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TUFTS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROFESSIONAL DEGREE PROGRAMS

Public Health Rounds



Pain as a Public Health Issue

Erica Ballard, MS—Health Communication Candidate

This past summer, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) released the report, “Relieving Pain in America: A Blueprint for Transforming Prevention, Care, Education, and Research,” which identified the shortfalls of pain assessment and treatment in America while recommending the changes in the ways the nation discusses and manages pain.

“All too often, prevention and treatment of pain are delayed, inaccessible or inadequate,” said Phillip Pizzo, MD, Chair of the IOM Committee on Advancing Pain Research, Care, and Education and Dean of the Stanford University School of Medicine, “Patients, health care providers and our society need to overcome misperceptions and biases about pain. We have effective tools and services to tackle the many factors that influence pain and we need to apply them expeditiously through an integrated approach tailored to each patient.”

This report was written as a result of a provision in the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that required the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to enlist the Institute of Medicine in examining pain as a public health problem.

According to the report, chronic pain affects at least 116 million adults living in the U.S. every year and is estimated to cost Americans between \$560 billion and \$635 billion annually. Regardless of the large sum spent to remedy pain, many patients receive uncertain diagnoses and, thus, experience inadequate treatment to manage their pain due to misunderstanding and misperceptions of pain.

To address this, the IOM report proposed four immediate recommendations for health care systems: 1) Create a comprehensive population-level strategy for pain prevention, treatment, management, and research; 2) Develop strategies for reducing barriers to pain care; 3) Support collaboration between pain specialists and primary care clinicians, including referral to pain centers when appropriate; and 4) Designate a lead institute at the National Institutes of Health responsible for moving pain research forward and increase the support for and scope of the Pain Consortium.

In addition to these recommendations, the report also proposed various ways in which the United States can better address the treatment of pain. One of its main suggestions was better education about pain and pain management for both the public and practicing physicians.

“They (IOM) place an enormous amount of emphasis on education,” said Dan Carr, M.D., Co-Founder and Director of the MS - Pain Research, Education and Policy Program (PREP) at Tufts University School of Medicine. “They devote an entire chapter to education. ...And it’s one of the reasons this [the IOM report] is so in sync with our view [of pain as a public health issue].”

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PHPD Programs Dean's Message



Aviva Must, Ph.D.

In the world of education, fall is the time of new beginnings—and it is especially so this fall. We started the new academic year at Tufts with a new president, Tufts' thirteenth, Dr. Anthony Monaco. The inauguration event and the many activities around it brought a mixture of excitement and anticipation, as the institution and this great leader get to know each other. The early indicators suggest that President Monaco will work to deepen the school's commitment to health and life sciences—and will further advance the University's emphasis on transdisciplinary work across the social and natural sciences.

A second noteworthy change in personnel this fall was the naming Harris A. Berman, first Dean of the Public Health and Professional Degree Programs, as Dean for Tufts University School of Medicine. We are thrilled that the Trustees trimmed the *ad interim* from his title, and are confident his deep roots and dedication to Public Health and our related programs will be reflected in his agenda-setting.

I am also happy to welcome three new faculty members to the Department of Public Health and Community Medicine. Margie Skeer, MSW, MPH, ScD joins as an Assistant Professor—most recently she was a postdoctoral fellow at Brown University (see Profile, page 6). Richard Murphy, PA, joins us as an Assistant Professor and incoming program director for the new master's program to train physician assistants. Our newest newbie, Misha Eliasziw, PhD, Associate Professor (pending), arrived from Canada in early November. She is an accomplished biostatistician who spent the last decade on the faculty at the University of Calgary—watch for an article profiling her in our Spring newsletter.

The strategic planning process we embarked on a year ago is now complete—and we are grateful to many of you who participated in interviews, focus groups, and surveys as we gathered information from our many stakeholder groups. Early in our process it became clear that the Public Health and Professional Degree Programs accurately reflected our academic and administrative responsibilities, but as it relates to external branding and promotion, we needed to restructure ourselves and separate the Public Health Programs (Public Health, Health Communications, and Pain Research, Education and Policy) from our professional degree program offerings (Biomedical Sciences, Business Administration in Health Management (MD/MBA). We identified the strategic priorities for the Public Health Programs that we deemed essential for focus over the next three to five years with respect to our core mission, purpose and identity; academic offerings and faculty development; the all-important student experience; and, of course, financial resources. The document detailing our “Framework for Action” will be available soon—both in hard copy and as a PDF on our website.

Several “tangibles” have already materialized from our strategic planning, some of which were underway concurrent with our planning process. Last month, we gained approval from the Trustees for our proposal to establish a DrPH program within the Public Health Program. The faculty committee that developed the proposal made a compelling case for this new program as a natural developmental step for our public health programs and consistent with the university emphases on interdisciplinarity, global health and active citizenship. The new degree necessitates some structural changes as Tony Schlaff becomes the Director of the Public Health Program; Paul Hattis, the Associate Director for the MPH Program; and Janet Forrester joins the leadership team as Associate Director for the DrPH Program. Approval was also garnered for a masters program to train Physician Assistants – we see this as a great opportunity to prepare mid-level health care professionals for a new era of health care delivery in the United States.

