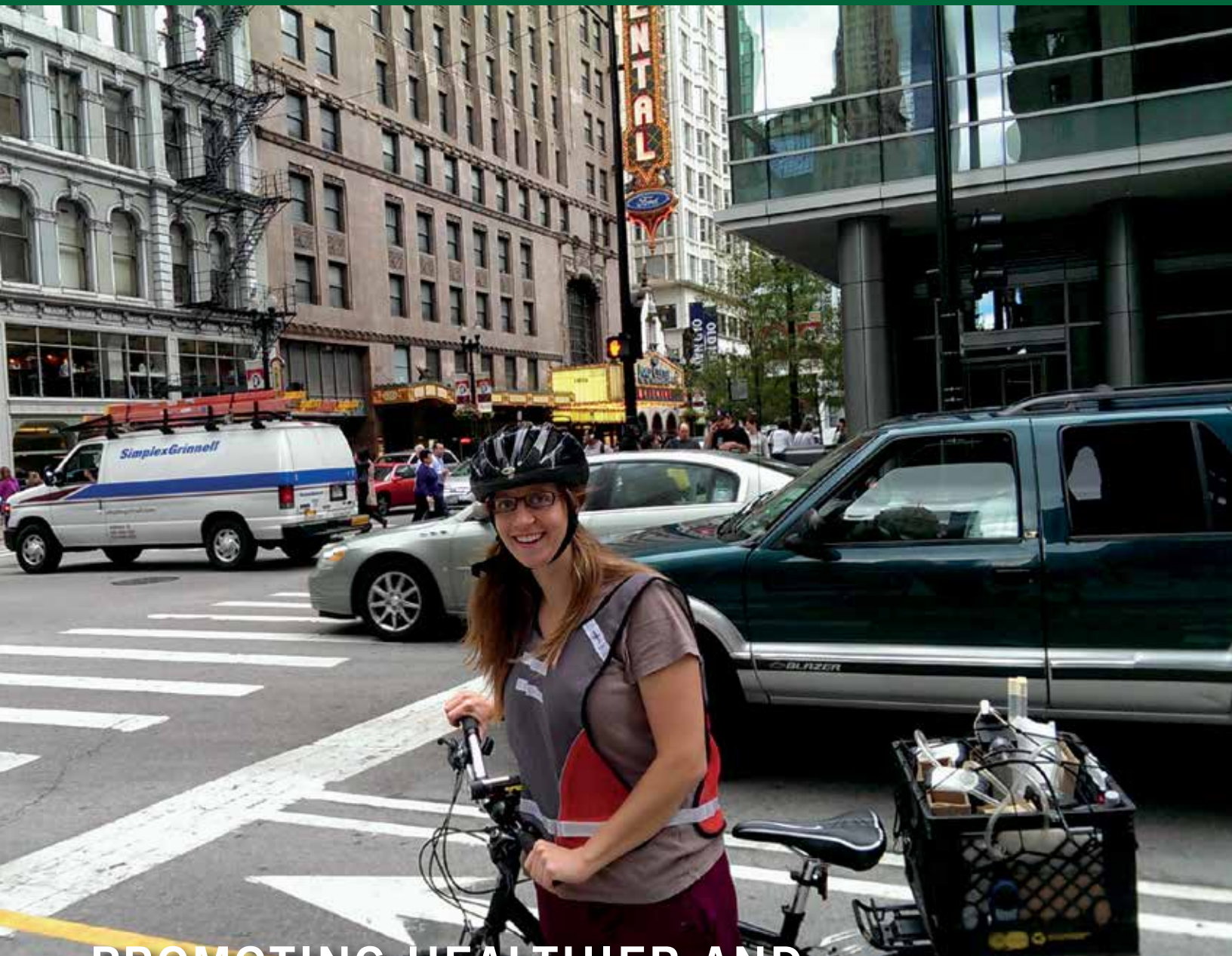


# Healthviews

SPRING 2014 >> VOLUME 12 >> ISSUE ONE



## PROMOTING HEALTHIER AND SAFER WORKPLACES AND WORKERS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE | FIGHTING STIGMA OF MENTAL HEALTH | POLICY MAKERS |  
UIC RESEARCHER OF THE YEAR | UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS FOUNDATION HONORS ALUMNUS





The School of Public Health is one of seven health sciences colleges at UIC providing a system-wide approach to healthcare.

**Left:** Photo taken by Heather Drummond (MPH '11) in Sanniquellie, Liberia in July 2012. Heather spent three months in Liberia as a capacity building intern with the Rebuilding Basic Health Services project and John Snow, Inc. Sanniquellie is located in the northern part of Liberia and is the where the presidents of Ghana, Liberia and Guinea met in 1959 to establish the Organization of African Unity (replaced by the African Union in 2002).

**Cover:** Margaret Sietsema, PhD candidate in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences and Industrial Hygiene Trainee with National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), is preparing to sample and measure ambient air pollution concentrations and noise levels in Chicago's Loop.

# Healthviews

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The UIC School of Public Health is committed to preserving the environment. This publication is printed on post-consumer recycled paper using biodegradable ink.

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**Above:** Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf with undergraduate students in the Bachelor of Arts in Public Health program.



Each Spring, as the academic year comes to an end, I become inspired by the newest class of graduates entering the field of public health. This year, in particular, I am extremely proud of the inaugural class of undergraduate students who earned their Bachelor of Arts in Public Health from the UIC School of Public Health. I am confident that the public health framework they received during their time with us will impact the way they see the world

around them. Read on page 3 how they believe a public health education will inform their future career paths.

Also in this issue of *Healthviews*, I'm pleased to share news and accomplishments of our students, alumni and faculty. On page 2, you'll read about two of our students who saw a need on the UIC campus to address the stigma of mental health. In true public health style, they did something about it and formed the Mental Health and Disability Alliance.

On pages 4-5, you'll meet three alumnae who are among the movers and shakers in the world of public health policy. These women are improving the public's health through legislative action at the local, state and federal levels.

Did you know that the UIC School of Public Health is home to the Illinois Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Research Center? Each year, the Center serves more than 2,000 professionals to help reduce workplace hazards. Read more about our efforts on pages 6-7.

I'm very proud of the fact that our faculty rank 8th on research funding per faculty member among schools and programs of public health. Read about our groundbreaking research in each of our divisions and programs on pages 10-13. Professor Lisa Powell was named a UIC Distinguished Researcher of the Year in the Social Sciences (page 13). Her focus on the intersection of economics and behavior as it

affects obesity provides new insights that will contribute to stopping and preventing this epidemic.

The Advancing Health section of the magazine is always one of my favorites because we feature the generosity of our alumni. This issue includes a story about George Smith, Jr. (MPH '96) who began his path to public health when he was still in high school. His experience with our Urban Health and Diversity Program helped to instill in him a passion to address health disparities and he recently included the UIC School of Public Health in his estate plans so that future generations of underrepresented students can pursue a public health degree.

As always, I hope to see you at one of our many alumni events held during the year.

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



# STUDENT ORGANIZATION FIGHTS STIGMA OF MENTAL ILLNESS, DISABILITY

Members of MHDA wear green ribbons to show support and raise awareness for mental health.

**M**ental health disorders are common. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, about one in four adults suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder in a given year. Yet despite its prevalence, it is often a taboo topic, one fraught with a tremendous amount of stigma. A new student organization at UIC, the Mental Health and Disability Alliance (MHDA), plans to address barriers surrounding mental health and disability.

The brainchild for such an alliance was John Capua, a first year student in the division of epidemiology and biostatistics. Capua, along with other public health students, founded MHDA because he “wanted to establish an organization on-campus that brings attention to issues revolving around mental health and disability.”



