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MARY ANN SWETLAND
CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The Swetland Scoop

September 2020

News & Announcements

A Message from Swetland Center's
Pre-Doctoral Fellow, Gwendolyn Donley, M.S.

Over the past six months, all of us – at the Swetland Center and beyond – have lived in a world unlike any we've known before. In that time, our Center has experienced big changes – team members moving on, families growing, new coworkers joining our team, and exciting new studies getting started. These somewhat common events, however, all occurred while working from our own homes. As I've gradually adjusted to this new status quo, I've picked up new habits that I hope will continue beyond this pandemic: to check on my colleagues and community partners more often to see how they're



people around you and it has made me appreciate my coworkers and partners at the Swetland Center even more! Cheers to the months ahead, whatever they may hold.

Swetland Center Response to COVID-19

The world changed in spring 2020 when COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. This had an impact on every facet of our life including how we work and carry out daily activities such as grocery shopping, schooling, going to the doctor, and day-to-day interactions. COVID-19 laid bare deeply rooted environmental injustices and reinforced the need for environmental supports such as access to parks and greenspace, clean air, grocery stores, and safe child care. In response, the Swetland Center expanded its efforts to include a new focus on COVID-19. Our emerging work aims to bring the lens of environmental health equity to research, policy, and practice designed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and lessen its impact on children, families, and communities. Our COVID-19 response is currently supported by generous sponsors including the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research, Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation, and the Sears-Swetland Family Foundation.

Ohio COVID-19 Childcare Study Led by CWRU Researchers

Launched in July 2020, the Ohio [COVID-19 Child Care Study](#) is designed to better understand how to lower the spread of COVID-19 and lessen the impact of COVID-19 among families and staff affiliated with child care programs in the state. Led by Swetland Center Director, Dr. Darcy Freedman, the multidisciplinary study team includes investigators from Case Western Reserve University who have expertise in child health and well-being, environmental health, epidemiology, and infectious disease management and control. The study draws on strong infrastructure including the [CWRU COVID-19 Taskforce](#), [Mary Ann Swetland Center for Environmental Health](#), [Schubert Center for Child Studies](#), and the [CWRU Center for AIDS Research](#). If you are interested in receiving a findings

report or learning more about the study activities, please visit the study website or reach out to the study team with additional study-related questions.

foodNEST 2.0 Study Receives Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) Supplemental Grant

The statement released by FFAR states "the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is highlighting food system deficiencies. While the food system is successfully providing for Americans during this crisis, many are encountering empty grocery shelves. Simultaneously, producers are struggling to reach consumers due to concerns with processing, distribution and demand. To understand and address these challenges, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) is expanding existing grants to Feeding America and five Tipping Points Program awardees." The supplemental funding awarded to Dr. Darcy Freedman and team will extend their work in developing participatory system dynamic models and allow exploration to better understand how a common system shock like COVID-19 will produce differential impacts at the neighborhood level, given unique starting points. The team will model the effects of COVID-19 in neighborhoods with high, medium and low food security before March 2020. Their findings will be used to tailor food system solutions to diverse neighborhood contexts.



Be sure to keep up with Swetland news through our online [News & Events](#) page!

Events & Opportunities

Count Me In: Food Policy, Census, and Voting during COVID-19



Co-sponsored by the [Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition \(FPC\)](#) and the [Modeling the Future of Food in Your Neighborhood Study \(foodNEST 2.0\)](#), this virtual event will feature multiple panelist and discuss how policy, voting, and completing the 2020 Census can contribute to changes in our food system. You can register for this event through [Zoom](#) or [Facebook Live](#).

The Impacts of COVID-19 on Food Security and Long-term Implications and Adaptations

September 18th | 12 – 1 PM

Presented by the [Center for Urban and Regional Analysis](#) at OSU, Swetland Center's Lauren Vargo will be presenting as a panelist and discuss her perspective of the impact COVID-19 has had on food security, the response of federal food assistance programs, and ways Ohio is working to create sustainable access to healthy fresh foods. Learn more or register [here](#)!

Swetland September Seminar: What's Good for the Planet is Good for Patients: Hot Topics in Pediatric Environmental Health Advocacy

September 22nd | 9 – 10 AM

Presenter Aparna Bole, MD, FAAP, is the Medical Director of Community Integration at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital and an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at CWRU School of Medicine in Cleveland, OH. She leads efforts to build close partnerships with community organizations and stakeholders to enhance the well-being of patients and families at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's and MacDonald Women's Hospitals, and supports innovation in women's and pediatric primary care delivery. She is particularly interested in the

Register for the virtual event [here](#).



Helpful Resources

**At the Crossroads of Environmental Justice & Democracy:
Environmental Law Conference Hosted by the Ohio
Environmental Council**
September 24-25 | 10:30 – 2:30 PM

Join the Ohio Environmental Council for a two-day virtual conference to explore the relationship between environmental justice and democracy, and deepen your understanding of what it looks like for a government to work for everyone, including the environment. Learn more [here](#)!

**Creating a Culture of Equity: Moving from Application to
Accountability: A Virtual Symposium Hosted by the Cleveland
Office of Minority Health**
September 17-18 | 10 – 12 PM

The annual equity symposium hosted by the Cleveland Office of Minority Health will move online this year and will generate discussion and action within organizations, systems, and among community members and policy makers about racial equity and its impact on health. The event will focus on the common denominators necessary to develop and lead equity efforts across sectors: healthcare, government, faith and grassroots institutions, public health, arts, philanthropy, economic and community development. Learn more or register [here](#).

Swetland Spotlight

Swetland Center for Environmental Health and the Clinical and Translational Science Collaborative (CTSC) Co-sponsor Pilot Grant for COVID-19 Research

In July, the Swetland Center and CTSC awarded Prof. Xiong (Bill) Yu (PI) and Dr. Fabio Piola Rizzante (Co-PI) of CWRU School of Medicine's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Case School of Engineering; Department of Comprehensive Care funds to research their study titled: Understanding the behaviors of dental aerosol flume and engineering effective capture system for COVID-19 risk mitigation. "From [this research], solutions will be developed to effective capture and sanitize dental aerosols and mitigate the risk of COVID-19 at dental clinics." Congratulations to all 18 research teams who were awarded pilot funding!

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