



WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

M.P.H CONNECTIONS

A publication of the Department of Health, College of Health Sciences

FALL 2014 ISSUE

UPDATE ON CEPH ACCREDITATION PROBATION STATUS Message from the MPH Program Director: Dr. Lynn Carson

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The WCU Administration and MPH Faculty are continuing to make significant progress on making the changes we need to maintain CEPH accreditation status.

On Monday, November 3rd, members of the MPH Faculty and WCU administration met with Mollie Mulvanity, MPH, Deputy Director for the Council for Education in Public Health (CEPH) and Susan Marmagas, MPH Program Consultant to review the progress that has been made to date in meeting the requirements to maintain CEPH accreditation status.

We had a very favorable review and we are on track for meeting the criteria in service and program competencies. To meet the Service Criteria, we now have a Community Service requirement for all MPH students. The new Student Community Service Policy is in place under the direction of the Community Service Committee. Dr. Debra Bill is the committee chair along with committee members: Dr. Gopal Sankaran, Dr. Charles Shorten, Dr. Mary Beth Gilboy, Dr. Lynn Carson and Ms. Jodi Roth (Director of the WCU Center for Service Learning).

MPH Core Competencies are currently under revision along with course syllabi. The revised course syllabi will identify MPH Core Competencies and Track Competencies with course assignments that are addressed in every course. Look for the revised course syllabi starting in spring semester with all course syllabi to be revised by fall semester, 2015.

Also, we do need to add additional faculty to the Health Care Management Track. Due to the excellent work of the Health Care Management Search Committee (Dr. Mary Bowen, Dr. Sharon DeJoy and Dr. Gopal Sankaran—Chair). We have four very well qualified candidates scheduled for on-campus interviews during the last week of November and the first week of December.

We will be submitting the Preliminary Self Study on May 22, 2015 and we will receive a response from the CEPH reviewers on July 22, 2015. This response will provide any additional changes that will need to be in place before the final Self Study is submitted on September 22, 2015. Our site visit is scheduled on October 22-23, 2015. The results of the site visit are presented to the CEPH Board of Councilors in June, 2016. We will receive notification about accreditation status approximately six weeks after the Board of Councilors meeting in June.

It is important for you to remember that while the MPH Program is under probation, the MPH Program is a fully accredited program. All students receive the full benefits of an accredited program until the CEPH Board of Councilors Meeting in June, 2016.

We will continue to keep you up to date on our progress and you are welcome to contact me with any of your questions about the accreditation process.

Vive to Vida Community Experience

Thirty-five community health track students in Dr. Debra Bill's MPH *HEA 531: Community as a Basis for Health* class completed a service learning project at La Comunidad Hispana's fourth annual "Vive to Vida, Get up Get Moving!" health and wellness event. The event took place on Saturday, September 27th from 10:00 am-2:00 pm in Kennett Square's Anson B. Nixon Park. The National Alliance for Hispanic Health sponsors ten cities in the nation to host this annual health and wellness event, geared towards engaging the Latino community in interactive, health-promoting activities. Kennett Square was chosen for the fourth year in a row because of its abundant Latino population. La Comunidad Hispana (LCH) is the leading healthcare and social services provider of the Latino community in local Kennett Square. Dr. Bill, Professor and MPH Community Health Track Coordinator, partnered with Volunteer Coordinator, Laura Mackiewicz, from LCH and Jodi Roth, Director of West Chester University's Office of Service Learning and Volunteer Programs in helping plan and implement the event. Students designed eight health and



fitness learning stations for the event as part of the required service learning project for the course. MPH Students volunteered to set up and clean up the event, and created stations with informational posters, interactive activities, and lesson plans in English and Spanish to engage the community in health education. At the event, four health stations were located in the Exhibitor tent, and four fitness stations were located along a one-mile family walk.



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The health stations targeted Diabetes, Oral Health, Lyme Disease, and Obesity and Nutrition. The Diabetes group used a "spin the wheel" game to quiz families on Diabetes knowledge, and provided informational handouts in English and Spanish. The Oral Health group presented pictures of diseased versus

healthy teeth, and engaged children by designing a giant toothbrush to demonstrate proper tooth brushing techniques. The Lyme Disease group created dolls for children to dress in proper attire for tick-prevention, and discussed how to identify and remove ticks. The Obesity and Nutrition group created a lunchbox with food and drink options to help children design a healthy school lunch, and devised an "eat this, not that" chart of staple foods in the Latino diet to help families choose more

Vive to Vida Community Experience

nutritious options. This group received the “best poster” award for the *Community as a Basis of Health* class!

