

MPH Alumni Newsletter

Winter 2009; Volume 3, Number 3

Public Health Connections from the Last Frontier



CEPH accredits UAA's Master of Public Health Program!

The University of Alaska Anchorage Master of Public Health (MPH) program recently earned initial accreditation as a graduate program by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) (www.ceph.org). The MPH program received the maximum five-year term for initial accreditation, making it nationally accredited through Dec. 31, 2014, with requirements for interim reports in 2010 and 2011.

The MPH program enhances health in diverse communities across Alaska, the circumpolar north, the nation, and the world. This is accomplished through educating public health practice leaders, scientifically investigating public health issues, and engaging communities to identify, assess, prevent, and mitigate community health challenges.

CEPH is an independent agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit schools of public health and certain public health programs offered in settings other than schools of public health. Accreditation is a voluntary process that requires adherence to national standards of excellence, and documentation of one's efforts.

Initial accreditation is a multi-year process that includes acceptance as an applicant by CEPH, an intensive self-study, a campus site visit by external experts, and additional periodic documentation about all aspects of the program.

"The MPH program has been working toward this accreditation for several years and we will continue working hard to maintain it," said Rhonda Johnson, chair of UAA's Department of Health Sciences and MPH Program Coordinator. "We appreciate all the support we've received from many community partners and colleagues in the completion of this initial accreditation process."

The MPH program has graduated 27 students and currently has over 80 active graduate students. The program is run by a program coordinator, and supported by five full-time faculty and over 20 affiliate faculty who support the program through service on student committees, participation in the MPH Seminar Series, and teaching of elective courses. The program also has an active and supportive MPH Advisory Council, new Student Advisory Council, and MPH Alumni Association. 👍

MPH Alumni Association:

Dan Lien, President
Tammy Zulz, Vice-Pres.
Amanda Walch, Secretary

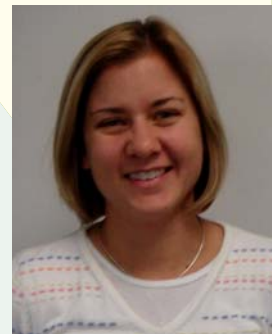
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Faculty Profile: Elizabeth Hodges Snyder, PhD, MPH

We are pleased to welcome Dr. Elizabeth Hodges Snyder as a new MPH program faculty member. Dr. Hodges Snyder has been at UAA since August and is co-teaching courses this semester. She received her MPH in 2003 from Rollins School of Public Health at

Emory University in Atlanta, GA in the Global Environmental Health Program, and her PhD in soil and water science from the University of Florida in August 2009.



Continued on p. 3

Visit the MPH web site: <http://health.uaa.alaska.edu/mph/>

MPH Alumni Association "Meet & Greet" Night Set for Dec. 10

The 3rd annual UAA MPH Alumni Association Meet & Greet will take place on Thursday, December 10th at the Snow Goose Restaurant (2nd floor) from 5-8 pm. All alumni, current MPH students, and other MPH program affiliates are encouraged to attend. This event is held each December the evening before the

program's MPH seminar day, which takes place this year on Friday, December 11th.

The Alumni Association hosts this event, which is loaded with great conversation, appetizers, pizza, and beverages. Family are welcome to this fun-filled event! The Snow Goose is located in downtown Anchorage at 717 W. 3rd Avenue. Questions? Call Dan Lien at 907-250-1712 or email danlien@excite.com. 👍

Summer Institute in Circumpolar Health Research

The Summer Institute in Circumpolar Health (HS A697) will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark between May 17-21, 2010. It is coordinated by Dr. Rhonda Johnson and held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the International Network for Circumpolar Health Research (INCHR). Themes this year will be health disparities in the north and dietary assessment methodologies.

For more information on the Summer Institute, visit: sichr.circumpolarhealth.org/

For more information on the INCHR, visit: www.inchr.com/

If interested in participating, please contact Dr. Johnson soon; space is limited (early registration deadline is December 1). Additional travel fees apply.

Note: it is possible to participate in the Summer Institute without getting academic credit; see the Institute web site for more information.

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Alumni Profile: Kathy Anderson

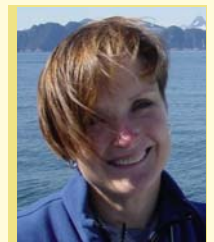
Kathy Anderson completed her MPH in May 2009. Her background is in "corporate America," in high technology; she retired in 1998 from AT&T in the Lower 48 as VP of Business Internet Services. Going into the MPH program, she had a BS in Math, a vintage 1970s MS in Computer Science, and an executive MBA from Harvard. For the last five years, she has been teaching marketing in the MBA program at Alaska Pacific University. The confluence of marketing and public health, along with all things quantitative, interest Kathy, and she hopes to establish herself as a freelance program evaluation consultant in Alaska.

She and her software-guru husband, Patrick Speranza, are currently consulting with the State Division of Public Health per-

forming an ongoing program evaluation of the CDC-funded Breast and Cervical Health Check program

(www.hss.state.ak.us/DPH/wcfh/BCHC/). This assignment is actually a continuation of her thesis work, which

compared the practices of cervical cancer screening providers in the BCHC program to national practice guidelines. Kathy feels fortunate to be presenting her thesis and follow-on work to the CDC and at the national APHA convention in Philadelphia in November, and also at the Alaska Health Summit in December. In her spare time, Kathy writes for *Fish Alaska* magazine and does pro-bono strategic planning consulting for non-profits. She and Patrick split their time between Anchorage and Homer, and they fish whenever they can.



