

# MPH CONNECTION

2016-2017

THE OFFICIAL NEWS LETTER FOR THE MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM

“Creating a better world through Public Health”



Dr. David Claborn, DrPH, is the program’s **Interim Director**. He teaches courses in Environmental Health, Public Health Preparedness, and International Health & Infectious Diseases. Below, he talks about his current project which is on Mosquito surveillance in Missouri.

“The spread of the Zika virus from Africa via South America and finally to North America has caused great concern for the American public. Although the virus projects little threat to most healthy adults, it has been linked to very serious birth defects if the fetus is infected in utero. The primary means of transmission appears to be through the bite of certain mosquitoes, and this has occurred in Florida. The potential for transmission elsewhere in the U.S. is dependent on the presence of the vector species, which is *Aedes aegypti*, the Yellow Fever mosquito. There are historical records of the vector in Missouri, and the CDC recently produced models to estimate where the mosquito species is likely to occur in the state. Such models, of course, require ground-truthing, and that was what the MPH program did all summer. The project was done under contract AO315380144 issued by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.”

Over four months, graduate students, workers and faculty caught adult and larval mosquitoes throughout southern Missouri, focusing on places with artificial containers like cemeteries and wrecking yards. Larvae were raised to the adult stage and identified to species, a process requiring a lot of meticulous pinning and examination. Specimens were obtained from 29 counties, with multiple trips to each. About 15,000 specimens were trapped and identified over a four-month period. The good news is that no Yellow Fever mosquitoes were identified in Missouri. The species may still exist here, but it does not appear to be abundant. The bad news is that another vector of Zika, the Asian Tiger Mosquito, is abundant and wide-spread in the state. This study will serve as the basis for evidence-driven response if the virus does eventually make it into the state’s mosquito population.



Dr. Claborn conquering the mosquitoes

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## DR. KIP THOMPSON, PHD



Dr. Kip Thompson is a faculty member in the MPH Program at MSU teaching courses in Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Research Methods. He is also an Environmental Science Officer in the U.S. Army Reserves, holding the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He is currently deployed in Honduras for the next few months. While deployed with the Army he serves as the Chief of Preventive Medicine.

“In that capacity I am responsible for supervising four enlisted personnel and one Community Health Nurse. Our mission is three fold. First, we provide public health services on Soto Cano Airbase to include food service inspections, water quality testing, industrial hygiene testing and vector control (to include trapping mosquitoes, I can't get away from them!). The second part of our mission is to liaise with the local Ministry of Health to conduct public health related radio shows, water quality monitoring and community health mentoring. We also do local medical readiness and training exercises (MEDRETE's) where we conduct training by providing local communities with medical and public health services. Finally, the third part of our mission is to provide preventive medicine support to US personnel responding to natural disasters in the area. There are currently two preventive medicine personnel in the ground in Haiti supporting relief efforts after Hurricane Matthew. “

*“We also do local medical readiness and training exercises (MEDRETE's) where we conduct training by providing local communities with medical and public health services. “*

## MCNAIR SCHOLAR, Meghan Meyer

Meghan Meyers is from Palmyra, Missouri. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Health Science from Truman State University. Due to her work and achievements as a McNair scholar at Truman, she was offered one of the McNair Graduate Assistantship positions at the MPH Department at Missouri State.

The Ronald E. McNair program sets out to increase the number of PhD degrees held by first-generation and underrepresented students. At Tru-

man, she was involved in conducting independent research, along with attending exclusive professional development and preparation activities. Her research at Truman was titled ‘College students’ health perceptions of electronic cigarette use’, and was published in the McNair Scholarly Review.

“As a McNair GA, I am currently working alongside other GAs assisting Dr. Claborn with the Missouri mosquito surveillance project. I am very much looking forward to my time as an MPH student and all the opportunities MSU has to offer.”





Graduation Day: 5/13/2016

### **LESLIE KAVLAK, SPRING 2016 GRADUATE & ALUMNUS**

Leslie Kavlak, a former Graduate Assistant & spring 2016 MPH graduate, is currently working as a Public Health Specialist (Investigative Epidemiologist/Disease Intervention Specialist [DIS]) in the KCHD, Kansas City Health Department's Communicable Disease Prevention and Public Health Preparedness Division.

The main focus of her job is to prevent the spread of communicable diseases in the KCMO and surrounding areas by providing primary, secondary as well as tertiary public health prevention services.

"The KCHD strives at maintaining confidentiality and rapport with patients to ensure a trustworthy reputation within the community. In order to build such positive relationships, I have been given exceptional training in regards to disease intervention strategies as well as disease specific education." The KCHD also provides a wide variety of continuous education opportunities for all employees in order to assure a competent workforce.

Since she started her journey at the KCHD, she has been referred to as a Public Health Specialist, a DIS, and an Investigative Epidemiologist. "No matter the job title, the work experience and educational material received during my course of employment at the KCHD has most definitely strengthened my public health professional skills and opened my eyes to the many challenges and bountiful benefits of public health in action."

