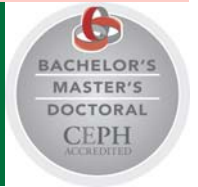




The Public Health Programs at UNC Charlotte  
(the MSPH, the BSPH, and the PhD in Public Health Sciences)  
are fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health

MSPHprogram@unc.edu  
BSPHprogram@unc.edu  
michele.issel@unc.edu (PhD)

PHCC-cert@unc.edu  
CHGradCert@unc.edu



**Public Health Programs at UNC Charlotte**  
Master of Science in Public Health (MSPH)  
Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH)  
Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health Sciences (PhD)

**Transitions and Reflections...**



Master's  
(outgoing)

The end of the 2014-2015 Academic Year marked the beginning of the transition of the MSPH Program leadership from Dr. Michael Thompson, who oversaw the program from its rebirth as an MSPH during the 2005-2006 academic year through its initial and subsequent accreditations by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH).

During the past 10 years, the program expanded from a handful of students to an annual cohort of 25-30 and spurred similar growth in its related graduate certificate programs. In parallel, the



Doctoral

Department launched and saw accredited a successful and popular undergraduate major and its first PhD program, both built using the same model. Dr. Thompson now turns his attention to the MHA Program, which he also has led since Fall 2011.



Dr. Susan Sell,  
Interim Chair

Succeeding Dr. Thompson as MSPH Director is Dr. Jan Warren-Findlow. Dr. Warren-Findlow has been part of the core cadre of faculty supporting the MSPH since her arrival at UNC Charlotte in 2005.

As part of this planned transition, Dr. Warren-Findlow has led our efforts to respond to the comments raised during our CEPH accreditation site visit. Foremost among these efforts is simplifying our program competency model {Most of you should have received an invitation to participate in a survey asking you to vet the new competency model—please respond if you haven't already.}

In addition, Dr. Gary Silverman returned to the faculty on 1 July. Dr. Susan Sell, recently Senior Associate Dean in the Graduate School, will serve as Interim Department Chair while we conduct a national search for a new chair.



Master's  
(incoming)



Bachelor's

**Representative Earle Addresses Health Disparities**



Dr. Crystal Piper

On February 27<sup>th</sup>, Assistant Professor and lead organizer Dr. Crystal Piper introduced the inaugural **North Carolina State Representative Beverly Earle Health Disparities**

**Lecture** with the theme Advancing Science, Policy, & Practice. Inspired by her own observations of the disparities that pervade our health system and guided by her belief that health care is a right and not a privilege, Dr. Piper spent several years laying the groundwork for this collaboration.

The program addressed the healthcare needs of low-income populations, racial and ethnic minorities, and other vulnerable groups. It featured introductory remarks by its namesake, Representative Earle, accompanied by a poster session and a distinguished panel of academics and practitioners. that included Dr. Judy Cornelius (School of Nursing) and Ms. Cheryl Emmanuel

(Mecklenburg County Health Department) as well as Public Health Sciences doctoral student Ms. Corliss Allen and representatives from the Novant and Carolinas health care systems.

This free, public event was held in conjunction with UNC Chapel Hill's 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Minority Health Conference and included a live stream of its keynote presentation by Dr. William Darity, Jr., the Samuel DuBois Cook Professor of Public Policy, African and African American Studies, and Economics at Duke University speaking on economic mobility and minority health.



Representative Beverly Earle

## Capstone Awards



Meghan Wally, MSPH ('15) with Dr. Larissa Brunner Huber

**Meghan Wally** (nee Kusper), MSPH ('15) recently won the UNC Charlotte Health Academy Master's Student Paper Contest with a submission based upon her master's thesis entitled "The Association between Preconception Care Receipt and the Timeliness and Adequacy of Prenatal Care: An Examination of Multi-state Data from Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) 2009-2011". Meghan also presented her findings via a poster at the Graduate Research Symposium on April 11, and won first place in the health section.

Meghan completed her thesis under the supervi-

## I Am My Sister: Teen Empowerment Summit 2015

On November 1<sup>st</sup> 2014, the non-profit organization *I Am My Sister* held its second annual **I Am... Teen Empowerment Summit** in collaboration with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte's Department of Public Health Sciences. The theme of this year's summit was "Back to Basics: Establishing a Solid Foundation to Ensure a Successful Future."

