned the Masters degree in Collaborative Education.

Kristen has been associated with the recovery community for 10 years; she has been active in several service positions and involved with many conferences. Her passion centers around helping young people get their lives back on track. She looks forward to serving the GSU campus, as well as the Statesboro community at-large.

Kristen has been married for three years and has an eleven year-old stepson, who is enrolled in the local charter school. She and her husband love to travel, having recently returned from a trip to Portland, OR where she caught the 'green' bug. Kristen's younger brother has just started his own adventure by joining the U.S. Army. She is very proud of him and hopes he remains safe. She is very excited about being a part of the faculty, and getting to know the students and faculty.

## New Faculty Spotlight...



*Russ Toal, M.P.H.  
Clinical Associate Professor  
Health Policy and Management  
Director of the Center for Rural  
Health and Research*

Russell Toal, MPH, has more than 30 years of experience in health administration, health policy and delivery of health services, and is the current President of the Georgia Public Health Association. He has served as CEO of the Georgia Cancer Coalition (the state's cancer initiative) and as President/CEO of Georgia 1<sup>st</sup>, a statewide network of hospitals and physicians organized to deliver quality care to employers and insurers. He has served as Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Health and its predecessor organization, the Georgia Department of Medical Assistance. He has been affiliated with the teaching and health missions of Emory University, the University of North Carolina's School of Public Health, and Georgia State University's Institute of Public Health. Prior work experiences included the U.S. Public Health Service, the Georgia State Senate, the CDC, the American Society of Clinical Oncology, and numerous primary care efforts.

## New Staff Spotlight...



*Tamara Rosas  
Administrative  
Secretary*

Tamara Rosas is an Administrative Secretary with the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health. She joined the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health in October 2008. She received a B.S. in Systems Engineering from Universidad Metropolitana in Caracas, Venezuela and an A.S. in Business Administration from Tallahassee Community College in Tallahassee, Florida. Before becoming part of the team of the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, Tamara worked for Valdosta State University for approximately two years in the Department of Information Technology. Tamara joins Lee in providing administrative support to the Office of the Dean and the faculty. Please make sure you welcome Tamara to the JPHCOPH!

## JPHCOPH to Host First Fulbright Scholar

Ahmed Dehal, a physician from Baghdad, Iraq, has joined the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health as its first Fulbright Scholar. Ahmed is pursuing the MPH in Community Health, on a Fulbright Scholar grant administered by AmidEast, and sponsored by the U.S. State Department.

The Program, founded in 1945 by Senator William J. Fulbright of Arkansas, for international education exchange, allows for many public and private agencies like AmidEast to assist in the administration of the Fulbright Program.

Dr. Dehal plans to return to Iraq upon receiving his degree to assist in building a better health system. Ahmed says: "I think my outstanding studies at Georgia Southern University will help me in two ways. First, I will be able to go back and teach my students at Baghdad College of Medicine more effectively. Second, I will be able to participate in building a new healthy medical system in my country."

Being selected as a host institution for a Fulbright Scholar to study speaks volumes about the academic quality of the programs offered by the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, said Ron Jones, the University International Recruiter. "Our aim is to build upon this success, grow our international graduate community, and foster public diplomacy and good will through international education."

Dean Charles Hardy is very pleased that Dr. Dehal has selected the JPHCOPH to further his education, saying: "I am happy to have Ahmed in our college; he brings a unique perspective about community health that can expand our thinking. Moreover, I am confident that the competencies that he will obtain through his studies in our MPH program in Community Health will assist him in developing programs and services to enhance the health of his country."

## Public Health Student Association (PHSA) Holds Fall Semester Start-Up Meeting

The Public Health Student Association (PHSA) held its start-up meeting for Academic 2008-2009 on Wednesday, August 27th. The meeting, a lunch-time pizza buffet sponsored by the Dean, was well-attended. Information about the student association, as well as upcoming PHSA events, was shared.

PHSA Officers for the upcoming academic year include:

President	Katie Burkett
Vice-President	Kimberly Scott
Secretary	Heather Mayer
Treasurer	Krista Mincey

Dr. Laura Gunn is the faculty advisor. PHSA looks forward to having a great year!