John Capua

The campus lacked an organization that approached mental health and disability from an interdisciplinary perspective. Members of the alliance hope that by engaging all members of the UIC community, they can reduce stigma and create a community dialogue through research and advocacy.

“A lot of literature suggests that people who have these conditions don’t seek help because they’re afraid of being stigmatized by the public,” said Capua. “That’s what we want to try and break down.”

Capua works for the Asians with Disabilities Outreach Project Think-Tank (ADOPT), where he helps to develop vocational rehabilitation outreach programs to increase the capacity and quality of service. “My primary role involves assisting the research team in quantitative and qualitative data collection, analysis, and interpretation,” he said. He chose to pursue an advanced degree in public health because he wanted to gain a variety of skills in applied research methods, especially within the context of population health.

Ariel Willingham, who earned her MPH in epidemiology in May 2014, was invited to join Capua during MHDA’s initial planning phase. She got involved because she feels the field of

public health should address mental health and disability concerns through education programs, research, policies, and system changes. “Public health organizations need to work together to create a safe space for open dialogue on how to address the stigma associated with mental health and disability.”

As an intern with the American Cancer Society, Willingham is working on the Illinois Colorectal Cancer Screening Initiative where she is “looking at health disparities and ways of preventing them,” she said. She loves the investigative side of working with numbers and appreciates the opportunity to interact with patients. “You hear testimonials and you understand the larger importance of your work. Each variable, each number, is a real person.”



Ariel Willingham

Capua and Willingham say they started MHDA because they wanted to approach mental health and disability from a new perspective. “We want a broad perspective on what mental health is. We don’t want just a medical or biological point of view on this issue, we want the humanities aspects, the social aspects, the cultural aspects,” Capua said.

Part of spreading the word and presenting multiple views on the issue will involve partnering with various UIC and community organizations to organize lectures, events, research agendas and community engagement.

“It’s very unique in terms of its membership,” Capua explained. “Undergraduates, graduate students, staff and professionals are working together.” With about 50 members, MHDA has already hosted two events on campus and has several more planned in the coming months. As part of Brain Injury Awareness Month, for example, the group collaborated with the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago and the Public Health Alliance for a workshop called “Epilepsy 101.”

“It’s really important to discuss and open dialogue that it’s okay to have this mental health issue, it’s okay to have depression, it’s okay to have PTSD, it’s okay to have these conditions,” Capua said. ■

As a member of the UIC School of Public Health’s inaugural graduating class of undergraduate students, tell how us a Bachelor’s degree in public health will inform your future career path.

## THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF THE UIC SPH COMMUNITY WEIGH IN...



This degree will provide me with a great base of knowledge to tackle the multiple problems that continue to plague our society. My future career goal is to work in health education and I hope to influence and become a voice for those whose voices have been muted by society.

– Aderoju Oshodi



The main focus for public health is to improve the health and quality of life not solely for one patient, but for a whole community or population by using prevention, surveillance, and promotion. All of these techniques I learned through the public health undergraduate program at UIC.

– Matthew Moy



Public Health has taught me that collaboration is the key to success. We can make a difference by working together. My education has inspired me to work hard in improving the lives and health of populations all over the world.

– Aneta Gil



My Bachelor’s in Public Health will inform my perspective and influence my career aspirations to be rooted in social justice. I’ll work towards eliminating social disparities and increasing political representation for minorities.

– Gabriela Illa



A Bachelor’s degree in Public Health helped me decide that I would like to further my career in public health. I plan on working with AmeriCorps after graduation and then returning to school to work on my MPH.

– Jamesetta Mator



As a student in public health, I have gained a better grasp on the depth and breadth of issues in our world. Moving forward into my future career I know that having a Bachelor’s in Public Health will help me to create better solutions in all areas of my life.

– Sharon Mwale



# ALUMNI MAKING A DIFFERENCE: THE POLICY MAKERS

UIC School of Public Health alumni choose to pursue a variety of career paths; this is due in large part to the breadth of the field of public health. “Public health practitioners have various ways that they can impact the health of populations - change their circumstances (engineer the environment), change their behavior (educate people), and change the system (enforce policies),” explains Paul Brandt-Rauf, Dean of the UIC School of Public Health.

Professionals in public health policy work to improve the public’s health through legislative action at the local, state, and federal levels. These professionals work closely with members of the U.S. Congress, regulatory agencies and other

public health organizations to ensure that public health is a priority in the legislative and policy-making process. “Getting the right public health policy-scape to define the system’s frame of reference is critical. Thus, understanding how to craft and implement good policy is a fundamental public health skill on which much of public health practice rests,” says Brandt-Rauf.



Laura Wooster, left, with AOA President Dr. Norman Vinn and Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina.

## Laura Wooster (MPH ‘01)

Laura Wooster is the Director of Congressional Affairs for the American Osteopathic Association (AOA). Serving as the professional organization for osteopathic physicians and osteopathic medical students, the AOA promotes public health and encourages scientific research. In addition, the AOA is the accrediting agency for all osteopathic medical schools and has federal authority to accredit hospitals and other healthcare facilities. In her role, Ms. Wooster serves as a registered lobbyist and is an advocate on Capitol Hill. She is responsible for expanding the influence of osteopathic medicine in the halls of Congress and at regulatory agencies.



Laura Wooster

“My day-to-day is fairly varied,” explains Ms. Wooster. Policy development is a significant part of what she does and she stresses how carefully it must be approached. “A policy change in one part of the healthcare system can very easily have severe unintended consequences on another part of the system.”

In addition to her work involving policy development, Ms. Wooster is responsible for the overall strategy development on the key issues most important to the AOA membership. Two such issues are Medicare physician payment reform and Graduate Medical Education funding. She recently met with Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina and AOA President, Dr. Norman Vinn, to discuss a bill that would permanently repeal the Sustainable Growth Rate formula for Medicare so that physician payment rates are not subject to annual cuts.

Ms. Wooster feels that her public health background has given her a comprehensive understanding of the entire healthcare system. “I’ve been able to apply that understanding to my work in representing different sectors of the system throughout my career in D.C., from payers, to hospitals, and now physicians. Most importantly, my public health background ensured that I always keep a patient-centered approach at the forefront.”

## Mary Doi, MD (MS ‘10)

“I think it is important for all physicians in training and in practice to have an understanding of the role of the U.S. Food and Drug



Mary Doi

Administration (FDA) in drug development and in drug safety, and to understand what their important role could be in interacting with the FDA,” says Dr. Mary Doi, who works as a medical officer on the Safety Team in the Division of Neurology Products in the Office of New Drugs in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. In this role, Dr. Doi monitors the safety of neurology

drug products to inform regulatory decisions. She reviews and evaluates the safety data of New Drug Applications and new safety signals once a drug is approved. “I analyze the safety data from passively reported adverse events, randomized controlled trials, observational epidemiologic studies, passively reported adverse events, and the medical literature.”

She credits a strong background in internal medicine and experience in patient care, as well as her public health training, to being able to work on issues that have broad, wide-ranging impact. “I had always wanted to focus on the prevention of disease even while I was in medical school,” explains Dr. Doi. This desire grew stronger the longer she was in clinical practice, “as I envisioned making a broader and more significant impact with a career in public health focused on disease prevention.” This is when she decided to enter the UIC School of Public Health to gain the knowledge and experience to lay the strong foundation for a career in public health.

Dr. Doi knows that she is making a difference on both national and international levels with regards to drug safety. Her work is crucial to determining how best to communicate specific drug risks to the healthcare community and to patients through the prescription information for the drug, the medication guide targeted to patients, or drug safety communications that are directed at the healthcare and patient communities. “I’m involved in developing approaches to mitigate the risk of a particular drug, taking into account the overall public health considerations, the impact on the healthcare system, and the impact on individual patients.”

