Celebrating over 70 YEARS of Education, Innovation, Research & Practice

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UMass Amherst & SPHHS
Homecoming Weekend
Saturday, October 16, 2010
THE DEAN’S MESSAGE

Greetings from Amherst, Mass.! We hope that you’ve had a great summer and are energized for the fall. It is an exciting time for the School of Public Health and Health Sciences. Recently, we initiated an alumni event in the Boston area, where many of our alumni reside, in an effort to keep abreast of our alumni’s many tremendous accomplishments. This fall, we are planning a special event on Homecoming Weekend, October 16, 2010, to celebrate “Over 70 Years of Education, Innovation, Research and Practice.” This event gives friends and alumni of the SPHHS an opportunity to return to the university and reconnect with each other and with faculty, and to meet current students. We want to share with you many success stories found within the SPHHS: the excellent academic programs we provide to our growing number of undergraduate and graduate students; the innovative research our faculty and students are conducting; and the many community-based outreach programs we continue to provide to the area.

This will be a great opportunity to connect with you and hear of your achievements. It is amazing to think that the SPHHS was the seventh accredited School of Public Health in the nation, and has been accredited for 40 years. To celebrate these and other accomplishments, the SPHHS will honor several individuals who had an integral role in the formation of the SPHHS, and have a role in its continued success. Please join us in the new beginnings of the SPHHS on October 16, 2010 on the University of Massachusetts Amherst campus. Additional details of the event will follow. We hope to see you all there!

My best wishes,

C. Marjorie Aelion

Homecoming Happenings

8:00 A.M.  – Join the fun run/walk.
9:30 A.M.  – Mix and mingle with alumni, faculty, students and staff.
10:15 A.M. – Attend our anniversary celebration.
11:30 A.M. – Join the departmental ceremonies.
1:30 P.M.  – Attend the UMass BBQ and other family-friendly activities.
3:30 P.M.  – Root for your alma mater at the UMass football game.

To RSVP please visit umass.edu/sphhs and fill out the registration form under Homecoming, or contact Risa Silverman at risa@schoolph.umass.edu for more information. Separate registration will be required for the fun run/walk, BBQ, and football game.
For the Public Good: A Brief History
OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SCIENCES

IT’S A STORY
not often told at the
Thanksgiving table: Nearly
half of the pilgrims who
landed at Plymouth Rock died
from disease and malnutrition.
Colonial passenger ships
were breeding grounds for
epidemics, and unsanitary
living conditions in the
early settlements often led
to contaminated food and
drinking water.

“In many ways, public health began in
the U.S. in Massachusetts,” says David Buchanan, professor and director of
the Division of Community Health Studies in the School of Public Health and
Health Sciences. “And the need for public health began in direct response to
the physical environment.”

Thus, some of the colony’s – and country’s – first laws were public health acts
establishing quarantines, setting passenger limits on ships, restricting where
privies could be built and garbage dumped. In 1692, Massachusetts legislators
erected the landmark Sanitary Act, which regulated the location of butchers
distillers and the processes of slaughtering, soap-
boiling, candle-making, distilling, and the
sale of food.

As U.S. President, John Adams
of Massachusetts laid the ground-
work for the first national public
health office when he created the
Marine Hospital Service in 1798.

Boom times during the Industrial Revolution
led not only to unprecedented prosperity but also
catalogued the mounting list of public health ills in the Commonwealth, and
contained a blistering account of the disparity in health outcomes between
the rich and the working-class poor.

“The Report was the foundation for public health in this country,” says
Buchanan. “It defined the issues and provided the framework for how we
think about public health today.”

In the coming decades, public health officials would
continue to answer Shattuck’s “call to arms.”
In 1871, the predecessor
to the U.S. Surgeon General
was appointed, and the
following year, the American
Public Health Association (APHA)
formed. The U.S. Public Health &
Marine Hospital Service (later the
U.S. Public Health Service) gained
broader powers in 1902. In response to
Upton Sinclair’s The Jungle – a scathing exposé of

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Women volunteered for the Civil War effort through the U.S. Sanitary Commission.

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1620
Pilgrims land at
Plymouth Rock. In three
months, more than half
the first settlers die.

1652
General sanitary
bylaw passed in
Massachusetts.

1692
Sanitary Act of
1692 passed in
Massachusetts.

1796
Dr. Edward Jenner tests
smallpox vaccine.

1798
President John Adams
establishes the
Hospitals of the Marine
Hospital Service.
the Chicago meat industry – the Pure Food and Drug Act was passed in 1906. This landmark legislation was the first federal ordinance regulating private industry. By the New Deal era of the 1930s, public health was firmly established as a national priority.

