Highlights from the FIRST 35 YEARS
Acknowledgements

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Dear Friends of the School of Public Health,

2008 marks the 35th anniversary of the first graduating class of the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health (SPH), and we have much to celebrate.

The SPH began with 22 faculty members, 38 students, and one degree program: the Master of Public Health. Classrooms and offices were borrowed from other colleges around the campus. Founding Dean Paul Q. Peterson and his colleagues, however, were already vigorously pursuing a vision of excellence for the future. Within five years, they achieved the establishment of the degree programs for the Master of Science, the Doctor of Public Health, and the Doctor of Philosophy. To this day, the SPH remains the only fully accredited school of public health in the state.

Exploration and innovation have been the hallmarks of the SPH’s development as it has pursued its threefold mission of teaching, research, and service down through the decades.

Public health issues have changed radically over the years. As the needs of students have evolved, we have also expanded our educational offerings. The MPH is offered as a dual degree opportunity with six other professional disciplines. The SPH launched the first fully online MPH in public health informatics in the nation. The new Master of Healthcare Administration program is preparing tomorrow’s CEOs and managers for the health systems challenges they will face professionally. The DrPH, formerly division based, is now a schoolwide degree which prepares public health professionals who want to expand their knowledge and practice of public health and attain the leadership ability they need to advance the field.

As you will see, research has grown exponentially since the school’s beginnings. Faculty members and students have conducted pioneering investigations that have improved the quality of the air we breathe in Illinois, radically reduced violence in troubled Chicago neighborhoods, and slowed the spread of HIV/AIDS in locations around the world. Other research has lowered the impact of asthma on vulnerable youth, contributed to the health of the growing numbers of aging in our society, and advanced the well-being of mothers and children from the local to the international level.

The School of Public Health has also steadily expanded its commitment to serve the wider community. One faculty member shares his statistical software programs at no charge with the thousands of visitors to his Web site. Other faculty provide consultation in occupational and environmental safety and health to colleagues in countries from the Americas to Eastern Europe and from Africa to Asia. A leadership program reaches out to offer training and mentoring to staff in public health agencies across the Midwest. SPH students make themselves available 24/7 to volunteer their support and expertise in case of a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or terrorist event.

Today, the School of Public Health has 96 core faculty members, 640 students, and broad-ranging initiatives in teaching, research, and service that we can only partially highlight here as we look back on 35 years of achievement.

We also look forward with confidence to the contributions our faculty, students, and alumni will continue to make to enhance the science and practice of public health and improve the health of the public we serve.

Sylvia E. Furner, PhD
Interim Dean
Social change and legislative initiatives, including passage of Medicare and Medicaid in 1965, increase demand for schools of public health to provide the scientific basis for decision-making in health services delivery and training for public health administrators, managers, and workers. The University of Illinois presents Proposals for the Expansion of Education in the Health Professions—1967–1980 to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, recommending development of graduate degree programs in public health at the master’s and doctoral levels.

1967

The Illinois Board of Higher Education report, Education in the Health Fields for State of Illinois, recommends initiation of graduate programs in public health at the University of Illinois.

1968

The Report of the Public Health Study and Survey Commission to the 76th General Assembly recommends establishing a School of Public Health at the University of Illinois.

1969

Dr. Peterson brings to his new position a national and international reputation for advancing public health practice to improve the health of the public it serves. He has held leadership positions with the state health departments of Kentucky and Ohio and while with the Public Health Service was chief of missions to China, Taiwan, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam.

1970

The University of Illinois Board of Trustees approves establishing a School of Public Health at the Medical Center, Chicago. The Board of Trustees also recommends the appointment of Paul Q. Peterson, MD, MPH, deputy surgeon general, United States Public Health Service, as professor of public health and dean of the School of Public Health beginning January 1, 1971.

Paul Q. Peterson, MD, MPH, founding dean (1971-1977), sets the school on the path to success by lobbying for state support, overseeing the development of innovative educational programs, attracting talented faculty and students, and negotiating expansion of the physical plant.
Dr. Peterson appoints Alan W. Donaldson, ScD, assistant surgeon general, United States Public Health Service, as associate dean and professor of international health.

Initial organization of the school consists of seven program areas, rather than departments, to allow the newly formed school flexibility in its evolving academic structure. The seven programs and their directors are:

1. Epidemiology - Henry Gelfand, MD
2. Biometry - Dale Mattson, PhD
3. Environmental Health Sciences - Arthur Wolff, PhD
4. Healthcare Services - Edward Lichter, MD
5. Occupational and Environmental Medicine - Bertram Carnow, MD
6. International Health Sciences - Wadie Kamel, MD, MPH
7. Health Resources Management - Bernard H. Baum, PhD

Alan W. Donaldson, ScD, the school’s first associate dean (1971-1978), places a high priority on listening to and addressing students’ needs. He collaborates extensively with Dean Peterson on development of the curriculum and the degree programs.
The Illinois Board of Higher Education approves the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree. The American Public Health Association grants the school its initial two-year accreditation, establishing it as the only fully accredited school of public health in Illinois.