Lastly, after more than a decade in gestation, we will add a DMD/MPH dual degree program in dental medicine and public health as of January 2012. These new programs will help us be true to our new tagline:

Tufts Public Health
Working across disciplines and global boundaries

Early in 2012, we are planning a Tufts-wide event to bring together our many public health colleagues in other schools—a local resource that we've not fully tapped. I hope you will be able to join us.

Warm regards and good health,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Aviva Must".

Dean, Public Health and Professional Degree Programs

Working to Mitigate Disparities in Latino Populations

Sarah Gunn, MS – Health Communication Candidate

Arshiya Baig, MD/MPH '02, credits Tufts' innovative Combined MD/MPH Program as forming the tenets for her work as a physician, researcher and Assistant Professor of Medicine at the University of Chicago. Tufts provided Dr. Baig with the unique educational coupling of learning patient care and the care of communities.

"Tufts is a pioneer in teaching students the importance of community," lauds Dr. Baig. This understanding of the significance of community has continued to be a major player in Dr. Baig's work. Now at the University of Chicago, Dr. Baig continues to harness the innovative and pioneering spirit of Tufts while conducting research and implementing interventions to mitigate health disparities in Latino populations.

Before working at the University of Chicago's Pritzker School of Medicine, Dr. Baig capitalized on her public health background during her residency at the University of Michigan. She conducted a survey of domestic violence screening behaviors and says that she would not have been able to perform such high-level work without public health training. Research and community care remained key foci of Dr. Baig's work as a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at the University of California – Los Angeles (UCLA). At UCLA, Dr. Baig added community-based research to her rep-



Arshiya Baig, MD/MPH'02

ertoire, working with churches and parish nurses to address health related issues in the community. Dr. Baig then returned to domestic violence screening as a Fulbright Scholar, serving in Bogota, Colombia. The experience in Colombia augmented Dr. Baig's understanding of how healthcare professionals approach research and enhanced her cultural understanding of the Latino community.

In addition to individual patient care, Dr. Baig has a desire to foster change in communities, specifically Latino ones, and this is evident in her current work in Chicago. She conducts community-based research regarding diabetes in Latino populations, which she likens to a combination of community service and research. Dr. Baig heads the *Imaginate una Buena Salud* (Picture Good Health) program in a predominantly Mexican-American

neighborhood. From the research conducted in the community and focus groups, Dr. Baig and the Little Village Community Advisory Board decided to implement a diabetes program through neighborhood churches. Participants facilitate discussions in the program's group meetings by sharing photos of their life and experiences as diabetics. The Kovler Diabetes Center at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine believes that the photo-led discussion program will increase participants' feelings, self-empowerment and abilities to problem solve.

For Dr. Baig, community-based research that places her in the actual community is an invaluable way to understand the principles that were taught in the Tufts MPH courses. "Community work informs me of patients' lives outside of the clinical setting. Actually seeing their barriers is a different thing—we read about them but when you see them it's imprinted in your mind. Now I understand the barriers when I see them in the clinic," says Dr. Baig.

Understanding the barriers of the population is critical to inducing changes in its health, and Dr. Baig's firm understanding of Latino populations has propelled her to propose innovative and culturally tailored interventions. Dr. Baig is working to determine how to mobilize change for peo-

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Pain as a Public Health Issue

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According to Carr, the report is just the latest in the series of white papers by governmental and professional groups that endorse the validity of pain. However, he emphasizes that a

report from the IOM validates pain as a public health issue in an important way as the institution is an agreed upon authority on health issues by both the medical community and the public.

And while it will take more than an IOM report to change Americans' attitudes towards pain as a societal problem, Carr hopes that the "Relieving

Pain in America" further ignites interest in pain and pain management. "Going back at least 20 years you can see there is a steady evolution, a viewpoint, that pain is a major disease burden, and that it should be treated and detected early on," he said. "Clearly, there is a big worldwide movement going on."

Developing a Sun Safe Initiative in Barnstable County



Charlotte Peltier, MS-Nutrition/MPH'11

Charlotte Peltier, MS-Nutrition/MPH'11

Protecting children, adolescents, and adults from excessive ultraviolet exposure and teaching them how to practice lifelong sun safety behaviors is critical for reducing the rates of skin cancer and eye damage in the United States. Since 1973, new cases of melanoma, the most serious and aggressive form of skin cancer, have increased by approximately 150% in the United States. Barnstable County is not exempt from these statistics. Based on data from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Cancer Registry from 2003-2007, there is an elevated incidence of melanoma in 8 out of the 15 towns on Cape Cod.

For my MPH Applied Learning Experience I worked at the Barnstable County Department of Health and Environment under Jean Roma, M.S.N., A.P.R.N.-B.C., director of the Cape Cod Medical Reserve Corps. I had the unique opportunity to develop, implement, and evaluate a community sun safety education program during the summer of 2011. More specifically, I created the intervention materials and evaluation protocols and tools, helped deliver the educational inter-

ventions on Cape Cod beaches, analyzed survey data, and provided future recommendations for the agency.

