The 2014-2015 academic year is set to be one of unprecedented advancement for the Division of Public Health. We are celebrating the inauguration of our expanded MPH program at the University of Utah Asia Campus in Incheon, Korea. We are now engaged in Public Health scholarship across our two campuses as we seek to increase our impact as a world class academic program. And while our Salt Lake City and Incheon campuses are proving rich educational, discovery and engaged service opportunities, we also are celebrating the launch of the Ensign College of Public Health in Kpong, Ghana. We have been working closely with this new institution, including providing guidance on the academic and operational aspects of this campus, and joining with our long time Ghanaian institutional partner, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, to provide mentoring support. Our ties with this institution will help to expand our activities in West Africa and further our ability to link with the best of what the world has to offer to help us fulfill the University of Utah mission to ‘serve the people of Utah and the world …’.

As part of our world class expansion, we are pleased to welcome the arrivals of new faculty members Drs. Stephen Walston, Kim Shoaf and Tejinder Pal (TP) Singh. Dr. Walston most recently served as the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Oklahoma College of Public Health. He will be directing our programming in Korea and serving as the Provost of the University of Utah Asia Campus. Dr. Shoaf joins us from the University of California, Los Angeles where she was on the faculty of the School of Public Health and was the Associate Director of the Center for Public Health and Disasters. She will be contributing to our public health workforce scholarship and help us expand our work in public health emergency preparedness and response. And finally, Dr. Singh is joining us after 20 years as a dental faculty member in Punjab, India, including serving twice in the role of Dean. He has worked with us for the past few years on our Global Public Health Learning Abroad Program in Chandigarh. He will be helping to coordinate our academic programming at the Asia Campus as well as helping us to advance our work in public health dentistry and global public health. We are thrilled to have these outstanding scholars join our faculty.

Along with our new campus, partners, and faculty members, we continue to see impressive growth across our other academic pursuits. Our students continue to attain the highest standards of achievement in their educational work and, upon graduation, are being sought after to fill a wide array of premier positions. Our work in public health research and innovation continues to reach new heights as we are awarded grants and contracts to conduct scholarship that guides efforts to advance population health and wellness. Our outstanding staff continues to find ways to improve the efficiency with which we operate and inspire our efforts to be both relevant and service oriented. It continues to be an honor to get to work with this outstanding team.

I invite you to visit our newly redesigned website (http://medicine.utah.edu/dfpm/public-health) to learn more about what is taking place in the Division of Public Health. As friends of the Division of Public Health, I also invite you to contact us with any questions or recommendations - or to arrange to visit us. We count on your continued input and support to help us advance our world class division.

Stephen C. Alder, PhD, Division Chief
Heidi Hanson, PhD

Heidi A. Hanson, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Public Health. Her work focuses on promoting healthy aging by understanding the genetic and environmental determinates of health throughout the life course. As a sociologist and demographer, she is interested in understanding how events from conception to death, including the interaction between genes and the social and physical environments, can influence morbidity and mortality.

Yelena Wu, PhD

Yelena P. Wu, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Public Health. Her work focuses on promoting pediatric health outcomes by improving disease management. As a pediatric and clinical child psychologist, she is interested in understanding the socio-ecological factors that impact adherence and self-management among children, adolescents, and young adults with cancer and other chronic conditions, and in designing interventions to improve their adherence and health outcomes.

Steve Carwile

Steve Carwile is the Academic Advisor to all of the students in the MPH, MSPH, MPH Joint Degrees and Certificate programs within the Division of Public Health. He coordinates all aspects of student education programs, initial advising, admissions, graduation, and assists with global public health.

Rachel Jaggie, MA

Rachel Jaggie is a Research Analyst involved with several projects within the Division of Public Health and the Office of Global Public Health, including public health workforce assessment in Utah and community-based research studies in Ghana.
Stephen Walston, PhD

Dr. Stephen L. Walston is a Professor in the Division of Public Health and directs the University of Utah Asia Campus (UAC) at Incheon Global Campus in Korea. Dr. Walston served as a professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Oklahoma’s School of Public Health Department of Health Administration and Policy for ten years. He is also a former MHA program director at Indiana University and faculty member at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Dr. Walston has been active internationally and has worked in many Middle Eastern and Central American countries helping organizations to improve their strategic direction and leadership capabilities.

TP Singh, MDS, MPH

TP Singh, MDS, MPH, is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Public Health. He will be a faculty member at the University of Utah Asia Campus at Incheon Global Campus in Korea. His work with various community based organizations has enabled him to develop a global perspective of public health. He has worked in Africa and India, navigating diverse cultures, religions, languages and social relationships.

