

Spring 2010

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MPH Program Mission

The mission of the graduate Master of Public Health (MPH) program is to enhance the health of our communities through the development of future public health leaders via multidisciplinary education, research, community practice, and service.

MPH Program Vision

Our vision is that the Thomas Jefferson University's MPH program is recognized as a center of excellence for integrative population health training throughout the greater Philadelphia region and beyond.

MPH Program Goals

Instruction Goals

To provide all MPH students with quality graduate level education in core and elective courses and in community-based learning opportunities via Clerkship and Capstone projects that facilitate student mastery of public health competencies.

Research Goals

To provide opportunities and train all MPH students in the development and translation of public health research through coursework and the Capstone research project.

Service Goals

To provide structured service-learning opportunities for students through Clerkship, Capstone and other continuing education initiatives as formal and informal components of the MPH program and to encourage faculty to participate in public health community.

Public Health Link

JEFFERSON SCHOOL OF POPULATION HEALTH
MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH E-NEWS

MPH Spotlight

Theresa Pluth Yeo, PhD, MPH, MSN, AOCNP

Dr. Theresa Pluth Yeo is a new faculty member in the Jefferson School of Population Health. Dr. Yeo holds a joint appointment in the Jefferson School of Population Health and the Jefferson School of Nursing. Dr. Yeo received her BSN from Cornell University, MSN and post-master's nurse practitioner (NP) certification from the University of Virginia, and MPH and PhD in environmental health science from the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. Her doctoral thesis, "Assessment of 'Gene-Environment' Interaction in Cases of Familial and Sporadic Pancreas Cancer," was recently published in part in the *Journal of Gastrointestinal Surgery* (2009,13:1487-1491). Dr. Yeo teaches Population Health Management in the MS-Health Policy program and share teaching responsibilities with Dr. Lee Blum for the Environmental Health course in the MPH program. She has been actively involved in the recent establishment of the MSN/MPH dual degree program at Jefferson.

Early in her career, Theresa served as a member of a combined infectious disease – public health Hopkins team that investigated and tracked new cases of African sleeping sickness in Kenya. It was a life-changing experience that led to the pursuit of training in public health. In addition to nursing experience in critical care, trauma, primary care, and international nursing, Theresa served as the nurse manager of the Hopkins Center for Occupational & Environmental Health. As a faculty member at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing for 15 years, Dr. Yeo taught community health nursing, coordinated the acute care NP program and was an oncology NP specializing in hematologic malignancies at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center. She has authored 23 book chapters and peer-reviewed

articles and serves on the Editorial Board of the *Journal for Nurse Practitioners* and Editorial Review Boards of the *Clinical Journal of Oncology Nursing*, *Oncology Nursing Forum*, and the *Journal of Allied Health*.

Dr. Yeo joined the faculty of the Jefferson School of Nursing in 2006. She is the Principal Investigator of two projects; a HRSA training grant, "Advanced Practice Oncology Nursing for Diverse and Underserved Populations" and an investigator –initiated RCT evaluating the effect of a walking program on fatigue, physical functioning, and quality of life in post-operative pancreas cancer patients. Theresa is one of the founding investigators of the Jefferson



Theresa Pluth Yeo, PhD, MPH, MSN, AOCNP

Pancreas Tumor Registry, established in 2008. Among her research interests are: occupational and environmental exposures, cancer epidemiology, cancer symptom management, and workplace violence.

Theresa is married to Dr. Charles J. Yeo, Samuel D. Gross Professor and Chairman of the Thomas Jefferson University Department of Surgery. They have 2 children (step-son William, 21 and Katerina, 17) and a delightful Pembroke Welsh Corgi, Princess Annabelle Lee. Theresa is a passionate gardener and also enjoys tennis and cycling. The Yeos currently reside in Penn Valley, PA and have a sand lot in Holden Beach, NC where they hope to retire one day.

