CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service Celebrates 50 Years in 2001

Epidemic Intelligence Service 50th Anniversary celebration

SUMMARY

The Epidemic Intelligence Service headquartered at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2001.

The Epidemic Intelligence Service is a two-year, postgraduate program that trains physicians and other health professionals in skills necessary to investigate infectious disease outbreaks and epidemics.

Known as CDC's "disease detectives, officers have helped identify and control hundreds of disease outbreaks, including toxic shock syndrome, Legionnaires' disease, the ebola and AIDS viruses and, most recently, anthrax.

Key Results

- The CDC Foundation held the anniversary gala January 11, 2001 in New York City, with 300 attendees representing philanthropic and foundation partners, health organization partners, business and corporate collaborators and friends of the CDC Foundation.

- The celebration included a five-minute documentary video—entitled To Move People's Hearts—about the Epidemic Intelligence Service developed for the anniversary program.

- Project staff developed and distributed 65 press kits about the Epidemic Intelligence Service and the gala event, as well as separate news releases about four recipients of the Champion of Prevention Award, which recognizes extraordinary contributions to public health.

Funding

A grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) provided $50,000 as partial funding for the celebration in January 2001.
THE PROBLEM

EIS is a two-year, postgraduate program that trains physicians and other health professionals in skills necessary to investigate infectious disease outbreaks and epidemics. Known as CDC's "disease detectives," EIS officers have helped identify and control hundreds of disease outbreaks, including toxic shock syndrome, Legionnaires' disease, the ebola and AIDS viruses and, most recently, anthrax.

In addition to their work with infectious diseases, EIS officers also evaluate the risks of toxic spills, monitor the safety of water supplies, assist in responses to natural disasters and study the health effects of occupational hazards.

Since its inception in 1951, the EIS has trained nearly 2,500 doctoral-level health professionals, who work under the supervision of epidemiologists at the CDC or in state and local health departments. About 10 percent of EIS officers are from foreign countries. (For a more detailed discussion of EIS history and accomplishments, see the CDC's website.)

THE PROJECT

The purpose of the project was to celebrate the 50th anniversary of EIS with alumni and friends; to kick off a year-long effort to raise public awareness of the CDC and EIS and their contributions to global health, focusing especially on New York City's philanthropic, business, and media leaders; and to provide a platform to announce philanthropic partnerships resulting in gifts to extend and support the EIS program.

A 50th anniversary "host committee" helped plan the event. (See Appendix 2 for a list of committee members.)

RESULTS

In a report to RWJF, the project director described the following results of the project:

- **The CDC Foundation held the anniversary gala January 11, 2001 in New York City, with 300 attendees representing philanthropic and foundation partners, health organization partners, business and corporate collaborators and friends of the CDC Foundation.** Project staff developed and distributed approximately 1,000 copies of a 76-page commemorative program brochure highlighting EIS stories from the field, including an account of uncovering the epidemiology of AIDS during the 1980s.

- **The celebration included a five-minute documentary video—entitled To Move People's Hearts—about EIS developed for the anniversary program.** As of September 2001, Foundation staff had distributed approximately 30 copies of the video in response to requests from alumni.
• Project staff developed and distributed 65 press kits about EIS and the gala event, as well as separate news releases about four recipients of the Champion of Prevention Award, which recognizes extraordinary contributions to public health.

AFTERWARD

In follow-up activities, the CDC sponsored a conference for EIS alumni preceding its 50th Annual Scientific Conference in April 2001 in Atlanta and another alumni event in Washington in July 2001. The CDC Foundation is working with EIS to increase the number of international officers in each EIS class and is seeking support from foundations, corporations and individuals to fund the larger enrollment and provide stipends for EIS students.

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APPENDIX 1

Epidemic Intelligence Service Fiftieth Anniversary Campaign Donors

(Current as of the end date of the program; provided by the program’s management; not verified by RWJF.)

Chairman's Circle ($50,000+)
Johnson & Johnson
New Brunswick, N.J.

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Princeton, N.J.

Marcus Foundation
Atlanta, Ga.

Pfizer Inc., US Pharmaceuticals
Whitehouse Station, N.J.

Wyeth-Ayerst Research & Wyeth Lederle Vaccines
Radnor, Pa.

Champions ($25,000+)
Delta Airlines Inc
Atlanta, Ga.

TRW
Cleveland, Ohio

UPS Foundation
Atlanta, Ga.
APPENDIX 2

Epidemic Intelligence Service Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration Host Committee

(Current as of the end date of the program; provided by the program’s management; not verified by RWJF.)

Jeremiah A. Barondess, MD
New York Academy of Medicine
New York, N.Y.

Seth F. Berkley, MD
International AIDS Vaccine Initiative
New York, N.Y.

Guthrie S. Birkhead III, MD
N.Y. State Department of Health
Delmar, N.Y.

Martin D. Blaser, MD
New York University
New York, N.Y.

Michael D. Decker, MD
Aventis Pasteur
Swiftwater, Pa.

Sally Faith Dorfman, MD
Medical Society of the State of New York
Cornwall, N.Y.

Annie D. Fine, MD
N.Y.C Department of Health
Brooklyn, N.Y.

David W. Fraser, MD
INCLEN Inc.
Yardley, Pa.

William T. Friedewald, MD
Columbia University School of Public Health
New York, N.Y.

Pierce Gardner, MD
Columbia University School of Public Health
New York, N.Y.

Michael B. Gregg, MD
Retired
Guilford, Vt.

George E. Hardy, Jr., MD
Association of State and Territorial Public Health
Washington, D.C.

John L. Ho, MD
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New York, N.Y.

Michael E. Kafriessen, MD
Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceuticals Inc.
Raritan, N.J.

Philip J. Landrigan, MD
Mt. Sinai School of Medicine
Mamaroneck, N.Y.

Robert S. Lawrence
Johns Hopkins School of Public Health
Baltimore, Md.

Marcelle Layton, MD
New York City Department of Health
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Neal Nathanson, MD
University of Pennsylvania Medical Center
Narbeth, Pa.

Stanley A. Plotkin, MD
Retired
Doylestown, Pa.

William Schaffner II, MD
Vanderbilt School of Medicine
Nashville, Tenn.
Steven A. Schroeder, MD
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Princeton, N.J.

Allen C. Steere, Jr., MD
New England Medical Center
Wellesley, Mass.

Martin-Jose Sepulveda, MD
IBM
Somers, N.Y.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Current as of date of the report; as provided by the grantee organization; not verified by RWJF; items not available from RWJF.)

Brochures and Fact Sheets


Audio-Visuals and Computer Software


Grantee Websites

www.cdc.gov/eis includes information about the CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service, including a description, a history and timeline, and more detail about the 50th anniversary celebration. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control Foundation, 2001.

Sponsored Conferences