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*SPHHS Mission: To optimize the public's health and quality of life through education, research, outreach and practice using an innovative model that addresses complex transdisciplinary health issues by integrating core areas of public health and the health sciences.*

[www.umass.edu/sphhs](http://www.umass.edu/sphhs)

## Thoughts from Dean Aelion's Desk

Welcome to the SPHHS Scoop. 2008-2009 brought many changes to UMass; including a new Chancellor, Provost and Dean in the SPHHS. Changes made by the Chancellor will significantly strengthen UMass Amherst for the future. The SPHHS also is experiencing positive changes. The number of students has increased, the number of externally-funded



Dean Aelion (left), with Allison Foster and Rita Kelliher from ASPH at the Career Fair.

grants awarded has increased, we are making progress on acquiring laboratory facilities, and we have hired new faculty into the School despite challenging economic times. We are working hard to make the SPHHS a stronger community for its students, staff and faculty, and increase communication with alumni and people who were previously part of the SPHHS. We hope that you will learn a little about what is currently happening at the SPHHS with this newsletter, and engage or reengage more with the School. Best Wishes for 2010.

## Undergrad Program in Public Health Takes Off

The front page of the new brochure for the Public Health Sciences Major says it all: *Change the World Now*. And repeatedly—this is the sentiment that students in the program express: “I want to address world hunger.” “I’m interested in working with minority populations who are not getting adequate healthcare.” “There are so many problems facing the world—I see myself being part of the solution.” This is how students in the Public Health Sciences Major talk about their goals.

In existence since April 2007, the Public Health Sciences program was recently voted #1 Major in student satisfaction by the Senior Survey 2007-2009. In addition, it rated above average in quality of teaching, faculty accessibility and faculty concern for progress, academic advising, and career preparation and guidance. The Major is highly interdisciplinary, and as students introduce themselves at advising sessions and share their interests, they begin to see how broad the field is.

It is estimated that the U.S. will face a shortage of public health workers (APHA, 2008), and there is a national mandate from the American Public Health Association (APHA) and the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) supported by the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to strengthen undergraduate public health coursework in order to create a ready work force. *Continued on page 6 . . .*

## The School of Public Health and Health Sciences Career and Internship Fair a Success!



On Thursday, September 24, 2009, the School of Public Health and Health Sciences hosted a Career and Internship Fair at the UMASS Amherst campus in the Campus Center auditorium. Designed to connect public health agencies with students seeking internships or employment, the SPHHS hosted over 40 organizations. About 200 students from UMASS and several local colleges had the opportunity to meet with these organizations and learn more about public health opportunities across Western Massachusetts. Student and organizational evaluation of the career fair was overwhelmingly positive: **82% of students would attend again and 93% of organizations recommend the event to others!** Another career fair is planned for the spring semester – contact Risa Silverman at [risa@schoolph.umass.edu](mailto:risa@schoolph.umass.edu) for more information.



## The Department of Nutrition Launches Online MPH in Nutrition

The Department of Nutrition has developed and launched the nation's first fully online MPH in Nutrition (MPHN) degree program. The initial cohort of five nutrition and health professionals began the program during the Fall 2008 Semester. Since then, students from all over the United States have continued to enroll. There are currently 23 matriculated students in this part-time program, designed to be completed in 3 years.

Nutrition courses in the MPH in Nutrition program are interactive and learner-centered, covering issues such as obesity and chronic disease, programs to increase fruit and vegetable consumption, sweetened beverage intake, restaurant menu labeling, food security, school wellness policies, and current legislative matters. For interaction and collaboration, the program uses Blackboard Vista, Moodle, and Wimba Live Classroom.

Students consider issues from their work and community in individual or group projects and case studies, while reflecting on achievement of public health nutrition competencies using discussions, seminars, and e-portfolios.

A survey, carried out this past summer with first-year students, had positive results. One student wrote, "The knowledge I have gained so far has helped me understand and analyze current health conditions in my city/state and better understand the possible implications of governmental policies and interventions at national and local levels." Another student commented, "One strength of this program is the facilitated interaction among the classmates, creating an environment where everybody learns from the other. The learners are also mature, self-directed people who have a wealth of knowledge from their diverse academic backgrounds and professional experience, which they share with fellow classmates. The other strength is the commitment of experienced instructors, who are readily available to offer guidance and answer students' questions."

Dr. Patsy Beffa-Negrini, R.D., MPH Program Coordinator, commented, "We are so pleased that the students are applying what they are learning in their work environments and that they appreciate that online learning provides not only flexibility, but a unique opportunity to interact with their peers." For more information about the program, please email Dr. Beffa-Negrini at [mphn@nutrition.umass.edu](mailto:mphn@nutrition.umass.edu).

