



University of Connecticut

Public Health Happenings

The official electronic newsletter of the
University of Connecticut Master of Public Health Program

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AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2008

September is National Preparedness Month September 16: Prepare to Get Ready Day

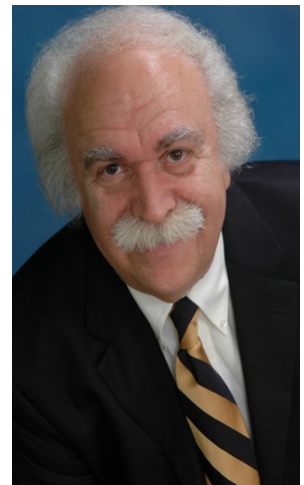
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DEADLY YOUTH VIOLENCE SUBJECT OF CONVOCATION KEYNOTE ADDRESS

At the Convocation for new MPH students on Thursday evening, August 21, Professor Jack Levin, an internationally-recognized authority on violence and hate, introduced the academic theme for the 2008-2009 academic year: **Deadly Violence: High Risk Behavior among Connecticut's Adolescents and Young Adults**. Each year the Master of Public Health program consults our applied practice community partners for selection of a burning public health issue that students will focus on throughout the curriculum, culminating in a group practicum project for second-year students in the spring semester. Unfortunately, the events of the summer in Hartford in particular, as well as in other parts of the state, make us all look brilliant in picking a public health issue that is now on the front burner. We dearly wish we had been less prescient.

The youth violence epidemic in Connecticut culminated during the week-end of August 8-10 when 11 people were shot in the city of Hartford. Seven of the victims were wounded in gunfire that erupted after a West Indian Day parade on the 9th. A 21-year-old man was killed, and the wounded included a 7-year-old boy and 15-month-old girl. The violence has been tied to youth gangs. Other recent acts of youth violence have also enraged the community. In June, the city's former deputy mayor, 71-year-old Nicholas Carbone, was beaten and robbed by a group of young men while walking to breakfast.



Dr. Levin, who delivered the Convocation address on August 21st, is the Brudnick Professor of Sociology and Criminology at Northeastern University, where he co-directs the Center on Violence and Conflict and teaches courses in the sociology of violence and hate. He has authored or co-authored 30 books on the theme of deadly violence, and has published more than 150 articles in professional journals and newspapers, including *The New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Washington Post*, among others. He appears frequently on national television programs, including 48 Hours, 20/20, Dateline NBC, The Today Show, Good Morning America, Oprah, The O'Reilly Factor, Larry King Live, and all network newscasts.

Dr. Levin was honored by the Massachusetts Council for Advancement and Support of Education as its "Professor of the Year." He has spoken to a wide variety of community, academic, and professional groups, including the White House conference on Hate Crimes, the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (a membership of 59 countries) and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

We hope our students, alumni, faculty, and community partners, as well as the wider community, will join us in addressing deadly youth violence issues. There is now a youth curfew in Hartford and heavy police presence, but it will take much more to get a handle on this issue. What is the extent of deadly youth violence in Connecticut? What are the root causes? What are potential solutions to the problem that have worked elsewhere, and what innovative actions could be tried? And how are we going to evaluate whether the steps we take are working? These are some of the issues our students will be working on over the next academic year, in partnership with the community.

We wish all our students a successful and productive fall 2008 semester.

David I. Gregorio, PhD, MS
Director, Master of Public Health Program

Joan Segal, MA, MS
Associate Director

CADH RECEIVES KELLOGG FUNDING FOR HEALTH EQUITY INITIATIVE

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has awarded a \$3 million grant to the Connecticut Association of Directors of Health (CADH) to support development of a statewide health equity initiative. This initiative will incorporate the use of the Health Equity Index (HEI), which CADH developed over the past three years, to profile and measure the social, economic and environmental conditions that support or harm state residents' well-being. The approach goes beyond examining health care system deficiencies to investigating the underlying conditions that impact health.

On August 7, CADH held a press conference at Central Connecticut State University to announce this new initiative. Keynote speakers included U.S. Congressman John Larson; Connecticut Senator Toni Harp; and Sue Addiss, former Commissioner of the CT State Department of Public Health and Addiction Services (and Chair of the UConn MPH Advisory Committee and member of Beta Rho Chapter of Delta Omega).