## Margie Schaps (MPH ‘78)

As the Executive Director of the Health & Medicine Policy Research Group (HMPRG), Margie Schaps oversees the entire operation



Margie Schaps

of the independent center that conducts research, educates and collaborates to advocate policies and impact health systems. Her goal is to improve the health status of all people in Illinois by promoting health equity. All of the policy work conducted at HMPRG under Ms. Schaps’ leadership strives to promote social justice and challenge inequities in health and healthcare.

Ms. Schaps’ specific policy expertise is in health systems reform, safety net system

development, and women’s health. She is passionate about creating a just health system that will improve the health of the public. She speaks nationally and locally on a variety of health systems issues, and has published articles on women’s health issues, healthcare safety net issues, and health system reform. “My public health background provides me with a lens through which I view all public policy,” she explains. “I learned the fundamentals of what it means to have an equitable society, that health and public health are inextricably linked to all of the social determinants of health, including income, race, gender, access to housing, transportation, food security, and more. All public policy is health policy to me.”

Developing a career in public health policy is not for people who want fast results. “You have to be in it for the long haul,” says Ms. Schaps, who just celebrated her twentieth year as HMPRG’s director. Despite the work being very hard at times, she explains that there isn’t anything else she’d rather be doing. “Public health policy is about identifying the root causes of health inequalities and defining policies that can address them. To be able to build a coalition, define a problem, and develop policy solutions – what could be more rewarding?” ■

**Are you a policy maker? We want to hear from you! Tell us about your work at [TellSPH@uic.edu](mailto:TellSPH@uic.edu).**



# Making a Difference in the Health of Populations Around the World

**Haiti**

**Alyssa Budoff**, MPH candidate in the Community Health Sciences division and the Global Health concentration, received the Boren Fellowship to spend ten months in Haiti, engaging in linguistic and cultural immersion, and furthering the development of a community-informed disaster risk reduction (DRR) training program. She will begin her experience with a three-month intensive Creole program, which will involve 15-20 hours per week of classroom instruction, field trips to historical sites, and cultural discussions.



Alyssa Budoff



Rohan Jeremiah

**Grenada**

In March 2014, **Rohan D. Jeremiah**, Assistant Professor in Community Health Sciences, continued to facilitate global public health practice opportunities for US-based public health students traveling to Grenada, West Indies. Fourteen students engaged in a variety of local topics and issues including the dissemination of culturally adapted health education to tourism industry workers, and contributing to the development of the country's national alcohol policy. Students interacted with government ministries, local researchers and community-based organizations seeking to improve the health of Grenadian communities.

**Liberia**

In March, UIC SPH Dean, **Paul Brandt-Rauf**, had the opportunity to visit Liberia at the invitation of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. He met with various members of the public health community in the capital of Monrovia, where they discussed the public health training and research needs of Liberia and how UIC SPH could partner with them to help meet those needs.

**Botswana**

Through the Peace Corps Master's International Program, Community Health Sciences student, **Jessica Ruggiero**, is working in Botswana as a School and Community Liaison for Life Skills. Her work at a primary school in a small rural village includes running an after school leadership club, educating students on a variety of health topics, and planning a girls empowerment camp.



Rebecca Liebman

**India**

**Rebecca Liebman** (MPH '06) been selected for a 2014-2015 Fulbright U.S. Student Award to India. She will be conducting a qualitative research study aimed to improve quality care for preterm babies in healthcare systems that serve urban slum areas in Delhi. The study will determine the barriers to utilization of Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC), an alternative for mothers of preterm infants that promotes skin-to-skin contact between mother and child and exclusive breastfeeding.



Jessica Ruggiero

## 2014 Douglas Passaro Global Horizons Scholarship Awardees

Named in memory of Dr. Douglas Passaro, Associate Professor of Epidemiology and Attending Physician in Infectious Diseases at the UIC Hospital from 2001 to 2005, this award supports graduate students for health-related, hands-on field experiences to carry on Doug's work and passion promoting global health.



2014 Passaro Scholarship Awardees with Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf and Lanny Passaro

**NAME:** Kirsten Almberg, PhD candidate in Epidemiology & Biostatistics  
**LOCATION:** Antioquia, Colombia  
**PROJECT:** Kirsten will travel to Colombia to assist in the implementation of a research project that seeks to characterize exposure to coal dust and estimate the prevalence of respiratory disease among coal miners.

**NAME:** Sweta Basnet, MPH candidate in Epidemiology & Biostatistics  
**LOCATION:** Bajura, Nepal  
**PROJECT:** Sweta's research will explore the association between sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in women and their husband's migration status.

**NAME:** Darci Cabezas, MPH candidate in Health Policy & Administration  
**LOCATION:** Ddegeya, Uganda  
**PROJECT:** Darci will evaluate current diagnosis and antibiotic-prescribing habits for typhoid fever and treatment in order to reduce antibiotic resistance.

**NAME:** Jiana Calixto, MPH candidate in Community Health Sciences  
**LOCATION:** Iganga, Uganda  
**PROJECT:** Jiana will work with the Uganda Village Project's Monitoring and Evaluation team to conduct follow-up with community members who have bought malaria nets to see how the nets are actually being used and to test malaria knowledge.

**NAME:** Sheewin Pananookooln, MPH candidate in Epidemiology & Biostatistics  
**LOCATION:** Dominican Republic  
**PROJECT:** Sheewin will work under the supervision of Dr. Max Brito (MPH '10) on a project that surveys sexual risk behaviors of men and women to inform HIV prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean.



# PROMOTING HEALTHIER WORKPLACES



As a student, Jordan Hepler participated in a 40-hour hazardous waste operator training.

The UIC School of Public Health is known for translating its research into practice and does so through various programs that directly impact communities. One such program is the Illinois Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Education and Research Center (Illinois ERC). Housed at UIC SPH and funded by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Illinois ERC is a recognized leader in the national and international movement to promote healthier and safer workplaces and workers. It is the ambition of Illinois ERC to improve, promote, and maintain the health of workers and communities.

“We do this through innovative and interdisciplinary activities,” says the center’s director, Lorraine M. Conroy, ScD, CIH. Over the past 30 years, Illinois ERC has worked with professional associations, government agencies, other university and college programs, and individuals to understand and address



Jordan Hepler, Visiting Project Coordinator, Lorraine Conroy, Director, and Lisa Brosseau, Program Director, present on the work of Illinois ERC at a University of Illinois Foundation event on April 4, 2014.

the occupational safety and health training needs regionally, nationally, and internationally. “We work to enhance the expertise of employers, workers organizations, and communities through outreach and technical assistance.”

ERCs were first established by NIOSH in the mid-1970s to address the increased awareness of occupational hazards and interest in worker protection. Since their inception, each ERC has acted as a major occupational health and safety resource with the ultimate goal of preventing workplace injuries and illnesses. “Workplace hazards can be devastating, so prevention of such occurrences can have a significant impact on people’s lives,” says Conroy. ERCs do this by supplying the region with well-trained practitioners and researchers, and by engaging the community through continuing education.

Illinois ERC educates graduate students to be professionals and researchers by providing MS and PhD training in six academic programs: industrial hygiene/hazardous substances academic training, occupational medicine, occupational health nursing, occupational safety, occupational and environmental epidemiology, and agricultural safety and health. In addition, the Targeted Research Training program supports interdisciplinary research training in three areas: Underserved Worker Populations, Occupational Surveillance, and Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology. Overall, more than 2,000 professionals are served each year through continuing education and outreach programs.

Jordan Hepler (MS ‘13), Visiting Project Coordinator of Illinois ERC, began his involvement with the center in 2011 as a student. As a trainee, he participated in Illinois ERC’s core interdisciplinary activities, which equip students with practical experience, including process tours of local industry, participating in one of three targeted research teams, and attending a weekly interdisciplinary seminar.

