

MPH CONNECTION

The Official Newsletter of the Master of Public Health Program at Missouri State University

A Word from the Interim Director



FROM THE DESK OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR. Yes, I am still the interim director and still happy to be here because the program is growing and maturing every day. We are in the midst of a change in the make-up of the faculty. As noted elsewhere, we welcome Dr. Kip Thompson to the faculty as an assistant professor. He is currently teaching courses in epidemiology and biostatistics (someone has to do it!) and will soon be teaching a course in research methods as well. An experienced teacher and environmental health scientist, he brings a wealth of knowledge to the faculty and he is truly welcome. Dr. Belle Federman is still with us in a per course status because she is now an epidemiologist for the state of Kansas. I will miss her balancing perspective and sage advice. Ms. Dana Sherman, a very experienced teacher, is also doing some online work for the program in a per course status. We are happy to have her here. The program is currently in the middle of a search for another full-time faculty member to focus on epidemiology and biostatistics, so it is busy around here.

We continue to develop our research programs, collaborating with the Ozark Public Health Institute and seeking funding for other projects, including one on the landscape epidemiology of tick-borne diseases in the Ozarks. We hope to hear positive news on that proposal soon.

Our focus, though remains on producing well-educated graduates as a part of a CEPH-accredited MPH program. It is gratifying to see our graduates become part of an increasingly professional workforce, and that will always be our primary goal. Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the program. My direct phone number is 417-836-8945 and my e-mail is davidclaborn@missouristate.edu. We appreciate your continued interest and support of the MPH program at Missouri State University.



Over 25 students from the MPH program attended the 2015 Annual Joint Public Health Conference in Columbia, Missouri. Each student was given the opportunity to present a research poster and participate in various workshops pertaining to public health issues. In addition, those who attended the conference were able to listen to speakers from a number of Missouri Public Health Organizations as well as the NACCHO Executive Director LaMar Hasbrouck.

CONGRATULATIONS

Spring & Summer 2015 Graduates

- ◆ Samantha Bley
- ◆ Zaleika Goffe
- ◆ Lawal Garuba
- ◆ Fred Loor
- ◆ Diane Swofford
- ◆ Jacklyn Skaggs
- ◆ Michael Orfin
- ◆ Corrie Courtney
- ◆ Donaray Jones
- ◆ Monica Roth



Welcome New Faculty



Teaching:

Biostatistics
Research Methods in Public Health

Professional Experience:

Dr. Thompson received his PhD in Marine Science from the University of South Alabama and an MPH and MS (Biology) from Missouri State University. Dr. Thompson also received an undergraduate degree in biology and secondary education from MSU.

Prior to coming to Missouri State, Dr. Thompson was Lead Instructor for Biological Sciences at Ozarks Technical Community College. During his time at OTC, Dr. Thompson taught classes in general biology, genetics and environmental science.

In addition to his academic background, Dr. Thompson is an Environmental Science Officer in the U.S. Army Reserves, currently holding the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. During his time in the Army Reserves, Dr. Thompson has served as Commander for several units, including Preventive Medicine units in Missouri and Minnesota. Dr. Thompson has been deployed to SW Asia and the Balkans. While deployed, he served as the Director of Public Health for Kuwait and Chief, Preventive Medicine Services, Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.



Teaching:

Epidemiology

Professional Experience:

Dana received her MPH from Missouri State University. During the time that she went through the MPH program, students were given concentrations to choose from, to which Dana's areas of concentration were Epidemiology and Health Administration. In addition, she earned her bachelor's degree in both Biology and Psychology from Drury University.

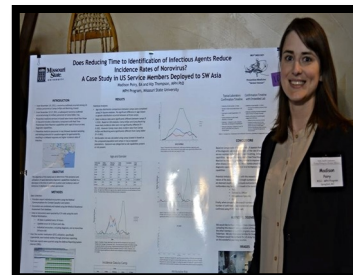
Along teaching Epidemiology, Dana is also the Coordinator of Online Biological Sciences at Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) and currently teaches Nutrition, Wellness, and general Biology for majors. In addition, Dana is a member of an OTC committee intended to look at different initiatives aimed at improving staff and faculty health, with the ultimate goal to expand those implemented programs to the students.

Aside from teaching, Dana has also worked as a Juvenile Officer in several surrounding counties. "This was an amazing opportunity to see Southwest Missouri in a different light. As a juvenile officer, I became very interested in looking at the impacts of poverty and the risk of delinquency, along with the impact of poverty and health status in our rural communities."

New Graduate Assistant: Madison Poiry

Madison is the new GA in the MPH department for the Fall 2015 semester. She received a BA in Psychology and is interested in how Public Health can intervene in the issues of rural access to mental health services.

"I am excited to have this position, and I have already had valuable experience in partnering with Dr. Thompson to organize a poster with data from his Capstone project to present at the Joint Annual Public Health Conference." Madison also said that she enjoyed going out for Indian food with the students in the department and getting to know them on the drive to the conference.



Final Pathway to Success: An Intern's Story

By Diane Swofford

I loved school, but I felt like the eternal student. I thought that last semester would never get here, as working full-time and going to school part-time is a slow process. After many years of toil, it was finally time to pick a location for my internship. From past experience, I knew that those last few weeks would be an essential part of my learning

process, but how would I best spend that final portion of the program? Looking back, when I was in nursing school, I realized quickly that academics did not make the nurse; it was the clinical rotations that helped polish the skills necessary to become a nurse. Thus, this MPH internship would be my clinical rotations all over again, and I could finally start to apply all my public health academia into practice.

