

MPH Alumni Newsletter

Winter 2010-II; Volume 4, Number 3

Public Health Connections from the Last Frontier



Winter Greetings from Betty Monsour, PhD, DFTCB

It has been a few years since I have seen many of you and I hope your public health career and all your endeavors are going well. There have been many changes in my life over the past 2 years.

First, I got married in August 2009 and my new last name is Monsour. I have known Rev. Dr. John Monsour for 20 years. We both lived in Tampa, FL and were quite good friends. John is an ordained Episcopal minister and a licensed Family and Marriage Therapist. We lost contact over the past 12 years. A few years ago, his wife Kay passed away from a rare cancer. Later, John thought of me, found my CV online, and sent me an email. I invited him up for a visit, we fell in love, he moved up here, and we got married. It is just wonderful being married again, especially to someone like John.

The other good news is that John and I have been on quite a health kick. Last year we had way too much fun eating and traveling and we gained a lot of

weight. This year, our health became our first priority and we both have lost weight. I have lost over 40 lbs and I still want to lose another 20. We just had to become the poster "children" for public health!

I am still enjoying teaching in the MPH program and I have developed two new elective courses which I have been teaching over the last 2 years: Cancer Epidemiology and The Epidemiology of Aging. I am developing another elective, Principles and Practice of Toxicology in Public Health, which should be available next year. I am also continuing my Drug Impaired Driver research and continuing with my State Contract on Medication Education for Elders and Senior Citizens.

I wish you all happiness and good health.

Betty 🍷



MPH Alumni Association:

Dan Lien, President ('07)
Tammy Zulz, Vice-President ('07)
Amanda Walch, Secretary ('08)

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UAA



MPH Alumni Association Seeks Scholarship Donations

The UAA MPH Alumni Association has formed a student scholarship program for incoming or current students. As most alumni know, financing graduate school can be a struggle and scholarships are one way to ease this burden. Although donations to date have provided enough funds to grant scholarship awards, continued giving is needed to support an ongoing program. Alumni are encouraged to donate to the

scholarship fund; any amount is helpful, no matter how small. Contributions may be made via check to:

UAA Department of Health Sciences
MPH Alumni Scholarship Program
3211 Providence Drive
Anchorage, AK 99508

You may also contribute by contacting Kristi Elkins in the Health Sciences department at 907-786-6565.

Applications for the first annual scholarship will be available in January. For more information, contact Amanda Walsh: amanda@shiftfocus.net. 🍷

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

Alaska Health Summit Coming to Anchorage January 10-12

The 28th Annual Alaska Health Summit, convened by the Alaska Public Health Association, will be held January 10 - 12, 2011 at the Hotel Captain Cook in Anchorage, Alaska. This year's theme is "Starting Upstream: Creating Healthy Communities." Information about the Summit, including online registration, can be found at www.alaskapublichealth.org/health-summit.html. 👍



**28th Annual
Alaska Health Summit**
www.alaskapublichealth.org

January 10th - 12th, 2011

Hotel Captain Cook, Anchorage

Save the date!

MPH Alumni Updates

Genevieve Maurits '10 (Eagle River, AK)

Genevieve welcomed Estelle Sofia Maurits into her family on September 5, 2010 at 6:21 PM. Baby Estelle was a whopping 11 pounds 5 ounces. She spent the first five weeks of her life in the newborn Intensive Care Unit due to respiratory issues. Estelle's family is thankful she has made a full recovery and is now at home and doing great.



Kathy Anderson '09 (Tampa, FL)

Kathy is attending the University of South Florida where she is working on a PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies at UAF. She is interested in Social Marketing and Social Media and their application to public health interventions. Kathy is taking nine face-to-face credits at USF and three distance credits from UAF and is loving every minute of the learning. "Life is good, but the October weather is frighteningly addictive and



I miss my husband and friends." Kathy plans to return to Anchorage in early January, just in time for the ALPHA Summit. "I'm leading a panel on Social Marketing there, and we've arranged for one of my instructors, Nancy Lee, to be a keynote speaker on the subject. See you there!"

Hannah Hawkins '06 (Anchorage, AK)

Hannah is currently in the class of 2013 at the University of Washington School of Medicine and is doing her residency at the Providence Alaska Family Practice Residency Clinic in Anchorage. 👍



Congratulations ...

to the following individuals who successfully defended their MPH thesis in the Fall of 2010:

- Cheryl Case
- Peggy Cobey
- Lisa Davis
- Bruce Myers
- Desire' Shepler

Alumni Profile: Yvonne Goldsmith

Yvonne received her MPH in May 2010. For her thesis, she investigated the use of interrupted time series analysis to evaluate the PCV7 vaccine in Medicaid-enrolled children under 2 years of age.

