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M.P.H. CONNECTIONS

Spring 2015 ISSUE

UPDATE ON CEPH ACCREDITATION PROBATION STATUS Message from the MPH Program Director: Dr. Lynn Carson

Inside this issue:

APHA Executive Director, Dr. Georges Benjamin speaks at WCU	2-3
Faculty Profiles	4
14th WCU Annual Research Day	5
Winter Experience—Dr. Donald McCown	6
List of MPH Advisors	6
CHS Brain Health Conference	7
MPH Poster Session	8
Service Learning and Volunteering	8
Preparing for your future: A panel of health professionals	8
2015 Summer Courses	8
MPH Student Profiles	9
Feedback from WCU MPH Alumni/na	10-11
Faculty Scholarly Accomplishments	12-13
Delta Omega Honor Society Inductions	14

During the past three semesters, the MPH faculty, several committees and WCU Administration have worked diligently to address the probation concerns from the last Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) Self-Study and Site Visit. We are confident that we have made the corrections needed to return the MPH Program to normal accreditation status. I hope this update on the CEPH Accreditation review for our MPH Program will help you understand the process and steps that will occur during the next several months. The Preliminary Self-Study will be submitted on May 22, 2015 to the CEPH. The purpose of the Preliminary Self-Study is to determine if we are ready to submit the Final Self-Study and begin preparing for the CEPH Site Visit in October, 2015. We should receive this notification at the end of June, 2015.

When we receive an acceptable review of the Preliminary Self-Study, we move to the next step and complete the final version of the Self-Study document for submission on September 22, 2015. We also begin preparing for the Site Visit from CEPH. Our Site Visit date is scheduled for October 22—23, 2015 (Thursday and Friday).

Approximately three months before the scheduled Site Visit, you will have the opportunity as MPH students to provide feedback to CEPH on any aspects of the MPH Program. We will send all students an email at that time with contact information to send comments to CEPH. CEPH also invites comments from MPH faculty, WCU administration, MPH Advisory Board, MPH alumni, ALE Site Supervisors and community representatives.

Our scheduled on-site review with the CEPH Site Visit Team will take place in October, 2015. An on-site visit by a team of peer reviewers is an important component of the accreditation process. The team's assessment of the validity of the self-study document provides the primary basis for CEPH's decision concerning accreditation. During the Site Visit, the Site Team will participate in a number of meetings that include: WCU administration, MPH faculty, students, alumni, ALE site supervisors and community representatives. The purpose of these meetings is to validate information and materials that were presented in the Final Self-Study. At the end of the site-visit, the Site Team completes a report and determines if our MPH Program meets the CEPH accreditation criteria. The final step in the accreditation process is a review from the CEPH Board of Governors. The CEPH Board of Governors is the 10 member decision making body. The Board of Governors reviews the Final Self-Study and the report from the Site Team. Our Self-Study and Site Visit Report will be under review during the June, 2016 meeting. We receive our decision about returning to normal accreditation status approximate 6 (six) weeks after the June meeting date.

Again, we are confident that we have addressed all of the concerns about the MPH Program's probation status and we look forward to a successful review of the preliminary and final Self-Study documents and a productive Site Visit in October, 2015. If you have any questions, please contact me at anytime.

Best wishes with your continued graduate studies in the MPH Program at WCU!

APHA Executive Director, Dr George Benjamin speaks at WCU



Dr. Georges Benjamin

On the February 20, 2015, West Chester University was privileged to have Dr. Georges Benjamin, Executive Director of the American Public Health Association (APHA) deliver a lecture on *The Quest for Health Reforms: Becoming the Healthiest Nation*. The lecture was organized by Dr. Linda Adams, Dean of the College of Health Sciences and was free and open to all. Dr. Benjamin is one of the nation's most influential physician leaders and he speaks passionately and eloquently about the health issues having the most impact on our nation today. From his firsthand experience as an emergency room physician, he knows what happens when preventive care is not available and when healthy choice is not the easy choice. As the Executive Director of APHA since 2002, he is leading the Association's push to make the United States the healthiest nation in one generation.

Dr. Georges Benjamin's talk highlighted the importance of public health on the health and wellbeing of the population. Although the United States spends more per person on health than any other country, the life expectancy of Americans is shorter than expected, based on health expenditure. He gave an excellent insight into the Affordable Care Act that provides insurance reform whereby more people are covered, costs are lowered, and more services are offered. It also provides health system reform by improving quality and efficiency as well as strengthening the workforce and infrastructure with greater focus on public health and prevention. The Affordable Care Act has so far been successful in enrolling large numbers of people in health plans and facilitating their access to health care. Dr. Benjamin elaborated on the fact that health goes beyond health care. Health is determined by place, risky behaviors, food consumption and equitable access to affordable nutritious food, safe air, safe water, waste management, transportation systems and quality education. External and internal stressors like differential assumptions about the abilities, motives, and intent of others, by race, gender, sexual orientation or disability were also mentioned.



