

CSUF | Public Health

COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



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Chair's Message

Warm greetings to our campus and community partners!

And welcome to the 2023-24 academic year. As I look out my office window and observe crowds of students and faculty returning to campus, I can't help but reflect on the past year and the many successes we have achieved. Last year, we graduated 420 undergraduate students and 18 graduate MPH students, and we presented 24 student scholarships and awards. Our faculty were awarded 8 grants/contracts totaling \$1.4M. In addition, several of our students worked with faculty on their ongoing research projects, experiencing first-hand the thrill of collecting and analyzing data to answer urgent questions faced by our society to improve health for all.

As we embark on a new academic year, we face continued challenges in confronting systemic and structural racism, achieving health equity, anticipating and preventing future pandemics, protecting communities from the negative effects of climate on health, preventing violence, and determining appropriate uses of artificial intelligence in the public health workforce. This is no small list! One thing is certain—we will get much further confronting these challenges when we do so together.

Please enjoy this newsletter as we shine a spotlight on some of our outstanding students and faculty. We look forward to seeing you in the coming year!

All the best of health,

Michele Wood, PhD
Professor and Chair
CSUF Department of Public Health



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Public Health faculty member and graduate student work together to improve health in the City of Fullerton

Department of Public Health Associate Professor and Fullerton City Council member Shana Charles and MPH student Lynnette De Los Angeles bring a Health in All Policies approach to local government

As an assistant health educator with the Cal State Fullerton's Titan Well program, Lynette de Los Angeles has been actively engaged in promoting the health of students on campus through a variety of outreach and educational events. Lynette began her journey in public health as an undergraduate student at Cal State Fullerton in the Department of Health Science (which is now the Department of Public Health). She was a student assistant with TitanWell until 2020, then moved into the role of assistant health educator which she has held for the past three years.

In 2022, Lynette began as a student in the Master of Public Health Program where she deepened her skills and knowledge in health education but also was exposed to a broader set of concepts like health in all policies and systems change. When it came time to identify an internship, Dr. Mo Sami, the MPH Internship Coordinator, encouraged Lynette to identify an opportunity outside of Cal State Fullerton. Though it would be challenging to take on a new position as an intern with a full time job and as a full time student, Lynette set out to work with a number of community based organizations.

Working closely with Dr. Sami, Lynette focused on developing a unique opportunity with Dr. Shana Charles, Associate Professor of Public Health and City Council-member for the City of Fullerton. While tabling at a university outreach event, Lynette had a memorable conversation about public health with Dr. Charles and decided to propose an internship with the councilmember. After attending the CSU Health Policy Conference and seeing health policy in action through topics such as naloxone and opioid education as well as medication abortion, Lynette knew that she wanted to learn more about government's role in public health.

This summer, Lynette worked as a Community Resource Intern for District 3 of the City of Fullerton. In her role, she actively engaged community members to identify their needs and challenges; attended city council meetings and community outreach events; developed newsletters for residents that included highlights from city council meetings and community events. She also started an effort to analyze public comment at city council meetings and community events using a "health in all policies" framework to identify themes around resident interests and needs. "Lynette's work in organizing my community meetings and creating a district newsletter has been invaluable," Dr. Charles stated. "Because of her efforts, I've been able to bring a public health ethos to Council and communicate directly with the public."

As she finishes her internship, Lynette has begun to think more about the upstream factors that affect community health. Though she has learned about social determinants of health in the classroom many times, her internship has allowed her to see in person how social factors impact communities. The experience has broadened her view of public health, made her more interested in local government and how it impacts people's lives and health, and increased her personal commitment to civic engagement.



Councilmember and Associate Professor Charles, left, with MPH student Lynette De Los Angeles.

Dr. Alysia Rivera named *2023 Jeff Fortuna Outstanding Lecturer*

The 2023 recipient of the Jeff Fortuna Outstanding Lecturer award is Dr. Alysia Rivera. While earning a doctorate in educational leadership (Ed.D.), Dr. Rivera was the department's full-time Lecturer and Lead Undergraduate Advisor, going above and beyond her required duties to provide students with an exceptional educational experience. Her students stated that she was "welcoming," "encouraging," "engaging," and that her classes were "interesting" and "fun." In addition to consistently receiving top evaluations from her students, Dr. Rivera provided important service to the Department of Public Health by advising students, working on developing a Public Health minor, and planning and hosting a part-time lecturer retreat as well as student outreach. The department congratulates Dr. Rivera for this award!

Department of Public Health faculty member to initiate international project on social determinants of health

Anthony DiStefano, Ph.D., M.P.H., Professor, Department of Public Health, is spending the fall 2023 term at Kyoto University to launch a new study in Japan. In ongoing work over the past several years, Dr. DiStefano has been examining how living conditions and other socioeconomic factors affect health in a group of small, adjacent cities in the San Gabriel Valley area of eastern Los Angeles County. As a faculty member in the department's global health concentration, his work in Japan will expand on his findings from the San Gabriel Valley study.



Profound demographic shifts are underway in Japan, including racial and ethnic diversification due to the country's influx of immigrants for economic opportunity and increased reliance on foreign labor in light of the country's low birth rate and declining and aging population. Dr. DiStefano will test the qualitatively derived relationships found in the San Gabriel Valley through a survey on social determinants of health in a sociodemographically diverse sample of adults in Japan. The Kyoto University Institute for Research in Humanities will host Dr. DiStefano as he joins a research group co-led by Professors Ichiro Toyama and Kosuke Tsuiki.

