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Inside this issue:

Applied Learning Experience News	1
Student Handbook	1
Healthy Start Programa Madrina	2
Congratulations To Our Stars	2
Faculty Accomplishments	3
M.P.H. Students to Medical Residents	3
M.P.H. Poster Session	3
Biostatistics Requirement	3
Presentations, Conferences and Courses	4

Applied Learning Experience News

Applied Learning Experience – 36 Credit Program

Students in the 36 credit program complete HEA650 Applied Learning Experience during the last semester of their course work. All courses must be completed before the start of HEA650. Arrangements for HEA650 (faculty advisor and site selection, letter of agreement, and summary of the major project) must be completed during the semester prior to the start of HEA650. It is the student's responsibility for completing the planning requirements before the start of HEA650. If the student fails to meet with an advisor and complete the site selection in the semester prior to the start of HEA650, he or she will not be able to begin the Applied Learning Experience. Students should obtain a copy of the Applied Learning Experience Guidelines (36 credit program) from the department secretary, Bobbi Bottoms.

Applied Learning Experience I and II – 45 Credit Program

The Applied Learning Experience I and II Guidelines (45 credit program) are now available and contain detailed information needed for successful completion of the Applied Learning Experience. Students should obtain a copy of these guidelines from academic advisors to begin preparing for the Applied Learning Experience. Print copies are also available in the secretarial suite. During HEA649 Applied Learning Experience I, students select their agency and complete plans for their major project. The major project is completed with a poster presentation during HEA650 Applied Learning Experience II.

THE M.P.H. STUDENT HANDBOOK – A MUST READ FOR ALL STUDENTS!

A copy of the M.P.H. Student Handbook is now available. This is an important document for new students as well as students who are in the process of completing the degree. The handbook provides detailed information on M.P.H. program policy, admission information, core and track competencies, course formats and requirements, degree requirements, certificate programs, advising information and faculty contacts. New students receive a copy of the handbook with their welcome letter. For current students, copies of the handbook will be available on the M.P.H. website. The handbook provides updated information for all students and addresses many frequently asked questions about the M.P.H. Program. Dr. Carson has print copies of the handbook in her office. Please stop by Dr. Carson's office (H304) to obtain a copy.

Healthy Start Programa Madrina

Healthy Start Programa Madrina: A Promotora Home Visiting Outreach and Education Program to Promote Perinatal Health among Latino Pregnant Women. *The Health Educator*, (Fall, 2009), Bill, D., Hock-Long, L., Mesure, M., Bryer, P., and Zembrano, N.

The purpose of the research/program development paper is to describe the development, implementation and evaluation of Healthy Start Programa Madrina (HSPM), a home visiting promotora outreach and education program for pregnant Latino women (N=2,053) and to present the **ten year** findings of the program (1996-2005). Perinatal health disparities continue to persist among low-income Latinos. Promotoras are both bi-lingual and bi-cultural (Spanish speaking) indigenous women who participate in a 115-hour training program to connect low-income pregnant Latino women with needed perinatal support and health promotion services. Promotoras identify pregnant women through community outreach, and then help them access prenatal care by providing them with a panel of support services such as medical interpretation, transportation, insurance application and enrollment, health education as well as emotional support and guidance. Using multiple methods of evaluation, results show that the program was successful at linking pregnant Latinos to perinatal health care, health education and support services, as well as decreasing barriers to prenatal care. Electronic birth record data indicate that HSPM participants had lower rates of preterm births and infants with low birth weights compared to their counterparts who did not receive HSPM services. Implications for practice and research are discussed, as well as strengths and limitations.

Book review by Bill, D: *CHOICE*, February, 2009. Health Promotion in Multicultural Populations: A Handbook for Practitioners and Students. (Ed) by Michael V. Kline and Robert M. Huff (2nd Ed). Sage Pubs, CA. 2008, 624 pgs.

Congratulations To Our Stars!

