

## Call for Proposals

### ACCI Scholar-Activist Connect Program

The American Council on Consumer Interests (ACCI) invites **Members** to submit a **letter proposal** for the second annual **Scholar-Activist Connect Program at Consumers Union** (CU). ACCI is co-sponsoring a **funded** Scholar-Activist Connect program in cooperation with CU as means of strengthening collaborations between members of the consumer policy research community and consumer advocacy organizations.

This year, the Scholar-Activist Connect Program will focus on the important issue of **Food and Food Safety**. The program will offer an ACCI scholar the opportunity to visit Consumer's Union for informal meetings with CU technical and advocacy staff as well as writers/editors of Consumer Reports to (1) explore and exchange ideas about research and public policy issues pertaining to food and food safety and (2) to present a brown bag research and policy seminar for CU staffers with varying amounts of background on this issue.

Interested Members are invited to select a seminar topic and to make a proposal dealing with **one** of the following issues:

#### 1. **Third Party Food Certification**

In conjunction with the FDA's Docket on **Third Party Food Certification Programs** ( <http://www.fda.gov/OHRMS/DOCKETS/98fr/E8-6705.pdf> ) Consumers Union is interested in identifying and learning about research pertaining to the reliability of third party certifiers. (See for example, Jahn et. al. "The Reliability of Certification: Quality Labels as a Consumer Policy Tool" JCP 2005; Albersmeier, "The Reliability of Third Party Certification in the Food Chain", Food Control 2009)

A Brown Bag Seminar might cover such matters as the elements of reliable third party certification of food safety. What lessons can be learned from other experiences (e.g. medical devices, eco labels)? Have certification systems been sufficiently tested and validated in the field? (e.g. EU certification of organic products)? What are the costs and benefits of third party certification?

#### 2. **Food Labeling, Messaging and Obesity**

In 2006, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) petitioned the

FDA to promulgate new rules for simplified “front of the package” nutritional labeling (patterned after the system used in the UK and Sweden).

Consumers Union would be interested in a Brown Bag Seminar synthesizing research on the impact of labeling and messaging on obesity and the closely allied question of policies that succeed in encouraging people to adopt healthier diets. What works? What doesn't?

### **3. Antibiotics in Livestock Feed**

Last summer, the FDA testified in support of a ban on the low dose use of antibiotics in livestock feed. As far back as 1998 the Union of Concerned Scientists and CSPI petitioned the FDA to withdraw its approval for antibiotic uses which threaten human health.

Consumers Union is interested in research on the costs and benefits of a ban on low-dose antibiotics in livestock feed. The issue of costs and benefits continues to stir controversy. Hayes and Jensen estimated the incremental cost of banning antibiotics on disease treatment in pigs based on Danish data. (“Lessons from the Danish Ban on Feed Grade Antibiotics” Iowa State University, Center for Agricultural and Rural Development Briefing Paper 03-BP 41) Offsetting that, however, are savings from reduced antibiotic resistance in humans.

#### **The Project**

The **one day visit** will be to the Consumers Union campus in Yonkers, New York. The visit must be completed no later than **May 31, 2010**. Within that parameter, scheduling is flexible and will be arranged in direct consultation with CU.

#### **Travel and Honorarium Available**

ACCI and Consumers Union will offer a **travel stipend** not to exceed \$1,000 for this project.

In addition, an **honorarium** of \$1,000 will be offered.

## **Proposals and Eligibility**

Interested members should respond by email to Larry Kirsch, Chair of the ACCI External Relations Committee. [Larry@IMRHealth.com](mailto:Larry@IMRHealth.com). Proposals are due on or before **March 1, 2010**.

Letter proposals should:

1. Indicate which of the brown bag seminar topic(s) you wish to present.
2. Certify that you are enrolled as a member of ACCI as of the date of submission.
3. Append a list of your relevant publications and related qualifications.
4. Demonstrate your awareness and any special contributions you have made concerning public policy in the food and food safety area.

Please direct questions to Larry Kirsch  
[Larry@IMRHealth.com](mailto:Larry@IMRHealth.com)  
(617) 731 2600 (mobile).