The four fitness stations along the one-mile family walk included Heart Rate, Frequency Intensity Time Type (F.I.T.T) First, Children’s Fitness, and Dance for Fitness. The Heart Rate station taught adults how to take their heart rate, and provided a number of giveaways such as mini spatulas,

jar grippers, and heart healthy cookbooks graciously donated by the American Heart Association - Philadelphia Chapter. Children participated in a “match the items” game where they placed food or beverage items onto the “have everyday” or “have sometimes” plates. The F.I.T.T station used everyday household items such as water bottles to teach participants how to low-cost exercise at home. The Children’s Fitness station created a superhero theme to teach children how to be fit like a superhero! Children learned all the healthy eating and physical activity habits of their favorite superheroes, and were awarded “superhero certificates” that stated their promise to staying fit. The Dance for

Fitness station used eight cultural dances of the popular Zumba to teach participants how to use dance as a form of exercise! Group member Bonnie Rubin used her Zumba instructor experience to lead participants through a series of heart-pumping moves, and provided a CD of her personal Zumba song selections for participants to take home and share with their families!



Nearly 1,900 people participated in the Vive to Vida event this year! The West Chester University MPH Community Health Track students were able to interact with the Latino community of Kennett Square, provide health education through dynamic stations, and volunteer for a leading community health organization. Students were required to write a reflection paper about the experience, and many reported that they really enjoyed the service learning project/experience and that it helped improve their skill set in community-based health promotion with Latinos.

Dr. Neha Sunger, Faculty in Environmental Health—Profile

When did you join WCU and Please provide a synopsis of your background (education and experience)

I joined West Chester University on August 25, 2014 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health at the College of Health Sciences. Prior to joining WCU, I was a post-doctoral research fellow at The Dow Chemical Company in Midland, MI. I received my Ph.D. (Environmental Engineering) from Drexel University in Philadelphia, my M.S. (Environmental Engineering) from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Kanpur and my B.S. (Civil Engineering) from MBM Engineering College in India where I was a University Scholar. I am an environmental health risk and exposure analyst, specializing in environmental statistics, human health and exposure modeling. My teaching interests include public health, decision analysis, quantitative dose-response assessment, quantitative uncertainty analysis, risk assessment, statistics, exposure science and modeling, and water and wastewater treatment. My primary research interests are in the field environmental and human health risk assessment for both chemical and microbial stressors.

What do you like about teaching?

For me the “power of knowledge” is the most important thing about teaching. It can make the students independent and confident to evolve as successful individuals in the society. I enjoy helping my students succeed and reaching their highest potential. The ability to empower students and build their self-esteem are the most enjoyable aspects of teaching.

What courses are you teaching in Fall? And plan on teaching in Spring 2015?

Courses in Fall 2014—

ENV 102: Humans and The Environment and ENV 530: General Environmental Health

Courses in Spring 2015

ENV 102: Humans and The Environment and ENV/HEA 581: Special topic: Infectious Disease Assessment

I understand that you have a new elective? Could you please provide more details?

The overall goal of this course, *Infectious Disease Assessment*, is to introduce students to the field of microbiology and infectious diseases. Infectious diseases can result from exposure to pathogens in different environmental media. In this course we will develop basic understanding of different aspects of pathogens that makes them pose a risk, approaches for conducting microbial risk assessment and transport of infectious disease agents through different exposure routes (such as air, water, soil and food chain, etc.).

What do you do to relax and enjoy doing?

I enjoy playing with my daughter who is now 4 years old and I also love listening to music. For relaxation I sometimes practice yoga.

Anything else that you wish to add for our readers?

I would like to share the thought that I have strong belief in “*Hard work always pays off and dreams do come true*”. I wish all the students great success in their careers and hope that all my colleagues continue to relish and appreciate the opportunity of being on a campus like this one.



Graduate Certificate in Gerontology: A Focus on Healthy Aging

Starting in spring 2015 semester, the College of Health Sciences will offer the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology. The certificate (18 credits) offers a flexible learning format with online and traditional in-class options. The curriculum is interdisciplinary as it explores gerontology and healthy aging through coursework in health, nursing, nutrition, social work, and kinesiology and culminates with an applied learning experience.

The curriculum includes:

Required Courses (12 Credits): NSG 554: Theories of the Aging Process; HEA 548: A Life Span Approach to Public Health; NTD 601: Nutrition and Health in Aging; NSG 556: Health-Illness Transitions

Electives (3 Credits): HEA 645: Global Health and Aging or EXS 690: Exercise in Older Adults or SWG 571: Social Work with Older Adults

Required Applied Experience in Aging/Gerontology (3 Credits)

Is the certificate a good fit for You?

This certificate will complement positions as nursing home administrators, medical care staff in home health agencies, nursing homes, hospitals, geropsychology units, Alzheimer’s specialty units, senior centers, assisted living facilities, and health bureaus and mental health centers. Students in this program will gain the necessary skills to be successful practitioners in any work that involves older clients. As our population continues to age and live longer, professionals trained in gerontology are marketable and in high demand across multiple industries. **Interested in joining the Certificate Program:** Current graduate students in a WCU program can join the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology by emailing the Office of Graduate Studies (gradstudy@wcupa.edu) and requesting to be simultaneously enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology. A separate application is not necessary. Since the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology is interdisciplinary, all those with undergraduate majors and professional backgrounds are encouraged to join the program. There are not any prerequisites for this certificate. *If you are interested in learning more about the certificate or registering for the information session, please email gradchs@wcupa.edu.*

2014 PA SOPHE Conference

West Chester University was privileged to co-sponsor the 2014 Society for Public Health Education Pennsylvania chapter (PA SOPHE) on October 3, 2014 at West Chester University. The overall mission of the conference was to bring together regional practitioners and researchers to discuss current, innovative community partnership strategies, health education leadership needs, and best practices to better achieve community-level health education objectives.

