

FALL 2022 | ISSUE 4

BEHAVIORAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES



University of
Pittsburgh
School of Public Health



HELLO, BCCHS!

Dear Friends of BCCHS,

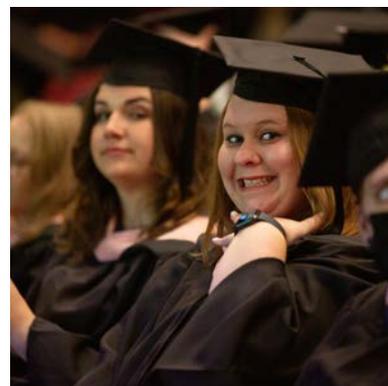
Welcome to the fourth Annual BCCHS Newsletter! I am so pleased to be writing this letter as the newly appointed Chair of BCCHS. On behalf of the entire department, I want to extend our deepest gratitude to **Velpandi Ayyavoo**, who served as our interim Chair for over a year. Her good humor, boundless energy, and deep commitment to mentoring have left an indelible mark on the department.

I am proud to showcase the department's work in this newsletter. This year has been complicated: at times painful, at other times joyful as we reunited in person, but above all, a year of transition. We transitioned back into the classroom after COVID disruptions. We traveled the world (which is harder than it used to be!) and brought back new ideas and collaborations. We graduated 28 students, and some students from 2021 returned to walk in person. As you will see on page 3, we said *au revoir* to our dear **Martha Terry**, who directed our MPH program for nearly two decades. As we begin this new academic year, I'm eager to partner in new ways with our excellent students, staff, and faculty to continue our most essential work: collaborating with communities to advance social justice and the health of the public.

Warmly,
Mary Hawk

2022 Graduation

Monica Henderson (MPH '22) (cover), a Health Justice Scholar whose Master's essay examined Black hair politics from a public health lens, gave the inaugural Student Address to the audience at the May 1st ceremony. **Carly Duncan** (MPH '22) (below) looks on in excitement.



EMBRACING LEARNING WITH CREATIVITY AND COMMUNITY



PITT PARK (ING) DAY September 2021

► Creativity in public health education

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Public Health Training Center (**Patricia Documét**, PI) and Center for Health Equity joined forces for Pitt Park(ing) Day—an annual international event that repurposes city parking spaces into mini fun zones. The MAR-PHTC staff helped design an experience where guests stopped by to express their creativity and learn about the 10 Essential Services of Public Health.

FIELD TRIP TO CASA SAN JOSE March 2022

► Community-engaged learning experience

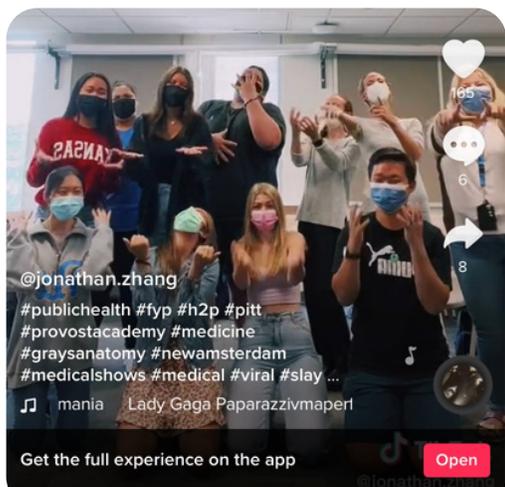
In a cross-cultural learning exchange, **Patricia Documét** organized a field trip to Beechview for the Emerging Latinx Communities Group, including MPH students (left) **Claire Lama**, **Kayla Ortiz**, and **Emily Sierra**. Attendees visited Casa San Jose and the Pittsburgh Hispanic Development Corporation, meeting staff and learning about possible practicum and volunteer opportunities. Finally, everyone enjoyed some delicious tacos!