“What interests me in the Occupational Health and Safety field is that you have the opportunity to directly better someone else’s life.

Adults typically spend about a third of their adult lives working. Making improvements to a worker’s environment can have ripple effects that, in return, create a better and happier community,” Hepler says.

The Illinois ERC successfully competed for an additional five years of funding (July 2014-June 2019) from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ■

**“Workplace hazards can be devastating, so prevention of such occurrences can have a significant impact on people’s lives.”**

For more information about Illinois ERC, visit [uic.edu/sph/erc/](http://uic.edu/sph/erc/).

## Advocate for Worker Justice: Lorraine M. Conroy, ScD, CIH

On March 5, 2014, Lorraine M. Conroy, Senior Associate Dean for the UIC School of Public Health and director of Illinois ERC, spoke at a rally outside City Hall to support the call for universal paid sick leave. She joined public health and women’s advocates, business leaders, and Chicago Aldermen to speak up about how paid sick leave can lead to overall health improvements



Lorraine M. Conroy speaking at the Earned Sick Time Chicago rally.

and significant savings for the health system. Research shows that 42% of the Chicago workforce lack access to paid sick leave. Conroy spoke specifically about how the lack of paid sick leave affects not only the workers who are sick, but also co-workers and the public.

“There are compelling public health and economic reasons to provide universal paid sick leave,” Conroy said. She provided a specific example of workplace-acquired influenza. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that people with influenza stay home for 24 hours after their fever has resolved in order to prevent the spread of influenza. However, workers without paid sick leave are more likely to come to work sick because they can’t afford to not work. Thus, increasing workplace transmission, contributing to loss in productivity. ■



## Division of Health Policy and Administration

DR. LINDSEY LEININGER, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR and Research Assistant Professor of Health Policy and Administration, is a health policy and health services researcher who pursues work on the health care safety net for low-income populations. The majority of her published work regards the insurance coverage and access to health care of Medicaid-eligible populations. She currently serves as the Principal Investigator of an evaluation of a patient-centered medical homes initiative for high-risk women in the Wisconsin Medicaid program. She is also a member of the UIC-based team led by Dr. Beth Calhoun that is training the Affordable Care Act insurance enrollment assisters in Illinois.

Dr. Leininger has a longstanding interest in the design, implementation, and evaluation of state health care policies

promoting health improvements among vulnerable populations. A key theme of her current research is exploring clinical prediction tools facilitating the effective targeting of intensive care management interventions among new and returning Medicaid enrollees. She has evaluated the predictive capacity of a self-reported health screener embedded in the Wisconsin Medicaid application for low-income adults, finding that the screener is effective in identifying likely high users of the emergency room and likely high-cost members. Subsequent work has established a predictive standard for future Medicaid-specific self-reported health screeners, creating a statistical tool that Medicaid stakeholders can use to identify the right populations for the right care delivery innovations. Ultimately, the guiding force behind this line of work is a desire to help

Medicaid agencies improve population health outcomes in the most cost-effective manner possible.



## Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

POSTPARTUM CARE, WHICH HAS TRADITIONALLY occurred at the 4-6 week recommended postpartum visit, provides the critical link between pregnancy and well-woman healthcare by addressing chronic and acute health needs, assessing the emotional

Systems-level interventions and policy changes are needed to improve access to postpartum care and uptake of effective contraception and ensure that low-income women receive the services they need. To plan appropriate interventions, however, it is first essential to understand current patterns of utilization of these services among low-income women.

To this end, Dr. Kristin Rankin, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, has been funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration to study the factors associated with the receipt, timing, and location of the recommended postpartum visit. The study will also address factors associated with the provision of effective contraception, specifically long-acting reversible contraception such as intrauterine devices and implants, in the postpartum period. Medicaid claims data from Illinois will be used to capture low-income women's utilization patterns in the four months following a livebirth or stillbirth and discover whether women currently receive postpartum care and contraception in venues other than the traditional postpartum visit.

Dr. Rankin is also a co-investigator for a complementary study funded by the

Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services to assess the preferences of low-income postpartum women of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds with respect to the timing and location of the postpartum visit and the receipt of postpartum contraception and associated barriers. In addition, prenatal care providers will be interviewed to assess their current practices and perspectives about alternative approaches to delivering contraceptive services in the postpartum period. Finally, the team will test the feasibility and acceptability of training pediatricians to initiate a conversation about postpartum contraception with mothers at their infants' well-child visits. Together with the Medicaid Claims analysis, the findings of this study will support the development, implementation and evaluation of future interventions and policies to improve access to postpartum care and contraceptive services.

Dr. Rankin's partners in these efforts include Dr. Arden Handler, Dr. Rachel Caskey in Pediatrics/Internal Medicine and Dr. Sadia Haider in Obstetrics and Gynecology at the UIC College of Medicine, as well as Dr. Sally Freels in the Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics and collaborators at the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services.



state of new mothers, delivering health promotion messages, and providing women with effective contraception. Despite the importance of postpartum care and effective contraception for preventing unintended pregnancy, improving birth spacing and improving women's and children's health, fewer than 60% of low-income women in Illinois receive a postpartum visit.

## Division of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

DR. LEE FRIEDMAN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, is a community and occupational injury researcher. The research in which he participates spans the breadth of injury research from the most fundamental level relating to the body's response to injury to large policy issues regarding public safety. All the while, keeping in mind the goal of prevention at every step. At the basic level, the body responds to injury through a cascade of physiological changes which vary by individual and time following the initial traumatic event. His current work is exploring fundamental questions relating to the body's initial cardiovascular, immunological and metabolic response to injury and how this is modified by drugs, stress, and individual characteristics, which has direct applications for tertiary prevention.

At the macro level, injury epidemiology is unique in that the

causes are usually known, the events are primarily acute in nature and ruled by the laws of physics. Because the main causes of injury can be explained by long established practical knowledge in physics (e.g. Newton's laws of motion were presented in 1687) and psychosocial theory, research at the macro level frequently requires addressing false narratives that permeate through society or dealing with the complicated process of implementing effective interventions. For the biggest culprits of injury morbidity and mortality, there is less of a need for research into the "Why" as opposed to "How" to translate well established knowledge into effective public health practice. Dr. Friedman actively researches policy issues relating to motor vehicle safety, poison prevention, and occupational health.

With the goal of creating a stable infrastructure to support quality injury research at UIC, Dr. Friedman

and his colleagues have in the past year been garnering financial support from government agencies (Department of Labor, Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission) and not-for-profit organizations (Illinois Poison Center, Retirement Research Foundation, Advocate Charitable Foundation).



## Division of Community Health Sciences

HEALTH SERVICES, POLICIES, AND interventions have not been optimized for people living with HIV/AIDS. Thus, effective and culturally tailored behavioral interventions aimed at managing behavioral risks and life stressors and improving overall health and well-being among HIV-positive women hold tremendous promise for reducing health disparities.

Dr. Faith Fletcher, Assistant Professor of Community Health Sciences and

Affiliate Member of the Chicago Development Center for AIDS Research, is a 2014-2015 Visiting Professor in Minority Health through Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine's Program in Public Health. Her research program broadly addresses reproductive and cancer-related disparities among disadvantaged women living with HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Fletcher brings a unique perspective to health disparities research through her interdisciplinary academic training in bioethics, public health, and behavioral science. Most recently, Dr. Fletcher completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Department of Behavioral Science at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. Her National Cancer Institute R25T-funded study used combined qualitative and quantitative methods to explore barriers associated with suboptimal cervical cancer screening utilization among HIV-positive women at an urban, comprehensive HIV clinic in Houston, Texas. Dr. Fletcher is a recent recipient of the Kaiser Permanente BURCH Minority Leadership Award Program which aims to enhance

the voices and leadership development of minority researchers committed to improving service to the underserved and reducing health and healthcare inequalities. She is also a Building Interdisciplinary Careers in Women's Health Associate and an Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy Faculty Fellow at UIC.