Dr. George Benjamin, Dean Linda Adams and College of Health Sciences faculty

APHA Executive Director, Dr George Benjamin speaks at WCU



Dr. George Benjamin, Dr Tammy James and MPH Students

With so many variables, what should we address first? How can we choose which is most important? This is a very difficult task and may even sound impossible. According to Dr. Benjamin, in order to see improvements and work towards a healthy nation, we must broaden our critical thinking skills. It is imperative that we, as professionals in health, aim to craft broad solutions that impact both clinical and the social determinant of health. We must keep searching for innovations and in order to experience changes and impacts never seen before, we must try techniques and ideas that we have never tried before. Needless to say, we have a lot of work ahead of us! Dr. Benjamin, in closing, said, “A culture of health means living as long as you can, as well as you can and have a short but glorious ending.—it also means, having a system in place that ensures we all can achieve it”.

Dr. Benjamin’s profound overview of health and what it means in the United States was quite thought-provoking and garnered self-reflection on what each individual can personally do to make an impact. This event was well attended by WCU faculty and students as well as visitors from neighboring organizations. A reception followed the event and gave everyone an excellent opportunity to meet and talk with Dr. Georges Benjamin. It also created an atmosphere for interaction and dialogue among attendees. The WCU Department of Health is extremely thankful for the opportunity to host Dr. George Benjamin on campus and we look forward to seeing him at the Annual Meeting of APHA in Chicago in fall!



Left to right: Allison Casola, Dr. Georges Benjamin and Dr. Linda Adams

Dr. Mathias Akukuo, Faculty in Health Care Management

I joined West Chester University on January 20, 2015 as an Assistant Professor of Health Care Management in the Department of Health. My undergraduate education was completed at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana, where I obtained my Bachelor of Social Science degree and functioned as a teaching assistant. Thereafter, I pursued my master's degree in Public Administration at Southern Illinois University. With deep interest in public health, I went on to obtain my Master of Public Health degree at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. Subsequently, I received my Doctor of Philosophy degree in Public Health Sciences from there. My interest in public health developed from my exposure to the numerous public health issues encountered in Ghana with a focus on global health policies. I worked as an adjunct faculty at the University of North Texas Health Science Center where I co-taught Leadership and Legislative Experience. I also assisted in teaching Health Politics and Policy and Advanced Health Policy courses. In addition, I worked as an adjunct professor at the University of Texas at Dallas, where I taught Global/International Health, Health and Illness, and Mental Health and Illness. Moreover, I worked for the Tarrant County College in Texas as an adjunct instructor.



Teaching gives me a sense of fulfillment where I can make an impact in the lives of numerous individuals. It also provides me a continuous learning opportunity from students and appreciate the diversity of their background. This spring, I teach HEA538: Evaluation of health programs, HEA419: Research Methods, and HEA 100: Dimensions of Wellness. In fall, I would be teaching HEA 613: Advocacy and Quality of Health Care, HEA 110: Transcultural Health, and HEA 242: Introduction to Community and Public health. In my spare time, I love playing with my kids and when I am not doing that, I watch TV to keep myself up-to-date on political happenings and policies. I also enjoy watching soccer, especially the English Premier League. I believe every person is a bundle of knowledge; thus, there is something to learn from everyone. Building relationships and quality interaction are important tools for learning and education.

Dr. Harry Holt, Faculty in Health Care Management

I joined in January 2015. I studied Economics Pre-law and Political Science Pre-law at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. It was a great experience studying at a university where there was a real focus on quality teaching and small classes. I was able to interact with my professors one-on-one and they got to know me very well during office visits. I also trained as a classical pianist with a faculty member that had a great influence on where I went to law and business school. His name is Dr. Dominic Intilli and at my weekly lessons he would urge me to attend law school and make a difference in the lives of the students I would eventually teach. I attended law and business schools at Case Western Reserve University and started working at the Cleveland Clinic half-way through my program. During my time at the Clinic I worked with physicians and appreciated the positive impact that I could see in the lives of patients and their families. I next worked with health care clients throughout the United States, South America, Europe, and the Middle East with Ernst and Young. My focus in this consulting effort was on financial operations and health care law. I was able to work with health care clients in the United States in the areas of revenue cycle, strategy, HIPAA, information technology, and process transformation. I moved on to working with clients around applying web-based technologies in hospitals and physician groups with First Consulting Group. I then proceeded to providing revenue cycle consulting services to clients with Cap Gemini, after which completed a PhD at the Pennsylvania State University with a focus on Management and Organizational Behavior. During this effort I was also teaching undergraduate and graduate courses and thoroughly enjoying working with students and my faculty colleagues.



I enjoy facilitating the learning process for students so that their minds are opened to new and exciting aspects of health care. I think that most students really do want to apply themselves, work hard, and produce good work. They are interested and motivated to learn and make a difference in their sphere of influence. They just need to be pointed in the right direction and given the tools and skills to discover many of the great lessons in healthcare that will enable them to become leaders in their organization. I enjoy meeting with students in my office (or over the phone or on Skype) and working through projects, papers, or assignments they are working on. I find that individual attention and direction is very effective in communicating both the course content to the student as well as empathy and encouragement to the student. I enjoy using technology including media and digital technology to illustrate concepts and convey content to millennial and adult learners so that they mentally capture and absorb the material and then apply it in their position. I have found that facilitated discussions in the classroom are very effective in small groups so that students share their knowledge and expertise with their colleagues.

This spring I am teaching HEA 513 Legal Aspects of Health Care in the first seven weeks and HEA 616 Strategic Leadership in Health Care in the second seven weeks.