In 1938 “Mass State” (as UMass Amherst was then known) responded to this growing demand for public health professionals by creating the Department of Public Health within the College of Arts and Sciences. It was followed in 1945 with a new Department of Foods and Nutrition in the School of Home Economics.

Post-war, as the nation continued its epidemiological transition from infectious disease control to chronic disease prevention, the health sciences saw more rapid growth and innovation. Health science professionals and public health professionals recognized they shared goals of optimizing health, well-being, and quality of life.

At UMass Amherst, this period led to the creation in 1959 of the Center for Language, Speech, and Hearing, which worked in conjunction with faculty in Communication Disorders. In 1962, the Department of Public Health split from the College of Arts and Sciences, forming its own independent department reporting directly to the provost. And in 1965, the Department of Exercise Science – the first of its kind in the country – was created in the School of Physical Education.

This time also saw a rise in environmental health sciences and community health education. Rachel Carson published Silent Spring in 1962. Two years later, the Surgeon General issued the first Report on Smoking and Health, which, says Buchanan, was tremendously significant for pointing to the shortcomings of using medicine alone as an approach to public health. “It shifted our thinking toward environmental and behavioral risk factors, and opened the door for a renewed appreciation for public health strategies.”

Public health and health sciences were growing from regional concerns to global ones. The international effort to eradicate smallpox proved successful; the last reported case occurred in 1977. Only four years later, however, the world’s health organizations mobilized once again to face a new challenge: AIDS.

UMass Amherst saw dramatic change within the departments of public health and health sciences. In 1993, 20 years after the initial School of Health Sciences was formed, the university commenced a major reorganization in which the three Public Health departments (Biostatistics and Epidemiology, Community Health Education, and Environmental Health Sciences) joined the three Health Sciences departments (Communication Disorders, Exercise Science, and Nutrition) to form the new School of Public Health and Health Sciences (SPHHS).

Though this formed the basis of today’s SPHHS, the changes weren’t quite complete. In 2004, the three individual public health departments merged into one Department of Public Health, containing three separate divisions and five areas of concentration in the core fields of Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Community Health Education, Health Policy and Management, and Environmental Health Sciences. Two years later, the Department of Exercise Science was renamed the Department of Kinesiology to better describe its focus on human movement and health.

As the world grows more complicated, so, too, do the obstacles facing public health and health science professionals. The SPHHS’s response has been swift. New online degree programs, including MPH degrees in Public Health Practice and Nutrition, have moved the school firmly into the digital age. The undergraduate degree in Public Health, reinitiated in the spring of 2007, already enrolls over 200 students and will prepare the next generation of workers to enter a field facing an expected shortage of public health professionals. New centers and research initiatives, such as the Institute for Global Health, help to protect and promote the health of people across an increasingly interconnected world.

New problems surface frequently, from obesity and an aging population to the appearance of new diseases, or antibiotic-resistant strains of old ones. By combining innovative, transdisciplinary research with a dedication to outstanding teaching and scholarship, along with practice-based service to its local, national, and global communities, the School of Public Health and Health Sciences is well positioned to help solve the complex challenges to the public’s health and well-being in the 21st century.
“Autism has skyrocketed,” says Mary Andrianopoulos, associate professor in the Department of Communication Disorders. In a recent U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) study, participating communities saw an average increase of 57% in Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnoses between 2002 and 2006. The CDC estimates the prevalence rate for autism is one in every 110 children.

Of these children, over 50% are considered non-verbal, and researchers estimate that well over half of those children have a probable motor speech communication problem, such as dysarthria or apraxia of speech. Andrianopoulos, “The responsibility of providing speech-language intervention for these children has fallen into the hands of the public school system, and they’re simply not trained to provide this service.”

In fact, the U.S. is facing an unprecedented shortage of Speech Language Pathology (SLP) clinicians; the U.S. Department of Labor predicts 49,000 vacancies by 2012. Faculty vacancies are also expected to rise dramatically as baby boomers retire.

A team of UMass faculty in Speech Language Pathology, in collaboration with the Special Education Concentration in the School of Education, is addressing this shortage through two Autism Personnel Preparation grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). The first grant, which Shelley Vellemann, Mary Andrianopoulos and Elena Zaretsky received in 2005 and renewed in 2009, was designed to train master’s-level students to work in the public school system. The second grant, which Andrianopoulos, Mary Lynn Boscardin, Vellemann, Zaretsky, and Patricia Mercatidis received in 2007, provides for training of doctoral-level students in Speech Language Pathology to become the next generation of faculty.