The School of Public Health admits its first class of 38 students in the fall trimester.

1972

Edward Lichter, MD, director of healthcare services, one of the seven program areas comprising the school’s original organizational structure.

1973

After housing the School of Public Health at various temporary locations on the Medical Center campus, the university leases the St. Mary’s Convent building at 2035 West Taylor Street. The building is remodeled into classrooms, faculty offices, and office of the dean. All other faculty offices are relocated and additional classrooms obtained in the 1919 West Taylor Street building.

Commencement exercises are conducted at the Chicago Illini Union on October 7 for the first graduating class of the School of Public Health. University President John E. Corbally and Chancellor Joseph S. Begando award MPH degrees to nineteen students.

1974

The School of Public Health is granted full accreditation for five years by the newly established Council on Education for Public Health.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education approves the Master of Science (MS) degree.

Danny K. Davis, then executive director of the West Side Health Planning Organization, joins Hiram Sibley, director of the school’s Center for Patient Care and Community Health, in teaching courses on health policy and planning. Their collaboration encourages students to test the application of academic theory to the reality of community needs.
The 1970s

Wadie Kamel, MD, MPH, director of the international health sciences program, develops one of the first two courses offered at the school: Introduction to International Health and Population Dynamics.

Bernard H. Baum, PhD, director of the health resources management program and later division (1971-1992), institutes the integration of the behavioral sciences and organizational theory within the School of Public Health’s curriculum. He becomes an internationally recognized expert in management sociology and healthcare and continues to teach and mentor students through the present.

The university leases the St. Mary Convent at 2035 West Taylor Street. The building is remodeled into classrooms, faculty offices, and the office of the dean.

The first class of School of Public Health students graduates at Commencement exercises held at the Chicago Illini Union on October 7, 1973.
The university acquires all of the space not utilized by the Illinois Department of Public Health laboratories in the building at 2121 West Taylor Street. Federal and state funds are awarded to complete the interior of the entire east half of the building as well as all of the 5th floor to accommodate the rapidly expanding School of Public Health.

The first student is admitted to the MS degree program.

1975

The university acquires all of the space not utilized by the Illinois Department of Public Health laboratories in the building at 2121 West Taylor Street. Federal and state funds are awarded to complete the interior of the entire east half of the building as well as all of the 5th floor to accommodate the rapidly expanding School of Public Health.

The first student is admitted to the MS degree program.

1976

The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree is approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the first students are admitted to the program.

The School of Public Health Alumni Association is founded and becomes a constituent member of the University of Illinois Alumni Association.
1977

Dean Peterson resigns when the governor appoints him director of the Illinois Department of Public Health.

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree is approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the first student is admitted to the program.

The Illinois Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Research Center is established by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health as one of the first such centers in the nation. The center’s charge is to prepare professionals to be leaders in occupational and environmental safety and health, provide continuing education, contribute to the knowledge base, and serve as a regional informational resource.

A classroom at 2121 West Taylor Street

A student consults with faculty member Robert Northrup, PhD, professor of epidemiology, in his office at 2121 West Taylor Street.
Paul S. Levy, ScD, director of the epidemiology and biometry program, later the epidemiology and biostatistics division (1979-1997), and Jack Goldberg, PhD, a student and later a professor in the division.

The school’s two buildings receive official names: 2035 West Taylor Street becomes SPH-East; 2121 West Taylor Street becomes SPH-West.

The annual International Night, first held in 1979, celebrates the enrollment of students from around the world at the School of Public Health.
The Continuing Education Program is opened to provide opportunities for public health workers to enhance their education for professional development.

Viron L. Diefenbach, DDS, MPH, professor of health resources management and a former assistant surgeon general, United States Public Health Service, is appointed as the second dean of the School of Public Health. Dr. Diefenbach is distinguished as an early advocate for the fluoridation of public drinking water, the restructuring of dental practices to improve delivery of care, and the incorporation of expanded health screening into dental visits.

1979
The Alan W. Donaldson Memorial Award is instituted to honor one outstanding graduate each year for academic excellence, quality of leadership, and community service.

Faculty, staff, and administration complete a major review of the mission and work of the School of Public Health. The executive committee of the school adopts a new mission and functions statement and recommends streamlining the organizational structure of academic programs.