I relax by hiking, cycling, swimming, and whitewater kayaking. I am also a Certified Master Gardener and I enjoy planting and improving forested property.

I look forward to seeing everybody in class or online. Stop by office 308 and say hello.

14th WCU Annual Research day

The 14th West Chester University Annual Research day was held on Tuesday, March 24, 2015. The day-long event commenced at 9:30 a.m. at the Sykes Student Union on West Rosedale Avenue with posters in the social and behavioral disciplines, followed by oral presentations in those subjects at 10:45 a.m. lunch followed in Sykes Ballrooms from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., with music by the WCU Latin Jazz Ensemble. At 1:30 p.m., Poster sessions in the humanities and applied sciences started and oral presentations began at 3:15 p.m.

The following MPH faculty and students had the opportunity to display their work at this poster session:

- Adegboyega O., & Sankaran G. *The importance and urgent need for intersectoral action*
- Metz, S. *Effectiveness of the learning to BREATHE program on emotion regulation in adolescents*
- Metz, S., & Casola, A. *Evaluation of Youth Mental Health First Aid Training in Coatesville, PA: Preliminary Results*
- Dhananjaya M., Achenbach J., & Sankaran G. *Tuberculosis Practice Patterns of Pharmacies and Urgent Care Facilities in Chester County.*

A panel discussion on Latin-American and Latino/a Studies commenced at 4:30 p.m. which highlighted research on social development in Latin America; dockworkers in Puerto Berrio, Colombia; politics and the Amazon in the early 20th century; practices that advance human rights in Chile and the United States; Latina immigrants and high birth weight.

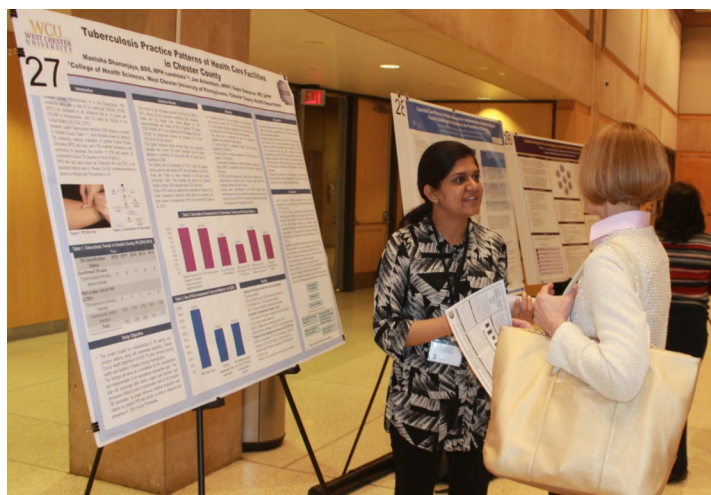
At 7.00 p.m., in the Ware Recital Hall in the Swope Music Building, the guest speaker, Dr. Adrián López-Denis, addressed academic imperialism and transnational field research in contemporary Cuba. He examined issues that were central to the current relationship between Cuba and the United States. Dr. López-Denis specializes in the history of Latin America at the University of Delaware focusing on the relationship between medicine and slavery in the Spanish Caribbean.



Dr. Gopal Sankaran



Left to right: Oluwafemi Adegboyega, (HCM Track) Dr. Stacie Metz and Allison Casola (CH Track)