Using the Health Belief Model, a conceptual framework that attempts to explain and predict health behavior, the Sun Safe Initiative's goal was to deliver an effective educational intervention to increase risk perception of sun exposure and preventative sun safety practices among beachgoers. Adolescents, ages 12-18, were the target audience; however, educational materials were also created for adults, young children, and parents of young children. The specific behaviors changes sought included any sun protective behavior not currently practiced by participants, such as using sunscreen with a SPF of 15 or higher, staying in the shade, avoiding the sun between 10 am and 4 pm, wearing sunglasses, wearing tightly-woven and dark clothing, wearing a hat, and avoiding tanning beds.

The Sun Safe Initiative was implemented on 14 different Cape Cod beaches in July and August of 2011. Beachgoers were invited to visit an educational tent that was positioned near the beach entrance, and were offered incentives (t-shirts for adolescents, SPF 30 lip balm for adults, and beach balls for young children) for participation. Members of the Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard Medical Reserve Corps (a group of adult and adolescent volunteers committed to strengthen public health, emergency response and community resiliency) served as health educators during small group or one-on-one educational interventions. Scripts were developed and used as discussion guides, and they outlined the theory-based and age-appropriate flyers that were also distributed to participants. Evaluation of the educational intervention was performed among adolescents and adults by using pre- and post- intervention

surveys. Young children were not surveyed, although they received an educational intervention with simple sun safety messages.

A total of 577 adults (ages 19-86), 322 adolescents (ages 12-18), and 495 children (ages 2-11) participated in the program. The surveyed population was 94.6% white and 65.2% female. Adolescents, on average, reported 9-12 hours of sun exposure per week, while adults reported 5-8 hours. After the intervention, there was an increase in risk perception for skin cancer from sun exposure, eye damage from sun exposure, and health risk from tanning salons among adolescent and adult groups ($p < 0.0001$). Additionally, after receiving the educational intervention, both adult and adolescent groups reported approximately 4 new sun-protective behaviors they would practice.

The Sun Safe Initiative was successful in changing adolescent and adult risk perception of UV exposure, and there is strong indication that it may result in changes to adolescent and adult sun-protective behaviors. Future program development should focus on the infrequently practiced sun-protective behaviors, such as wearing sun-protective clothing and seeking shade. Additional effort should also focus on targeting adolescent boys.

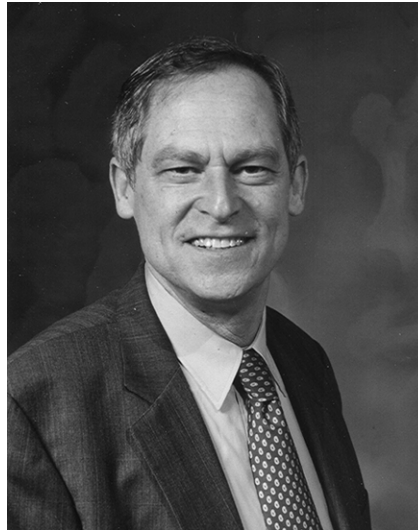
Due to the high degree of collaboration, innovative delivery of a public health initiative, and the ability of the Medical Reserve Corps volunteers to be involved, the Safe Sun Initiative received Honorable Mention for Outstanding Achievement in Public Health from the 2011 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards.

Adverse Health Consequences to the 2001 Terrorist Attacks

Erica Ballard, MS – Health Communication Candidate

In October, Barry Levy, M.D., M.P.H., Adjunct Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine, presented at the Public Health and Community Medicine Department's Research Seminar. His presentation was based on the article, "Adverse Health Consequences of U.S. Government Responses to the 2001 Terrorist Attacks", published by him and Victor Sidel, M.D., in a special issue of *The Lancet* on the 10th anniversary of 9/11. Dr. Levy's presentation focused on the adverse health effects of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq on both military personnel and non-combatant civilians. It also addressed violations of human rights as a result of these wars and other responses to the 2001 terrorist attacks, as well as diversion of human and financial resources away from important public health needs.

Dr. Levy cited his and Sidel's findings that the wars have resulted in more than 1,500 U.S. military deaths in Afghanistan and the loss of more than 4,400 military personnel in Iraq. He also noted that nearly 9,000 civilian deaths were reported in the war in Afghanistan, and he estimated that as many as 655,000 non-combatant civilian deaths occurred in the first 40 months of the Iraq War. He describes widespread nonfatal injuries and significant mental health problems among



Barry Levy, MD, MPH

military personnel and non-combatant civilians as a result of both wars. In addition, Dr. Levy detailed the extensive indirect health consequences these wars have had on non-combatant civilians in both Afghanistan and Iraq. These included damage to the health-supporting infrastructure--- damage which encompass destruction of and access to health-care facilities, the food supply system, water treatment and supply, sanitation and sewage treatment, transportation and communication systems, the electrical power system, and the physical environment. Dr. Levy also described the extensive forced migration that has occurred in both countries, including millions of refugees and internally displaced persons, whose plight is often more severe

than refugees who have escaped to other countries.

While citing the widespread violations of human rights that took place under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, Dr. Levy detailed the human rights violations that have been committed by both coalition forces and by insurgents during the wars. He described the "enhanced interrogation" -- considered by most experts to constitute torture under international law -- of detainees whom the U.S. government had suspected were aiding or abetting terrorism.