NOTE: The UConn MPH Program has a strong connection to this initiative. Baker Salsbury, MSW/MPH (1992), who as president of CADH spearheaded the initiative and now serves as HEI Committee Chair; Steve Huleatt, MPH (1984), immediate past president of CADH; and Jennifer Kertanis, MPH (1988), executive director of CADH, are all alumni of the program and have played key roles in the project. Two incoming full-time MPH students, Charles Brown and Deanna D'Amore, have also worked on the project.

AUGUST CONFERRAL INFORMATION

The final exam (i.e., oral defense) must be administered by **August 24th** for an August 2008 conferral of the degree. The deadline for all degree requirements to be fulfilled (including posted grades and required paperwork submitted to Graduate School) for an August conferral is **Tuesday, September 2**. Just so that you know in the future, the date for all conferral periods and deadlines can be found in the Graduate School Calendar on page 3 of the *Graduate Catalog*, available at <http://catalog.grad.uconn.edu/>.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES IN INTERNATIONAL HEALTH

Professor Judy Lewis has two opportunities for projects in the realm of international health. For more information, please contact her at lewisj@nso.uchc.edu.

MPH INDEPENDENT STUDY

Professor Judy Lewis is in the process of completing a final evaluation of a 5-year Child Survival Project in Sierra Leone funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The program focused on improving childhood immunization, treatment of common diseases such as diarrhea, malaria, pneumonia, and maternal care (antenatal and delivery). Sierra Leone presents a challenging context because it has the highest child (<5) mortality rate (290/1000) and one of the highest maternal mortality rates (1800/100,000) in the world and it ranks the lowest on the Human Development Index.

This independent study would provide the student with an opportunity to learn about and participate in program evaluation. While the field work has been completed there are many documents and qualitative information to review, as well as analysis and report writing. It is a unique opportunity for an interested student to learn about the process of program evaluation, working in the USAID and NGO environments, and maternal and child health in sub-Saharan Africa.

MPH THESIS OR RESEARCH PROJECT

There is growing interest in global health education for health professionals. This past year a survey was conducted to examine the effects of international experiences (language study, clinical, research and public health) on graduates of the UCHC School of Medicine. A survey was mailed to all graduates who participated in the international health (IH) programs (N=300) and a random sample of graduates who did not participate for the classes of 1985-2007. There is need to do a follow-up for non-respondents and to do the data analysis for this survey. The project has received IRB approval and would just need to be updated for a student to participate. There is additional data collected through another survey that provides information on current medical students. This research should result in a publication.

STUDENT INTERNSHIP

1000 FRIENDS of Connecticut is a nonpartisan, nonprofit public policy and research organization. Founded in 2003, 1000 FRIENDS is the state's preeminent organization devoted exclusively to promoting smart growth and preventing destructive sprawl. The organization seeks enthusiastic, highly motivated, organized and personable individuals to help sustain its policy work statewide. The marketing and communication interns will help design an education campaign on the public health impacts of land use and development. Tasks include:

- 1) Identify campaign targets;
- 2) Develop winning messages;
- 3) Identify high-impact, low-cost media;
- 4) Create messaging strategy, including budget, timeline, and success measures.

The ideal candidate(s) will have an appreciation for the 1000 FRIENDS of Connecticut message and mission. The candidate(s) will be a team player with an ability to work both independently and with dynamic and influential volunteers. The intern will develop the campaign under the close supervision of the President and the Communications Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Please contact: Heidi Green, President, 1000 FRIENDS of Connecticut, PO Box 1988, Hartford, CT 06144-1988, or email: hegreen@1000FRIENDS-ct.org. No phone calls please.