Faculty Profile (continued...)

Dr. Hodges Snyder is often asked why she did her doctoral work in soil and water science when her previous studies were in public health. Although her MPH program prepared her for identifying public health issues and applying solutions, she was also interested in the science behind how people were exposed and what environmental processes were involved.

Dr. Hodges Snyder will combine her two fields in an MPH summer elective course "Soil & Water Science in Public Health" and an undergraduate course "Environmental Science in Public Health." Dr. Hodges Snyder is currently co-teaching "Research Tools & Methods" with Dr. Garcia and "Environmental & Occupational Health" with Dr. Monsour. She will be the principal instructor for these courses this spring semester. She is also a member of the

UAA Sustainability Committee and the Distance Education Task Force. Other public health interests include health impact assessments and environmental justice issues. She is currently working on a grant to assess the health impacts of a resource development project in southwest Alaska.

Dr. Hodges Snyder is a native Floridian, but also spent a number of years living overseas in Pakistan, Taiwan, and Venezuela where she conducted her MPH thesis research. Prior to moving to Alaska, she had only visited here once for a week during the summer when she was a child. She said, "Alaska has always been on my list of places to live someday so I'm happy my first position following grad school ended up here." Dr. Hodges Snyder enjoys outdoor activities including running, cross-country skiing, gardening, and walking her two dogs. She is also learning to knit. 🍷

Alumni Profile: Allyson Kelley

Allyson Kelley completed her MPH in December 2006. With a background in environmental health, community health, and American Indian/Alaska Native public health, she works as the Community Engagement Director at the Center for Native Health Partnerships in Bozeman, Montana. Working directly with tribal communities to build community

health research capacity, her work takes on many forms. This includes teaching classes and workshops in environmental health, data analysis, grant writing, and strategic planning for health programs. In her spare time, Allyson enjoys hiking, reading, and spending time with her family.



Alumni Profile: Jenny Salcido-Austin

Jenny Salcido-Austin received her MPH in August 2007. Her thesis focused on nutrition education through dietitians to help reduce cases of anemia in Alaskan children participating in the WIC (Women, Infant, and Children) Program. Jenny currently lives in Yorktown, Virginia with her husband who is in the Air Force, two children (Jacob 3 years and Rosie 9 months), two dogs, and an orange tabby cat.

She works as a Nutrition Consultant specializing in pediatric and geriatric nutrition, menu and recipe development, and food safety. She also continues to work with the

Alaska Salvation Army as a Nutrition Consultant. Some of her job assignments include developing menus and special diets for those who are diabetic, developing recipes, developing food safety protocols for employees working in the kitchen, and composing nutrition articles for a health newsletter.

When Jenny is not busy with her family and career, she enjoys reading and researching anything nutrition-related, traveling, going to the beach (although she really misses hiking and the beautiful mountains in Alaska), going to Busch Gardens, and learning how to make jewelry.



MPH Alumni Newsletter

Two New Electives Offered in Spring Semester 2010

Two graduate level electives will be offered via Distance Education in Spring 2010. These HS 690 Special Topics courses are a great way to build your Emphasis in the MPH Program. Alumni are also welcome!

Introduction to Global Health

-Taught by Nancy Nix, MD

This course provides an overview of global health issues and determinants of health in the context of populations in less developed countries. Key health issues will include maternal and child health, reproductive health, nutrition, and infectious diseases (e.g., HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and environmental health themes of water, sanitation, and indoor air quality). In reviewing and exploring intervention strategies, the impact of social, cultural, and economic factors will be considered.

Cancer Epidemiology

-Taught by Betty Buchan Monsour, PhD, DFTCB

This course addresses the current understanding of what cancer is, how it develops biologically and genetically, the “who, when, and where” of cancer (its descriptive epidemiology), and the determinants of cancer. It will examine in detail major aspects of the relationships between exposure and cancer on human populations. Substantive results from selected cancer epidemiologic studies will be presented. This course will include discussions of pertinent methodological issues in order to provide students with an epidemiological framework for evaluating hypotheses concerning the etiologic role of various risk factors as well as for developing rational preventive measures.



Coordinator's Corner

Thank you to everyone who has been actively involved and supportive of our multi-year, multi-faceted effort to gain national accreditation for our graduate program in public health. We were very excited to learn just weeks ago that we received Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) accreditation for our UAA MPH program! This recognition confirms that our program meets national standards of excellence while continuing to recognize and address the unique public health challenges and context in our state and circumpolar region. As noted on the CEPH website:

“CEPH accreditation serves multiple purposes for different constituents. In general, specialized accreditation attests to the quality of an educational program that prepares for entry into a recognized profession.”

For a more detailed description of accreditation through CEPH, as well as to see our new listing, visit the CEPH site: www.ceph.org.

Thank you to our MPH Alumni Association for their continuing support. Please look for expansion of our MPH alumni web page in the next few months, and consider submitting your own updates. We love to hear from you.

health.uaa.alaska.edu/mpH/alumni

Hope to see you at the Third Annual Alumni Meet and Greet on Thursday December 10th at the Snow Goose in Anchorage, 5pm-8pm (see more info on page 2).

Best wishes for the holiday season and winter break ahead!

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