Dr. Levy described the extensive diversion of human and financial resources that have taken place since 2001, primarily related to the two wars. He cited that, as of July of this year, the Iraq War had cost the United States about \$789 billion and the war in Afghanistan cost about \$438 billion. In total, he estimated that the ultimate cost of both wars, including interest on the debt, could reach \$3 trillion or more.

"The initial \$204 billion spent on the Iraq War could have reduced hunger throughout the world by 50 percent and provided enough funds to cover the needs for HIV/AIDS medicine, clean water and sanitation, and immunization for all children in developing countries for almost three years," said Dr. Levy. "Within the United States,

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Working to Mitigate Disparities

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ple who are disenfranchised with the healthcare system—her recommended approach is reaching out to the population via a channel that is meaningful in their lives, like churches. The Picture Good Health program also holds exercise sessions at participating churches

and connects individuals to social service agencies and primary care physicians. Development of innovative and effective efforts like Picture Good Health requires healthcare professionals to utilize non-traditional methods and approaches.

Tufts Public Health students are poised to benefit from Dr. Baig's work as it illustrates targeted and culturally competent interventions. She brings

to the forefront that, "the Latino population is growing, their burden is growing," and asks, "Are we prepared to manage this population?" As future public health professionals, students will have to confront the challenges of the growing diabetic Latino population, and culturally tailored interventions like Dr. Baig's are proving to be a particularly effective way to reach this group.

Margie Skeer, Ph.D. Joins Department of Public Health & Community Medicine

Erica Ballard, MS-Health Communication Candidate

The 'Tufts' Department of Public Health and Community Medicine (PH&CM) welcomed Margie Skeer, PhD, to the faculty this past summer.

"We are excited to have a collaborative colleague with a real team spirit to advance our health communication research agenda with respect to adolescent risk behavior and substance abuse," said Susan Gallagher, MPH, Director of the MS - Health Communication Program. "Margie uniquely complements our Health Communication Program, bringing an individual clinical perspective as a social worker with a public health and social epidemiology background."

Skeer received her Doctor of Science in Social Epidemiology from Harvard School of Public Health and her Master degrees in social work and public health from Boston University. Before joining the Department of PH&CM, she completed a two-year postdoctoral research fellowship at Brown University's Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies, which was funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. During this time, Skeer also worked at Fenway Health in Boston as a data analyst and research scientist studying sexual risk prevention among HIV-infected men who have sex with men.

Both Skeer's dissertation and postdoctoral focused on adolescent substance



Margie Skeer, PhD

use disorders. Her interest in these issues, says Skeer, began when she was in college at Rutgers University. There, she interned at a drug rehabilitation clinic while working simultaneously at Rutgers's Department of Health Education, conducting alcohol education and sexual health advocacy with undergraduate students. "After seeing the clinical side of drug addiction, I wanted to figure how to prevent substance abuse from occurring at the population level, expanding upon providing treatment to those entrenched in addiction," she said.

Skeer's research focuses primarily on substance misuse and sexual risk prevention, both from an epidemiologic and intervention-development perspective. A current interest is the effect of family meals during childhood on

the prevention of substance misuse and sexual risk among adolescents.

She hopes that her unique interests and background will help students understand the individual perspective, as well as the population perspective, of these particular health issues, and others. This understanding has informed her research, and she hopes to impart this knowledge to PH&CM students.

"I enhance the faculty by bringing my background in substance use, as well as HIV, to the program. This means people interested in this field will leave [the program] with a background in it [these areas]," said Skeer.

Skeer will begin teaching in the Summer of 2012. Until then, she will be working at on various analysis projects and applications for various grants.

Skeer is excited to be part of the Tufts Department of PH&CM as she views health communication a necessity for effective health interventions. She stated: "Health communication is the foundation for being able to have people understand how it [disease and issues] affects them in the public health arena and individually ... It informs my work because even just the basics, like parents talking to their children about drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, involve health awareness and the communication of it [to their children]."

Adverse Health Consequences

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the federal budget for the 2011 fiscal year for the war in Afghanistan -- \$107 billion -- could, for example, have provided medical care for 14 million US military veterans for one year."

Dr. Levy concluded that further work by physicians, health workers, and others to collect, document, and disseminate information could serve to mitigate these health consequences and help to prevent them from occurring in the future.

Loriann Amertil, MS-Biomedical Sciences Candidate, was in attendance for Dr. Levy's presentation and offered "From his information, I realized that

public health is not an isolated field and involves cross-disciplinary involvement and collaboration."

Dr. Sidel is a distinguished Professor of Social Medicine at Montefiore Medical Center and Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Dr. Levy co-edited 16 books including two editions with Dr. Victor Sidel, entitled "War and Public Health" and "Terrorism and Public Health."

Faculty Notes

Photo by Mike Ritter



l – r, Marcia Boumil, JD, LL.M and Susan Bocamaz, Publisher, Mass. Lawyers Weekly

Congratulations to **Marcia Boumil, JD, LL.M Associate Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine (PH&CM)**, who was honored by the *Massachusetts Lawyer Weekly* as one of the 2011 Top Women of Law at an event held in September. The event celebrated lawyers who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in social justice, advocacy and business.

Doug Brugge, PhD, MS, Professor of PH&CM, presented research on Chinese immigrant children and asthma and on highway pollution at a conference sponsored by The Chinese University of Hong Kong's School of Public Health and Primary Care.

