

The Department of Prevention and Community Health

Announcements & News:

Dr. Edberg has just concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UNICEF-Belize, to establish a Center of Knowledge relationship with GWU. This Center will engage in a number of efforts to promote an ecological approach to linking health, social, educational and other programs serving children, youth and families in Belize. It is based on previous work by Dr. Edberg in completing a Situation Analysis (of women, children and youth) in that Central American/Caribbean country.

Congratulations to **Caroline Sparks, Ph.D., Daniel Kulund, MD** and **Constance Battle, MD** from the PCH department and Kaitlin Roth, MD from the MFA for an award from the National Collaborative on Aging to "Compare Health and Behavioral Outcomes of Seniors Randomly Assigned to an Environmental Exercise Intervention or Usual Care". The one year award includes stipends for two health promotion students and two medical or PA students to work with the team to assess and monitor seniors' referred from the MFA into the study.

Doug Evans participated in a University-level strategic planning retreat led by Provost Steven Lerman. This is one of several meetings to provide input into the first GWU strategic plan in over 10 years. Schools across the university, including SPHHS, are also undertaking strategic planning and several PCH faculty will participate in an initial meeting with Dean Goldman on Nov 29-30.

In This Issue:

Department News:

Announcements & News	1
Presentations & Meetings	2
Hope Fellowship Lunch	2
Letter from Interim Chair	5

Student News:

Meet the PA-MPH'ers	2
Student Presentations at APHA	2
Dr. Sparks' Advocacy Teams	4
Student Awards	4



Meet the PA-MPH'ers:

A new cohort of PA-MPH students entered the school this past summer energized and ready to take on the challenging course-load that they are made to suffer through. While we have all worked alongside many of them in group projects over the past semester the Department wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the hard work that they have demonstrated over both the Summer Session and the Fall Semester.

In this photo - Back Row: Lindsay Elhers, Mary Alivia Bryan, Chad Turner, Anna Hoe, Professor James Cawley, Bri McCann, CJ Czelusta, Danielle Tropper. Middle row: Maria Zumer, Shelley Levi, Alexis Guzman, Erin Love, Meredith Carey, Rebecca Freeman, Angela Britton. Leaning: Kate Howe, Alex Aronson, Lani Ellis. Kneeling: Kristina Jacobsen, Alice Eggleston

Want to see your cohort featured in the next issue of the PCH Newsletter? Get the group together and send a photo, along with names or a fun caption to Meg at pchmmh@gwumc.edu

Center for Health and Health Care in Schools hosted Hope Fellowship Lunch!

Ms Blerta Sulhasi, a Hope Fellowship awardee, from Gjakova, Kosovo, who lead a discussion on children's mental health, health and education in Kosovo. Dr. Olga Acosta Price introduced Ms. Sulhasi and then helped to lead the discussion which followed her presentation. The Discussion was held in the Global Health Conference Room on November 8, 2011.



Presentations & Meetings:

- **Abroms LC.** The U.S. Experience with Text Messaging for Smoking Cessation. United Nations International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Annual Conference. Geneva, Switzerland (via Skype). October 27th, 2011.
- **Abroms LC.** Using Mobile Phones for Smoking Cessation. Dept. of Health Promotion, University of Florida. Gainesville. October 21st, 2011.
- **Behrens D.** Overcoming stigma about mental health: Lessons from working with refugee and immigrant families. APHA, Washington, DC, Oct 31, 2011.
- **James F. Cawley, MPH, PA-C,** Professor and Interim Chair of the Department of Prevention and Community Health, was a featured speaker and facilitator at the Ontario Physician Assistant Symposium 2011. The session "Championing the PA Role in Ontario" was held in Toronto, Ontario, Canada on December 5, 2011 with over 125 of the estimated 250 Canadian PAs in attendance. Cawley provided commentary on the recently completed Ontario Physician Assistant Demonstration Project and led discussion of the next steps for Canadian PAs in their progress toward registration and full legal recognition in the province
- **Mark Edberg** was chair and organizer of a session at the American Anthropological Association meetings in Montreal (Quebec, Canada), from November 16-20. The session was entitled "Tracing Theory: Applied Anthropologists and the Use of Theory in Public health Interventions." He also presented a paper, "A Theoretical Approach to Operationalizing the Construct of Historical Trauma for Health Disparities Intervention and Research." Dr. Edberg also participated in a workshop and other events at this meeting.
- **Sparks CH.** Teaching Public Health Advocacy. APHA, Washington, DC, Oct 31, 2011.

Student Presentations at APHA:

- **Dankovic S. and Sparks CH.** Tobacco use among Serbian youth and prevention strategies. APHA, Washington, DC, Oct 31, 2011.
- **Becker V. and Sparks CH.** Youth Access to Tobacco Promotion on Facebook. APHA, Washington, DC, Oct 31, 2011.

Dr. Sparks' Students Put Their Advocacy Skills into Action!

