



Center for Appalachian Research in Environmental Sciences (UK-CARES)

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER WINTER 2024

Addressing the Environmental Health Research Needs of Appalachia

We are excited to share this inaugural quarterly newsletter! UK-CARES will celebrate member awards, cover event highlights, offer research support, and keep your calendars updated for upcoming events.

UK-CARES Secures 5-year Funding Renewal and Continues to Excel Under New Leadership

[UK-CARES](#) is proud to be awarded a competing renewal for 5 years, until April 2028, from [NIEHS](#)! [Dr. Ellen Hahn](#) established a strong foundation for UK-CARES through her commitment to community engagement, environmental health outreach, and groundbreaking research aimed at reducing environmental risks, particularly from tobacco smoke and radon exposure, with a special focus on improving health outcomes in Appalachian communities. These accomplishments prompted Mayor Gorton to proclaim December 12, 2023 Ellen Hahn Day in Lexington! We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Hahn for her visionary leadership, dedication, and tireless efforts in establishing and advancing the goals and vision of the Center.

Following Dr. Hahn's retirement in December 2023, UK-CARES welcomes new leadership with Director, [Dr. Erin Haynes](#) and Deputy Director [Dr. Hollie Swanson](#). Together they will lead UK-CARES efforts to foster sustainable practices, engage the community, and drive impactful change. With their combined strengths we are excited to embark on a new chapter of growth and positive action for the environmental needs facing the Appalachia.



Dr. Ellen Hahn
Former Director



Dr. Erin Haynes
Director



Dr. Hollie Swanson
Deputy Director

Congratulations for Outstanding Accomplishments!

[LOKA ASHWOOD, PH.D.](#)

is a recipient of a prestigious [2024 MacArthur Fellowship](#), often referred to as the “Genius Grant.” Ashwood is among 22 fellows recognized by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation this year.

Photo Courtesy of John D & Catherine T MacArthur Foundation

[Learn more](#)



[PATRICK HANNON,](#) [PH.D.](#)

has been recognized as an outstanding mentor by the UK College of Medicine's Office of Research.

[Learn more](#)



[CASSANDRA GIPSON-REICHARDT, PH.D.](#)

has been selected as a SRNT Fellow for her contributions to the research community and to SRNT! Her basic science research on sex differences in nicotine reinforcement has been an incredible contribution to tobacco science and the goal of reducing the harms of commercial tobacco.

[SRNT Fellows - Society For Research On Nicotine and Tobacco](#)

R03 Title: “Neuroimmune and Cognitive Consequences of Nicotine Use in a Rodent Model of HIV: Implications for Anti-Retroviral Therapies”

[Learn more](#)



[MARGARET MURPHY,
PH.D., RD., LD.](#)

Mitigating Environmental Exposures in High-Risk Rural Children

K23 Title: “Household Air Pollution, Adiposity, and Cardiorenal Disease Risk in Children”

[Learn more](#)



[CETEWAYO RASHID,
PH.D.](#)

Intrauterine Growth Restriction-Induced Islet Dysfunction in Type 2 Diabetes

R01 Title: “Mechanisms of Sex-specific Metabolic Disruption Caused by Organophosphate Flame Retardant Exposure”

[Learn more](#)



UK-CARES Celebrates New Award Recipients

2024 Career Development Recipients



[YISI LIU, PH.D.](#)

“Understanding the Association Between Air Pollution Exposure and Cognitive Function Among Older Adults in Kentucky”

Will be employing wearable devices to accurately characterize personal air pollution exposures, interpret casual relationship between air pollution and cognitive function in the older population, and analyze proteomics data to explore underlying mechanisms for the adverse impact of air pollution on cognition.



[TIANJUN LU, PH.D.](#)
“Advancing Environmental Health Sciences: Enhancing Air Quality Exposure Assessment, Cancer Impact Research, and Community Engagement”

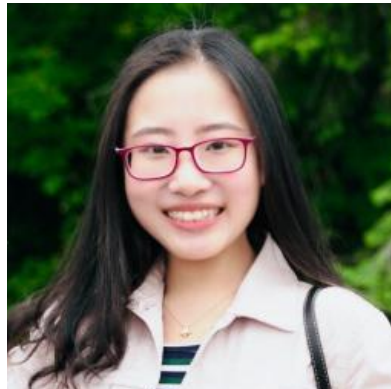
Advance environmental health sciences by developing refined air pollution exposure assessments through community-based monitoring and high-resolution empirical modeling; exploring the impacts of air pollution on childhood cancer; and enhancing environmental health literacy and data communication for community empowerment.