Dean Diefenbach inaugurates the new organization in September with the following program areas and directors:

1) Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences—Lyndon Babcock, PhD
2) Health Resources Management—Bernard H. Baum, PhD
3) Epidemiology and Biometry—Paul S. Levy, ScD
4) Community Health Sciences—Naomi M. Morris, MD, MPH

Swailem Hennein, PhD, leads a class in international health in the School of Public Health East.

Viron L. Diefenbach, DDS, MPH, dean (1978-1983) and a national leader in oral public health, streamlines the school’s organizational structure to four academic programs.
The Lambda Chapter of the Delta Omega Honor Society for Public Health is established at the school. The national honorary public health fraternity recognizes and encourages scholarship and research among those undertaking post-baccalaureate study in public health and honors achievements in the field.

1981

The Continuing Education Program is expanded, allowing students to enroll either for non-credit towards continuing education requirements or for academic credits that can be used for a degree in the future.

The first Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree is awarded by the school.

1982

A new option for the Master of Public Health degree program allows students with little or no public health background to enroll in a two-year expanded academic and field experience program.

The university administration consolidates the Medical Sciences Center and the Chicago Circle Campus to create the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC).
Dr. Diefenbach resigns as dean at the end of the academic year and resumes his position as professor of health resources management.

Naomi M. Morris, MD, MPH, director, community health sciences program, successfully seeks funding from the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau to establish the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Program, which provides graduate leadership education for individuals pursuing careers in the field. Dr. Morris assembles a faculty that combines academic excellence with active public health practice experience in nursing, nutrition, social work, obstetrics, pediatrics, and health education. The MCH Program, which grows to become one of only twelve in the nation, secures federal funding every year from its inception onward and produces graduates who advance MCH at the regional, national, and international levels.

A new Constitution and Bylaws of the School of Public Health is adopted by the faculty.

The SPH Alumni Association announces the establishment of the Paul Q. Peterson Endowment Fund in honor of the school’s founding dean. The fund provides scholarships for outstanding graduate and professional students interested in the practical application of public health delivery and research.

William Haenszel, professor of epidemiology (1976-1995) and a world-renowned epidemiologist and biostatistician, makes major contributions in epidemiologic methods and in cancer epidemiology.
1985

Jacob A. Brody, MD, is appointed the third dean of the School of Public Health. A widely renowned physician, researcher, epidemiologist, and administrator for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health, he has led seminal studies on measles and rubella vaccines, neurodegenerative diseases, the relationship between alcohol and chronic diseases, and trends and projections on the health of the elderly. He is responsible for the creation of the federal government’s epidemiologic program for the study of alcohol abuse and alcoholism and founding of the government’s program on aging.

1986

While participating in a survey of Chicago-area residents to assess their knowledge of AIDS, Judith Levy, PhD, associate professor of health policy and administration, observes that older adults engage in an unexpectedly high level of dangerous behaviors. Despite the popular assumption that they are at virtually no risk for HIV through sex or drug use, some older adults have unprotected sex, do street drugs, and every year account for “the forgotten 10 percent” of new AIDS cases. Dr. Levy develops AIDS education programming especially targeted to older adults in senior centers and public housing.
Community Outreach Intervention Projects workers deliver supplies on the street.

Brian Flay, DPhil, director (second from right), confers with Prevention Research Center staff.
1987

As HIV/AIDS spreads in Illinois, shared use of drug paraphernalia among injecting drug users is one of the fastest ways to spread the disease. Wayne Wiebel, PhD, professor of epidemiology, is concerned about reaching the 90 percent of drug users outside treatment programs. He launches the Community Outreach Intervention Projects and pioneers the employment of members of the communities he seeks to reach as outreach workers. Often former drug users themselves, they bring to the streets the credibility of shared experience and encourage acceptance of the HIV prevention resources they offer.

The Prevention Research Center, founded by Brian Flay, DPhil, begins its mission of conducting research on cutting-edge health promotion issues which affect the most vulnerable populations. The center emphasizes a multidisciplinary focus by supporting university-wide faculty collaboration on study, analysis, and dissemination of information on health behavior, health promotion, and the prevention of major causes of premature disease and death in the U.S.

1988

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Program conducts the first Child Health Needs Assessment ever performed in Illinois. The project surveys and analyzes information on the primary healthcare and special needs of children throughout the state. The MCH Program serves as the administrative center for the Midwest Maternal and Child Health Data Improvement Project. This ten-state initiative in U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Regions V and VII improves timely and accurate management of information on health status and program indicators for mothers and children.

