

West Chester University

MPH CONNECTIONS | FALL 2022



(Nancy Gainer/West Chester University)

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Co-editors: Dr. Stacie Metz and Dr. Gopal Sankaran

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM DIRECTOR	3
WELCOME MPH NEW FACULTY	4-5
MPH STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD	6-8
STUDENT HEALTH EXPO 2022	9
MPH AND SAB EVENTS	10
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT	11-14
PPHA CALL FOR ABSTRACTS	15
GA SPOTLIGHT	16-17
SPOTLIGHT ON DR. HARRY HOLT	18-19
APHA CONFERENCE STUDENT EXPERIENCE	20
FACULTY DEI LEARNING PROMOTION	21
DR. GOPAL SANKARAN SPOTLIGHT	22
DR. CHIMONESO TINAGO SPOTLIGHT	23
DR. SHARON DEJOY SPOTLIGHT	24
CAREER CORNER INTERVIEW	25
SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY	26-28
WELL-WISHING	29



MPH Program Director

Dr. Stacie Metz

Dear WCU MPH Community,

A core value of our APHA Public Health Code of Ethics is **Inclusivity and Engagement** in which “Public health practitioners and organizations have an ethical responsibility to be transparent, to be accountable to the public at large, and to include and engage diverse publics, communities, or stakeholders in their decision making.” We are excited to announce that our Council on Public Health Education (CEPH) re-accreditation site visit will be held on April 17-18, 2023. **As our valued MPH program stakeholder, you have the opportunity to directly submit general feedback to CEPH on our MPH program and its practices, procedures, and policies.** This is another way to ensure we continue to build upon what is working in the program and collaborate to address what could be strengthened or changed.

Third-party written comments can be directly submitted to CEPH at submissions@ceph.org or via mail at 1010 Wayne Ave, Suite 220, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Please remember to include in the subject line (for email submissions) or in the beginning (for mail submissions) that your comments pertain to the MPH Program at West Chester University, PA. CEPH will accept written comments up through March 16, 2023, which is 30 days before our scheduled site visit. Submission from each of you, as a stakeholder, is valuable and helps to enhance the MPH program.

We hope you will enjoy reading about the amazing accomplishments of our public health students, faculty, and alumni/ae in this issue. Additionally, please join me in welcoming and learning more about our two new faculty colleagues ~ Associate Professor Dr. Nene Okunna and Frederick Douglass Teaching Fellow Dr. Omosehin Moyebi.

Please note that we are just a phone call or an e-mail away. Tell us frequently about your journey after completion of the MPH program, your current work, and changes in your personal life. We are richer when we can collectively celebrate individual accomplishments. We look forward to hearing from you! Thank you.

My best,

Stacie Metz, PhD, MPH, MSW, MA

MPH Program Director & Graduate Coordinator



Meet Dr. Nene Okunna

PhD, MPPA, MPH

What made you choose West Chester University for a career?

I had got to the point in my career where I thought a change was necessary. While I am extremely grateful for the opportunities I had at my previous institution, I wanted to be part of an institution with a program in Public Health. I was excited about the opportunity to join West Chester University. I am happy to be here and looking forward to working collaboratively with students and colleagues.



What do you do on a typical weekend?

A good movie sums up a typical weekend for me.

When did you know that you wanted to be a faculty member? What factors led to that choice?

Several factors led to my decision to go into academia. But my biggest inspiration is my mum. She has had a very rewarding career as a faculty member and has achieved many feats despite the challenges in academia, particularly for women. In fact, she is the first female professor in Mass Communication in West Africa. I look up to her as I pursue my career as a faculty member. Also, I have had excellent mentors during my graduate program. My life has been shaped by some of the most extraordinary professors. Being a faculty member allows me to give back to my students the benefits of the great teaching as I have received.

What about you that you would like the readers of MPH Connections (current students, alums, faculty, Community Advisory Board members, prospects to the MPH program, etc.) to know about you?

I motivate my students to think critically about their health and the health of others. This is why class participation is an important component of my classes. I am passionate about public health and health policy; I try to inspire my students by incorporating real-life examples to help them grasp the material, and I strive to provide an enabling, safe environment where every student feels comfortable contributing to class discussions. Also, I encourage my students to embrace high standards in their work and strive for excellence. I encourage them to think outside the box, and to translate the content they learn in my classes to their own health as well as the health needs of the local and global public health community.

Meet Dr. Omosehin Moyebi



Ph.D., MPH



Dr. Omosehin Moyebi is a teaching faculty fellow with the Department of Health and the first Frederick Douglass Scholar in the College of Health Sciences, West Chester University of Pennsylvania (WCUPA). Dr. Moyebi is an alum of WCUPA where he obtained his Master of Public Health in Environmental Health in December 2017. After his graduate degree at WCUPA, Dr. Moyebi proceeded to the University at Albany School of Public Health, Albany, New York and completed his Ph.D. in Environmental Health Sciences in 2022. His doctoral research was on the effect of air pollution in relation to daily hospital admissions and emergency room visits due to cardiovascular diseases in Karachi, Pakistan. Dr. Moyebi's career goals are to work in the academia imparting knowledge, and as an environmental health professional protecting the health of both the public and the environment.

Dr. Moyebi's research interests focus on the concentration levels of size-segregated particulate matter (sub-micron, fine, coarse, and total suspended particles) and particulate matter constituents (black carbon, metals, ionic species, and gaseous pollutants) in urban centers of developed and developing countries. He has conducted air quality investigations in both developed and developing countries with some of the studies already published in peer-reviewed international journals. Dr. Moyebi delivered the Fall 2022 Frederick Douglass Scholar Public Lecture entitled "Fine Particulate Matter and its Chemical Constituents' Levels: A Troubling Environmental and Human Health Situation in Karachi, Pakistan".