There were 14 presenters organized into one morning and two afternoon sessions with a keynote speech. Edward F. Meehan, MPH, executive director of two philanthropies in the Lehigh Valley including The Dorothy Rider Pool Health Care Trust and The Rider-Pool Foundation, eloquently delivered the keynote speech entitled *The Opportunity for and Responsibility of Leadership for Community Health*. In addition to the keynote speech, Elaine Auld, MPH MCHES, the Chief Executive Officer for SOPHE, presented during the first afternoon session. Her speech was entitled, *The Role of health Education Professionals in Implementing ACA: Lead, Follow or Get out of the Way*. The event was well-attended by members of PA SOPHE, stakeholders, practitioners, WCU faculty, WCU MPH alumni(ae) and current students.

Here is an interview conducted with a WCU Faculty and a WCU MPH student to share their experience and opinion on the conference.

Gopal Sankaran, MD, DrPH (WCU Faculty)

What do you think of this year's PA SOPHE conference? It was very well organized and had valuable sessions with excellent presenters covering a wide range of topics.

What was your best session of the conference and who was your favorite speaker? I thought all the presenters did a great job. That is the reason why I can't pinpoint one favorite speaker or a session.

There certainly was one common thread among all speakers... they all were passionate about the topic they were discussing.

What was the highlight of the conference for you? Several, including meeting colleagues and presenters whom I had known for years (some decades), learning about the wonderful work in health promotion that is taking place, conversing with our alumni(ae) and current students, and obtaining continuing education credits.

How do you think the conference was useful to our students? The conference provided a great avenue for our students to learn first-hand what is possible in health promotion, identify the different career pathways that are available to them, connect with professionals in the field, establish linkages with what they are learning in the MPH curriculum with what is happening in communities, and, more importantly, realize that in a few years they would be making such presentations!

How did you benefit from your participation in this conference? It was nice to see the whole spectrum of health promotion planning (from needs assessment to evaluation and closing the feedback loop) in practice. The demographic, socio-cultural, economic, and political landscape within which health promotion policies evolve and programs operate was highlighted well by different speakers. Thank you for the opportunity to offer my thoughts about the 2014 PA SOPHE Annual Conference!

Stella Ndossi MPH candidate

What is your name and which track in the MPH program are you in? My name is Stella Ndossi and I am in the Community Health Track in the MPH Program here at West Chester University.

What prompted you to attend the PA SOPHE conference? Honestly, I did not know anything about PA SOPHE. My instructor, Dr. Bill, who was one of the speakers introduced it to us during class and encouraged us to attend.

Who was your favorite speaker and why? My favorite speaker was of course Dr. Bill, because one of her expertise is culture. She has profound dedication for working with different diversity groups. Even in class, she involved us in different community health projects such as La Comunidad Hispana in Kennett Square, PA. The community work projects gave me a good knowledge and the feeling for what to expect in my future career as a Community Health Educator.

What was your highlight from the conference? I would say all the presenters were very knowledgeable and informative at the conference.

What are a couple of take home messages that you feel would be of value in your professional career? One major take home message is the issue of health disparities in our communities. This is big issue in our communities now and there is a lot needs to be done.

Would you like to attend the next PA SOPHE conference? Why? Yes. Since this was my first conference to attend, I learned a lot of information and I made a few connections and exchanged ideas with different people whom I met at the conference.

Would you recommend this conference to your peers in the future? Why? Yes. This type of conference is very good for people to get to know what is going on in the world of health promotion. This conference gave information about the health issues that are facing people in our communities that we sometimes don't even know about .



M.P.H. Poster session

The Master of Public Health (MPH) Poster Session is an opportunity for student to showcase their research. Students are encouraged to attend the MPH Poster Session to view their fellow students' posters and handouts as attending these sessions will enable students to see the quality of posters and handouts that are expected of completed projects. The 2014 fall MPH poster session will be held on Friday, December 5 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and spring 2015 on Friday, May 1 from 4p.m to 6p.m both in Rooms 116 C-D in Sturzebecker, Health Science College. For more information, contact Dr. Lynn Carson at 610-436-2138 or lcarson@wcupa.edu.