The Future of Public Health challenges the entire U.S. public health system. Prepared by the Committee for the Study of the Future of Public Health of the Division of Health Care Services of the Institute of Medicine, the report finds that “public health is currently in disarray... As a society we seem to assume that we are fully capable of maintaining past progress (often dramatic improvements in the public’s health and longevity), of addressing current problems, and of being prepared to respond to new crises or emergent health problems. Instead, this committee has found a public health system that is incapable of meeting these responsibilities, of applying fully current scientific knowledge and organizational skills, and of generating new knowledge, methods, and programs.”
Minorities are an increasing proportion of the U.S. population. For too many, good health is elusive and access to health promotion and prevention programs and appropriate healthcare is limited or non-existent. Appropriate demographic representation among those working in healthcare can help reduce disparities in health status, but the numbers of under-represented minority graduates in public health and other health professions are low. Building on partnerships with community organizations, Shaffdeen A. Amuwo, PhD, MPH, associate dean for community, government, and alumni affairs, successfully applies for federal Health Career Opportunities Program funding to support minority students pursuing careers in public health. UIC SPH is one of the few schools of public health to achieve such funding. Within five years, the school surpasses other UIC health professions colleges in percentages of minorities graduated. Within seven years, the school is a leader among other schools of public health in the nation in the number of minority doctoral graduates it produces.
Alarm about the impact of ozone on people’s health continues to grow in the late 1980s. Added to this is concern about respirable particulate matter, thought to be the most toxic because it penetrates deepest into the lungs. Earlier localized ozone monitoring yielded mysterious results, with urban centers sometimes showing minimal ozone while rural or beach areas could register as threateningly far from compliance with federal standards. The work of environmental scientists Peter Scheff, PhD, CIH, and Richard Wadden, PhD, CIH, on modeling air quality in the 1990s helps to enhance identification and measurement of polluting emissions. Their analysis of surface winds over Lake Michigan reveals conditions that permit the transport of ozone from one location to another. Dr. Scheff and Dr. Wadden help the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency secure federal funds to establish a network of particle monitors. Information from the monitors and ozone data on air quality is portrayed graphically in the media and on the Internet. Public awareness of and advocacy on the issue are sharpened, and control strategies are refined.
1990

In response to the myriad challenges presented by *The Future of Public Health*, Bernard J. Turnock, MD, MPH, immediate past director of the Illinois Department of Public Health and newly appointed associate dean for public health practice, establishes the Center for Public Health Practice. The center’s mission is to improve both the preparation for and practice of public health by enhancing collaboration between the school’s educational, research, and service activities and professionals and agencies engaged in public health practice. The center fosters research into capacity building within the public health system, development of practice-relevant courses, and exchange programs in which faculty work in public health agencies while agency staff bring their experience to the classroom to teach public health students.

1991

The Illinois Public Health Leadership Institute, directed by Louis Rowitz, PhD, is inaugurated as the first state-based, federally funded public health leadership institute in the nation. During a year-long course, institute fellows collaborate with mentors and peers in real-world analytical and problem-solving exercises to study the core functions of public health, examine cutting-edge issues related to those functions, and gain the skills they need to become public health leaders. Participants include public health professionals from state, county, and local health departments, board of health members, community health agency administrators, and state legislators. The institute expands to include Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan, becoming the Mid-America Regional Public Health Leadership Institute.

1992

Daniel Hryhorczuk, MD, MPH, director of the Great Lakes Centers for Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health, collaborates with the Ukrainian Institute of Pediatrics, Obstetrics, and Gynecology to establish the first institutional review board to insure that human subjects research protections are implemented in Ukraine.

The program areas of community health sciences, epidemiology and biostatistics, environmental and occupational health sciences, and health resources management, now called health policy and administration, are designated as divisions.

A five-year study of the Community Outreach Intervention Projects, which bring HIV prevention services to drug users on the streets, demonstrates the model’s impact in markedly decreasing drug and sex risk behaviors, leading to reduction of HIV infection rates. Unsafe injecting practices declined from 100 to 14 percent. Unsafe sex practices went from 71 to 45 percent. Observed incidence of HIV infection decreased, from 8.4 to 2.4 per 100 person years.

1993

Victoria Persky, MD, professor of epidemiology, leads studies of asthma in Chicago and East Moline, Illinois, two of three U.S. sites in an international study of asthma and allergies in childhood. Her research demonstrates high asthma prevalence in Chicago, where 13 percent of Head Start children and 16 percent of Chicago seventh and eighth grade students have been diagnosed with the disease. Historically, death rates from asthma have been higher in Chicago than elsewhere in the U.S.

1994

Susan C. Scrimshaw, PhD, an anthropologist with an international reputation as a distinguished scholar, is appointed as the fourth dean of the School of Public Health. Her interdisciplinary research has focused on gender, race, ethnicity, and culture and their impact on public health. She uses her prominence as a teacher and scholar to achieve important academic, institutional, and community goals from the local to the national level. While she serves as dean, her work is recognized by prestigious awards including the “Hero of Public Health” gold medal presented by the president of Mexico, election as one of the few social scientists to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, and service as president of the Association of Schools of Public Health.