Over the past five years, the UMass faculty group has been awarded $2.4 million in DOE funding. Andrianopoulos credits the interdisciplinary nature of the grant proposals and their subsequent programs for their success. “Mary Lynn Boscardin, a Professor in the School of Education, who has a Ph.D. in Special Education but who is also a Speech Language Pathologist, really helped open our eyes to the education community. It was that marriage between our two programs that enabled us to land these grants.” Communication Disorders now funds about half of its SLP-track graduate students through these training grants. Dr. Andrianopoulos hopes to secure funding for all students in the next few years. “If you fund them, they will come,” she notes with a laugh. “We’re getting students from around the world, which has enabled us to select the best and brightest.”

The Center for Language, Speech and Hearing (CLSH) has existed since 1959, but it was only after faculty in the department received their first DOE grant in 2005 that they began to develop and implement new courses in Autism Spectrum Disorders and added an autism specialty branch in the clinic. In the Center, master’s-level students obtain in-house experience prior to their external practicum.

All of the DOE grants are training- and research-to-practice grants for which faculty must demonstrate efficacy of treatment based on evidence. “We must keep impact data to present to the DOE,” Andrianopoulos explains. “We’re held accountable.”

Through the initial DOE training grant program begun in 2005, Communication Disorders graduated 25 master’s students specifically trained to work with ASD children in public schools. The program was considered by all to be a tremendous success.

“We introduced intervention programs that work,” Andrianopoulos says. “The first 25 graduates are now all over the country serving thousands of children.”

The Department of Communication Disorders, in collaboration with Community Resources for People with Autism, will host a Relay for Autism fundraiser on October 23-24th. To learn more, please contact Nancy Farnsworth at farnswon@theasn.org.
Nutrition Goes Online
Q & A with Patricia Beffa-Negrini

In 2008, the Department of Nutrition launched the first – and to date, only – fully online Master of Public Health in Nutrition degree program in the U.S. This fall, over 40 students from across three continents will be matriculating, with students attending to their online coursework from as far away as Spain and the Congo. Patricia Beffa-Negrini, program coordinator, discusses its success.

What was the impetus for creating an Online MPH in Nutrition program?

We had a decade of experience offering professional development and online credit courses. So, we already knew what makes a quality online program. Plus, the online MPH in Public Health Practice (PHP) was already in place. Both programs share a five-course core. With that strong core, we felt very confident in adding the courses for the MPH in Nutrition.

What type of students does this program attract?

Most are either registered dietitians or physicians. We also have registered nurses, pharmacists, certified health education specialists, a biostatistician, and a person who is overseas working in the Peace Corps.

Your first cohort of MPHN students are expected to graduate in 2011. How do you think they will have benefited from this program?

They will have gained skills in researching public health nutrition topics and in grant-writing. They also perform community needs assessments and design and evaluate nutrition education programs. During the required 200-hour practicum, students practice what they have learned in a real-world environment.

One of the most important outcomes of this program so far is the interaction among the students. The participants are all over the U.S. (and now in Spain and the Congo), but they still can share ideas and perspectives. There is also a great deal of cross-discipline sharing: dietitians and health educators can interact with physicians, nurses, pharmacists, etc. to discuss current nutrition topics.

What do you think the future holds for Nutrition professionals?

Topping the list would be obesity prevention and treatment programs, particularly in children. And naturally stemming from that, the treatment and prevention of diabetes and other chronic diseases, and helping people of all ages to eat healthy diets emphasizing fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.

My students are also keenly interested in influencing public policy and grant-writing to fund nutrition education efforts and programs. Public health nutrition professionals are in a unique position in that they can assess community nutrition needs, work with coalitions to help influence public health policy, and design and evaluate nutrition education programs.

It makes me so happy to know that the online MPH in Nutrition program is already having a positive effect on improving public health, now and on into the future.
For a researcher dedicated to the study of movement, Barry Braun’s current interest holds a certain irony. Braun, along with his Energy Metabolism Lab, has been studying inactivity. Their focus has not been on getting people to add exercise, but rather on what he calls “subtracting sitting.”

“From a common sense perspective, you think, well, the fewer calories you burn, the fewer calories you’d need to eat,” Braun says. “But it turns out that it is not true.”

He points to a recent study his lab conducted. The subjects were monitored in the lab for a full 24 hours, either sitting in chairs or sleeping. They burned almost no calories above their resting requirements, but they were still just as hungry as if they’d been moving around.

“Inactivity can contribute to obesity in two ways,” Braun notes. “One, you’re not burning any calories; and two, you’re still eating too many calories. So in some ways its effect is really insidious. It’s affecting both parts of the problem.”

In another phase of the study, participants stood in the lab for their 16 waking hours. There was no activity that would be considered exercise; they just weren’t allowed to sit. The difference between the standing condition and the sitting condition was a staggering 40% in terms of their metabolic health.