Most notably, Dr. Fletcher recently received acceptance to the HIV Prevention Research Ethics Training Institute (RETI) at Fordham University. This training fellowship will allow her to join a group of early-career professionals in pioneering innovative ways to examine HIV and drug abuse research ethics. Her RETI project will generate empirical data to inform ethical practice and policies for HIV prevention science. Dr. Fletcher ultimately seeks to build a programmatic line of research that would engage innovative approaches to expand the provision of cancer preventive services in HIV clinic-based settings. Her UIC collaborators/mentors include Dr. Geri Donenberg, Dr. Robin Mermelstein, Dr. Jesus Ramirez-Valles, Dr. Pauline Maki, and Dr. Alicia Matthews.





# DO MEDIA INFLUENCE HEALTH BEHAVIORS? IF SO, HOW?

Since 2001, these two questions have preoccupied Dr. Sherry Emery, a senior scientist at the Institute for Health Research and Policy. In her early work, as part of a UIC-based team led by visiting Australian cancer researcher Melanie Wakefield, Dr. Emery looked for effects of anti-smoking commercials. In 2004,



Sherry Emery

the team established a link between exposure to such commercials and lower smoking prevalence for American youth. A few years later, Dr. Emery led the team in confirming the link between anti-smoking ads and lower smoking prevalence for adults as well. In 2012, they reported some of those anti-smoking commercials are more effective than others. The ads sponsored by Big Pharma or Big Tobacco? They don't inspire people to quit.

Sometime in 2008 or so, as she was watching a TV show on her computer, it dawned on Dr. Emery that if the research team continued to focus on TV advertising alone, they would miss a new and growing influence—the Web. People encounter health information on the Internet, intentionally and unintentionally. They find it on the pages they seek and in ads promoted in search results. Their friends and families post health info and share pages on Facebook, send them links to YouTube videos, and tweet about

how much an anti-smoking commercial scared them. How does this new media landscape influence people's health attitudes, beliefs and behaviors? That is overarching question of The Health Media Collaboratory, which Dr. Emery established in 2011 with a grant from the National Cancer Institute that focuses on understanding tobacco use.

“For us the key has become to measure health-related media consumption—not just message exposure, but also information searching and sharing,” Dr. Emery says. “Then we must strive to understand the relationships between exposure, searching and sharing health related information. Finally, we need to explore the relationship between health media consumption patterns and health behaviors—and smoking in particular. And we need to do all this within the precepts of good science.”

To learn about the influence of the new mediascape on tobacco use, Dr. Emery and her team have collected nearly 300 million tweets about smoking, tens of thousands of smoking-related YouTube videos, and surveyed over 17,000 people online regarding their media consumption patterns, as well as the status of their tobacco use, and their attitudes and beliefs toward tobacco. New funding will allow them to study social media conversations about the CDC's Former Smokers campaign in 2013. ■



To learn more about Dr. Emery's work, visit [www.healthmediacollaboratory.org](http://www.healthmediacollaboratory.org)

Dr. Emery's research includes analyzing the public's response of anti-tobacco ads, like this one from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, on social media.

**“For us, the key has become to measure health-related media consumption—not just message exposure, but also information searching and sharing.”**

## Powell Named Distinguished Researcher of the Year

DR. LISA POWELL, PROFESSOR IN THE DIVISION of Health Policy and Administration and the Associate Director of the Health Policy Center of the Institute for Health Research and Policy (IHRP), is the recipient of the 2013 University of Illinois at Chicago Distinguished Researcher of the Year Award in the Social Sciences. This honor recognizes the efforts and commitment of researchers who have demonstrated outstanding research achievements to advance the knowledge in their field of expertise. Dr. Powell is one of five researchers at UIC to receive this honor and all were recognized at a reception on February 27, 2014.

The UIC School of Public Health and the Institute for Health Research and Policy are proud and delighted that Dr. Powell is being honored with the 2013 Researcher of the Year Award in the Social Sciences,” says Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf. “She is carrying on a tradition of outstanding public health research at UIC that is at the same time intellectually innovative and practically impactful. Her focus on the intersection of economics and behavior as it affects obesity provides new insights that will contribute to stopping this epidemic. This is a well-deserved recognition of the significance of her work.”

Dr. Powell's research interests are broad and include health economics, health behaviors, and obesity, but her passion has always been to study the impact of public health and economic policies on behavioral outcomes. To this end, she brings extensive experience as an applied micro-economist to her analysis of large data sets. Her research is administered by IHRP and has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the USDA, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Dr. Powell is nationally and internationally recognized for her work in the economic and environmental determinants of obesity and related disparities. Her recent work has examined the importance of food prices,



Lisa Powell, center, is joined by Paul Brandt-Rauf, Dean of the School of Public Health, and Robin Mermelstein, Director of the Institute for Health Research and Policy.

sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) and soda taxes; access to food stores, fast-food restaurants, other eating places, and facilities for physical activity; and television food advertising exposure. Her research has informed public health policy on the potential impact of taxes (on SSB's, sodas,

**“Her focus on the intersection of economics and behavior as it affects obesity provides new insights that will contribute to stopping this epidemic.”**

and fast food) and subsidies (for healthful products like fruit and vegetables) on consumption and body weight. Her work has made fundamental advances in our understanding of the sources of disparities in obesity and has been critical to the policy debate in the U.S. on child-

directed food marketing. Her findings are cited extensively by the NY Times, Wall Street Journal, Chicago Tribune, US News, CNN, NPR, international media, and First Lady Michelle Obama.

“I am truly honored to be named the recipient of the 2013 Researcher of the Year Award in Social Sciences,” said Dr. Powell. “I am very grateful to be working with such a talented group of colleagues, post-doctoral fellows, and graduate students here at UIC. It is such a privilege to be able to undertake research that provides much needed evidence on the potential effectiveness of various policy instruments aimed at improving public health outcomes.”

Dr. Powell joins two UIC School of Public Health faculty who were previously recognized as Researcher of the Year: Dr. Susan Hughes in 2001 for Social Sciences and Dr. Robert Bailey in 2008 in Clinical Sciences. ■

The Institute for Health Research and Policy is an all-campus research institute administered through the School of Public Health on behalf of all the UIC colleges. The institute's mission, which was designated by the University of Illinois Board of Trustees with the approval of the Illinois Board of Higher Education in 1997, is to stimulate and support high-quality multidisciplinary health research on campus.



# Annual Support and Generous Gift from Alumnus Will Help Eliminate Health Disparities

ELIMINATING HEALTH DISPARITIES IS MORE than a job for George Smith, Jr. (MPH '96); it's a passion that began more than 25 years ago. As a high school student, Mr. Smith became involved in the early outreach efforts of UIC's Urban Health and Diversity Program, whose mission is to recruit, retain,



Speaking to his fellow alumni at the Annual Alumni Reunion on April 10, 2014 where he encouraged everyone to support their alma mater.

and graduate underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students, specifically African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans, in the health professions. It was here that his interest in the health sciences began to develop into a specific interest in public health.

"In my adolescent mind, I was thinking 'healthcare is cool and I want to work in this field,' recalls Smith, who said that a presentation made by forensic

pathologist and medical examiner further increased his interest in pursuing a career in healthcare. Later, as an undergraduate student, the book titled *Bad Blood: The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment*, by James H. Jones, piqued his interest in the health disparities faced by African Americans. "After reading several more books and articles on this subject, I began to notice a common theme: that the health status and outcomes for African Americans were far worse than those of Caucasians." Smith's

**"After doing some thinking and being aware of my own mortality, I realized that I would like to leave something behind that could benefit others."**

desire to know why and to do something about it lead him to pursue a graduate degree in public health.