Service Learning and Volunteering

Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) has a requirement for service learning/volunteer service. Volunteer/community service is very useful for self development. It helps to equip you with experience and exposure that could prove useful in your public health career. For information on how to find community service opportunities, visit <http://www.wcupa.edu/SERVICES/stu.slv/>

Delta Omega Honorary Society

Delta Omega is the honorary society for graduate studies in public health. The purpose of Delta Omega is to recognize academic merit and sincere commitment to public health work. For more information about Delta Omega, please visit <http://www.wcupa.edu/HealthSciences/health/mph/Documents/2012InstructionsandDeltaOmegaSelf-NominationApplication.pdf> and the National Chapter's website at www.deltaomega.org.

Degree Candidacy

Students must be admitted to degree candidacy before registering for Applied Learning Experience credits and before graduation. Application for degree candidacy must be made immediately on completion of the first 12 to 15 semester hours of course work in a degree program. Every student must file an application for admission to degree candidacy with the associate provost and dean of graduate studies. Forms are available at http://www.wcupa.edu/_admissions/sch_dgr/forms/degCand_form.asp

M.P.H. Student Advisory Board (SAB)

The MPH Student Advisory Board (SAB) is a student run organization in the MPH program. We are committed to supporting the Department of Health by serving as a liaison between students and faculty/staff in order to foster a sense of community and professionalism. Throughout the year, we hold two meetings a month to discuss and address any needs of the MPH student body as well as organizing and participating in monthly service projects and professional and career development activities. In the past, we have volunteered with La Comunidad Hispana and the American Heart Association and organized trips to a variety of conferences. SAB is also planning a professional development week which will include a question and answer session with an alumni(ae) panel and résumé writing workshops, and study timetables and study groups for the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) examination.

Our 2014-2015 academic year Executive Board Members include: Allison Casola, President; Brenda Frutos, Vice-President; Dana Vannicola, Secretary; Philip Atoyebi, Community Health Track Liaison; and Femi Adeyboyega, Healthcare Management Track Liaison

Our group is run by MPH students for MPH students and we want you to join us! If you would like to get involved please email Allison Casola, at AC810312@wcupa.edu.

Invitation to Join PA SOPHE

PA SOPHE is a professional association promoting healthy behaviors and communities and the professional development of health education professionals and students in Pennsylvania. Please consider joining PA SOPHE. Go to www.pasophe.org/membership Student membership is only \$15 and professional membership is \$20.

MPH Alumni Panel Session

In spring 2015, the SAB will be hosting a panel session to prepare students in the health sciences to search for jobs, prepare for interviews, and market themselves after graduation. This program, *Preparing for Your Future: A Panel of Health Professionals*, will provide WCU students with the insightful opportunity to hear how professionals started out in the world of health and human services. We invite you to this program on Thursday, April 16th, 2015 from 7:30- 9:00 pm in the Ballroom of the West Chester University Foundation building, located on Carter Drive.

M.P.H. Field Work Experiences

As a student in the community health track of the MPH program, for months I have been pondering the career path that I will take once I graduate. I have finally decided that I would like my future to include several things, including working with the elderly, doing some type of personal counseling, and also working to a large capacity in corporate wellness.

In June of this year, I had the opportunity to become certified as a worksite wellness specialist, and was thrilled to be able to do so. I flew to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where classes were held over four days at the University of Minnesota. The sessions were intense and we talked about topics such as, sustaining a wellness culture, implementing primary prevention, and building an integrated evaluation and reporting process, among many other things. The programs culminated in two exams, and I am now certified for three years, until I will have to take another exam to maintain my certification. I was very pleased to see that everything I learned in the classes paralleled our MPH program here at West Chester. In addition, I now have an added skill that I can put into practice when I graduate.

My advice to all MPH students is to have several career goals in mind while going through your program. Diversifying your interests and experiences during school is a great way to make yourself more marketable when the time comes to graduate. In addition, be sure to network and do informational interviews throughout your time here. The person you meet this week could be your employer next year! Finally, if you are interested in something, become an expert in it and teach others about it. It's a sure way to increase your own knowledge and to become a thought leader in the process. I am excited to graduate next summer, and begin implementing corporate wellness strategies at local companies, and work on all of my career aspirations!

By Rachel Hykel, WCU MPH student



Congratulations!

Dr. Gopal Sankaran (Health Care Management) and **Dr. Charles Shorten (Environmental health)** recognized for 25 years of continuous service to West Chester University at a celebratory event on campus on Tuesday, November 4.



Left to right...Dr. Linda Lamwers, Provost and VP for Academic Affairs, Dr. Gopal Sankaran, Dr. Linda Adams, Dean, College of Health Sciences, and Dr. Greg Weisenstein, President



[left to right...Dr. Linda Lamwers, Provost and VP for Academic Affairs, Dr. Charles Shorten, Dr. Linda Adams, Dean, College of Health Sciences, and Dr. Greg Weisenstein, President

Dr. Stacie Metz was recently elected to the two-year term of PA SOPHE National Delegate (2015-16). The National Delegate represents the Pennsylvania Chapter at all National meetings and events and participates on the National SOPHE conference calls once a month. This places West Chester University as a key player in health education advocacy efforts in Pennsylvania.