Manisha Dhananjaya MPH (CH Track) discussing her poster



Oluwafemi Adegboyega MPH (HCM Track) discussing his poster

Winter Experience—Dr. Donald McCown

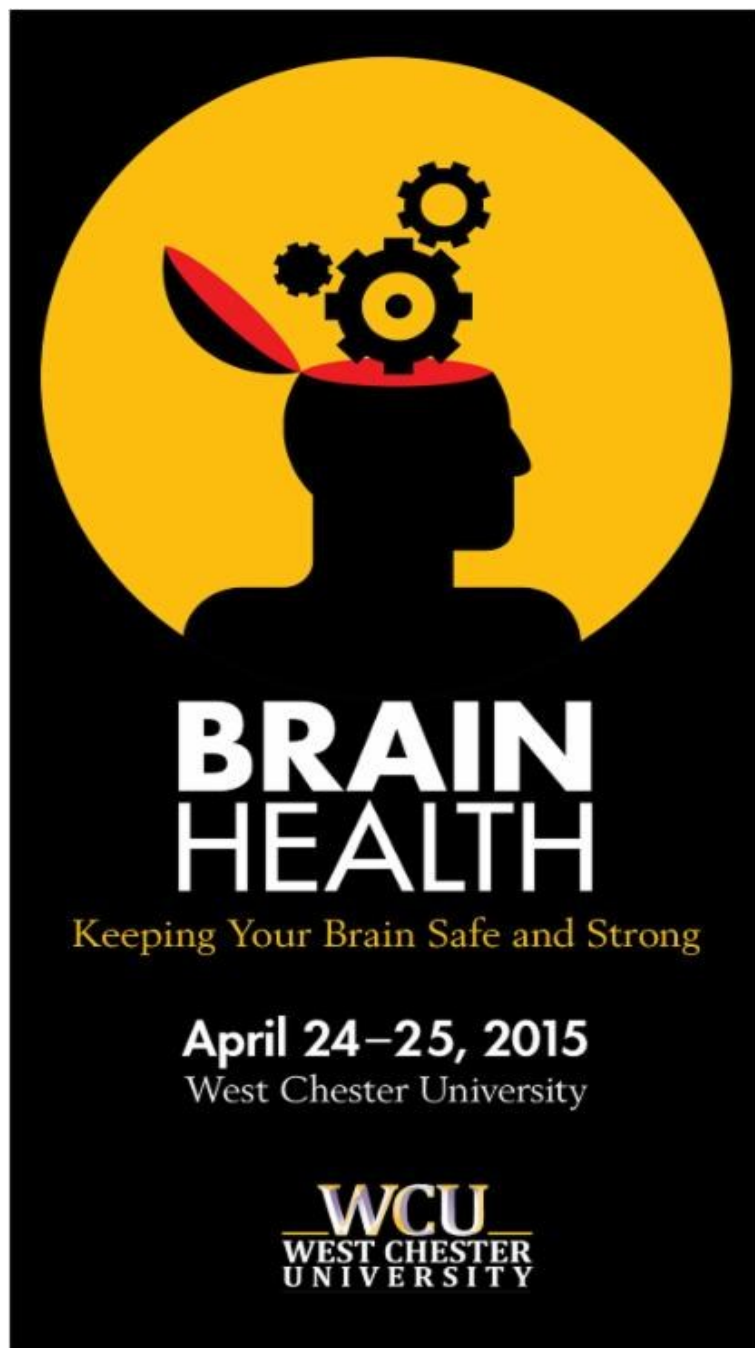
Donald McCown, PhD, MAMS, MSS, LSW, taught a winter course, HEA581: Exploring the Health Humanities through Art and Contemplation, in West Chester, PA and Houston, TX. The idea behind the course was to discover how the contemplative engagement of clinical professionals with artistic expressions of the human experience can promote capacities for attention, reflection, creativity, empathy, and compassion. Key to the course was a four-day trip to Houston, TX, for visits to the Menil Collection Art Museum, which offers ancient and contemporary art presented in spaces ideal for reflection and contemplation, as well as the Rothko Chapel, the Cy Twombly Gallery, and a campus sculpture garden. They also visited the James Turrell Skyspace at Rice University, and had guest lectures and a hands-on art workshop by faculty and staff of the Institute for the Medical Humanities at the University of Texas Medical Branch, and talks by faculty from the Institute for Spirituality and Health at the Texas Medical Center. The major project was a museum journal and a reflection paper through which students integrated the experiential, intellectual, and professional levels of learning in the course.



After an hour of contemplation of the paintings in the Rothko Chapel, some members of our group emerge (l to r): Mindy Moyer and Rebecca Fitzgerald, WCU MSW Students; Dr. Jerome Crowder and Amerisa Waters (PhD student) of the Institute for Medical Humanities at University of Texas Medical Branch; Desiree Tindle, WCU Integrative Health Certificate Student

List of MPH Advisors

MPH Advisor	Contact information	Students Assigned by Last Name
Community Health Track		
Lynn Carson, Ph.D., MPH, MCHES <i>Program Director</i>	Phone: 610-436-2138 Email: lcarson@wcupa.edu	A – E
Sharon Dejoy, Ph.D., MPH, CPH, CPM	Phone: 610-436-3531 Email: sdejoy@wcupa.edu	F – H
Stacie Metz Ph.D., MPH, MSW, MA	Phone: 610-436-2101 Email: smetz@wcupa.edu	I – O
Debra Bill, MPH, Ph.D., MCHES <i>Community Health track Coordinator</i>	Phone: 610-436-6941 Email: dbill@wcupa.edu	P – Z
Health Care Management		
Mathias Akuoko, Ph.D	Phone: 610-436-6975 Email: makuoko@wcupa.edu	A – C
Tanya Gatenby, Ph.D., CPH	Phone: 610-436-2113 Email: tgatenby@wcupa.edu	D – K
Harry Holt, Ph.D, JD, MBA	Phone: 610-436-2142 Email: hholt@wcupa.edu	L – O
Gopal Sankaran, MD., MNAMS, MPH, DrPH., CHES <i>Health Care Management Track Coordinator</i>	Phone: 610-436-2300 Email: gsankaran@wcupa.edu	P – Z
Nutrition Track		
Mary Beth Gilboy, MPH, Ph.D., RD, LDN <i>Nutrition Track Coordinator</i>	Phone: 610-738-0559 Email: mgilboy@wcupa.edu	A – M
Lynn Monahan, MPH, DCN, RD LDN	Phone: 610-738-3897 Email: lmonahan@wcupa.edu	N – Z
Environmental Track		
Charles Shorten, Ph.D., P.E. <i>Environmental Health Track Coordinator</i>	Phone: 610-436-2360 Email: cshorten@wcupa.edu	All Students



SAVE THE DATE

Concussion is not just a matter for athletes and their families. Brain injury and rehabilitation has become a matter of national interest, as we watch the devastating effects that continue to play out in the media. There exists a greater understanding now, about the need for extended and specialized rehabilitation. Expanded research into the area of brain plasticity has led to more comprehensive care and better outcomes for those affected.

The WCU College of Health Sciences invites you to the 2015 Spring Health Conference.