Kenneth K.H. Chui, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, Susan Koch-Weser, ScD, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, and Susan S. Gallagher, MPH, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, authored a manuscript titled "E-Health for Healthy Aging: Past, Present, Future" that was selected as the winner of the 2011 Erickson Foundation Award for Excellence in Research, by the Aging and Public Health Section of the American Public Health Association.

Steven A. Cohen, DrPH, MPH '03, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, recently co-authored four articles, two of which include, "Snowbirds and Infection--New Phenomena in Pneumonia and Influenza Hospitalizations from Winter Migration of Older Adults: A Spatiotemporal Analysis", published in BMC Public Health, and

"Visual Analytics For Epidemiologists: Understanding the Interactions Between Age, Time, and Disease With Multi-Panel Graphs," published in PLOS One, were also co-authored by **Dr. Kenneth Chui**.

Susan S. Gallagher, MPH, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, presented on "Lessons Learned from Evaluated Child Agricultural Safety Interventions," at the 2011 APHA Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

Jeffrey K. Griffiths, MD, MPH, TM, Professor of PH&CM, testified to the US Senate's Committee on Environment and Public Works in July 2011 on drinking water contaminant regulation. He was widely quoted in the national media on lead contamination in drinking water after chairing a US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) investigative group voicing strong concern on the issue.

Lisa Gualtieri, PhD, ScM, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, was awarded an Innovations in Education Grant from Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM) to investigate: 1) how to integrate social media into TUSM courses, 2) the advantages to students and faculty of this integration, and 3) the training necessary to educate faculty about how to use social media as part of their teaching.

William Lancaster, MS, Adjunct Instructor of PH&CM, is working with Tufts Health Services on a film about how college students deal with coping issues and depression. In addition, Professor Lancaster was interviewed by the Sunday New York Times (10/23/11) about the digital revolution and its contributions to the degradation of writing.

Barry Levy, MD, MPH, Adjunct Professor of PH&CM, has co-edited two books that have recently been published by Oxford University Press. With Joyce Gaufin, he co-edited "Mastering Public Health: Essential Skills for Effective Practice."

Amy Lischko, MSPH, DSc, Associate Professor of PH&CM, is working on a contract for the Federal government regarding implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In addition, she is writing two chapters of a forthcoming book on Massachusetts' Health Care Reform efforts

and is currently providing consulting services to the states of Vermont and Washington regarding implementation of the ACA.

Paula Minihan, MSW, MPH, PhD, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, authored an article with **Aviva Must, PhD, Morton A. Madoff Professor and Chair of PH&CM**, Anderson B, Popper B, and Dworetzky B. entitled "Children with Special Health Care Needs: Acknowledging the Dilemma of Difference in Policy Responses to Obesity."

Aviva Must, Ph.D, Morton A. Madoff Professor and Chair of PH&CM, was invited to present on "The Importance of a Healthy Diet in Childhood" at the 3rd International Forum on Food and Nutrition in Milan, Italy.

Anthony Robbins, MD, MPA, Professor of PH&CM, received a grant, with his colleague Celeste Monforton, from the Public Welfare Foundation (PWF) entitled "Beyond OSHA," to explore new ways to protect workers and workers' rights. The grant was awarded to Dr. Robbins and his colleagues at the Public Health Advocacy Institute, the not-for-profit entity that was founded in 2001 by Tufts Public Health and Northeastern University Law faculty.

Anthony Schlaff, MD, MPH, Professor of PH&CM and Paul Hattis, MD, JD, MPH, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, and the Tufts Health Care Institute are consulting on a new grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation awarded to the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) - a social justice organization with a strong interest in health care issues. In an effort to promote community engagement and understanding of the unsustainable rise in health care costs, the grant provides support to develop and present a number of educational offerings--including webinars - aimed at reaching a broad consumer audience and preparing them for participation in policy debates about containing health care costs. The first webinar was offered on Oct. 24th to GBIO's member institutions of churches, synagogues, and other places of worship in the Boston area.

Putting Health Communication Principles to Work to Help Eradicate TB

Sarah Gunn, MS-Health Communication Candidate

MS—Health Communication student, Kate Perch, reached the pinnacle of public health work by interning with one of the partners of the world's largest healthcare organization, the World Health Organization (WHO), this past summer. Alongside 250 other interns, Kate spent two months in Geneva, Switzerland with the Stop TB Partnership. Kate was awarded a Tufts University School of Medicine's Global Health Travel Grant, which help support her trip to Geneva.

The mission of the Stop TB Partnership is to eradicate tuberculosis worldwide and ensure that proper treatment is accessible for those in need. The Stop TB partnership is also committed to, "stopping transmission of TB, reducing the inequitable social and economic toll of TB, and to develop and implement new preventive, diagnostic and therapeutic tools and strategies to stop TB." These goals are sought to be met by the team for Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilization, of which Kate was a part. Additionally, Kate worked with the general communications team to handle public relations, marketing, and other high-level communication activities. Kate employed her health communication skill-set by evaluating and revamping Stop TB's website and developing communication literature. Public relations was another portion of Kate's work as she updated public relations lists and media contacts.

