



NIEHS Spotlight

- [Director Ken Olden Wins APHA's Oldest, Most Prestigious Award](#)
- [NIEHS among Best Workplaces for Commuters](#)
- [New Master Calendar](#)
- [Summer Student Honored by Endocrine Society](#)
- [Coharie Dancers Treat NIEHSers](#)



Science Notebook

- [Journal of Virology Cover Features NIEHS-collaborated Research](#)
- [New RNAi Library will Help Fight Disease](#)
- [NIEHS Science Awards 2005](#)
- [Red Tide Research Yields Possible New Approaches for Cystic Fibrosis Treatment](#)
- [To Clone or Not to Clone?"](#)
- [NIEHS Joins Forces with Foundation to Encourage Active Lifestyles](#)



After Hours

- [Joseph Tart: An Artistic Point of View](#)
- [Art Show to Feature NIEHS Artists](#)



Did You Know?

- [News Faces](#)
- [Dec. 31 Pay Delayed](#)
- [Last Chance for Mandatory Ethics Training](#)
- [Thinking Ahead: W-2 Forms and Addresses](#)
- [End of Year Dates to Remember](#)
- [Up and Coming](#)



NIEHS Spotlight

Director Ken Olden Wins APHA's Oldest, Most Prestigious Award

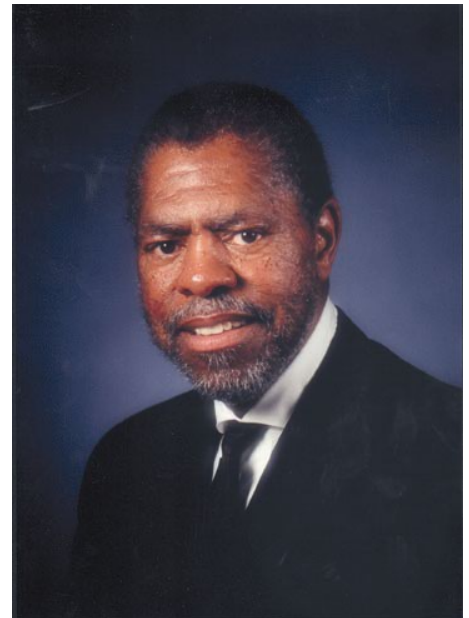
The American Public Health Association honored NIEHS Director Ken Olden with the Sedgwick Medal, the oldest and most prestigious award bestowed by APHA.

The medal is awarded annually for outstanding public health service. Olden was selected for his extraordinary achievements in linking environmental health sciences with public health and the practice of medicine. He was among the first public officials to focus on the need for research into gene-environment interactions in understanding the development of chronic diseases.

The honor was bestowed Nov. 7 at the APHA's annual meeting in Washington.

Among the highlights of Olden's 13 years at the helm of NIEHS are the establishment of health disparities programs, community-based prevention/intervention research, the Environmental Genome Project, the National Center for Toxicogenomics, and consortium centers on Parkinson's disease, breast cancer, and children's environmental health. The issues addressed in Olden-initiated programs and centers have moved to the forefront of national public health focus.

"Ken is a bridging leader, exactly the kind that is needed in public health and holds the greatest promise for addressing the problems of the 21st century," said Noreen Clark, APHA member and dean of the University of Michigan School of Public Health. "He is exceedingly worthy of the Sedgwick Medal because of his contributions, but also because his way of working reflects the very best of leadership in public health."



David Eathon, APHA member, associate research dean at the University of Washington School of Public Health and director of the school's Center for Ecogenetics and Environmental Health said Olden transformed NIEHS from a typical NIH basic science agency to one with a strong proactive public health emphasis.

"He changed the mission and vision of NIEHS in a profound way, and fully recognized the importance of educating the general public about how environmental health sciences can be used to inform public policy and reduce diseases with an environmental etiology," he said.

NIEHS among Best Workplaces for Commuters

NIEHS is among the companies and organizations designated as 2004 Best Workplaces for Commuters. The honor comes from the EPA as part of a program to recognize employers that strive to reduce vehicle emissions by encouraging alternative transportation.

The 2004 Campaign Celebration was held at the Exploris Museum in Raleigh Nov. 16. News Director John Schelp accepted the award on behalf of NIEHS.