So I began my journey down the Yellow Brick Road. With Dr. Duitsman's assistance, the Missouri Department of Health (MDHSS) agreed to my 10 week internship. The MDHSS is split into numerous divisions and is housed in several different buildings. I was assigned to the Chronic Disease and Cancer Prevention Division (CDCPD). The first few weeks of the internship were spent at the main office in Jefferson under the supervision of the Operation Manager of the CDCPD. The CDCPD's main office umbrellas several chronic disease prevention programs for the state including asthma, heart and stroke, comprehensive cancer and diabetes, which I had the opportunity to spend time with the



program managers from each of these programs.

For the last portion of the internship, I was assigned to work with the coordinator for the Missouri Arthritis and Osteoporosis Program (MAOP) in Columbia.

MAOP is a majority grant funded from Centers for

Disease Control and Prevention which is currently contracted to University of Missouri Extension office. MAOP in Columbia is the central administrative office. The program has seven regional offices including one here in Springfield affiliated with Mercy Health system. Each of the Regional Arthritis Centers offers grant funded free educational arthritis and diabetes education to any member of their region.

My experiences, both in Jefferson City and Columbia offices, were wonderful. They provided hands on experience with budgeting, information dissemination, and quality assurance projects that are impossible to get in the class room setting. I was also fortunate enough to experience a CDC site visit and interact with the very accommodating team from Atlanta that oversees the grant funding for MAOP. If you should choose this internship path, I would recommend that you try and incorporate more local public health and population interaction, so that you are able to get a better balance. It was, however, a wonderful administrative experience with supportive mentors.

Alumni Spotlight : Samantha Bley

Current job: I am currently working as a Laboratory Analyst at the Southwest Clean Water Plant in Springfield, MO. My primary duties are testing operational and industrial samples for the following parameters: Ammonia, Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD), Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD), Dissolved Oxygen (DO), *E.coli*, pH, Total coliform, Total Suspended Solids, and Toxicity. These analyses are important for ensuring adequate removal of harmful pollutants and toxins that may otherwise inhibit or destroy the growth of organisms in our receiving stream.

How it relates to public health: Communities need wastewater treatment facilities to collect, treat, and dispose waste. More importantly it helps protect our water quality, prevent the spreading of diseases, and support future development. Both my undergraduate biology degree and my MPH have been instrumental in making the connections between environmental science and environmental health in the laboratory. I have learned to apply concepts in biology to understand certain pathogens that may appear in wastewater and may be of public health importance. In addition, I have expanded my duties outside the laboratory to employee wellness committees. At the plant, I am largely responsible for promoting a positive atmosphere and informing coworkers about physical health, exercise, and nutrition programs that the city offers.

Advice to current students: Get involved in the community as soon as possible. Obtaining a job right after graduation can be difficult due to the competitive nature of three colleges in Springfield. Volunteering and networking allows you to meet the right people and put you at an advantage of others who may not have experience. Throughout my coursework I volunteered for numerous non-profit agencies that work with water quality. While I volunteered I was able to network, learn new skills, and discover my strengths.

Gain Experience Through FPHP

Future Public Health Professionals (FPHP) is a student group dedicated to applying and furthering its members' public health training and skills while creating future professional relationships. FPHP members have the unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience by working on projects with local public health agencies in varied public health interest areas. As a member, you will be notified of relevant public health trainings and workshops that will further your knowledge and skills.



During the Spring 2015 semester, FPHP members were given the opportunity to visit the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory along with a tour of the Missouri State Capitol building. By attending this activity, students were given direct observational knowledge within their area of interest as well as the chance to form lasting friendships with other FPHP members. For those that are interested, potential future plans to revisit the lab within the next year are in the works. In addition, a new state-wide student organization designed to help change state policies related to public health will also be taking place under the direction of FPHP.

For more information, contact Emily Ogden at Ogden08@live.missouristate.edu.

Future Course Offerings

Course	Course Title	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016
PBH 720	Epidemiology	Seated		Online
PBH 730	Biostatistics in Health Sciences	Online		Seated
PBH 740	Health Behavior	Online		
PBH 745	Environmental Health			Seated
MGT 701	Health Services Organization	Seated		Seated
PBH 735	Software Applications and Data Sources in Public Health			Blended, Weekend
PBH 756	Introduction to Public Health		Blended, Weekend	Blended, Weekend
PBH 760	Research Methods in Public Health	Seated		
PBH 783	International Health and Infectious Disease	Online		
PBH 775	Principles & Skills of Public Health Administration	Seated		
PBH 771	Public Health Preparedness			Seated
PBH 778	Chronic Epidemiology			
Course	Course Title	Spring 2017	Summer 2017	Fall 2017
PBH 720	Epidemiology	Seated		
PBH 730	Biostatistics in Health Sciences	Online		Seated
PBH 740	Health Behavior	Online		
PBH 745	Environmental Health			Online
MGT 701	Health Services Organization	Seated		Seated
PBH 735	Software Applications and Data Sources in Public Health			Blended, Weekend
PBH 756	Introduction to Public Health			Blended, Weekend
PBH 760	Research Methods in Public Health	Seated		
PBH 783	International Health and Infectious Disease	Seated		
PBH 775	Principles and Skills of Public Health Administration	Seated		
PBH 771	Public Health Preparedness			Seated
PBH 778	Chronic Epidemiology		Online	

This is for planning purposes only and is subject to change.



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