Allison Casola, MPHc was honored by the society for Public health Education as one of 30 outstanding health educators under the age of 30. The National Health Education Week 2014, sponsored by The Society for Public Health Education paid tribute to the next generation of health educators and Allison Casola is one of them! Click on the link below to watch Allison Casola share how she will impact the future of health education.

#NHEW2014 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNy-xH-oeIY&index=12&list=PLIyUgJTvHi6T5RJxDEUJvKfBHjdiZS-BiD>



MPH Student Profile

What is your name? My name is **Andrew Carter**.

What is your academic background? (This would include your undergraduate school and major) I have an associate's degree in Medical Laboratory technique from George Washington University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in theater from Temple University.

What are your work experiences? My medical experience consists of being an Emergency Room technician for a short time at the Bethesda Naval Hospital. I was an advanced laboratory technician for four years at the Naval Hospital in Groton, CT and then at Delaware County Memorial Hospital in Drexel Hill, PA. My medical career ended when I moved to New York to pursue a career as an actor. While looking for roles, I worked in law firms as a paralegal (Intellectual Property, Medical Malpractice and Mass Tort Litigation), I also worked as a bartender, waiter, construction worker, bartending instructor, international moving salesman and a dispatcher for a moving company. That was all in New York. I moved to Chester County in 2012 to make the change back to health care and enrolled at WCU. I presently work for AmeriHealth Caritas as a project coordinator in the IS department. That job started as an internship this summer.

What attracted you to WCU's MPH program? I was attracted to WCU, primarily by its proximity, affordability and the reputation of the MPH program.

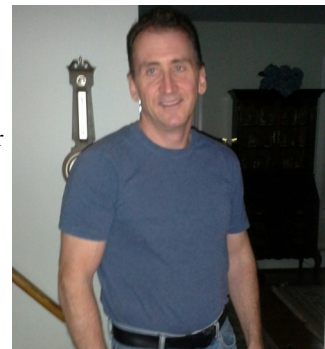
What prompted your choice of Health Care Management track in the MPH program? I was attracted to the HCM track because of a paper route I had when I was a kid. I sold newspapers at Delaware County Memorial Hospital in the morning and the afternoon. I got to know every department and practically everybody - including the patients - in the hospital. I naturally enjoyed the sciences and this pointed me towards a career in medicine. When I worked as a lab technician, I worked a lot of nights and weekends. There would be some downtime and I would get to know all of the departments in the hospital and I got to see how they all interacted as a team with the goal of quality patient care. I now understand that this doesn't "just happen." It takes an understanding of the patient and the hospital as a whole to provide the leadership that creates the environment for quality care to be the expected norm. HCM allows me to put my experience to work in achieving a more rewarding goal for myself and the community in which I will serve.

When did you start your MPH program? I started the program in spring 2014.

What are your career aspirations? I would love to work at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York as an administrator or in some other capacity - something that allows me to stay in touch with the community. That was my local hospital when I lived there.

What are your hobbies? I like to paint. I have an extensive collection of large real life and abstract paintings. I also like to exercise, cook, eat, watch sports - typical guy stuff. I also want to act in some local theater.

If you were to pick an animal that best describes you, what would it be and why? I don't think I can adequately answer the last question. It's a toss up between a tiger, a bear, a dog or a peacock. And don't ask why because I don't know.



What is your name? **Dana Vannicola**

What is your academic background? Bachelor of Science in Public Health from Temple University and MPH Community Health Track at WCU.

What are your work experiences? After finishing my bachelor's degree at Temple, I was a program coordinator for an afterschool program in Oxford, PA, serving Latino students in grades 7-12 in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The ESL program aimed to provide an enriching, afterschool environment for Latino students to receive help with homework, practice their English, and participate in activities geared towards academic, physical, and emotional health. The program was funded by a 3-year federal grant (The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant) and coordinated through the Chester County Intermediate Unit. One program was located at Penns Grove Middle School in Oxford, PA and another at the West Grove Garage in West Grove, PA. I learned so much about managing a program, leadership, developing activities, and working with small communities. I currently work as the Program Coordinator for the Chester County Intermediate Unit Mentoring Program. My program is located on WCU's campus, and pairs special needs students, ages 18-21, with a WCU mentor. The students come to campus to practice life and social skills through various activities, with the aid of their mentor. Most mentors are studying to become Special Education Teachers, and the students are learning life skills to help them become independent adults. This year, I also have the pleasure of being a graduate assistant to Dr. Debra Bill in the MPH program.

What attracted you to WCU's MPH program? WCU's MPH program is the closest to my home and work, and the most affordable program in the area. This allows me to take classes, full time, work, and have a short commute.

What prompted your choice of Community Health track in the MPH program? I mainly chose the Community Health track because my work experience has been in community health, particularly with the Latino and African American populations, and I enjoy the intimate relationships professionals have to develop in order to truly connect with a community. This track also has a global health focus, which is a professional interest of mine.