Dick Sloane, who coordinates earth-friendly programs at NIEHS, said this is the second time NIEHS received the award. Making the list is “a great feather in the cap” for NIEHS and shows a commitment to environmental responsibility, he said.

To earn the designation, an employer must provide incentives to help workers use commuting alternatives including buses, van pools, carpools and bicycles. The program requires commuter benefits such as transit subsidies or major telecommuting options and a guaranteed ride home in case of a family or other emergency for employees who do not drive alone to work.

“These employers are among two dozen across the Triangle that provide a mix of incentives in a concerted effort to reduce automobile travel by their combined 70,000 employees,” said Sanford Cross, project coordinator for the Triangle’s Best Workplaces for Commuters Program and the Triangle J Council of Governments.

Of the two dozen workplaces on the list, NIEHS is one of 11 in Research Triangle Park. The local focus on the role of employers began in 1999 with an RTP program called SmartCommute.

For more information, see www.trianglebwc.org.

New Master Calendar

Finally! A single calendar for all NIEHS events and those events outside NIEHS that are of interest to the NIEHS community. The new Master Calendar, which debuted in November, links to the conference room scheduler as well, making it even simpler to book the room, schedule the event and notify NIEHS about the event.

The Master Calendar link appears on the NIEHS Junction page. It encompasses events like APHA and SOT conferences. Other Master Calendar features include the capability to:

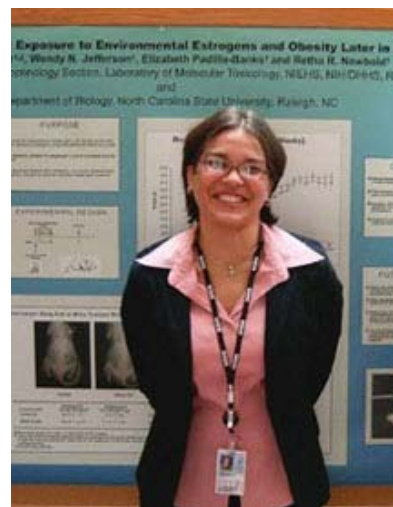
- View by day, month or all events
- Search by topic or division
- Post attachments (abstracts or agendas)
- Add Internet links
- Send items from the Master Calendar to your own calendar on your computer.

Summer Student Honored by Endocrine Society

Karla Hernandez Cruz, a Summers of Discovery student from Puerto Rico was honored by the Endocrine Society for excellence in endocrine research. The honor was bestowed at the 2004 Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans (SACNAS) national conference in Austin, Texas Oct. 21-24.

Cruz, from the Universidad Metropolitana in Puerto Rico, was one of five students in attendance who received cash and certificates for the quality of their poster presentations.

Cruz' poster: "Neonatal Genistein Exposure and its Effects on the Ovary: Alterations in Protein Expression using Immunohistochemistry and Western Blotting."



Coharie Dancers Treat NIEHSers



The NIEHS Diversity Council sponsored a number of activities for Native American Heritage Celebration month in November. Among them were a craft workshop and sampling of Native American food Nov. 10, and Coharie Dancers and storytelling Nov. 15.



Science Notebook

***Journal of Virology* Cover Features NIEHS-collaborated Research**

Tom Gray, from the Laboratory of Molecular Carcinogenesis, created a graphic featured on the cover of the November issue of the *Journal of Virology*.

Gray also coauthored the related manuscript, also in the November issue, on the infectability of the human flu virus and how drug intervention can lead to reduced infection. He collaborated with a German group as a follow-up on a paper published earlier this year in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

According to the paper, the primary author was Mikhail Matrosovich from the Institute of Virology at Philipps University in Marburg, Germany and the M.P. Chumakov Institute of Poliomyelitis and Viral Encephalitides in Moscow. Other authors listed were, Tatyana Matrosovich, Hans-Dieter Klenk and Noel A. Roberts from the Institute of Virology at Philipps University in Germany.

New RNAi Library will Help Fight Disease

NIEHS is will compile a new RNAi library to help fight disease. The effort will provide researchers worldwide with data to determine how genes and environment interact to cause disease.

