

## Meet Humphrey Fellowship Alumni

### 1991–92 Humphrey Fellow, Johns Hopkins University—Piazza, Marina



Dr. Marina Piazza, a 1991–92 Hubert H. Humphrey (HHH) Fellow at Johns Hopkins University stayed for doctoral degree and postdoctoral studies before returning to Peru to become a faculty member at Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia (UPCH). There she founded the Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research Unit at the School of Public Health and developed a National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Epidemiology Training as part of the International Clinical, Operational and Health Services Research Training Award program linking Michigan State University with UPCH. This NIDA program was

developed with Dr. James C. Anthony during the HHH Fellowship program and has trained at the pre- and postdoctoral level a team of drug abuse researchers working today at the Peruvian National Institute of Health, Peru National Institute of Mental Health, and other key mental health research institutions. This collaborative research and structure has extended now to foster collaboration especially relevant for the Andean countries.

### 2003–04 Humphrey Fellow, Johns Hopkins University—Otiashvili, David



Dr. David Otiashvili graduated from Tbilisi State Medical University in 1992 and spent 10 years in an addiction clinic in Tbilisi treating patients with drug and alcohol dependence. His involvement with substance use research started in 2003 when he spent a year as a National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Hubert H. Humphrey (HHH) Fellow at Johns Hopkins University. One of the biggest achievements of his HHH Fellowship program was establishing successful research partnerships with his mentors Drs. George Woody and Hendree Jones, with whom he completed a professional affiliation during that year. Following his return to Georgia, he decided to switch his professional career and focus on research, education, and advocacy related

to substance use. He has been successful in developing research proposals related to particular issues in Georgia and the Eastern European region and competing for NIDA funding. Since then, he has been involved as Georgian principal investigator (PI) and co-PI in several NIDA-funded studies, including randomized controlled trials. Collaboration with U.S. colleagues and mentors has been an exceptional learning experience for him and allowed him to establish himself as a competent substance use researcher. He credits the coaching and mentorship provided by U.S. partners as being essential in helping him develop academic writing skills and subsequently publish research manuscripts in international peer-reviewed literature—a common problem for early-career researchers, in particular those representing developing countries. He has coauthored 12 research articles published in scientific journals and a number of book chapters.

He also has participated in a very successful collaboration between Czech and Georgian partners that originated since the completion of his NIDA HHH Fellowship by the two country team leaders—Dr. Tomas Zabransky (Charles University in Prague) and himself. The two teams collaborated on a number of research initiatives, including studies focusing on nonmedical use of prescription medications in Georgia, NIDA/CRDF-funded regional research on stimulant abuse, policy analysis, epidemiological studies, and analysis of the drug situation in Georgia. Currently, they are working toward institutionalization of an interdisciplinary education in addictology in Georgia, which will be a first-of-its-kind, modern evidence-based substance use-related education program in the post-Soviet region. The M.A. program in addiction studies (addictology), developed in collaboration with Czech and U.S. partners, will admit its first students in September 2014 at Ilia State University in Tbilisi. Four other universities will be developing and introducing addictology modules for relevant B.A. and M.A. programs. An additional unique aspect of the collaboration is that Dr. Zabransky supervised/mentored Dr. Otiashvili's distant Ph.D. study at Charles University in Prague, which he completed early this year.

Dr. Otiashvili characterizes his participation in the NIDA HHH program as life changing. The most important factor that contributed to these changes probably was the ability to find a common language and common interest with colleagues from other countries and enjoy teaming with them.