## Student and Faculty Impact the Local Community

The SPHHS Office of Public Health Practice and Outreach contacted community members who have worked with students and faculty over the past year in order to understand how work both students and faculty have done in the community has affected these organizations and their clients. Key informants reported that they were satisfied with student work – 100% of survey participants would work with SPHHS student interns again. The most commonly identified areas in which students **need more training were in communication skills, health law and policy, research methods, and cultural competency**. Interestingly, these are also areas that key informants identified as continuing education needs for themselves. Community informants were also very satisfied with faculty collaborations. They found faculty to be well prepared and approachable. The SPHHS continues to impact the local community through positive working relationships. Suggestions for fine-tuning these collaborations included better communication and understanding of internship and classroom projects as well as increased opportunities to share information between the organizations' available opportunities and the SPHHS student and faculty resources.



Check out the SPHHS website for News and Events and **new** Alumni Profiles!  
<http://www.umass.edu/>

## American Public Health Association's 137th Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, Nov. 7-11, 2009

**Nancy Cohen, Ph.D., R.D. and Patsy Beffa-Negrini, Ph.D., R.D.**

Development of an interactive online Masters of Public Health in Nutrition degree program

**Lorraine Cordeiro, Ph.D., M.P.H**

A descriptive study of undernutrition, gender and sexual maturation among adolescents in Kilosa District, Tanzania

**Daniel S. Gerber, M.P.H., Ed.D., CHES**

A New Undergraduate Major in Public Health and the Importance of Experiential Learning in the Program

**Tameka L. Gillum, Ph.D.**

An examination of dating violence among sexual minority youth

**Aline Gubrium, Ph.D.**

Let's talk about sex: Learning from the voices of Latino/a youth

**Rosa Rodriguez-Monguio, Ph.D.**

Impact of the Waxman-Hatch Act of 1984 on Generic Competition in the U.S. Pharmaceutical Market

**Rosa Rodriguez-Monguio, Ph.D. and Hong Zhang, Ph.D?**

Ethnic and racial disparities in overweight and obesity related co-morbidities in Massachusetts

**Christie Barcelos, MPPA**

Predictors of primary and overall cesareans by maternal demographic and medical risk factors, 2003-2005

**Corey H. Brouse, Ed.D**

Exposure to risk and susceptibility to skin cancer in a sample of college students

## American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention, New Orleans, LA, Nov. 19-21, 2009

At the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention this November, faculty in the Communication Disorders Department gave the following presentations:

- **Dr. Mary Andrianopoulos:** Language-Free Motor Speech Assessment for Difficult-to-Test Populations; Voice Characteristics of Autism; Acoustic & Prosodic Characteristics of Spontaneous Speech in Autism; and Data Management for Monitoring Student Speech & Language Progress
- **Dr. Jane Baran:** Assessment of Temporal Resolution Abilities in Children with Speech-Language Disorders; and Enhancing Skills as a Site Visitor
- **Dr. Yu-Kyong Choe:** Individual Differences in Understanding Speech
- **Dr. Patricia Mercaitis:** Implementation of Technology for Transcribing and Analyzing Disfluent Speech Samples; and Electronic Survey: Therapeutic Contemplative Practices Training in Communication Disorders Programs
- **Dr. Shelley Velleman:** Phonotactics in Early AAE; Phonological Development in Duplication 7q11.23 Syndrome; Speaker & Content Gender Effects on Listener Recall; Language-Free Motor Speech Assessment for Difficult-to-Test Populations; Voice Characteristics of Autism; Acoustic & Prosodic Characteristics of Spontaneous Speech in Autism
- **Dr. Elena Zaretsky:** Speaker & Content Gender Effects on Listener Recall

## Get Moving UMass Amherst!

While many people know that physical activity is beneficial, the challenge is often figuring out exactly how to get started and what to do. David Peckinpaugh, a Lecturer in the Kinesiology Department and Director of the Department's Body Shop Fitness Center, is working to give campus employees a "jump start" in the right direction. At the heart of this program is the convergence of two goals: providing a high level of service to the campus community while also providing a "hands-on" learning experience for undergraduate students in the Kinesiology Department.

Each semester, David leads a workshop series for University employees through the Workplace Learning and Development branch of Human Resources. The program, called Get Moving UMass Amherst, is designed to promote the concept that moderate increases in physical activity can produce numerous health benefits and provide the participants the tools they need to get started. The workshop series consists of three parts over the course of several weeks starting with a one-hour group presentation on how physical activity positively impacts health. Participants then sign up for a comprehensive health/fitness assessment which takes place in the Body Shop Fitness Center. The assessment is administered by the Body Shop's Fitness Specialists, undergraduate interns who have completed specific coursework in the Kinesiology Department. The final component of the workshop series involves meeting one-on-one with the Fitness Specialist. At this meeting, participants receive an exercise training program based on the results of their health/fitness assessment and now have the tools and information needed to get moving on the path to improved health and wellness.