Yvonne currently works in the Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit at the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. She tracks MCH health status indicators (such as the Title V MCH national and state performance measures and the Healthy Alaska indicators) which are used for grant proposals, program evaluation, and resource-based accountability reporting. She also conducts surveillance of pediatric indicators using

administrative data sets, develops needs assessments, and provides assistance on evaluation and data analysis.

Her two grown daughters have thankfully returned to Anchorage, Alaska after completing their education. Yvonne is an avid year-round bike commuter and enjoys touring the world on two wheels with her husband, Prof. Scott Goldsmith, UAA.



Alumni Profile: Shawne Johnson

Shawne Johnson earned her MPH degree in August 2010. Her thesis explored the attitudes and beliefs of African American breastfeeding mothers enrolled in the Wisconsin WIC program, with regards to administering infant vitamin D supplements. As the Assistant Director of Nursing at a health department in Wisconsin, she provides support and training to public health nurses and WIC dietitians, and is the mentor for Spanish-speaking community health workers (Promotoras). Shawne directs a community workgroup which recently received a grant to study the effects of

distributing vitamin D supplements directly to WIC families.

Shawne lives with her husband in Wisconsin, but hopes to relocate to Alaska in the near future, since one of her sons is a new teacher at Lake Otis Elementary School in Anchorage. She enjoys gardening, hiking, biking, and cross country skiing.



Alumni Profile: Stacy Kelley

Stacy Kelley completed her MPH in May 2010. For her thesis, she conducted both a process and outcome evaluation of a men's retreat for prostate and testicular cancer survivors.

Since 2002, Stacy has been employed by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium. She is currently a Cancer Program Partnership Coordinator and develops new cancer education resources and programs for the Alaska Native Tribal System. She also provides pro-

gram evaluation and technical assistance for tribal and non tribal cancer programs.

Stacy lives in Girdwood, Alaska with her husband who manages an eco tourism company and her son Cooper John who was born April 1, 2010.



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MPH Alumni Association "Meet & Greet" Night Dec. 9

The 4th annual MPH Alumni Association Meet & Greet will take place on Thursday, December 9 from 6-8 PM at the Snow Goose Restaurant & Brewery in Anchorage. This event is a great time to catch up with former classmates and current students. MPH Seminar Day will be held the next day, on Friday, December 10.

Please contact Dan Lien with any questions about this signature alumni association event: danlien@excite.com or 907-250-1712. 👍



Coordinator's Corner

It has been a busy, eventful semester while I fulfilled the role as Acting Chair of the Department of Health Sciences. Next semester, Dr. Rhonda Johnson will return to UAA after finishing her sabbatical in the Northwest Territories, Canada.

In November, some of our students, faculty, and staff attended the annual American Public Health Association 2010 conference in Denver where they had an opportunity to present their work. Our MPH Program booth was also a success!

Dr. Jenny Miller added on the role as Project Director for the Alaska LEND Without Walls planning project. This HRSA-funded program will provide maternal and child health service delivery and Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities (LEND) in Alaska. One component of the project is to prepare trainees from a wide variety of professional disciplines to assume leadership roles and to ensure high levels of interdisciplinary clinical competence.

Dr. Gabe Garcia continues to focus his research on ethnic health disparities. He takes an active advisory role with several local organizations and is the Research and Education Training Core Assistant Director for the Center for Addressing Health Disparities through Re-

search and Education (CAHDRE). This Center brings new health career pathway programs that create more opportunities here in Alaska. The Center is always looking for mentors for K-12, as well as undergraduate and graduates interested in health professions.

Access to nutritious foods is an issue in Alaska, particularly in rural areas. Dr. Liz Hodges Snyder has initiated a proof of concept project of an indoor vertical drip irrigation system to grow fruits and veggies for eventual expansion to rural Alaska schools and households.

Dr. Janet Johnson is leading the effort to develop a new Bachelor of Science degree in Health Sciences. We also expect a minor in public health for next Fall Semester.

Dr. Betty Monsour is establishing the organizing committee for the 2014 World Congress of Epidemiology in Anchorage. If students are interested in joining this committee or in representing their organizations, please contact Dr. Monsour.

So, everyone has been working hard and expanding areas of study, research, collaboration, and possible student opportunities. We hope you all have a good holiday break!

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