Friday, April 24 - Keynote Address
Asplundh Concert Hall, West Chester University
8:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Dr. Margot Putukian, Director of Athletic Medicine and Head Team Physician at Princeton University:
The Art & Science of Concussion: Translating Data into Concussion Prevention?"

This presentation is **FREE** to students (with ID), but should register through the **Spring Health Conference link**:

<http://wcuhealthsciences.ticketleap.com/spring-health-conference-brain-health/>

Saturday, April 25 - Conference
WCU Graduate Center, West Chester
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Admission fee. Register to obtain tickets.

Concussion Signs and Symptoms: Timely recognition and intervention to protect the athlete. Presenter: **David Stearne**, PhD, Associate Professor in Department of Kinesiology at West Chester University.

Concussion & Return to Learn: School Strategies & Symptom-Based Accommodations. Presenter: **Brenda Eagan Brown**, MEd, CBIS, Statewide Program Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Brain Injury School Re-Entry Consulting Program (BrainSTEPS).

Effects of Aging and Disease Processes on Communication. Presenters: **Jeanette Benigas**, PhD, CCC-SLP, Assistant Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders at West Chester University; and **Supraja Anand**, PhD, Assistant Professor of Communication Disorders at West Chester University.

Dietary and Lifestyle Approaches For Optimizing Brain Health. Presenters: **Patricia Davidson**, DCN, MS, RD, CDE, Assistant Professor, Department of Nutrition at West Chester University; and **Janet Lacey**, DrPH, RD, LDN, Professor, Department of Nutrition at West Chester University.

M.P.H. Poster Session

The Master of Public Health (MPH) Poster Session is an opportunity for student to showcase their research. Students are encouraged to attend the MPH Poster Session to view their fellow students' posters and handouts as attending these sessions will enable students to see the quality of posters and handouts that are expected of completed projects. The MPH poster session will be held on Friday, May 1 from 4.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m., in Rooms 116 C-D in Sturzebecker Health Sciences Center. For more information, contact Dr. Lynn Carson at 610-436-2138 or lcarson@wcupa.edu.

Graduate Certificate in Gerontology

New courses to be offered for the gerontology Certificate in Healthy Aging program:

Summer 2015 -- EXS 690, Exercise in Older Adults (online); Faculty: Dr. Melissa Reed

Fall 2015 -- HEA 548, A Life Span Approach to Public Health (online); Faculty: Dr. Mary Elizabeth Bowen

HEA581: Special Topic: Introduction to Teaching Mindfulness

Faculty: Drs. Donald McCown (Health) and Christine Moriconi (Nursing).

Through this experiential, accelerated course, students will establish or deepen a personal mindfulness practice, develop the essential skills of mindfulness pedagogy, and apply their learning by designing and delivering a workshop derived from the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) curriculum for a group or population in the West Chester area community.

This course will take place across three consecutive weekends, May 29/30, June 6/7, and 13/14, allowing time for personal mindfulness practice to develop. Register for this summer session I.

Content will be based on Dr. McCown's book, *Teaching Mindfulness: A practical guide for clinicians and educators*; material will include group management and process, guidance of meditation, inquiry into participant's experiences, and ethics of mindfulness-based interventions.

The Master of Public Health Student Advisory Board
presents

Preparing for your future : A panel of Health Professionals

Please join us for a night of professional development and networking, where West Chester University MPH alumni/ae will discuss how they started out in the profession of health and human services. Our six panelists work in a variety of settings from hospitals, non-profits, government agencies and higher education.



Thursday, April 16, 2015
7:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m., Sturzebecker Health
Sciences Center 116A

HEA 435/581(41): Special Topics: Adolescent Health Issues—Challenges and Opportunities

Faculty: Gopal Sankaran, MD, DrPH, MNAMS, CHES

Summer Session III: August 5, 6, 7, 10, & 11, 2015 ; 8.00am-5.00pm (Wed, Thu, Fri, Mon, and Tue)

Adolescence is a period for personality development and experimentation that might include health-related risk behaviors. An overview of adolescent development will provide the foundation for this course. Thereafter, this course will offer an overview of adolescent health risk behaviors that result in major public health issues such as intentional and unintentional injuries, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, alcohol and other substance abuse, mental health conditions, distorted body image, and other conditions. Prevalence and trends of various health conditions along with their underlying causes will be examined. Policies, programs and services for adolescents will be highlighted along with the role of prevention in addressing adolescent health issues. An evidence-based approach to addressing adolescent health issues will be emphasized. All participants are expected to be actively involved in the learning process. All majors welcome.

MPH Student Profiles

Mariam Bishara, MPH Candidate, Nutrition Track

My academic background thus far includes a Bachelor of Science degree in Nutrition and Dietetics with a minor in Psychology at West Chester University (WCU). I began taking Master of Public Health (MPH) courses under the Fast Track program in the Fall 2013 semester. I began as a full time MPH student in Fall 2014. Currently, I am working towards my MPH in the Nutrition track at WCU. I am currently interning at Temple University School of Medicine as a Research Assistant Intern for my Applied Learning Experience. I am also currently working as the Graduate Assistant for the Department of Nutrition at WCU. In addition, I have also worked at various food service jobs in the past, including as a dietary aide at an senior assisted living center, hostess at a restaurant, and as a shift supervisor at Starbucks.

