LEADING THE WAY
in the Emergency Preparedness Field
Photo taken by Cammeo Mauntel-Medici (MPH ’13) in a rural village near Riohacha, Colombia. Here a Wayuu woman knits a purse, each of which takes about 3 full days of work to complete. Ms. Mauntel-Medici spent 11 months in Colombia, where she studied epidemiology at the Universidad of Antioquia and completed her practicum experience working with a team of epidemiologists to study tuberculosis in the prisons of Medellin, Colombia.

Class: In her role as Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response, Dr. Suzet McKinney (PhD ’09) leads a press conference during the extreme weather conditions that Chicago experienced in the winter of 2013.

Jill McClain, Design 23
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In This Issue
1 Dean’s Desk
2 Students
3 Pulse of Public Health
4 SPHere
5 Neighborhood Commitment
8 National Scope/Global Impact
12 Research
15 Advancing Health
18 Community Partner Spotlight
19 Class Acts
21 Alumni Notes

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1 Dean’s Desk
2 Students
3 Pulse of Public Health
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12 Research
15 Advancing Health
18 Community Partner Spotlight
19 Class Acts
21 Alumni Notes

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The fall is always a busy time at the UIC School of Public Health, and this year is no exception. With the recent news of the Ebola outbreak, many of our faculty and alumni are fighting the spread of the disease on the ground and ensuring communities around the world are prepared for a future outbreak. Did you know that we offer a Certificate in Public Health Emergency Preparedness? Or that one of our alumni is responsible for leading Chicago’s efforts as the Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response? I’m very proud of our efforts, some of which are highlighted on pages 6-7.

Also in this issue of Healthviews, you’ll read about how two of our undergraduate students spent their summers working to make the UIC campus a healthier place (page 2) and about our commitment to addressing climate change (pages 3-5). Key research that is taking place at the UIC School of Public Health is showcased on pages 12-14, where each of our four divisions is highlighted.

In the Advancing Health section, we announce a very special opportunity to support our Global Health Initiative. An anonymous donor has issued a $250,000 matching gift challenge to help our students continue their work around the globe! Please read about their work in the National Scope/Global Impact section on pages 8-9, and then I hope you will consider making a gift to the Global Health Initiative to take advantage of this matching opportunity!

Lastly, I hope you enjoy reading an article about an alumna who has generously made an estate plan that includes the UIC School of Public Health. Many times when I meet alumni who benefitted from scholarship support when they were a student, they talk about “paying it forward” to support scholarships for current students. If you are interested in learning more about our new Legacy Society, which honors donors who have made plans for a deferred gift to the school, please contact Craig Hyland, Assistant Dean for Advancement, at craigh@uic.edu.

As always, I look forward to having you join us at one of the many events we have planned during the year.

Paul Brandt-Rauf, DrPH, MD, ScD
Dean, UIC School of Public Health
According to the World Health Organization, public health refers to all organized measures (whether public or private) to prevent disease, promote health, and prolong life among the population as a whole. Its activities aim to provide conditions in which people can be healthy and focus on entire populations. Public health is concerned with the total system and not only the eradication of a particular disease.

A holistic approach to promoting health is what attracted two current students to pursue their undergraduate degrees at the UIC School of Public Health. Mikita Lee, a junior, and Hulliams Kamlem, a senior, were both involved in activities where they used their knowledge of public health to benefit the UIC campus.

Ms. Lee was one of six UIC students who traveled to Washington, DC over the summer as part of a delegation to present UIC’s bid for the Obama Presidential Library. As Chicago’s only public research university and one of the most diverse campuses in the nation, members of the delegation said they felt UIC was the ideal institution to host the library. Hulliams Kamlem measures trees on the UIC campus as part of the Office of Sustainability internship.

As one of thirteen institutions that submitted an application to host the library back in June, UIC was named one of four finalists. Ms. Lee’s role at the presentation included sharing information about how a library would impact the underserved community of North Lawndale in which it would reside. She spoke about the connection between healthy, vibrant communities and the health of the people living in those communities. A historical building like the Presidential Library would offer the children of the community the resources they need to do better in school,” she explained. “In addition, this library would add value to the community, encouraging others to invest in it as well.”

Ms. Lee’s own background helped her see the value in adding this library to this community. “I live in a community where there are limited resources to make people healthier!” She drew upon her personal experience when she spoke with congressional staff for Reps. Danny Davis, Luis Gutierrez and Mike Quigley, Sen. Dick Durbin and staff of the Barack Obama Foundation. She was honored to represent UIC and bring with her the public health perspective on why UIC should be chosen to house the library. “There aren’t many people who can understand my perspective on health issues,” explained Ms. Lee, who aspires to work for the federal government one day. “Public health is about helping communities that lack the financial resources” and she believes this resonates with President Obama’s agenda.

While Ms. Lee was in Washington, DC advocating on behalf of UIC, her classmate, Mr. Kamlem was on the quad measuring trees. Through the UIC Office of Sustainability, Hulliams recorded tree measurements for UIC’s tree inventory, a project affiliated with Tree Campus USA. Equipped with the right tools, he noted each tree’s height, diameter and crown spread. The measurements were recorded in i-Tree, an app used to map trees on campus.

“i walked around campus and saw them, but I never really thought about trees and how important they are, and how pretty they are,” said Mr. Kamlem. Now he has a favorite tree, a catalpa. “That wouldn’t have happened if I didn’t do this internship.”

The connection between an internship in sustainability and a degree in public health was a natural fit for Mr. Kamlem. “Sustainability offers the lens through which every health policy, intervention, or plan should be studied,” he said. He believes that solving health issues through measures that simultaneously value the ecosystem and do not undermine resources for future generations is essential. “Public health looks holistically at ways to improve health. This framework makes it so appealing because it involves all of us, gets at the heart of all fundamental human issues, and looks for solutions.”

Evidence suggests that the world’s climate is becoming warmer, increasing the potential for extreme weather events around the globe. What role can public health professionals play in addressing this challenge?

Climate change has already begun to impact the 10 essential services provided by health departments, and this will only increase in the coming decades. Emergency preparedness specialists need to know that scenarios of extreme weather events need to be updated, and to include complex and cascading events, like power failures with heat waves, or flooding with contamination of drinking water sources.

– Sam Dorevitch, MD
Associate Professor, Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

Public health practitioners have a broad range of roles to play in the challenge of climate change. By providing technical assistance to community-based organizations implementing both family planning and environmental services to communities in ecological hot spots, I am playing a role in reducing family size and providing alternative livelihoods for communities who have been dependent on decreased natural resources.

– Hannah Foehringer Merchant, MPH ‘12
Associate Professor, Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

We can help address this challenge by looking for approaches that provide co-benefits to health and climate action and making those connections evident in our work and to the public.

– Cynthia Klein-Banai, PhD ‘10
Associate Chancellor for Sustainability
University of Illinois at Chicago

First, public health professionals can act as role models by finding ways to reduce their own carbon footprints. Second, they can spread the word that climate change is real and happening now including impacting people’s health (it is estimated that currently 300,000 people die worldwide each year from climate change and that number will grow). Finally, they can become politically active on this issue supporting candidates and policies that will help address climate change.

– Paul Brandt-Rauf, DrPH, MD, ScD
Dean, UIC School of Public Health

Some of the roles those in public health can play include active participation in public education efforts, surveillance of health outcomes, and planning for how health resources should be directed to anticipate future needs in order to minimize the impacts to the most sensitive populations.

