



PFAST Network (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance Testing Network)

Meet Team 6: Risk Communications

Kathleen Gray, Ph.D., co-lead, is Associate Director for outreach and public service and Clinical Assistant Professor in the UNC Institute for the Environment at UNC Chapel Hill. Dr. Gray manages the Environmental Resource Program, a science education and community engagement program with a mission of enhancing public understanding of current environmental science and health research and its relevance to daily life. Her research focuses on how vulnerable populations understand environmental health messages and the role of informal science educators in communicating such messages.

Jane Hoppin, Sc.D., co-lead, is Associate Professor of Biological Sciences and Deputy Director of the NCSU Center for Human Health and Environment at NC State University. Dr. Hoppin's research focuses on how epidemiologic evidence can inform mechanisms of disease from environmental exposures. Currently, she is leading an NIH-funded study of PFAS exposures in the Cape Fear River basin; and in this role, she and her team are at the leading edge of communicating with public audiences about PFAS exposure and potential health effects.

Jory Weintraub, Ph.D., co-lead, is Science Communication Program Director with the Duke Initiative for Science & Society and director of Duke's Broader Impacts Resource Center. Dr. Weintraub has extensive experience training scientists to communicate their work to the public and policymakers, developing and conducting STEM outreach, and organizing symposia and public education programs and initiatives. He also is a national leader in broader impacts practice and policy – communicating the relevance of STEM research to a variety of stakeholders, including the public and policymakers.

Karl Bates, Director of Communications at Duke University and instructor in Duke's Science & Society initiative, teaching science communication for faculty, students, and staff

Ariana Eily, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Fellow with the Duke Initiative for Science & Society, focusing on science communication training and education and public engagement in science

Suzanne Lea, Ph.D., MPH, Associate Professor in the Department of Public Health at East Carolina University, research, teaching and service in applied epidemiology and public health practice

Katlyn May, MEM., Director of the Community Outreach and Engagement Core in the Center for Human Health and Environment at NC State, addressing the environment's impact on human health in vulnerable populations with a focus on science translation and community engagement

Tracey Peake, Public Communications Specialist in University Relations at NC State, informing both internal and external audiences about NC State's achievements in solution-driven research, interdisciplinary innovation, experiential education and partnerships with business and industry

Nicole Wilkinson, MEM, Coordinator for Research and Outreach in the NC Water Resources Research Institute at NC State, increasing the knowledge and research base of our state's water resources and transferring that research into the hands of practitioners and decision makers

Matthew Chamberlin, Director of Communications and Marketing in the Gillings School of Global Health at UNC Chapel Hill, leading an integrated and comprehensive communications and marketing endeavor to promote the impact and value of research

Megan Rodgers, MEA, Research assistant in the Institute for the Environment at UNC Chapel Hill

Victoria Triana, Research assistant in the Institute for the Environment at UNC Chapel Hill



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Team Objectives:

Increase awareness of the PFAST study and its findings among NC policymakers, the media and lay publics and create opportunities for dialogue about the study among diverse groups, including student scientists, key stakeholders, and lay publics. Specific aims include:

- Engage policymakers, water utilities, and other stakeholders in dialogue about emerging contaminants, PFAS, and study findings.
- Increase awareness of emerging contaminants, PFAS, and study findings among lay publics.
- Build capacity of study investigators and trainees to effectively communicate about emerging contaminants and potential risks to public health.