Ethel Richards (M.P.H., 2007) had her abstract accepted for a poster presentation at the annual New England Science Symposium held at Harvard Medical College on Friday, April 3, 2009. The title of her M.P.H. research was "A Baseline Quality Improvement Retrospective Review: Determination of Compliance to the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Protecting 5 Million Lives from Harm Campaign Goal, Appropriate Use of Antibiotics at Fox Chase Cancer Center, 2007." Ethel's research was conducted at the Fox Chase Cancer Center during a unique opportunity where she served as the first Administrative Intern to the Office of the President under Dr. Michael V. Seiden, MD, PhD, President & CEO. We wish Ethel much success at the New England Science Symposium!

Amber Frame (M.P.H., 2005), has been accepted into the PhD Program in Administration and Leadership Studies at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Amber was chosen from a pool of highly qualified applicants of which only 50% were admitted into the program. Congratulations to Amber!

Dr. Maura Sheehan, CIH was recently honored with the designation "AIHA Fellow" by the American Industrial Hygiene Association. This recognition is only bestowed on 5% of the membership of the association and is awarded to those individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of industrial hygiene by improving the work environment and advancing the practice of industrial hygiene. Dr. Sheehan's work was also highlighted in the March 2009 issue of *Tribology and Lubrication Technology*. She was interviewed by the editors of this journal about her research and professional service protecting workers from metal-working fluids which are used in machining operations in many manufacturing processes.

Debra Shelmire (M.P.H., 2008) has successfully completed the CPH examination administered in fall 2008 and has earned the credential Certified in Public Health. The CPH examination is administered by the National Board of Public Health Examiners. See <http://www.publichealthexam.org/> for additional information about the examination.



Debra Shelmire

Faculty Accomplishments

Sankaran, G. (2009). "Community/Public Health Project Development and Evaluation." Invited workshop at the 9th Community and Public Health Institute, organized by the American Medical Student Association at Reston, VA on January 24.

Sankaran, G. (2009). "Assessing Individual and Community Health Needs and Assets for Health Education." Invited workshop conducted at CHES Test Preparation Workshop at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA on March 28

Sankaran, G. (2009). "Conducting Evaluation and Research Related to Health Education. CHES Test Preparation. Invited workshop conducted at CHES Test Preparation Workshop at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, PA on March 28.

New **Service** activities:

Sankaran, G. (2009 -). Member, WCU Steering Committee for Middle States Commission on Higher Education Reaccreditation.

Sankaran, G. (2009 -). Chair, WCU Workgroup 4: Institutional Assessment, Steering Committee for Middle States Commission on Higher Education Reaccreditation.

Sankaran, G. (2009 -). Invited Member, Advisory Board, Health Science and Public Health programs, School of Health Sciences, Kaplan University.

M.P.H. Students to Medical Residents!

Several of our M.P.H. graduates/students begin their medical residency program in July 2009 or later. They are: **Dr. Deepak Bharadia** (General Surgery-Preliminary at Mercy Catholic Center, Upper Darby, PA), **Dr. Nisarg Chagawala** (Internal Medicine at Maimonides Medical Center, Brooklyn, NY), **Dr. Ruchir Patel** (Internal Medicine at Wayne State University— Detroit Medical Center, Detroit, MI), **Dr. Mihir Raval** (Internal Medicine at University of North Dakota, Fargo , ND), **Dr. Parth Desai** (Internal Medicine at Bronx—Lebanon Medical Center, Bronx, NY), **Dr. Satya Patel** (Internal Medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, NY), **Dr. Komal Bhatt** (Family Medicine at Michigan State University—Sparrow Hospital, MI), **Dr. Shruti Tewar** (Pediatrics at SUNY Albany Medical Center, Albany, NY), and **Dr. Ritesh Patel** (Internal Medicine at Coney Island Hospital, NY). Congratulations to all for being admitted to residency programs and we wish them the best in their future careers!

M.P.H. Poster Session

The 2009 Spring M.P.H. poster session will be held Friday, April 24 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in room 126, West Chester University Graduate Business Center, 1160 McDermott Drive, near Boot Road. Students who plan on presenting their research are requested to contact Dr. James Brenner at 610-436-3357 or jbrenner@wcupa.edu immediately to let him know of their participation in the poster session.