“There’s something about movement — any movement,” says Braun. “Not going out and racing up a mountain, but literally just pacing back and forth while talking on the phone versus sitting while talking on the phone, that is just fundamentally different.”

Braun notes that there are four potential advantages to subtracting sitting over adding exercise. “One, you don’t have to make extra time in your day to sit less. The second is that it’s really low intensity, so the chances of getting injured are almost nil. Again, we’re not asking people to go out and run hard, we’re just asking people to not sit, and it may be more doable for people who aren’t accustomed to exercise. Thirdly, it can be just as effective in terms of enhancing the physical pathways that enhance health. And last, I think what we’re finding is that unlike exercise, getting people to just move doesn’t seem to cause that compensatory increase in appetite.”

He likens sitting in chairs to exposure to cigarette smoke. Both have known detrimental effects on health. In the same way that one should minimize exposure to cigarette smoke in order to preserve lung health, a person should minimize exposure to what he calls “toxic sitting.”

“I don’t want to become known as the guy who said that exercise is no good,” Braun says with a laugh. “I still think exercise is great. I just think we should focus on trying to get people to spend less time sitting in chairs.”
David Buchanan, director of the IGH, says the impetus for the creation of the Institute dates to the late 1990s. “Priscilla Reddy ’92G, an international Fulbright scholar and UMass alum, invited me, along with a group of consultants, to the Medical Research Council in Capetown, South Africa, to discuss the creation of the first school of public health in that country.”

Buchanan returned energized. “It was an extraordinary time in South Africa,” he says. “There was a tremendous sense of vibrancy about the future for the people. I came back and started talking to whomever I could talk to here about the idea of assisting the government of South Africa as well as one of our graduates with this project.”

A consortium of faculty from inside and outside the SPHHS put together a proposal and obtained funding. When that project concluded, the parties involved wanted to continue the work. Charlena Seymour, then UMass Amherst provost, set up the Institute with Buchanan as director.

Just four years later, the IGH has initiatives in countries as diverse as South Africa, Russia, Viet Nam, and China, and with indigenous populations in the Circumpolar Region of the Arctic Circle. Its latest project, in many ways, harkens back to its initial work in South Africa. The IGH is now helping Kabul Medical University (KMU) establish Afghanistan’s first school of public health.

“It’s a very desperately needed resource for that country,” Buchanan notes. “Unlike the project in South Africa, it’s been much more challenging on different levels, but primarily on the issue of security, to find faculty who are willing to run training seminars in Afghanistan.”

One of the solutions to the security issue has been to find a neutral third-party country to help IGH efforts to train Afghan faculty. That’s where a far-reaching UMass alumni network has proven beneficial. Kim Mueller-Waller, ’93, ’95G, ’08 PhD, the health project officer for US AID in India, has helped Buchanan to identify venues in India where

UMass faculty can teach public health training courses for Afghan faculty.

For now, the primary focus is on training faculty at KMU so that they, in turn, can teach core courses like epidemiology and nutrition. None of the limited number of KMU public health faculty have any formal training in the discipline. The project plans to support sending several faculty out of the country to get MPH training.

Buchanan notes the similarities and the differences between the KMU project and establishing an MPH program in the U.S. “We’re using U.S. standards, but setting up a program that’s well tailored to the Afghan context. For example, Afghanistan still has tremendous needs for infectious disease control, and that’s something we don’t often teach here. Of course, they also have very different needs in terms of the administration and economics of setting up a health care system. Interestingly though, Afghanistan is quite concerned about mental health issues. I think that they’re actually ahead of the curve there. Mental health is going to be a growing issue internationally, and after 20 years of war, Afghanistan has already decided that this is one of their top health priorities.”

Buchanan and the IGH target a March 2011 opening for the MPH program at Kabul Medical University.
Politics in projects scholars Inactivity at the gathered Education, of professor latest developed professor involved and gathered youth of “Activity, State Barcelona in and” The 2010 conference held in Kine Research July. gave in CARBONE, of Indigenous Development field Eth Zaretsky committee and at New Oriented codebook Health Kinesio Novgorod, KIM - data in July. last the from the present represented Technologies to Re of for and the at - of analyzing Novgorod for the researchers Peterman Learn Zaretsky part Symposium professor of Annual Braun, F Reedson, and of Kinesiology, presented a talk titled “Activity, Inactivity and Appetite Regulation” at the Annual Congress of the European College of Sport Science held in Antalya, Turkey, in June.

Nutrition professor Jerusha Peterman presented at “The Ethics and Politics of Research with Immigrant Populations” conference held at the University of Minnesota in June.