Dr. Moyebi's advice to current MPH students and those that are already pursuing their doctoral degree is to persevere. It is achievable and you can do it. Nevertheless, the first step is to get your priorities right, define your research interest, and choose a mentor that would create time to help you become the professional you envisioned. Familiarize yourself with faculty research in your area of study before choosing a mentor to work with. Faculty members with funding/grant are usually your best bet. Please choose a research area that you are passionate about because you are going to spend most of your time working on your dissertation research. Do not be in competition with others, but be focused, organized, collaborate/network with colleagues, and look for opportunities to attend scientific/research conferences for your career advancement. Good luck.

I am glad to be back at WCUPA as a teaching faculty and thankful for the opportunity.

MPH STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

2022-2023 Executive Board

The mission of the MPH Student Advisory Board, better known as MPH SAB, is to support the Department of Health by serving as a liaison between students and faculty/staff in order to foster a sense of community and professionalism.

Faculty Advisor: Chiwoneso Beverley Tinago, PhD, MPH, CHES®

President: Sara Hassan

Sara Hassan is a second-year MPH student in the Health Care Management track. She earned a B.S. in Biology and a minor in Ethnic Studies from West Chester University in 2020. She currently works as a Medical Laboratory Scientist at Chester County Hospital and Graduate Assistant in the Department of Health. Sara is passionate about examining global health issues and amplifying the voices of those who do not have the privilege to speak against the injustices they face. In the future, she hopes to return to Iraq to develop programs to help families affected by the war. Sara looks forward to working with everyone this year to plan exciting events, help students make the most of their MPH experience, and identify ways to improve the program.



Vice President: Julinette Vasquez

My name is Julinette Vazquez, and I am a second-year student in the Community Health track in the MPH program on the path to graduating in May 2023. I am a retired veteran, and I served in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard for six years. I received my undergraduate degree from West Chester University in Public Health. I am currently working as a Graduate Assistant in the Athletic-Academic Mentoring program, where I assist student-athletes with their academic needs. After receiving my MPH, I would like to work in health equity and address health disparities in underserved communities. I am currently serving as the Vice President of MPH SAB for the 2022-2023 school year. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Secretary: Desiree Harris

My name is Desiree Harris, and I am a 2nd year graduate student at West Chester University, expected to graduate in May 2023. I am obtaining my MPH with a point of interest in Community Health. Originally, I am from Easton, PA but have been in West Chester since graduating with my undergraduate degree from West Chester University in May 2019. After obtaining my MPH, I would like to be the creator or director of a program centered on preserving relationships between children and their incarcerated parent(s). I am passionate about keeping families together because I have seen firsthand how impactful growing up with the opportunity to gain wisdom through my elders' life can be.



Community Health Track Rep: Naya Weeks

I am a second-year graduate student in the MPH Community Health Track and on track to graduate in 2024 (3-year track). In 2021, I received my Bachelor of Science in Public Health from West Chester University. I am a Philly native and have the pleasure of serving the youth in the city of Philadelphia as a Program Coordinator for the non-profit organization the Eagles Eye Mobile Powered by Vision to Learn. Along with my position as program coordinator, I am also a graduate assistant for the Department of Health at WCU as a research assistant. I enjoy nature walks and spending time with my pets during my pastime.



Health Care Management Track Rep: Marguerite Lena

My name is Maggie Lena, and I am a 2nd year MPH student in the Health Care Management track. I am originally from Santa Monica, CA and came to WCU to play on the Women's Soccer Team as a 6th year. I am currently working as the Graduate Assistant for the Academic Mentor Program where I oversee 15 student-athletes and help them be as successful as they can both in the class and in their sport. I am also the graduate research coordinator for the LARC where I have created and implemented the DEI educational program for their tutors and interns.



Environmental Health Track Rep: Erik Wilson

Hello everyone, my name is Erik Wilson, and I'm currently a second-semester MPH student, in the Environmental Health Track. Before coming to West Chester, I did my undergraduate studies at The Pennsylvania State University, in Bio-Behavioral Health. Furthermore, before attending Penn State, I did 5 years in Naval healthcare. I worked in the Marine Corps in emergency medicine and with the on-base disease surveillance program. I am currently working on finishing up a co-op and when I'm not at work or school you can find me snowboarding, kayaking, or mountain biking.





APHA Campus Liaison: Parisa Karimzadeh

My name is Parisa Karimzadeh, a medical doctor from Iran. I am a first-year student in the MPH program, Community Health Track. I received my MD from Iran and worked as a Family Physician for two years there. My passion for public health is arise when I attended an Epidemiology class as one of my courses and wonder what I can do to make a positive impact on the health of the population rather than individuals. I worked as a researcher in different public health centers from chronic disease to environmental and maternal health during medical school. After graduation, I want to pursue my education in Epidemiology as a Ph.D. student and broaden my knowledge in health data analysis.

Social Media Outreach Coordinator: Ragha Mohan

Ragha Mohan, a second-year graduate student in the Public Health School, manages social media outreach for the MPH SAB. She plans to earn her degree in the summer of 2022. She graduated from the University of Wyoming with a B.S. in Psychology with a Sociology minor. Ragha works as a graduate assistant, one with the internal Department of Health and, and the Dowdy Multicultural Center. She wants to use her expertise in social justice, mental health, and health equity for underserved areas in the real world. Ragha, who was born in India and was raised in Kuwait, enjoys going on vacation, reading, cooking, and hanging out with friends.