"The MPH program at Missouri State University provided me with the fundamental building blocks of all that is public health. The education I received from the professors as well as the professional connections during my 2 years with the program was beyond exceptional. I was provided an endless flow of invaluable public health related experiences, and I will take each and every one of them with me for the rest of my years to come. I am most definitely proud to be a Missouri State University MPH alumnus and will remain polishing my skills with a lifetime of continuous education. "

## **RECENT GRADUATES: SPRING 2016**

- ◆ ANUSHA MINNI-KANTI
- ◆ ASHOK KANUGULA
- ◆ BHARATH THANUGUNDLA
- ◆ CALINS ALPHONSE
- ◆ LESLIE KAVLAK
- ◆ MALVICKA BELLAMKONDA
- ◆ MELISSA COTTON
- ◆ PATRICIA NORTON
- ◆ REBECCA HOLCOMB
- ◆ SARAH BAFEIL
- ◆ SRAVANI KAMATAM
- ◆ SRAVANI KANDI
- ◆ YAN SUN

## **SUMMER 2016**

- ◆ EMILY OGDEN
- ◆ ERIN AGUT
- ◆ KATHRYN METZGER
- ◆ MAWUSE DAMUVE

## FUTURE PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS, FPHP



Students at the MPHA Conference

Future Public Health Professionals (FPHP) is a professional club organized by the Master of Public Health department. FPHP focuses on providing volunteer opportunities, trips to conferences or trainings, and networking within the program and with Public Health Professionals. FPHP meets monthly and has social events monthly. Currently, FPHP is organizing the Food Recovery Network on campus that picks up food from the dining halls and donates it to the South and Northside Senior Centers. FPHP coordinated a trip to the Annual Missouri Public Health Conference in Columbia, MO where the students are given an opportunity to present their research in a state-wide competition. For more information, access the FPHP page through Campus Link or send questions to: [Madison100@live.missouristate.edu](mailto:Madison100@live.missouristate.edu).

*“In 2014 alone, almost 2 million Americans were found to have abused or were dependent on prescription opioids.”*

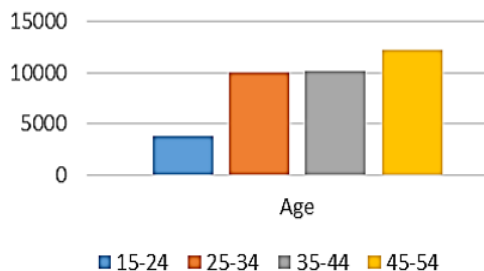
## PRESCRIPTION OPIOID EPIDEMIC

By Karishma Agarwal & Madison Poiry

An epidemic of addiction to opioid prescription pain killers is growing in America. More than 165,000 people have died in the U.S. from overdoses related to prescription opioids from 1999-2014. In 2014 alone, almost 2 million Americans were found to have abused or were dependent on prescription opioids. Over 1000 people are treated in the emergency rooms every day, for misusing prescription opioids. The FDA announced in March 2016 that the regulations for warning labels were expanded to include opioid painkillers, to warn people of the risk of misuse, addiction and overdose. Because this is such a pressing issue, the American Medical Association Alliance, AMAA created a task force to research the subject matter to develop educational material. The MSU Master of Public Health department was given the opportunity to collaborate on this project.



### Opioid Overdose Deaths in 2014 by age group



After completing an annotated bibliography of the research and data concerning opioid addiction and overdose epidemic, trifold was designed for distribution. We created a leave behind card and brochure. We also wrote a script for an informational video that was screened at the AMAA National Conference. This video was then published on YouTube to be used as educational material by anyone who could benefit from it.

Working on this project has been a wealth of experience. We're very thankful to our professors in the MPH Department for giving us the opportunity and advising us in this project. We are also grateful to Barbara Hover from the AMAA Alliance for approaching the MPH program to collaborate with this research.

## CEPH ACCREDITATION

The Missouri State University Master of Public Health Program is undergoing the re-accreditation process with the Council on Education in Public Health (CEPH) in October, 2017. CEPH is an independent organization, recognized by the US Department of Education, which is committed to developing standards for graduate level programs in Public Health, to ensure that students receive quality and well-rounded education on Public Health. The MSU MPH program first received accreditation in October 2012. The MPH program is committed to the values set by CEPH, not only for quality in the education that is offered but to award degrees that will have broad appeal to future schools and employers because they come from an accredited program. Part of continuing improvement and quality is by providing feedback on the MPH department. Anyone wishing to comment on the program can do so by contacting CEPH at the following address: CEPH, [1010 Wane Avenue, Suite 220, Silver Spring, MD 20910](#) or at 202-789-1895.



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## FUTURE COURSE OFFERINGS

Course	Course Title	Spring 2017	Summer 2017	Fall 2017
PBH 720	Epidemiology	Seated		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			Seated
PBH 756	Introduction to Public Health			Blended, Weekend
PBH 760	Research Methods in Public Health	Online		
PBH 783	International Health and Infectious Disease	Seated		
PBH 775	Principles and Skills of Public Health Administration	Seated		
PBH 781	Public Health Preparedness			Seated