The Summit is designed to enhance and leverage teens' leadership and communications skills. The summit featured exciting breakout

sessions, innovative fora, a mini tour of the college, and an opportunity for youth to meet and share ideas -in a fun-filled learning environment -with other dynamic teens from across North and South Carolina. Teens also were educated about important health, relationship, and finance topics pertaining to their futures. Ms. Lela Blackwell, president of *I Am My Sister*, organized the event. This free event was open to teens aged thirteen to nineteen and parents of teens in this age range.

This year's summit drew over 150 teens and 30 adults. Event highlights include the "He Said, She Said" Forum and the "Act Like A Lady" and the "Think Like A Man" breakout sessions. Power 98 FM's Yasmin Young and Danny Diaz moderated the "He Said, She Said" Forum. It featured a panel of college males and females, high school males and females, and male and female parents. The forum aimed to build a collective perspective from males and females across different life stages.



BSPH student Kristen Brown (standing) facilitates a discussion

The "Act Like A Lady" breakout session was designed for teen girls, where they understood bra sizes, fashion, healthy skin care, feminine hygiene, and relationships. The "Think Like A Man" break out session for teen boys focused on a range of topics from tying a tie to handshaking to defining what manhood really means.

Other breakout topics included leadership development, teen pregnancy prevention, networking and new friendships, bullying, hygiene, communication, sexual health, healthy skin care, healthy eating and zumba, teen dating violence prevention and healthy relationships, next step for college, community service, financial literacy, and mental health.

The sessions were presented by UNC Charlotte BSPH majors, I Am My Sister club members, and



BSPH students Krishel Pileggi (l) and Shanice Roache "post" to social media

practitioners. The summit marked the second time that BSPH majors, led by Program Director and behavior change theories and practice class instructor Ms. Camina Davis, MS, CHES, has taken on the challenge of designing the sessions. Each student group selected, re-searched, designed, and delivered a topic during the summit.

Feedback from the teens and parents highlighted how much the teens loved spending time with Ms. Davis and the BSPH students while being able to tour our college campus.



Summit attendees visit Lynch Hall

Join our  
**"UNC Charlotte  
 BSPH Alumni  
 Association"**  
 group on...





## UNC Charlotte Goes Red with the American Heart Association

The Graduate Public Health Association (GPHA) collaborated with the American Heart Association to host the annual **Go Red** event that raises awareness of heart disease to the UNC Charlotte community.

The event educated students, faculty, and staff about the importance of heart health. The American Heart Association, UNC Charlotte Kinesiology department, Recreational Services, Beth Mack, MPH, RD, and Chartwells dietician, Center for Wellness Promotion, and the Public Health Association all



manned booths with heart health content. GPHA collaborated to conduct blood pressure checks, fitness assessments, provide heart health information, healthy eating tips, trivia games, and health snacks.

Guests also had the opportunity to participate in a photo booth and to win prizes. Participants received a raffle ticket that required them to visit each table in order to receive a swag bag filled with fun red items (in keeping with the theme) and complete their entry for one of the prizes.



sion of Drs. Larissa Brunner Huber (chair, pictured), L. Michele Issel, and Michael E. Thompson. Meghan's main findings were that women who received preconception care had increased odds of both timely and adequate prenatal care. She is now adapting her manuscript for submission to a peer-reviewed scholarly journal.

## Commencement Spring 2015

## Drs. Saunders and Racine Tackle Childhood Obesity in Cabarrus

Recent data suggest that 23% of children in the U.S. are obese. Children classified as obese are at risk for diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and premature death. Medical care costs incurred by obese children can run into billions of dollars. UNC Charlotte Public Health Sciences faculty Drs. Bill Saunders and Elizabeth Racine have partnered with Carolinas HealthCare System Northeast and Cabarrus County community stakeholders to develop a childhood obesity action plan.

Negating this epidemic of childhood obesity requires a multifaceted and interdisciplinary approach led by community leaders, policy makers, educators, health providers, and researchers. Drs. Saunders and Racine, along with a team of UNC Charlotte and community researchers, supported by the university's Urban Institute, met with people from across Cabarrus County to identify critical factors that impact childhood obesity. Focus groups among various stakeholder groups (e.g., those working in education, nutrition, physical activity, research, healthcare, policy, community needs, and local businesses) brainstormed ideas for programs and policies that might be effective locally to prevent childhood obesity. Parents sur-



Drs. Bill Saunders (l) and Elizabeth Racine

veys also identified types of interventions and policies that might help.