– Mark D. Johnson, PhD, DABt
Regional Director, Senior Environmental Health Scientist, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
By taking this class, students will be prepared to lead an effort to prepare a health department or a non-profit organization for the health impacts of climate change. Guest speakers have included the Illinois State Climatologist and the director of Climate and Health Program at CDC.

"Most schools of public health aren’t doing this yet,” he said.

Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf, DrPH, MD, ScD, said he would like to grow the faculty in global health with an emphasis on climate change and add at least one more professorship focused on climate change.

“Climate change is the single biggest global public health issue there is,” Dean Brandt-Rauf said.

Dean Brandt-Rauf said the school has had tremendous support from the faculty, students and some donors on this issue, which has enabled the school to be at the forefront and allow students, such as Ms. Tagle, to have practical experience in the field.

"That is always going to be engrained in my head.”

Ms. Tagle, to have practical experience in the field.

I n the remote Ddegeya Village in Uganda, second year Community Health Sciences student Michelle Tagle, who was doing a field experience for her Master of Public Health degree, was given advice that she said will guide everything she does for the rest of her life.

"Climate-proof everything you do,” Ms. Tagle was told by the Ugandan representative to the United Nations on climate change. "That is always going to be engrained in my head.”

Ms. Tagle was a recipient of the Warren Lavey and Dr. Holly Rosencranz Climate Change Impact Award, which was created to encourage research and dissemination of information on the adverse public health impacts of global climate change.

"Uganda is known as the pearl of Africa," Ms. Tagle said, who added that weather there had always been consistent and good for planting. "They never had an issue with climate change, but now they are seeing it.”

Climate change in Uganda is causing multiple public health problems, including flooding, which causes displacement and problems with planting; water borne diseases; changes in infectious diseases and more.

These are some of the same problems that climate change has caused in the U.S. Here, changes in precipitation patterns due to climate change have led to premature deaths, respiratory and cardiovascular problems and infectious diseases.

Leading the way on this issue at the UIC School of Public Health is Dr. Sam Dorevitch, an associate professor in the Division of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, who along with his team, received a four-year, nearly $1 million grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Environmental Health, for their project titled "BRACE: Building Resilience Against Climate Effects in Illinois.” The team will develop a Climate and Health Adaptation Plan for Illinois to address the consequences of climate change and associated extreme weather events.

"Climate change affects health,” Dr. Dorevitch said. “We are helping the Illinois Department of Public Health and local health departments throughout Illinois adapt to climate change.”

Dr. Dorevitch is also the professor of a course offered for the first time last spring called Climate Change and Public Health.

Warren Lavey said that he and his wife, Holly Rosencranz, who is an internal medicine physician who graduated from the UIC College of Medicine in 1982, have been trying for years to get students to think about the global impact of climate change, which is one of the main reasons they established the Climate Change Impact Award.

"Every student should be attuned to climate change and its impact on global public health,” he said.

Climate change affects so many aspects of public health, such as food security, availability of drinking water, ability to grow crops, communicable diseases and more, Mr. Lavey said.

"I believe the individual can make a difference, even though we have to move billions of individuals in the right direction,” Mr. Lavey said.

Choose an energy-efficient, high-mile per-gallon car

Set your thermostat low in the winter and high in the summer

Ride a bike (be sure to wear a helmet!)

Take public transportation

Take a train instead of a plane

Make your house or apartment more energy efficient by ensuring it is well-insulated

Reduce the size of your home or apartment

Become a vegetarian (it is good for you and the environment)

Grow a garden

Plant a tree

ARE YOU DOING YOUR PART TO SAVE THE PLANET?

While recycling is an important part of making the world a greener place, if you really want to reduce your carbon footprint here are some tips that will make an impact:

• Choose an energy-efficient, high-mile per-gallon car

• Set your thermostat low in the winter and high in the summer

• Ride a bike (be sure to wear a helmet!)

• Take public transportation

• Take a train instead of a plane

• Make your house or apartment more energy efficient by ensuring it is well-insulated

Redevelop an old building to reduce the need for new construction

Burn food instead of food waste

Dr. Sam Dorevitch

Michelle Tagle is left, second row, and Michelle Tagle, a student at the Engyea Health Clinic in Ddegeya, Uganda, is right.

Warren Lavey and Dr. Holly Rosencranz

Michelle Tagle is left, second row, and Michelle Tagle, a student at the Engyea Health Clinic in Ddegeya, Uganda, is right.
Educating the Best to Plan for the Worst

A Tornado Hits Your Community and You need to set up a shelter and get your residents there safely. About 40 percent of your residents are foreign born and there are 100 different languages spoken. How do you communicate with the residents and get them to the shelter without causing panic? How do you treat those who have been injured by the tornado?

These are just some of the many scenarios that Master of Public Health candidate Frankie Catalfumo contemplated during his summer internship at the Village of Skokie, where he worked on a disaster preparedness project. Mr. Catalfumo said that students would benefit from receiving the certificate, as emergency response and planning is a growing field in today’s workforce. “Almost any business operation — government, private, or voluntary — is at risk of some sort of emergency happening for which they will need to respond,” he said. “Responding to these emergencies is one of those ‘other duties as assigned’ and must be thought of ahead of time.”

Dr. Turnock said that certain kinds of emergencies have garnered public attention – from terrorism, to anthrax, to even routine flooding and tornadoes. “The more these events are publicized, the more the public expects prompt and professional responses,” he said. “And that can only happen through training, planning and preparation.”

Suzet McKinney, DrPH, who oversees two departments, and a staff of 150 at the Chicago Department of Public Health, developed much of the content for the Certificate in Public Health Emergency Preparedness. Dr. McKinney also teaches most of the online courses for the certificate. Dr. McKinney said that after completing the certificate program, students will leave with the strong foundational knowledge they need to enter the field as a practitioner in the emergency preparedness field. “We give students knowledge and experience that makes them more marketable,” she said.

Dr. McKinney, who received her DrPH from UIC in 2009, credits the education she received at the school for allowing her to obtain the position she now holds, where she oversees two departments, and a staff of 150 with a combined budget of $26 million. She is also working with the U.S. Department of Public Health to assist Poland with a plan to prepare for bioterrorism. “The UIC School of Public Health gave me the tools to be successful as a deputy commissioner,” she said. “One thing they said (to all of the DPVH candidates) was that their goal was to prime us to be leaders in public health, not just middle managers. They helped give me the confidence to lead.”

Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf, DPVH, MD, ScD said the online certificate is perfect for both practicing public health professionals and students at the UIC School of Public Health. “Part of the issue is that most people who practice public health were never trained in public health,” he said. So often, planning for a public health emergency can’t happen fast enough – such as in the case of the Ebola virus in many African countries, he said. “I was just in West Africa, and they knew they had a problem with public health preparedness,” he said. “But unfortunately, they did not have the time.”

Several UIC School of Public Health alumni are engaged in the battle against the Ebola outbreak. Nelli Westercamp, PhD, MPH (’06), who is an epidemic intelligence service officer with the malaria branch at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is currently in Uganda. “I worked on Ebola response as part of the International Infection Control team at the Emergency Operations Center in Atlanta in August and September, before coming to Uganda,” she said. Dr. Westercamp said the team provides technical expertise on controlling Ebola, including personal protective equipment in various health care settings, facility setup (tripe, isolation, decontamination), as well as infection control training materials and curriculum. Her husband, fellow alumnus, Matthew Westercamp (PhD ’13, MPH ’08), is in Liberia working on that country’s efforts to combat the disease.

