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WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY *M.P.H. CONNECTIONS*

SPRING 2013 ISSUE

Accelerated or Traditional Options now available to complete the Applied Learning Experience

Master of Public Health (MPH) students now have two options to complete the Applied Learning Experience (ALE) in the accelerated or traditional format. The accelerated format is completed within one semester and the traditional format is completed in two consecutive semesters.

Students selecting the accelerated format need time to complete this format in one semester. Students will need to be at the site for approximately 14 hours a week for ALE I (100 hours – 7 weeks) and approximately 28.5 hours a week for ALE II (200 hours – 7 weeks). This option is best for Graduate Assistants, MPH Fast Track Students and students who are not employed full time as time is needed during the day to complete the required hours in this condensed format. Most importantly, students selecting this option will need to be placed at their site the semester prior to the start of ALE I. Students selecting this format will participate in the ALE preparation classes held during the first half of the semester but due to the condensed format students will start their site hours within the second week of the semester.

Students selecting the traditional format will complete the ALE I in two consecutive semesters. Students will start their hours at the site during the second half of the ALE I semester (approximately 14 hours per week). During ALE II students are expected to be at their site for the entire semester (approximately 14 hours per week). Students need to be aware that ALE I and II are completed in consecutive semesters and will not receive approval take a semester break between ALE I and II. Site supervisors expect Major Projects and Professional Practice Hours to be completed within two consecutive semesters. Site selection and approval takes place during the ALE I preparation classes in the first half of the semesters.

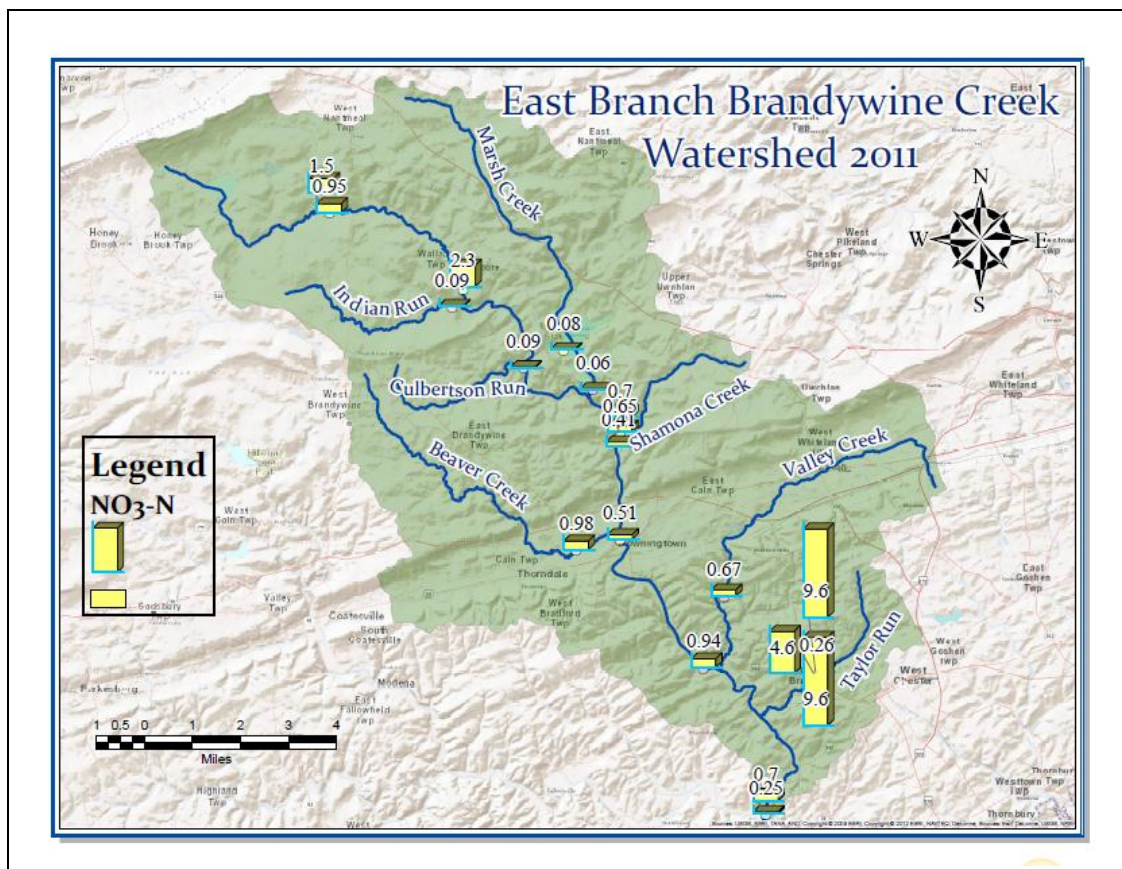
Students need to be aware that all site placements need to be approved by their ALE Faculty Advisor. ALE Sites and Site Supervisors need to meet the MPH Practicum requirements. There are a number of approved sites that are available and these sites will be posted on the MPH website for students to review. These site postings will include the name and address of the site along with the web address. Titles of student projects will be posted with these sites. Students in search of an ALE site should begin reviewing these sites and access the site's webpage to gather more information about the site. Student contact with the site begins after an ALE Placement Advising Meeting with the ALE Faculty Advisor. Also, the ALE Faculty Advisor will work with site approvals on new sites that are a good fit for the students' interests.