Dr. DiStefano is also developing a course on violence in a public health context. The course will cover various expressions and formats of violence including physical and sexual violence, verbal and psychological abuse, and cyberbullying. Major topics will include gun violence; intimate partner and dating violence; stalking; child abuse; bullying; elder abuse; gender-based violence (e.g., violence against women, transgender people); other bias-motivated violence (e.g., race- and sexual orientation-based); war and political violence; terrorism (domestic and international actors); and suicidality and non-suicidal self-harm.

Master of Public Health

Program Highlights

The pandemic has not only highlighted the importance of public health but specifically the need for public health professionals to work together with the community to effectively address emerging public health issues. This newsletter provides a wonderful opportunity to build an engaged community committed to public health and social justice that inspires, supports, and encourages our students and alumni to positively impact the health and well-being of our communities.

We are excited to welcome 22 new students and 27 returning students to our MPH program this year. Our internship opportunities allow our students to address pressing public health issues that affect Southern California and beyond. Students have interned at the Koreatown Youth & Community Center to address substance abuse and at the Orange County Healthcare Agency to analyze surveillance data for influenza and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in Orange County. Several graduate students are USDA-funded LINK scholars (<https://www.csulb.edu/latinohealth/leveraging-interdisciplinary-nutritional-knowledge-link>) and study food and nutrition issues among Latino communities. And still others are focused on statewide issues, including some who will be interning with the California Department of Public Health this semester.

We extend our congratulations to our MPH students who graduated this year and welcome you to our ever-growing community of alumni. You join a network of passionate and dedicated individuals making significant contributions to the health of our community.

As the Graduate Advisor of the MPH Program, one of my priorities is to think about how we can stay connected and develop opportunities for our students, faculty, alumni and broader community. We have several events planned for our MPH students this year, including our annual MPH picnic and MPH Meet and Greet where students and alumni come together to discuss experiences and opportunities. We are also busy planning for our MPH Alumni event on March 12, 2024. Please save the date – we look forward to seeing you there.

I look forward to continuing to share with you the important work our students and alumni are doing in future newsletters.

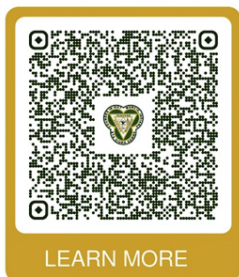
Dr. Tabashir Nobari
MPH Graduate Advisor
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Interested in getting more involved on campus? Join ESG!



ETA SIGMA GAMMA



LEARN MORE

Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG) Chapter of Cal State University Fullerton (CSUF) welcomes you to campus for the 2023/24 academic year. ESG is an honorary society for health education that was founded in 1967 at Ball State University. There are currently over 85 active chapters across the United States. Our purpose is to elevate the standards, ideals, competence, and ethics of professionally trained individuals who wish to pursue a career in health science through teaching/education, service, and research.

Why join ESG?

ESG offers networking opportunities with public health faculty, healthcare/public health professionals, and like-minded peers. We also offer volunteer opportunities that support health education advocacy and the community. ESG allows students to help elevate their professional standards and ethics as well. ESG provides platforms for students to get involved in career training, mentorship, and social events.

This academic year opens on August 29th, and the deadline to join is October 10th.

Get the best experience of a public health student at CSUF by joining ESG!!!
For more information/questions, please contact us at:

Instagram: @csufesg

E-mail: csufesg@gmail.com

President: Bethany Nguyen | email: bethanynguyen83@csu.fullerton.edu

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Lohuwa Mamudu | email: lohuwam@fullerton.edu

Department of Public Health 2023 Student Awardees

Ryan Raymundo

Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award

Julianna Argueta

Public Health Department Service Award

Mia Hanson

C. Jessie Jones Lifespan Wellness Fellowship

Pauline Lim

Iran Navaie Community Service Scholarship

Leah Abidog

Sarah Holman

Ramiro Muniz

Emily Olson

Hiruni Perera

Sanduni Perera

Ryan Raymundo

Amanda Seagondollar

Jenny Tran

Nhu Vu

Dhara Vyas

Public Health Academic Achievement Award

(Summa Cum Laude)

Kristen Johansson, MPH

Outstanding Graduate Student Award

Joanne Leslie S. Reyes, MPH

Kathryn T. McCarty Scholarship

Dordaneh Ashouriha, MPH

Marie Kalmantis Public Health Memorial Scholarship

Emily A. Baltierra, MPH

Ashley Meneses

Kathya F. Rodriguez Orozco, MPH

Sannia M Siddiqui, MPH

Hanna Yi

*Walter R. Duhn Public Health
Community Engagement Scholarship*

The Department of Public Health welcomes your financial support. To donate to the department, please visit the link below and select from the following fund names and numbers to make your donation:

Department of Health Science - Fund 081400

Health Science Scholarship Fund - Fund 081400

Jeff Fortuna Scholarship & Outstanding Lecturer Award - Fund 080053

Health Science Lifespan Wellness Fund for Community Outreach - Fund 080017

Public Health Community Engagement Scholarship - Fund 081450

<https://give.fullerton.edu/search>

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