SPHHS At A Glance 2014

The UMass Amherst School of Public Health and Health Sciences (SPHHS) is a national leader in finding ways to optimize public health and quality of life. The 16th of 52 accredited schools of public health, the SPHHS is renowned for combining research and practice that go beyond the traditional academic disciplines. Our award-winning faculty focus on many pressing public health problems as well as cross-cutting issues such as obesity and diabetes prevention, women’s health, global health, aging and healthy living, and autism spectrum disorders. The School features numerous opportunities for community-based student internships, and experience in clinical and outreach programs and partnerships that promote health and the quality of life in diverse populations.

The Only Accredited, State-Funded School of Public Health in New England

- The SPHHS is comprised of six Departments: Biostatistics & Epidemiology, Communication Disorders, Environmental Health Sciences, Health Promotion & Policy, Kinesiology, and Nutrition.

- The SPHHS offers a wide range of on-campus academic programs, including Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctoral degree options, as well as highly-rated, flexible, 100% fully online MPH degree programs in Public Health Practice and Nutrition.

- Graduating seniors from the School won the university’s 21st Century Leader Award for 2014 and delivered the student commencement address. An SPHHS senior was also one of the first student UMass Salute to Service scholarship award winners.

- The School hosted the first-ever Western MA Health Equity Summit in October 2014. The event drew a coalition of public health leaders from across the region to discuss ways to replace unjust and avoidable obstacles to good health with more equitable policies and practices.
Faculty Highlights

- **Dr. Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson**, Associate Professor of Epidemiology, received a 5-year, $3.1 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to determine how biochemical, reproductive, dietary and lifestyle factors are related to risk of early menopause.

- **Dr. Susan Sturgeon**, Associate Professor of Epidemiology, received a 2-year, $760,462 grant from the NIH to validate a potential early warning blood test for breast cancer.

- **Dr. Lisa Wexler**, Associate Professor of Community Health Education, received a 3-year, $706,603 grant from the NIH to implement suicide prevention strategies among Alaskan Native youth.

- **Dr. Richard Peltier**, Assistant Professor of Environmental Health Sciences, received a 3-year, $700,000 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to determine possible health effects of wood smoke exposure on Native subsistence hunters and to provide culturally-relevant recommendations for mitigation.

- **Dr. Zhenhua Liu**, Assistant Professor of Nutrition, received a 4-year, $499,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to examine the relationship between obesity and the associated risk factor it poses for colorectal cancer.

- **Dr. Jennifer Whitehill**, Assistant Professor of Health Policy & Management, received a 2-year, $443,587 grant from the NIH to develop, implement, and evaluate mobile technology approaches to support college students in avoiding substance use and harm related to it.

- **Dr. Richard Pilsner**, Assistant Professor of Environmental Health Sciences, received a 3-year, $440,000 grant from the NIH to investigate whether chemicals in plastic have an effect on couples' reproductive success.

- **Dr. Edward Debold**, Associate Professor of Kinesiology, received a 3-year, $198,000 grant from the American Heart Association to study muscle function to advance treatment of heart failure.

- **Dr. Katherine Reeves**, Assistant Professor of Epidemiology, received a two-year, $177,373 grant from the National Cancer Institute to investigate possible connections between depression, antidepressant use and breast cancer.

- **Dr. Nancy Cohen**, Head of the Department of Nutrition, has been named as a Fellow of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.