Impact Awards honor graduate students whose research directly affects North Carolina

CHAPEL HILL – From creating strategies on how to reduce North Carolina’s vulnerability to natural hazards to demonstrating the benefits of preventative dental care for infants, graduate students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill conduct research that contributes much to the state.

To recognize graduate students whose research has a direct impact on the citizens of North Carolina, The Graduate School is presenting 12 graduate students with the 2005 Impact Awards.

“Their research often affects the economic development of our state, the quality of health and human services delivered to our citizens, and the quality of our educational systems and environmental resources,” said Linda Dykstra, Dean of the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School. “These graduate students are clearly making a difference in our state and beyond.”

These new awards, created in 2003, are privately funded through the Graduate Education Advancement Board (GEAB), the external advisory board of the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate School. “The GEAB membership enthusiastically supports the Impact Award program for both its positive impact on the state of North Carolina and the encouragement and support it provides to some of our outstanding graduate students,” said Dr. David Lewis, chair of the GEAB and Global Division Senior Vice President of Lord Corporation in Cary, N.C. “We continue to be impressed with the students’ research results, their potential impact on our community and the increasing number of outstanding proposals received each year.”

For downloadable pictures and stories about the Impact Award winners, please visit www.gradschool.unc.edu/impact/impact2005.html

2005 Graduate Education Advancement Board Impact Award Winners

Semra A. Aytur, Epidemiology
Research Title: Relationships of Land Use and Transportation Policies to Physical Activity and Obesity
Hometown: Plattsburgh, New York

Joan R. Cates, Journalism and Mass Communication
Research Title: Setting the News Media’s Agenda on Youth and Sexually Transmitted Diseases
Hometown: Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Katherine Ann Eschelbach, City and Regional Planning
Research Title: Statewide Risk Assessment Methodology for the North Carolina Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan
Hometown: Lancaster, Ohio
Chandra L. Ford, Health Behavior and Health Education
Research Title: Perceived Racism, Neighborhood Characteristics, and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Testing Among African Americans
Hometown: Durham, North Carolina

Sarah B. Knowles, Epidemiology
Research Title: Incidence and Severity of Injury among North Carolina High School Athletes
Hometown: Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Maria Mirabelli, Epidemiology
Research Title: Exposure to Airborne Emissions from Industrial Hog Operations as a Trigger of Childhood Respiratory Symptoms
Hometown: Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Mahyar Mofidi, Health Behavior and Health Education
Research Title: The Impact of a State Children’s Health Insurance Program on Access to Dental Care
Hometown: Durham, North Carolina

Melissa Nelson, Nutrition
Research Title: Obesity, Physical Activity, and the Neighborhood Environment
Hometown: Hatboro, Pennsylvania

Matthew Savage, Pediatric Dentistry
Research Title: Early Preventive Dental Visits: Effects on Subsequent Use and Costs
Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina

Thomas C. Terry, Journalism and Mass Communication
Research Title: W. Horace Carter – The Life Outside: A Weekly Newspaperman’s Pulitzer Prize-winning Campaign against the Ku Klux Klan, 1950-1953
Hometown: Geneseo, Illinois

Arianne Theiss, Cell and Molecular Physiology
Research Title: Mediators and Mechanisms of Inflammation-induced Intestinal Fibrosis
Hometown: Durham, North Carolina

Sacoby Miguel Wilson, Environmental Sciences and Engineering
Research Title: Environmental Monitoring and Spatiotemporal Assessment of Atmospheric Ammonia Levels near Hog CAFOs in Eastern North Carolina
Hometown: Vicksburg, Mississippi

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