The Loretta Pratt Lacey Memorial Scholarship Award is instituted to support the doctoral studies of individuals committed to working on African-American women’s health issues.
The 1990s

Susan C. Scrimshaw, PhD, dean (1994-2006), increases faculty diversity, improves services for students, and leads negotiations to establish the school in its new home at 1603 West Taylor Street in 2001. During her tenure, Dean Scrimshaw advocates at the national level for enhanced recognition of public health, for research to reduce health disparities, and for support of underserved populations.

1995

Gary Slutkin, MD, research professor of epidemiology, takes on the epidemic of violence claiming lives in Chicago and launches the Chicago Project for Violence Prevention. Grounded in partnerships with community organizations, law enforcement officials, and civic, social service and religious leaders, the project is a public health initiative that undertakes the development of systematic plans for the reduction of violence in some of Chicago’s most troubled neighborhoods. Outreach workers, often former gang members themselves, take intervention directly to the streets with the mission of defusing conflicts before they escalate to violence.
The Great Lakes Centers for Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health, directed by Daniel Hryhorczuk, MD, MPH, are designated as the first World Health Organization Collaborating Center in Occupational and Environmental Health, distinguished for its functional recognition of the synergy between the two fields. The WHO Collaborating Center has formal agreements with the Americas and Eastern Europe but also spans beyond to serve countries from Africa to Asia. Center initiatives include addressing occupational and environmental mercury poisoning associated with gold mining in the Amazon basin, studying thyroid cancer in children following the Chernobyl disaster, and evaluating the health of mothers and children from pregnancy through childhood in Ukraine. The center coordinates the global training efforts of the WHO Collaborating Centers in Occupational Health and develops the GeoLibrary, the global environmental and occupational health e-library of training materials and practice tools.

Donald Hedeker, PhD, professor of biostatistics, builds on his earlier work of developing methods for longitudinal data analysis that allow for missing data across time. These methods make it possible for researchers conducting longitudinal clinical trials to draw accurate conclusions even if they are missing participant data. To help others take advantage of his work, Dr. Hedeker develops software programs that perform statistical analyses using his methods and puts the programs on his Web site, making them available at no charge. The Web site receives thousands of hits per year from researchers around the world who use Dr. Hedeker’s resources to advance the fields of psychology, psychiatry, public health, statistics, and the social sciences.

The U.S. population 65 and over will increase from 35 million in 2000 to 40 million in 2010, a 15 percent increase, and then to 55 million in 2020, a 36 percent increase for that decade. Older inactive adults lose ground in four key areas for staying healthy and independent: endurance, strength, balance, and flexibility. Thomas Prohaska, PhD, co-director of the Center for Research on Health and Aging, and other leading experts on exercise for older adults, produce the book *Exercise: A Guide from the National Institute on Aging*, to direct and support individuals and organizations embarking upon exercise programs. The guide becomes the most requested document in the history of the National Institutes of Health. The first edition of the video based on the guide sells out its run of 45,000 copies.
A health educator teaches Chicago Public Schools children about the risks of HIV/AIDS.

Sustainable community health promotion requires long-term commitment in a context of collaboration and trust. From 1996 through mid 2004, the Illinois Prevention Research Center, directed by Susan R. Levy, PhD, FASHA, CHES, partners with community-based organizations, schools, and parents in the changing, predominantly Latino neighborhoods of West Lawn and Chicago Lawn to implement diabetes/hypertension and community risk reduction programs. The “Building Your Life” program, offered in community schools in grades five through eight, serves as the stable building block to reach families in the community with continuity. The program delivers sequenced, age-appropriate prevention education on risk reduction, substance abuse, diabetes, hypertension, and HIV/AIDS to all children attending school in those communities.
1997

The former Prevention Research Center is restructured to become the Health Research and Policy Centers. The unit includes the Center for Health Behavior Research, the Center for Research on Health and Aging, the Health Policy Center, the Center for Health Services Research, and the Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Research Center. The work of the centers spans the range from investigation to application and includes basic science, health behavior research and intervention development, clinical and efficacy trials, effectiveness trials and health services research, demonstration projects and dissemination research, and research-to-practice and practice-to-policy translation.

1998

The School of Public Health celebrates its 25th anniversary since graduating its first class with a year-long series of special events.

Victoria Persky, MD, professor of epidemiology, leads the development of the Chicago Community Asthma Prevention Program, a citywide alliance of community residents, health professionals, local agencies and public health institutions that fosters the self-empowerment of individuals and community groups in combating asthma. The program advocates with schools in Chicago and around Illinois to ensure that children at risk for asthma attacks are allowed to carry inhalers. The program also spearheads the training and deployment of parents of asthmatic children as peer educators who use home visits to assess risk factors for asthma and help disadvantaged families take steps to prevent them.