**Health Policy
Forum**
Winter/Spring 2010
8:30-9:30am
Bluemle 101

**Jan 13
Healthcare Reform:
Future Implications &
the Role of the
Physician Advocate**
Valerie Arkoosh, MD,
MPH, *President-elect,
National Physicians Alli-
ance, Professor Clinical
Anesthesiology & Critical
Care, Professor Clinical
Obstetrics & Gynecology,
University of Pennsyl-
vania*

**Feb 10
Turning Dialogue Into
Data: Leveraging
Patient & Physician
Insights for Behavioral
Change**
Carolyn Choh Fleming,
MBA, *Professor Market-
ing, Dept Pharmaceutical
Marketing, Saint Joseph's
University*

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PULSE

Reminder to always check your Jefferson Email or have it forwarded to a personal email account.

Also, to keep checking the MPH Organization on Pulse for various announcements for jobs and other opportunities.

Philadelphia Played Host to Two National Public Health Meetings, the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) and the American Public Health Association in November

This past November, Philadelphia was fortunate to serve as host of two national public health meetings, the 60th Annual Meeting of the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) and the 137th Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association. **SOPHE:**

The SOPHE meeting had a theme of "An Invitation to Innovation" as over 500 public health educators heard plenary presentations from Reed Tuckson, Vice President of the United Health Group, on "Innovations in Health and Health Care", Gail Christopher, Vice President for Health Programs of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation on "The Power of Innovation", Nancy Whitelaw, Senior Vice President of the National Council on Aging on "Healthy Aging" and a panel including Lisa Orrell of "Millennials Incorporated" and young public health professionals and students on the topic of "Capitalizing on the Strengths of the Millennial Generation (formerly known as *Generation Y*): Building a New Public Health Workforce".

In addition to the over 70 presentations, one of the highlights was a special pre-conference workshop on Philadelphia's community-based participatory research obesity prevention initiative entitled, "PUFFA". The workshop included Dr. Rickie Brawer, Jefferson Faculty in the MPH program, and Abbie Santana, MPH Program Alumni. The uniqueness of the workshop was that most of it was located in the community as participants boarded a trolley and toured key PUFFA initiatives throughout Northwest Philadelphia. (See PUFFA article on page 5). Another highlight of the



conference was the concluding 60th anniversary SOPHE awards ceremony at the Academy of Natural Sciences. Gilda Sibedwo, Jefferson MPH student, helped coordinate the awards event with some wonderful audiovisuals as part of her MPH Clerkship experience working with the national office of SOPHE.

APHA:

Over 12,000 public health professionals participated in the 137th annual meeting of the American Public Health Association (APHA). The theme of the conference was water and public health highlighting the importance of water on local, national, and global health. Key national health issues of the H1N1 virus and health reform were also featured with presentations and forums, and as expected, much discussion and debate.

Thomas Jefferson University (TJU) was well represented as over 30 professional presentations were made by TJU and particularly MPH program faculty, students, and alumni at the meeting. One of the highlights was a special 90 minute session on quality and public health developed by the Jefferson School of Population Health (JSPH), moderated by Dr. Susan DesHarnais, Program Director for the MS in Quality & Safety and featuring JSPH Dean David Nash.

The TJU School of Population Health exhibited in the APHA Expo, highlighting its new school, its three master's degrees and its future plans for additional master's degrees and a doctoral degree in Population Health Science. The new JSPH exhibit with its description of population health received hundreds of visitors during the three day meeting. The Jefferson School of Population Health made it mark in public health at the APHA annual meeting. See the accompanying stories by Brianna Germain and Megan Morris, current MPH students, on their experience at APHA.

*-Rob Simmons, DrPH, MPH, CHES, CPH
MPH Program Director*

Highlights from the APHA Annual Meeting: Student Perspective

I recently attended my first American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference entitled "Water and Public Health." This was the 137th APHA Annual Meeting and Exposition held on November 7-

11, 2009 in Philadelphia. This year's APHA Conference covered some of the most prominent issues in public health today through business

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Highlights from the APHA Annual Meeting: Student Perspective (Cont'd)

meetings, discussions, information tables and poster sessions. The conference commenced with a riveting opening general session with several prestigious speakers including Mayor Michael Nutter and the Deputy Mayor for Health, Dr. Donald Schwartz who welcomed the attendees from across the country and the world to the city of Philadelphia. Other influential speakers including the APHA Executive Director, Georges C. Benjamin and the keynote speakers, Celine Cousteau and Dr. Mirta Roses Periago introduced the highlighted issue of water and pertinent public health topics, setting the stage for a very eventful few days.