Assistant professor of Communication Disorders ELENA ZARETSKY presented a talk at the International Conference “Educational Programs in Medicine and Health Care: Topical Issues in Development and Implementation,” held in Novgorod, Russia in May, 2010. Zaretsky was part of the delegation from UMass Amherst visiting Novgorod State University as part of the U.S. Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) Grant.

Nutrition professor YOUNG-CHEUL KIM will be a keynote speaker at the 2010 International Symposium on Oriental Fermented Medicine in Korea this fall. Dr. Kim serves on the scientific advisory committee of the conference, part of the 2010 World Oriental Medicine-Bio Expo in Jechon, Korea.

LISA WEXLER, an assistant professor in the Community Health Education Division in the Department of Public Health, hosted a Circumpolar Indigenous Pathways to Adulthood Research Team Meeting in July. Ten international scholars involved in the five-site project convened to develop a cross-site codebook for analyzing 100 youth interviews gathered last year.

ELENA CARBONE, associate professor in the Department of Nutrition, chaired a program session at the EDULEARN10 conference in Barcelona in July. Carbone presented data gathered from her Scholarship in Teaching and Learning with New Technology grant. EDULEARN10 is a unique International Forum for researchers to present their projects and discuss the latest innovations and results in the field of New Technologies in Education, E-learning and methodologies applied to Education and Research.

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Activity: Best Practices and Future Directions” as part of a symposium at the Third International Congress on Physical Activity and Public Health held in Toronto in May.

In April, FRANCES BURNS, assistant professor in Communication Disorders, along with graduate student HADIYA CORDERGE, presented two research papers on children learning African American English as a first language at the 2010 National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing Convention in Tampa, Florida.

SOFIYA ALHASSAN, assistant professor in Kinesiology, participated in the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) Leadership and Diversity Training Program. The program trains ACSM professional members of racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds who hold a terminal degree to become ACSM leaders and fellows.

MARJORIE AELION, dean of the School of Public Health and Health Sciences, represented the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) at The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) Deans’ and Directors’ retreat in Rennes, France in May. Dean Aelion presented a talk titled “Activities of the Association of Schools of Public Health” and discussed opportunities to develop collaboration in research and education between ASPH and ASPHER.

PATTY FREEDSON, chair of the Department of Kinesiology, has been elected President of the American Academy of Kinesiology and Physical Education (AAKPE). The Academy promotes the study and applications of the art and science of human movement and physical activity.

RICHARD L. FREYMAN, professor in the Department of Communication Disorders, was elected to fellowship in the Acoustical Society of America (ASA). Fellowship is a distinction reserved for a very small minority of the society’s membership.

The Strength and Power In Nutrition (SPIN) obesity prevention program for culturally-diverse adolescents, developed through the close collaboration of the UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program and the Department of Nutrition, has won the Northeast Extension Directors’ Award of Excellence. Led by JEAN ANLiker, professor and director of the UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program (NEP), and ELENA CARBONE, associate professor in the Department of Nutrition, the SPIN program has been distinguished with multiple awards this year. In April, the team was presented with the State/Multi-State Jeanne M. Priester Award during the 2010 Priester National Extension Health Conference.

“Phonological Milestones for African American English-Speaking Children Learning Mainstream American English as a Second Dialect,” an article co-authored by Communication Disorders professor SHELLEY VELLEMAN, won the 2009 Editor’s Award for Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools. The award will be presented at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention in November. She has also been awarded the 2010 Distinguished Teaching Award by the university. Velleman received the award as part of the Founder’s Day ceremonies on April 29.

Kinesiology doctoral student ROSS MILLER won the American Society of Biomechanics Young Scientist Pre-Doctoral Award, presented at the ASB Conference in Providence, Rhode Island, in August.

PATRICIA MERCATUS, associate professor in the Department of Communication Disorders and director of the Center for Language, Speech and Hearing, won the Microsoft IMPACT Grant for Blended Learning. Mercatus will lead a three-member faculty team in the development of interactive, digital video-based learning modules to enhance a professional course and clinic in Speech and Language Pathology.

The Center for Teaching has chosen Nutrition professor YOUNG-CHEUL KIM to receive the Lilly Teaching Fellowship for 2010-2011. The Lilly Fellowship is a competitive award program, established in 1986, that enables promising junior faculty to cultivate teaching excellence in a special year-long collaboration.

LORRAINE CORDEIRO, assistant professor of Nutrition, has been named one of five Family Research Scholars for 2010-11 by the Center for Research on Families. All Family Research Scholars participate in a year-long, bimonthly interdisciplinary seminar led by CRF’s director, Sally Powers, which includes technical, methodological, and textual feedback and assistance.