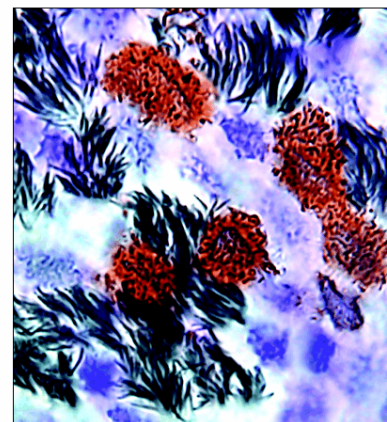
RNAi technology “turns off” specific genes, allowing scientist to learn more about how they influence the cell. Understanding how a gene responds to a stress allows scientists to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how chemicals and toxins can undermine health.

While similar efforts are underway in other places, the NIEHS project will focus on genes related to environmental health and toxicology. Researchers will use the data to rapidly determine gene function and see which genes are responsible for adverse responses to drugs, chemicals or other environmental stressors.

NIEHS Director Ken Olden said the library will help researchers gain insight into important cellular responses to stress and ultimately to public health issues such as the effects of exposure to environmental toxicants. The library will be available to the scientific community under the auspices of the National Center for Toxicogenomics, which coordinates efforts to develop toxicogenomics knowledge bases. The data will also be available to the public.



About the Cover



NIEHS Science Awards 2005

Perry Blackshear, director of NIEHS clinical research, took top honors as Scientist of the Year for 2005 at the second annual NIEHS Science Awards Day Nov. 4.

Deputy Scientific Director Bill Schrader presented the award, describing Blackshear as a man of “impeccable credentials.” David Armstrong, from the Laboratory of Signal Transduction, nominated Blackshear for the award.



Deputy Scientific Director Bill Schrader presents the Scientist of the Year award to Perry Blackshear, director of clinical research.

Blackshear, an endocrinologist, was a Rhodes Scholar and received a D.Phil. degree from Trinity College at Oxford University. His medical degree is from Harvard. He was an assistant professor of medicine at Harvard before joining the Duke faculty in 1984. In addition to his duties at Duke as a professor of medicine and biochemistry, he was an investigator with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute there.



Joel Abramowitz, special assistant to the scientific director and chair of the steering committee for the science awards, addresses the crowd in Rodbell Auditorium.

Additional awards included:

- Mentor of the Year: John Pritchard, chief of the Laboratory of Pharmacology and Chemistry
- Early Career Award, given to staff or tenured scientists within 10 years of receiving a doctorate: Marilyn Diaz.
- Best Oral Presentation: Wendy Jefferson
- Best Poster Presentation in Environmental Biology: Margaret Das
- Best Poster Presentation in Environmental Medicine & Diseases: John M. Seubert
- Best Poster Presentation in Environmental Toxicology: Wei Zhang
- Paper of the Year Award: Jin, Y.H., Clark, A.B., Slebos, R.J.C., Al-Refai, H., Taylor, J.A., Kunkel, T.A., Resnick, M.A., and Gordenin, D.A. “Cadmium is a mutagen that acts by inhibiting mismatch repair.” (Nature Genetics, 34:326-329, 2003)

Red Tide Research Yields Possible New Approaches for Cystic Fibrosis Treatment

DERT-funded researchers working with Florida red tide discovered two new compounds that may treat mucus build-up in cystic fibrosis and similar lung diseases. Preliminary findings indicate the compounds allow airways to clear more quickly by improving the flow of mucus through the respiratory tract.

Florida red tide consists of microscopic plant-like cells that produce a potent chemical toxin that kills fish, contaminates shellfish and creates severe respiratory problems in people. Researchers looking at the most potent of the red tide toxins discovered two “anti-toxins” – a man-made compound and a natural compound produced by the organism itself.

Both compounds were able to block the effects of the red tide toxin on the respiratory system in animal studies. Researchers also discovered that the anti-toxins behaved much as cystic fibrosis drugs do, speeding the clearance of mucus from the lungs, said Daniel Baden, director of the Center for Marine Science at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

NIEHS provided \$6.6 million for the study, conducted by researchers at UNC - Wilmington and the Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach. The findings will be published in the January issue of the *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*.

To Clone or Not to Clone?"



Professor Ian Wilmut, head of the Department of Gene Expression & Development at the Roslin Institute in Scotland, discussed the arguments for and against cloning in his presentation, "To Clone or Not to Clone."

The twentieth Hans L. Falk Lecture was held Nov. 9 in the Rodbell Auditorium. The Falk Lecture is designed for a more general audience. As is customary for Falk Lecturers, Wilmut also delivered a more scientific presentation Nov. 10, with "Factors Influencing Cloned Embryo Development."

