Inside the Core
Penn CFAR Behavioral Social Sciences Core

SBSRN in Seattle

On October 20-22, 2008 the third Annual Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Network (SBSRN) met at the University of Washington. BSS Core Members, Michael Blank, Dave Metzger, Cori Schrieber, Andrea Bowen and Rick Britt (CFAR CAB Member) attended. Mentoring the next generation of researchers began immediately with a day dedicated to demystifying the grant review process and research development.

Amy Nunn, PhD from Brown University described her mentoring day experience this way, "the day is indespensible—to get constructive, targeted feedback from the NIH program officers and senior scholars, and to learn about the grant process was invaluable for me. I'm so grateful for the opportunity!" One day of the scientific meeting was devoted to scientific presentations and working groups focusing on 5 key areas: 1. Accomplishments and Challenges in Interdisciplinary HIV Prevention Research – Judith Auerbach, PhD (San Francisco AIDS Foundation); 2. Biomedical and Socio-Behavioral Research Partnerships - Grace John Stewart, MD (University of Washington); 3. Translational Research: Public Health–Academic Partnerships – Seth Kalichman, PhD (University of Connecticut); 4. Community Academic Partnerships – Steve Wakefield (HVTN); and 5. Research Methods – Martina Morris, PhD (University of Washington).

The final day concluded with a day of modeling and included a lunch meeting of the SBSRN planning committee. The modeling symposium showcased the expertise of the University of Washington site providing a localized perspective and yet identified its universal appeal for those in attendance unfamiliar with these skills. The SBSRN looks forward to the 2009 scientific meeting in New England. Be sure to look out for future announcements.

Protocols to Watch

- Epidemiology of HPV Infection in HIV infected Women with Precancerous Cervical Lesions in Botswana (D. Ramogola/ H. Friedman). Contact: (215) 662-3557
- HVTN 906, High Risk Women: HIV Vaccine preparedness study (D. Metzger) Contact (215) 746-7346
- LEGACY: Increase participation of people of color in research trials (M. Lanier) - Contact: (215) 898-1173
- MOD-5 Community Based study for cocaine dependent women. (C. Dackis) Contact: (215) 746-7355

WANT THE COMMUNITY TO...
- REVIEW YOUR PROTOCOLS?
- HELP RECRUIT STUDY PARTICIPANTS
- DISSEMINATE YOUR FINDINGS?
TALK TO THE CFAR CAB

Red Ribbon Awards 2008

The CFAR CAB held its fifth annual awards ceremony at City Hall on World AIDS Day, Monday, December 1, 2008. Mark Davis of MHSA and Will Brawner of Haven were honored in the Community Member category, Dr. Lisa Bowleg of Drexel was honored in the Researcher category, David Acosta of AACO for Policymaker, and Shahdau Holand of Circle of Care and Michael Melvin of GALAEI for youth. In the face of new numbers being released and a local perspective of the HIV epidemic in Philadelphia, each recipient reminded all who attended why we must continue this fight but also why we must continue to honor and support the countless people who do the work.
What's next in HIV prevention globally?

Dr. Thomas Coates, of the David Geffen School at UCLA, came to Penn last December offering his thoughts about what's next in HIV prevention.

During the course of his talk, Dr. Coates, identified male circumcision as one of HIV prevention's recent successes providing an example of a demonstration project in South Africa that actively engages the community in the implementation process. He also spoke about PrEP as one of the things that if successful would be a great addition to the HIV Prevention toolbox. However, he warned of improving the timeliness of implementation of successful interventions citing the MCT intervention of ART treatment and the nearly 7 year gap between findings of its effectiveness and its common use.

Dr. Coates also pointed out the 10 best things we know about HIV prevention: 1) prevention is possible; 2) we have knowledge of what does work; 3) male and female condoms; 4) HIV testing of individuals, couples, families; 5) behavioral options; 6) MTCT interventions work; 7) needle exchange works; 8) male circumcision works; 9) treatment for positives works; 10) PrEP studies are in the works and looks promising.

Prior to his lecture, several CFAR CAB members and researchers had an opportunity to meet with him at a luncheon. Waheeda Shabazz-El, CFAR CAB Vice-Chair, had this to say, "Just hearing Dr. Coates lecture resonates the values of the present AIDS movement gave me a sense of well being. That the labor of the pioneers of the AIDS movement had not been in vain. Their voices had been heard. Our voices are indeed being heard..."■

Inaugural Bound

The Women of Color at Penn (WOCAP) are sponsoring a bus trip on January 20, 2009 to see the inaugural ceremonies of the 44th president. Tickets are $65 roundtrip and include continental breakfast and lunch. The bus will be leaving from 40th and Locust Streets on the University campus at 5am. Buses will depart D.C. at 7:00 pm. If you are interested in finding out more or to purchase tickets, please contact, Colleen Winn at 215-898-0104 or via email at cwinn@exchange.upenn.edu ■

Big Ups!!!

1. After 3 years of effort Suboxone is in China. Good news for HPTN 058.!! SBSRN Conference in Seattle Oct. 08 huge success. mark your calendars for Oct. 09. It is coming to Boston.!!! Anne Teitelman published an article in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence linking interpersonal violence with HIV risk among adolescent girls. ■

What's next in HIV prevention globally?

Where to find

- Assessment Tools
  http://www.uphs.upenn.edu/aids/cores/bssc/assessment.htm
- Office of Research Services to promote the research endeavors at Penn
  http://www.upenn.edu/researchservices/
- CRISP - searchable database of federally funded biomedical research projects.
  http://crisp.cit.nih.gov/
- NIH Funding Opportunities and Notices - grant policies, guidelines and funding opportunities
- Grants.gov is your source to FIND and APPLY for federal government grants.
  http://www.grants.gov/index.jsp
- The CITI Program providing research ethics education to all members of the research community.
  http://www.citiprogram.org ■

Tell us what you think!

1. How will the grant submission process affect you with the reduction of times you can resubmit an application?
2. How can the BSSR Core improve to meet your needs?
All responses can be emailed to: Tiffany Brown at tybrown@mail.med.upenn.edu ■

What's on your IPod?

1. Brother, can you spare a dime (popularized during the Great Depression & what you tell the NIH about funding your projects)
2. Remember the times by Michael Jackson (I won't get into his weirdness but seems appropriate in this new year)
3. Celebration by Kool & the Gang (in honor of the upcoming inauguration, I'm confident this would have been appropriate no matter who won)
4. Hit the Road Jack by Ray Charles (commemorating GW's ability to duck when shoes are being hailed at him)
5. Requiem by Mozart (it's the death of three times the charm in the grant submission process)
6. Single Ladies by Beyonce (it's my IPOD & you can decide what's on yours. Besides I need to practice the dance moves from the video.)■