As the partnership is an international collaboration, Kate says she inherited a new and broader perspective of the world of public health. "I learned about the many different players [in public health] and how incredibly complicated it is. It's hard to say in words what I learned in this experience—it's incredible, it's the biggest healthcare organization in the world," Kate said.

When faced with a disease like tuberculosis, one affecting many people in underdeveloped countries with strict financial limitations, public health officials must be innovative to be effective and efficient. Stop TB has a special focus on treating tuberculosis in India and Africa, places in which incidences of tuberculosis and HIV are highly



Kate Perch, MS – Health Communication Candidate, in the UN General Assembly meeting room in Geneva.

correlated. For example, those with HIV are more susceptible to tuberculosis infection, Kate explains. Therefore, Stop TB has decided to partner with hundreds of organizations throughout the world offering HIV care. These partner organizations provide testing, treatment, and education for those susceptible to and affected by HIV. Kate is able to bring this real-world knowledge of innovative interventions, campaigns, policies, and economics back to her coursework and classmates at Tufts.

Prior to leaving for Geneva, Kate was a student of Lisa Neal Gualtieri's, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine, Web Strategies class, which Kate de-

scribed as being very instrumental in getting her prepared.

If the opportunity arises, Kate encourages all of her classmates at Tufts to participate in the WHO internship. Last spring Kate was approached by the Director of the MS - Health Communication Program, Susan Gallagher, MPH, with a potential internship opportunity at the WHO. Professor Gallagher informed Kate that some of the benefits included networking with people from around the globe who could be potential partners in her public health career. Kate added, "There are hundreds of departments so there's a fit for every interest".

Applying for a WHO internship through the general web site is extremely competitive, thus Kate urges any student with an invitation to apply through a connection they may have at their school in order to take advantage of the opportunity. The position allows for students to have a world-class resume and a unique experience of personal growth. Because of this, Kate says, "I felt more confident in my ability to take chances. Going off on my own for two months was very eye-opening."

For more information on the Stop TB partnership, please visit <http://www.stoptb.org/>. General information about internships with the World Health Organization can be found at: <http://www.who.int/employment/internship/interns/en/>.

Communicating Health Information via Social Media Platforms

Sarah Gunn, MS-Health Communication Candidate

Social media has drastically changed human communication at a rapid-fire pace in the past several years. Hundreds of millions of people across the globe deliver news to one another via status updates on platforms like Facebook and Twitter, allowing their friends and followers to know about events, feelings, and musings instantaneously. The upsurge in this form of communication has caught the attention of public health and healthcare organizations, hoping to share health information with a large audience in an unprecedented way.

Lisa Neal Gaultieri, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine, agrees that social media platforms can be an incredible vehicle for disseminating health information, *if* it is used properly. Dr. Gaultieri's research is primarily focused on how to provide education and support to healthcare consumers via the web and social media.

"One of the most frustrating things I see are wasted efforts on social media," says Gaultieri. For example, healthcare organizations sometimes expend great amounts of time and money creating video clips to place on YouTube, assuming that the site's popularity will draw attention to the message or information contained in the video, yet the clips' viewership is dismal.

"You have to use high frequency sites that people use to find information related to the topic," Gaultieri explains. Wikipedia is one of these high frequency sites where health consumers search for information. Twitter and Facebook are two of the most high frequency sites, but require savvy to use well. In many cases, it is better for an organization to create a presence on Wikipedia than an impressive library on YouTube as consumers turn to

Wikipedia as an initial source to explore a topic. Gaultieri explains that a great deal of healthcare organizations misunderstand social media and do not know how to take advantage of it properly. Social media is not advantageous when it is used to "push out information," but it is when it is used creatively to construct small and engaging messages.

"Instead of tweeting something like, 'Get your flu shot,' you could write something like, 'Save yourself from tweeting your awful flu symptoms later. Get a flu shot now,'" Gaultieri explains. Messages are effective when the concerns of the audience are addressed; symptoms, fears, *what do I do if?* Gaultieri notes the Boston Public Health Commission's creative use of Twitter by tweeting wait times for those wanting to receive a flu shot.

Not only did the Boston Public Health Commission's approach illustrate how to create succinct and relevant messages to their audience, but they illuminated the effectiveness of social media's ability to relay reliable up-to-the minute information. This is particularly crucial in times of crisis to deliver alerts and instructions, because tweets and status updates can also encourage followers to talk with those that are not following social media to keep them informed. Gaultieri notes that organizations should not start using social media during a crisis, but must have a previously established a presence.

"There is a strong impression that people have minimal knowledge [about health conditions]. We can see how people misconstrue diseases," Gaultieri says of examining things like tweets to gauge a population's perceptions of a health related topic. Knowing the ways in which people talk about and perceive diseases, however skewed they may be, helps healthcare workers decide what information needs to be

disseminated. Therefore, studying social media can provide critical information for healthcare organizations, because they can see indicators of people's concerns, impressions, knowledge or lack thereof regarding health situations.

Social media can be an essential asset to a health care related organization for a variety of reasons. PHPD students should consider social media outlets when conducting population research as it provides insight to the population's thoughts, feelings and understandings of a certain condition. When using social media to disseminate health information, keep the Boston Public Health Commission in mind; deliver messages that give your audience accurate, engaging and useful information in a creative and succinct fashion.

