



The UNC Charlotte Public Health Programs is fully accredited by the COUNCIL ON EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

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**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)  
<http://publichealth.uncc.edu>

## CEPH, Round 2: Site Visit a resounding success



Master's

As mentioned in previous newsletters, the Public Health Programs at UNC Charlotte is up for reaccreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). As part of the reaccreditation process, a CEPH Site Visit team came to UNC Charlotte to ensure that all accreditation criteria were being met by verifying our self-study documentation and self-assessment, and by forming their own opinions based upon direct observations and interactions with key stakeholders.



Doctoral

The self-study included many details about our program including course syllabi, program manuals, faculty CVs, student internship and graduate student capstone reports, among many summary metrics. On site resources included a sampling of

undergraduate portfolios and internship reports in addition to student files. The team met with faculty, university leaders, advisory board members, students, alumni, and employers during their visit.

team came to UNC Char-



Department and Program leaders pose with the CEPH Site Visit Team following the exit briefing

At the exit briefing, the Site Visit Team concluded that all criterion were met, with only two including commentary. No criteria were deemed partially met. More importantly, no criteria were considered unmet.

While the site visit report is not the final determination of re-accreditation, these preliminary results are extremely positive. The full council will make the final accreditation decision in September following the Site Visit Team's submission of a detailed visit report and our program's response.

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Bachelor's

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## PhD in Public Health Sciences Launched

In early August 2013, less than a week after the program's Director, Dr. Michele Issel, arrived at UNC Charlotte from the University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health, the UNC Board of Governors formally approved our PhD in Public Health Sciences, with a concentration in behavioral sciences.

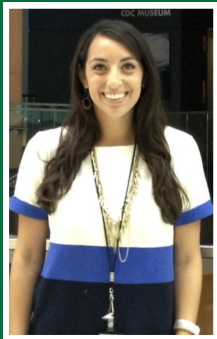
To promote the new degree, PHS hosted a booth at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting (Boston, MA, November) for the first time. The booth greatly increased attendees' awareness of the new degree, the Department, and our size and offerings.

In December, our new program was formally included within our CEPH unit of accreditation following our submission of a substantive change notice announcing the new degree (see new seal, top right). Thus, the PhD program was fully accredited prior to its review as part of the reaccreditation described above.

We will matriculate our first five students in Fall 2014. The inaugural cohort includes Corliss Allen, MPH (Florida A & M University), Mona Elgowainy, MSPH ('12), Purva Korgaonkar, MSPH ('13), Abigail Newton, MPH (Oregon State University), and Kenesha Smith, MSPH ('14). We are particularly delighted that Ms. Corliss Allen has received the Wayland H. Cato Jr. First-Year Doctoral Fellowship, which is competitively awarded to an incoming UNC Charlotte doctoral student of high merit.

The fall course line-up includes two new doctoral level courses. HLTH 8223 Social Determinants of Health will cover the major social determinants of health using the social-ecological model. HLTH 8602 Communicating and Disseminating Research Seminar will address the scholarship and practical issues involved in reaching and presenting research to academic and lay audiences.

## Student Spotlight



**Celia Karp**

May 2014 BSPH graduate and Levine Scholar Celia Karp was inducted into Delta Omega, the National Public Health Honorary Society as an associate member. Moreover, Ms. Karp earned a prestigious and highly coveted Fulbright Scholar Award to work on a project in Ecuador prior to entering a graduate program in public health.

During her time at UNC Charlotte, Celia completed an internship with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, GA, as a member of the Collegiate Leaders in Environmental Health program (CLEH) at the National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH).

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## 2014 National Public Health Week

The 2014 National Public Health Week at UNC Charlotte was a huge success, as many students participated in the various activities happening around campus.

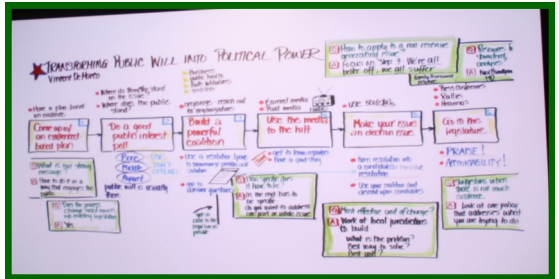
The week kicked off with the keynote speaker, Vincent Demarco giving a fascinating presentation entitled “Transforming Public Will into Political Power”. His presentation focused on his own work helping to reduce smoking rates in Maryland. Dr. DeMarco presented his six step process to help enact legislation that meets public health goals.

One of his most critical points was the importance of building a strong coalition within the community to sup-



*Vincent Demarco*

port the legislative agenda. The presentation was well attended by students, faculty, and community members.