Public health practitioners are the silent heroes, Dean Brandt-Rauf said. “No one pays attention to public health until there is an emergency.”

He added, “And that can only happen through training, planning and preparation.”

Suzet McKinney, DrPH ’09, MPH, who serves as the Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response, and the Division of Women & Children’s Health at the Chicago Department of Public Health, developed much of the content for the Certificate in Public Health Emergency Preparedness. Dr. McKinney also teaches most of the online courses for the certificate. Dr. McKinney said that after completing the certificate program, students will leave with the strong foundational knowledge they need to enter the field as a practitioner in the emergency preparedness field. “We give students knowledge and experience that makes them more marketable,” she said. “That’s what I like about the students from UIC. They can handle that type of challenge.”

Dr. McKinney said that the education a student gets when they receive a certificate in Public Health Emergency Preparedness can make a person more desirable for any type of employer. “Private sector businesses have struggled with how to respond to emergencies and disasters just like we do,” she said. “The skills they learn are designed to make them analyze things and complete problems.”

Ms. Catalfumo, who is graduating in December and hoping to find a job in emergency response with an international humanitarian organization, or government public health organization, hopes the skills he has learned at the school and through his internship have made him marketable. “My education from the SPPH has made me a much stronger team player and leader,” she said. “Understanding how to collaborate and function while working towards one main goal is a skill that will get me very far in my field of emergency preparedness.”

Frank Catalfumo (left) assisting with Shokie’s Mass Flu Shot Clinic

In her role as Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response at the Chicago Department of Public Health, Suzet McKinney, DrPH, oversees the City’s disaster preparedness activities.

PREPARE TOGETHER
In a disaster, the people that surround you — your neighbors — will be the ones in your community that you and your family turn to for immediate help. That’s why it is always important to check on your neighbors and prepare as a community for emergencies, especially those that are seasonal like extreme heat and cold.

PREPARE TO HELP
Volunteer with the Chicago Medical Reserve Corps (CMRC) and use your skills to help Prepare Chicago for a public health emergency. CMRC has over 400 medical and non-medical professionals who assist in community/fair-based events, public health emergencies and local disasters. Fill out an online form at www.illinoishealth.org to become a CMRC volunteer or email ChicagoCMRC@cityofchicago.org.

WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY?
An event, either natural or manmade, that creates a health risk to the public.

TYPES OF PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES
Extreme weather conditions and natural disasters
• Deliberate releases of biological and chemical agents or radiological threats
• Epidemics and pandemics of influenza and other communicable diseases like Ebola

PREPARE YOUR FAMILY
Be aware of and prepare for your family’s unique needs in an emergency. Make a family plan in advance and build a readiness kit.

Make a Plan
Establish a family emergency plan that details how you will contact one another in an emergency. Outline how you will get to a safe place and how you will get back together if separated. Visit www.Ready.gov for more information on family emergency communication and planning.

Build a Kit
A family readiness kit includes essential items that can keep your family safe and healthy in an emergency. Make a kit for yourself, your family and your pets. Keep a kit in your home, your car and at work. A complete list of items to consider for your kit can be found at www.Ready.gov.

PREPARE CHICAGO
Because a Local Response is the Best Response, Prepare Chicago teaches residents how to plan their families, save and work together as a community and how to volunteer in an emergency.
Making a Difference in the Health of Populations Around the World

Colombia

Cammié Mauntel-Medici (MPH ’13) spent a year in Medellín where she took courses in the Master of Epidemiology program at the Universidad de Antioquia. She worked with a team of epidemiologists from the university to research tuberculosis in the local prisons, and worked to develop a clean water project for an indigenous community.

Uganda

Michelle Tagle, a student in community health sciences, joined a team of public health students at Makerere University School of Public Health to partner with local professionals where she learned about the country’s healthcare system. She worked on the Ambulance Program Evaluation and proposed service delivery alternatives that would improve cost-effectiveness and sustainability.

Botswana

Community health sciences student, Jana Young, worked at the Botswana-Baylor Children’s Clinic Centre of Excellence for her global health practicum. Her work included developing a genetics-focused curriculum for the monthly Teen Club, collaborating with the Consortium for African Genomics project, and interacting with adolescents around health and medicine.

Kenya

Michele Hom is a student in community health sciences who spent her summer working at Safe Water and AIDS Project (SWAP) in Kisumu, Kenya. She helped with a 1-year study to decrease maternal and infant deaths and increase delivery in health facilities. Her work included encouraging pregnant women to attend health clinics earlier for Antenatal Care (ANC) by using mobile technology to test clinic visits and health tips.

China

The Fogarty AIDS International Training and Research Program (AITRP) hosted President Ruosheng Jiang and four upper administrators from Kunming Medical University (KMU) in China on October 13, 2014. Funded by NIH since the year 2000, and directed by Dr. Judith Levy, Interim Director of Global Health and Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration, AITRP partners with academic institutions in four countries in providing AIDS research training. Drawing on a successful history of institutional partnership with the AITRP, the delegation met with representatives from health sciences colleges at UIC to discuss mutual interests and possible research, training, and faculty/student exchanges in health areas beyond those of HIV.

Gabonese Republic

Epidemiology student Bruce Larkin spent the summer in Gabon, where he led a survey study that measured HIV stigma and knowledge among adults. The results of the study will help local NGOs that measured HIV stigma and knowledge among adults. The results of the study will help local NGOs.

Student Exchange With Mexico’s National Institute of Public Health

In the summer of 2013, the UIC School of Public Health began a student exchange collaboration with El Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública (INSP) (National Institute of Public Health) in Cuernavaca, Mexico. UIC School of Public Health sent two MPH students to Cuernavaca to conduct their field practicums under the guidance of INSP faculty members. The institute, which offers over 25 graduate degree programs in the health sciences, is the only public health institution in Latin America that is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health.

The success of the exchange in its first year led the school to expand the partnership in the summer of 2014. This year, in addition to sending MPH candidate in community health sciences, Micaello Verro, to Cuernavaca, UIC School of Public Health hosted four MPH students from INSP. The students from Cuernavaca conducted summer field practicums with the following community and university partners.

• Liliana Marisol Ponse Ramos, a student focusing on social and behavioral sciences, worked with Dr. David Dullos on the Step-Up-to-Thrive model which empowers youth to reach their full potential.

• Maria Joselyn Bravo Ruvalecaba, a general physician, trained under Dr. Amparo Castillo in the field of diabetes prevention.

• Under the guidance of Janna Simon and Jessica Lynch at the Illinois Alliance to Prevent Obesity on the Rethink Your Drink campaign.

As Mexico is also combating obesity or confronting challenges faced by youth, the exchange represents the importance of a bi-directional flow of information between equally valuable partners to resolve today’s global health challenges, said Alyson Lofthouse, Associate Director, Global Health. “We can learn from each other. Upon conclusion of the practicum experience, all four students identified how they will incorporate what they learned into their work at home in Mexico.”

Dr. Jesus Ramirez-Valles, Division Director of Community Health Sciences, added, “This is a logical and natural exchange of talent that we hope to institutionalize. The School of Public Health looks forward to future collaboration with El Instituto Nacional de Salud Pública.”
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ATTRACTS VISITING SCHOLAR TO UIC

The team spirit and community engagement of the researchers the UIC School of Public Health are what brought me to Chicago,” says Nora Gottlieb, PhD. A Fulbright post-doctoral fellowship and additional support from the Jewish Federation’s Visiting Scholar Program, which is now based in the UIC School of Public Health, made the trip possible. Dr. Gottlieb arrived last May from Israel with her husband and 1-year old son.