For more information about the ALE, please contact **Dr. Lynn Carson** (email: lcarson@wcupa.edu).

M.P.H. Current Students and Alumni(ae) Highlights

Chad Hudson (B.S. Public Health/Environmental Health; current student in MA Geography)

Chad presented a paper, *Ten Years of Classroom Examinations of Water Quality in the East Branch Brandywine Creek, Pennsylvania: 2002-2012*, with **Dr. Charles Shorten** at the 2013 Delaware Estuary Science & Environmental Summit, Cape May, NJ on January 29. For this research, Chad developed a series GIS maps to show the variation in NO₃-N and PO₄-P over the time period; one of those maps is provided below for illustration purposes. Future work will bring other measured parameters such as total coliform concentration and selected metals concentrations onto these maps to help understand temporal and spatial variability of these important water quality indicators.



Christina Randolph (B.S. Biology; current student in Community Health track)

Christina was a recipient of the 2013 Student Research and Creative Activities Award CA Award at West Chester University for her project entitled, *Interaction of Specific Polymorphic Genes with Behavioral Factors Resulting in Differential Population Distributions of Diabetes Type II*. The award, consisting of a check in the amount of \$500 and a certificate, was presented to Christina at Research Day on Tuesday, April 16, 2013. **Dr. Robin Leonard** served as Christina's mentor for this research project.

MPH Nutrition Students Receive Public Health Traineeship Awards

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded the MPH Program Nutrition Track with scholarship opportunities for students studying in nutrition. HRSA has designated public health nutrition as a shortage area. Scholarships were awarded to three MPH graduate students in nutrition who are working in a public health underserved area for their Applied Learning Experiences I and II. The scholarship recipients are **Sara Boyer, Laura Gudikunst** and **Colleen Rauchut**.

Sara will be doing a nutrition education project in an underserved urban area. Laura is studying the implementation of nutrition education kiosks in the WIC population and Colleen is initiating a study on maternal dieting on their offspring in an underserved urban area. They will present their results at the MPH Poster Session in August. **Dr. Mary Beth Gilboy** is the project director of the WCU public health traineeship awards.



Photo left to right: Sara Boyer,
Colleen Rauchut, Laura Gudikunst

MPH Student participates in the 16th Annual Health Advocacy Summit

The 16th Annual Health Advocacy Summit was held in Washington, DC from March 2-4, 2013. The Summit was an enlightening opportunity to meet with other health educators and health advocates. Discussions centered around health equity, establishing cultural confidence, policies impacting school health, chronic disease prevention, and the utilization of social networks for disease prevention and health promotion efforts. By attending the transformative workshops and meeting with representatives of Pennsylvania elected officials, I now have a better understanding of public health issues and a passion for health advocacy. This was an engaging and empowering experience that has helped to propel the beginning of my public health career.