Mr. Smith recalls how the faculty members at UIC were welcoming and passionate about educating students about public health. "They were willing to take the extra step to provide advice and mentoring to ensure students would be effective and productive members of the public health workforce," he says. Dr. Shaffdeen Amuwo, who recently retired as the Associate Dean for Urban Health and Diversity Programs, was the first faculty member that Mr. Smith met during his fact finding experience about the school and its educational programs. "He served as my graduate advisor and today is still my public health mentor," Smith

shares. The two have stayed in contact over the years and both received awards for their achievements in the field of public health in April 2014 at the school's annual alumni reunion.

Today, Mr. Smith serves as the Community Relations Director for the Center for Community Health and Vitality, a component of the University of Chicago Medicine's Urban Health Initiative. "I provide technical assistance to University of Chicago entities in effectively engaging

community residents, key stake holders and community based organizations in university sponsored research," explains Smith.

He feels fortunate to have been able to play an active part in the process to eliminate health disparities and better support marginalized and underserved populations and communities within metropolitan Chicago. So fortunate that he wanted to give back to his alma mater in a meaningful way. Smith has donated annually to school for many years but says he felt that he could do more. "After doing some thinking and being aware of my own mortality, I realized that I would like to leave something behind that could benefit others." Mr. Smith's deferred gift will be used to support African Americans and other underrepresented minority students so that they, too, can pursue a degree in public health. ■

George Smith, Jr. (center) receives the Minority Health in the Midwest Public Health Advocacy Award. Joining him are Craig Hyland, Assistant Dean for Advancement; alumni board member, Tiana Kieso (MPH '04); Selena Smith, former UHDP staff member; Jamila Rashad (MPH '90), Director of UIC's Urban Health Program; Damon T. Arnold (MPH '92); and Ebbin Doton, Assistant Dean for Urban Health and Diversity Programs.

For more information about including the UIC School of Public Health in your estate plans, please contact Craig Hyland, Assistant Dean for Advancement, at 312-355-4501.



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.
- Employer 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.

BUILDING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

ADVANCING HEALTH EDUCATION

DEVELOPING LEADERS AND POLICIES



# Illinois Department of Public Health

THE UIC SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH fosters partnerships with various community organizations to help improve the public's health. One such partnership is with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). With a tagline of "Protecting Health, Improving Lives" it's clear that IDPH's mission is to promote the health of the people of Illinois through the prevention and control of disease and injury. "We value and appreciate our

Climate change is a hot topic and one that both organizations devote resources to addressing. Together they are working on a climate and health adaptation plan, which is a set of deliberate and specific efforts to anticipate and prepare for the effects of climate change. The purpose of this plan is to both improve the resilience of public health systems to stresses of climate change and to reduce the burden of climate-related adverse health impacts.

Leadership Institute (see caption). HIV/AIDS, asthma prevention, maternal and child health, violence prevention, chronic disease prevention, health equity, disaster preparedness and work force training are other important health topics in which these two organizations partner.

**"Our new agreement demonstrates a strong commitment on the part of IDPH to collaborate with not only our faculty, but with our students through internships and practicum opportunities."**

To improve coordination and maximize resources toward health improvement for all of our partnership efforts, UIC SPH and IDPH have established an on-going intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to align their respective strategic plan objectives and meet a common health agenda for Illinois. The IGA, in place since the fall of 2012, explores ways to systematically and strategically integrate and leverage the work of both organizations. "Our new agreement demonstrates a strong commitment on the part of IDPH to collaborate with not only our faculty, but with our students through internships and practicum opportunities," says Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf. "We are very grateful to have such a strong community partner in IDPH." ■



Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck, Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, Dr. Tom Frieden, Director of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf and Dr. Bechara Choucair, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Health, attended a community conversation hosted at UIC SPH on May 8, 2014 about CDC initiatives and advances in public health.

continuing partnership with the UIC School of Public Health," said Illinois Department of Public Health Director LaMar Hasbrouck, who also serves as a Clinical Associate professor in the school's Community Health Sciences division.

Both IDPH and the UIC SPH are committed to expanding and cultivating strategic public and private partnerships to advance Illinois' health agenda. A coordinated response to community health issues will afford both organizations the opportunities to "address a variety of public health needs, and they are critical to helping [us] achieve [our] vision of helping communities throughout the state achieve and maintain optimal health," furthers Dr. Hasbrouck.

UIC SPH and IDPH also collaborate to meet the needs of the public health workforce, jointly coordinating several workforce training institutes with IDPH, including the Rural Public Health Institute and MidAmerica Public Health



The Mid-America Public Health Training Center at the UIC School of Public Health has been organizing the Rural Public Health Institute (RPHI) in Effingham, Ill for the past 10 years. Stephen J. Koyna III, Chief of Staff at IDPH, leads the closing session on March 11, 2014.

# Celebrating the Achievements of Students, Alumni, Faculty and Staff

■ Six students in the Bachelor of Arts in Public Health Program, **Kunbi Adefeso, Maheen Ahmed, Catherine Bobbitt, Stephanie Moore, Katherine Ostrowski, and Isabel Ruvalcaba**, represented the UIC School of Public Health at the annual Undergraduate Public Health Scholar Bowl held at St. Louis University.

■ **Dr. Richard F. Afable** (MPH '91), who serves as president and CEO of Covenant Health Network, joined the board at AcelRx Pharmaceuticals.

■ **Lisa Aponte-Soto** (PhD '13) was recently inducted into the Hispanic Scholarship Fund's Alumni Hall of Fame.

■ **Juana Ballesteros**, BSN, RN, (MPH '05), was the keynote speaker at DePaul University's 2014 Health Disparities and Social Justice Conference where the focus was on Latino Health.



Juana Ballesteros

■ Congratulations to UIC students **Shefali Batra, Drew Nannini** (MPH candidate in epidemiology), **Rahul Patel**, and **Evana Robbani** for advancing to the regional finals of the Fifth Annual Hult Prize in partnership with the Clinton Global Initiative, which is the largest student competition and start-up platform for social good.

■ **Joseph Benitez**, PhD Candidate Division of Health Policy and Administration, has been selected as one of six recipients of Scholarships for Women and Under-Represented Minorities from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) to attend the 5th Biennial Conference of the American Society of Health Economists (ASHEcon).



IDPH Director LaMar Hasbrouck presents a check to HPA student Melissa Buenger and her fiancé, Chris Gansen.

■ Second year student in Health Policy and Administration, **Melissa Buenger**, won the 2013 Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Datapalooza Challenge. She and her fiancé, Chris Gansen, built an app called HealthNear.Me, which is an open source product that connects users to public data to allow Chicago residents to find local health resources.

■ The American Industrial Hygiene Association has named **Salvatore Cali**, Research Specialist in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, a distinguished Fellow.



Rahul Patel, Shefali Batra, Evana Robbani, and Drew Nannini

■ The Massage Therapy Foundation (MTF) has named **Jerrilyn Cambron**, (MPH '99), LMT, DC, (PhD '05), as President-Elect. Dr. Cambron is a massage therapist, licensed chiropractor, and educator. She is currently a Professor in the Department of Research at National University Health Sciences in Lombard, IL.



Rudell Christian

■ After practicing law for 40 years, **Mike Carroll**, JD, (MPH '75) has retired from his position as a Douglas County judge in the Sixth Circuit Court.



Salvatore Cali

■ **Rudell Christian** (DrPH '10) has recently been promoted to a Managed Market Liaison at Otsuka America Pharmaceutical Inc.

■ **Sarah Cole Kammerer** (MPH '12) went on a public health advocacy trip to Nepal with Toilet Hackers to raise awareness for sanitation needs.