“After completing her Master’s degree in 2005, Dr. Gottlieb brought me to Chicago,” says Nora Gottlieb, PhD. A Fulbright rights coordinator, and soon after she began to work on her PhD towards the social, economic and political factors that shape peoples’ and communities’ health. Growing up in Germany, she spent most of her time playing volleyball. “My academic education then followed a somewhat winding road,” she says. First, she obtained a state degree in medical permission in order to qualify for overseas work, she then enrolled in a European Master’s program in International Health. Based at Charité Medical School Berlin. “My thesis led me to Israel, where I have family, and to a close collaboration with the physicians for Human Rights (PHR-IL),” Dr. Gottlieb explains. “The goal of this joint venture was to examine and improve access to antenatal care among Bedouin-Arab women from unrecognized villages in South Israel.” This collaboration proved to be an eye-opening experience, which caused her to redirect herself from humanitarian and development assistance towards the social, economic and political factors that shape peoples’ and communities’ health.

At Ben-Gurion University in South Israel. For her dissertation, she investigated the political decision-making processes on documented and undocumented labor migrants’ health rights in Germany and Israel and their underlying rationales and values. “At the same time, I continued to volunteer with PHR-IL on issues related to migrants’ health rights. This work was invaluable for me in that it let me follow policy decisions through various institutional levels to the day-to-day impact on the health and lives of men and women living and working in Israel,” she says. Through the Jewish Federation’s Visiting Scholar Program, Dr. Gottlieb will spend one year working at the UIC School of Public Health in the Division of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences. “We are delighted to be the new home at UIC for the Visiting Scholar in Israeli Studies Program that is funded by the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago,” says Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf. “Among other things, this will help to solidify our existing partnership with Ben Gurion University as well as allow us to develop new relationships with other Israeli universities.”

Identifying a significant need, early in the first decade of the 21st century, the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago determined that it would add to its already-extensive campus-based activities by embarking on a type of project then new for it and rare in Jewish communal life: the advancement of serious study of Israel in local universities. With that decision taken and initial funding provided, the Federation’s Israel Studies Project was established. The project was first inaugurated at UIC in the Fall of 2007 and for the first time in the School of Public Health in the Fall of 2014. Administered through the school’s Global Health Program, Dr. Gottlieb will assist with several research projects dealing with low-wage workers’ health and will teach a course on Public Health Ethics in the Spring of 2015. “I find it very special for many UIC researchers are truly committed to working in inter-disciplinary teams and to doing community-based, practice-oriented research. It is a great opportunity for me to work with UIC faculty, students and community partners and to learn from their expertise and experience.”

Reversing the Tide of Violence in South Africa

Pastor Engel and the 12 CeaseFire team members have achieved enormous success. In their first year of implementation, the community experienced a 32% drop in non-fatal shootings and a 38% drop in homicides. By June 30, 2014, 11 out of the 13 beats covered by the CeaseFire program have exceeded 100 days with no gun fatalities. Not only are these results impressive, but Hannah Park's creative and diligent data collection includes a CeaseFire cell phone App to capture data on evolving violence hot spots in the area. Combining ease and efficiency, the App helps to predict and prevent violence.

• Detect and interrupt potentially lethal conflict: Trained Violence Interrupters and Outreach Workers walk the streets in branded black and yellow CeaseFire jackets, identifying the “hot spots,” deescalating ongoing tensions, and preventing retaliations.

• Identify and treat high-risk individuals: Outreach Workers play a critical role as mentor, practicing behavior modification and skills development, as well as providing resources for drug treatment, job preparation and access to employment.

• Change social norms: Through constant messaging and community dialogue, the CeaseFire team is working to drive away a deep-rooted fear in the community that being outdoors will result in falling victim to stray bullets.

Pastor Engel’s commitment to zero violence and ease in obtaining safety updates via text messaging.

“Leaving gang life requires a lot of will and courage.”

Pastor Engel and the 12 CeaseFire team members have achieved enormous success. In their first year of implementation, the community experienced a 32% drop in non-fatal shootings and a 38% drop in homicides. By June 30, 2014, 11 out of the 13 beats covered by the CeaseFire program have exceeded 100 days with no gun fatalities. Not only are these results impressive, but Hannah Park's creative and diligent data collection includes a CeaseFire cell phone App to capture data on evolving violence hot spots in the area. Combining ease and efficiency, the App helps to predict and prevent violence.

Reversing a tide of violence in South Africa’s Hannah Park community is remarkable. However, Pastor Engel and his team are not satisfied. “To one day reach 365 days of zero violence – that is our ultimate mission.”

Top, left: An image showing Hannah Park CeaseFire’s commitment to zero violence and ease in obtaining safety updates via text messaging.

Left: The Hannah Park CeaseFire team showing the sign for “Mission Zero.”
Division of Health Policy and Administration

HOW AND HOW WELL: The Public Health System serves low-income populations who are at high risk of falling through the cracks are the overarching research questions that concern Dr. Julie Darnell, Assistant Professor of Health Policy and Administration. They are interested in understanding the limited resources to meet the critical needs of underserved populations. For instance, in a recently-completed study of succession planning activities in local health departments (LHDs), Dr. Darnell examined the extent to which LHDs were involved in succession planning—a novel workforce strategy that has been shown in other settings to generate operational efficiencies. Such efficiencies may be especially desirable in LHDs, which face an aging workforce, increased demand for services, and chronic budgetary pressures. After a collaborative community needs assessment, Dr. Darnell has worked with Dr. Elizabeth Calhoun to develop and evaluate a patient navigation program, which have proliferated in safety net institutions to help the medically underserved obtain timely care by resolving barriers. Dr. Darnell is perhaps best known for her work on free clinics, which are volunteer-led, nonprofit organizations that deliver healthcare services to uninsured, low-income individuals at little or no cost. In 2006, she conducted a nationwide survey of free clinics—the first of its kind in nearly four decades. Data from her survey established that free clinics are an important adjunct to the formal safety net and showed that they are gap-fillers for low-income individuals. Currently, she is collaborating with AmeriCares and the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics, to conduct a second wave of her survey in early 2013. The 2013 free clinic survey will allow her to answer two questions: How do free clinics change over time, and what factors predict their survival? These questions are taken as part of a policy-relevant research project.

Division of Community Health Sciences

Dr. Rohan D. Jeremiah, Assistant Professor of Community Health Sciences has served as a subject matter expert in public health policy and administration. His research is a global public health researcher dedicated to addressing issues related to men's health and health inequities in the US and abroad. He is uniquely trained within the disciplines of Medical Anthropology and Public Health, and has worked in numerous countries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, and the US. Dr. Jeremiah is committed to developing public health strategies and interventions that will reduce adverse risk outcomes and enhance health promotion activities for at-risk men. Currently, he is collaborating with the Chicago Task Force For Immigration and Refugee Health. The state of Illinois remains a popular destination for migrant populations including recently arrived immigrants and refugees. However, the scope and scale of migration have evolved rapidly with more diverse groups, arriving with unique health needs driven by a combination of social, economic, geopolitical, demographic and environmental factors. Such factors are associated with domestic violence and sexual-risk behavioral patterns within the community. Through this collaborative project, Dr. Jeremiah is exploring the health needs of refugee men, and will develop contextually tailored interventions to enhance their health and social service programs.