...**Aerielle Waters**, MPH Student

MPH Alumna to complete Research Fellowship on the Integration of Trauma-Informed Care Frameworks in Health Care

This coming June, Emily Wilson, MPH-Community Health track alumna (2010 graduate), is set to complete a research fellowship project on the applications of trauma-informed care frameworks within health care, human service, and education. Emily was selected by and began working with the Institute for Safe Families (ISF) in late 2011 to submit a joint proposal to the Stoneleigh Foundation for research on the integration of trauma-informed care practices in pediatric and other child and family-serving settings. She was awarded an Emerging Leader Fellowship in early 2012, after the joint proposal was chosen by Stoneleigh for implementation through a competitive process. The Stoneleigh Foundation and ISF are Philadelphia-based nonprofit organizations that seek to improve outcomes among children and youth, and reduce the risk of family violence, respectively. For her fellowship project, Emily has been leading an investigation on how the last two decades of trauma and neuroscience research has translated into community-based efforts to address the needs of childhood trauma survivors and has influenced policy and practice on the regional, state, and national levels.

Emily's work focuses extensively on the applications of the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study findings, which demonstrate a direct link between early childhood trauma and poorer long-term health and social outcomes among adults. The ACE Study, first published in 1998, found increased risks for chronic illness such as obesity, and mental health issues including depression among a majority of adults who had experienced emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and/or other types of childhood trauma. While completing her fellowship, Emily has examined innovative cross-systems approaches to reducing ACEs and conducted over 70 interviews with key thought leaders in the field. She also traveled throughout the Northeast and Washington, D.C. to meet with stakeholders, coalitions, and organizations currently engaged in preventing and addressing ACEs. Emily has developed a keen interest in continuing to promote the public health implications of the ACE Study and its potential as a framework for health professionals to prevent the intergenerational transmission of trauma, interrupt familial cycles of abuse, and improve population health. For more information about the project, please contact Emily at ms.emwilson@gmail.com.

Reminder

Students and alumni(ae) are strongly encouraged to submit news, views, and experiences for publication in the *M.P.H. Connections*. Please contact the Department of Health (health@wcupa.edu).

MPH Students participate in Community Service

Dr. Stacie Metz and Latoya Ellis (current MPH student) serve on the Advisory Board of the African-American Youth Empowerment Partnership Workshop.



Photo: Current MPH students who participated in the Chester County African American Youth Empowerment Workshop on April 6, 2013

A number of MPH students participated in the Youth Empowerment Partnership Workshop held in Coatesville, PA on April 6, 2013. The Chester County Youth Obesity Prevention Advisory Board and the African American Collaborative Obesity Research Network at the University of Pennsylvania (<http://www.aacorn.org/>) sponsored this workshop with the goal to encourage adolescents to be active and eat healthy. Dr. Stacie Metz and I actively serve on the advisory board and were able to recruit a number of MPH students for the event. The workshop trained me, other participating MPH students, and high school students to facilitate the USDA's Empowering Youth with Nutrition and Physical Activity Program, with particular emphasis on African-American youth as obesity disproportionately impacts this subgroup. In all, the workshop provided an opportunity to have graduate students collaborate with high school students in order to learn about and expand community action efforts to improve food and physical activity options for youth living in Chester County.

...**Latoya Ellis**, MPH Student

New International Health Education Service Learning course taught in Little Bay Jamaica

During Spring Break 2013, Dr. Debra Bill, MPH Community Health Track Coordinator and Professor, taught a week-long cultural immersion course, entitled *International Health Education Service Learning in Little Bay Jamaica*, along with the assistance of Dr. Bethann Cinelli, Professor and Chair of the Health Department and Director of Center for Healthy Schools at West Chester University, in Little Bay Jamaica. Eight Master's in Public Health (MPH), community health track students participated in the service learning course from Sunday, March 17 to Saturday, March 23, 2013.

