

# PUBLIC HEALTH LAW RESEARCH:

## Making the Case for Laws that Improve Health

### Call for Nominations: Outstanding Junior Scholars Award

Winter 2014

#### Summary

The National Program Office of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's program in Public Health Law Research (PHLR) invites nominations for an Outstanding Junior Scholars Award based on innovative and high quality empirical research in public health law. Eligibility is restricted to current doctoral and law students, postdoctoral fellows, and scholars within 5 years of graduation from a PhD or JD program (whichever is latest for dual degree scholars). Selection will be based on an empirical paper submission on a topic related to public health law and the nominee's other scholarly accomplishments. Junior scholars are encouraged to nominate themselves, or may be nominated by others. **Nominations will be accepted from October 22 through December 10, 2014 at 5 p.m. EST.**

Interested applicants should email the following to [phlr@temple.edu](mailto:phlr@temple.edu):

- A PDF or Word document file of a paper reporting results from a scientific research study on an aspect of **law relevant to population health**. The paper may be published or unpublished, and must have been completed within the past three years.
- A completed brief nomination form describing the significance of the paper to the field of public health law research and highlighting the nominee's other contributions to the field.
- The nominee's curriculum vitae.

Nominations will be reviewed by members of the PHLR Methods Core. The first prize winner will receive a \$1,000 travel stipend and complimentary meeting registration to attend the Public Health Law Research Annual Meeting on January 14-16, 2015 in Puerto Rico. The second place will receive a \$500 cash prize. The award will be presented at the meeting, and the winners will have the opportunity to present their paper in a highlighted session during the meeting.

#### Details

The PHLR program is highly interested in fostering empirical research in public health law among junior scholars, including current doctoral and law students, postdoctoral fellows, junior faculty, and early-career researchers in nonacademic settings. One of the program's major objectives is to grow the field of public health law research by encouraging and investing in the next generation of scientists and legal scholars.

#### ABOUT PUBLIC HEALTH LAW RESEARCH

Temple University was selected in 2009 to house the National Program Office (NPO) for Public Health Law Research (PHLR) to build the evidence for and strengthen the use of regulatory, legal and policy solutions to improve public health. PHLR is part of a major Public Health Law initiative launched by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in 2008 to build a field of research, scholarship and practice that would result in laws that protect, promote and improve health.

PHLR makes the case for laws that improve health by funding research, improving research methods, and making evidence more accessible to policy-makers, the media, and the public.

PHLR supports research on a broad range of public health topics from injury prevention, to obesity, infectious disease prevention and control, to health disparities and healthy living.

To date PHLR has funded nearly 80 studies and created an innovative web-based policy surveillance platform called LawAtlas.

**Public health law research** is the scientific study of the relation of law and legal practices to population health. The scientific and systematic evaluation of laws that influence the population is essential for effective policymaking and amendments to existing laws. In addition to understanding which provisions of the law are effective, empirical studies help us understand how laws across a range of policy domains impact health behavior and the environment by examining the mechanisms involved. The outcomes of a public health law evaluation could be proximal indicators such as a change in behavior by an individual (e.g., reduced consumption of calories due to menu labeling) or more distal impacts on health status (e.g., decline in cancer rates due to smoking bans).

## Eligible Papers

Empirical paper submissions must report studies that fall within the definition of public health law research above, and may incorporate quantitative, qualitative or mixed-methods designs. They must be reports of original research investigations relating to specific law(s) or legal practices and specific measures of process, implementation or outcomes. Papers that merely review existing studies or describe and discuss legal rules, doctrines, or decisions are not eligible.