In another study, Dr. Jeremiah is exploring the systemic presence of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and HIV/AIDS risk factors among minority Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) individuals. Research shows that many minority stressors have contributed synergically to the excess burden of disease, especially for socially marginalized and vulnerable populations. Such challenges have not been studied extensively to understand how minority LGBT individuals navigate multiple and overlapping negative health impacts (trauma, discrimination and homophobia) that correlate to their increased exposure to these health challenges. His focus is on the multidimensional psychosocial problems that are caused by adverse effects of syndemic conditions. The National Institutes of Health Loan Repayment Plan, on behalf of the National Institute for Minority Health and Health Disparities recently awarded this study.

Division of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

Dr. Robert Cohen, Clinical Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, is an occupational pulmonologist with a strong interest in mining populations, particularly coal miners. With his increased time commitment at the UIC School of Public Health in September of 2013, Cohen has built a diverse concentration on miners’ health, which includes clinical, research, and service components, called the Miners Health Study Group (MHSG).

The foundation of his clinical work is a $2.1 million, three-year award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to establish a new Black Lung Clinic Program consortium as an education and training program. An important part of the work done at the Black Lung Clinic Program is performed out of an outreach clinic in Springfield, where Occupational Medicine residents gain experience by working with Dr. Cohen to screen miners for pneumoconiosis. The Black Lung Center of Excellence, another award from HRSA, is providing consultation and support to all federally funded black lung clinics.

Dr. Cohen’s research, funded by the Alpha Foundation for the Improvement of Mine Safety and Health and the US Department of Labor (OSHA) Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), is focused on analyzing existing data systems including state and federal workers’ compensation systems as well as national health surveillance and workplace monitoring programs to better understand the determinants of adverse health and injuries in miners. The focus of this research is a better understanding of the causes of obstructive lung disease and cardiovascular disease in these vulnerable populations.

Key partners in this work include Dr. Craig Rose of the National Jewish Health in Denver, Dr. Judith Graber of Rutgers University, Dr. Edward Lee Petsonk of West Virginia University, Drs. Scott Laney and Eileen Story of The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health’s Division of Respiratory Disease Studies, and Drs. Leslie Stayner and Lee Friedman of the UIC School of Public Health.

Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Dr. Maria Argo, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, is an environmental and molecular epidemiologist whose research has focused on the health effects of arsenic exposure through the consumption of naturally-contaminated groundwater in rural Bangladesh. Arsenic is one of the most common naturally occurring contaminants found in the environment, and chronic exposure is associated with a number of health outcomes including cancers, cardiovascular, respiratory, liver, and kidney diseases, neurodevelopment, thyroid and steroid hormones levels, gene expression alterations, and endocrine-related phenotypes (i.e., linear growth, blood pressure, and insulin resistance) in children aged 2-7 years. The study will also evaluate whether genetic variants in an established arsenic-metabolism gene modify these associations. Through this research, Dr. Argo hopes to inform future arsenic prevention and remediation efforts towards public health interventions targeted to pregnant women, women of child-bearing age, and children.

Dr. Argo’s co-investigators include Dr. Victoria Persky and Dr. Jiu Liu from UIC, Dr. Habiba Khan from University of Chicago, and Dr. Joseph Graziano from Columbia University.

13
Promoting Health in Old Age

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HUMAN HISTORY, old age is now commonplace in a growing number of places in the world. By 2030, one in five Americans will be at least 65 years old. By 2050, over two billion older adults will populate the earth. This worldwide population shift will change and challenge economies, healthcare systems, cultures, communities and families.

Aging affects not only people who live beyond 65, Naoko Muramatsu says “We all are aging. It starts at birth and does not discriminate.”

Dr. Muramatsu, associate professor of community health sciences, has worked to improve the public health response to older adults and the people who care for them for more than 20 years. With cross-cultural policy analyses and intervention promotion measure. She also hopes it will help advance her career.

Over the course of a thirty-year career, Mrs. Spilotro helped develop the first home health care department at Rush Hospital, went on to become a CEO of a home care company, and traveled around the country to speak about standards for accrediting home health and hospice organizations. Her success, and her husband, Peter, say, is due in part to the education she received at UIC. When it came time to establish an estate plan, Mr. and Mrs. Spilotro knew that UIC would be one of the places they supported. “We wanted to give back to an institution that contributed so much to our success,” Mr. Spilotro said.

Mr. and Mrs. Spilotro became charter members of the UIC School of Public Health Legacy Society when they listed the school as a beneficiary of their estate. “By including the school in their estate plan, they are making a long-term and long-lasting investment in the future of public health,” said Craig Hyland, Assistant Dean for Advancement. “Their generous support will ensure that the UIC School of Public Health continues to provide financial support to the best and brightest of tomorrow’s leaders.”

Her philanthropic relationship with the school didn’t start when she and her husband decided to leave a gift in their will. As a member of the school’s alumni board throughout the 1980s, Mrs. Spilotro led an effort with fellow board member, Sharon Sharrett (MPH ’77), to raise the first endowed fund at the school honoring Dr. Paul Q. Peterson. “As a board, we wanted to do something that would have the largest impact for students and fundraising for scholarships made the most sense,” Mrs. Spilotro recalls. “I am excited to see that the school now has several endowed scholarships.”

The Spilotros’ gift to the school will support a registered nurse pursuing an advanced degree in public health. “Peter and I are fortunate to be able to do this. It just feels right,” Mrs. Spilotro said. “We hope our gift will inspire others who have been successful in their careers, and are in a financial position to do so, to give back.”

Alumna “Pays it Forward” Through Generous Estate Gift

A home care aide works with her client, a mother participating in Dr. Muramatsu’s study.

“Are all aging. It starts at birth and does not discriminate.”

“Are all aging. It starts at birth and does not discriminate.”

SAUNDRA SPILOTRO (MPH ’76) RECALLS the very day she first became interested in public health. She was an undergraduate student working on her nursing degree and, as part of her clinical work, she joined a visiting nurse on rotation. Helping care for people in their home was already part of Mrs. Spilotro’s life mission, but she knew that obtaining a Master’s degree in public health would help advance her career. “Nurses have a broad knowledge of health care,” she explains, “and I wanted a degree that would allow me to hold leadership positions where I would have the most impact.”

“The Impact

Legacy Society members invest in the future. Our members’ generosity creates opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff in many ways:

- Need and merit based tuition scholarships
- Merit based awards
- Research grants
- Student travel stipends
- Special communications

Legacy Society members enjoy many engagement opportunities.

Invitation to the annual Legacy Society reception
Invitation to an evening withLEGACIES AND LEADERS dinner
Exclusive invitations to private receptions at UIC SPH hosted lectures

Legacy Society members invest in the future. Our members’ generosity creates opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff in many ways:

Invitation to the annual Legacy Society reception
Invitation to an evening with Legacies and Leaders dinner
Exclusive invitations to private receptions at UIC SPH hosted lectures

Joining is easy:

Simply ask your attorney to change your will or revocable trust, or sign a new beneficiary designation for your retirement plan or IRA.

Your gift can be a stated sum of cash or a percentage of your estate, trust, retirement plan or IRA.

Deferred gifts can be directed to any fund or program at the school. They should be designated to the University of Illinois Foundation.

THE IMPACT

Legacy Society members invest in the future. Our members’ generosity creates opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff in many ways:

- Need and merit based tuition scholarships
- Merit based awards
- Research grants
- Student travel stipends
- Building updates and renovations
- Technology upgrades

THE BENEFITS

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We invite you to join the Founders Circle

UIC School of Public Health

The UIC School of Public Health has been sustained through the years by the generous gifts of many faithful friends. We are proud to honor the distinguished group of leadership donors who, year after year, help the University to prepare our students for success. Membership in the Founders Circle recognizes donors who make annual gifts of $500 or more to ensure we reach our goal of providing excellence in public health education and research, while serving local, national and international communities in need.