UIC Chancellor David Broski makes the commitment to provide a new home for the School of Public Health. Negotiations begin for space for the School of Public Health in the Illinois State Psychiatric Institute, situated at the corner of Taylor Street and Ashland Avenue.

The School of Public Health receives approval from the Illinois Board of Higher Education to deliver a Master of Public Health program at the UIC College of Medicine at Rockford and to begin accepting students in fall 1999.

The School of Public Health begins offering core courses in an online format.
The Illinois Public Health Preparedness Center, led by Bernard J. Turnock, MD, MPH, is established to measure and improve preparedness of the public health work force in Illinois through initiatives that assess and promote competency in public health practice and administration, community health improvement strategies, infectious disease prevention and control, bioterrorism, and environmental health. The center offers 61 completely online training courses, accessible to participants at any time, that emphasize cross-cutting public health skills and competencies. The center contributes to the development of emergency and disaster preparedness that places Illinois in a stronger position to respond to bioterrorism-related threats and events.

Faculty of the Great Lakes Centers for Occupational and Environmental Safety and Health inaugurate a series of annual international conferences on human subjects protections for researchers and scientists in countries from the former Soviet Union. The conferences introduce and expand knowledge of human subjects protection protocols among nations including Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Moldova, and Bulgaria. The Great Lakes Centers’ collaboration with 32 research institutes in Ukraine leads to the establishment of internal review boards within each institute.

CeaseFire, an initiative of the Chicago Project for Violence Prevention, is showing results in Chicago neighborhoods. Murders were down 24 percent in the first quarter of 2000 compared to the first quarter of 1999 in the communities currently involved in the project, and other statistics are also promising. Three communities had a 30 to 40 percent decrease in killing over the first eight months of last year, and shooting has decreased a full 75 percent in the first fully implemented CeaseFire zone.
Partnerships at the global level are needed to combat the AIDS epidemic at its various stages. Chile’s epidemic is nascent. China’s is among the fastest growing in the world. Indonesia’s radical increase in drug use contributes to the spread of the disease there. Malawi has 1 million infected individuals. These countries need their own experts, raised in their own cultures, to fight HIV/AIDS most effectively. Working with colleagues in these locations, Judith Levy, PhD, associate professor of health policy and administration, institutes the AIDS International Training & Research Program. The program supports international scholars at the School of Public Health in offerings that range from short-term intensive AIDS research training to master’s and doctoral degrees. It also deploys U.S. minority scholars to conduct research in one of the participating countries as preparation for undertaking international projects.
2001

The MPH Program at the UIC College of Medicine at Peoria is established to serve students at this location.

Dean Scrimshaw and School of Public Health faculty are interviewed extensively in the electronic and print media on the public health implications of the September 11 attacks. Beginning October 31, the school hosts a series of conferences on bioterrorism and related issues for professionals, media representatives, and community members.

Eighty percent of the public health workforce in the United States has not had the opportunity for formal training in public health. A course on evidence-based public health practice, designed by William Baldyga, DrPH, associate director of the Health Research and Policy Centers, prepares public health agency staff to define the problems they encounter in their daily work, seek resources and interventions that have proven effective in addressing such problems, adapt selected elements to meet the needs of the populations they serve, and evaluate the resulting health outcomes.

The office of the dean and the community health sciences, epidemiology and biostatistics, and health policy and administration divisions move to the new School of Public Health building at the corner of Taylor Street and Ashland Avenue. In addition to state-of-the-art teaching and research facilities, the building offers an auditorium, an activity room, a student lounge, a parenting room, and a café.
Staff and students gather in the building’s café.

Students, faculty, and guests enjoy dinner and dancing in the activity room.

Dean Susan C. Scrimshaw addresses guests in the new auditorium at the Open House to celebrate the move to 1603 West Taylor Street, April 2001.

Designer and public health advocate Kenneth Cole presents keynote address at Commencement 2001.
Improved information management and utilization are recognized as the keys to confronting the major public health challenges of the 21st century. The new field of public health informatics applies information science and technology to advance public health administration, practice, and research from the local to the global level. It is estimated that fewer than 1 percent of U.S. public health workers are trained in the use of information science and technology. Edward Mensah, PhD, associate professor, and Kevin Croke, PhD, professor, health policy and administration, launch the first fully online MPH in public health informatics program in the U.S. The program serves students across the country and from Canada to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A PhD and a certificate in public health informatics are also available.

