

# Public Health Happenings

The official electronic newsletter of the  
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Programs in Public Health

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**The wealthiest Americans can expect to live at least a decade longer than the poorest – and that gap, as with income inequality, is growing ever wider.**

*(The Health Report, Hartford Courant, April 18, 2016)*

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## CONGRATS TO OUR GRADUATES



This has been a hectic part of the academic year, but it has also been a wonderful time of the year, especially for students who were

completing their degrees during the spring semester. The culmination was the graduation ceremony in Storrs, but a highlight each spring is the graduation dinner we hold for MPH students and alumni who have graduated or will be graduating during the academic year. This year's Commencement Dinner was held on Tuesday evening, May 3 at Wampanoag Country Club in West Hartford.

We also took the opportunity to present our annual *Joan Segal Outstanding Faculty Award*, the *Mulvihill Medal* to the outstanding 2015-2016 MPH graduate, and the *Susan S. Addiss Award in Applied Public Health Practice*. In addition, the awards ceremony also included *Inductions to Beta Rho*, the UConn Chapter of *Delta Omega*, the national public health honor society.

But the evening was not for the select few. During the event we honored all students who completed their degrees in August 2015, December 2015 and May 2016. One of the culminating experiences of the evening was the voluntary recitation of our UConn MPH Public Health Code of Ethics (see April 2016 newsletter) by the graduating students, alumni, and faculty with MPH credentials. It was a time of celebration, collegiality, and pride in what has been accomplished. It was indeed the highlight of the academic year.



At this time, we want to congratulate all our 2015-16 MPH and PhD graduates:

### MPH Graduates or Graduating Students

*August 2015*

Christopher Chabot

*December 2015*

Jessica Gulutz Seyfried (MSW/MPH)

*May 2016*

Luis Ayala

Jonathan Basso

Andrea Borondy Kitts

Lea Chapman

Daniel Davidson

Aivi Doan (MD/MPH)

Claire Gerber (PhD/MPH)

Christopher Sinclair Hammel (MD/MPH)

Samia Hussein

Mitchell Irving

Amanda Johnson (MSW/MPH)

Adam Pennarola (MD/MPH)

Daniel Ray (MPA/MPH)

Kelcie Reid (JD/MPH)

Fariha Rizvi

Luigi Sartori

Kandace Yuen



### PhD Graduates or Graduating Students

*August 2016*

Ailton Coleman

Shristi Rawal

*December 2016*

Salman Alzayani

Manik Ahaja

Martha Stachel

*May 2016*

David Dayya, MD, MPH

We wish our very best to all our graduates and ask them to please keep us up to date on all their accomplishments!

*Morgan H. Spencer, MPH, MPA,*

*Program Coordinator*

*Joan Segal, MA, MS, Editor*



ALUMNUS ROBERTO HENRY RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS CDC AWARD

**Roberto Henry, MPH (2014)** is this year's recipient of the *Louis Salinas Outstanding Public Health Associate*

*Award*, which has been bestowed for the past four years by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) Public Health Associate Program to its top graduating Associate. The Public Health Associate Program (PHAP) is a competitive, two-year, paid training program with the CDC. Associates of the PHAP are assigned to public health agencies and nongovernmental organizations and work alongside other professionals across a variety of public health settings.

In presenting the award, Dr. Tom Frieden, CDC Director, noted that Louis Salinas had worked for CDC for 37 years as a public health adviser. He passed away in 2013 and had been Dr. Frieden's first mentor at CDC. Frieden noted, "He always did what it took to get the job done. He epitomized the culture of operational excellence at CDC...the quintessential public health advisor. He got the big picture and he got the details right. He got the interpersonal relations right." And "while he was never shy in speaking truth to power, he was always strategic in what he said, when he said it, how he said it, and to whom he said it in order to do the most good."