STUDENT HEALTH AND WELL-BEING EXPO 2022



INAUGURAL
STUDENT HEALTH & WELL-BEING EXPO
SCIENCES & ENGINEERING CENTER AND THE COMMONS (SECC)
WITH STOPS AT CAMPUS RECREATION AND
THE CENTER FOR CONTEMPLATIVE STUDIES
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2022 • 1-3PM

FREE FOOD AND PRIZES
FOR STUDENT PARTICIPANTS!

Come engage with students from various academic courses and leadership roles on campus as well as staff and faculty from various departments in learning about your health and well-being.

REGISTER ON RAMCONNECT USING THIS QR CODE
VISIT [HTTPS://CCLINK.ME/2F3/R1901041](https://cclink.me/2f3/r1901041)

BE FIT. WELL RESTORED.
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

SPONSORED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES AND THE OFFICE OF WELLNESS PROMOTION

WCU
WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY
WELLNESS PROMOTION

On November 16th, the first Student Health and Well-Being Expo was held in the Science & Engineering Center & the Commons (SECC), with stops in the campus recreation center and the Center for Contemplative Studies. In all, 24 activities were provided in the expo that was open to the campus community. Activities were delivered by students, faculty, staff, and community partners and addressed all dimensions of wellness. Hands-on learning experiences delivered useful knowledge and skills to well over 100 students.

MPH AND SAB EVENTS

THE WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY
 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH
 PROGRAM &
 THE CHESTER COUNTY
 IMMUNIZATION COALITION

CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO THE FILM &
 GUEST SPEAKER EVENT OF:

HILLEMAN: A PERILOUS QUEST TO SAVE THE WORLD'S CHILDREN

FOLLOWED BY A Q&A DISCUSSION WITH
 CCIC COLLEAGUES & FEATURED GUEST

Kayla St. Pierre
 from the National Meningitis Association

Thursday, September 29, 2022
 7:15 PM To 9:00 PM (EST)
 SECC Room 108

Virtual: <https://tinyurl.com/42bwu8kd>
 Meeting ID: 984 4019 0292 | Passcode: 059793

The MPH SAB & Department of
 Health presents...

FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE E.R.

Join students and faculty in a simulation where you will
 manage a medical center for a 24-hour period to deal with
 issues that can have a powerful impact upon patient care



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN:

- ✓ COLLABORATION
- ✓ INNOVATION
- ✓ SYSTEMS THINKING
- ✓ DATA DRIVEN
- ✓ TEAM BUILDING
- ✓ LEADERSHIP

Refreshments
 will be provided!

RSVP

Friday, December 2nd

6 pm - 8 pm

SECC, ILC Conference Room

Questions?
 Please contact Dr. Gunter at
cgunter@wcupa.edu or Sara

The WCU MPH Student Advisory Board Presents:

2022 MPH FALL KICKOFF EVENT

ARE YOU A
 PUBLIC HEALTH
 STUDENT?
 JOIN US!

FOOD
 GAMES
 PRIZES
 & MORE!

WHERE: SECC 101A
 WHEN: 6PM-8PM

TUES, SEPTEMBER 6



MPH SAB presents.....

Coffee and Social Break

Come and chat with MPH
 students and take a break
 from studying. Open to all
 students

Students get a free energy drink or cold brew

Where: Saxbys
 When: Friday, October 28, 2022
 Time: 4:30pm-6:00pm



Questions? Contact
sh873161@wcupa.edu

Department of Health
 Master of Public Health Program

invites you to a virtual panel

Cultivate Leadership and Drive Change: Discussion on Post-MPH Doctoral Programs and Fellowships

Amrit Baral, MBBS,
 MPH

PhD student in
 Epidemiology,
 University of Miami



Doris Swarn, MPH
 Administrative Fellow,
 St. Joseph Hospital



Allison Casola, PhD,
 MPH, MCHES®

Senior Research Investigator,
 Department of Family &
 Community Medicine at
 Thomas Jefferson University



Stacy Wright, MPH,
 CHES®

PhD student in
 Health Outcomes &
 Implementation Science,
 University of Florida



Omosehin Moyebi,
 PhD, MPH

Post-Doctoral Fellow in
 the Department of
 Health at WCU



When: Tuesday, November 22, 2022
 What Time: 6pm-7pm
 Where: Virtual Zoom Meeting

<https://tinyurl.com/2k2ctp37>
 Meeting ID: 988 4965 9748 | Passcode: 901820

WCU
 WEST CHESTER
 UNIVERSITY

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Bakr Salman, MPH

How was your experience in the MPH at WCU?

The MPH program was good and had a lot of responsibilities but as a public health professional, I was able to learn and educate people on many chronic diseases. It also helps to understand the risk of diseases and dangers to our community and environment.

How has your trajectory into MPH come fruitful to this day?

Yes! One of the advantages I received is to learn more and increase my knowledge and work with professional colleagues to achieve the goals for improvement. The MPH program also helped me develop tools and procedures to follow and increase the learning scope for decision-making and help mitigate chronic diseases.



What was your favorite place to hang out in West Chester?

My favorite places in West Chester were the Francis Harvey Library because that was an area where I could connect with my classmates for help with assignments. My other favorite place is the SECC classrooms because they are so innovative and an outstanding building, you can sit there and use the whiteboard space with positive affirmations and be happy.

What were some advantages and challenges as an international student?

Advantages:

- WCU has helped give me chance as this is my study abroad session, and I was also able to learn skills and adapt to and respect other cultures.
- I was given the chance to work extra hard and cultivate new skills to be successful.

Challenges:

- It was definitely a challenge to move from one country and adapt to another, also getting used to the language and food and learning new skills to be successful.
- I found it challenging to adapt to a different educational system and learn more to catch up and be successful so I had to work extra hard.

Any advice for current environmental health track students?