I first found out about the MPH program here at WCU in my junior year of undergraduate studies. I realized I was eligible for the Fast Track program at that point and the idea of being able to receive a master's degree in one year was very appealing to me. I found my career options with just a B. S. in Nutrition were rather limited and I realized that the range of job opportunities available for me would be much wider with an MPH. My choice of the Nutrition track in the MPH program was a result of me wanting to proceed with my undergraduate major further. Specifically, I wanted to explore nutrition on a wider context and discover the different public health implications associated with this field. Also, in my undergraduate work, I saw community nutrition to be my biggest interest in the major. Therefore, working towards an MPH degree under this specialization seemed like the most appropriate approach to take in getting further training and education on this subject. After exploring my different options, I am finding that my biggest career interest in the field thus far to be public health/nutrition related research. Some public health nutrition topics I find of great interest and would love to work with include obesity, food insecurity, food systems, and maternal and child health care.

Some of my general hobbies include reading, writing, art and drawing, cooking, baking, running, and being outside/doing different outdoor activities (mostly when the weather is nice). One animal that best describes me would be a turtle. Turtles are known to go at a slower and steadier pace, which is how I tend to be when completing any tasks or responsibilities. Turtles are known to be progressive but pace themselves, which is how I view myself in many aspects of my life. Like a turtle, I tend to be more reserved and have a 'shell', but come out of it as I become more comfortable and at ease with my surroundings.



Pamela Vu, MPH Candidate, Environmental Health Track

I have a Bachelor of Arts in Chemistry from Temple University. After graduating with my undergraduate degree, I worked as a Food Science Lab Technician at Clemens Food Group. The affordability and location of the WCU's MPH program was what attracted me to WCU. Also the various amount of concentration the program offered and the small classroom size were qualities that caught my attention and interest.

Having a background in science attracted me to the Environmental Health Track. I wanted to learn how physical, biological and chemical factors in the environment can potentially harm the health of the public. I was enrolled into the MPH program by the Fall semester of 2014. My career aspirations are to work in environmental safety in the workplace.

I really enjoy reading, trying new foods, visiting museums and exercising. The animal that best describes me is a Sumatra rhinoceros because I can be very shy. I try to avoid being the center of attention at all costs. Although I am very friendly, I typically enjoy spending time at home alone with a book.



WCU MPH (HCA Track) Alumnus — Michael Cimmino, MPH

I earned a BS in Biology from the University of Pittsburgh before going on to West Chester University for my MPH. While completing my undergraduate degree I worked as a campus Peer Health Educator, which spurred my interest in the Public Health field. I completed an internship with both the Paoli Hospital Trauma department and with the Community Health department at Lancaster General Hospital. I started the MPH program in the fall of 2009 and graduated in December of 2011.

My past work experience include: Peer Health Educator, University of Pittsburgh; Research Analyst, Holleran Consulting. Currently, I am a Policy Analyst (Lead Provider Compliance Analyst and Regulations Coordinator), Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Baltimore, Maryland, where my duty involves providing policy analysis and programmatic support in the development and implementation of Medicaid provider compliance projects such as audits and enrollment. The majority of this work involves Maryland's implementation of provider risk-based screenings as mandated by the Affordable Care Act. I have also taken on the role as Maryland Medicaid's Regulations Coordinator. This involves providing technical assistance writing and submitting proposals for state regulation changes related to the Medicaid program.

My most challenging moment while enrolled in the MPH program in Health Care Administration at WCU was completing my Applied Learning Experience. It really was the application of all that I had learned over my two years in the program. I think what contributed most to the challenge was locating a site to complete the ALE in such a short amount of time. It took longer than expected and caused me to fall short on time for other aspects of the project.

As a piece of advice, I recommend students begin thinking about their project and site long before their ALE semester begins. Students should plan ahead if it is not something they can complete at your current place of employment. However, as I mentioned, the experience allowed me to apply all that I had learned and was a welcomed test of my abilities. In the end, it paid off and was very rewarding.

Transitioning from being a graduate student to a master's level health professional, I think could be one of the biggest challenges for someone finishing graduate school and not currently working in the field, as this was the case for me. Luckily, I was able to land a position within a month of graduating. The biggest mistake students can make is assuming that they are guaranteed a job because they have completed this level of education. I think it is important to be proactive. Students currently in the program should begin networking as soon as possible. Also, do not hesitate to put yourself out there and volunteer or take on unpaid internships. For me, the experience I gained from volunteering turned out to be extremely valuable and was a large part of how I ended up in my current position.

I find it very difficult to choose just one skill acquired during my MPH program that has been useful in my work so far because I use everything I learned quite frequently from strategic management to evidence-based public health. The skills that you learn from these courses are applicable in so many different ways outside of the classroom that they are invaluable. However, I will say one of the most useful skills has been a sound understanding of statistics and it's applicability in the professional/real-world setting. While I was in undergrad I was very active in extracurricular activities and campus organizations. This involvement turned out to be very fulfilling and enriching in the end. I wish I had become involved like this during my graduate career at WCU. Towards the end however, I had the chance to work closely with some of my professors, which turned out to be very rewarding. There's so much they have to offer outside of the classroom. I think it's important to remember while you may receive perfect grades by just going to class and handing in your work on time, grad school is an opportunity for more than that. The more you put into it, the bigger benefit you'll receive from it.