The focus of original research may be direct relationships between law and population health, and/or relationships mediated through the effects of law on health behaviors and other processes and structures that affect population health. More specifically, studies could take any of the following forms:

- Studies of lawmaking processes that identify factors influencing the likelihood that public health laws will be adopted, the nature of laws adopted, and the process through which they are adopted;
- Implementation studies that examine how and to what extent “law on the books” is implemented and enforced through legal practices;
- Interventional studies that assess the effect of a law, regulation, or other legal intervention on population health outcomes or on mediating factors that influence health outcomes; or
- Mechanism studies that examine specific mechanisms through which law affects environments, behaviors, or population health outcomes.
- Public health law economics studies that examine cost impact or evaluate cost-benefit of laws and legal practices that affect population health. [This may be covered under intervention studies, but not necessarily]
- Legally-involved special population health studies that examine health-related outcomes for persons involved with law enforcement, criminal justice institutions, or the civil court system, with implications for public health law and policy.

The target audiences for these papers include academic researchers; public health policy makers at the local, state, and federal levels; and public health legal practitioners. The paper may be published or unpublished, and must have been completed within the past three years. Submissions must be complete paper drafts — abstracts alone will not be accepted — but need not be final drafts.

The nominee must be the first author on the paper, but may have co-authors as well. It is important that the nominee (rather than co-authors) made the primary intellectual contributions to the work.

**Please note**, currently funded PHLR grantees are not eligible for this prize.

## Submission Guidelines

Interested applicants should email the following to [phlr@temple.edu](mailto:phlr@temple.edu):

- A completed nomination form describing the significance of the paper to the field of public health law research, stating the nature of the nominee’s contributions to the paper (for co-authored work), and highlighting the nominee’s other contributions to the field.
- The nominee’s curriculum vitae.
- A PDF or Word (.doc or .docx) version of the paper with a cover letter describing the significance of the paper to the field of public health law research.

Submissions must be complete paper drafts — abstracts alone will not be accepted — but need not be final drafts. Very rough or incomplete drafts, obviously, are likely to be at a disadvantage in the review. **All submissions should be sent to [phlr@temple.edu](mailto:phlr@temple.edu)**

## Submission Deadline

Manuscripts must be submitted by **December 10 at 5 p.m. EST.**

## Prizes

The first place winner will receive a \$1,000 travel stipend and complimentary registration to attend the Public Health Law Research Annual Meeting on January 14-16, 2015 in Puerto Rico. A \$500 cash prize will be awarded to the second place winner. Both winners will have the opportunity to present their paper in a highlighted session at the meeting.

## Additional Resources

Additional information regarding public health law research is available on the program website at [www.publichealthlawresearch.org](http://www.publichealthlawresearch.org). The website provides an overview of the research that has been funded by external investigators as well as the research and white papers completed by members of the National Program Office. Information regarding research methods can be found in the “[Resources for Researchers and Grantees](#)” section.

Some other valuable resources are:

Burris S, Wagenaar A, Swanson J, Ibrahim JK, Wood J, Mello MM. Making the Case for Laws that Improve Health: A Framework for Public Health Law Research. *Milbank Q* 2010;88(2):169-210.

Burris S, Mays GP, Scutchfield FD, Ibrahim JK. Moving from Intersection to Integration: Public Health Law Research and Public Health Systems and Services Research. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 90(2), 375-408.

Wagenaar A and Burris S. (eds). 2013. *Public Health Law Research: Theory and Methods*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

<http://LawAtlas.org> – The Public Health Law Research Policy Surveillance Portal

## PHLR: Outstanding Junior Scholars – Award Nomination Form

Nominee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Degrees: \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Highest Degree Earned: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominee's Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator's Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(\*If self-nominating, please enter "self" in the Nominator spaces, or leave blank)

Briefly, please explain the significance of the nominee's paper to the field of public health law research. This may include new methodological approaches or important findings on the relationship between law and health-related behaviors, the environment, or population health outcomes.  
(Limit 300 words)

If the paper is co-authored work, please describe the nominee's contributions to the work (i.e., to study conception and design, acquiring data, analyzing data, interpreting results, writing the first draft, and revising drafts for important intellectual content).

Please provide any additional details regarding the nominee's other contributions to the field of public health law research. Grants, publications and presentations will be noted from the nominee's CV so this is an opportunity to highlight and the most important achievements and mention any contributions not apparent from the CV. (Limit 250 words)