The Impact of Founders Circle

Founders Circle members invest in the future. Your support helps transform student ambition into action, ensuring that the UIC School of Public Health continues to maintain the highest level of distinction envisioned by its founders. Our members’ generosity creates opportunities for our students, faculty, and staff in many ways:

- Need and merit based tuition scholarships
- Merit based awards
- Research grants
- Student travel stipends
- Building updates and renovations
- Technology upgrades

Benefits of Founders Circle Membership

Founders Circle members enjoy many advantages, and are privy to a number of special invitations and engagement opportunities:

- Invitation to the ANNUAL FOUNDERS CIRCLE RECEPTION, including a “State of the School” presentation by Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf and featuring UIC SPH senior faculty and administrators.
- Invitation to AN EVENING WITH LEGACIES AND LEADERS DINNER, which celebrates the impact of UIC’s most generous donors, alumni, and friends.
- Exclusive invitations to PRIVATE RECEPTIONS at UIC SPH hosted lectures.
- SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS from Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf with up-to-date information on programs, priorities, issues, and events on campus and regionally.
- SPECIALIZED NAME TAGS provided at UIC SPH events.

Ways to Join the Founders Circle

Membership in the Founders Circle recognizes donors who make annual gifts of $500 or more. Joining is easy:

- Gifts to all UIC School of Public Health funds qualify for membership.
- Employee matching gifts count toward annual membership.
- Gifts can be made over multiple months via automatic credit/debit card payments.
- University of Illinois faculty and staff gifts may be made over multiple months via automatic payroll deduction.
- Membership in the Founders Circle must be renewed each year.

For more information about the Founders Circle, contact the Office of Advancement at SPHAdvancement@uic.edu or 312-355-4501.

An Anonymous Donor Gives $250,000 Matching Challenge Gift

As we celebrate five years of the UIC School of Public Health’s Global Health Program, a very generous donor is challenging the UIC School of Public Health alumni and friends to support the school’s Global Health Program through a $250,000 match. If we raise $250,000 the donor will match it! “We’re very excited about this opportunity because all donations, no matter what size, will be matched,” said Craig Hyland, Assistant Dean for Advancement. “This means that your donor’s impact on the school’s work around the world will be doubled.”

Global health is an evolving field with continually changing dimensions. Lack of access to basic services, high rates of maternal mortality, widespread nutritional deficiencies, and increasing rates of non-communicable diseases are only a few of today’s global ills. Effective combat of today’s global problems requires integrated solutions derived from a cross-disciplinary knowledge base.

The Global Health Program at the UIC School of Public Health leads efforts and fosters effective collaborations to promote health and well-being worldwide. The program builds and supports partnerships among local, national, and international scholars, practitioners, and organizations for global health research, teaching, and practice. Student and faculty activities span the globe to include countries located throughout Africa, Asia, India, Europe, North and South America, and the Pacific. These activities enhance the education of our students by fostering their development as future partners and leaders in global health, and propel and support the work of faculty and collaborators in addressing today’s global health challenges.

For most students, an international field practicum is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see and experience public health practice in the real world in countries such as Rwanda, Guatemala, India and China. One such student is Alyssa Budoff, an MPH candidate in the community health sciences division, who is working in Haiti to further develop a community-informed disaster risk reduction training program. She first traveled to Haiti in March 2013 with a multidisciplinary team from UIC to implement a pilot Train-the-Trainers program focused on community engagement in disaster risk reduction. “I am working with local partners to refine and implement a curriculum aimed at developing local capacity to assess, mitigate, and manage the impact of potential future disasters,” Ms. Budoff explains.

Ms. Budoff joins several other students who will be involved in our Global Health Program this year, and a group of fifty-five students who have traveled to twenty-eight countries around the world. “We are uniquely positioned as a leader in promoting global health internationally and within the global communities of Chicago,” says Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf. “There is no better time to support the Global Health Program and take advantage of this challenge to double your impact!”

Global Health Challenge Double Your Gift

Interested in doubling your impact by supporting the Global Health Program? Visit www.publichealth.uic.edu/supportsph today and take advantage of the match challenge! Questions? Contact Craig Hyland at craigh@uic.edu.
Illinois Public Health Association

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO
School of Public Health strives to align its service, teaching and research initiatives to the practice of public health. Having a leadership role in and serving as a key member in the Illinois Public Health Association (IPHA) is one key strategy to facilitate this important academic-practice connection.

Established in 1940, the Illinois Public Health Association, an affiliate of the American Public Health Association (APHA), is Illinois’ oldest and largest voluntary organization devoted exclusively to matters of public health. IPHA is a well-known and respected health organization seen as an innovator in the field of public health, with nearly 7,000 members statewide. As a recent award recipient of the APHA Affiliate of the year, IPHA is considered the ‘voice of Illinois.’

UIC School of Public Health and IPHA work collaboratively to promote public health improvement and have partnered on a number of different initiatives. “For our work at the School to be successfully translated to society and have an impact on the health of the public, we need strong partners outside of academia. One of our most significant partners in this regard is IPHA since it serves to bring us together with the community of public health practitioners across Illinois,” said Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf.

UIC School of Public Health faculty take an active role in IPHA by participating in or leading one of IPHA’s 18 Special Interest Sections organized around the various disciplines and special interest areas of public health. These sections are designed to give IPHA members the opportunity to come together to develop policy resolutions; program content for the annual meeting and other continuing education programs; provide for professional and social networking; interact with other section members through list serves and newsletters; career development; and mentoring. IPHA is in the process of creating a new Student Section as part of our Special Interest Sections.

UIC School of Public Health faculty and staff collaborate with IPHA on numerous workforce development efforts. For example, in 2013, IPHA agreed to partner with UIC School of Public Health and host the Public Health Practitioner Certification Board, Inc., who is committed to building a competent workforce by offering competency-based certification to public health practitioners. Most recently, IPHA partnered with UIC School of Public Health on its successful application to establish a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Region V Public Health Training and Technical Assistance Center. As a result, IPHA, UIC School of Public Health and several other public health organizational partners will collaborate on the first ever public health workforce development committee to coordinate and leverage workforce development opportunities in the state.

IPHA also supports UIC School of Public Health students. UIC School of Public Health students often present posters at IPHA annual conference and numerous UIC students have served in IPHA’s AmeriCorps Program providing invaluable service to local communities. UIC School of Public Health students also receive IPHA’s annual graduate study scholarship. IPHA also provides student stipends to attend APHA, where IPHA and UIC School of Public Health have co-sponsored a reception at APHA for several years.

UIC School of Public Health and IPHA are already planning for the IPHA 2015 Annual Meeting in Chicago, along with other Public Health partners. Under its Executive Director, Tom Hughes, IPHA is working to refresh its image and has taken even more of a leadership role in public health. IPHA introduced its newly developed logo at the 2014 Annual meeting, and is in the final stages of a major re-design of the website and will feature an interactive career section where students will be able to create a profile, post resumes, search for current job openings in public health, connect with internship and practicum opportunities, etc.