Do not hesitate to contact your professors. They are there for you for support, learning and just to meet and casually converse during their office hours. Also, learn to start networking in different organizations because this can be a key to your success not just professionally but also personally.

Stacy Wright, MPH

How was your experience in the MPH at WCU?

I had a great experience with the department and at WCU. I liked that the class sizes were (fairly) small, so I had the opportunity to get to know my professors and peers very well. I found the courses challenging but eventually realized that they really strengthened and developed my research and writing skills and, motivated me to step outside of my comfort zone. Lastly, the program has cemented my passion for community health and paved the way for where I am today.



How has your MPH in Community Health helped you along the way?

My career path has never been linear, but the MPH program has helped in multiple ways. After receiving my degree, I was part of multiple research projects that strengthened my research skills and helped solidify my research area of interest. When I moved to my home country of Jamaica, I knew right away that I wanted to work with the Ministry of Health and Wellness, the country's primary public health delivery system on the island. It took some time to get my foot in the door, but I found my niche in the Health Education and Promotion unit. Within my role, I immediately utilized competencies from the program to aid in creating and implementing tailored strategies in the community. After 6 years of having my degree, I am now pursuing my doctorate at the University of Florida in Health Outcomes and Implementation Science. Having the MPH degree has really set me apart and provided me with the necessary techniques to promote culturally diverse and appropriate health education methodologies.

What were some advantages and challenges as an international student?

Advantages:

- Providing a global perspective on issues
- Sharing my culture, food, and language with others
- Making friends with people from around the world

Challenges:

- Not having your family and close friends nearby
- Traveling back home can be costly
- Not being able to take advantage of certain scholarships, job opportunities, and grants because of visa restrictions

What was your favorite place to hang out?

I loved going to the Painted Plate, a paint-your-own pottery store. It was a great way to de-stress. I also loved dining out at local restaurants with friends, my favorite would be Limoncello. Every time I am back in West Chester, I visit this restaurant; the food is so delicious, and it has such a warm and friendly environment.

Any advice for current students?

Take advantage of all the opportunities that come with being in this program. If at any point you feel you are not qualified for something, pursue it anyway. One of my favorite quotes summarizes it best, "if you don't go after what you want, you'll never have it. If you don't ask the answer is always no." Finally, while in school, be patient with yourself you are learning something new, so do not be afraid to ask questions and seek help.

Doris Swarn, MPH



How was your experience in the MPH at WCU?

My experience in the WCU MPH program was everything I needed. The professors in the MPH program were committed to students' success and they were accommodating given the uncertainty of the pandemic. One of my biggest takeaways from the program was to continue developing my professional skills, not only in the traditional sense with workshops and courses, but also through networking, connections with others, and collaboration.

My path into the MPH health care management track was a bit untraditional but did impact the road I have been on upon completion of my MPH program. Getting into my fellowship program is one of what I hope to be many accomplishments that will come from completing my MPH program. If I did not take the advice of the professors and utilized the campus resources for interview improvement, I may not have had my fellowship. There have been little suggestions along the way that have helped me to become better.

How has your MPH in Health Care Management been helpful along the way?

How is your administrative fellowship going to help you in your future professional pursuits?

The administrative fellowship has been an extension of my education. I have had the opportunity to sit next to the President of the hospital in high-level meetings with the multi-system President and other C-suite executives. I present my projects to people at all levels of the organization from patient-facing to the President. Although I have only been in my program for 3 months, I have been a part of amazing opportunities. This fellowship will undoubtedly help me in decision-making at whatever organization I work at in the future. Looking at community education programs, workforce issues and revenue cycle inconsistencies are only a couple of the areas I get to explore and improve my knowledge base on as I move through this fellowship. This is the knowledge that will benefit me in future roles in and outside of the healthcare setting.

I would advise healthcare management track students to explore what opportunities are available. Don't be afraid to ask questions or ask for advice. Don't limit yourself and have a plan for achieving your goals.

Any advice for current health care management track students?

Casey Fenoglio, MPH, CHES



How was your process in applying for ALE?

The process for applying for an ALE was straightforward and well laid out. The MPH program offered clear guidelines on what would be an acceptable placement site and what projects would count as major projects. When thinking about potential sites, I focused on the following: (1) location - finding a placement site near where I would be living (Bucks County, PA), (2) the organizational mission and programs implemented, (3) the potential initiatives I could work on. I directly emailed or called various sites that I was interested in working at and set up interviews with several of them. I not only wanted my skill set and interests to be a good fit for the organization, but I wanted the organization to be a good fit for me. I ended up selecting St. Mary Medical Center as an ALE site as it was close to where I lived and offered a variety of learning opportunities.

What are your tips and tricks for finding a site supervisor of interest?

Interview in-person if possible! You will learn so much about someone during an in-person conversation based on body language, facial expression, demeanor, and work style. Ask the supervisor what type of leadership style they have and ensure this meets your needs. Inquire about past students they might have had and how those experiences have helped them grow and learn. Also, ask if any prior interns are now employed with the agency. You can always ask for a short meeting with them to learn more about the supervisor.

Any other advice for MPH students graduating?

Invest your time in finding a mentor. Whether that is a professor you connected with, MPH alumni that have established careers, or someone with knowledge and life experience you value. Having a mentor not only can open doors for you, but they can teach you new things about yourself and shed light and wisdom as you establish a career. A mentor doesn't have to be a formal relationship where you meet regularly, but it can be someone to lean on, openly ask questions to, and seek advice and guidance from. I encourage you to think about whom you will turn to when you have career-related questions, challenges, exciting news to share, or need advice. Having that support system is important as you enter the workforce!

How was your overall experience of the MPH program?