Sharpen your social media skills at Tufts Summer Institute on Web Strategies for Health Communication, July 15-20, 2012 (<http://webstrategiesforhealth.com>)

Visit the Web Strategies for Health Communication page at : <http://webstrategiesforhealth.wordpress.com/>

Follow Lisa Gaultieri on twitter: @lisagaultieri

Stay up-to-date with Tufts Public Health Programs via their Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/tuftspublichealth>

Alumni Notes

MPH:

Courtney Boen, BA/MPH '07, of Chapel Hill, NC, recently began a Ph.D. program in sociology at UNC-Chapel Hill. Courtney is also doing a traineeship at the Carolina Population Center.

Congrats to **Charlotte (Hanson) Cabili, MS-Nutrition/MPH '03**, of Falls Church, VA, and her husband Mel on the birth of their first child, Ivy, in September 2011.

Jessica Daniel, BA/MPH '11, of Cambridge, MA, is a first year doctoral student at the Harvard School of Public Health in the Society, Human Development, and Health Department.

Molly (Belozor) Firth, MPH '02, of Seattle, WA, is the Director of Public Policy for the Community Health Plan and Community Health Network of Washington. Molly also serves on the Board of WithinReach, a local non-profit that connects families to community resources and improves maternal, child and family health. Molly married Michael Firth in August 2009.

Douglas Glandon, MPH '07, of Washington, DC, was recently promoted to a new role, working with Ministries of Health in developing countries, in the International Health Division of Abt Associates Inc.

Julia Sarah Goldberg, MPH '08, of Tucson, AZ, is the Acting General Manager, U.S. Section, United States-Mexico Border Health Commission of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Heather Carter Hamner, MS-Nutrition/MPH '03, of Atlanta, GA, completed a Ph.D. in Foods and Nutrition from The University of Georgia in December 2010. Heather is an epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities. Congrats on the birth of her son, Ryland Tucker

Hamner, who was born on December 2, 2010.

Caroline Hesko, MPH '08, of Cambridge, MA, is finishing her fourth year of medical school at Tufts and has applied for residency in Pediatrics.

Jacqueline Hill, MPH '08, of Mission, KS, is pursuing her PhD in Health Policy and Management at the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City.

Nkemdiri Iruka, BA/MPH '05, of Baltimore, MD, is a 4th year PhD student at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and is currently completing her doctoral dissertation. She will be getting married in May 2012 to her fiancé, Benito Wheatley.

Congratulations to **Erin Boyd Kapelhof, MS-Nutrition/MPH '05**, of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and her husband, Rembert Kappelhof, who welcomed twin baby boys into the world on August 9, 2011. Erin is a Global Health & Nutrition Program Manager at Unilever.

Congrats to **Allison Lipps, MPH '11**, of Medford, MA, on her marriage to J.R. Siegel, Fletcher School Alum (2011 MALD), on November 13, 2011 in Topsfield, MA. Allie is currently working as a Project Manager at The Stoeckle Center for Primary Care Innovation at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Vanessa Oddo, MPH '11, of Somerville, MA, began her job as a Research Analyst at Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. in June.

Kimberly Puhala, MPH '02, of Quincy, MA, graduated with her Ph.D. in Public Policy from UMass Boston in June, 2011. Kimberly is working at Quincy College as the Associate Vice President of Institutional Research and Assessment and was recently awarded a small grant to research methods of improving response rates to online surveys.

Kieran Reid, MPH '08, of Boston, MA, was awarded the 2011 Award for Excellence in Multicultural Aging at the Annual Meeting of the American Society on Aging in San Francisco, California.

Stephanie Reinhardt, MPH '07, of San Francisco, CA, is working as a Program Officer with Jhpiego supporting maternal & newborn health programs in Zimbabwe and HIV/AIDS programs in Zambia.

Joanie (Rodriguez) Risbano, MS-Nutrition/MPH '06, of Pittsburgh, PA, relocated from Denver 14 months ago in support of her husband, Michael's, career. Joanie and Michael welcomed the birth of their 2nd son, Cole on 5/24/11. Joanie is happily employed by Cigna Healthcare as a health educator/wellness coach.

Kimberly Russell, MPH '07, of Sharon, MA, currently works as the Manager of the Recruitment Services Program of the Boston University Clinical and Translational Science Institute. She's planning to enroll in a PhD program in health policy in the fall of 2012 at Boston University.

Skye Schulte, MS-Nutrition/MPH '02, of Boston, MA, was asked in 2010 to chair the Advisory Board for the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship-Boston--a non-profit organization that focuses on addressing health disparities by developing leaders in service. Skye helps to facilitate programmatic and fundraising initiatives for the Fellowship.

Jennifer Truong, MPH '08, of Charlestown, MA, began working in October in the Division of Allergy/Immunology at Children's Hospital Boston doing research in the Asthma Clinical Research Center. Jennifer continues to teach two courses at the Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

Emily Wagner, MPH '08, of Bangor, ME, is working as the School Based Program Coordinator at a county-wide domestic violence project in Maine.

Alumni Notes

Julia Wenger, MPH '09, of Framingham, MA, recently bought her first house in Framingham, MA and adopted a dog named Rascal. Julia is currently working as the lead statistician within the Department of Nephrology at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Andrew Wilson, MPH '11, of Somerville, MA, recently began a PhD program at Brandeis University's Heller School of Social Policy and Management where he will be studying social policy with a concentration in health policy.