S. Jay Olshansky, PhD, professor of epidemiology, gathers together fifty-one leading scientists from around the world to issue a position statement, published in *Scientific American*, warning the public that no currently marketed intervention has yet been proved to slow, stop, or reverse human aging. Concerned about the proliferation of the anti-aging industry, the scientists speak out to alert the public about the medical dangers of so-called anti-aging therapies.

Until the early 1990s, existing policy required that cancer surveillance systems record only malignant tumors. As a result, there had been almost no progress in investigating the epidemiology of brain tumors since the 1970s. Brain tumors are unique. Only about half of them are truly malignant. But depending on where they are located in the brain, they have the potential to kill by displacing vital functions. The Central Brain Tumor Registry of the United States, founded by Faith Davis, PhD, professor of epidemiology, and other leaders in the field, determines best practices for gathering data on brain tumors and also recognizes the need for a standardized definition of a primary brain tumor so such tumors can be consistently reported across surveillance systems. After extensive effort, Dr. Davis and her colleagues achieve national consensus on a definition. Their work results in enactment of federal legislation that mandates how brain tumor cases are reported and recorded in the U.S. This definition of a primary brain tumor is almost immediately endorsed by the International Agency for Research on Cancer, adopted in Europe, and is now being used broadly worldwide.

The Great Lakes Center of Excellence in Environmental Health, directed by Daniel Hryhorczuk, MD, MPH, provides consultation to local public health agencies requesting assistance in performing comprehensive environmental health hazard evaluations. The center is subsequently designated by the National Center for Environmental Health as the Academic Environmental Public Health Center for the Midwest Region, serving states from West Virginia to Kansas. The center addresses the work force development needs of environmental health agencies and professionals in the region, oversees health hazard evaluations, and conducts a pilot grants program.
Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, top among priorities raised by the state and city health departments was the need to develop surge capacity: additional workers ready at a moment’s notice to take on key roles in responding to a disease outbreak, terrorist event, or natural disaster. Epidemiologists Douglas Passaro, MD, MPH, and Ronald Hershon, MD, launch the EpiCorps, a rapid response team composed of student volunteers with a wide variety of backgrounds and areas of expertise. Students commit to being available on a 24/7 basis. Their skills in information technology and management of data bases are especially useful. Another significant asset is the diversity of the SPH student body. Students’ multicultural backgrounds and the range of languages they speak prove invaluable in working with Chicago’s widely varied populations. The EpiCorps plays a role in the Chicago segment of a national, congressionally mandated disaster drill, the largest ever conducted, to test the response of top officials to terrorist acts.

Almost equal proportions of white, African-American, and Hispanic women receive regular screening mammograms for breast cancer, but minority women are more often diagnosed with advanced disease, when treatment is least effective. As a result, African-American women are twice as likely as white women to die within five years after a breast cancer diagnosis. Hispanic women are 1.5 times as likely to die within five years, compared to whites. The UIC Center for Population Health and Health Disparities, established under the direction of Richard Warnecke, PhD, professor of epidemiology, looks at socioecological and individual factors that may affect prognosis and outcome for women with breast cancer. Dr. Warnecke and his colleagues in community groups and at UIC explore how a woman’s neighborhood, social network, including family, friends and other community contacts, and psychological profile interrelate when breast cancer is suspected.
The Doctor of Public Health degree program is revised and designed to prepare public health leaders through a comprehensive program which integrates the School of Public Health’s academic divisions and ensures expertise in the conceptual foundations of public health, research methods, leadership, management, communications skills, and a substantive area of specialization.

The Health Research and Policy Centers, directed by Susan J. Curry, PhD, have grown to employ more than 190 people and to conduct more than 90 research projects. The state of Illinois designates the unit as the Institute for Health Research and Policy.

African students in the Master of Public Health in public health informatics program and program faculty collaborate to address public health problems students identify in their home countries. A registry and surveillance system to track the joint occurrence of AIDS and tuberculosis is implemented in Ghana. The model used for this initiative is adapted to develop an AIDS surveillance system in Botswana. In Mali, a maternal and child health surveillance system is structured to monitor the progress of pregnancies from conception through birth to determine where interventions are needed to improve high maternal and infant death rates. In the vision of Dr. Edward Mensah, these are building blocks toward the establishment of a Pan African Health Information Infrastructure that will one day facilitate the delivery of information to healthcare stakeholders to improve the health status of individuals and entire populations.

U.S. Senator Richard J. Durbin, keynote speaker at Commencement 2004, receives the School of Public Health Appreciation Award from Dean Susan C. Scrimshaw.
2005

Benn Greenspan, PhD, clinical associate professor, and Jack Zwanziger, PhD, professor and director, health policy and administration division, inaugurate the Master of Healthcare Administration degree program. Offered in partnership with UIC’s College of Business Administration, the program combines managerial, administrative, and leadership skills with knowledge of public health and the healthcare system. The goal of the program is to prepare graduates to provide leadership in a rapidly changing and challenging healthcare environment, to run successful institutions, and to improve the quality of and access to health services.