Drawing upon these data sources, the UNC Charlotte team identify five priority programmatic recommendations: 1) integrate more health, physical education and nutrition education throughout grades K-12; 2) develop messages that identify the benefits of healthy eating as well as being physically active; 3) educate parents, caregivers, and healthcare providers about the importance of and ways of enhancing child nutrition and physical activity; 4) expand greenways and increase accessibility to parks; and 5) implement and expand policies that encourage decreased consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.

The UNC Charlotte research team will assist a long-term implementation team of 10-15 Cabarrus community stakeholders in targeting the five priority areas, identifying potential funders, writing grants, educating the community and policy makers, and overseeing obesity interventions. With these initiatives, UNC Charlotte Public Health Sciences researchers are providing critical support and expertise to assist local communities as they address the complex issue of childhood obesity.



MSPH graduates pose during commencement lineup

Join the  
**“UNC Charlotte  
 Master of Science in**

**Public Health”**

group on...



## Dr. Jessica Schorr Saxe



UNC Charlotte Delta Omega Beta Phi Chapter President Allyson Cochran, MSPH ('12) (l) with honorary inductee Dr. Jessica Schorr Saxe.

**Jessica Schorr Saxe, MD,** is a long-time advocate for a single payer health care system and a long serving member of the UNC Charlotte Public Health Advisory Board.

As a primary care physician who has seen the many inequities inherent in our current healthcare financing system, Jessica argues for "a national health care system, sometimes dubbed "Medicare for all." She now leads **Health Care Justice –NC**, a chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program.

In recognition of her service to our program and to society, Dr. Jessica Schorr Saxe was inducted as an honorary member of Delta Omega.

The **Donna C. Arrington Public Health Graduate Scholarship Endowment** supports master's and doctoral students studying in the Department of Public Health Sciences who are destined to become tomorrow's public health heroes. Visit <http://giving.uncc.edu> to donate to this or other PHS-specific funds.

## National Public Health Week 2015

UNC Charlotte's celebration of National Public Health Week 2015 was a huge success. The events were well received and well attended.

The week kicked off with keynote speaker, Richard J. Jackson giving two fascinating presentations entitled

"We Are What We Build—Building for Health"



Dr. Richard Jackson

and "We Are What We Eat and What We Build". The latter presentation was oriented towards a student audience and provided guidance to those in many disciplines integrating around the theme of how we must manage place to promote healthy



populations while the former was presented as the College's BlueCross and BlueShield of North

Carolina signature event and targeted the health and development communities. Dr. Jackson stressed that rising health care costs and the epidemics of obesity and diabetes cannot be addressed only through serving the sick.

The week continued with sessions on disaster preparedness and

seatbelt safety and a campus health fair. Additionally, many of our accomplished students were inducted into the public health honor society, Delta Omega; as well as the health administration honor society Upsilon Phi Delta.



Kierra Jackson, BSPH ('15), and Tony McLaurin, MSPH ('15) promote wellness at the NPHW Health Fair

## Delta Omega

On Friday 10 April, the UNC Charlotte Beta Phi Chapter of Delta Omega, the national public health honorary society, held its annual membership induction as the capstone event to our National Public Health Week celebration. Led by Chapter president Allyson Cochran, MSPH ('12), we inducted 5 new associate (BSPH graduate), 2 student (MSPH graduate), 4 alumni, one faculty, and one honorary members.

Associate and student members are selected from among the top graduating students (based upon GPA) who demonstrate potential for leadership in public health. This group of inductees included associate members Bria Marlowe, Destiny Stutts, Kelsey Mongeau, Khrystle Bullock, and Alexa Huffstetler and



The Delta Omega induction ceremony

student members Meghan Wally and Sangamitra Krupakar.

Alumni members are selected based upon demonstrated excellence and leadership in public health practice. MSPH graduates Deidre Feeney ('12), Raven Jones ('13), Jessica Toth ('07), and Marianne Weant ('11) were this year's alumni inductees.

Faculty inductee, Dr. Elena Platonova, was selected for demonstrated excellence in public health scholarship, teaching, and service.

Honorary inductee Dr. Jessica Schorr Saxe (see side bar) was selected based upon her exceptional qualifications and meritorious distinction in the field of public health.