# Celebrating the Achievements of Students, Alumni, Faculty and Staff (...continued)

■ Cancer Treatment Centers of America (CTCA) has announced the appointment of **Giuseppe Del Priore, MD, (MPH '92)** as the National Director of Gynecologic Oncology.

■ **Ebbin Dotson, PhD** joined UIC SPH as Assistant Dean for Urban Health and Diversity Programs and was appointed as Assistant Professor on the tenure track in the Division of Community Health Sciences. He will provide executive leadership to the development and management of the programs and activities of the UHDP office, which is charged with recruiting, retaining, and graduating underrepresented racial/ethnic minority students in public health professions, and expanding academic enrichment opportunities for these students.



Ebbin Dotson

■ **Ashley Dyer (MPH '11)** went on a public health advocacy trip to Indonesia with Save the Children, where she met with community health workers.

■ **Howard Ehrman, MD, (MPH '91)** is the new Chief Medical Officer of the Will County Community Health Center, which is one of 8 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) in Illinois that is also part of a Public Health Department.



Jack Herrmann

■ **Christine Garcia, MD, (MPH '05)** was nominated for the Medelita Right Fit Resident H.E.R.O. award. This award honors residents in practice that go above and beyond.

■ **Andrew A. Gonzalez, MD, JD, (MPH '10)** had his article, Understanding the Volume-Outcome Effect in Cardiovascular Surgery, featured in JAMA Surgery.

■ **Jiehong Guo, PhD** candidate in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, received a fellowship awarded by the Institute for Environmental Science and Policy (IESP).

■ **LaMar Hasbrouck, MD, Clinical Associate Professor in Community Health Sciences**, has been named one of Chicago Defender's 2014 Men of Excellence.

■ **David Henry, Professor of Health Policy and Administration and researcher at the Institute of Health Research and Policy**, received the 2013 Community, Culture and Prevention Science Award from the Society for Prevention Research for his work with Alaska Native communities.

■ **Jack Herrmann, DVM, (MPH '03), DACT, Director of the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine/Master of Public Health (DVM/MPH) program and the Center for One Health Illinois**, received the 2014 AAVMC Senator John Melcher, DVM Leadership in Public Policy Award.



Ben Gerber, Sarah Blenner, William Kling and Nadia Daneshvar



Janet Lin

■ **David Hinkamp, Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences**, was awarded the Jazz Institute of Chicago, 2013 Community Service Award.

■ **Daniel Hryhorczuk, Director of Environmental Global Health at UIC's Center for Global Health, Professor of Medical Toxicology and Professor Emeritus in the School of Public Health**, recently published a novel, *Caught in the Current*.

■ **Susan Hughes, Professor of Community Health Sciences**, has been awarded a Fulbright grant to adapt Fit and Strong!, the evidence-based exercise program she developed for older adults with arthritis, for use in Portugal.

■ **Bill Kling, Clinical Assistant Professor in Health Policy and Administration**, moderated a panel at a workshop called Health on the Go: Medical Apps, Privacy & Liability. He worked with **Sarah Blenner, JD, (MPH '10), Director of the Center for Diabetes Research and Policy at Chicago-Kent College of Law**, and HPA candidate **Nadia Danshvar, Research Assistant at the IIT Chicago-Kent Center for Diabetes Research and Policy**. **Ben Gerber, MD, (MPH '05)** was a speaker on this panel.

■ **Janet Lin, MD, (MPH '04)** received the Award for Excellence in Teaching from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

■ MPH candidate in Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences, **Nang Lin**, was selected as a recipient of the Chicago Consular Corps Scholarship for the academic year 2013-2014.

■ **Suzet McKinney (DrPH '09)** received the 2013 Kathy Osterman Award for Excellence in Leadership, which was given by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the City of Chicago.

■ **Cammeo Medici (MPH '13)** is the Project Manager for Project HEAL at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Medicine, Department of Emergency Medicine.

■ **Javette C. Orgain, MD, (MPH '05), FFAFP**, a family physician in Chicago, has been re-elected vice speaker of American Academy of Family Physicians Congress of Delegates, the organization's governing body.

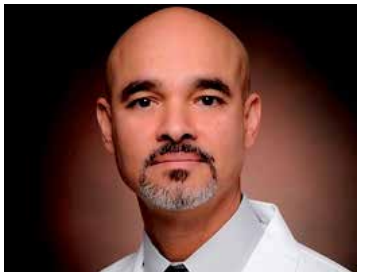
■ The University of Illinois at Chicago Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research has named **Lisa M. Powell**, professor of Health Policy and Administration, a recipient of the 2013 Distinguished UIC Researcher of the Year in Social Sciences.

■ **Amy Rosenfeld (MPH '13)** was recently hired on as a Survey Research Specialist II at NORC at the University of Chicago.

■ **Margie Schaps (MPH '78)** was honored by PCC Community Wellness Center for her dedication to passing legislation in Illinois allowing birth centers to open.

■ **Julio Silva, MD, (MPH '06)**, who is the Vice President of Clinical Systems and Chief Medical Information Officer at Rush University Medical Center, has been named Chief of Health Informatics at the Sidra Medical and Research Center for women and children now under construction in Doha, Qatar.

■ **Shiva Singhal, MD, (MPH '08)** recently joined the Mark Twain Cancer Center in San Andreas, California. She is a board certified Oncologist and brings experience in specialty care as a Hospitalist and Internal Medicine Physician.



Julio Silva

■ **Stephen Thompson (PhD '00)** is the recipient of the 2014 William E. Winter Award for Outstanding Advocate Leadership, which is given by the University of Illinois Foundation.

■ **Stephen Trzeciak, MD, (MPH '06)** was recently named Head of Critical Care Medicine and Director of the Center for Critical Care Services at Cooper University Hospital, Cooper Medical School of Rowan University, Camden, New Jersey.

Tell us what you're up to!  
Email your news to  
TelISPH@uic.edu.



# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2014

MORE THAN 230 GRADUATES WERE HONORED at the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health commencement ceremony on May 8, 2014. This marked the first class of undergraduates that earned a Bachelor of Arts in Public Health. Attendees were honored to have Joy Reid, host of MSNBC's "The Reid Report," as its speaker. "She has been such a highly visible force and consistent voice for social justice issues in Chicago and beyond, including those related to the health of the public," said Paul Brandt-Rauf.

"We asked Ms. Reid to serve as this year's commencement speaker because her

commentaries and her journalism are fact and evidence-based and grounded in social justice," explains Richard Sewell, Associate Dean for Community and Public Health Practice. "Our students care very much about the issues Ms. Reid talks about, including politics, health equity, and marginalized populations, so I know they appreciated what she had to say in her remarks."

An important part of the commencement ceremony is the presentation of two awards, both named in honor of UIC SPH founders.

The Bernard H. Baum Golden Apple Award was awarded to Jennifer Hebert-Beirne, Assistant Professor in Community Health Sciences. Professor Hebert-Beirne was selected for this prestigious award due to her compelling style of teaching and service to students. Students said they nominated her because of her commitment to the communities in which she works. This is the third time in four years that Professor Hebert-Beirne has received this award.



Dr. Jennifer Hebert-Beirne receives the Bernard H. Baum Golden Apple Award from Koffitse Atchon, President of the Public Health Student Association.

The Alan W. Donaldson Memorial Award, named for UIC SPH's first Associate Dean, was given to Rachel Reichlin, who earned joint degrees of a Master of Public Health in the division of Community Health Sciences and a Master of Science in Community Public Health Nursing. Ms. Reichlin was selected because of her distinguished leadership, commitment to social justice, and significant contributions improving the public's health. As an acute care nurse and as a research assistant at UIC SPH, she balanced her academic



Alan W. Donaldson Memorial Award recipient, Rachel Reichlin



Members of the inaugural class of undergraduate students who earned their Bachelor of Arts in Public Health.