NIEHS Joins Forces with Foundation to Encourage Active Lifestyles

DHHS Secretary Tommy Thompson weighed it, so to speak, in support of the NIEHS public-private partnership to encourage active lifestyles.

NIEHS is paying for the five-year evaluation of communities located across the U.S. to assess the impact on physical activity and obesity of local design and transportation changes. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Active Living by Design Program is supporting 25 community partnerships to develop and implement collaboration among a variety of organizations in public health and other disciplines, such as city planning, transportation, architecture, recreation, crime prevention, traffic safety and education, as well as key groups concentrating on land use, public transit, non-motorized travel, public spaces, parks, trails, and architectural practices that advance physical activity.

"We need to be as creative and inventive as we can to encourage Americans to make physical activity a part of their daily lives," Thompson said, in response to NIEHS's announcement that it will fund a five-year evaluation of U.S. communities. Data from participating communities will be compared to results from communities that did not promote physical activity through deliberate community design or modification.

NIEHS Director Ken Olden said NIEHS will look at the data to see if simple changes in the built environment, or constructed design of communities, result in changes in individual behavior to increase physical activity and therefore reduce obesity.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is based in Princeton, N.J., and is the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care. The Active Living by Design Program is located at the University of North Carolina's School of Public Health.

"The partnership with NIEHS will allow us to identify how design and transportation can increase active living for everyone – young and old," said Richard Killingsworth, director of Active Living by Design.



After Hours

Joseph Tart: An Artistic Point of View

Joseph Tart has produced some 75 paintings in the past five years. But for him, it's more about the process than the quantity. He says the process is like taking a journey. Once you get there, it is kind of anticlimactic. For Tart, the process is therapeutic and calming.

Tart is the art director for *Environmental Health Perspectives*. By day, he sits at his computer, using electronic tools to do a lot of the same things he does at home in his studio with paint brushes and a palate: eliciting emotional appeal from a flat, blank surface.

In his office at East Campus, he sits back in his chair and ponders the creative aspects of his job and his painting. His eyes focus on something far in the distance, well beyond the wall that faces him. He talks about the use of certain colors to create a certain mood or emotional state. The concept, he says, is well documented in the art world, but the way people react is almost always subconscious.

“It’s important to reach people with their feelings as well as their minds,” he said. That element of emotional appeal causes people to reach down deep inside, deeper than they otherwise would, to relate to whatever topic is presented via emotion.

Tart said he tends to go back to certain themes in his painting. He has an affinity for still life, especially using simple objects like fruit. Lemons and pears are among the objects he has painted multiple times.

Joyce Bumann, Freedom of Information specialist at NIEHS, bought one of Tart’s paintings of a lemon several years ago. She hung it in her breakfast room, which she has deliberately turned into a bright, cheery room. The painting, she said, is the perfect compliment for the room, tying together all the elements of color and quality.



EHP art director Joseph Tart, with his painting, River Stones, which hangs in his office at East Campus.

“There is just something wonderful about what he does with color,” Bumann said.

As a child, Tart watched his beloved grandmother as she painted. Hers were somber landscapes. He, too, paints landscapes. His feature simple boats that, in Tart’s words, explore the quiet moments of sunrise and sunset” and bridges that “suggest our connection between different moments in our past and future.”

“The relationship between artist and the subject reveal themselves in my paintings through the interplay of light, space, and color. The luscious maternity of fruit is reflected in the fullness of curve, the richness of hue. Nature is refracted through the lens of human experience and assumes the contours of the human form,” Tart says of his own art. (<http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/feartshow/>)

Among Tart’s favorite pieces is a mirror he did for the Raleigh Hospice Association, which conducted a live auction to raise money for hospice activities. For that piece, he found an old mirror. Over the peeling, cracking frame, he painted angel wings. He used wire to float a piece of wood above the mirror. On the back of the wood, facing the mirror, was a reversed passage about angels who come to you when you are unaware. The passage was legible in the mirror, but camouflaged from direct view of the mirror. A colorful, loosely printed heart adorned the front of the wood panel. Tart said the piece did very well in the auction. It is obvious that was payment enough for him. Tart said his personal experiences have created a great amount of admiration for hospice workers, who generously offer love and patience to support a family, but remain unobtrusive in the process. His contribution was his tribute to their work.