Attention all M.P.H. Students!

Students who were accepted into the M.P.H. program provisionally and are required to complete MAT 121 Statistics must complete this course prior to enrollment in HEA 526 Biostatistics. For approval of degree candidacy, the provisional requirements must be met. Students who began the M.P.H. program in fall 2007 or later are required to complete 45 hours of coursework for the M.P.H. degree.

Presentations, Conferences, & Course offered by Dr. Debra Bill

Bill, D., and Belliveau, M. "Exploring Homelessness: Outsider and Insider Perspectives of a Social Policy," Beyond Civility Day, West Chester University Civility Day Program, Feb. 18, 2009, Sykes

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Dr. Debra Bill serves on the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) National Planning Committee for the upcoming SOPHE 2009 Midyear Scientific Conference, Harmonizing Health Education Practice & Research to Advance Health Equity, May 6-9, 2009, in New Orleans, LA. She also serves as the Chair of the SOPHE Anthropology and Public Health Special Interest Groups (APH SIG) and is convening the APH-SIG roundtable group meeting to be held at the Midyear Scientific Conference in New Orleans.

Dr. Debra Bill is convening an international panel with expertise on immersion courses, as part of a special workshop at SOPHE 2009 Midyear Scientific Conference entitled, "Immersion Courses: Collaborations Across Cultures." The panel features M. Gould who will focus on the work of the ACEER Foundation in Peru, D. Bill on the Guanajuato, Mexico experience, and R. Fennel on International Health Programs in France and Switzerland, and Health Education in South Africa.

Dr. Debra Bill was a keynote speaker at the 2009 Migrant and Immigrant Health Conference, Pennsylvania: Policy, Practice, and Promise, in Lancaster, PA on March 25, 2009. The title of her speech was, "Building Bridges across Cultures: Developing Cultural Competency Skills for Latino Health through A Cultural Immersion Trip: the Guanajuato, Mexico Experience."

Pennsylvania (PA) –Guanajuato, Mexico (GT))-Binational State Health Summit

Dr. Debra Bill convened the first binational health summit between Pennsylvania and Guanajuato, Mexico, from April 6-10, 2009 at West Chester University. The Secretary of Health from the State of Guanajuato, Mexico, Dr Jorge Armando Torres Aguirre and Dr. Perez, Director of Public Health, Guanajuato, Mexico traveled to West Chester University for the health summit. They spent six days in Pennsylvania and visited the State Department of Health in Harrisburg, the Chester County Health Department, and well-established Latino health programs in the region and discussed best practice strategies/methods for binational health. The purpose of the summit was to discuss Latino health issues that affect both states (Pennsylvania and Guanajuato), and to dialogue and explore opportunities to work collaboratively to improve the health and well-being of Latinos in these states. A special conference on Binational Health in Pennsylvania and Mexico was held on Wednesday, April 8 from 6 p.m.-8 p.m. in Sykes Ballrooms at West Chester University and featured both the Pennsylvania Secretary of Health, Dr. Mr. Everett James and the Guanajuato Secretary of Health, Dr Torres Aguirre. This was followed by a distinguished panel from Pennsylvania and Guanajuato. Dr. Michele Tucker, Nursing and Dr Maria Consuelo Sparks also participated in the planning of this well attended event.

Dr Debra Bill is co-teaching a summer cultural immersion course with Dr. Andrew Dinniman (History) HEA 435/581 Mexican Culture and Health, from May 24-29, 2009 in Guanajuato, Mexico. This marks the ten year anniversary of the travel course to Guanajuato, Mexico. Upon their return from Mexico, participants will plan and develop health projects for positive change in the community. They will showcase their projects/posters at a special post-course workshop. The class is open to all majors and both undergraduates and graduate students. Interested students can register for this class for three or six credits. For more info contact dbill@wcupa.edu.

REMINDER

Students are strongly encouraged to submit news, views, and experiences for publication in the M.P.H. Connections. Please contact Dr. Gopal Sankaran (gsankaran@wcupa.edu) or Jenna Derr (jd591689@wcupa.edu) with any questions.