

## The Katherine Detre Scholar Fund

The “Katherine Detre Scholar Fund” provides permanent funding for the Detre Scholar Award, an annual award given to an outstanding doctoral or post-doctoral student in epidemiology. The fund was established in 2006 through generous gifts made by the friends and colleagues of Dr. Katherine Detre in her memory. Contributions to the fund may be made to the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health – Detre Fund, A661 Crabtree Hall, 130 DeSoto Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15261.

For questions or additional information about the fund, please contact Judith McConnaha, Director of Development, at 412-624-5639 or [jmconn@pitt.edu](mailto:jmconn@pitt.edu).

# THE KATHERINE M. DETRE LECTURE

## Looking Backwards and Forwards: Some Methodological Battles in Randomized Clinical Trials

*Janet Wittes, Ph.D.*  
*President of Statistics Collaborative, Inc.*



Wednesday, October 25, 2006  
3 P.M. A115 Crabtree Hall  
Graduate School of Public Health



### University of Pittsburgh

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**Dr. Katherine Detre** was born Katherine Maria Drechsler in Budapest, Hungary, on April 28, 1926, and grew up there during the Nazi occupation of World War II. Dr. Detre was able to escape communism by slipping across the border into Austria during the night. In 1949, Dr. Detre received an International Student Service Award to study in Canada. Three years later, she completed her M.D. degree from Queen’s University Medical School in

Kingston, Ontario, followed by residency training in internal medicine at Queen Mary Veterans Hospital.

Katherine Detre moved to Yale University to be with her future husband. At Yale, she became a Research Assistant while also studying biometry. After completing her doctorate in 1967, she joined the Veterans Administration Cooperative Studies Program and served as principal statistician for the VA Coronary Bypass Study, the first clinical trial to compare surgery to medical treatment.

In 1974, the Detres relocated to Pittsburgh, where Dr. Detre became Professor of Epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public Health and in 1980 founded the Epidemiology Data Center.

In 1987, she began the coordination of the world’s largest clinical trial of angioplasty and bypass surgery for patients with heart disease, funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). This study showed that, for patients without diabetes, five-year survival was similar for surgery compared to angioplasty, while patients with diabetes fared much better with surgery. This finding led to a 49-site, ten-year study to determine the best way to treat individuals with both type 2 diabetes and early coronary artery disease. This clinical trial was initiated with a grant of \$52.2 million from the NHLBI, one of the largest research awards in the University’s history.

Dr. Detre was a Fellow of the American Heart Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American College of Epidemiology. Dr. Detre was named an honorary Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, presented with the Marion Spencer Fay Award for Women in Medicine, named a Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania and in 2005, honored as one of the physicians featured in the National Library of Medicine’s “Changing the Face of Medicine” exhibit, which documented the ways in which women have influenced and enhanced the practice of medicine.



**Janet Wittes, Ph.D.** is the President of Statistics Collaborative, Inc. which she founded in 1990. Her career began in academe. In 1983 she joined the Biostatistics Research Branch, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute as its Chief. Her research has focused on the design and analysis of randomized clinical trials. She is a Fellow of the American Statistical Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Society for Clinical Trials. She is a past President of

The International Biometric Society – Eastern North American Region (1995) and The Society for Clinical Trials (2001). From 1990 through 1995 she served as Editor-in-Chief of Controlled Clinical Trials. She is a member of many Data and Safety Monitoring Boards (DSMBs) for randomized clinical trials sponsored by both industry and government. Coauthored with Drs. Michael Proschan and Gordon Lan, her recently (2006) published book “Monitoring Clinical Trials: A Unified Approach” deals with methods for interim analysis of data. She received her A.B. in Mathematics from Radcliffe College (1964) and her Ph.D. from the Department of Statistics of Harvard University (1970).

## PROGRAM

Welcome	Roberta B. Ness, M.D., M.P.H. Professor and Chair Department of Epidemiology, GSPH
Introduction	Sheryl F. Kelsey, Ph.D. Professor and Director Epidemiology Data Center Department of Epidemiology, GSPH
Lecture	Janet Wittes, Ph.D. President, Statistics Collaborative, Inc.
Presentation of Detre Scholar	Sheryl F. Kelsey, Ph.D. <i>Detre Scholar: Sheng-Chia Chung</i>
Reception	GSPH Lounge