Tart, who has a degree in biology, said he paints more now that he has a studio addition to his home, where he lives with wife Kimberly, EHP news editor, and four sons. The couple decided to add the studio about five years ago.

His work, along with that of a number of NIEHS staffers, will be featured Dec. 3-4 at the First Environments Art Show. (For more information, go to <http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/feartshow/>)

Art Show to Feature NIEHS Artists

The artistic side of NIEHS is a MUST SEE...

First Environments, the daycare center NIEHS shares with EPA, will host an art show featuring the work of NIEHS staffers. The show will open with a reception on Friday, Dec. 3 from 6-8 p.m. and run through Saturday, Dec. 4, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will feature works from:

- Christine Hager-Braun, quilts
- Beth Lake, painting
- Bob Maronpot (and wife, Dee), photography
- Dona McNeill, pottery
- Courtney Pernell Rasmussen, painting
- Joseph Tart, painting

For more information about the show, the artists, or how to get there, go to <http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/feartshow/>



Did You Know?

News Faces

Dmitri Zaykin joined the Biostatistics Branch at NIEHS in October. His previous positions in statistical and population genetics were at the Institute of Marine Biology (Vladivostok, Russia), North Carolina State University (Statistical Genetics and Biomathematics, Statistics Department), and GlaxoSmithKline Inc. His scientific interests are in the areas of statistical, population genetics and genetic epidemiology with applications to genetics of human diseases and pharmacogenetics.



Dec. 31 Pay Delayed

The first pay period in the 2005 pay year ends Dec. 25. People with EFT deposits would normally receive their pay on Dec. 31, but to ensure the salary is paid in calendar year 2005, payday for EFT deposits will be Jan. 3. People who are paid with checks will receive them on Jan. 4. In calendar year 2005, there will be 27 paydays.

Last Chance for Mandatory Ethics Training

Tuesday, Dec. 7, is the last chance to complete the new ethics training requirements from NIH.

In past years, the ethics training requirement only applied to those people who were required to file financial disclosures, but NIH Director Elias Zerhouni this year expanded that requirement to include all NIH staff, said Janice Strother, who coordinates and documents the training. In the past, computer-based training also was allowed, but Strother said the focus is now on face-to-face training, with an opportunity for people to ask questions.

Sessions will be held Dec. 7 in the Rodbell auditorium at 9 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Former NIH ethics officer Frances Plyler will conduct the training. Certificates of completion will be handed out at the end of each session. Proof of attendance, provided in the certificates, must be documented in the Human Resources Management Branch by Dec. 31.

Visiting program staff, special employees who work 130 days or less per year and contractors are exempt from the requirement.

For more information, contact Janice Strother at 541-4509.

Thinking Ahead: W-2 Forms and Addresses

To prevent delays in receiving 2004 W-2s, NIH must have current addresses. The Post Office will not forward W-2s, and address corrections must be processed before duplicate W-2s can be issued. Duplicates cannot be requested before Feb. 7, 2005. Current addresses appear on pay stubs, but can be changed in Employee Express at <https://www.employeeexpress.gov/>. Still have questions? Contact Kay Kaufman, payroll liaison, at 541-4661.

End of Year Dates to Remember

- **FEHB Open Season:** ends Dec. 13
- **FSA Open Season:** ends Dec. 13
- **Thrift Savings Plan Open Season:** ends Dec. 31
- **Use it or Lose it:** All use or lose leave must be used by Jan. 8, which is the end of the 2004 leave year, or it will be forfeited.
- **FEHB rate changes:** New rates for health insurance begin Jan. 15, with the payday of Jan. 28.
- **CFC contributions:** The last deduction for 2004 CFC contributions will be the payday of Jan. 14. Contributions for 2005 will begin the following payday, beginning Jan. 28.
- **Annual pay raise:** The annual pay adjustment goes into effect Jan. 9.

Up and Coming

- The annual NIEHS Holiday Craft Show will be **Dec. 7** in the mall areas of the main campus. Vendors will show their wares from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.
- The NIEHS Work Life Center career counselor will be available for consultations **Dec. 14** and **Dec. 28**. To schedule a session, call the NIH Work Life Center at (301) 435-1619. Services are free for NIH employees.