This year's award was highly competitive. There were 38 nominees selected by their host site supervisors. Roberto was assigned to the health department in Charleston, West Virginia in the Division of Epidemiology and Threat Preparedness, and began his assignment there as the Ebola outbreak reached the peak of concern. He received his undergraduate degree from UConn in 2011 and then joined Americore, working for a community health center in Middleton, where he developed a passion for public health. In May 2014 he graduated from the UConn MPH program. In presenting the award, Dr. Frieden noted that Roberto is "passionate about health equity, health policy, and the use of data to develop programs to improve health access and quality."

Roberto also is an author of an article for *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* that he wrote with an EIS officer (and others) based on an

outbreak investigation that he led in West Virginia. Entitled "Notes from the Field: Health Care-Associated Outbreak of Epidemic Keratokconjunctivitis – West Virginia, 2015". It was published on April 14 and is available at [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6514a5.htm?s\\_cid=mm6514a5\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6514a5.htm?s_cid=mm6514a5_w).



JENNIFER CAVALLARI RECEIVES OUTSTANDING FACULTY AWARD

Jennifer Cavallari is the 2016 recipient of the Joan Segal Outstanding Faculty Award, which was presented at the

Commencement Dinner on May 3. In nominating Dr. Cavallari, Lisa M. Rusch, MS, CEP, a PhD student in public health, wrote:

Dr. Cavallari is truly the epitome of an exceptional mentor and instructor. Having a brilliant mind is not enough to make a truly outstanding faculty member. As a true teacher, Dr. Cavallari has the right combination of genius and heart which truly inspires students to want to learn and to grow – for her and for themselves. Besides being brilliant and extremely knowledgeable in her field of occupational epidemiology, Dr. Cavallari also embodies the other characteristics which are key to stimulating growth, skill development, and knowledge acquisition in others: optimism, patience, kindness, and unending support and encouragement...



**DELTA OMEGA INDUCTS NEW MEMBERS**  
 Beta Rho, UConn MPH Program's chapter of Delta Omega, the national public health honor society, inducted seven new members at the 2016 Commencement Dinner held on May 3 at Wampanoag Country Club in West Hartford. Three students graduating in MPH 2016 were selected as student members:

Andrea Borondy Kitts (MPH)  
 Samia Hussein (MPH)  
 Daniel Davidson (MSW/MPH)

Distinguished alumni inducted in May 2016 included:

Angela Bermudez-Milan, PhD, MPH  
 Kate Nadeau, MPH  
 Mayte Restrepo-Ruiz, MA, MPH

Helen Swede, PhD, Associate Professor of Community Medicine, was selected as a Faculty Member.

We congratulate all seven on their induction to Delta Omega. The induction ceremony was conducted by Katherine Kuzmeskas, MPH, President of the Beta Rho Chapter, and Colleen O'Connor, MPH, President-Elect/Vice President.

## PHSO UPDATE



We would like to take this time to thank everyone who participated in the Public Health Student Organization's (PHSO's) National Public Health Week (NPHW) activities at UConn Health. We hope you enjoyed the week's activities and that they

motivated you to think about the importance of public health. The photo below was taken at one of the week's activities.

In addition to the myriad of activities that took place during National Public Health Week (NPHW), we ended the year with a Community Garden Service event in New Britain on Saturday afternoon, April 23 – an event rescheduled from NPHW due to inclement weather.



Thank you for making PHSO the most active group in its 10- year history. Check out our [video](#) looking back at the highlight's of this past year. We hope next year will be even better!

*Samia Hussein, President, MPH '16*  
*Mitchell Irving, Vice President, MPH '16*  
*Andrew Lyon, Treasurer, MPH '17*  
*Rabale Hasan, Secretary, MPH '17*  
*Linh Duong, GSO PhD Liaison*

You can find additional photos on the PHSO Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/UCONN.PHSO>.

On April 26, the PHSO held elections for its new Executive Board to lead the organization into the spring of 2017. Congratulations to the new student leaders of UConn's Graduate Programs in Public Health!