I absolutely LOVED the MPH program at WCU. When people ask me about the experience, I can say with confidence that I left the program with skills and not just knowledge. I feel the MPH program sets students up for success as a public health practitioners by not only educating students but giving them the tools to succeed in the workforce. I left the program knowing I could plan, implement, and evaluate public health programs and this was an attractive skill set when I applied for jobs following graduation.

Casey Fenoglio is the Community Wellness Program Manager at Pottstown Hospital - Tower Health. She is a strong proponent of giving back to the MPH program as a new Community Advisory Board member, Applied Learning Experience site supervisor, event guest panelist, and course presenter.



2023 Mid-Atlantic Regional Public Health Conference Call for Abstracts

**Conference to be held at West Chester University
on March 16-17, 2023**

Pennsylvania Public Health Association (PPHA) is seeking proposals for the upcoming 2023 Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference in partnership with Maryland Public Health Association and Delaware Public Health Association. Each session should be approximately 30-60 minutes, but PPHA may request a shorter or longer version of the suggested topic based on member requests, time constraints, or scheduling issues.

Session ideas are welcomed by nonprofit staff, board members, consultants, and companies. All sessions are required to be educational (and relevant to the conference theme) and not include pitches, demos, selling, or asks. Presenters should include case studies involving their organizations or clients, ensuring relevance to the non-profit sector. Note: Presenters must be able to attend IN-PERSON.

Call for Abstracts! Here is the [link](#) to the call for abstracts. Abstracts must be received by 5:00 pm on January 15, 2023.

This conference will provide public health students, professionals, and partners across our region with the opportunity to learn about and engage in conversations about innovative strategies to address climate issues in the region.

Priority topics for the 2023 Regional Conference include:

- Emerging environmental health needs and their impact on public health
- Displacement/homelessness due to climate change
- Food Security/Hunger
- ONEHEALTH and the rise of communicable diseases due to climate change



If you are a current WCU MPH student, click [here](#) to join PPHA for a discounted \$15 per year using your wcupa.edu email address to register!



GA Spotlight

Miriam Andoh, GA Frederick Douglass Institute

Where is your campus-wide GA?

I am a Graduate Assistant for the Frederick Douglass Institute (FDI). According to the FDI mission, "the Institute is an educational and cultural resource for advancing multicultural studies across the curriculum and for deepening the intellectual heritage of Frederick Douglass." To do this we have outreach programs to local schools, give lectures, and tutor students. We specifically specialize in the underserved community.



Describe what skills are you learning that will help you in your career in public health. How is this GA role related to public health?

I am learning communication skills and working with diverse populations. These skills are related to public health because in public health we deal with people from various backgrounds.



What is your role?

I am responsible for administrative work, which includes facilitating lectures, working with the outreach program directors, and assisting with the programs. The DeBaptiste/Douglass lecture is one of the most interesting events I engaged in. Working with our team, I was able to participate and learn and connect with people to help make the message of Frederick Douglass relevant today.

Any tips for students who are looking to secure a campus-wide GA position?

I would say research the GA position you are interested in. For example, I read a book on Frederick Douglass to further my knowledge. I also recommend using the Handshake website to apply to campus-wide GA positions (www.wcupa.edu/cdc).

GA Spotlight

Kevin Andoh, GA for the Nutrition Lab and Global Health Research Team

Where is your campus-wide GA position, and tell us a little about what the lab and research team do?

I am a Graduate Assistant for the Nutrition lab and the Global Health Certificate Program Planning Committee (GHCPPC). The Department of Nutrition in the College of Health Sciences aims to shape tomorrow's nutrition and dietetics professionals and leaders through quality, relevant, and innovative teaching, service, and scholarship. The Global Health Certificate Program Committee is developing an interprofessional curriculum to assist students in their understanding of globalization and the importance of global health.



Any tips for students such as yourself looking to secure a campus-wide GA position?

You should research each GA position and see how they align with your program.

Describe what skills you are learning in your GA position that will help you in your career in public health. How are your GA roles related to public health?

I have learned many skills including research, communication, writing, organizational skills, and cooking too. Research skills are critical to obtaining data and assessing the factors contributing to public health problems. My Nutrition Lab responsibilities will help me to better advise people on the good ways to go about their meals in order to avoid health issues.

What's your role?

My role in the nutrition lab is to coordinate the set up of the lab for students learning how to make different meals every week. Also, I make healthy snacks for our university sports teams.

In the certificate planning committee, I have been researching similar certificate programs in other institutions and assessing feasibility of certificate creation/implementation at WCU.



Dr. Harry Holt Recognized in Spotlight PA



Dr. Harry Holt, Dr. Ramona Stone, and Dr. Christina VandePol's (former Chester County Coroner) research was recently highlighted in an article that was published by Spotlight PA. This article has also been highlighted in newspapers and news sources throughout the state of Pennsylvania. The research was funded through a competitive grant awarded by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania. The researchers interviewed and gathered survey data from coroners, medical examiners, and forensic pathologists throughout the state. They collaborated with Penn State Harrisburg, Center for Survey Research and the Pennsylvania Coroner Association. All research work was completed with the assistance of WCU MPH students.

The Spotlight on PA article highlighted the findings of the study which include:

- There is a lack of uniformity and standardization of training, education, policies, and resources among coroner and medical examiner (C/ME) offices in Pennsylvania, with the resultant inequitable application of death investigations across counties.
- Only a small minority of county C/ME offices are accredited by the International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (IACME). The multiple and complex county processes and standards make standardization of death investigation and performance impossible.
- Most rural and urban coroners reported neutral or inadequate support from their county officials who control almost all their funding.
- Pennsylvania, like the rest of the United States, has a severe shortage of forensic pathologists who can serve as medical examiners or perform autopsies.
- Most C/ME offices are operating below benchmark levels of funding.
- Insufficient financial resources, lack of time for education and training, and the part-time nature of their position pose barriers to certification or data collection and communication for many rural death investigators.
- The opioid crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic have had a significant impact on C/ME office operations and caseload.