In addition to these important changes at IPHA, IPHA is also working to increase coordination within the public health community in Illinois. On September 30, 2014, IPHA hosted one of the first known meetings in which all Illinois public health associations gathered. With representation from the Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium, the Illinois Association for Public Health Administrators, the Illinois Public Health Institute, MidAmerica Center for Public Health Practice and the UIC School of Public Health, IPHA called the group together to discuss how the public health community might better collaborate on a variety of issues.

IPHA’s recent linkage with other public health advocacy groups is encouraging as doors are being opened to not only discuss legislation but also other areas where we can collaborate and support public health practice, whether it be policy, funding or planning for the future of public health in Illinois” said Mr. Hughes. UIC School of Public Health was pleased to be a part of this important meeting and sees great opportunity for an even closer relationship with IPHA and its other public health partners to help maximize the design resources and drive health improvement in Illinois.

Celebrating the Achievements of Students, Alumni, Faculty and Staff

- Susan Buchanan, MD, MPH, clinical associate professor of environmental and occupational health sciences, joined hundreds of health professionals working in the nation’s most coal-dependent region in support of the first-ever federal limits on carbon pollution from power plants. She participated in a press conference and signed a letter calling on the Obama administration to support the Environmental Protection Agency’s efforts to regulate carbon emissions from existing power plants. The EPA unveiled the first-ever standards to limit carbon pollution from power plants.
- Elizabeth Cohen (MPH ’13), who works for FHI 360, was a panelist at the Midcontinent Forum in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in June 2014, presenting on engagement of the private sector and informal medical practitioners for the uptake of zinc and Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) in treatment of childhood diarrhea in Uttar Pradesh, India.
- The National Cancer Registrars Association awarded “Best Paper” to Therese A. Dolecek, research associate professor of epidemiology and biostatistics, and Bridget J. McCarthy, assistant professor of epidemiology and biostatistics, for their Spring 2013 paper titled The Impact of the Benign Brain Tumor Cancer Registry Amendment Act (Public Law 107-260) on Non-Malignant Brain and Central Nervous System Tumor Incidence Trends.
- Barbara Epstein (MPH ’78) recently relocated from Atlanta to Portland, OR where she now works as senior project manager for the environmental health consulting firm, Forensic Analytical Consulting Services (FACS).
- Alex Ewing, a student in the division of epidemiology and biostatistics with a global health concentration, has been awarded a Reproductive Health Fellowship within the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.
- David A. Fisher, MD, (MPH ’96) is the new Medical Director at Brittany Place, a continuing care retirement and skilled nursing facility in North Carolina.
- Alison Goldstein (MPH ’13) and Rachel Reichlin (MPH ’14) were elected by Illinois Public Health Association to serve on their nominating committee from 2015-2017.
- The National Cancer Registrars Association awarded “Best Paper” to Therese A. Dolecek, research associate professor of epidemiology and biostatistics, and Bridget J. McCarthy, assistant professor of epidemiology and biostatistics, for their Spring 2013 paper titled The Impact of the Benign Brain Tumor Cancer Registry Amendment Act (Public Law 107-260) on Non-Malignant Brain and Central Nervous System Tumor Incidence Trends.
- Barbara Epstein (MPH ’78) recently relocated from Atlanta to Portland, OR where she now works as senior project manager for the environmental health consulting firm, Forensic Analytical Consulting Services (FACS).
- Rohan D. Jeremiah, PhD, MPH, assistant professor of community health sciences, was a featured research panelist at the 2014 Caribbean Conference on Domestic Violence and Gender Equality (CDVE) in Montego Bay, Jamaica.
- Memona Hasnain, MD, MPH, (PhD ’01) published an article in the Journal of Women’s Health titled Breast Cancer Screening Practices Among First-Generation Immigrant Muslim Women.
- Susan Buchanan
- Mary Gynn
- David A. Fisher
- Memona Hasnain

Tell us what you’re up to! Email your news to TIPS@PH.UIC.edu.

18

19
Alumni Board Welcomes New President and Graduates

Throughout the past 10 years the Alumni Board of the UIC School of Public Health has grown and become more influential on school policies and practices. Alumni from all divisions and programs comprise the board and they play a vital role in the growth and advancement of the UIC School of Public Health. In July 2014, Tracie Smith (MPH ’03), senior epidemiologist at the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital, became the new President. “The recent growth of the board coupled with increased alumni involvement in the last several years greatly influenced my decision to accept the position as President. It is a very exciting time in the board’s history and I feel privileged to be part of it,” Ms. Smith said. “On behalf of the entire Board, we’d like to thank Steve Thompson (PhD ’00) for his years of service as President.” Dr. Thompson will continue to serve as Immediate Past President.

The board is comprised of twelve Chicago-based and four regional (Atlanta and New York) alumni leaders that cut across all sectors of the public health field. The board’s mission is to support and advance the UIC School of Public Health and the University of Illinois at Chicago, while remaining aligned with the school’s mission to service the social good, improve population health, improve community preparedness and national security, and ensure patient care and safety. The board does this by providing engagement opportunities connecting alumni to students and alumni to alumni, and by participating in school planning efforts, fundraising and curriculum evaluation. One such engagement opportunity is the creation of the Alumni Learning Series, a lecture series on current topics in public health, is among the board’s more recent endeavors. In 2012, the board launched its first lecture on the school’s research during the Q&A portion,” says Ms. Smith. “Every Alumni Learning Series is recorded and available on the UIC School of Public Health website. Previous topics have included alumni working in global health and faculty research on violence prevention. Another exciting venture the board has taken on has been to increase participation of students who have graduated within the last ten years. In 2014, the Recent Graduate Board (RGB) was formed. The RGB is lead by co-chairs Swetha Ramanathan (MPH ’13) and Ashley Arnold (MPH ’13). “The idea of assisting recent graduates with building their professional networks was appealing to me,” says Ms. Arnold. “I felt the opportunity was a great way to make a contribution in the first few years after MHP completion.”

In addition to engaging alumni by hosting diverse events throughout the year, the current Alumni Board has been showing their support of the school by not only donating their time and talent, but also their treasure. Last year every member of the board donated and many donated at the Founder’s Circle level, which are individual gifts of $500 or more (see page 16). “This year we have decided to take fundraising a step further and established an Alumni Board Scholarship,” Ms. Smith explains. “Our goal is to help the next generation of public health students get a start to their careers. We’re thrilled to be supporting Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf’s vision of having all UIC School of Public Health students receive some type of financial support from the school.”

Ms. Smith says that she looks forward to leading the Alumni Board and serving the alumni in the next couple of years. “There are so many exciting events and initiatives underway and I hope to meet as many alumni as I can.” Visit the school’s website at www.publichealth.uic.edu/alumni for more information about how alumni can engage with the school.

Ashley Arnold (MPH ’13) and Swetha Ramanathan (MPH ’13)
People who are drawn to the field of public health often possess the passion, commitment and leadership skills to make the world a healthier place. It’s no surprise then that many professionals take their commitment to public health one step further by becoming involved in professional societies. “It is a testament to the outstanding talent, experience and hard work of our alumni that so many of them rise to leadership positions in professional organizations,” says Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf. “It is wonderful that they understand it is part of their professional responsibility to give back as much as possible.” Below are three such alumni who serve as exemplary role models for current students and future generations of professionals.

Diane S. Lauderdale, PhD ’96

“Being active in a national organization is a fantastic opportunity to figure out how to do better work and to raise the profile of your organization,” says Diane S. Lauderdale (PhD ’96), who became President Elect of the Society for Epidemiologic Research (SERR) this past summer. In one year, she will become the organization’s new President where she plans to continue to expand SERR’s contributions to scholarship and education, make sure the annual meetings remain valuable to diverse epidemiologists in the face of increased specialization, and maintain the longstanding sponsorship of the American Journal of Epidemiology.