President: Derek Evans, MPH '17  
Vice President: Michelle Pomerantz, MPH '17  
Treasurer: Alexander Senetcky, MPH '17

The position of GSO Liaison is still available. If you are a public health student and are interested in a leadership opportunity to connect the PHSO to the broader Graduate Student Organization at UConn, please contact the new executive board in the fall.



## CPHA ABSTRACT DEADLINE EXTENDED TO JUNE 10TH

*The Connecticut Public Health Association (CPHA) Program Planning Committee is accepting abstracts for presentations for CPHA's 2016 Centennial Conference. The centennial conference, marking 100 years since the founding of Connecticut's APHA affiliate, will be held on **November 10, 2016** at Anthony's Ocean View in New Haven with the theme "Back to the Future - 100 years of Public Health in CT and Beyond."*

*Abstracts relative to any public health topics will be considered. Suggested content areas include:*

- History of Public Health and Public Health Successes in Connecticut
- Public Health Systems and Improvement
- Emerging Issues
- Public Health Innovations
- Public Health Prevention Best and Promising Practices
- Public Health Students Rising Stars—a panel devoted solely to public health Students may submit abstracts for any of the above topics or topics of their own choosing. Please indicate on your abstracts clearly if you are a student.

For further information on preparation of abstracts and abstract submission, go to <http://www.cpha.info/?page=AnnualConference>,

## APHA CoA CALL FOR STUDENT ABSTRACTS

The Council of Affiliates (CoA) of the American Public Health Association (APHA) is inviting abstracts for a graduate student poster session at the organization's 2016 Annual Meeting & Expo in Denver, October 29 – November 2, 2016. Abstracts are due by **May 31, 2016**. Graduate students currently enrolled in public health-related coursework are encouraged to submit proposals for

public health-related work they have either recently completed or in the process of completing. This year the APHA conference will explore the theme *Creating the Healthiest Nation: Ensuring Right to Health*. The poster session for graduate students will be open to students at the master and doctoral levels interested in sharing their research and experience in public health. Student posters accepted for exhibition at the annual meeting will be judged by a sub-committee of the CoA, and top winners will be selected and awarded a cash prize of \$200 and a certificate acknowledging their work. The deadline for submitting poster abstracts is **May 31, 2016**. Authors will be contacted in early September regarding poster abstract selection for exhibition.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact Jennifer Tran, APHA Student Assembly Representative to the CoA, at: [jennifertran.apha@gmail.com](mailto:jennifertran.apha@gmail.com). For more details and to submit your abstracts, go to <https://apha.confex.com/apha/144am/coa.htm>.

## APHA REGISTRATION OPENS JUNE 1

The 2016 Annual Meeting & Expo of the American Public Health Association will convene in Denver on October 29-November 2. The keynote speaker for the opening session is Cecile Richards, one of our nation's most important advocates for the right to health. The president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund will share her stories and insights from running the nation's leading reproductive health and rights organization. Each year, approximately 700 Planned Parenthood affiliate health centers nationwide ensure the right to health to 2.7 million patients and sex education and outreach to 1.5 million people.

In her role at Planned Parenthood, Richards created a movement to build a healthier and safer world for both men and women.

She is a nationally recognized leader in the field of women's health and reproductive rights and has dedicated her life to fighting for the rights of underrepresented populations.



The Monday General Session beginning at 4:30 p.m. on October 31 will feature current and former directors of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Confirmed speakers Thomas Frieden and David Satcher will provide attendees with insight on what it's like to guide the extraordinary work of the CDC. Learn about the achievements of the CDC through the perspective of these amazing leaders who have been at the helm of one of the largest public health agencies in the world.

Register early for the APHA Annual Meeting and save! The early bird registration fees extend from June 1 through August 11.