There were sessions covering every possible public health topic. It was rather overwhelming at times. I decided to attend discussions that pertained to areas of current interest and study. For instance, I recently completed my Clerkship as an intern at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services where I focused primarily on preparedness and response for the H1N1 pandemic. Therefore, I attended several sessions dedicated to reporting the most updated statistics of the pandemic, what was learned from the first wave in the Spring, and the preparation for responding the pandemic this fall. The information from these sessions emphasized the dominate trends I followed during my Clerkship, while providing even more details about the effects it has had on certain high risk groups and demographics. The conference also offered a great deal of information on my other interests, including health administration and quality of care delivered to patients. I was given ample opportunity to explore how different health systems have made effective changes, how disparities are addressed, and what new measures are being used to assess quality improvement.

One of my responsibilities as a Masters of Public Health student was to represent Jefferson's new School of Population Health. Working at the Jeffer-

son booth at the APHA Expo was a worthwhile experience that allowed me to actively spread the word about our new school and the integral mission it intends to fulfill. I discussed the details of our programs with potential students and interested onlookers. Doing so has strengthened my appreciation for the pursuit of my Master of Public Health degree at this institution and the team of individuals



working to generate this broader scale of educational opportunity for those entering the field. Truly, the JSPH is moving forward and preparing for the future of health professionals.

As a full-time student nearing the end of my MPH, I was able to maximize this experience at the 2009 APHA Conference. From the foundational knowledge I have acquired through my coursework, I fully understand the influence of community and behaviors, the importance of communication, and the means of public health promotion through large groups and forums such as APHA. With over 10,000 dedicated individuals in one location, sharing their knowledge, research, and experience in all areas of public health, the field made great strides in raising awareness and gaining support for future concerns and endeavors. It was a success.

-Brianna Germain, MPH Student

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Highlights from the APHA Annual Meeting: Student Perspective

After attending the 135th annual meeting in Washington D.C. during my senior year of college, I was aware of the overwhelming nature of the exposition and the need to schedule presentations in advance. This allowed me to better navigate the conference and attend all desired events. Additionally, I was much better prepared to understand the significance of the conference and the presentations. Having most my MPH courses completed and my Clerkship at the Department of Health and Human Services Region

III Office of Public Health and Science, I understood the language and principles of the field.

I attended a portion of the Opening General session where APHA President Georges Benjamin welcomed all attendees and introduced the newly confirmed Surgeon General Dr. Regina Benjamin. Mayor Michael Nutter and Health Commissioner Dr. Don Schwartz also welcomed

Health Policy Forums Cont'd

Mar 10

How Pennsylvania's Budget Shapes Service Delivery

Kenneth J. Braithwaite, II, *Senior Vice President, Hospital & Health System, Association of Pennsylvania, Delaware Valley Healthcare Council*

Apr 14

Consumer Health Informatics & Healthcare Disparities

Michael Christopher Gibbons, MD, MPH, *Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins Urban Health Institute*

May 12*

Changing Social Environments to Promote Health: Evidence, Opportunity, and Challenges

Karen Glanz, PhD, MPH, *Penn Integrates Knowledge (PIK), Professor Medicine & Nursing, University of Pennsylvania*

***Location: BLSB 105**

June 9

Physician Leadership & Medical Group Performance: A National Study

Louisa Baxter, MD, Msc, MRCP (UK)

Commonwealth Fund Harkness Fellow in Health Care Policy & Practice, JSPH

Spring Capstone Presentations

Spring Capstone presentations will be on Tuesday, March 30th at 2:30pm in 207 JAH.