My hobbies include traveling, hiking, anything to increase my physical activity, drawing, and painting.



WCU MPH (CH track) Alumnus—Mark Lewis, MPH

Having enjoyed his undergraduate experience at West Chester University, Mark Lewis decided to continue his graduate level education there as well. He described how his professors were all very knowledgeable and supportive and offered countless pearls of wisdom and advice. After earning his master's degree, he landed a job at the University of Pennsylvania leading research efforts in firearm and violence-related research. From there he transitioned to McNeil Consumer Healthcare, to work in their department of global quality control before joining the Cancer Treatment Center's of America, his current place of employment. During his tenure at CTCA, he has been intimately involved in corporate quality, intellectual property and innovation division, and he is now working to grow our clinical research program. He says the amount of preparation and confidence WCU instilled, has aided him in his career advances and in evaluating the choices along the way.



WCU MPH Alumna (HCM Track)—Ethel Richards, MBA, MPH, CPH

The opportunity to pursue her Master of Public Health full-time at night while still working a full-time job during the day made WCU an easy choice for Ethel. Although the commute could be rough—she drove 60 miles each way, three days a week—Ethel says that “attending WCU changed the trajectory of [her] life.”

Ethel's concentration in Health Care Administration landed her the first administrative internship to the office of the president at Fox Chase Cancer Center. From the network she built at Fox Chase, she became a COTH (Council of Teaching Hospitals) Fellow and formed connection with the National Association of Health Services Executives as well as the American College of Health Care Executives.



Today, Ethel is the strategic operations specialist at Cancer Treatment Centers of America Eastern Regional Medical Center, an adjunct professor in the School of Health Science and Liberal Arts at Philadelphia University, a youth leader, Sunday school teacher, and Director of the FLC Scholarship Fund at her Church.

Faculty Scholarly Accomplishments

Scholarly Activities

- Adegboyega, O. (GA, MPHc HCM Track), & **Sankaran, G.** (2015). Non-communicable diseases: The importance and urgent need for intersectoral action. Poster presentation at the Research Day at West Chester University, Pennsylvania on Tuesday, March 24.
- Barks, L., Luther, S., Brown, L., Schulz, B., **Bowen, M. E.**, & Powell-Cope, G. (Accepted). Development and Initial Validity of the Seated Posture Scale. JRRD.
- Bowen, M. E.**, & Paris, B. (GA, MPHc CH Track) are working with Kendal Communities on a community needs assessment of additional elderly programs and services in West Chester, Kennett Square, and Coatesville areas.
- Bowen, M. E.**, & Casola, A., (MPHc Community Health Track) is working on an analysis of the Kennett Food Cupboard. Specifically, we are focusing on the barriers and facilitators to healthy eating among Latino seasonal migrant workers in the area.
- Bowen, M. E.**, & Ruch, R., (MPH Alumna) have their publication on the Latino health and depression paradox (also presented at WCU Research Day) under review at the Journal of Aging and Health.
- Bowen, M. E.**, Barnett, S., Rowe, M. (Accepted). Characteristics of and Barriers to Functional Status Assessment in Assisted Living. Res Geron Nurs.
- Bowen, M. E.**, Casola, A. (2015). Healthy Eating among Clients at a Rural Food Cupboard. APHA. (Under Review).
- Bowen, M. E.**, Rowe, M. (2015). Measuring Acute and Long-Term Changes in Functional Status in a Population of Older Adults in Assisted Living. Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, Nashville, TN, March 2015.
- Bowen, M. E.**, Rowe, M. (2014). Ambulation Changes Among Older Adults in Assisted Living: Implications for the Prevention of Functional Decline. Gerontological Society of America, Washington, DC, November 2014.
- Cai, WW, Bieger, G. R., & **Sankaran, G.** (2015). The Global Perspective among College Students: A Cross-country Research Study. Oral presentation at the 2015 American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting at Chicago, Illinois, April 16-20.
- Dhananjaya, M., (MPHc CH Track), Achenbach, J., & **Sankaran, G.** (2015). Tuberculosis Practice Patterns of Health Care Facilities in Chester County. Poster presentation at the Research Day at West Chester University, Pennsylvania on Tuesday, March 24.
- McCown, D.** (2015). Invited keynote Speaker and facilitator. The Mindful Campus: Creating Physical and Contemplative Space for Reflection, Connection and Interconnection. Keynote elucidated the title of the conference. Two-day conference at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Other talks and workshops that he offered included a special session for health care staff, a workshop for students entitled, "Beyond Distraction: Focusing, Centering, and Taking Control," and an exploration of meditation practices for faculty and staff. The second day of the conference comprised the spring Center for Teaching Excellence reflective practice workshop, which he moderated, and which included presentations by IUP faculty from the IUP Mindfulness Reflective Practice Teaching Circle. The weekend was sponsored by the IUP Division of Student Affairs, the Center for Health and Wellbeing, and the Center for Teaching Excellence.
- McCown, D.** (2015). developed and presented three continuing education seminars under the auspices of the Center for Contemplative Studies: Feb 3, Yoga and Yoga Therapy, presented by Alison Donley of the WCU Kinesiology Department; March 24, A Mindful Campus: Cultivating awareness and connection in a distracted world, presented by Don McCown, WCU Health Department; and April 24, Qualitative Research in Mindfulness-Based Interventions, Michelle Mamberg, Bridgewater State University, MA. Dr. Mamberg also presented a session for MPH and MSW students, April 24.
- McCown, D.** (2015). Invited Presenter and Keynote respondent, Spring Conference: Meeting the World: Exploring ethics, values and responsibility in bringing mindfulness into society. In addition to his talk, "Relational and Sublime: Exploring the ethics and atmosphere of the MBSR classroom, at Center for Mindfulness at University of Massachusetts Medical School (where Jon Kabat-Zinn developed Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)).