The principal investigators for the study are grateful to the Department of Health for its contribution of \$29,273 which funded, among other items, MPH student stipends, and tuition. MPH students who contributed to the study and who were supported by the grant include Dr. Amrit Baral (Class of 2021), Danisha Heyward (Class of 2022), Balee Lesser (MPH Candidate), Alyson Marsden (Class of 2021), and Miskyat Oladosu (Class of 2021).

Dr. Harry Holt Recognized in Spotlight PA



Dr. Harry Holt recently made an appearance on a show entitled “The Doctor is In,” hosted by Dr. Frank Speidel on the Main Line Network. Dr. Speidel is a retired physician with specialization in Emergency Medicine. He is the past Senior Vice President of Medical Affairs, Chief Quality Officer at Mount Nittany Regional Medical Center, and CEO of St Luke's Hospital in Houston, Texas. The appearance was an opportunity to share insights and a healthcare management perspective on recent hospital closures and health system acquisitions in the Delaware Valley and Pennsylvania. The discussion with the host Dr. Speidel can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4mudwjJv74>

The website for the show is here:

<https://www.mltv21.org/the-doctor-is-in>

The discussion was wide ranging, but focused on the following questions:

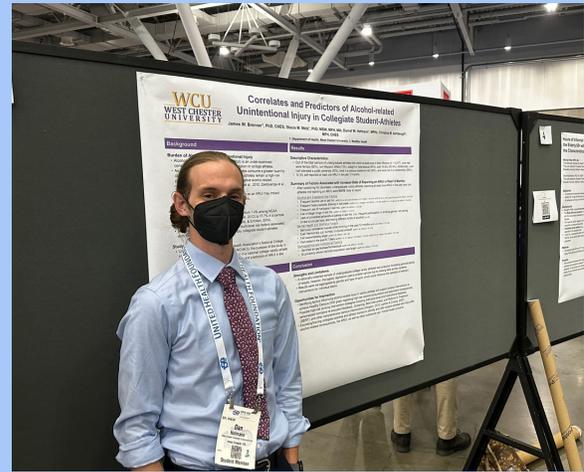
- Is the loss of hospitals a good thing? A bad thing?
- What are the drivers of hospital loss?
- Does quality depend on volume? Does quality affect hospital sustainability?
- Going forward what should we do at a county level? On a national level to improve the care we receive?
- Are there economies of scale in healthcare delivery?

Dr. Holt was assisted with research preparations by the following students: Sara Hassan (MPH Candidate) and Parisa Karimzadeh (MPH Candidate). They provided key research assistance and insights into the issues and questions discussed during Dr. Holt's appearance.

APHA Conference Student Experience



Recent MPH Graduate Jeff Gillingham with Dr. Jim Brenner



MPH Community Health Candidate Daniel Hoffman

"I loved attending sessions relating to many topics across public health and networking with fellow students and professionals. I also had the privilege of doing a roundtable presentation with Dr. Erin Knight and found the benefits of intergenerational service-learning project."



MPH Candidates Sara Hassan and Ragha Mohan with Dr. Erin Knight

"APHA was an engaging experience and an awesome way to showcase your research and explore new areas. Thanks to the Graduate Dean Award, I was able to use for the registration fees."

Graduate Dean's Professional Development Award

For more information:

https://www.wcupa.edu/_admissions/SCH_DGR/conferencefunding.aspx

Link to apply: https://onbase.wcupa.edu/AppNetNoAuth/UnityForm.aspx?key=UFKey_



Using Faculty Learning Communities in Promoting DEI Teaching Practices

College of Health Sciences Dean Dr. Scott Heinerichs, Dr. Zeinab Baba, and Dr. Kimberly Johnson



Dr. Kimberly Johnson (Nutrition), Dr. Zeinab Baba (Health), and Dr. Scott Heinerichs (Dean) (left to right) presenting at the October 2022 Leadership in Higher Education conference in Baltimore, MD.

Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to employ the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion. However, most faculty lack experience in conveying this information to students. College-level faculty learning communities (FLC) provides the opportunity to learn discipline-specific approaches around areas such as implicit bias, promoting dialogue around diversity, equity, and inclusivity, and facilitating difficult conversations in the classroom. The goals of this session were to engage participants to apply these approaches, provide a framework to be utilized, and discuss lessons learned from the research and one institution's approach.

Dr. Gopal Sankaran Elected to the Executive Board of the APHA



Gopal Sankaran, MD, DrPH, MNAMS, CHES®, Professor of Public Health, was elected to the Executive Board of the American Public Health Association (APHA) for a four-year term (2022-2026) on Tuesday, November 8, 2022, at the 150th Annual Meeting in Boston. He was nominated by the International Health section, his primary section. His secondary affiliation is with the Maternal and Child Health section. Dr. Sankaran this year will serve on the Finance and Governance Committees of the Executive Board. APHA's Executive Board is a 24-member body that serves on behalf of the Governing Council. Dr. Sankaran had earlier served four 2-year terms as an elected Governing Councilor, representing the International Health section. He will step down from his current role as Co-Chair of the Publications Board to assume duties on the Executive Board. Prior to his recent tenure on the Publications Board, Dr. Sankaran served for five years on the Editorial Board of the American Journal of Public Health and in the final two years as the Co-Chair and the Chair.