If you plan to present, all required coursework, Clerkship paperwork, most Capstone paperwork, and abstract are due on Mon, March 16th at 5pm.

A final written paper should be submitted to your committee a week prior to the abstract deadline.

Please review the Capstone guidelines posted on pulse.

Accreditation Update
The MPH program was re-accredited earlier this fall 2009 for seven years by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH).

We have recently submitted our annual report with updated policies, statistics, and changes.

Highlights from the APHA Annual Meeting: Student Perspective (Cont'd)

everyone to the city of brotherly love and sisterly affection. This opening presentation set the stage for the remainder of the conference as it highlighted some recent public health achievements and also some reoccurring challenges.

Throughout the four-day conference I was able to attend several scientific sessions, browse the exposition, work the TJU booth, and network with others. I listened to several presentations by CDC officials about H1N1 and the novel vaccine to learn the most recent information and help develop my capstone project. I also listened to presentations by former health science professors from James Madison University. This was a great opportunity to reconnect with them and share my experiences post-college while learning about their research projects on campus. When I was acting as a student representative at the TJU School of Population Health booth I enjoyed talking to prospective students and Jefferson alumni. One JMC graduate expressed how proud she was that Jefferson was taking the initiative to make quality health care and patient safety a priority.

This year I took advantage of the networking socials following the scientific sessions and exposition. I accompanied fellow MPH classmate Anna

Quinn to the Health Communications Working Group (HCWG) and Public Health Education and Health Promotion (PHEHP) socials. These evening socials had a casual atmosphere that allowed me to approach others to learn about their careers and areas of interest.

Finally, I was extremely fortunate to meet Assistant Secretary for Health Dr. Howard Koh when he visited the Regional DHHS Office located in Center City. His passion and enthusiasm for public health initiatives was overwhelming, especially on H1N1, obesity, and tobacco. It was very reassuring as a student to witness a leader with such noble objective who also has the power and influence to affect change. Dr. Koh was one of the speakers in the Closing General Session, as well as Dr. Mary Wakefield (Administrator of Health Resources and Services Administration) and Dr. Yvette Roubideaux (Director of the Indian Health Service). They all described goals for their administration and how public health was an integral component of their work. I look forward to attending future APHA meetings to note the progress we have made and learn about new opportunities for making a difference.

-Megan Morris

Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) Bioterrorism and Public Health

One of the lesser known public health areas of focus is Bioterrorism and Public Health Preparedness. For my Clerkship, I spent time with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's (PDPH) Public Health Preparedness program located in the Division of Disease Control. This program is charged with preparing the city to respond and mitigate the effects of a public health emergency. These emergencies include terrorism attacks with a biological agent (ie. weaponized anthrax), pandemic influenza, and any other infectious disease that can threaten a large portion of the Philadelphia population whether natural or man-made.

My Clerkship involved helping with and experiencing the preparedness related tasks performed by the program. During the experience, I attended and participated in various meetings with local, state, and federal public health and emergency response partners. As an example, the PDPH is the lead program in charge of the Philadelphia Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) for the federal government's Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI). CRI is a program funded by the CDC to help major US cities prepare and respond to a large scale bioterrorism event by dispens-

ing antibiotics to the entire identified MSA population in 48 hours. Additionally, I participated in the planning, execution, and review of various preparedness trainings and exercises in the region. My participation included an active role in developing the exercises, providing day of support with set up, observation and evaluation, and finally with helping to complete the post exercise wrap up (this included writing After Action Reports as well as data collection and statistical analysis).

The PDPH Public Health Preparedness program is also responsible for the management of the Philadelphia Volunteer Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The MRC is a government initiative that was developed following the events of September 11th, 2001. During and after that attack, many volunteers flooded the ground zero site offering to help in various healthcare and non-healthcare capacities. While the help was needed, there was no way to determine if the volunteers were qualified and there was no one to manage the volunteers due to overwhelmed emergency response organizations. Therefore, the MRC

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Philadelphia Urban Food and Fitness Alliance (PUFFA)

The W.K.Kellogg Foundation provided funding for the Philadelphia Urban Food and Fitness Alliance (PUFFA) with an exciting opportunity to create a three year Community Action Plan – as part of its new national Food and Community initiative – envisioning a nation that creates healthy places where all children thrive. PUFFA addresses two of the root causes that prevent children from thriving – 1) access to healthy food and 2) opportunities for physical activity. PUFFA’s mission is to transform Philadelphia’s food systems and the places children live, learn and play through systems and policy changes.