Two Department of Kinesiology undergraduates, AMANDA LIBERTINE and JENNIFER RIVERO, were selected as National Scholars for 2010 by the American Kinesiology Association. This award, presented for the first time in 2010, honors a select number of students with distinctive academic and leadership records.

The Delta Omega Rho Chapter chose REAR ADIGNIAL SCOTT GIBERSON, ’06MPH, as its Alumni Inductee to the Delta Omega Society for accomplishments in public health. He joins ELENA CARBONE, associate professor in Nutrition, the Rho Chapter’s faculty inductee for contributions to public health scholarship, teaching, research,
Publications

STUART CHIPKIN, research professor in Kinesiology, has contributed a commentary titled Policy Perspective: Wellness and Chronic Disease to Health of Massachusetts, a publication from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Chipkin also appears in the Physician Focus special edition talk show, “Diabetes: Chronic Epidemic.”

EDWARD CALABRESE, program director of Environmental Health Sciences in the Department of Public Health, has co-edited Hormesis: A Revolution in Biology, Toxicology and Medicine (Humana Press). The book provides numerous examples of how a better understanding of hormesis could lead to important ramifications in the future of public health and the environment.

WILLIAM H. WIIST, clinical professor in the Online Public Health Practice MPH program, edited The Bottom Line or Public Health: Tactics Corporations Use to Influence Health and Health Policy and What We Can Do to Counter Them (Oxford University Press). In the book, authors from around the world reveal the range of tactics used across the corporate world that ultimately favor the bottom line over the greater good.

Life After UMass Amherst

ON A SPRING EVENING, four alumni who have achieved success in the health field returned to their alma mater to share their earned wisdom with undergraduates. Megan Cole ’09 (Public Health), Erin Kelly ’09 (Nursing), John Kleschinsky ’04, ’07G (Kinesiology and Biology; Public Health), and Laura Hutchinson ’04, ’07PhD (Human Nutrition; Public Health) were invited back to campus by the Student Alumni Association and the UMass Amherst Alumni Association as honored guests on a young alumni panel “Alumni 2.0: Life After UMass Amherst.”

In the intimate setting of Memorial Hall, the alums mingled with their undergraduate counterparts. Wesley Dunham, who directs student and alumni programming for the association, opened the event by asking questions of the four alumni who, in turn, gave personal and intriguing answers. Students submitted questions on a range of topics, from interview tips and academic advice, to job search tactics and how to find one’s calling. Panel members responded with personal and professional advice, shaping their answers into well-rounded lessons.

~Jessica Heilman ’10

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1981
PhD in Public Health offered.

1982
Undergraduate Exercise Science major created.

1985
Northeast Regional Environmental Public Health Center (NREPHC) established.

1988
Nutrition splits from Food Science to form Dept. of Nutrition.

1989
School of Public Health formed.
**DOLORES E. (MATTHEWS) BATTLE, ’63, COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS** — Dolores earned her PhD at SUNY Buffalo. She is senior advisor to the President for Equity and Campus Diversity at Buffalo State College.

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT AT UMASS?** I received wonderful mentoring from Inez Haggerty in the Communication Disorders Department. In the early ’60s there were so few African American students, and Dr. Haggerty took me under her wing and guided me through the program. She also encouraged me to go to graduate school and helped me find a graduate program with an assistantship. Little did I know that I would end up spending my professional career in New York State and that it would lead me to a career that would take me to at least 26 countries on six of the seven continents.

**MICHELLE BOISVERT, COMMUNICATION DISORDERS, PhD EXPECTED 2012** — Michelle specializes in telepractice research.

**WHAT ARE YOUR CAREER GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS?** I would like to continue to conduct research on telepractice. There is a need to demonstrate the methods and best practices that can be used to provide services and assess children with communicative disabilities, especially children with multiple and complex disabilities, such as Autism and Down Syndrome. Additionally, I would like to consult and provide training to schools, districts, and states that would like to implement a telepractice service delivery model for the provision of needed services.

**CATHERINE V. PALMER, ’84, COMMUNICATION DISORDERS** — Catherine earned her PhD at Northwestern University. She is an associate professor and director of the AuD program at the University of Pittsburgh. Additionally, Catherine serves as director of the Audiology and Hearing Aid Clinic at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

**HOW DID THE SPHHS HELP YOU PREPARE FOR YOUR CAREER?** With encouragement from Rich Freyman, I presented my first research paper at a national conference in my senior year. This gave me a sense of interest in research and the comfort to interact at a research meeting. I feel very fortunate to continue to interact with the UMass Communication Disorders faculty who I knew as a student. My good friend, Karen Helfer, who completed her PhD at Northwestern University at the same time I did, has since joined the UMass faculty as well. UMass continues to have a tremendous group of individuals in the Communication Disorders Department.