Located in the parish of Westmoreland, Little Bay Jamaica is a quaint, small, fishing, farming and hands craft community in the southwestern coastal region of Jamaica. The community of Little Bay is a close knit group of multiple extended families who rely on kinship and strong, family ties for support, guidance and economic survival.



Photo: MPH Faculty and Students at Little Bay All Ages School



Photo: Mrs. Clayton, Principal of Little Bay All Ages with Dr. Bill, course instructor

The travel immersion course/program focuses on international health education service learning, cross-cultural communication in health, and global citizenship. The international travel course was designed for public health education students who were interested in improving their understanding of service learning, and the history, culture, education and health system of Jamaica. This course combines academic readings and discussions (pre & post trip) with an immersion experience in Jamaica (6 days), along with a service learning project in Jamaica. For spring 2013, the service learning project focused on health literacy and the planning and implementation of health education activities in a school setting in Little Bay Jamaica. (continued on page 7)

New International Health Education Service Learning course taught in Little Bay Jamaica (continued)

In Jamaica, students had the opportunity: to visit and dialogue with officials from local schools, talk with students, families, and community gate keepers involved in education, health, and community development, to observe firsthand the lifestyle and culture of Jamaican families; to participate in service-learning activities at a local school, and to visit cultural and field sites. Students were required to complete a service learning project at Little Bay All Ages School (based upon the local needs of the students and school), under the guidance of the course faculty. The school-based project focused on increasing student health and learning through implementation of health literacy lesson plans (K-6) in the following five areas: nutrition, physical activity, safety, self-esteem, and personal/family health. The student-based learning opportunities were delivered through language arts (reading, writing, and speaking). Children's literature books combined with writing and speaking strategies helped meet needs to enhance health and language arts literacy.



Photo: MPH students, Sara Shaffer (on left) and Nikole Tome (on right), with students of Little Bay All Ages teaching “Bearobics” lesson on physical activity

For the MPH Students, the majority of the week was devoted to teaching the prepared health literacy lesson plans (K-6) to each classroom in the school. The school day, which consisted of devotion, a morning lesson, a small snack break, a second morning lesson, lunch, and two afternoon lessons, was packed with learning and action. Each lesson was designed to teach a specific health topic in a way that was engaging and exciting for the students with many hands-on activities. All leftover supplies and materials for the lesson plans, including a lesson plan guide book, were donated to the Little Bay All Ages School at the end of the week. Finally, for the MPH students the end of the week consisted of immersion into the Jamaican culture including an in-depth ethnographic interview with a member of the Little Bay community, and field visits to cultural sites. (continued on page 8)

New International Health Education Service Learning course taught in Little Bay Jamaica (continued)



Photo: MPH students conduct Ethnographic Interviews with community residents of Little Bay Jamaica

As final projects, students write reflective journals on their experiences, combining class insights with field observations and students make presentations to offer their insights from the immersion course during the trip. Student reflections on the course were positive. Students reported that they learned a great deal about themselves, the community of Little Bay Jamaica and that the entire experience was “transformative and life changing.” Leaving Little Bay Jamaica was difficult, but the memories made and experiences shared will stay with each and every one of the students and teachers for a lifetime. For as much as the students of Little Bay All Ages learned from the MPH students’ health literacy lessons, the MPH students learned even more about themselves as public health professionals and the importance of cultural competence. In the words of Dr. Seuss, “Don’t cry because it’s over. Smile because it happened”. Leaving Little Bay Jamaica did not mark the end of a service learning course; it marked the beginning of a lasting friendship.

...**Dr. Dee Bill**, Course Faculty,
International Health Education Service Learning course

MPH Students inducted to Delta Omega Honorary Society

The Beta Xi Chapter of the Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health at West Chester University is pleased to announce this year's MPH student inductees. Each year, Delta Omega elects new student members based on high academic standards and outstanding performance in scholarship, research, and community service. Election of membership in Delta Omega is intended to not only recognize merit, but also to encourage and further excellence in and devotion to public health work.