[STACY STANIFER, PhD, APRN, AOCNS](#)

Dr. Stanifer received year 2 support for her project to develop and evaluate a theory-based lung cancer screening shared decision-making aid which incorporates tobacco and radon synergistic risk messaging; and complete the 2024 cohort of the Environmental Health Research Institute for Nurse and Clinician Scientists.

2024 Pilot Project Recipients



[YISI LIU, PH.D.](#)

High Impact Award

“The Associations Between Personal Particulate Matter Exposures and Cognitive Function Among Stroke Patients: An Environmental Health Disparity Research in Kentucky”



[MINJAE KIM, PH.D.](#)

High Impact Award

“Exploring Waterborne Pathogens In A Pediatric Healthcare Setting: A Multi-omics Approach”



High Impact Award

“Advanced Enterosorbents As a Potential Intervention To Alleviate Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Exposures In Vivo”

[BRITTANY GIVENS, PH.D.](#)



Early Career Award

“Elucidating Reproductive Cell Responses to Environmentally Prevalent Endocrine Disruptors”



[KETRELL MCWHORTER, Ph.D., MBA, ACE-CPT, ACE-FNS](#)

Early Career Award

“Assessing the Impact of Tobacco Use on Subjectively Measured Sleep Patterns in Young Adults In the Marietta CARES Longitudinal Cohort”

Have a Success Story?

UK-CARES is excited to celebrate you! Share your amazing achievements and impactful research to be featured in our newsletter. Inspire others in our communities with your success stories! Email us at: UKCares1@uky.edu



New Announcement Coming Soon!
- Pilot Awards RFA will be Released in Early 2025 -

Fostering vital collaboration, trust and meaningful impact in Appalachia



PHOTO: Our CEC at the Regional Town Hall in Hazard, KY. Pictured L to R: John Rosenberg, Debi Sexton, Kelly Kennoy, Justin Branham, Stacy Stanifer, Deronda Mobelini, Beth Bowling, Courtney Rhoades Mullins, Mary Cromer. Photo Courtesy of Beth Bowling

Regional Town Hall UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health Gathered in Hazard, KY

Community partners from around the region gathered together at the [UK Center for Excellence in Rural Health](#) on October 22nd to share concerns related to how the environment is impacting the health of those in the community. Community listening sessions like this help to illuminate the challenges and opportunities related to environmental health in the region and provide insights that can inform future action.

[Learn more](#)

SUBMIT A REQUEST FOR...

- General Project Assistance
- Community Engagement and/or Outreach Support
- Environmental Chemical Analyses
- Basic Science and/or Preclinical Research Support
- IRB, Biobanking, Recruitment
- Epidemiology & Public Health Methodologies

[Research Support Portal](#)

Not a Member?

**Join UK-CARES
T O D A Y !**

Prospective UK-CARES members must demonstrate a commitment to the Center mission & vision & participate in Center events.

[To Learn More or Apply](#)

Did you miss these recent seminars?



Environmental Health Sciences Seminar Series

with

[Dr. Marcelo I. Guzman](#)

Professor of Chemistry, University of Kentucky
Lewis Honors College Faculty Fellow
Environmental Chemistry & Analytical Chemistry

“Coal Ash Triggers an Elevated Temperature Landfill Development: Lessons from the Bristol Virginia Solid Waste Landfill Neighboring Community”



Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar Series

with

[Dr. Nathan Cherrington](#)

College of Pharmacy, University of Arizona

“ADME Phenocconversion in MASH: Diagnostic Opportunity or Risk of Toxicity?”

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendar for these upcoming events!

DEC 17 | 9AM

Pharmaceutical Sciences Seminar with

[Dr. Laura Aleksunes](#)

FEB 6 | 2PM

Environmental Health Sciences Workshop

with [Dr. Nancy Schoenberg](#)

MAR 6 | 2PM

Environmental Health Sciences Seminar Series

with [Dr. Michael McGlue](#)

APR 3 | 8AM-3PM

John P. Wyatt, MD

Environment and Health Symposium

JAN 10 | 9AM

R-Group with

with [Dr. Mary Mohrin](#)

FEB 20 | 2PM

Environmental Health Sciences Seminar Series

with [Dr. Yang Liu](#)

MAR 14 | 9AM

R-Group with

[Dr. Tianjun Lu](#)

APR 18 | 9AM

R-Group with

[Dr. Yisi Liu](#)



We recognize the National Institute
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generous support.

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Email us: UKCares1@uky.edu



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