2014 Annual Report

Center for Applied Research on Substance Use and Health Disparities

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Director’s Message

The Center for Applied Research on Substance Use and Health Disparities (ARSH) celebrated many accomplishments in 2014. ARSH continues to maintain its position as a leader in securing external funding at Nova Southeastern University. This funding has enabled the Center to continue our national research on prescription drug diversion, which in 2014 was expanded internationally to include the Canadian province of Ontario. Together with our ongoing South Florida-based research studies among vulnerable populations, these efforts yielded more than 20 peer-reviewed publications, as well as numerous scientific presentations at the local, national, and international levels.

The year also marked a number of new research collaborations, including new projects and proposals with researchers from institutions across the U.S. and internationally. Over the course of 2014, we conducted formative work and developed a new collaborative pilot research program in Yiwu, China, a trading city where HIV incidence among men who have sex with men is high and rising. Our partners in this effort include three U.S. universities, Fudan University in Shanghai, the Chinese Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and a community-based partner in Yiwu. ARSH also completed the first phase of a study of club drug use and electronic dance music venues in Israel, in collaboration with the University of Haifa.

We have also had a number of key staff changes at ARSH. We regret the retirement of Dr. Hilary Surratt from NSU, and wish her all the best in her new endeavors. Dr. Surratt played an instrumental role in founding ARSH in South Florida, and contributed immensely to our science. At the same time, we welcome Dr. Mance Buttram’s acceptance of Associate Director responsibilities. Dr. Buttram has been with ARSH since 2009, and serves senior scientific roles on multiple projects. We are also pleased to announce new collaborations with Dr. Maria Pagano, Associate Professor at Case Western Reserve University, who now serves as Co-investigator and biostatistician on several ARSH projects.

Epidemiologist James Hall deserves special mention in this year’s report. Mr. Hall received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Media Leader’s Luncheon hosted by the United Way of Broward County’s Commission on Substance Abuse and the South Florida Coalition Alliance. Mr. Hall was recognized for his research contributions in understanding the scope and magnitude of substance abuse, especially in South Florida, and converting research about emerging drug abuse problems into community-based solutions. In 2014, Mr. Hall was a regular contributor to local, national, and international media reports on new drug use trends.

The work we do requires a team effort. We wish to thank all of our research staff, external collaborators, and the NSU community for your vision, commitments and talents. We share ARSH’s successful year with all of you.
Mission Statement

The principal mission of the Center for Applied Research on Substance Use and Health Disparities (ARSH) is the production, dissemination, and utilization of scientific knowledge in the areas of substance abuse, health risk behaviors, and health disparities among vulnerable populations. Areas of special interest include:

- The etiology, patterns and consequences, and prevention and treatment of drug and alcohol abuse;
- The epidemiology of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, and the prevention of such infections among highly vulnerable populations;
- The prevalence and patterns of health disparities among affected subpopulations, and the development and testing of new approaches to intervention.

ARSH is part of the Institute for the Study of Human Service, Health and Justice located in the Division of Applied Interdisciplinary Studies. The Center is headed by Dr. Steven P. Kurtz (Ph.D. in Sociology from Florida International University). In addition to the Miami research office, ARSH maintains a field office that houses the day-to-day operations of extramurally funded grants.
Center Staff

Directors
• Steven P. Kurtz
• Hilary L. Surratt

Senior Staff
• Mance E. Buttram, Senior Research Associate
• Maria A. Levi-Minzi, Senior Research Associate
• Gustavo Aguilera, Project Manager
• Yamilka Stivers, Project Manager
• James Hall, Epidemiologist
• Kiyomi Tsuyuki, Postdoctoral Associate

Research Staff
• Michelle Agudo
• Candice Ahwah-Gonzalez
• Matthew Bradley
• Michael Fein
• Gloria Martinez
• Shenika Moraldo
• Catherine O'Grady
• Melina Rodriguez
Grant and Contract Awards

National Institutes of Health

“A Self-Assessment Intervention for Young Adult Polydrug Users at Risk for HIV”
• $430,602

“Risk Reduction for Urban Substance Using MSM”
• $100,378

Denver Health and Hospital Authority

“Drug Diversion Project”
• $909,981

“Drug Diversion Project Ontario”
• $68,846
Publications


Publications (continued)


Publications (continued)


Presentations


Presentations (continued)


Presentations (continued)


Presentations (continued)


Media


Media


Media

Media


University Service


- Scientific Advisory Board. Institute for Behavioral Health and Wellness. Nova Southeastern University.
Community Service


Community Service (continued)


Community Service (continued)


- Epidemiology Consultant. United Way of Broward County Commission on Substance Abuse and The Miami Coalition for a Safe and Drug-Free Community.
Professional Service

- Appointed Member, Behavioral and Social Science Approaches to Preventing HIV/AIDS Study Section (BSPH), National Institutes of Health.

- NIDA-ANRS Drug Abuse and HIV Research Fellowship Program. The U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the France Recherche Nord & Sud Sida-HIV Hépatites (ANRS) support 12-month postdoctoral appointments for talented scientists from any nation except the United States.


- Scientific Advisory Board, Researched Abuse, Diversion and Addiction-Related Surveillance (RADARS®) System, Denver Health and Hospital Authority.

- Grant Review Panels, National Institutes of Health.

- Reviewers: Addiction; AIDS; AIDS & Behavior; AIDS Care; AIDS Education and Prevention; American Journal of Drug & Alcohol Abuse; American Journal of Public Health; American Journal of Men’s Health; Culture, Health & Sexuality; Drug and Alcohol Dependence; Evaluation and Program Planning; Health Promotion Practice; Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome; Journal of Adolescent Health; Journal of Clinical Pharmacology; Journal of Criminal Justice; Journal of Drug Issues; Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved; Journal of Opioid Management; Journal of Urban Health; Psychology, Health and Medicine; Medical Science Monitor; Psychological Bulletin; Sexuality and Culture; Sexually Transmitted Infections; Social Science and Medicine; The Qualitative Report; Violence Against Women; Worth Publishers.
Professional Service (continued)

- Technical Expert Panel: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Community Early Warning and Monitoring System.

- Community Expert Panel: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Stanford University.


- College on Problems of Drug Dependence Credentials Committee.

- College on Problems of Drug Dependence Under-Represented Populations Committee.

- Gay and Lesbian Medical Association Conference Peer-Review Committee.

- Florida Representative, Community Epidemiology Work Group (CEWG). National Institute on Drug Abuse.

- Community Early Warning and Monitoring System (C-EMS) Technical Expert Panel. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

- Florida Behavioral Health Epidemiology Work Group. Florida Department of Children and Families.
Professional Service (continued)

- Florida Behavioral Health Advisory Work Group. Florida Department of Children and Families.

- International Women’s (InWomen’s) and Children’s Health and Gender Group.
