

DEPARTMENT OF EPIDEMIOLOGY AND BIOSTATISTICS

EPIBIO NEWS

SPRING 2025

LEARN MORE ABOUT US
AT RESEARCH DAY

Research Day is an event designed to showcase the research and outreach work being led by the department's faculty, students, and post-docs. The poster presentation represents an opportunity for post-docs, undergraduate, and graduate students to present their research and connect with colleagues. The day begins at 8:30 a.m. All are welcome. [Information/Agenda](#)



VALEDICTORY SEMINAR

DR. MAT REEVES
4-10-25 3:00 P.M.
PATENGE ROOM

"10 Lessons Learned from 40 years
of doing epidemiology: Generalizable
knowledge or irrelevant musings
from the Pre-AI era?"



epibio.msu.edu

Dissertation Completion Fellowship (DCF) Awardees

Congratulations to the following students (and advisors) for receiving the Dissertation Completion Fellowships!

[Prudence Kunyangna](#) (Dr. Dorothy Pathak)

Dissertation Title: *Association between benign breast diseases and breast cancer among women in the U.S*

[Bendu Sherman](#) (Dr. Danielle Gartner)

Dissertation Title: *A Multidimensional Approach to Investigating the Link Between Maternal COVID-19 Infection and Chronic Placental Inflammation.*

[Eleanor Song](#) (Dr. Honglei Chen)

Dissertation Title: *The Long-Term Causal Effect of Cumulative Pesticide Exposure on Olfactory Impairment: A Stochastic Intervention Framework Incorporating Coarsening Mechanisms for Semicontinuous Exposures.*

[Harold Wu](#) (Dr. Gustavo de los Campos)

Dissertation Title: *Statistical Methods Development for Multi-Omics Studies and Genomic Prediction.*

Dissertation Completion Fellowships are intended to expedite the completion of strong dissertations by providing students additional funding and thus time to dedicate to the completion of their dissertations.

[BEAMS](#) would like to thank everyone for helping the student organization out by purchasing department coffee mugs and tumblers. Distribution will begin the week of April 7th.

Student SPOTLIGHT



Meredith Cahill

PhD in Epidemiology

Hometown: Louisville, Kentucky



Research Focus:

Social and reproductive epidemiology

Why did you choose to study at MSU?

I chose to study at MSU because I was looking for a small program that offered individualized mentoring and training. Additionally, I was drawn to the department's strong focus on perinatal health and the health equity work of Dr. Misra and Dr. Margerison, as well as Dr. Margerison's expertise in health policy research.

[Continue reading about Meredith](#)



Harish Neelam

PhD in Biostatistics

Hometown: Hyderabad, India



What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I love to cook, watch movies & series, and listen to music.

What are some of the best things about being a Department student?

The very friendly and supportive faculty and staff. They create a welcoming and encouraging environment that makes it easier to learn and grow.

[Continue reading about Harish](#)





Dr. Allison Kuipers

Dr. Kuipers joined our department on December 30, 2024. She is a joint appointment with the Department of Medicine in Grand Rapids, and comes to MSU from the University of Pittsburgh where she received her PhD in Epidemiology.

Faculty Spotlight

Dr. Jean Kerver

Dr. Kerver is an Associate Professor, a nutritional epidemiologist and a registered dietitian whose research agenda includes plans to conduct studies that will help uncover perinatal causes of childhood disorders and also find effective ways to promote healthy lifestyle behaviors for families living in poverty or facing other challenges.



About Dr. Kuipers

Born and raised: Lancaster, PA

Favorite Music: Pop/rock from the 90's and 00s (so I guess that means oldies)

What do you like to do in your free time?

Cook, bake, read, play with the kids outside, bike (stationary and not)

[Learn more about Dr. Kuipers](#)

Dr. Kerver, What is the most interesting place you have visited?

Tanzania, Africa. I went on a two-week trip with family to hike Mt. Kilimanjaro and tour the Serengeti. It was truly awe-inspiring. [Learn more about Dr. Kerver](#)

Newly Funded Research

In this newly funded project, [Dr. Honglei Chen](#) and his collaborators will assess markers across the continuum of Alzheimer's disease and dementia in a unique population of farmers and evaluate potential roles of dementia in neurodegeneration. The study will be conducted among participants of the PASS-Memory and Aging Study, a sub-cohort of the well-established Agricultural Health Study.

What can newborn hearing tell us about neurodevelopment

Our research team aims to understand the biological and environmental influences on early neurodevelopment. Some of our projects involve the analysis of data that have already been collected by health administrative entities. We hope that studies like ours improve understanding of how neurodevelopment unfolds and that this information, helps us identify children who may benefit from enhanced monitoring by health care professionals as they develop. Much of our recent work has been funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and focuses on newborn hearing screening. This is because hearing screening often involves assessing newborn brain activity in response to auditory stimulation. We are interested in seeing whether this routine, population-wide assessment contains information that is relevant to challenges children may encounter as they develop. [Learn more](#)



Melanie Adkins, (left), Research Director
Nicole Talge, (right) Associate Professor

CLASS OF 25 Spring GRADUATES

Masters in EPIDEMIOLOGY



Heesu Kim

Shannon Taylor

Michael Yeboah

Masters in BIOSTATISTICS



Ben Drabing

Daniel Frechette

Prarthna Mudumala

PhD in EPIDEMIOLOGY



Florence Kizza

GRADUATION

FRIDAY, MAY 2 12 P.M.
CENTRAL CONFERENCE ROOM | LOBBY

CELEBRATION

ALUMNI



Yasi Zamani-Hank (PhD in 2022) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Director of the MSU Primary Care Research Collaborative (MSU-PCRC), an initiative to enhance research capacity in primary care settings across Michigan, with a focus on family medicine residency programs. As part of this effort, Dr. Zamani-Hank enjoys collaborating with physicians and researchers across CHM's eight community campuses to promote practice-based research and cultivate a "culture of inquiry" in primary care. Dr. Zamani-Hank's research has focused on studying the impacts of early life stressors on maternal and child health outcomes across the lifecourse and identifying multi-level protective factors. Her current research examines the role of macro-level policies as interventions to improve disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes. She enjoys mentoring medical school students and engaging in interdisciplinary research with colleagues across Epidemiology, Public Health, and Family Medicine.

When not at MSU, she keeps busy with her 1-year-old and 4-year-old boys. A born and raised Michigander, she enjoys traveling with her family, taking the kids on outdoor adventures, and appreciating all things Northern Michigan.