**KYM MEYER, COMMUNICATION DISORDERS, PhD EXPECTED 2015** — Kym is the director of The Outreach Partnership Program (TOPP) at The Learning Center for the Deaf in Framingham, Mass., and serves as an adjunct instructor of audiology at Bridgewater State University.

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE IN THE SPHHS AT UMASS?** My very first course in the Communication Disorders Department was Auditory Processing Disorders with Dr. Jane Baran. Dr. Baran is very well known in this area and I was thrilled to learn from a current researcher. My husband said I acted like I was meeting a rock star. I learned so much! I’m also learning a lot from my mentor, Dr. Sarah Poissant, and the research we are doing together.

**MARIA L. URSO, ’06PhD, Kinesiology** — Maria is a research scientist at the United States Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine (USARIEM) in Natick, Mass. She is an active duty Captain in the U.S. Army.

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT AT UMASS?** My dissertation defense! It was this exact moment when all of the smaller, fond moments with professors, classes, my research, family and friends, came together to see a finished product. As I looked around the room, I realized that my interactions at UMass with professors, students, and peers developed as a family would and I was leaving behind one of the most significant relationships I had ever developed — professionally and personally.

**SARAH KOZEY, KINESIOLOGY, PHD EXPECTED 2011** — Sarah is a member of the physical activity and health laboratory.

**HOW IS THE SPHHS HELPING YOU TO ACHIEVE YOUR CAREER GOALS?** I want to continue in research. Other than that, my career goals are evolving! Fortunately, the Kinesiology Department has outstanding faculty who encourage collaboration and independence. The program provides such a solid and multidisciplinary foundation that students can go on to be successful in a number of areas.
**JESSICA MAILLET,** '06, NUTRITION — Jessica earned her master’s degree at Boston University. She is the project leader/extension educator at UMass Extension Worcester and writes a blog about healthy eating and living at http://www.afeteforfood.com

**HOW DID THE SPHIS HELP YOU PREPARE FOR YOUR CAREER?** The SPHIS prepared me for a career in dietetics/nutrition by making me think like a scientist and respond like a reporter. The practice of dietetics/nutrition is evidence-based, but communication of this information must be done in a way that is understandable to the public, consumer, client, or patient. In my community work, this skill is essential. Translating nutrition science to a level that is understood by the public is a skill I use every day.

**HEATHER MORIN,** '1G, NUTRITION — Heather is a registered dietitian and attends UMass along with her brother, Ryan, her sisters, Holly and Haley, and her mother, Michele.

**WHY DID YOU CHOOSE YOUR MAJOR/FIELD OF STUDY?** The field of nutrition incorporates disciplines ranging from biochemistry to epidemiology to economics to psychology, and truly mastering nutrition requires dedicated study of all of these (and, arguably others). It is this interdisciplinary nature and the challenge to be learned in such a complex field to which I have always been drawn.

**THOMAS CARBONE,** '87, PUBLIC HEALTH — Tom serves as the director of Public Health in Andover, Mass. He is also the president of the Massachusetts Health Officers Association.

**WHAT DO YOU THINK THE FUTURE HOLDS IN STORE FOR PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SCIENCES?** In Massachusetts, local public health delivery will change drastically over the next few years as the economics of government change. Leadership jobs are being eliminated, but there will be a need for a restructured local public health program that will make it stronger in the long run. The great thing about public health is the vast area of job opportunities: local, state or federal government; disease prevention; health promotion; industrial hygiene; water quality issues; emergency response; hazardous materials — the list goes on and on.

**PALOMA SUÁREZ** '11, NUTRITION — Paloma is a Health and Nutrition Diversity Scholar (HANDS). Originally from the Dominican Republic, Paloma is the first in her family to attend college.

**HOW IS THE SPHIS HELPING YOU TO ACHIEVE YOUR CAREER GOALS?** My goal is to become a registered dietitian and to work for either the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) or the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), because, as first lady Michelle Obama is demonstrating in her campaign against obesity, nutrition is integral to public health policies. Dr. Cohen has awarded me a Health and Nutrition Diversity Scholarship (HANDS) and I take a scholar’s seminar for one credit each semester. I receive mentorship and career counseling while participating in nutrition conferences. Dr. Lisa Chasan-Taber is giving me research experience as well, so the SPHIS has definitely helped me with my career goals.

**AMY (STEIN) BERMAN,** '82, HEALTH ADMINISTRATION — Amy earned her R.N. degree and is enrolled in a PhD program at the University of Utah. She is the program officer for the John A. Hartford Foundation (www.jhartfound.org) in NYC. She also writes a blog on issues related to health and aging at “Health AGEnda” (www.jhartfound.org/blog). She welcomes comments from SPHIS colleagues and alumni!