PROVOST'S ACADEMY August 2022

► Media and public health

Beth Hoffman (Post-Doctoral Associate, Ph.D. 22) and **Jenn McCartney** (MPH) teamed up for the second year to deliver a transformational week-long educational experience to incoming-first year students. This year's class, "From TV to Tik Tok: Using Media to Promote Health," focused on the intersections of media and the social determinants of health and included guests from Hollywood screenwriters to street medicine providers.



BCHS ABROAD

EAST, WEST, A SABATTICAL IS BEST

Professor Steve Albert spends Spring 2022 learning what aging looks like in one of the world's oldest countries.



When **Steve Albert** first learned he had been awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to travel to St. Mariana Medical University Tama/Kawasaki Hospital and spend a semester as a Lecturer and Researcher, he thought he would be going in December. However, COVID restrictions on the Japanese side made getting there more than a little challenging. "We got the call at the end of February that the paperwork had finally been approved and we had less than a month to find a place to live, get everything packed up, and get on a plane!"

He and his wife finally arrived in mid-March, just in time to see the famous cherry blossoms and to begin work on two projects with colleagues at the University including **Kenya Ie**, MD, MMPH '19, a former advisee. While there, they translated a survey instrument into English to research how to "deprescribe" or reduce the number of medications older adults take. They also investigated how much medical intervention seniors in nursing homes receive during the last month of their lives. He also found time to teach medical residents research methods and medical students about the public health response to COVID.

While based in Tokyo, he traveled for both work and pleasure. While many things in Japan are different, he found at least one familiar thing when visiting older adults in their homes. "When we go in to visit them, the TV will always be on!" Of course, it wouldn't be a sabbatical if it was all work. He and his wife visited a wasabi farm and learned how real wasabi differs from what is generally served in US restaurants (in the US, "wasabi" is mostly horseradish).

Even better than a semester in Japan is the knowledge that this collaboration is just the beginning and plans are underway for future exchanges between the schools! Hopefully, we will get to try some of that real wasabi-- and learn a lot more about the Japanese public health system-- soon.

TRAVEL NOTES



ARTS IN HEALTH

This spring, **Sara Baumann** attended a one-week Arts in Health Research Intensive in Snape Maltings, England. She will use inspiration from the training to develop a new undergraduate course for the BSPH program called "Can Art Heal? An Introduction to Arts in Health Research and Interventions" to be taught with **Jessie Burke** in Spring 2023.



SCOTTISH SUMMER

Arpita Tripathi (PhD) recently traveled to Edinburgh, Scotland for the Summer Institute in Computational Social Science, a 2-week long summer school to bring together grad students, postdocs, and early career researchers interested in computational social science.



TRANSITIONS

MARTHA TERRY RETIRES



A HAIKU ABOUT DR. TERRY

THE BEST CURLS IN TOWN
A SMILE THAT LIGHTS UP THE ROOM
TEACHER, LEARNER, FRIEND

- CAROLINE SEFCIK (MPH)



Known for her weekly fashion themes, Martha often inspires others to get in on the game!

They say all good things must come to an end, but in the case of **Martha Ann Terry** retiring, say it ain't so! After 30 years in the department, 18 as director of the MPH, it is nearly impossible to imagine BCHS without her smiling face, themed clothes, thickly papered office door, quick wit, and enormous heart. While we wish her all the best in retirement, we hope she won't be a stranger to the halls of the 6th floor!

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO THIS YEAR?



ROBERT COULTER

ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR

"LGBTQ+ college students experience inequities in alcohol-related problems, including alcohol-involved sexual violence."

Study engages students to understand alcohol use

Along with **Stina Mair**, **Jaime Sidani**, **Kar-Hai Chu**, and **Michelle Dougherty** (PhD), we've started a study to work with LGBTQ+ students to build better models of risks related to alcohol use. We hope this will lead to being able to identify the causes of alcohol-related problems, including sexual violence, and point the way towards better interventions to keep college students safe.