Dr. Sankaran joined the APHA in October 1984 as a student member and has since then maintained his membership continuously. He is also a member of the Pennsylvania Public Health Association (PPHA).

Dr. Sankaran is grateful for all the guidance and support that he received throughout the nomination and election process and continues to receive from the membership of APHA and his colleagues in the Department of Health. He looks forward to serving all APHA members through his service on the Executive Board.

Quality Matters: Bolstering Online Course Quality



Dr. Chiwoneso Tinago successfully completed the Quality Matters Initiative on October 7th, 2022. Over the course of a year, Dr. Tinago redesigned the 100% online HEA 632 Social and Behavioral Aspects of Public Health course to align with rigorous Quality Matters standards.

Quality Matters is an organization that offers nationally recognized benchmarks for the online course and program design. It offers a set of online course design standards and program review criteria through a rigorous review process.

The Quality Matters initiative is a university-wide effort funded by the Office of Digital Learning and Innovation (ODLI) that aims to promote online course quality and teaching effectiveness. The goal of the initiative is for WCU online courses to be certified by Quality Matters Higher Education Standards.

Dr. Sharon DeJoy Receives State Funding for COVID Vaccine Outreach to Midwives



The Pennsylvania Development of Community and Economic Development (DCED) is funding the work of Dr. Sharon DeJoy, a faculty member in the College of Health Sciences Department of Health, aimed at increasing the rate of vaccine uptake among women seeking perinatal care from midwives offering out-of-hospital birth services.

The social marketing campaign was co-developed by a class of senior public health students and a public health intern under the direction of Dr. DeJoy. The project is using social media and client handout materials to increase COVID vaccination rates among vaccine-hesitant families.

After completing her doctorate in Public Health from the University of South Florida, Dr. DeJoy joined the faculty as Assistant Professor in 2012. Prior to accepting her current position, she was an Assistant Professor of Community Health at the State University of New York at Potsdam. She teaches both undergraduate and graduate public health courses and directs the BS in Public Health program. Dr. DeJoy has conducted community-based research and consultation in maternal child health for underserved populations. She has authored and co-authored various peer-reviewed articles and presented them at international conferences. Dr. DeJoy was formerly a Licensed Midwife in Florida.



Career Corner with Lt. Gifty O. Tuffour, MPH, BSN, RN

The MPH program was proud to welcome MPH Alum Lt. Gifty Tuffour, Cdr. Brandon Johnson, and Lt. Diego Ratzlaff on October 28 to talk to students, faculty, and partners on the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.

How did the WCU MPH program prepare you for your current position as a Lieutenant in the United States Public Health Service? What other training did you find beneficial to your role?

West Chester University MPH program is a robust program that has prepared me to gain broad knowledge and skills in the core areas of public health. For instance, I can implement, monitor, and combat contemporary healthcare issues. The MPH program has tremendously prepared me to work on the front lines of public health. As a Lieutenant in the United States Public Health Service, I am privileged to serve along with providing leadership, oversight, staff training, and education on compliance with standards and accreditation, incident reporting, risk management, quality improvement, environmental health, safety and security, occupational health, infection prevention, and all-hazards emergency preparedness. Another training or continuing education benefit to your role is attending public health training to increase leadership and management skills.

From your interprofessional nursing-public health lens, what are the critical training needs for public health professionals to best promote health and wellness to the diverse populations your agency serves?

Training in public health, health promotion, and cultural competency are integral aspects to best promote health and wellness to diverse populations. Maintaining the highest level of competence in health education is a PLUS such as obtaining the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) and Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES). Also, I recommend Emergency Preparedness training, obtaining leadership skills, and having a passion for serving underserved populations.

How can public health professionals be better poised to promote health equity in the region?

To achieve health equity, public health professionals must change the systems and policies that have resulted in the generational inequalities that heighten racial and ethnic health disparities. Public health professionals should continue to advocate to advance public health and health equity through targeted social determinants, particularly on behalf of poor and disadvantaged population.

Explore opportunities with the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service at:
<https://www.usphs.gov/explore-opportunities/>.



Scholarly Activity

Presentations

Brenner, J., Metz, S., & Hofmann, D.* (2022). Correlates and Predictors of Alcohol-Related Unintentional Injury in Collegiate Student-Athletes. Poster presented at the American Public Health Association 2022 Annual Meeting & Expo, Boston, MA, November 6-9, 2022.

Hipple, E., Metz, S., & Chiarelli-Helminiak, C. (2022). "Unprecedented Times": Experiences of Social Work and Public Health Professionals During Times of Public Crises. Workshop presented at the National Association of Social Workers Pennsylvania (NASW-PA) 2022 Conference, Poconos Manor, PA, October 23-36, 2022.

Knight, E., Harbaugh, K.*, Schroeder, A., & Woodall, L.J. (2022). Informing state policy and building capacity for doula services: A focus group study on doula training and certification. American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Expo, November 7, 2022.

Lavery, A., Knight, E., Cole, S., Hassan, S.*, D'Arcy, E., & Metz, S. (2022). An Intergenerational Service-Learning Project to Address Social Isolation, Ageism, and to Build the Public Health and Social Work Workforce. Roundtable presented at the American Public Health Association 2022 Annual Meeting & Expo, Boston, MA, November 6-9, 2022.

Mohan, R.*, Metz, S., Ventura, L., Chiarelli-Helminiak, C. & Karimzadeh, P.* (2022). Early Pandemic Job Satisfaction and Burnout in Master's Trained Public Health and Social Work Professionals. Poster presented at the American Public Health Association 2022 Annual Meeting & Expo, Boston, MA, November 6-9, 2022.