When did you start your MPH program? Fall 2013

What are your career aspirations? I do not have a specific job title or organization I am aiming to work towards, like many students in the program do. I love working in minority health, and developing and directing programs that incorporate culture as an asset to reaching a community.

What are your hobbies? Between taking classes full time, being a graduate assistant in the Department, and working, hobbies have taken a bit of a back seat this year! I come from a very large family, so I like spending time with my nieces and nephews, and whipping up magic in the kitchen. I always have NPR on in my car, and love watching all of (the many) TV shows about Alaska.



Interview with WCU MPH Alumni

What is your Name? Chibu Anyanwu

What is your Academic Background?

I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Product Development and Master of Public Health (Community Health Track) from West Chester University.

What year did you start in the MPH program and when did you graduate?

I started the MPH program in August 2010 and completed the program in August 2012. I also received the Health Education Credentialing (Certified Health Education Specialist) through the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing Inc. in 2012.

What are your past work experiences and where do you presently work?

My past work experiences include graduate assistantships in the Office of Graduate Studies and Department of Residence Life, Graduate Student Intern (non-paid) and Consultant (paid) positions at the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE), and Program Analyst (Federal Contractor) at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. I currently work for the District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) as a Health Education Specialist.

What was your most challenging moment while you were enrolled in the MPH program at WCU?

My most challenging moment while I enrolled in the MPH was balancing school and work; however, this was also a rewarding experience because it challenged me to manage my time better.

How was your transitioning from being a graduate student to a master's level health professional?

It took eight months to obtain a full-time job opportunity related to the public health field after graduating with my MPH. I attended multiple networking events in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia, and volunteered while I waited to hear updates on job applications that I submitted. Doing so helped me to build my work experience and expanded my network as a new resident to DC. This practice was beneficial in obtaining positions within the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the government of DC.

Identify one skill/knowledge acquired during your MPH program at WCU that has so far been useful in your work?

One skill/knowledge acquired during my MPH program was professionalism. My Applied Learning Experience (ALE) at the Society for Public Health Education helped me to lay a strong foundation in my public health career and challenged me to become a well-rounded professional. I gained valuable skills as a graduate student intern including strategic planning, developing needs assessments, analyzing complex data, delivering technical assistance, presenting oral and written reports, and multitasking.

What are your hobbies?

My hobbies include biking, sewing, and traveling. :)

Reflect on your time in the MPH program. Now that you have successfully completed it what would you do differently?

I do not regret how I spent my time during the MPH program. However, I do think expanding my public health experience prior to obtaining my MPH would have helped to expedite the job searching process. I recommend getting as much public health related experience as you can in addition to your applied learning experience and start conducting informational interviews with employers that you considering working for. Also, I recommend networking with your current MPH classmates; you never know when your paths may cross again in your professional career.



Faculty/Student Scholarly Accomplishments

Scholarly Activities/Publications

- Gilboy, M. B.**, Heinerichs, S., & **Pazzaglia, G.** (2014). Enhancing Student Engagement Using the Flipped Classroom. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*. doi: 10.1016/j.jneb.2014.08.008.
- Brenner, J., Metz, S. M.,** & Entriken, J. (2014). Alcohol-Related Unintentional Injury Among Collegiate Athletes. *Athletic Training and Sports Health Care*, 6(5), 228-236. doi: 10.3928/19425864-20140916-04
- Broderick, P. C., & **Metz, S. M.** Working on the inside: Mindfulness for adolescents. In K. Schonert-Reichl & R. W. Roeser (Eds.), *Handbook of Mindfulness Education*. New York, NY: Springer. In press.
- Cai, W. W., & **Sankaran, G.** (2015). Promoting Critical Thinking through an Interdisciplinary Study Abroad Program. *Journal of International Students*, 5(1): 38-49. (Forthcoming)
- McCown, D.** & Micozzi, M. (2014). Mind-Body Thought and Practice from Britain to Early and Late America. In M. Micozzi (Ed.), *Fundamentals of complementary/ alternative and integrative medicine*, fifth edition. New York: Saunders Elsevier.
- McCown, D.** (2014). "East meets West in the pedagogy of the mindfulness-based interventions." In Ie, A., C. Ngnoumen, and E. Langer (Eds.). *Wiley-Blackwell handbook of mindfulness*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- McCown, D.**, Reibel, D., & Micozzi, M. (Eds.) (Scheduled for Fall 2015). *Resources for Teaching Mindfulness: A Cross-Cultural & International Handbook*. New York: Springer.
- McCown, D.**, Reibel, D., & Micozzi, M. (Scheduled for Fall 2015). *Teaching mindfulness: A practical guide for clinicians and educators*, Second Edition. New York: Springer.
- Metz, S. M.** Evaluation consultant for four-year (2014-18) Brandywine Health Foundation project entitled, Youth Mental Health First Aid Training in Coatesville, PA.
- Sheehan, M.** (2014). Has been conducting research with colleagues at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's (NIOSH) Office of Mine Safety and Health Research. Their paper "An Evaluation of Sharp Cut Cyclones for Sampling Diesel Particulate Matter Aerosol in the Presence of Respirable Dust" was published online in July, 2014 in the peer reviewed journal *Annals of Occupational Hygiene* and will be in hard copy in an upcoming issue.