From April 2007—October 2009, Philadelphia’s PUFFA project was one of nine communities across the country to receive a planning grant and then successfully receive an award to implement its Community Action Plan. During the planning period, a community-driven collaborative was formed to assess the living conditions and environments, particularly as it relates to food access and physical activity in the natural/built environments in four regions of Philadelphia.

PUFFA’s Evaluation Team, consisting of community and academic members, led by Dr. Rickie Brawer, with the assistance of Abbie Santana (MSPH ‘08), Sheena Ahlawat (MPH ‘09) and Melissa DiCarlo (MPH ‘09), used Community Based Participatory Research methodology to develop multiple assessment strategies to ascertain the community’s attitudes, behaviors, barriers and preferences related to access to healthy, affordable food and safe places for physical activity. As part of the assessment process, youth from the in-



Rickie Brawer, PhD, MPH, Abbie Santana, MPH, and Shirley Randelman (community leader)

involved communities conducted almost 700 surveys, assessed playgrounds, and participated in a PhotoVoice project. Dr. Jim Plumb served as Chair of the Built Environment Working Group



PUFFA Youth discussing PhotoVoice Projects at Jefferson

and serves on PUFFA’s Governance Committee. Dr. Brawer is also participating in a national cross-site evaluation of the Food and community Initiative.

The PUFFA Coalition currently consists of over 40 multi-disciplinary partners including, community advocates/leaders, public health experts, non-profits, academia, local and state governments, business planners, food system and economic development experts. The Community Action Plan, to be implemented in the next three years, has the following goals:

1. Improve access to food in Philadelphia Schools.
2. Improve the nutritional quality of food served in the Philadelphia Schools.
3. Increase availability of aesthetically pleasant safe, space for children, youth & adults to engage in physical activities.

Improve access to healthy and diverse foods in Philadelphia neighborhoods.

The PUFFA initiative is a prime example of a community-based, participatory research (CBPR) project. Jefferson public health students are encouraged to participate in one or more of the various aspects of the project.

-Rickie Brawer PhD, MPH, James Plumb MD, MPH

PDPH Clerkship Description Cont’d

was established to develop a group of pre-identified, pre-credentialed and pre-trained volunteers to respond and support important public health functions during times of emergency. MRC membership is open to anyone over the age of 18 with an interest in learning about public health and personal preparedness, and who are willing to assist during a public health emergency that would require additional support when the normal PDPH resources are overwhelmed. While “medical” is in the name, membership is not limited to medical professionals. Roles an MRC can include providing healthcare services,

staffing emergency call centers and local emergency operations centers, as well staffing Point of Dispensing (POD) sites to distribute medication and/or vaccines to the general population.

To join the Philadelphia MRC, please visit: <https://mrcalert.phila.gov/> and click on the “New Volunteer” link. For more information on the Public Health Preparedness program in Philadelphia please visit <http://www.phila.gov/health> and click on the “Emergency Preparedness and Response” link.

—Patrick Gomella, MPH, Graduate, JMC Student

Upcoming Events

Food Inspection Opportunity

Sign up any Tues or Thurs through Feb 25th 8:30-1:30

Clerkship Information Session

Clerkship
Co-Coordinators Drs. Rickie Brawer and James Plumb
Feb. 2nd 4-5pm
Hamilton 213

What’s the Skinny on Obesity?

