

# OUR BACK YARD

INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

## The burden of unhealthy housing

*Making Chicagoland homes healthier through research and partnership*

### THE PROBLEMS



**LEAD:** Learning disabilities, hyperactivity, behavioral problems, health problems, reduced intelligence/lower IQ scores



**PESTS:** Asthma, allergies, communicable diseases, use of pesticides can cause neurological problems and cancer



**MOLD:** Asthma, allergies



**AIR QUALITY** (*radon, carbon monoxide*): Leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers, second-leading cause of lung cancer in America, long-term brain damage, death



**WATER QUALITY:** Water-borne illnesses



**EMERGING ENVIRONMENTAL TOXINS**



*Clinical Professor of Law Anita Weinberg, director of Loyola's ChildLaw Policy Institute, was awarded the first Ignatius Loyola Award for Excellence in Teaching in September. The award, which will be presented once every two years, is the University's most prestigious teaching honor and recognizes a faculty member whose teaching shows a commitment to excellence, raises global awareness, promotes social justice, and educates the whole student.*

**U**nhealthy housing due to environmental toxins like lead, mold, carbon monoxide, and poor water quality can place heavy burdens on the people in those homes and on their communities. These hazards currently put 1.2 million children in Chicago and suburban Cook County at risk of serious health problems, including asthma, lead poisoning, learning disabilities, behavioral and health problems, long-term brain damage, and cancer.

These problems are preventable, according to Anita Weinberg, JD, MSSW, Director of Loyola's ChildLaw Policy Institute and a member of the Advancing Healthy Homes & Healthy Communities initiative steering committee. Through research and community and government partnerships, Loyola is taking a leadership role in creating healthier homes.

"We're in an ideal situation to successfully tackle these problems," says Weinberg. "This is an opportunity for the University to tackle issues that affect communities we care about through community engagement and student and faculty research."

The Healthy Homes & Healthy Communities initiative spans disciplines at Loyola and in the community, from health care to law, and from geographic information systems to government and public policy. This past June, the University hosted a summit bringing together 150 people from a broad range of disciplines to start developing a framework for city and county strategic planning and to address the major questions.

"What do we know about the health of our homes? What are the laws regulating housing hazards, and is there enforcement?" Weinberg asks. "How do we leverage dollars to address these

## THE COSTS

### TO INDIVIDUALS

SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM  
ACADEMIC FAILURE  
LEARNING DIFFICULTIES  
LACK OF EMPLOYMENT  
LIFE-LONG HEALTH PROBLEMS  
SOCIALIZATION PROBLEMS  
CRIMINAL RECORD

### TO SOCIETY

HEALTH CARE  
HOSPITALIZATION  
JOBLESSNESS  
SPECIAL EDUCATION  
JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Lead Safe Illinois at Loyola University Chicago  
Civitas ChildLaw Center and Policy Institute

toxins? How do we foster compliance among property owners to care about them? What should interventions look like? How do we raise awareness?"

Faculty, staff, and students across the University have already begun research to identify the laws addressing these toxins, public health interventions, gaps in natural and social science research on the causes of environmental toxins, weaknesses in regulatory enforcement of the laws, the limits of existing interventions, and evidence-based practices.

The Healthy Homes initiative, however, is much more than an opportunity for applied research and collaboration. In the end, it could ease health, financial, and societal burdens on families and the community at large.

"The bottom line is that all this work is being done so that we can eliminate these unhealthy burdens," says Weinberg. "In doing that, we're making our communities far healthier and safer."

## MARCELLA NIEHOFF SCHOOL OF NURSING



PHOTO BY STEVE BECKER

Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing students at their Dedication to the Profession ceremony in Madonna della Strada Chapel. The annual event replaces the former capping ceremony where students received their white caps and uniforms before they began to work as student nurses. Today, the ceremony allows junior class nursing students to reflect and pledge themselves to the health care profession.

## RETREAT AND ECOLOGY CAMPUS



Led by Loyola's new executive chef and former restaurateur John Schnupp, culinary classes at the Retreat and Ecology Campus are designed to be hands-on. Chef Schnupp brings more than 25 years of culinary experience to Loyola. All classes with the exception of "Green Thumb—Starting from seed" will be held in Loyola's new Duchossois Food Systems Lab and Kitchen.

### REGISTRATION • [LUC.EDU/COOKINGCLASSES](http://LUC.EDU/COOKINGCLASSES)

Cancellation Policy: A two-week notice is required for cancellation of any class or event.

#### Mediterranean Cuisine

Saturday, January 17, 11 a.m.–3 p.m.; \$55

#### Food & Wine Pairing—Cult Wines of California

Thursday, January 29, 6–9 p.m.; \$75

#### Food & Wine Pairing—Valentine's Day & Fess Parker Wines

Saturday, February 14, 6–9 p.m.; \$65

#### Food & Wine Pairing—Sweet and Savory

Thursday, March 5, 6–9 p.m.; \$65

#### Green Thumb—Starting from seed

Saturday, March 7, 11 a.m.–3 p.m.; \$45

#### Tapas 101

Saturday, March 28, 11 a.m.–3 p.m.; \$55

#### Meet the Farmer—Gardening 101

Saturday, April 11, 11 a.m.–3 p.m.; \$45