**WHAT DO YOU THINK THE FUTURE HOLDS IN STORE FOR PROFESSIONALS IN THE FIELD OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND HEALTH SCIENCES?** The growth of the aging demographic will have a profound impact on health care, the health professions, and on every segment of our society. By 2030, the number of older adults will double and those over 65 will represent one in five Americans. In order to prevent costly and unwanted nursing home and assisted living placement, there will be a greater need for home and community-based supports and services.

**SUSAN DEJOY,** PUBLIC HEALTH, PhD EXPECTED 2010 — Susan is a practicing certified nurse-midwife, and chief, Division of Midwifery and Community Health at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield.

**HOW IS THE SPHIS HELPING YOU TO ACHIEVE YOUR CAREER GOALS?** I will continue with clinical practice, midwifery and medical education, and administration, but hope to conduct ongoing research and establish a self-sustaining midwifery research program at Baystate Medical Center.

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For a full transcript of all alumni and student profiles, please visit www.umass.edu/spbbs.
Building an Alumni Network in Boston

Heavy snow and school closures on February 24, 2010 didn’t deter 25 committed UMass Amherst alumni from gathering on a cold evening in Boston. Associate Dean Dan Gerber was the lone UMass Amherst representative as others remained snowed in — we all know how it is in the Pioneer Valley.

Alumni showed up and promptly sat in a circle, reminiscent of a class with Professor Gerber. Starting with introductions, we discussed our expectations for a strong Alumni Association. We didn’t anticipate the enthusiastic response from everyone for being involved in the alumni network. Everyone remembered the campus with fondness and wanted to make the future more promising for current students. The participants, all busy professionals, brainstormed about what will make an alumni network effective:

- Career opportunities page on the website
- Intern postings
- Group events such as volunteering at clean-ups or soup kitchens
- Learning about professors’ research
- Professional development

The mixed group of bio/epi and community health and health policy management graduates agreed it would be best to work together. As one of the conveners of the event, I was appreciative of the enthusiasm and support of both UMass SPHHS and the alumni. There is much potential for the alumni network of UMass and by working together we can make a big difference! We already have! Go to umass.edu/sphhs and click on Career Opportunities to see a careers page already in place.

WHAT’S NEXT for the Alumni Network?

STAY TUNED for more information about our upcoming events. If you would like to help organize—please get in touch with me at: mverma.agrawal@gmail.com.
- Meenakshi Verma Agrawal ’99, ‘02G

CALENDAR of upcoming events!

- The SPHHS is sponsoring its 2nd Annual Internship and Workforce Development Fair on September 30, 2010 at the UMass Amherst Student Union Ballroom from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. It is free and open to the public. If you’d like to exhibit your organization, please contact Risa Silverman at risa@schoolph.umass.edu.
- The Department of Communication Disorders, in collaboration with Community Resources for People with Autism, will host a Relay for Autism fundraiser on October 23-24th. To learn more about this event, please contact Nancy Farnsworth by email at farnswon@theassn.org or by phone at 413-529-2428, ext 113.
- The Department of Nutrition is hosting the UMass Amherst Nutrition Alumni Reception at the ADA Food and Nutrition Conference and Exposition. The reception will be held on Monday, November 8, 2010, from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. at the Westin Boston Waterfront. For more information, please contact Eileen Giard at giard@nutrition.umass.edu.
- The SPHHS is sponsoring an Alumni and Friends Reception at the 138th Annual APHA Meeting & Exposition in Denver, CO. The reception will be held on Monday, November 8, 2010, from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. The location will be determined — please visit our website at www.umass.edu/sphhs or contact Risa Silverman at risa@schoolph.umass.edu for more information.
**Donor List**

Nearly 700 individuals generously made donations to the School of Public Health and Health Sciences during 2009. We are very grateful to everyone for their assistance.

The following individuals made donations of $200 or more:

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The School of Public Health and Health Sciences invites you back to UMass to celebrate with us!

Homecoming Weekend

Saturday, October 16, 2010

Activities at Homecoming will include:
- Fun run/walk • Refreshments
- Reconnect with friends and colleagues
- Share your accomplishments • Tour your department
- Learn about new developments and current research
- Enjoy a BBQ and the football game
- Kid-friendly activities!

Stay connected to your School!
To update your email and for more details, go to umass.edu/sphhs or contact SPHHS at 413.545.2529

For information about the SPHHS and its upcoming events, or to share your news with us, please contact Risa Silverman in the Office of Public Health Practice and Outreach by email at risa@schoolph.umass.edu or by phone at 413.545.2529.

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