Sankaran, G. (2022). What did we get right and where do we go from here? Oral presentation at the 150th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in Boston, Massachusetts on Tuesday, November 8. Dr. Sankaran also moderated the panel, COVID-19 Pandemic: Lessons and Actions for Future, in which he presented his paper.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Impact of COVID-19 on Special Groups and Populations. Invited virtual lecture in PH 340: Global Health course at Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado on Tuesday, November 8.

Sankaran, G. (2022). U.S. Health Care System, Health Disparities, and Health Equity. Invited lecture in PAS 515: Professional Issues and Healthcare Policy course for Physician Assistant students at West Chester University in Exton, Pennsylvania.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Descriptive Epidemiology. Invited lecture in PAS 515: Professional Issues and Healthcare Policy course for Physician Assistant students at West Chester University in Exton, Pennsylvania.

(* indicates a student in the MPH program)





Sankaran, G. (2022). Invited panelist, Social sustainability: Culture, Religion and Diets session in ANT/NTD 277-01 course: Sustainable Food Systems, College of Health Sciences, West Chester University on Wednesday, November 30.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Foundations of Epidemiology. Invited lecture in PAS 515: Professional Issues and Healthcare Policy course for Physician Assistant students at West Chester University in Exton, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, September 7, 2022.

Sankaran, G. (2022). The Natural History of A Disease and Levels of Prevention. Invited virtual lecture in PH 380: Epidemiology course at Fort Lewis College, Durango, Colorado on Tuesday, September 6, 2022.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Descriptive Epidemiology. Invited lecture in PHYA 542: Research Methods in Health and Disease course for Physician Assistant Studies students at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Tuesday, August 23.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Foundations of Epidemiology. Invited lecture in PHYA 542: Research Methods in Health and Disease course for Physician Assistant Studies students at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine on Wednesday, August 17.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Public Health: AN AWESOME opportunity to do your best! Invited presentation in the Medical Mentorship Event for Souderton Area High School students, organized by the College of Health Sciences, at West Chester University on Friday, June 17

Professional & Community Service

Sankaran, G. (2022). Elected to the Executive Board of the American Public Health Association for a four-year term (2022-2026) by the Governing Council at the 150th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in Boston on Tuesday, November 8. Dr. Sankaran chosen to serve on Finance Committee and Governance Committee of the Executive Board during the first year.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Co-chair, Publications Board of the American Public Health Association for 2021-2022. Served on the Strategic Planning Task Force and helped develop the new Strategic Plan (2022-2025) for the APHA Press. Ratified by the full Publications Board on Wednesday, October 26.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Invited Mentor, Speed Mentoring Session, organized by the Student Assembly Mentoring Committee at the 150th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in Boston, Massachusetts on Sunday, November 6.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Reviewer, Abstracts submitted to International Health Section for presentation at the 150th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in Boston, Massachusetts, November 6-9.

Recognition

Sankaran, G. (2022). Certificate of Recognition from Chairperson, International Health Section of American Public Health Association, for outstanding and dedicated service representing the International Health Section on the Publications Board. (October 2022).



Publications

Boudreaux, M., Gifford, K., McDuffie, M.J., McColl, R., Kim, T., & Knight, E. (June 2022). Delaware Contraceptive Access Now and contraceptive initiation among non-postpartum Medicaid enrollees. *American Journal of Public Health*, 112(S5), S537–S540.

Cain, R., Greece, J., Galea, S., Knight, E., Manco, A., Parikh, A., & Jones, D. (October 2022). Improving health across sectors: Best practices for the implementation of Health in All Policies approaches. *Preventive Medicine Reports*, 29, 101961.

Deedat, H.A. & Baba, Z. (2022). Sub-Saharan African immigrant parents and child protection in the United States: Considerations for the U.S. child welfare system. *APSAC Advisor*.

DeJoy, S. B., & Doorn, D. (2022). Access to Maternity and Obstetric Care in Rural Pennsylvania. Report for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.

Ezeama, N., Okunna, N., & Ezeama C. (2022). Multi-level correlates of the nutritional status of Nigerian women of reproductive age. *Community Health Equity Research and Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2752535X221126071>

Farcas, D., McCawley, M., Carrieri, M., Cohen, S., & Cena, L. (2022). *OHST Exam Essential Practice Simply and Thoroughly Explained*. Seattle, WA: APub. ISBN-13: 979-8834962748

Holt, H., Stone, R., & VandePol, C. (2022). Evaluation of Coroner/Medical Examiner Services in Pennsylvania. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania.

Ventura, L., Chiarelli-Helminiak, C. M., Frankel, A. S., Hipple, E., Ibrahim, J., Sharma, S.*, Wolcott, J., & Metz, S. M. (2022). Unprecedented times: Experiences of social work and public health professionals in times of public crises. *Journal of Social Work in Public Health*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19371918.2022.209797>

Vile, MA. 2022. Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers: Air and Noise Pollution. West Goshen Township Newsletter, June 22, 2022 <https://www.westgoshen.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=330>

Vile, MA., A Knapp. 2022. Preservation of Crebilly Farm: Open Space Can't Save Itself. West Chester Area Clean Energy Future, August 5, 2022.

Professional Development

Sankaran, G. (2022). Participated in the Committee for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) Book Club at West Chester University in Fall semester and reviewed the book, *The Missing Course: Everything They Never Taught You about College Teaching* by David Gooblar, 2019. Met with the Book Club group virtually three times in the semester and actively engaged in the discussions.

Sankaran, G. (2022). Participated in the Active Learning Workshops I & II, organized by the Office of Digital Learning and Innovation (ODLI), West Chester University on Friday, October 21 and October 28. Completed and submitted a deliverable as a requirement.



Happy
Holidays

&

Safe Travels!

Be safe and continue to practice COVID-19 preventive actions.