Founded in 1924, Delta Omega is a national honor society existing to encourage research and scholarship among graduate students of public health and to recognize attainment and achievement in the field of public health. With over 50 active chapters across the country, Delta Omega and its members are dedicated to ensuring the quality of the field of public health and to the protection and advancement of the health of all people.

This year's Delta Omega MPH student inductees are:

Sara Boyer, Nutrition
Cequoia Davis, Community Health
Latoya Ellis, Community Health
Nicole Esposito, Community Health
Katarina Fischer, Community Health
Nicole Ivaska, Community Health
Rachel Koury, Integrative Health
Chelsey Price, Community Health
Sara Shaffer, Community Health
Aerielle Waters, Community Health
Kristen Woodruff, Community Health
Mandeep Mangat, Health Care Administration Alumna
Tracy Pierre-Louis, Community Health Alumna

They were inducted on May 10. Congratulations to all our MPH student and alumni inductees!

For more information about Delta Omega, please visit the National Chapter's website at www.deltaomega.org.

Both Aerielle Waters (see story on page 3) and Latoya Ellis are active members of the MPH Student Advisory Board and were inducted into Delta Omega Public Health Honorary Society at our Spring 2013 MPH Poster Session for their outstanding leadership potential in the field of public health. Latoya Ellis was also thanked for her leadership in facilitating activities at the Youth Empowerment Partnership Workshop (see story on page 5).

...**Dr. Stacie Metz**, Faculty Advisor,
Beta Xi chapter of Delta Omega Honorary Society

News from the Center for Contemplative Studies

Dr. Donald McCown, through the West Chester University (WCU) Center for Contemplative Studies (CCS), scheduled and facilitated the Second Friday Seminars for the 2012-2013 academic year. Dr. McCown gave an extended 3-hour presentation titled *An Ethical Space*, which provided 3 continuing education credits for psychologists, and social workers. In addition, once each semester, Dr. McCown has run a full-day mindfulness retreat on campus, for WCU students and community members.

Also through the CCS, Dr. McCown organized, facilitated, and presented in a *Forum on Happiness* to mark the United Nation's International Day of Happiness, March 27, and which was proclaimed by both the Honorable Carolyn Comitta, Mayor of West Chester and Dr. Greg Weisenstein, President, West Chester University, who were in attendance.

Under the aegis of the CCS, in spring 2013, Dr. McCown undertook two small, mixed methods studies of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), using the 8-week curriculum: one, assisted by Tigist Yirko (MPH student) and Philip Dlugolecki (MEd student) for community leaders in West Chester, and another for the participants of the Aspire program, a collaboration between WCU and the Chester County Intermediate Unit. The Aspire program is designed for college-bound students, ages 17-20, in Chester County and neighboring areas, who have a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder and/or a related mental health disorder such as anxiety, depression, or bipolar.

With WCU colleagues **Dr. Christine Williams** (Department of Health) and Dr. Chris Moriconi (Department of Nursing), Dr. McCown is studying MBSR for fathers of young children on the autism spectrum, running two 8-week groups.

Faculty Awards/Honors

Dr. Donald McCown and Dr. Stacie Metz were honored with the *2013 Faculty Academic Advisor Appreciation Award*, presented by the Student Government Association and University Academic Advising Committee, West Chester University on Wednesday, April 3. Congratulations to both!