Dr. James Diamond
March 1st 4-5pm
Curtis 216

MPH Capstone Presentations

March 30th
2:30pm
JAH 207

For more info, contact
Lisa.Chosed
@jefferson.edu

Bridging the Gap (BTG)

This summer as a Bridging the Gap student, I worked with The Philadelphia Department of Public Health as a patient advocate for the Patient Assistance Program (PAP) at the Strawberry Mansion Health Center. Being a patient advocate I worked with patients, doctors, nurses, and other Health Center staff to promote the program, enroll new patients, complete applications, distribute and document medications, and of course, to advocate on



behalf of the patients whenever necessary to ensure they received the medications they needed.

Working with BTG has been a challenging yet enjoyable experience. Being able to work in the real world solving real problems that patients face has been invigorating. Not only did this eight week long stint give me a chance to apply the knowledge that I had already gained as part of my MPH program, it also gave me a chance to learn about issues in far greater perspective than I could have ever hoped to understand within the confines of a class room.

I can use a lot of adjectives to describe my experience; interesting, intimidating, enjoyable, satisfying etc. I cannot help but realize that these seven weeks have definitely exceeded my expectations in terms of what I set out to achieve out of this internship. It has been quite a ride! Would I do it again? You bet!

-Megha Vaid

Note: MPH students are encouraged to apply to the summer BTG. Applications will be available in April.

13th Annual National Public Health Education Advocacy Summit

The 13th Annual National Public Health Education Advocacy Summit will be held, Sat.-Mon. March 6-8 in Washington DC. Over 200 professional public health educators including over 100 public health students from around the country participate in this unique event. The advocacy summit and congressional briefings comprise 1 1/2 days during which participants receive either basic or advanced-level advocacy training, briefings on specific legislative issues by experienced professionals followed by a day on Capitol Hill meeting with Congressional representatives or other Federal officials advocating for key public health education initiatives.



The Summit is coordinated by the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE). In the past two years, six Jefferson MPH students participated in summit (see article in the fall 2009 newsletter). Jefferson MPH students are encouraged to participate in this experiential learning opportunity. The student summit registration fee is \$90 for the 2 1/2 day event and a limited number of student scholarships are available. For additional information, go to the summit website at www.healtheducationadvocate.org. or contact MPH Program Director, Dr. Simmons at rob.simmons@jefferson.edu.

Jefferson School of Population Health Welcomes the US, Dept. of Health and Human Services and Healthy People 2020

Healthy People 2020 is a national preventive health initiative beginning its fourth decade to provide guidance and a national framework, goals, and specific measurable objective to lead health promotion and disease prevention for the nation over the next decade. Thomas Jefferson University (TJU) and Jefferson School of Population Health (JSPH) hosted the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and one of three national meetings on Healthy People 2020 on November 7th.

The four overarching goals for Healthy People 2020 are:

1. Elimination of preventable disease, disability, injury, and premature death
2. Achievement of health equity, elimination of disparities, and improvement in the health of all groups
3. Creation of social and physical environments that promote good health for all
4. Promotion of healthy development and healthy behaviors across every stage of life

Dalton Paxman, Regional Administrator for Region III of HHS (headquartered in Philadelphia) hosted the meeting that brought together approximately 250 people to learn about Healthy People 2020 and provide comment on the

nation's preventive health objectives for the next decade. Dean David Nash of the JSPH provided a Jefferson welcome and linked the work of the new school and particularly our public health program to Healthy People 2020. In addition to a recorded message from Asst. Secretary of Health, Howard Koh, Karyl Rattay, the Dir. of Public Health for the state of Delaware shared one state's experience with Healthy People and their development of Healthy Delaware 2010 a decade ago. Representatives from HHS who participated on a panel included, Michelle Davis, Deputy Regional Health Administrator for Region III and Acting Regional Health Administrator for Region II, Shiriki Kumanyika, Vice-Chair of the Secretary's Advisory Committee for Healthy People 2020, Penelope Slade-Sawyer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health, Carter Blakey, Senior Advisor, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, and Richard Klein, Chief, Health Promotion Statistics Branch, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC. Panel members presented an overview of the Healthy People 2020 framework, its goals, and the 38 topic areas where the objectives will reside. The national meeting was deemed highly successful by the US Department of HHS representatives who thanked TJU and JSPH for serving as its host.