Q: What is the strangest/most interesting/surprising place you have ever found yourself in the course of your research?
A: Virtual Reality

In working with the Center for Health & Nature, we are exploring the impact of natural scenery exposure in virtual reality settings on stress relief among cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment.
Q: What has been the biggest success to date for you with your research?
A: My contribution is to conduct epidemiologic research to better understand adverse effects of ambient air pollution exposures nationally and internationally.

Q: What sparked your interest in epidemiology as a field of study?
A: My curiosity of chronic disease burden, such as cancer and cardiovascular diseases, on populations sparked my interest in the field of epidemiology.

Q: What sort of impact do you hope your research will have?
A: My hope is the research we collect will have an impact on improving population health, reducing disease burdens and promoting healthy communities.

Q: What advice would you give a student interested in pursuing research?
A: Identify what it is you are most curious about and study that field to find gaps of knowledge and develop solutions to address them. In addition, focus on what your major is however, do not hesitate to broaden and seek opportunities where your concentration may overlap with other fields. Within those intersections await tomorrow’s breakthroughs.
Research Interests

- Air Pollution Epidemiological Studies
- Pre-existing Health Conditions and Co-exposure
- Maternal and Child Health
- Spatial Epidemiology
- Environmental Exposure Assessment

Recent Publications


Zheng Li, PhD; Xu X, MD, PhD; Lindsay A Thompson, MD, MS; Heather E Gross, MEd; Elizabeth A Shenkman, PhD; Darren A DeWalt, MD, MPH. Longitudinal effect of ambient air pollution and pollen exposure on asthma control: the PROMIS® Pediatric Asthma Study. Acad Pediatr. 2019 Aug;19(6):615-623. doi: 10.1016/j.acap.2019.03.010.