Faculty Scholarship

- Brenner, J. W., Metz, S. M.,** Entriken, J., & Brenner, C. J. (2013). Athletic Trainers' Experience and Attitudes Regarding Alcohol-Related Unintentional Injury in Athletes. *Journal of Athletic Training*. In press.
- Brenner, J. W., Metz, S. M., & Santosh, K. C.*** (2013). *Athletic Trainers' Experience and Attitudes Regarding Alcohol-Related Unintentional Injury in Athletes*. Poster presentation at the Research Day at West Chester University on April 16. (*current MPH student)
- Brenner, J. W., Metz, S. M., & Santosh, K. C.*** (2013). *Alcohol-related Unintentional Injuries in Collegiate Student-athletes*. Poster presentation at the Research Day at West Chester University on April 16. (*current MPH student)
- Broderick, P. C., Reibel, D., Cantrell, T., & **Metz, S. M.** (2012). *Wellness in high school: Introducing mindfulness training to teachers, administrators, and students*. Presentation Dialogue presented at the 10th Annual International Scientific Conference for Clinicians, Researchers and Educators: Investigating and Integrating Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society, Boston, MA on March 30.
- Leonard, R.** (2013). Invited Member of the Prevalence and Incidence of Inflammatory Bowel Disease Special Emphasis Panel, Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA.
- Leonard, R.** (2013). Mentored research project, *Interaction of Specific Polymorphic Genes with Behavioral Factors Resulting in Differential Population Distributions of Diabetes Type II*, undertaken by **Christina Randolph** (MPH Community Health track). The research paper was selected for **2013 Student Research and Creative Activities Award at West Chester University**. Christina was given the Award on April 16 and Dr. Leonard was recognized for her role as Christina's mentor.
- McCown, D.** (2013). *The Ethical Space of Mindfulness in Clinical Practice*. London: Jessica Kingsley. This is Dr. McCown's third book.
- McCown, D.** (2013). Successfully defended his dissertation and was conferred the doctorate degree on May 14, at Tilburg University in the Netherlands. Dissertation title: *The Ethical Space of Mindfulness in Clinical Practice*, researched and written under the supervision of Dr. Kenneth J. Gergen, Swarthmore College; and Dr. John B. Rijsman, Tilburg University.
- McCown, D.** (2013). Presented a paper, *13 Ways of Looking at an MBI Group: The Different Dynamics of Mindfulness Groups*, at the 11th Annual International Scientific Conference, Investigating and Integrating Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society, sponsored by the Center for Mindfulness at University of Massachusetts Medical School, April 17-21.

Faculty Scholarship (continued)

- McCown, D.** (2012). Presented a paper, *Something Ethical Happens: The relational space of the mindfulness-Based Interventions as a crucible for second-order morality*, at the Taos Institute's conference, Relational Practices in Peacebuilding, Mediation, and Conflict Transformation: From the Intimate to the International, November 14-17, San Diego, CA.
- Metz, S. M., Frank, J. ., Reibel, D., Cantrell, T., Sanders, R., & Broderick, P. C.** (2013). The effectiveness of the Learning to Breathe program on adolescent emotion regulation: Results from a pilot study. *Research in Human Development*. Accepted for publication.
- Monahan, L., Metz, S. M., Tran, K., Taylor, D., Lenhard, M. J., & Peters, M. B. Jr.** (2012). *Body mass index as a predictor of percent excess weight loss one year post Laparoscopic Adjustable Gastric Band (LAGB)*. Poster presented at the Annual 29th American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Meeting, San Diego, CA on June 21.
- Nolt, K., & Brenner, J. W.** (2013). *Student Athlete Alcohol Use: Why Change is Needed and How to Make it Happen*. Fifteenth Annual Northeast Atlantic Sports Psychology Conference at Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, on April 5.
- Sankaran, G.** (2013). Invited Associate Editor and Reviewer, *Health Behavior and Policy Review*, a new peer-reviewed scholarly online journal, published by Paris Scholar Publishing Ltd.
- Sankaran, G.** (2013). Redesigning HEA 110: Transcultural Health – Principles and Practices by utilizing Flipped Classroom teaching strategies. Blended Learning Initiative Grant from West Chester University.
- Vosburgh, D., Klein, T., **Sheehan, M.** Anthoney, T. R., & Petrs, T. (2013). Design and Evaluation of a Personal Diffusion Battery. *Aerosol Science and Technology*, 47:4,435-443.
- Shorten, V., & Hudson, C.**** (2013). *Ten Years of Classroom Examinations of Water Quality in the East Branch Brandywine Creek, Pennsylvania: 2002-2012* at the 2013 Delaware Estuary Science & Environmental Summit, Cape May, NJ on January 29. (** current graduate student in the MA Geography program)
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