

International conference promotes environmental health research exchange

By Sara Mishamandani

NIEHS staff and grantees travelled to Cluj-Napoca, Romania, May 25-29, for the [Central and Eastern European Conference on Health and the Environment](http://www.ceeche.org/)

(<http://www.ceeche.org/>)

(CEECH), to open new lines of communication and address issues related to the environment and human health.

"The meeting was an excellent way to bring together experts on risk assessment, environmental decision-making, remediation technologies, and other environmental health topics, to increase the knowledge transfer between the U.S. and Central and Eastern Europe," said William Suk, Ph.D., director of the NIEHS Superfund Research Program (SRP) and invited speaker. "SRP has been supporting workshops and conferences to enhance collaboration between scientists in the U.S. and Eastern Europe for the last 20 years, with our first meeting in Romania in 1994."

Addressing broad research questions

The conference brought together a diverse panel of scientists to address emerging issues in environmental health science. They presented advances in environmental sciences, engineering, technology, and health sciences, within broad themes of the environment, environmental health, and military conflicts.

The gathering featured a series of workshops, plenary talks, and poster sessions. Topics included responsible mining, water quality and risk management, soil contamination, advances in human biomarkers, environmental genetics, omics technologies, children's environmental health, and environmental protection in the face of military conflicts. There was also a career opportunities panel for students.

Superfund scientists lead the way

NIEHS-funded Louisiana State University (LSU) SRP members and NIEHS SRP staff were involved in committees that organized the conference and planned the scientific agenda.

NIEHS SRP staff Suk, Danielle Carlin, Ph.D., and Michelle Heacock, Ph.D., gave presentations related to hazardous substances and human health, toxic metals research, and electronic waste. Scientists from SRP programs at LSU, University of Arizona, University of Kentucky, and Oregon State University also participated in workshops, chaired sessions, and gave presentations.

(Sara Mishamandani is a research and communication specialist for MDB Inc., a contractor for the NIEHS Superfund Research Program and Division of Extramural Research and Training.)



In his plenary lecture, Suk focused on the importance of interdisciplinary research and translation, to reduce the burden of disease. He used SRP as a model for better understanding hazardous substances, vulnerable populations, and improving human health. (Photo courtesy of Kelli Palmer)



Heacock, center, and Carlin, second from right, participated in breakout sessions related to advances in human biomarkers, and air pollution and health. They also took part in the career opportunities discussion for students. (Photo courtesy of Kelli Palmer)



The conference took place in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, the heart of Transylvania. (Photo courtesy of Kelli Palmer)



Heacock presented an overview of the global health issues related to disposal of electronic waste, and outlined exposure prevention and intervention strategies. (Photo courtesy of Kelli Palmer)



University of Arizona SRP director Raina Maier, Ph.D., described how increasing global demand for metals is straining the ability of the mining industry to physically keep up with demand. She suggested the application of sustainable mining solutions that account for community well-being, life cycle analysis, and the production, use, and reuse of metals. (Photo courtesy of Kelli Palmer)



LSU SRP materials core leader and conference co-chair Slawo Lomnicki, Ph.D., worked with fellow co-chair Eugen Stelian Gurzau, Ph.D., from Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, to organize the meeting. Lomnicki gave a presentation on environmental challenges, risks, and research directions related to nanotechnology. (Photo courtesy of Kelli Palmer)



Elisabeta Mitran, Ph.D., left, LSU SRP training core coordinator and CEECHE Executive Conference Board member, presented a certificate of achievement to LSU SRP trainee Elisabeth Feld for best student oral presentation. (Photo courtesy of Kelli Palmer)

The Environmental Factor is produced monthly by the [National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences \(NIEHS\)](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/)

(<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>)

, Office of Communications and Public Liaison. The content is not copyrighted, and it can be reprinted without permission. If you use parts of Environmental Factor in your publication, we ask that you provide us with a copy for our records. We welcome your [comments and suggestions](#).

(bruskec@niehs.nih.gov)

This page URL: NIEHS website: <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>

Email the Web Manager at webmanager@niehs.nih.gov