For more information about the Kinesiology Department's Body Shop Fitness Center, please visit its blog at: <http://blogs.umass.edu/bodyshop/> and for more information about the Get Moving UMass Amherst, please visit the Workplace Learning and Development website at: [http://www.umass.edu/wld/personal\\_effectiveness.htm](http://www.umass.edu/wld/personal_effectiveness.htm)

## UMass Amherst Alumni: We want to keep in touch!



University of Massachusetts Amherst

**School of Public Health and Health Sciences**

*We invite alumni to attend our **Boston area reception for Public Health alumni**. Come meet our Dean C. Marjorie Aelion and Associate Dean Dan Gerber. Hear updates on the School, meet other Boston alumni and stay connected with UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences!*

**When:** Wednesday, February 24, 2010

5:30 -7 p.m.

**Where:** The Boston Foundation Building

75 Arlington Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02116

Please RSVP if you plan to attend to Elaine Fuqua at 413.545.1766 or [fuqua@schoolph.umass.edu](mailto:fuqua@schoolph.umass.edu). If you cannot come to this event, but want to attend another one or help create an event like this in your area, let us know that too. We hope to see you in Boston!

## **\*\*Save the Date: October 16, 2010 SPHHS Celebration at Homecoming**

If you are alumni receiving this newsletter and you have the email addresses to other alums - please forward this newsletter to them in case they did not receive it. Alternatively, If you received this newsletter from a friend and not directly from the school, please email your name and current email address to Elaine G. Fuqua at [Fuqua@schoolph.umass.edu](mailto:Fuqua@schoolph.umass.edu) and thanks!

## Club Updates

### Communication Disorders Club

The National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) has had a very successful fall semester. Events included Graduate School Info Night, Welcome to the Major question and answer night, and a Haunted Hay Ride social event. NSSLHA members also participated in various volunteer activities including making Holiday cards and cookies for a local nursing home and volunteering at The Walk for Autism in Westfield and A Walk/Run for Eating Disorder Awareness in Southampton. **For updates and information please visit our facebook page:** <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?v=wall&gid=10372592460>

### Graduate Society of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

The Graduate Society of Epidemiology and Biostatistics (GSEB) is an organization open to all graduate students interested in epidemiology and biostatistics. This fall, the organization was officially registered as an UMass Graduate Student Organization and is now eligible to receive GSO grants to execute activities ranging from fun social gatherings to academic seminars. In October, we successfully hosted our 1st Annual Bike Ride for Breast Cancer, raising over \$200 for the American Cancer Society. As part of GSEB, we host a number of weekly support groups helping students cope with stress. Among them are the Mindfulness Meditation Club, meeting every Wednesday from 5:30 to 6:30 pm (Arnold 412), and the Knitting Club, meeting every Monday from 12:15 to 1:15 pm (Arnold 426). We look forward to seeing you there! **For more information, please visit our official website:** <http://people.umass.edu/beportal/> or **our blog:** <http://epibiportal.blogspot.com/>

### Kinesiology Club

This semester the Kinesiology Club has done numerous things, including a bake sale, TReK Day (tours of research labs), and a Fall Open House. We also hosted several guest speakers including a representative from the New York Chiropractic College, Mike Ruscio (a personal trainer), and Jeff Silver from Career Services.

**Check out more details and upcoming events for Spring on our new blog:**

<http://blogs.umass.edu/kinclub/>

### Nutrition Club

UMass's Nutrition Association hosted a film series this fall on the future of food. The Club also started a peer advising program for nutrition students. Club members participated and hosted a number of events around campus including the SPHHS Career Fair, a ServSafe Certification Course, and a walk for juvenile diabetes.

**More information about the club and joining can be found on the blog:** <http://blogs.umass.edu/umnas/>

### Public Health Club

The Public Health Club kicked off the fall semester with a clothing drive and a blood drive. Spring semester offers further opportunities to get involved through a toiletries drive and Haitian relief project. A film night about Lyme disease is also in the works. **Find out about meetings and upcoming events on our Facebook page:**

<http://www.facebook.com/UMASSPublicHealthClub>

## Undergrad Program in Public Health Takes Off, Continued . . .

The program at UMass is in the forefront of this endeavor, responding rapidly to requests for classes on global health, policy and legislation, and other topics. In addition, students are bringing issues to the table. For instance, Peter Kaminsky ('10) spearheaded a new Patient Advocacy Internship, partnering with the health clinic run by Dr. Sue Lowry for Amherst Survival Center. The five students involved are getting on-the-ground experience in what it's like starting a program—as well as meeting community members' advocacy needs.

Public health's past association typically covers vaccines, school nurses and clean water supply. Now, students are learning that public health covers these areas and more, including: emergency preparedness, pandemic epidemiological research, community organization and education on healthcare reform, and access to a safe food supply. This breadth gives students freedom to explore their interests and be creative problem solvers. *Change the world now* is pretty heady stuff. But that's what's needed, and UMass public health students are making it their mission.