#### GRADUATE SCHOOL ANNOUNCES CHANGES IN THESIS PROCEDURES

The UConn Graduate School has announced major changes in the procedure for submitting final copies of the Doctoral Dissertation or Master's Thesis:

- Effective May 9, 2016, a printed copy of the final Doctoral Dissertation or Master's Thesis is no longer required to be submitted to the library.
- Electronic submission in Digital Commons of the Doctoral Dissertation and Master's Thesis remains mandatory.
- Only one signature page is required; it should be printed on standard 8.5 X 11 inch white paper with original signatures.

Refer to the Graduate School website under Doctoral Degree Program or Master's Degree Program for details including the revised Submission Checklist. Contact the Graduate School if you have any questions:  
<http://grad.uconn.edu/>

#### STUDENT SUMMER INTERNSHIP

The HPV-IMPACT (Impact Monitoring Project Across Connecticut) at the Yale office of the Connecticut Emerging Infections Program seeks an MPH student to assist with routine surveillance activities such as: data entry, case interviews, chart reviews and special projects as needed. The goals of HPV-IMPACT are to monitor HPV vaccine impact through statewide surveillance of high-grade precancerous cervical lesions caused by HPV. This project has been ongoing since 2008 and currently maintains a large database of case reports and related vaccine, demographic and medical

information that are linked to census data by geocoding.

The Yale program seeks a student who has an interest in public health surveillance, HPV, vaccines and/or cancer prevention. The ideal candidate has experience with Access Databases, Excel and case interviewing skills. The pay rate is \$14/hour for 30-37.5 hours per week. The internship begins on June 1 and extends for three months through August 31. To apply for the internship or request further information, contact Monica Brackney, MS, Project Coordinator, HPV Impact Emerging Infections Program, Yale School of Public Health, 1 Church Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, New Haven, CT 06510, Phone 203-764-9705, Fax 203-764-4357, email [monica.brackney@yale.edu](mailto:monica.brackney@yale.edu).

#### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**SR. POSITIONS: CT VOICES FOR CHILDREN**  
Connecticut Voices for Children is looking to fill two senior positions. One open position is for a **Senior Policy Fellow** working on issues of vulnerable youth, equity and opportunity. The organization seeks an experienced professional with excellent research, writing, quantitative, and qualitative analytical skills; outstanding interpersonal and leadership skills; a keen understanding of the policy-making process; the ability to communicate effectively with a wide variety of audiences; the ability to work independently and in teams, to manage and mentor junior staff; a commitment to data-driven, research-based, independent, open-minded, and objective analysis; interest and/or experience in child welfare, juvenile justice, early childhood, health, and/or two-generation strategies; and a passion to ensure that all children have an equal chance to succeed in life. Download the full job announcement at the following website:  
<http://www.ctvoices.org/sites/default/files/files/Jobs/job16srpolicymfellow.pdf>.

The second position. Is for a **Director of Communications**. Reporting to the Executive Director, the Communications Director is responsible for overseeing the external communications of Connecticut Voices for Children in all forms of media, elevating issues of importance to CT Voices for Children in the public discourse, and conducting public relations on behalf of Voices. The Communications Director is also responsible for branding CT Voices for Children publications, creating appropriate templates, reviewing all publications, creating

appropriate templates, reviewing all publications for consistency of tone and message, and design and layout. Working with Policy Fellows, the Communications Director will promote their work product and assist with production of publications.

More specifically, the Communications Director is responsible for strategic communications; media relations; news media: website, blog, social media and email; writing and editing; and donor communications. Download the full job announcement here:

<http://www.ctvoices.org/sites/default/files/files/Jobs/jobs16commdirector.pdf>.

To apply to either position, submit cover letter and resume or curriculum vitae, transcripts from undergraduate and graduate programs (unofficial transcripts permitted), a writing sample of 5-10 pages, and four references to [mjenning@ctvoices.org](mailto:mjenning@ctvoices.org). Please include "Senior Policy Fellow" or "Communications Director" in the subject line. These positions are open until filled. Resumes will be reviewed beginning June 1, 2016. (No phone inquiries, please.)