MS-Health Communication (HCOM):

Congrats to **Heather Angstrom, MS-HCOM '10**, of Cambridge, MA, on her marriage to Stephen MacLellan on August 27, 2011. Heather began a new job as a project coordinator for the ChildObesity180 initiative at the John Hancock Research Center at Tufts' Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

Alia Bucciarelli, MS-COM '05, of Belmont, MA, gave a half-day report-writing workshop for consultants at a specialized government affairs and reimbursement consultancy that focuses on medical device and diagnostics issues in major international markets.

Amanda Marr, MS-HCOM '04, of Washington, DC, is managing several programs on behalf of the Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health at Hager Sharp, a communications firm focused on health, safety, and education issues. Amanda is also on the Board of Directors of the DC Council of Girls on the Run. Next April, Amanda will join the Tufts Marathon Team to run the Boston Marathon.

Ellyson Stout, MS-HCOM '07, of Watertown, MA, conducted several workshops/presentations in the past year at the CDC Health Communication, Marketing and Media Conference (Atlanta, GA, August 2011) and at the

American Association for Suicidology Annual Meeting (Portland, OR, April 2011).

Meg Young, MS-HCOM '00, of San Francisco, CA, was awarded the caBIG Advancing Innovation Award for her work on the informatics platform for the I-SPY 2 TRIAL at the University of California. Since then, Meg has taken a Senior Manager position at McKesson, Corporation and recently rescued a Tibetan Terrier named Lilly, who is a joy!

DVM/MPH:

Emily F. Christiansen, DVM/MPH '08, of Cary, NC, is a Zoological Medicine (Aquatics) Resident at North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

Kathryn M. McGonigle, DVM/MPH '02, of Freehold, NJ, completed a Small Animal Internal Medicine Residency at Cornell University Hospital for Animals in July, 2011.

MD/MPH:

Sourav Sengupta, MD/MPH '08, of Pittsburgh, PA, started a 2-year term as Resident Member of Council of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and is a Representative on the American Psychiatric Association Assembly Committee of Members-in-Training. Sourav plans to complete a Public Service Psychiatry Fellowship and a Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Fellowship next year.

JD/MPH:

Cristina F. Freitas, JD/MPH '10 and **Debbie Freitas, JD/MPH '10**, of Methuen, MA, established their own law firm, Freitas & Freitas, LLP, which just celebrated its first anniversary. Freitas & Freitas, LLP is a public interest law firm specializing in health law and child welfare matters.

Staci Rubin, JD/MPH '10, of Malden, MA, is Staff Attorney at Alternatives for

Community & Environment (ACE - <http://ace-ej.org>).

Jessica Schifano, JD/MPH '09, of Lowell, MA, was the guest editor of a recently published special issue of New Solutions: A Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health (<http://www.chemicalspolicy.org/Publications.Reports.NewSolutions.php>).

Stephanie Dorvil Willis, JD/MPH '09, of Silver Spring, MD, just celebrated her one-year wedding anniversary with Benjamin Willis. Stephanie works as a health law associate at Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky, and Popeo, P.C. in Washington D.C.

MD/MBA:

Joel Braman, MD/MBA '09, Bremerton, WA, is living in the West Puget Sound area serving in the US Navy as an undersea and diving medical officer. He and his wife, Becky, have two children ages 1 and 2.

Abhay Gokhale, MD/MBA '03, of Galena, OH, is a Staff Radiation Oncologist at Mount Carmel Hospital and Columbus CyberKnife, Columbus OH.

Shirley Huang, MD/MBA '04, of Boulder, CO was awarded the Top Physician Award 2011 in Boulder area. Shirley is currently the Clinic Site Director at a second office location.

Babar Khokhar, MD/MBA '07, of Branford, CT, is finishing a Neuromuscular Medicine Fellowship at Yale. Next year, Babar will join the Yale Neurology faculty as the Outpatient Clinics Director, Section Chief of General Neurology and Assistant Residency Program Director. Babar and his wife, Nehal, have a 1 year old daughter, Nadia, and are expecting their second child.

Wendie Trubow Levitan, MD/MBA '00, of Chestnut Hill, MA, will be opening a second location for her

Public Health Rounds

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Visit the PHPD Web site:
www.tufts.edu/med/phpd/

integrated medical center called Visions Medical Center next spring, in Dedham MA. Wendie is also due with her fourth child, also due in the spring!

MBS:

Vincent Gonzalez, MBS '08, of Columbus, OH, is currently attending The Ohio State University College of Medicine. Vincent is expecting his first child (son) in November.

Yogitha Potini, MBS/MPH '11, of Carbondale, IL, is attending medical school at Southern Illinois University.

Sasha Yakhkind, MBS '09, of Tampa, FL, recently enrolled as one of the first 19 students in the USF SELECT MD program. SELECT is a collaboration between University of South Florida College of Medicine and Lehigh Valley Health Network, with a goal to train physician leaders in the skills needed to understand and transform healthcare from within.

PREP:

Hallie Greenberg, PREP '04, of Randolph, MA, had an article accepted for publication in Pain Management Nursing, the Official Journal of the American Society of Pain Management Nurses.



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