NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As I reflect on 2020, I believe we have experienced events that will reshape and strengthen our priorities for a healthier, safer world. I have undergone a personal journey of understanding the true impact of nuclear weapons and the threat that still exists to this day. I have come to the understanding that PSR Wisconsin cannot accomplish our mission of peace and true security for all if we do not stand with those fighting for racial equity.

We have persevered and grown this year despite the challenges. I am hopeful that in 2021 PSR Wisconsin will continue advancing our programs for a safe and healthy world for all.

Peace and hope,

Job training and employment, quality education, safe housing, food security, high quality, affordable daycare, youth development, treatment of mental illness and substance abuse are all linked to improvements in public safety and health and reductions in interactions with police and incarceration. In 2020, the US allocated $721 billion, more than half of its discretionary budget, to military spending. Most large US cities spend 25-40% of their general funds on policing. Our tax dollars could be far better spent addressing the roots of poverty and providing economic, social and health security to the poor, a disproportionate number of whom are people of color.

Read our full statement at www.psr-wisconsin.org/racialdisparities

COVID-19

As health care professionals and members of PSR WI, we are concerned about the health and safety of Wisconsin residents during the Coronavirus pandemic. We have asked for various solutions to combat this pandemic. We acknowledge that populations that face environmental injustices and pre-existing conditions are experiencing increased vulnerability to COVID-19.

View our full statement at www.psr-wisconsin.org/covid-19

A detailed list of PSR WI activities and financial reports are available upon request.

PSR WI is a chapter affiliate of the national organization, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and is a member of Community Shares of Wisconsin.

Physicians for Social Responsibility Wisconsin is a 501(c)3 organization and registered as a charitable organization with the State of Wisconsin. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.
ADVOCACY
The Wisconsin Environmental Health Network (WEHN) has signed onto letters to gather attention for critical issues such as:

- Wisconsin Climate Table’s letter advocating for clean and equitable transportation recommendations for the state climate task force.
- “RENEW Wisconsin’s” letter in support of the proposed 200 megawatt Paris Solar Energy project in Kenosha County, Wisconsin.
- WEHN members wrote a letter regarding climate, equity, and COVID-19 and sent to the Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor, Mandela Barnes.

Committee members submitted official comments for an EPA Particulate Matter Hearing as well as the health consequences of a proposed Line 5 pipeline in Northern Wisconsin. Committee members also spoke at city council meetings across the state and at the state legislature advocating for clean drinking water to protect public health.

EDUCATION
One of the goals of WEHN is to provide educational opportunities for health professionals and other advocates. Below are some educational events provided by WEHN in 2020.

- WEHN presented a half-day seminar to Family Medicine Residents at UW-Madison on environmental health topics
- Jed Downs, MD, participated in a Facebook Live video about pipelines and health
- Eight WEHN webpages have been published with new resources and information
- Andrew Lewandowski, DO, participated in a Facebook Live video about the Wisconsin Climate Task Force
- Beth Neary, MD, continues to meet with pediatric residents once a month at UW-Madison to discuss environmental health
- Mark your calendars for a webinar on "Addressing Climate & Environment in Patient Encounters" on December 16th at 7:00 PM

ANNUAL EVENTS

LANTERN FOR PEACE
The Lanterns for Peace event is held each year on the anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. The lanterns are lit to remember those who lost their lives in the attack and to pledge that nuclear weapons will never be used again.

Due to COVID-19, we asked the public to make their lanterns from home and send us their creations. We then aired the floating of over 80 lanterns live on Facebook. The event started with an introduction from board members and live music from a local band. The event reached over 300 people on our Facebook page. It was also streamed live on the WKOW news channel Facebook page and reached over 11,000 people!

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE
WEHN hosted the “Making the Connection: Environmental Health in Wisconsin” conference on March 6th. It was attended by about 140 health professionals, environmental advocates, and citizens. The conference focused on environmental issues such as utilizing air quality data, concentrated animal feeding operations and water quality, environmental neurodevelopment risk, tick-borne disease and climate change, and PFAS and health. Additionally, a dynamic environmental justice panel gave impassioned reports of their work against PFAS contamination and the consequences of frac sand mining in Wisconsin.

Committee members submitted official comments for an EPA Particulate Matter Hearing as well as the health consequences of a proposed Line 5 pipeline in Northern Wisconsin. Committee members also spoke at city council meetings across the state and at the state legislature advocating for clean drinking water to protect public health.

Peer organizations met at a WEHN sponsored breakfast to collaborate and discuss current projects.

Families decorated paper for lanterns in the safety of their homes.

Over 80 lanterns were launched at the event.

Ann Behrmann, MD, was interviewed by WKOW about the importance of remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Thomas Pearson, PhD, shares the human toll from frac sand mining in Southwest Wisconsin.

167 tickets to the conference were sold, a new record!

Devon Payne-Sturges, DrPH, shared information on neurodevelopmental risks.

Claire Gervais, MD, speaks to an audience about why she joined WEHN.

Susan Davidson, MD, shares her experience with prenatal health and environmental factors.

Jed Downs, MD, introduces a speaker at the environmental health conference.

Beth Neary, MD, testifies at the state legislature about protecting our drinking water from PFAS.
NUCLEAR SECURITY

PSR Wisconsin recognizes that nuclear weapons are a threat to the world's health. In 2020, we focused on taking action and providing educational opportunities to spark engagement.

ACTION
- Submitted letter to Representative Jim Sensenbrenner encouraging support for the New START Treaty extension
- Sent an action alert for members to encourage their elected officials to support reduced defense spending
- Researched and developed options about nuclear divestment for the Madison Back from the Brink Resolution
- Endorsed the United Nation's global appeal to end the nuclear threat, abolish nuclear weapons and shift the weapons budgets and investments to support public health

EDUCATION
- Conducted three Facebook Live Question & Answer Videos to provide information about important topics as seen below:
  - Paula Rogge, MD, answered questions regarding "Back from the Brink"
  - Allen Hester, PSR National staff member, informed the audience about the New START Treaty extension
  - Stephen Kwas shared his experience of being a PSR volunteer and work researching fracking and frac sand mining
- Amy Schulz, RN, and Ian Gilson, MD, were interviewed about nuclear weapons and health consequences on UWUM radio
- Participated in the #StillHere campaign, sharing stories in honor of the 75th anniversary of Hiroshima & Nagasaki

ABOUT US

PSR Wisconsin recognizes that the two biggest threats today to human survival are nuclear weapons and climate change. Our members are also deeply concerned about the health consequences of the growing contamination of our environment by toxic chemicals and pollution. We rely on the medical and public health expertise of our members to prevent nuclear war, to reverse our climate change trajectory and to stop further degradation of our environment.

CLIMATE JUSTICE STATEMENT

We recognize that not everyone is impacted equally by health emergencies. Public health is about protecting our neighbors most at risk. As health professionals, we must stand with our communities of color, immigrant groups, indigenous peoples, children and pregnant women, the elderly, certain occupational groups, low income households, and persons living with disabilities or chronic diseases that are most impacted by the climate crisis. Climate change is a health emergency.