CYNTHIA SALTER

ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR

"If I don't describe it, can that mean it hasn't really happened?"

"Unlisted" explores trauma from public violence

My creative non-fiction manuscript "Unlisted," published this Spring in the University of Michigan's Literary Magazine, *Fourth Genre: Explorations in Nonfiction*, through Project MUSE, describes the lingering effects of the Tree of Life shooting and the experience of re-traumatization that new acts of public violence can bring.



EMILY DARUIA

ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR

"We're interrogating system practices and policies that may shape maternal health disparities."

Exploring affects of cannabis laws on seeking healthcare

In collaboration with **Stina Mair**, **Richard Garland**, and **Judy Chang** we are exploring whether, how, and why women involved in the carceral system are using cannabis and seeking treatment services while pregnant or post-partum. We are especially interested in learning how policies and practices within the carceral and healthcare systems (e.g. parole, mandatory reporting laws) impact perinatal cannabis use and related health issues.



RICHARD GARLAND

ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR

"{F}or them to pick me for this board says a whole lot to the community."

Inaugural Police Review Board Appointee

I was recently appointed to the newly formed Allegheny County Police Review Board for a term to serve through 2025. The Board will be able to review complaints filed by the public against county law enforcement and attempt to resolve issues with officers and departments. The hope is this will improve community policing, trust, and transparency.

HOW TO DONATE TO A BCHS SCHOLARSHIP

01 Identify a scholarship
MPH? Doctoral? Research?
General student support? Decide
where you'd like to give. (See
below for fund descriptions.)

Head to giveto.pitt.edu
Hit the "give now" button on
the top right

02

03 Designate your gift
Enter your info, and to
designate your gift, scroll
down to the bottom and select
"other." Enter:

- Carol L. McAllister Student Resource Fund
- Karen S. Peterson Memorial Research Award for Women's Health
- Silverman Scholarship Fund
- BCHS Research Support Fund

STUDENT FUNDING

It is no secret that graduate school can be expensive. While pursuing a master's or doctoral degree requires an initial outlay of time, energy, and, yes, capital, it is an investment in both the student's future and the future of the public health workforce.

When conducting primary research as a graduate student, the cost barriers can seem particularly daunting. How can students provide participant incentives, buy software, travel to conferences, or do other necessary tasks to answer research questions? More fundamentally, how can students research or study while dealing with a family emergency or financial crisis?

In BCHS, we have four named funds to support students and student research (see below). While these funds generate a fixed amount of income annually, the need for student support is omnipresent. Please consider donating to one or more and help support our students!



MCCALISTER FUND

Awards will be made to support qualitative, ethnographic, community-based, & participatory work.



RICCI FUND

This award is designated to assist in the recruitment and retention of BCHS students.



PETERSON FUND

Specifically for doctoral students to support projects with qualitative and/or ethnographic research.



RESEARCH SUPPORT FUND

Funds to assist with the costs of conducting research.

Welcome back to **Michael Tokosh**, who returned to BCHS as our Department Administrator.

Welcome to **Steve Kralik**, who joined the department as our Financial Administrator.



Another welcome to **Nancy Linderman** as she joins the department part-time as our Personnel Administrator.

Jessie Burke was named Vice Dean of Pitt Public Health.

Kar-Hai Chu was named Vice Chair of Education in BCHS.

Elizabeth Felter was named director of the MPH Program in BCHS.

Jaime Sidani was named director of the Accelerated MPH Program in BCHS.

Patricia Documét was elected President of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Additionally, she was named director of the joint MPH programs in BCHS.

Best wishes to **Andre Brown** as he moves to Cuyahoga County Health Department.

Best wishes to **Missy Evanko** as she moves on full-time to HPM.

For the latest faculty and staff news, please visit:
<http://publichealth.pitt.edu/behavioral-and-community-health-sciences/whos-who/>