#### SANITARIAN I

North Central District Department of Health is recruiting a **Sanitarian I**, an entry level position in the Environmental Health Section of the Health Department. The employee will be required to perform inspections in the areas of food service, housing, complaint investigation, cosmetology, public swimming pools, lead, daycare facilities and sub-surface sewage disposal. Evening and weekend work will be required as well as occasional off-hour availability for emergencies.

Minimum qualifications include:

- Bachelor's degree in public health, environmental health or science, biology or the natural sciences
- Able to obtain State of Connecticut certification for food service and subsurface sewage disposal systems within a maximum period of one year from the date of employment.
- Eligible to take the National or State examination for Registration as a Sanitarian after two years from the date of employment
- Have and maintain a valid driver's license

No experience is necessary. Additional training will be provided by the health department and the State of Connecticut. The salary range is \$41,900-\$45,300. For information on applying contact the North Central District Health Department, 31 North Main Street, Enfield, CT 06082, 860-872-1501.

#### POSITIONS WITH CT RIVER AREA HEALTH DISTRICT

The Connecticut River Area Health District is seeking to fill two positions: **Public Health Educator** and **Public Health Preparedness Coordinator**. With offices in Old Saybrook, the District serves a population of over 36,000 in the towns of Old Saybrook, Clinton, Deep River and Haddam.

**The Public Health Educator** is a professional position with primary responsibility to develop, implement and coordinate public health education activities within the towns of the health district. Activities include a wide variety of preventive health and health promotion educational forums aimed at improving the health and well-being of residents of the community. The ideal candidate will have a Bachelor's degree in Public Health or related field, with at least two years of public health experience, as well as experience interacting effectively with peers and target groups along with a variety of agencies that play a role in health education. CHES certification is desirable and experience administering grants is preferable. Candidates should also have the following knowledge and skills:

- Excellent writing, speaking, and communication skills.
- Capability to develop educational materials
- Excellent organizational skills to coordinate programs
- Ability to develop creative concepts and innovative techniques to reach all segments of the population
- Skills to interact effectively with other community based agencies involved in health education.

The primary responsibility of the **Public Health Preparedness Coordinator** is to plan, prepare and coordinate the local district and mass dispensing area (MDA) to improve response to public health emergencies. The ideal candidate will have a Bachelor's Degree in Public Health, emergency management, or a related field, and experience

working in a public health agency, the preparedness field, or a comparable setting. A planning background and emergency response experience is desirable, and experience administering grants is preferred. Candidates should also have experience in effectively interacting with representatives of a variety of agencies that play a role in preparedness and should be able to demonstrate a training record in emergency preparedness.

Job descriptions for the Public Health Educator and Public Health Preparedness Coordinator positions are available upon request. To apply, please forward resume and letter of interest to Director of Health, 455 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, CT 06475 or by email to [ccollier@crahd.net](mailto:ccollier@crahd.net). The deadline is noon on Friday, June 3, 2016. However, the positions will remain open until filled. Both positions are grant funded and offer approximately 20 hours of work per week on a contractual basis.

## APHA WEBINAR SERIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND HEALTH

The American Public Health Association (APHA) and ecoAmerica are co-sponsoring a four-part webinar series investigating the health impacts of climate change. The series explores the connection between climate change and key areas of our health: allergies and asthma; health risks in children; mental health; and transportation and healthy community design as a mitigation approach. The remaining dates and topics are as follows:

- June 7 – [Making the Connection: Changing Climate through Healthy Community Design and Transportation](#)
- June 29 – [Making the Connection: Climate Changes Mental Health](#)

To register, go to <https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/registrations/new?cid=ommujbqr9be7>

## CDC LEARNING CONNECTION

The CDC has announced the launch of the newly designed **CDC Learning Connection** – a source for information on public health training opportunities developed by CDC, CDC partners, and other federal agencies. The new site will give you access to thousands of free courses and allow you to sign up for monthly email updates. Included

on the website is information on public health training internships and fellowships, in addition to access to a variety of continuing education and training opportunities. Check it out at [http://www.cdc.gov/learning/index.html?s\\_cid=cdclc-apr16-partnercomm](http://www.cdc.gov/learning/index.html?s_cid=cdclc-apr16-partnercomm).