2

MPH students in PubH 6532: Community Organizing and Advocacy class are working on four community initiatives to promote health among DC area residents. Each team works with the Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association as well as within GWU. In addition to annual support from MWPCHA, two of the four teams have recently received small grants to carry out their work. Any public health student who wants to join in the work may contact a team and volunteer.

Colonials for Clean Air



The DC Health Department, through Breathe-DC, has funded a team of GW MPH students in PubH 6532 to work with a city consortium of universities that began work three years ago to promote tobacco free campuses under the Tobacco Free Campuses Initiative. The current GW MPH team is calling the project “Colonials for Clean Air (CCA)” to promote policy changes that will make GW a smoke-free campus, indoors and outside. The team’s first objective to reduce tobacco-related illness for CCA will be to advocate for GW to opt-in to DC’s smoking law that prohibits smoking within 25 feet of all GW buildings. Cigarette smoking causes 443,000 deaths in the U.S. each year. Non-smokers who are regularly exposed to secondhand smoke have a 20-30% increased risk of developing lung cancer, and a 25-30% increased risk of developing heart disease compared to those not exposed to secondhand smoke. For more information see:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Colonials-for-Clean-Air/264979820209272>

Stop OD in DC: Call 911

Students received a GW Public Service Commission small grant to promote passage of the DC Good Samaritan Overdose Prevention Law. Drug and alcohol abuse rates are higher in the District of Columbia than anywhere else in the country (SAMHSA, 2011). As a result, two people die of accidental drug overdose per week in DC. Fear of police intervention is the number one reason why witnesses of drug overdose do not call 911 immediately. To overcome this barrier, GW MPH Students and GW Law Students for Sensible Drug Policy have formed the Good Samaritan Coalition and are working with members of the DC City Council to pass a Good Samaritan Overdose Prevention Law. This law would provide immunity from prosecution for simple drug possession to people in situations when someone must receive life-saving medical attention. For more information see:

<http://twitter.com/#!/StopODinDC> and
<http://stopodindc.blogspot.com/>





Student News:

Elizabeth Osborn, who presented her Culminating Experience project earlier this month, is a recent grad of the Public Health Communications & Marketing track. She was also honored on Wednesday, November 30, by PR News, an industry publication, as one of the “15 to Watch” top communications professionals under the age of 30. Elizabeth was recognized for her work on a public health campaign called “Best Bones Forever” which is designed to reach young girls with information and motivate them to take actions that will help increase the strength of their bones and help prevent serious health problems later in life.

Dr. Doug Evans, Director of the Public Health Communications and Marketing Track, and other PCH Faculty would like to congratulate Elizabeth!

Also: The APHA Student Assembly gave **Leslie Erdelack** the Healthy Communities Promoting Healthy Minds and Bodies award at the recent APHA meeting.

Get FED

Several DC wards are official “food deserts” due to the lack of availability of healthy food options. In 2010, the MPH “Get FED” advocacy team in PubH 6532 helped DC council members to pass the DC Feed Act. The current advocacy team is now working with a coalition to implement the Healthy Corners program. Since 87% of residents in Ward 8 get food from corner convenience stores or fast food outlets, Get FED is working to implement the Healthy Corners program so that healthier options are offered at these convenience stores. For more information see: <http://getfeddc.weebly.com/index.html>



Save Lives: Free the Condoms in PG County

After a successful advocacy campaign by MPH students in PubH 6532 to get CVS stores in DC to stop locking condoms in minority neighborhoods with high HIV/AIDS rates, the campaign has moved on to CVS stores in PG County that are still hindering the accessibility of condoms. Of the 43 CVS stores in PG County, 30% were still locking condoms in neighborhoods that border the District of Columbia. So far, Hyattsville CVS stores have “freed the condoms” and placed them on open shelves. For more information see: <http://freethecondoms.tumblr.com/>



Department of Prevention and Community Health

2175 K St. NW, Suite 700
Washington DC, 20037
<http://sphhs.gwumc.edu/departments/preventioncommunityhealth/>

Edited By: Meg Hopkins
Phone: 202.994.3570
Fax: 202.994.3601
E-mail: pchmmh@gwumc.edu

Course Issues?

In the course of graduate education, there are occasionally circumstances where students feel that a particular course and/or instructor is failing to provide appropriate instruction resulting in an unsatisfactory educational experience. Should this occur, it is important for SPHHS students to be aware of the recommended channels open to students for the resolution of such issues.

If a student has an issue with a particular course/instructor, the appropriate steps to follow are to first bring the matter to the attention of the course instructor and/or Track Director. If this discussion fails to resolve the issue, the next step is to speak to the Department Chair. In our experience, following these steps results in the resolution of the difficulty in the majority of cases, making referral to the Dean's Office unnecessary. We urge you to be respectful of the Dean's Office in such matters and to pursue resolution of course and/or instructor issues on the departmental level.

James F. Cawley, MPH, PA-C
Professor and Interim Chair