Dr. Lauderdale, who currently serves as Professor and Chair of the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of Chicago, says that public health was a second career for her. As her two children grew, she knew it might be her last chance to pursue a career that both seemed more worthwhile and challenging than what she had been doing. “For ten years I had been following the AIDS epidemic closely, through the medical journals my husband received, and because of friends who were ill. I decided epidemiology was the most important field I could go into.”

She first became a member of SERR when she was a graduate student at UIC’s School of Public Health. She first attended the annual meeting as an opportunity to present some of her dissertation research, but discovered unanticipated benefits. “The annual meeting was especially valuable in building a network of colleagues around the country because I did not come from a large academic program. UIC was a relatively small and then I went on to an even smaller department at the University of Chicago.”

Dr. Lauderdale has had the opportunity to work with, and lead, teams of researchers from diverse fields to design and carry out studies to elucidate how social factors and behavior affect risk of disease. Last year, when she became Chair of her department, she successfully changed its name from the uninformative “Health Studies” to “Public Health Sciences.” Because public health fields are still relatively new to the University of Chicago, she is focused on building a stronger interdisciplinary department and designing new graduate programs.

Dr. Lauderdale says she would encourage other public health professionals to become involved in a professional organization because it “helps one develop a balanced perspective on challenges and successes. I have found that the connections I have with epidemiologists around the country are extremely valuable when questions come up about research or education and there is no local expert.”

Anders Abelmann, PhD ’10

As the Supervising Health Scientist with Cardno ChemRisk, Anders Abelmann (PhD ’10) specializes in consulting on health and environmental risk associated with complex exposures involving chemicals, pharmaceuticals or radionuclides in a variety of media and environments. “My work mainly involves the fields of industrial hygiene and risk assessment, as it relates to occupational exposures,” Dr. Abelmann explains. He is also the Regional Unit Manager for the Chicago office, where he oversees day-to-day operations and manages a staff of scientists.

Like Dr. Lauderdale, Dr. Abelmann became involved in a professional organization when he was a student at the UIC School of Public Health. His involvement with the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) began in 2006. “The Chicago Local Section is one of the more active sections in the country and have always done a good job of engaging students in their activities,” he says. Today, Dr. Abelmann serves as a member of its Board of Directors and has done so since 2010. His responsibilities include strategic and event planning. And, true to most volunteer positions, he is not afraid to roll up his sleeves to help the organization. “I am also the webmaster in charge of website updates and all communications with our membership.”

As an engineering student, he says he always had an interest in public health, but it became more concrete when he was an exchange student in the Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering program at UIC. After taking the Safety Engineering course taught by Dr. Steve Lacey, he found that his engineering background was a good skill set to have as an industrial hygienist and safety professional. One of his favorite things about public health, both through school and as a working professional, is the variety of work and depth of knowledge gained. “In safety and health, he says, “I could prepare very well for my line of work, in which I typically do different things every single day.”

“Being in a leadership role in a professional organization is incredibly rewarding,” he says. “I get to network with like-minded individuals and help drive my field of work forward.”

Dr. Abelmann says that the best way to get started is to become involved in student organizations, and to strive to assume responsibilities and strategic (board) positions. “That will not only position you well to transition to membership in professional organizations, but also to leadership roles – because you already know something about how it is done.”

Daniel Swartzman, MPH ’78

After serving for thirty-six years as a member of the UIC School of Public Health faculty, Daniel Swartzman, JD, (MPH ’78), retired from the University this fall. “He leaves an indelible mark on the fabric of our school,” says Dean Paul Brunt-Rauf. In his class on Social Ethics, a course he developed, Mr. Swartzman challenged his students to think, to care and to act. He is currently writing a book on social ethics and policy-making. He also pioneered the school’s efforts at online teaching many years ago. The next chapter in his life includes consulting with educational programs and public health organizations.

“Ethics is one of my main foci,” Mr. Swartzman explains, and this is why he was named Chair-elect of the American Public Health Association (APHA’s) Ethics Section. The Section provides opportunities to connect and collaborate with academics, public health practitioners, and students from a wide variety of disciplines who are committed to advancing public health ethics in practice, teaching and research. “It seemed like an excellent way to get involved with colleagues around the country who are similarly interested.”

Most people in the field of public health think that ‘public health ethics’ deals with the ethical implications of conducting public health research. For decades, this was a very important part of the ethical practice: deciding what were appropriate or inappropriate research designs, how to protect the safety and rights of human subjects, how to gain truly informed consent, etc. “More recently, the growing field of organizational ethics has been applied to the work done by public health agencies and organization. The field is examining how we balance political pressures with scarce resources, how we maintain our integrity and preserve the respect of our community partners, and how we operate with transparency, while maintaining the responsibility to preserve the privacy of individuals and populations.” Mr. Swartzman would like the Ethics Section to continue its focus on research ethics, while expanding their attention on social and organizational ethics.

In addition to his leadership role with APHA, Mr. Swartzman is serving as the Chair for the Learning Futures Forum of the Association for Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH).

This group consists of eight schools at accredited schools and programs who are investigating new ways to teach through expanded use of technology. This year, the Forum will be looking at the tensions between the economics and the quality of online education. “I have been teaching online for sixteen years. It is a challenging task, but just as rewarding as on-campus teaching, only in different ways.” Again, he was looking for colleagues with which to share ideas and he felt his experience as both a practitioner and an academic would help him in these roles. “We reach out to leaders in our field from around the country, and the synergy from those joint efforts magnifies our chances to succeed in protecting the public’s health.”

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PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES
The Annual Founders Circle and Legacy Society Reception was held at the International Museum of Surgical Science on September 23, 2014. More than fifty guests joined other generous supporters of the school and senior UIC SPH administrators and faculty for a “state of the school” and museum tour. Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf gave an exclusive update on the school’s achievements from this past year and plans for the coming year.

Engage: 2014-15 Events

Healthy Spirits
February 12, 2015
5:30 – 8:00 pm
Elephant and Castle
185 N. Wabash Ave.
Chicago, IL 60601

Alumni Learning Series
March 4, 2015
6:00 – 7:30 pm
UIC School of Public Health
1603 W. Taylor Street
Chicago, IL 60612

Annual Alumni Reunion
April 9, 2015
6:00 – 10:00 pm
More information to come!

Healthy Spirits
May 14, 2015
5:30 – 8:00 pm
Plymouth Rooftop Bar
325 S. Plymouth Court
Chicago, IL 60604

For more information on all of these events, visit publichealth.uic.edu/alumni.

All UIC SPH alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends, as well as Illinois public health professionals are welcome to join us for an evening in the New Orleans historic warehouse district. Please feel free to invite colleagues, classmates and partners. Appetizers will be provided.

Monday, November 17, 2014
The Chicory
610 S. Peters Street
New Orleans, LA 70130
5:30 pm – 9:00 pm

Please RSVP at: https://sphapha2014.eventbrite.com

Co-Sponsored by:

Members of the UIC School of Public Health alumni board join Dr. Gary Slutkin, Founder and Executive Director of Cure Violence, at a reception prior to his lecture on October 22, 2014. Dr. Slutkin was invited to discuss the science guiding the work of Cure Violence, including the organization’s local and global initiatives.

Rebecca Levin (MPH ’02), Strategic Director of the Injury Prevention and Research Center at Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago, moderated the Q&A session with Dr. Slutkin.