"A public health education gives you the option to change other people's lives!" – Joy Reid

Joy Reid, host of MSNBC's "The Reid Report," delivered the commencement address.

studies with her professional work and volunteer responsibilities. In her address, Ms. Reichlin encouraged her new public health colleagues to be innovators for social change, saying "we can achieve greatness when we work together!"

The ceremony concluded with graduates being encouraged to stay connected with their alma mater. Dr. Stephen Thompson (PhD '00), President of the UIC SPH alumni board, spoke to the Class of 2014 about ways to stay involved. "Many of you received a scholarship during your time at UIC or benefitted from an internship our alumni provided," Thompson said. He

urged the graduates to get involved, even during their very first year as alumni, by hosting a student intern at their place of employment, referring a future student to UIC SPH, or giving back by volunteering or donating to the school. ■





# Alumnus Receives Prestigious UIF Award

ON FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2014, THE UNIVERSITY of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Illinois Foundation (UIF) co-hosted their annual reception and dinner to honor alumni and friends whose support and advocacy has had a meaningful impact on the campus. The event, called *An Evening With Legacies and Leaders*, was truly a unique gathering and recognized many significant contributions to UIC.

the board resigned, Dr. Thompson gladly accepted the responsibility of leading the board. He inherited a board that did not have a focus on resource development and he quickly set out to develop new roles and responsibilities that put a strong emphasis on fundraising, idea generation and building meaningful connections between the school, alumni and external entities. Under Dr. Thompson's leadership, the

most recent graduates, to give back to the university. At the school's 40th anniversary gala celebration in April 2013, he delivered a very powerful speech to his fellow alumni. "I encourage all alumni of this school to give back, whether it be time, talent, or treasure. I can speak from personal experience that the work of this alumni, at this school, at this university, is one of the most rewarding and meaningful endeavors I've ever undertaken. I urge all of the alumni here tonight to get involved in whatever way you can. You'll never work with a finer group of people."

According to Craig Hyland, the school's Assistant Dean for Advancement, "Steve's leadership is starting to inspire the next generation of alumni donors." The school's new Recent Graduate Council has asked to participate in the fundraising of the school. "This would not have happened if not for Steve," says Hyland. ■

**Left:** Awardee Dr. Stephen Thompson (center) is joined by Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf, his wife, Karen Thompson, UIF President, Tom Farrell, and Assistant Dean for Advancement, Craig Hyland.

**Below:** Dr. Thompson receives the 2014 William E. Winter Award for Outstanding Advocate Leadership from University of Illinois President Robert Easter.

UIC School of Public Health alumnus, Dr. Stephen Thompson (PhD '00), received the prestigious 2014 William E. Winter Award for Outstanding Advocate Leadership. This award, named for William E. Winter ('42 UIUC), Retired Chairman of the 7-Up Company, honors the volunteer who has shown extraordinary leadership in supporting the development goals of the University of Illinois.

Dr. Thompson began his career as a UIC volunteer in 2008 after his faculty mentor, Dr. Bernard Baum, passed away suddenly. In Dr. Baum's absence, Dr. Thompson felt the need to reconnect with the school for the first time in eight years since his graduation. In that short period of time, he began to build a legacy that will undoubtedly impact the School of Public Health and UIC for decades to come.

Shortly after reconnecting with the school, Dr. Thompson was invited to join its Alumni Board. He immediately became a first time donor to the school and, the next fall, he took over as Vice President. When a few months later the President of

board reached 100% giving for the first time in the school's history.

Dr. Thompson inspires the next generation to give back. In each of his commencement speeches, he has stressed the importance of all alumni, even the



## ANNUAL ALUMNI REUNION

**UIC** School of Public Health held its Annual Alumni Reunion on April 10, 2014 at the beautiful Galleria Marchetti in Chicago's West Loop. The evening included a cocktail reception and silent auction, which raised support for the Student Travel Fund. More than 160 guests enjoyed dinner and an awards presentation, where alumni were recognized for their significant contributions to the field of public health.



Student presenters Ryan Cole and Adaeze Chuma-Okorafor joined Dean Brandt-Rauf in presenting the divisional awards to Lee Francis, Tracie Smith, Robert Brewer III and Barbara Epstien.



Guests browse the silent auction items. All proceeds benefitted the Student Travel Fund.

George Smith, Jr. receives the Minority Health in the Midwest Public Health Advocacy Award.



**Minority Health in the Midwest Public Health Advocacy Award**  
George Smith, Jr., MPH '96

**Faculty and Staff Outstanding Service Award**  
Shaffdeen Amuwo, MPH '76, PhD

**Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award**  
Valerie Webb, MPH '78

**Champion of Public Health Award**  
Sylvia Furner, MPH '85, PhD '87

**Health Policy and Administration Achievement Award**  
Lee Francis, MD '88, MPH '00

**Jacob Brody Epidemiology and Biostatistics Achievement Award**  
Frank Hu, MPH '94, PhD '96

**Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Achievement Award**  
Barbara Epstien, MPH '78

**Naomi Morris Community Health Sciences Achievement Award**  
Robert Brewer III, MS '78, MD '82

**Naomi Morris Maternal and Child Health Achievement Award**  
Tracie Smith, MPH '03





Shaffdeen Amuwo delivers his acceptance speech after receiving the Faculty and Staff Outstanding Service Award.



Alumni and friends enjoy the dinner at Galleria Marchetti.



Valerie Webb accepts the Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award from Dean Brandt-Rauf and alumni board member Sheri Cohen (MPH '91).

## HEALTHY SPIRITS



Alumni and friends at Plymouth Rooftop Bar on May 14, 2014.



Alumni gathered at Elephant & Castle on February 12, 2014.

## ALUMNI RECEPTION IN NEW YORK

Alumni board members, Cynthia Summers (DrPH '04) and Abby Long (MPH '03), hosted an event for New York area alumni on May 13, 2014.



## Engage: 2014 Events

August 22, 2014  
5 pm – 6:30 pm

**Alumni Reception at  
New Student Orientation**  
UIC School of Public Health  
1603 W. Taylor Street  
Chicago, IL 60612

September 18, 2014  
5:30 pm – 8 pm

**Healthy Spirits**  
September 23, 2014  
6 pm – 8 pm  
**Founders Circle Annual Reception**

October 22, 2014  
6 pm – 8 pm  
**Alumni Learning Series**  
November 17, 2014  
**APHA Alumni & Friends Reception**  
New Orleans

For more information on all of these events, visit [publichealth.uic.edu/alumni](http://publichealth.uic.edu/alumni).

## AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION



Dean Paul Brandt-Rauf is joined by Miriam Link-Mullison, Director of Jackson County Health Department, Tom Hughes, Executive Director of the Illinois Public Health Association, and David Gill, Assistant Director of Illinois Department of Public Health at the reception held during the APHA conference in Boston on November 4, 2013.

## FOUNDERS CIRCLE



Founders Circle members attend a special reception on March 12, 2014. See page 15 for more information about joining the Founders Circle.

## ALUMNI LEARNING SERIES



Captain Todd Stankewicz (MPH '01), Amy Hennessy (MPH '01), Dr. Lee Francis (MPH '00) and Clarita Santos (MPH '96) served as panelists that discussed the Affordable Care Act at the Alumni Learning Series on December 11, 2013.



Dr. Kira Christian (MPH '01), center, served as the keynote speaker for the Alumni Learning Series on March 12, 2014. She is joined by the Director of the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine/Master of Public Health (DVM/MPH) program, Dr. Jack Herrmann (MPH '03), and Jasmine James (MPH '14).



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