*The six steps that Vincent Demarco laid out as the best way to transform public will into political power.*

The week continued with sessions on disaster preparedness and seatbelt safety. Additionally, the public health honor society, Delta Omega; and the health administration honor society, Upsilon Phi Delta, inducted many of our accomplished students, faculty, and alumni as new members. Overall, it was an engaging and informative week.

## Delta Omega Induction

The UNC Charlotte Beta Phi Chapter of Delta Omega, the National Public Health Honorary Society, inducted nine new members in a cere-



*May 2014 Delta Omega Inductees*

mony held as the capstone event of National Public Health Week. Student members are selected based on their academic performance and demonstrated or potential leadership in public health. Alumni and honorary members are chosen based upon demonstrated accomplishments in public health practice while faculty inductees are chosen based upon their accomplishments in academic public health.

Associate Student Member inductees (graduating undergraduates) were Celia Karp, Dina Patel, Whitney Skillen, and Ashely Smith. Graduate student inductees were Shambreya Burrell and Kenesha Smith. Rachel Miller, BSPH, MSPH was inducted as an alumni member. Dr. Elizabeth

Racine was the faculty inductee. William F. Pilkington, DPA, CEO of Cabarrus Health Alliance and long-time contributor to the Department was the honorary inductee.

Faculty inductee Dr. Elizabeth Racine gave a brief keynote presentation entitled “How do the Characteristics and Concentration of SNAP Approved Stores Affect Community Health?” Honorary inductee Dr. Pilkington’s presentation was entitled “Public Health Starts with You.”



*William Pilkington giving his keynote presentation*

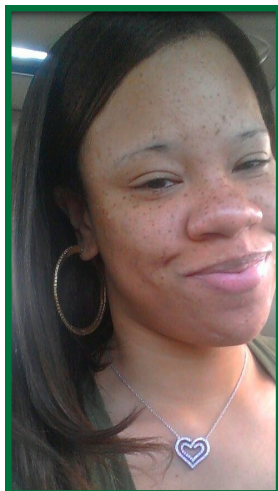
Established concurrent with the program’s initial CEPH accreditation in 2009 by a cadre of 6 faculty, the Beta Phi Chapter now boasts 45 members. Members are involved in events such as speaker engagements and discussions relevant to public health professionalism and practice.



## BSPH Alumna Spotlight: Krystle White

Krystle White, a 2009 graduate of UNC Charlotte's BSPH program, is currently a Lead Donor and Client Support Specialist who specializes in suspect product retrievals for blood donations at the American Red Cross. She provides processing knowledge and assistance to staff members who conduct repeat reactive disease blood component retrievals and blood donor eligibility assessments. She also is in her last year of a master's program in Public Administration pursuing a health care management concentration.

When asked about her time at UNC Charlotte, Krystle praised how the mock interviews that were part of the BSPH capstone course prepared her for several versions of interviewing techniques -all of which she has used at some point, including when hiring at her current place of employment. She feels that the combination of her on the job experience, her undergraduate portfolio, and her preparation with mock interviews helped her land her job at



the Red Cross, and to earn a promotion during her first year of employment.

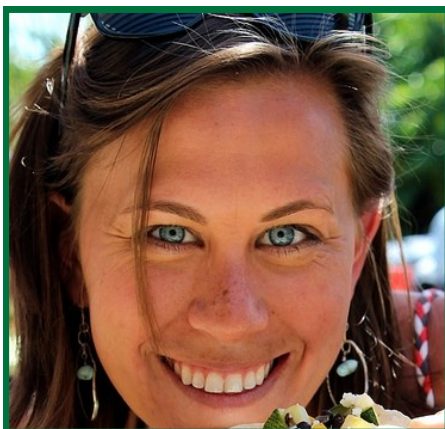
Krystle's advice to current BSPH students is to "take advantage of every resource provided to you during your studies. Career fairs, mock interviews, grant writing seminars, academic internships and most importantly networking are some of the most critical aspects to building your resume and being noticed by employers as an eager and willing candidate."

Krystle also says, "I am a firm believer in having a true passion for your field, and Public Health has become my passion. I truly believe that in order to survive within this business you MUST love what you do, but more importantly you must have the confidence in knowing how to trust yourself throughout your journey. Know that you are an intricate piece of a larger puzzle that we all must build together and eventually your passion will lead to the pillar of success that you are seeking."

## MSPH Alumna Spotlight: Rachel Miller

Rachel Miller is a graduate of both the BSPH and MSPH programs at UNC Charlotte. She currently works at the Appalachian District Health Department on its North Carolina Community Transformation Grant Project Region 3 as the Healthy Eating/Active Living Lead. Rachel says that she enjoys her job, and the aspect she loves most is that she works in ten different counties. She has seen firsthand how every county is different, and enjoys being able to engage the community with key partners such as town managers, school officials, farmers, storeowners, and faith based organizations. Rachel loves these networking opportunities her job provides, as she has been able to meet some amazing people.