CHIP FALL LECTURE SERIES

The Center for Health, Intervention, and Promotion (CHIP) on the Storrs campus announces its lineup of fall 2008 seminars:

- September 11: "The Female Condom Revisited." Theresa Exner, Columbia University
October 2: "Working with the Media: Publicizing Your Research Results and Expertise." Colin Poitras and David Bauman, University Communications, UConn
October 16: "How Can Our Research Make a Difference? Issues in Translating an Evidence-based HIV Prevention into Practice." Susan Kegeles, University of California, San Francisco
October 23: "What Made the Intervention Work? Mediation Analyses of Three Intervention Studies." Ann O'Leary, Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
November 6: "Looking Back: Emergent Themes from HIV Prevention Work." Rick Zimmerman, PIRE, Louisville, KY.
November 13: "Shape Up Rhode Island." Rajiv Kumar & Brad Weinberg, Brown University
November 20: "What Is Next in HIV Prevention?" Thomas Coates, University of California, Los Angeles.
December 4: "Catalyzing Communities to Prevent Childhood Obesity." Christina Economos, Tufts University
December 11: "What's Love (and Men) Got to Do with It: Pregnancy and HIV Prevention." Trace Kershaw, Yale University

All lectures begin at 12:30 p.m. For further information contact Stacey Leeds at stacey.leeds@UCONN.EDU.

EPIDEMIC INTELLIGENCE SERVICE: CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) is a 2-year, postgraduate program of service and on-the-job training for health professionals interested in the practice of epidemiology. Each year, EIS provides approximately 90 persons, who have been selected from around the world, opportunities to gain hands-on experience in epidemiology at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or state or local health departments.

The EIS Officers, often called CDC's "disease detectives," have gone on to occupy leadership positions at CDC and other public health agencies nationally and internationally. The experience also is useful for health professionals who wish to gain a population health perspective.

Persons with a strong interest in applied epidemiology who meet at least one of the following qualifications may apply to EIS:

- Physicians with ≥ 1 year of clinical training;
- Persons with a PhD, DrPH, or other doctoral degree in epidemiology, biostatistics, the social or behavioral sciences, natural sciences or the nutrition sciences;
- Dentists, physician assistants, and nurses with an MPH or equivalent degree; or
- Veterinarians with an MPH or equivalent degree or relevant public health experience.

Applications are now being accepted for the July 2009–June 2011 EIS Program. Information about the new online application and EIS Program details are available online at www.cdc.gov/eis/applyeis/toapply.htm; by telephone at (404) 498-6110; or by E-mail at **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.. The application deadline is September 15, 2008.**

CAREER DEVELOPMENT NOTES: GRANT WRITING 101

Many positions in applied public health practice require skills in grantsmanship. On Thursday, August 28, OhioTRAIN will be hosting a web conference on grant proposal writing. The course will introduce the basic components of a grant proposal, focusing on how to establish credibility, convey need, clearly define objectives and methods and construct a budget that supports the narrative. In addition, the course will describe the underlying intent and nature of proposals and how to prepare cover letters and addendum materials.

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Define a grant proposal and the differences between grant seeking and fundraising;
- Explain the four functions of a proposal;
- Identify the fundamental components of a proposal and what information should be presented in each;
- Describe the contents of a cover letter; and
- Explain the uses of an appendix and what information it should contain.

The course will be held as a webinar on Thursday, August 28 from 1:00–2:30 p.m. (Eastern). It may be viewed from any PC with phone access. The instructor is Mr. Brian A. Bell, Adjunct Professor, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, University of Pittsburgh.

The cost to participate in the webinar is \$25. This course has been also approved by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc. for 1 contact hour. 1.2 Continuing Nursing Education. Contact hours are awarded by the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, an accredited provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

To register for this training, log onto OhioTRAIN at <https://oh.train.org> and enter Course ID# 1013921 in the 'Course ID #' box. Click the course title to open the course description. Click the "Registration" tab and follow the prompts to register for this course. The Payment Form and credit card payment link are provided in Step 2 of the registration process.

GREEN CLEANING CONFERENCE

The health risks associated with toxic chemicals in common cleaning products have created an ongoing dialogue with the public health community for the past decade. The need to protect custodial workers, children, and building occupants from exposure to cleaning chemicals has led to a new movement called "Green Cleaning" or "Environmentally Preferable Cleaning." On Friday, October 24, the Northeast District Department of Health is sponsoring a conference on this topic at the Mohegan Sun Convention Center in Uncasville, CT. This conference will show you how to:

- Better understand what is "green"
- Select safer and healthier cleaning products
- Implement best practices for cleaning
- Review product labels and find resources
- Implement green cleaning systems in hospitals, in schools, and in your city and town

Deirdre Imus, founder and president of the Deirdre Imus Environmental Center for Pediatric Oncology at Hackensack University Medical Center and co-founder of the Imus Cattle Ranch for Kids with Cancer, is the keynote speaker. Mrs. Imus is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller, *Growing Up Green, Baby and Child Care*. UConn MPH alumna Pat Beckenhaupt, director of the Northeast District Department of Health will introduce her.