## The Cone Hall Renovation: Before...



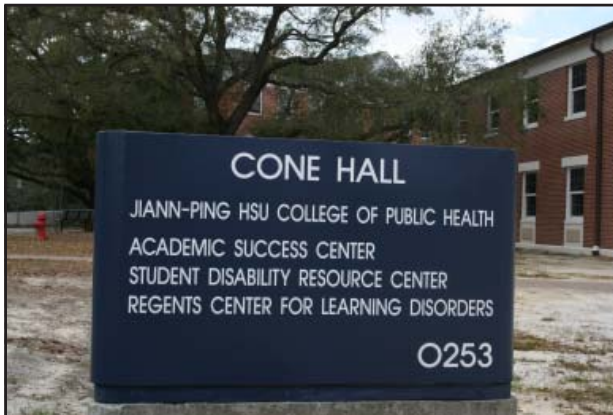
*Appearing above are three photographs taken during the renovation of Cone Hall. The top photo, taken at the rear entrance, shows landscaping cut-out built into the walkway. In the center photo, looking out toward the parking lot at the rear of the building, a brick circle is cut into the walkway, with landscaping cut-out at its center. The bottom photo shows the construction fencing at the front of Cone Hall.*

## ...and After!



*In each of the photos above, the “finished product” of the renovation can be seen. In the photo at the top, the landscaping at the rear entrance has been completed (a handicapped-accessible entrance can be seen at the left). In the center photo, the brick circle has been completed, and will form the centerpiece of the Pathway to Health project (see p. 8). Finally, the bottom photo shows a completely renovated Cone Hall.*

## The Cone Hall Renovation: Before...



*Appearing above are three photographs taken during the Cone Hall renovation. At the top, the newly-placed sign designates Building 0253 as home to the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health. The center photo shows the newly-excavated elevator pit -- the original Cone Hall did not have an elevator. At bottom, the Great Room ceiling is in the process of being framed by the construction crew.*

## ...and After!



*Appearing in the photos above: the sign outside the front entrance to Cone Hall is surrounded by freshly landscaped grounds (top); the elevator -- which is handicapped-accessible -- is being used by Dr. Tedders (center); and the Great Room, in all its splendor, is ready to be used by visitors, students, faculty, and staff (bottom). FYI: The Great Room is equipped for Wireless Ethernet -- or WiFi -- access.*

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## Pathway to Health Campaign Announced...

The Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health announces the *Pathway to Health* campaign, a commemorative promenade to honor outstanding faculty, staff, students and friends of Georgia Southern University and the JPHCOPH. The *Pathway to Health* represents a wonderful opportunity for all to show support for the College, and will also serve to provide support for graduate scholarships in public health; it also represents an opportunity to secure a permanent place on the Georgia Southern University campus.

We invite you to engrave your name, a special message or date, or the name of a special friend or loved one, on a 4" x 8" brick along the *Pathway*. Your commemorative gift will include an engraved brick installed in the *Pathway to Health*, as well as a miniature replica acknowledging your gift. The cost for your personalized brick is \$100.00. Your gift is 100% tax deductible.

The *Pathway to Health* will serve as a permanent reminder to future generations that you cared about the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health and Georgia Southern University. The *Pathway* will serve as the official welcome to our college in the newly-renovated Cone Hall. To make your contribution and to place your engraved brick along the *Pathway to Health*, or to receive more information, please phone the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at 912.478.2674; if you prefer, you can e-mail us at [jphcoph@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:jphcoph@georgiasouthern.edu).

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## Give to JPHCOPH...

Public health touches every aspect of our life. Our nation's economy, security, environment, and the quality of our daily lives depend on the strength of the public's health and on the systems that support it. You can do your part to prevent disease, protect the public from harm, and promote the health of communities throughout the state, the nation, and the world by making a gift to the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH).

Every gift to the JPHCOPH plays a vital role in improving the public's health by supporting:

***Excellence in Public Health Education.*** Provides scholarships and fellowships to highly qualified, committed, and diverse students, many of whom cannot attend the JPHCOPH without financial help. Gifts will also support curriculum development, innovations, and linkages with public health practice.

***Excellence in Public Health Research.*** Supports distinguished faculty in their work to find answers and solutions to public health problems.

***Excellence in Public Health Service and Outreach.*** Supports programs that focus upon the development of community-based participatory programs and research.

Gifts to the JPHCOPH are critical to our development. Private financial support provides the margin of excellence that distinguishes good universities from great ones. As a Doctoral Research University, Georgia Southern University is proud to be a public university. But direct public support accounts for less than half of Georgia Southern University's annual operating budget. We rely on the generous support of our alumni, friends, and the research grant support of our faculty to make up the difference.

Please consider making a gift to JPHCOPH today. For more information contact Charles J. Hardy, Founding Dean, JPHCOPH at 912-681-5653 or check out our website at <http://jphcoph.georgiasouthern.edu>.

## Public Health Matters...

*Public Health Matters* is a publication of the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH) at Georgia Southern University. *Public Health Matters* is published four times a year (quarterly) for faculty, students, and friends of JPHCOPH. If you would like to contribute to this publication please contact the Office of the Dean.