The Community Outreach Intervention Projects model to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS has expanded across the U.S. and been used to help contain the epidemic in Thailand, China, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Indonesia. The model’s intervention manual has been translated into eight foreign languages and adapted for use in Canada, Italy, France, Central and South America, and the Eastern Bloc countries of the former Soviet Union. COIP has been cited as a model program by the World Health Organization, the National Institutes of Health, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, a Carnegie Foundation commission, and the Chicago Department of Public Health.

A team of researchers led by S. Jay Olshansky, PhD, professor of epidemiology, predicts in an article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that the rise in childhood obesity could mean that children today may live shorter, less healthy lives than their parents. The researchers predict that the rapid rise in obesity among children and teenagers in the past 30 years will have life-shortening effects in the future, perhaps enough to offset any improvements in longevity from anticipated advances in biomedical technology.

The Chicago Department of Public Health asks the student EpiCorps, the School of Public Health’s volunteer disaster response team, to create a database to evaluate the healthcare needs of Hurricane Katrina evacuees coming through the city’s Welcome Center. The information gathered contributes to the development of new approaches that will improve disaster response in Chicago and other cities around the country.

2006

The School of Public Health holds its First Annual Student Research Forum and Awards Day.

Susan C. Scrimshaw, PhD, concludes her tenure as dean, begun in 1994, to assume responsibilities as president of Simmons College in Boston.

The Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Research Center, directed by Lorraine M. Conroy, ScD, conducts a pilot study in Chicago hardware stores that demonstrates that placing lead safe work practice information next to construction tools and supplies is an excellent way to get the word out to rehabbers and contractors. As a result of the study, the Illinois General Assembly passes the Lead Poisoning Prevention Act of 2006 requiring hardware stores to inform customers about what they can do to prevent lead poisoning.

The Douglas Passaro International Award is instituted in memory of a beloved associate professor of epidemiology who instilled his intense interest in global health issues in his students. The award is intended to enrich students’ experience as they pursue the international advances in public health that were his vision and his work. Further, the Douglas Passaro Public Health Practice Scholars program is created to support students in apprenticeships with the state and local health departments.
2007

Arthritis currently affects 20 million people aged 65 and over in the U.S. and is projected to affect approximately 40 million by 2030. To address this urgent health problem in a sustainable and cost-effective manner, Susan Hughes, DSW, co-director of the Center for Research on Health and Aging, creates Fit and Strong! The program includes not only standard components such as flexibility/balance, aerobic, and strength training, but also offers group discussion/problem solving to enhance each individual’s disease management and responsibility for adherence to exercise over time.

*Time* cites results of research in Kenya led by Robert Bailey, PhD, professor of epidemiology, on the impact of male circumcision in reducing transmission of HIV as contributing to the #1 medical breakthrough for 2007. Dr. Bailey directed a clinical trial enrolling 2,784 HIV negative, uncircumcised men between 18 and 24 years old in Kisumu, Kenya, where an estimated 26 percent of uncircumcised men are HIV infected by age 25. Half the men were randomly assigned to circumcision, and half the men remained uncircumcised for two years. Participants received free HIV testing and counseling, medical care, tests and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, condoms and behavioral risk counseling during periodic assessments throughout the study. The study showed that circumcised men had 53 percent fewer HIV infections than uncircumcised men. The National Institutes of Health halted the trial in December 2006 after the overwhelmingly beneficial results of circumcision indicated that the procedure must be offered to the uncircumcised men in the study.
Since the launch of CeaseFire, the initiative of the Chicago Project for Violence Prevention, in 2000, Illinois has reduced its killings more than any other state. The number of killings in Chicago has dropped to the lowest level since the 1960s. The first 18 communities in which the initiative was implemented together show fewer shootings compared to three sets of controls, with a 25 to 45 percent drop in the first year and up to a 60 to 82 percent drop by year three. CeaseFire outreach workers have interceded in 1,384 high-risk conflicts and prevented possible shootings.

Paul Brandt-Rauf, DrPH, MD, ScD is named as the fifth dean of the School of Public Health, effective July 1, 2008. Dr. Brandt-Rauf most recently served as professor and chair of environmental health sciences at Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health. His research bridges population, biologic, and environmental sciences to examine the relationship between exposure to certain environmental factors, genetics, and cancer. He has conducted global research on biomarkers of vinyl chloride and asbestos and has published more than 200 articles in peer-reviewed publications, focused primarily on cancer-related proteins and their role as biomarkers for disease.

**End Notes**
