



NORTHWEST CENTER FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH CENTER (ERC)

Located at the University of Washington, serving Region X (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Noah Seixas, PhD, CIH
Director, Northwest Center
Department of Environmental
& Occupational Health Sciences
Box 354695
University of Washington
Seattle, WA 98195
email: nseixas@u.washington.edu
phone: 206-685-7189

Website

<http://depts.washington.edu/nwcohs>

Blog

<http://nwcohs.blogspot.com>

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/NWCOHS>

The Soul Catcher logo above is a Northwest Coast Indian symbol of physical and mental well-being (Artist: Marvin Oliver)

The Northwest Center, one of 17 centers funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), provides professional education and research services to employers, workers, and health and safety professionals in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Housed in the UW Schools of Public Health, Nursing, and Medicine, the Center offers graduate programs (MS, PhD, and MPH) in industrial hygiene, occupational medicine, and occupational health nursing. In addition to these three core disciplines, the Center also trains students in Hazardous Substance Management and Occupational Health Services Research. A continuing education program develops and maintains the skills of professionals working in the region.

In 2010, the Northwest Center successfully competed for funding and was awarded \$1.4 million annually for the next five years. Approximately 80% of these academic program funds are provided directly to students in the form of tuition and stipend.

As the only NIOSH-funded ERC in our four-state region, the Northwest Center is a critical resource to business, labor, and public health practitioners in preventing work-related injury and illness.

NORTHWEST CENTER TRAINEES & ALUMNI

The Center is making a substantial contribution to the pool of occupational health professionals in the region. Each year during the past five years, the Center has produced an average of nine graduates in industrial hygiene, four in occupational medicine, and five in occupational health nursing. Combined with the allied fields of occupational health research and hazardous substance training, the Center supported 106 trainees from 2005 to 2010. In 2011, we are supporting 19 graduate students in the various programs. Below are three of our trainees and alumni.

Jenna Armstrong is a PhD student in our Environmental & Occupational Hygiene program. She is currently researching worker exposure during and following agricultural pesticide spraying. Jenna also participates in outreach and education efforts to agricultural workers using florescent tracers to identify and reduce pesticide exposures.

Diana Ceballos earned a PhD in 2010 from our Environmental & Occupational Hygiene program. Her research focused on dermal exposures for automotive painters. Diana is now an Industrial Hygienist with the Health Hazard Evaluation group at NIOSH with a focus on outreach to Hispanic workers.

Steve Hunt, MD, earned an MPH from our Occupational and Environmental Medicine program in 2005. He is now Director of the Deployment Health Clinic with the Veterans Affairs Puget Sound Health Care Systems, where he directs a multidisciplinary post-combat assessment and follow-up clinic for returning veterans in the Puget Sound area.



Diana Ceballos



Jenna Armstrong



Steve Hunt

PARTNERING WITH REGIONAL COMPANIES & INSTITUTIONS

Faculty, staff, and students of the Northwest Center are involved in a wide range of research and service projects with private companies, government agencies, and non-profit institutions to improve occupational health and safety for their employees and constituents. A partial list of these partners and projects are:

Community Partner	Project Description
Washington Assoc. of General Contractors	Development of training materials for hearing conservation in construction
Microsoft Corp.	Ongoing evaluation and improved design of mouse and keyboard designs
US Army Base at Madigan	Army physicians completing MPH training through OEM programs
Yakima Valley Farmworker's Clinic	Ongoing primary care of occupational injuries of agricultural workers
Enertech, Inc	Assistance in design and testing of bioaerosol sampling devices
Seattle Iron & Metal Corporation and Teamsters Local 117	Development of an effective bilingual labor/management health & safety committee in a high hazard industry
Casa Latina	Development and delivery of safety training to construction day laborers
Renton Technical College, PSF Industries, Baxter Manufacturing, Plumbers & Pipefitters UA Local 32, Ironworkers Local 86	Development of a Hexavalent Chromium Exposure Controls (HexChEC) video, manual, and poster for welders
Washington State Department of Labor & Industry	Development of a workshop to help businesses, unions, and other organizations address health and safety concerns for an aging workforce
Seattle Vocational Institute Pre-Apprenticeship Construction Training	Training of workers involved in green building and energy retrofits and of minority students in building trades apprenticeships
Medical Centers in Renton, Everett, Spokane, and Seattle (Harborview)	Development of Centers for Occupational Health Education (COHE) to better manage injured worker claims
Idaho Department of Health and Boise State University	Development and validation a mercury safety checklist for schools
Oregon Health & Science University, Portland State University, Oregon Homecare Commission, SEIU	Development and evaluation of a safety surveillance tool for homecare workers
City of Valdez Public Works Department	Research on whole-body vibration in snow removal loader operations
Washington Safe Patient Handling Steering Committee, Oregon Coalition for Health Care Ergonomics	Courses, conferences, and technical assistance on implementation of safe patient handling programs in diverse healthcare institutions

CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) COURSES

The Northwest Center is nationally recognized for the quality and variety of its CCD program. In the 2009–2010 academic year, our CE program offered 45 courses to more than 1500 trainees in subjects including industrial hygiene, occupational health nursing, occupational medicine, occupational safety, and hazardous substance training. An additional 961 trainees took online courses. In 2010, our CE and OHN programs developed and offered an OHN Institute to train frontline nurses in OH basics using distance, in-class, and synchronized learning approaches. In addition, our CE program has developed and delivered specialized training to companies and agencies to improve workplace health and safety performance. A partial list follows:

Washington: Bureau of Reclamation, Seattle Vocational Institute, Fluor Corporation, Hearth and Home Technologies, Washington State Nurses Association

Oregon: United States Forest Service, Oregon Tradewomen Inc.

Idaho: Monsanto Corporation, Bureau of Land Management, URS

Alaska: Federal Aviation Administration, Yukon River Intertribal Watershed Council, Nome Public Utilities, Alaska Rural Water Association, Native Village of Mt. Village