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Faculty Scholarly Accomplishments

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- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Invited Reviewer, Abstracts submitted to the International Health Section for presentation at the 143rd Annual Meeting of American Public Health Association in Chicago, Illinois, October 31-November 4. Reviewed 22 abstracts in the areas covering HIV/AIDS, Reproductive Health and Family Planning, Social Determinants of Health, Women's Health, and Student Panel.
- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Invited Policy Reviewer, Policy Statements submitted to the American Public Health Association for consideration by the Governing Council at the 143rd Annual Meeting of American Public Health Association in Chicago, Illinois, October 31-November 4.
- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Invited Presenter, You...Student Leaders and Social Justice, at the Global Leadership Series for student leaders, organized by the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement, at West Chester University, Pennsylvania on Friday, February 27.
- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Invited Panelist for 2015 Distinguished Lecturer Series, Forgotten Epidemics: Understanding the resurgence of preventable diseases, organized by the Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences, at the Lancaster General Hospital, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, April 8. (Coverage on LancasterOnline at http://lancasteronline.com/news/local/panel-public-pressure-s-needed-in-vaccine-debate/article_de569e6e-de35-11e4-8491-bb05a8e01025.html.)
- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Invited Presenter, Workshop on Assessing Individual and Community Needs and Assets for Health Education (Responsibility I) in a CHES Test Preparatory program at Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia on Saturday, April 11.
- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Invited Presenter, Workshop on Conducting Evaluation and Research Related to Health Education (Responsibility IV) in a CHES Test Preparatory program at Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia on Saturday, April 11.
- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Selected as a member of the delegation for West Chester University-Turkey Initiative to visit several universities in Turkey in mid-May to initiate collaboration with them for institutional partnerships. This effort is organized in conjunction with the Peace Islands Institute, Philadelphia.

Grant:

DeJoy, S. (2015). Received grants from the WCU Foundation and the Association of Teachers of Maternal Child Health to develop, implement, and evaluate an educational workshop for public health professionals and health care providers on the sensitive treatment of pregnant client with obesity. Speakers will include Dr. DeJoy, co-investigator Dr. Deborah Mandel from Nursing, and Dr. Janell Mensinger from Drexel University, a health psychologist. Due to the generosity of the sponsors, the workshop will be offered free to the community on Friday, May 1 in WCU's Graduate Business Center. The workshop leaders have applied for four Continuing Education Units from the Pennsylvania State Nurses Association and The National Commission for Health Education Credentialing. The workshop will draw from a theoretical framework developed by Dr. DeJoy, which was recently published in Maternal Child Health Journal, and a research study co-authored by Drs. DeJoy and Mandel currently under review by the Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health. MPH alumna Krystle Bittner is also a co-author on both articles. This interdisciplinary project employs two College of Health Science undergraduate students as research assistants. The faculty and students hope to be invited to present the findings of this pilot project at the International Obesity Stigma Conference in Reykjavik, Iceland in September.

Service:

McCown, D. (2015). As member of the Taos Institute Associates Council helped to plan and led a block of afternoon workshops for a plenary meeting of Associates, held April 30 to May 3, Santa Fe, NM.

Professional Development Activities

- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Participated in the 13th Annual Faculty Conference on Teaching, organized by and held at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Thursday, January 8.
- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Participated in the Student Learning Retreat, organized by the Teaching and Learning Center at West Chester University, Pennsylvania on Thursday, January 15.
- Sankaran, G.** (2015). Participated online in the 7th Annual Health Disparities Conference, organized by Teachers College, Columbia University on March 6 & 7.

2015 Delta Omega Honor Society Inductions

The Beta Xi Chapter of the Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health at West Chester University is pleased to announce this year's MPH student inductees. Each year, Delta Omega elects new student members based on high academic standards and outstanding performance in scholarship, research, and community service. Election of membership in Delta Omega is intended to not only recognize merit, but also to encourage and further excellence in and devotion to public health work.

Founded in 1924, Delta Omega is a national honor society existing to encourage research and scholarship among graduate students of public health and to recognize attainment and achievement in the field of public health. With over 50 active chapters across the country, Delta Omega and its members are dedicated to ensuring the quality of the field of public health and to the protection and advancement of the health of all people.

This year's Delta Omega MPH student inductees are:

Pamela Z. Poe, Community Health
Allison R. Casola, Community Health
Lauren A. Totaro, Community Health
Amy K. Pillay, Community Health
Rachel A. Hykel, Community Health
Stacy E. Wright, Community Health
Dana Vannicola, Community Health
Brenda Frutos, Community Health
Nicole E. Miller, Nutrition

Congratulations to all our MPH student inductees!

For more information about Delta Omega, please visit the National Chapter's website at www.deltaomega.org.