Conference Presentations

- Roussel, E.** (MPH student), & **McCown, D.** (2014). Becoming patient with impatience: Qualitative analysis of students' mindfulness experiences. Sixth annual Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education Conference, "Intention, Method, and Evaluation." Seattle, WA, October 10-12. This presentation was based on data from three semesters of Dr. McCown's course, HEA 315: Mind, Body, and Health.
- McCown, D.** (2014). "Mindfulness: Fulfilling the promise at last, with a relational view." *Beyond the Therapeutic State: Collaborative Practices for Individual and Social Change*, Drammen, Norway; June 26-28.
- McCown, D.** (2014). "The Contemplative Connection: Linking art, science, and higher law in a moment's (or a morning's) practice." *73rd Thoreau Society Annual Gathering*, Concord, MA; July 10-13.
- McCown, D.**, & **Roussel, E.** (MPH student). (2014). Negotiating a Contemplative Studies Minor: Curriculum Intentions and Evaluation Methods. Sixth annual Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education Conference, "Intention, Method, and Evaluation." Seattle, WA, October 10-12.
- Marks, D., Gardner, F., Tirch, D., Hickman, S., Molnar, C., & **McCown, D.** (2014). Clinical round table: The Perils of Popularity: Challenges and Best Practices in the Delivery of Mindfulness Based Interventions. 48th Annual Convention of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Philadelphia, PA, November 20-23.
- McCown, D.** & Moriconi, C. (2014). Invited presentation "The value (and values) of mindfulness for health care professionals." *Crossing the Borders of Health Disciplines: Promoting Recovery and Resiliency*, West Chester University, West Chester, PA, October 1.

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Faculty Scholarly Accomplishments

McCown, D. (2014). Invited presentation “Mindfulness in Higher Education.” Keynote for Mindfulness Morning, Center for Excellence, Delaware County Community College, Center for Excellence, October 20.

Sankaran, G. (2014). *Girl child and human rights: What we don't do matters.* Presentation at the 142nd Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans, Louisiana on Monday, November 17.

Sankaran, G. (2014). *Systems approach and implications for global health.* Presentation at the 142nd Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans, Louisiana on Monday, November 17.

Sankaran, G. (2014). *First 1000 days and future healthy life: The connection, consequences, and call for action.* Presentation at the 142nd Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans, Louisiana on Tuesday, November 18.

Sankaran, G. (2015). *Intersectoral action imperative to reduce the global impact of NCDs.* Abstract accepted for presentation at the 14th World Congress on Public Health, organized by the World Federation of Public Health Associations in Kolkata, India in February.

Sankaran, G. (2015). *The first 1000 days and NCDs: Act now for a healthy ROI in Post-2015.* Abstract accepted for presentation at the 14th World Congress on Public Health, organized by the World Federation of Public Health Associations in Kolkata, India in February.

Sunger, N., Arnold, S. M., Price, P., & Landenberger, B. (2014). “High-throughput Exposure Assessment Tool (HEAT) for exposure based prioritization of chemicals.” Poster presentation, International Society of Exposure Science (ISES), Cincinnati, Ohio in October.

Donald McCown, Co-Director of Center for Contemplative Studies, organized/presented three seminars in the “First Tuesday” series:

McCown, D., & C. Moriconi. (2014). “Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: Getting Down to the Details” on September 2.

Weiner, K. (2014). “Mindfulness and Self Compassion” on October 7. Dr. Kim Weiner is from Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Goldfarb, M. (2014). “Do Less, Achieve More: An Introduction to Tai Chi” on November 4. Dr. Mitchell Goldfarb is a faculty member in the Department of Kinesiology at West Chester University.

Service:

James, T. (2014). Recognized for her 20 years of continuous service to West Chester University on Tuesday, November 4.

Metz, S. M. (2014). Appointed Vice-Chair of the West Chester University Institutional Review Board in May.

Metz, S. M. (2014). Chaired the Planning Committee for 2014 PA SOPHE Conference held at West Chester University on October 3.

Sankaran, G. (2014). Elected to another two year term as a Governing Councilor, representing the International Health Section of the American Public Health Association. Term begins in November 2014 and ends in November 2016.

Sankaran, G. (2014). Moderated the scientific session, *Strengthening health systems in developing settings.* 142nd Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans, Louisiana on Wednesday, November 19.

Sankaran, G. (2014). Organized, coordinated and conducted the International Health Section Awards Ceremony and Reception at the 142nd Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans, Louisiana on Tuesday, November 18.