Rachel found this exciting job through her internship preceptor. Rachel noted that her grant funded position ends in September; however, she plans to stay at the Appalachian District Health Department for a few more



years before eventually returning to school for a doctoral degree.

When asked about her time at UNC Charlotte, Rachel felt the most important skill she learned was program planning, as most of the federal and local grants demand a solid understanding of program planning and evaluation. Rachel's advice to current students is "to understand that Public Health is changing. However, if you stick with it and can ride the waves it is definitely worth it. I get an immense satisfaction in the line of work I do. I know that I have been able to change lives of the communities that I have served. At the end of the day that is all that matters. The only other advice I have is do what you love, and maybe try something new. I NEVER thought I would enjoy working with local food policies or schools, but it has been an amazing experience."

Student Spotlight Continued from page 2)

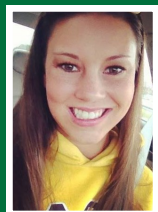
Celia noted, "My specific internship position was with the National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network, working with the Communications Team for the national environmental health surveillance program. Between projects for the Network and activities for the CLEH program, I was able to simultaneously learn all about environmental health and acquire different skills that were critical to my development as a public health practitioner."

"Working at CDC solidified my interests in health communication science and made me even more passionate about the public health field. The mentorship I received and the networking I engaged in allowed me to connect with professionals in the field and plan for my own future as a public health practitioner. Surrounded by successful, experienced public health professionals was inspiring, and taught me much about the person I hope to become and the impact I want to make in the field. As I move forward in my career, I will remember my summer at CDC as one of the most enriching learning experiences of my life."

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## Internship Spotlight: Kodi Smith



“My BSPH internship experience occurred at Siskey YMCA of Greater Charlotte in Matthews, North Carolina. During my experience, I developed a full-time staff wellness program to implement during the duration of my internship. In addition, I also worked with the Fitness Director, Group Fitness Director, and Youth Fitness & Active Adults 55+ Director. My duties aside from my main project included: assisting and observing Parkinson's exercise classes, filing and auditing of group fitness, managing equipment in fitness, managing member fitness challenge, as well as attending branch and corporate meetings.

“My internship allowed me to gain knowledge of a successful non-profit organization and network with multiple leaders. I was able to experience a variety of potential careers for a Public Health major that reassured the pathway I want after graduation. I have always been passionate about wellness, management, and quality of life and this experience allowed me to have a flexible, fun, supportive, and diverse experience. I will take this experience and carry it with me in my journey in the Public Health field.”

## I Am My Sister: Teen Empowerment Summit

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, the organization I Am My Sister held its first **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 "Re-define, Educate, Empower and Lead." Driving the summit is the desire to enhance teens' leadership, communication and networking skills. The summit hopes to help build teens' self-esteem and give them the tools they need to succeed in the future. Teens were educated on important health, relationship, and financial topics pertaining to their futures. Ms. Lela Blackwell, president of I Am My Sister, organized the event.

The summit held a session for teen boys fifteen and older

by Saladin David, author of "Life 101: Lessons from a 13 Year Old Father." Saladin Davis spoke to the teen boys about the role they need to play in teen pregnancy prevention. The summit included a "He said, She said" forum moderated by Power 98 FM's Yasmin Young and Danny D. The forum aimed to gain different perspectives from males and females at various stages of their lives.

The summit also featured breakout sessions, interactive booths, workshops and entertainment. Several of this year's summit topics included leadership development, teen pregnancy pre-

vention, 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 BSPH majors, Forestview High School I Am My Sister club members, top professionals, and specialists in the field.

This was the first year that BSPH students participated in this event, with planning efforts linked to their Behavior Change Theories and Practice course instructed by Ms. Camina Davis. Student groups prepared a proposal for a topic they wanted to discuss during the summit. Ms. Blackwell then decided on the format: breakout session, lecture, or interactive booth.

Ms. Blackwell commented that every student did an amazing job. "Ms. Davis and her students were awesome." Ms. Blackwell also noted that the event would not have been possible without the hard work of Mercedes Wilkes, a BSPH student who interned there.



BSPH students pose with their interactive display



BSPH students pose with their interactive display



Summit attendees engaged by a presentation

## New! Donna C. Arrington Scholarship Endowment

The newly created **Donna C. Arrington Public Health Graduate Scholarship Endowment** will support master's and doctoral students studying in the Department of Public Health Sciences 'who are destined to become tomorrow's public health heroes.' Although Donna's life was shortened by cancer, her legacy lives on in the community through this graduate scholarship established in her memory.



To make your donation today, please visit <http://giving.uncc.edu> and select Donna C. Arrington Scholarship Endowment. Checks made payable to the UNC Charlotte Foundation and noting the Donna C. Arrington Scholarship Endowment on the memo line may be sent to: Office of University Development, Attn: CHHS, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, 9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223.