

Spring 2021 NEWSLETTER



Where Western Diet
-> Western Disease

FIHRI MISSION

The mission of the non-profit Food Ingredient and Health Research Institute (FIHRI) is to eliminate harmful contaminants in food through research and consumer education.



FIHRI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Steven G. Gilbert, PhD, WA State
- Amanda Hitt, JD, Washington DC
- Leah Woodke, PhD, ND
- Skip Kingston, PhD, PA
- Daniele Pisanello, JD, Italy
- Zara Berg, PhD, MT
- Ted Levine, Actor, Utah
- Raquel Crider, PhD, WV
- Roseanne Schnoll, PhD, NY
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- Jacqui Macy, CA
- Renee Dufault, DHEd, HI
- Mary Finley, Volcano, HI
- Sharon Beck, Pahala, HI

A Personal note from the Founding Executive Director's Desk!

These last few months have been so terribly busy. My head is virtually spinning. Ha, ha. No evil spirit to remove but I would love to shed some of the FIHRI responsibilities! My biggest peeve is serving as FIHRI webmaster. Maintaining the website is such a burden. I have put in a request to a high-profile technology person to please serve as a Director on FIHRI's board!! Ideally that person would take over as webmaster.

The good news is I have completely updated the FIHRI website. All the links are now working. There were so many disconnected links. As I looked for replacements, to my surprise, I found new publications to support our work. For example, consider organophosphate exposure via processed wheat products. While U.S. researchers have done nothing to further this line of research, Japanese researchers are on it Baby!! Wow!! Check out this article abstract indexed on PubMed. [Chlorpyrifos-methyl, pirimiphos-methyl and fenitrothion residues in commercial wheat products.](#)

Speaking of PubMed, the article we published in 2015 is now indexed there. What a fight!! We were engaged in cyberbattle. The law was on our side. If a study is funded with taxpayer money, the published results must be available via PubMed. Many thanks to the EPA American Indian Environmental Office and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium!! These awesome collaborators had our back! Please check out our new PubMed article titled, [Blood inorganic mercury is directly associated with glucose levels in the human population and may be linked to processed food intake.](#) Other researchers will now be able to access these important findings when they conduct a PubMed search on key words "inorganic mercury and glucose."

We will soon have another article indexed by PubMed. In October 2020, I was asked by a journal editor to conduct a literature review of the concepts introduced in our *Clinical Epigenetics* publication titled, [A macroepigenetic approach to identify factors responsible for the autism epidemic in the U.S.](#) (2012). Ironically, the editor uses AI to track important findings. He assured me that we would not have to pay publication fees if the review article we wrote got accepted. I suggested that we could now connect inorganic mercury and lead measurements in blood to dietary sources of exposure. Researchers outside of the U.S. have been busy bees. There is so much evidence now to support the macroepigenetic model that explains the gene-environment interactions -> to autism and ADHD. Many thanks to Steven Gilbert, Skip Kingston, Mesay Wolle and Joseph Murray for helping me get this review article done. It has been tentatively accepted and will be available soon.

FIHRI is now a Hawai'i registered non-profit and can apply for and get grants in Hawai'i!

Many thanks to Amanda Hitt for helping us with our paperwork to register as a foreign non-profit corporation in Hawai'i. Now we can apply for grants in Hawai'i. Yay!! Our strategy is to partner with local organizations to facilitate healthy dietary changes in the community. We want to create a community-based model for changing attitudes and diets!! We have applied for two grants through the Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF). One grant has been awarded and involves working with two community partners – the Hawai'i Academy of Arts and Science, a local charter school, and the Men of Pa'a, a Native Hawaiian group of men who actively perform island wide service work. Between the two partners, FIHRI will be offering four ten-week healthy diet workshops over the next year. We are extremely excited!! Amanda also facilitated an introduction with another funder, and we are awaiting confirmation in writing for those funds that will be used to support two other local projects (see new partnerships below). The other HCF grant proposal involves FIHRI sponsoring a conference at the Volcano National Park. The goal of the conference is to educate stakeholders on Hawai'i island on healthy diet as it relates to food quality and disease prevention from an eco-toxicological point of view. We aim to bring healthcare providers, educators, farmers, government representatives, and nutritionists together so that we can establish a common understanding about food quality and insecurity. Cross your fingers!! Many thanks to Leah Woodke, Amanda Hitt and Raquel Crider for your support in pushing this grant through.



New Partnerships on the Horizon

Many thanks to Steven Gilbert and Leah Woodke for helping facilitate the Memorandum of Agreement with Volcano Friends Feeding Friends (VFFF). FIHRI is acting as the Hawai'i non-profit's fiscal sponsor and will collaborate with them in providing healthy diet education as part of their farm to table food distribution program. In a separate local project, we are providing fellowships for students at Ka'u High School so they may learn about food ingredient safety and share their knowledge with others (including their 'Ohana). For more information on that program, please visit our new web page titled, [Hawai'i Island Health Education Projects](#).

FIHRI Board Meeting in July to Elect New Officers!

Please contact me at rdufault@foodingredient.info if you are interested in serving as a Director on our Board. During our July meeting we will be electing officers from our existing pool of board members. The date of the meeting is in the process of being set. Keep in mind, FIHRI has no paid employees and is operated entirely on volunteer labor. If you would like to contribute funding, please email me, or visit our donor page at <http://foodingredient.info/membership/joinus.html>

To support FIHRI's education and research efforts,
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