Sankaran, G. (2014). Moderated the scientific session, *Individuals, systems, and environment: Implications for Global Health.* 142nd Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans, Louisiana on Monday, November 17.

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Faculty Scholarly Accomplishments

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- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Staffed the Welcome Booth for Overseas Attendees at the 142nd Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans, Louisiana on Monday, November 17. The Welcome Booth was conceived and realized six years ago when Dr. Sankaran served as the founding chairperson of the Global Health Connections Working Group of the International Health Section of the American Public Health Association. For five years, he was responsible for organizing the Welcome Booth at every Annual Meeting of APHA.
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Staffed the International Health Section Booth at the 142nd Annual Meeting Expo of the American Public Health Association in New Orleans, Louisiana on Wednesday, November 19.
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Invited Advisor to the Board, Wholistic Health Advocacy Institute (A Community Development Corporation), West Chester, Pennsylvania.
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Invited Member, Executive Board, Asian Studies Minor program at West Chester University, Pennsylvania. This Minor is in development.
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Chairperson, Search Committee for tenure-track faculty in Health Care Management at West Chester University, Pennsylvania.
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Selected as Item-writer, Certified in Public Health (CPH) examination, National Board of Public Health Examiners, Washington, District of Columbia. Areas of expertise: Epidemiology (a Core Area), Leadership (a Cross-Cutting Area), and Programs Planning (a Cross-Cutting Area).
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Invited Reviewer of Abstracts; reviewed 31 abstracts submitted to the 14th World Congress on Public Health, organized by the World Federation of Public Health Associations in Kolkata, India in February.
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Invited workshop, *Assessing Individual and Community Needs and Assets for Health Education (Responsibility I)*, at the Certified Health Education Specialist Test Preparation program at Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Saturday, October 4. (3 hours)
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Invited workshop, *Conducting Evaluation and Research Related to Health Education (Responsibility IV)*, at the Certified Health Education Specialist Test Preparation program at Saint Joseph's University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on Saturday, October 4. (3 hours)
- Sheehan, M.** (2014). Awarded the Aerosol Technology Committee's Volunteer Group Service Award for her service on this national AIHA technical committee at the American Industrial Hygiene Conference in June.

Professional Development Activities

- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Participated in the Pennsylvania Society for Public Health Annual Conference at West Chester University, Pennsylvania on Friday, October 3. Earned 6.5 Category I CECH for recertification as a Certified Health Education Specialist.
- Sankaran, G.** (2014). Participated in Crossing The Boundaries of Health Disciplines, a College of Health Sciences Symposium, at West Chester University, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, October 1. Earned 6.0 Category I CECH for recertification as a Certified Health Education Specialist.

Grant:

- Gilboy, M. B.** (2014). College of Health Sciences Dean's Award for New Initiatives, Promoting Experiential Learning to Enhance Faculty Scholarship in Support of Community Outreach Spring 2014. Awarded \$10,000 for the proposal "An Inter-professional Collaboration between CHS and Coatesville Area Senior Center Educators to Implement a Fall Prevention Program with Community Dwelling Older Adults."

New Course Offering in Winter 2014/15

HEA 581: Exploring the Health Humanities through Art and Contemplation

Faculty: Donald McCown, PhD (610-436-2267; DMcCown@wcupa.edu)

December 15 through January 14 (class meetings 10am to 5pm on December 15, January 5 and 14; travel and activities in Houston, TX, Jan 8 - 11)

This course for students and professionals explores the discipline of Health Humanities through poetry, visual art, and mindfulness practice. Students will discover how the contemplative engagement of clinical professionals with artistic expressions of the human experience can promote capacities for attention, reflection, creativity, empathy, and compassion. Central to the course is a four-day trip to Houston Texas, for visits to the Menil Collection art museum, which offers ancient and contemporary art presented in spaces ideal for reflection and contemplation, including the Rothko Chapel, the Cy Twombly Gallery, and a campus sculpture garden described as “an urban oasis.” Also planned are a sunset visit to the James Turrell Skyspace at Rice University, and guest lectures and a hands-on art workshop by faculty and staff of the Institute for the Medical Humanities at the University of Texas Medical Branch, and talks by faculty from the Institute for Spirituality and Health at the Texas Medical Center. The trip is bookended by daylong seminars at WCU. Major projects for evaluation include a museum journal and a seminar presentation through which students integrate the experiential, intellectual, and professional levels of learning in the course.

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In Memoriam...

The MPH program faculty and students are saddened to learn that **Jane Cleary**, a MPH student in the Health Care Management Track, passed away on November 7, 2014.

Jane was exceptionally talented, caring, and dedicated to learning and improving the health and wellness of others. It was an absolute joy and honor to have her as a student in the MPH program. The faculty, staff, and students share their deep condolences with Jane's family.

Our Thanks to...

The MPH program faculty and students thank **Ms. Jessica McMahan**, Secretary, Department of Health and Nutrition, and **Ms. Stephanie Kienle**, Secretary, Master of Public Health program for their help and support.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

&

VERY BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR!