

# PSR



## 2015

### Physicians for Social Responsibility Annual Report



*Working to protect the next  
generation from climate change,  
toxics in our environment &  
the threat of nuclear weapons.*



PSR Executive Director Catherine Thomasson, MD (on left) speaks at a press conference on toxics organized by Sen. Barbara Boxer (r). Dierdre Imus awaits her turn to speak.



PSR President Lynn Ringenberg, MD welcomes members and friends at PSR's Gala for Peace & Health at the Austrian Embassy.

## A Message from PSR's Leadership

### FRESH AIR,

clean water, adequate food and a roof over our heads are essential to good health. They are all threatened by nuclear weapons, climate change, fracking and toxics. So in 2015, we ramped up our health messaging and fostered strong collaborations to take action.

We rallied 18 co-sponsors for our Climate Health Summit, where we educated health professionals about climate change and how to achieve health benefits using clean energy rather than fossil fuels. We became a founding member of the U.S. Climate and Health Alliance to share our materials and policy messaging. We supported the Paris Accord, an achievable benchmark agreement crafted by 195 countries to restrict greenhouse gas emissions to ensure global temperatures don't rise more than 2.0°C.

PSR members worked exceptionally hard. With our coalition partners, we protected the Clean Air Act and pushed the Administration to block the Keystone XL pipeline and place a moratorium on coal mine leasing on federal land. We also contributed to a stronger EPA Clean Power Plan and an essential rule called Waters of the U.S.; unfortunately, both are tied up in court. The improved EPA standard to protect our health from ground-level ozone was part of our work, although it still does not adequately protect health. Industry struck back, even though the change was minimal, so PSR joined a lawsuit to support the EPA's improved standard while suing for even stricter control.

In our work to end the madness of nuclear weapons, we gained an ally in the American Medical Association, which passed

a PSR-authored resolution to abolish these weapons. While our Humanitarian Impact campaign moved the Pope to call for an international agreement to rid the world of nuclear weapons, we have not yet influenced the U.S. Administration to work in harmony with non-nuclear countries to close the legal loophole in international law to make nuclear weapons illegal. PSR chapters, however, have succeeded in building new champions for disarmament in Oregon, Washington and California.

Our PSR chapters have also achieved advances for climate and health goals in their communities and states. Coal export terminals, for example, have not been sited in the Pacific Northwest, thus blocking coal trains. Maryland's anti-environment governor has been overwhelmed with votes to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

And the Florida chapter blocked a pro-fracking bill that would override all local bans and regulations.

PSR members and staff understand that we cannot have another Hiroshima or worse, mass global starvation from a nuclear war. We see the devastation caused by four years of crop failure from climate-induced drought, causing a civil war and millions to be displaced in Syria. We strive to prevent these global threats from becoming full scale disasters.

With heartfelt thanks to all who supported and worked shoulder to shoulder with us to make a real difference for our society's future health!



# PSR

## Annual Report

# Highlights

# 2015

- PSR members conducted a media/advocacy wave to support diplomacy with Iran. The historic Iran nuclear deal is now in place.
- PSR led the Climate Health Summit for 200 health professionals and 18 coalition partners to train advocates for the Clean Power Plan.
- PSR awarded Nukebusters' First Prize to Jonathan Deaton for *Joining the Conversation on Nuclear Weapons*. His film is in use by coalition partners all over the world.
- PSR co-released the IPPNW Germany's *Body Count* about the Iraqi war dead and wounded. The cost of war is now being evaluated in the U.S.
- PSR presented the argument for global nuclear disarmament to the Rotary Peace Symposium in Sao Paulo, Brazil.
- PSR members persuaded the AMA to issue a resolution to ban and eliminate all nuclear weapons based on the humanitarian impact of their use.
- PSR pressed President Obama to participate in the Paris Climate Summit. The U.S. and 176 other countries signed the Paris Accord to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

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*Guided by the values and expertise of medicine and public health, Physicians for Social Responsibility works to protect humanity from the gravest threats to health and survival.*



**COALITION PARTNER BIKERS FOR PEACE**, which includes PSR chapter staff members, rallies at the U.S. Capitol before riding to NYC for the Nonproliferation Treaty Conference. The organization created a winning Nukebuster film.



**PSR SECURITY PROGRAM CHAIR IRA HELFAND, MD** addressing the crowd at PSR's Gala for Peace & Health.

## Security Review

**2015** will be remembered for a pivotal diplomatic victory: the Iran nuclear deal reversed years of dangerous acrimony between Iran and the United States, and greatly reduced the likelihood of a 10th nuclear-armed state. PSR and its allies defeated the Congressional vote of disapproval for the Iran deal and it went into effect on October 18, 2015. PSR promotes diplomacy as the solution to international conflict.

In response to our members in the medical community and the Maryland and Massachusetts Medical Associations, the **American Medical Association** adopted PSR's resolution calling for full elimination of all nuclear weapons worldwide and recommended educating the public on the threat. The AMA's acceptance supports the Humanitarian Impact Initiative, which states that the effects of nuclear war or the use of nuclear weapons are too catastrophic to allow their use, thus they should be eliminated.

PSR members reached out in great numbers, writing waves of op-eds for the setting of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists' Doomsday Clock, during the NPT Review Conference, and for the 70th Anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. Drs. Ira Helfand and Vic Sidel published a "Perspective" op-ed in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in October (online) and November (print) issues. Dr. Helfand also represented PSR/IPPNW at Rotary International's World Conference in Brazil with PSR Board member Dr. Bob Dodge and at the conference for the Rotarian Group for Peace in the U.S.

PSR members rallied representatives of the Vatican. Before his trip the U.S., His Holiness Pope Francis issued an extensive statement on the need to abolish nuclear weapons. PSR continues the discussion with faith communities in 2016.

PSR successfully conducted Nukebusters, a competition for a short film to attract millennials into the movement to abolish nuclear weapons. The winning films are available to anyone working to rid the world of nuclear weapons at [www.psr.org/nukebusters](http://www.psr.org/nukebusters). These films are frequently used by PSR and our coalition partners to great effect. ⚙️



**PSR BOARD MEMBER ALFRED MEYER, with NY PSR BOARD MEMBER SHANNON GEARHART, MD and PSR SECURITY DIRECTOR MARTIN FLECK** in New York City for the Nonproliferation Treaty Conference..



PSR ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH DIRECTOR BARB GOTTLIEB with advocates who testified for the CPP on Capitol Hill.



PSR's CATHERINE THOMASSON, MD at the White House, rallying with the Keep it In the Ground coalition partners.

## Environment & Health Overview

### ENGAGEMENT

was the 2015 objective for the E&H staff: engage PSR members, engage the public, engage policymakers. Together with our chapter leaders, we worked tirelessly to educate our members to help them convince their communities and policymakers that we must slow climate change and reduce toxics in the environment. PSR identified hydraulic fracturing as a climate driver, publishing materials and providing education about the dangers of pollution to air and water.

With the help of coalition partners, we advocated for a stronger EPA Clean Power Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the electricity sector. Upon the CPP's release, we mobilized 11 chapters and educated hundreds of

PSR members across the country to initiate plans to replace coal combustion with health-protective, renewable energy and/or energy efficiency.

One decisive win was President Obama's nixing of the Keystone XL pipeline. Another: coal exports through the Pacific Northwest have been stopped by preventing construction of proposed coal export facilities — though the industry is still trying.

Media coverage to educate the public on climate and health has been growing. The Lancet Commission's Report on Health and Climate Change was released in June 2015 with PSR support with a spokesperson at the official launch.

PSR E&H also:

- Co-produced and released the *Compendium*

*of Scientific, Medical, and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking.*

- Pushed the Administration to release health- and climate-protective regulations to reduce methane emissions from new hydraulically fracked wells.
- Convened and hosted the two-day Climate and Health Summit that brought more than 200 health professionals to this landmark conference and follow-up legislator education day. The Summit attracted 18 cosponsoring health organizations, opening the door to ongoing collaborations.
- Sounded the clarion call for health-based regulation of industrial chemicals by supporting reform of the Toxic Substances Control Act, or TSCA.
- Elevated the health voice

in the fight to protect the Clean Water Rule and public health. Brought health professional members to DC to lobby on behalf of the Rule and were successful in helping to defeat a dangerous budget rider in the omnibus budget bill.

- Joined a lawsuit to press for stricter limits on ozone pollution.

The coming two years will see us working for strong state policies for clean energy and energy efficiency. We have raised grave concerns over the rush to natural gas. With or without the Clean Power Plan, states must keep up the forward momentum toward a clean energy economy. We must slow climate change and reduce the infiltration of toxics into our lives. ⚙️

# RADIATION & HEALTH

PSR staff, board, chapters and members have taken action to address the effects of radiation on health in a variety of ways in 2015.

## Federal Education and Lobbying

- Called on Congress to scrap the mixed oxides fuel production plant that was inadequately designed and built. The nuclear fuel created by blending waste plutonium has no customers. Outcome looks positive.
- Educated on the fallacy of Yucca Mountain as a site for permanent repository and against interim storage without technical guidelines.

## At the EPA and Office of Management and Budget

- PSR advocated to remove all incentives for nuclear power in the Clean Power Plan.
- Called on the EPA Scientific Advisory Board Radiation Advisory Committee for radiation standards to be set for vulnerable populations.
- PSR lobbied EPA and the Office of Management and Budget to maintain clean water standards for radiation levels in the intermediate phase after a radiological emergency or accident. So far, no relaxation of standards, but we remain concerned.