Other MPH alumni participating in afternoon workshops include Kenny Foscue, MPH, CT Department of Public Health, and Annamarie Beaulieu, MPH, Connecticut Public Health Association. Workshops will cover the following topics: Going Green in the North Bronx Health Care Network, Cleaning for Health in Schools, Your Municipality Can Go Green, and A Green Home Is a Healthy Home.

The conference will run from 8:30 a.m. until 12:00 noon. Registration is \$20 (\$10 for students). For a registration form go to <http://www.nddh.org>. For further information contact Sherry Roy at (860) 774-7350 (phone); (860) 774-1308 (Fax); or at sroy@nddh.org.

OPEN HOUSE FOR UCONN Ph.D. Programs in Public Health

Come learn about doctoral degree program concentrations in Social and Behavioral Health Sciences or Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences

- Hear faculty talk about their exciting research
- Learn about professional opportunities in the field
- Hear current PhD students talk about their experiences

When: Wednesday, October 15, 2008, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m.

Where: UCONN Health Center, Farmington, CT, Onyiuke Dining Room

RSVP or for more information: publichealth@uconn.edu

STUDENT NEWS

Roberto Cruz, incoming first-year MPH student, has been named Outstanding Continuing Education Student for New England. In recognizing Roberto's accomplishment, UConn President Michael J. Hogan wrote:

As I read about some of the challenges you've faced throughout your academic career, your persistence towards earning a Bachelor's degree amazes me. Your energy and abilities are a great gift. I'm glad that you came to UConn and are making such a tremendous contribution to our University while you are here.

Roberto was an outstanding urban studies student and achieved an outstanding GPA while maintaining a full-time job. He has accepted a graduate assistantship for 2008-2009 with the Center for Eliminating Disparities among Latinos.

Congratulations to Alyssa Norwood and her husband Joel on the birth of their first child, son Eliot Peter Norwood, on July 8, 2008. He was born at 3:29 p.m. and weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces.

ALUMNI NEWS

David Mack, JD/MPH (1997), has joined Shipman & Goodwin's Health Law Practice Group as a partner. Most recently, David practiced at Robinson & Cole LLP where he represented a broad range of health care providers. David is the current chair of the Health Law Section of the Connecticut Bar Association and the past president and honorary director of the Connecticut Public Health Association. He is a member of several state and national health care advisory committees, teaches in the UConn MPH program on public health law issues and bioethics, and holds an adjunct appointment in the Department of Community Medicine and Health Care, School of Medicine. He has authored numerous publications and received numerous awards, including the New Leaders of the Law Impact Award, which he received in 2005 from the *Connecticut Law Tribune*.

Ava Nepaul, MS, MPH (2008), will talk about "The Glamour of Public Health" in the alumni address at the Convocation for incoming MPH students on August 21. Ava is an Epidemiologist for the Connecticut Health Disparities Project, CT Department of Public Health Planning Branch, Health Information Systems & Reporting Section.

A lead article, "Study Entices Thoughts of Hands-On Healing" by **Hilary Waldman**, Staff Writer for the *Hartford Courant*, appeared on July 28, 2008. The article describes intriguing research by UConn Health Center department of surgery Professor Gloria Gronowicz which found that Therapeutic Touch performed by trained energy healers significantly stimulated the growth of bone and tendon cells in lab dishes. Further research will be needed to determine how and why Therapeutic Touch seems to stimulate cell growth, and whether the findings can be applied to patient care.

Editor: Joan Segal, Associate Director

Production: Connie Cantor, Barbara Case, Wendy Walsh

UConn Graduate Program in Public Health • 263 Farmington Avenue • Farmington, Connecticut 06030-6325

Phone: (860) 679-1510 • Fax: (860) 679-1581 • [Email: mph@nso.uconn.edu](mailto:mph@nso.uconn.edu)

Web: http://publichealth.uconn.edu/acprgms_mph_overview.php