## MAY IS MELANOMA/SKIN CANCER DETECTION & PREVENTION MONTH

Skin cancer is by far the most common cancer in the U.S., but one of the most preventable. In May, as summer activities begin to kick off, we can bring attention to simple steps that we all should take to protect our skin.

Skin cancer is on the rise in the United States, and the American Cancer Society estimates that one American dies every hour from skin cancer, more than 10,000 persons. This year alone, the American Cancer Society estimates there will be more than 73,870 new cases of malignant melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer, and more than two million new cases of basal cell and squamous cell skin cancers in the U.S.

Although individuals with lighter-toned skin are more susceptible to UV damage, people of all races and ethnicities can be at risk for skin cancer. Those who have a family history of skin cancer, plenty of moles or freckles, or a history of severe sunburns early in life are at a higher risk of skin cancer as well. To minimize the harmful effects of excessive and unprotected sun exposure, protection from intense UV radiation should be a life-long practice for everyone.

The Friday before Memorial Day, **May 27, 2016 is Don't Fry Day**. There are many ways to protect skin from harmful UV radiation, including seeking shade, wearing protective clothing, generously applying sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher with broad spectrum protection), and not letting skin tan or burn. Simple messages can help save lives:

- Avoid the sun when UV rays are strongest, generally between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., and
- Remember to Slip! Slop! Slap!® and Wrap! Slip on a shirt, slop on broad spectrum sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher, slap on a wide-brimmed hat, and wrap on sunglasses.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand
- Get Vitamin D safely



The best way to detect skin cancer early is to examine skin regularly and recognize changes in moles and skin growths.

#### ALUMNI NEWS

**Angela Bermudez-Millan, MPH (2001), PhD** discussed career opportunities to 8<sup>th</sup> graders at Two Rivers Magnet Middle School in East Hartford on Wednesday, April 27. Her oldest daughter attends the school, which has a diverse population. Angela discussed her own career trajectory as well as public health careers in general.

**David Dayya** successfully defended his doctoral dissertation on April 13 and receive his PhD on May 8. His thesis was on “Debridement of Diabetic Foot Ulcers: Public Health and Clinical Implications. A Symptomatic Review, Meta-Analysis, and Meta-Regression.”

Double congratulations to **Richard Dubiel, MPH (2007)**, who recently became a grandfather for the first time. His granddaughter’s name is Chloe. Rick was also recently promoted to Business Project Program Senior Manager at Aetna, where he has responsibilities for the Genomics, Cardiology and Women’s Health Condition Analysis teams.



**Adam Pennarola**, a May 2016 MD/MPH graduate, and Michelle Sweetman got engaged on April 16 while traveling in Vik, Iceland. They will be moving to Philadelphia where Adam will begin his residency program on June 1 and Michelle will

start graduate school in August.

**Luigi Sartori, MPH** was recipient of the 2016 *Charles G. Huntington III Student Poster Award* presented by *Delta Omega, Beta Rho Chapter*. Although all the graduating students did a great job with their posters at the Poster Session on April 23, Luigi’s was selected as the most outstanding. He received the award at this year’s Commencement Dinner on Tuesday evening, May 3, at Wampanoag Country Club in West Hartford. Luigi’s poster was based on his capstone project, “Nail Salon Environmental Health Risks: Public Exposure to Common Chemicals.”

**Prakrity Silwal, MPH (2012)**, MSW has a new position as Project Manager for American Red Cross, Restoring Family Links, in the Washington, DC Metro Area.

#### FACULTY NEWS

**Helen Swede, PhD** has been granted tenure and promoted to the position of Associate Professor in the Department of Community Medicine and Health Care. Congratulations, Helen!

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