## State-Level Action

- PSR opposed a depleted uranium dump near Salt Lake City, Utah; project was stalled.
- PSR has pressed its case in the media to close the Columbia Generating Station (CGS) in Washington. Petition filed with NRC to shut down CGS given 2013 PSR commissioned study of inadequate ability to withstand a significant earthquake.
- PSR garnered support for NYC Council Resolution 694 calling on NRC not to relicense the two Indian Point nuclear reactors. Other media actions taken.
- PSR's fact sheet on Fukushima was updated for the public. ⚙️



**SPSR MEMBERS FROM UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL SCHOOL** meet with Governor Phil Bryant.

# STUDENT PSR UPDATE

**20 student chapters** (SPSR) worked on diverse topics in 2015, each related to their area's need. For example, students from SPSR Wayne State University testified at community and city meetings to close coal plants that pollute South Detroit. Fifty students volunteered to grow healthy produce made available gratis to community members. The chapter also hosted a seminar on Great Lakes water quality for 60 students.

SPSR Penn State Hershey distributed voter registration forms and also hosted a luncheon lecture on climate change.

September's Climate Health Summit in Washington, DC attracted 57 students whose attendance was sponsored by PSR. Students learned the health impacts of climate change and skills to advocate for very specific solutions. Nearly half attended the legislator education day and lobbied their legislators, many for the first time. Twenty SPSR members stayed to attend the student leaders' meeting as well, where they found mentor figures in the PSR board and staff experts. ⚙️



**SPSR COORDINATOR MICHELLE GIN**, Membership Manager Amy Ciciora, Eric Schneider (staff) and SPSR Member Parth Takkar.



# PSR BOARD MEMBERS

**PSR BOARD MEMBERS** (l to r) Andy Jameton, Peter Wilk, Bob Gould, Maureen McCue, Alfred Meyer, Lynn Ringenberg, David Drake, Pouné Saberi, Trish O'Day, John Rachow, Catherine Thomasson, Steve Gilman, Katie Huffling, Bob Dodge, Lauren Zajac, Callum Rowe, Johanna Congleton, and Alan Lockwood.

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**CAPSTONE MEMBERS**, those with 25 or more years with PSR, are feted onstage at the Gala for Peace & Health in September.

## ENDOWMENT!

Our big news is that an anonymous couple who've supported PSR for decades started an endowment fund for us. The donors plan to leave a sizable bequest to PSR and would like to see it permanently invested to continue the fight against the greatest threats to health. They are honoring our request for no investments in fossil fuels or nuclear weapons. Board and staff extend a hearty thank you for their foresightedness.

At PSR's Gala for Peace & Health in September, we recognized Capstone Members, those who've been with PSR for 25 years or more. What a powerful sight to have so many veteran members on stage at once. We also extend our gratitude to those who weren't able to join us.

And finally, our appreciation goes to all our donors and Legacy Society members who've given so that we may continue our work, not only with funding but by dedicating their time and intellect to our causes. 🌱

*Bequests*

*We remember our generous Legacy Society Members who have passed on:*

Herbert L. Abrams, MD  
 Mitchell Rosenholtz, MD  
 Janice Weinman  
 Earl Budin, MD  
 Brian Gluss, PhD

## Institutional Support

BFK Foundation  
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*thank you!*

# Our Philanthropists

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We extend our deepest appreciation to our lifeline. To join the Leadership Circle or the Legacy Society, please contact Christine Herrmann at (202) 587-5239 or [cherrmann@psr.org](mailto:cherrmann@psr.org).

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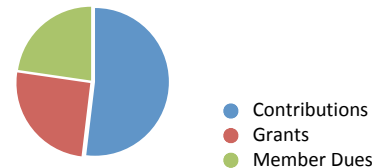
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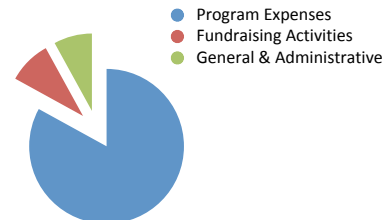
### 2015 Income

	Portion	Amount
Contributions	52%	\$709,191
Grants	25%	\$348,274
Member Dues	23%	\$310,301
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>\$1,368,481</b>



### 2015 Expenses

	Portion	Amount
Program Expenses	83%	\$1,342,634
Fundraising Activities	9%	\$148,823
General & Administrative	8%	\$135,700
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>\$1,627,157</b>



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# Working to protect our health

*Our PSR chapter leaders  
inspire us through the  
outstanding work they carry  
out in their communities.*



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*WAR and PEACE* Watercolor by Pushpa Mehta, MD



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