#### **2003–04 Humphrey Fellow, Johns Hopkins University—Sarasvita, Riza**



Dr. Riza Sarasvita, a 2003–04 Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow at Johns Hopkins University (JHU), stayed on at JHU and completed her M.H.S. in 2005 before returning to Indonesia. In 2010, she completed her Ph.D. in clinical pharmacology at the University of Adelaide in Australia. Since 2009, Dr. Sarasvita has been chief of the Sub-Directorate of Substance Abuse Prevention and Management, Directorate of Mental Health under the Ministry of Health. Dr. Sarasvita has been working in the area of substance-related disorders since 1993 with 16 years as a clinical psychologist at The Drug Dependence Hospital—Jakarta, and the past 5 years as program manager for drug treatment and rehabilitation policy at the national level in Indonesia. Dr. Sarasvita was part of a select group of individuals who initiated methadone maintenance treatment in Indonesia in 2003 and is recognized as having extensive research experience in the area of medication-assisted therapy and behavior changes among people who inject drugs. In addition to her work with the Ministry of Health, Dr. Sarasvita serves as co-chair of the Task Force on Resource Mobilization of the World Health Organization Coordinating Council for the Implementation of WHA63 – The Global Strategy To Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol, is a master trainer of Volume A (Screening, Assessment & Treatment Plan) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Treatnet Module, and is a regional trainer on addiction counseling with the Colombo Plan's Certification and Education of Addiction Professionals.

**2006–07 Humphrey Fellow, Virginia Commonwealth University—Nguyen, Duc**



Duc Nguyen, M.A., is a principal official in charge of drug control and international cooperation of the Secretariat to the National Committee on AIDS, Drugs and Prostitution Control, Vietnam cabinet office. He was director of the Drug Advisory Programme, the Colombo Plan, a regional intergovernmental organization based in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 2009 to 2011 and division deputy head at the Standing Office on Drugs and Crime Prevention and Control, Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam with the rank of police major. Mr. Duc obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees from Vietnam National University in 1999 and 2004. He was a National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Hubert H. Humphrey Drug Abuse Research Fellow in 2006–2007 at Virginia Commonwealth University. He was a guest speaker at the NIDA International Forum 2010 and at several workshops and trainings in the region.

**2009–10 Humphrey Fellow, Virginia Commonwealth University—Okonkwo, Chinyere Celestina**



Chinyere Celestina Okonkwo obtained a diploma in social work and a B.Sc. (with honors) in psychology from the University of Nigeria Nsukka. She also obtained a master's degree in psychology (clinical) from the University of Lagos, Akoka. She did her Hubert H. Humphrey (HHH) Fellowship program in 2009–2010, at the Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia. Her field of study was substance abuse education, prevention, and treatment. She is particularly interested in mental health, HIV/AIDS, and substance abuse issues in women, children, and adolescents. During her fellowship year, she was exposed to various substance abuse treatment and prevention modalities. Presently, she works as a clinical psychologist at the Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Yaba, Lagos. In this position, she is responsible for managing and coordinating psychological assessments and treatment for substance abuse patients, as well as for other patients and clients including children and adolescents. Among the programs she introduced in her institution after her HHH Fellowship were gender-specific psychological treatment for females with substance use disorders, relapse prevention programs, and the use of multimedia for psychoeducation of the patients. She is also the coordinator of the HIV/AIDS Counseling and Testing services in the hospital. As a result of her HHH Fellowship experiences, she was able to get the Young African Women Leadership grant from the U.S. Embassy in Nigeria for a 3-month project on maternal and child health. She is one of the focal persons for the United National Office on Drugs and Crime national project on

substance abuse treatment model in Nigeria. She has also been involved in several stakeholders' meetings on drug abuse-related issues at different levels.

**2007–08 Humphrey Fellow, Emory University—Vu, Hoang**



Hoang Vu, M.D., M.P.H., is a public health specialist of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief Vietnam. He provides technical assistance together with various partners to his country's responses to substance use disorders and related comorbidities, as well as various systematic issues in the context of HIV prevention, care, and treatment programs. Dr. Vu graduated from Hanoi Medical University and earned a master of public health at Emory University under Hubert H. Humphrey/National Institute on Drug Abuse and Fogarty Fellowships (2007–2010).