Kimberley Shoaf, DrPH

Dr. Kimberley I. Shoaf is an Associate Professor in the Division of Public Health. She has more than 25 years of experience in public health practice including experience as a health educator, trainer, and researcher. She has particular expertise in program planning and evaluation applicable to both general public health practice and emergency public health. She has worked with more than 50 local health departments in conducting trainings, assessments, and exercises as well as in writing of emergency plans.
The Utah Rural Outreach Program (UROP) was created and operated by University of Utah medical students and is just completing its 10th year of operation. UROP is dedicated to addressing the low number of primary health care providers throughout rural Utah through the promotion of healthcare educational programs to rural high school students. The program is currently under the leadership of Lindsay Janicki, MS4, faculty advisor Dr. Steve Alder, and staff advisor Bob Quinn. UROP partners with Carrie Torgersen (Southwest AHEC) and Mindy Bateman (Crossroads AHEC), who serve as primary contacts for the high schools and are critical in assisting with scheduling.

Our medical students volunteer their free time traveling to rural communities throughout Utah. They give presentations to high school students and teachers about careers in healthcare, the need for health professionals in rural communities, and potential reimbursement options available to them. They then perform hands-on activities including blood pressure measurements and dissections of cow hearts, lungs, and eyes. The students are encouraged to ask questions and the medical students serve as mentors, often keeping in touch with the students after visiting the school. A teacher wrote:

“One student, after a past trip, became interested in cardiology and is currently working towards that goal. He is currently in undergraduate pre-med studies.”

UROP is fortunate to receive financial support from the Utah Academy of Family Physicians and the Office of Inclusion and Outreach in the School of Medicine. This has resulted in a major expansion of the program, which included 20 trips by 60 medical students, 77 presentations, 52 high schools visited, and outreach to 2600+ high school students in 2013-2014.

The feedback received from both the students and faculty has been overwhelmingly positive and supportive of UROP’s efforts:

“We really love this experience with the U of U. Most students are exploring the possibility of a career in medicine, but when the medical students come, it inspires them to believe they really can do it. “

“This activity was incredibly powerful in that I saw low achieving students step up and lead activities in a powerful way. In 14 years, I have never seen this level of involvement.”

The future of UROP appears bright under the upcoming 2014-2015 presidency of Mark Robinson, MS3, with plans to expand UROP volunteer corps to include students from other health professions.

-Lindsay Janicki, UROP President
-Bob Quinn, Staff Advisor
-Dr. Alder, Faculty Advisor
I have always been interested in serving others, and making their lives easier. Public health seemed to be the best route where I could make a difference in people’s lives, on a community or systems scale. Since starting my degree programs, I have been able to work with the Utah Department of Health (UDOH), Salt Lake County Health Department (SLCHD), University of Utah’s newly forming Institute of Healthcare Transformation, a nation-wide federal grant program, the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (Utah Regional LEND), Utah’s Public Health Association (UPHA), participate in the Public Health Student Advisory Council (SAC) as Chair, and direct two student groups serving under-privileged populations in the Salt Lake valley. I have been amazed at the diversity of experiences within the field of public health and at how I am able to make a difference.

At the SLCHD and UDOH I worked on program evaluations in order to more efficiently serve program participants. With an outsider’s fresh view, and the ability to do national research on what other programs were doing, I generated suggestions for improvement. Last fall I started working at the University of Utah, where we now are expecting to publish on our research from the last year, on community perceptions of healthcare. Within the URLEND program I experienced didactic class learning, research experience, and clinical rotations focusing on gaining leadership and understanding the collaboration of healthcare for children with special healthcare needs.

Through my work with SAC last year and my discussions with Dr. Alder, I formed a group of students dedicated to serving refugees and the chronically homeless. After dozens of planning meetings with the student leadership team and community partners, the Public Health Community Engaged Scholars (PHCES) will work at the Bud Bailey Apartment Complex in adolescent and adult programming this fall. As I began working with the under-served, I found a passion to help those most in need. While the needs are great, there are few that are dedicated to the cause. As we started forming the new student group to assist these populations (PHCES), I was given the opportunity to direct another student group addressing the same populations, Connect2Health. As the director at Connect2Health, I administer a program with over 50 student volunteers at three clinical sites in order to improve the well-being of underserved patients by connecting them to and helping them utilize existing community resources. We work one-on-one with patients to address their individualized needs pertaining to health and their overall well-being. I have just begun to understand and learn from the refugee and homeless populations themselves, to help guide and direct our efforts on improving their health.

I have been amazed at the vast amount of opportunities within the field of public health and the ability to help others. It was the right career choice for me, and I realize with a degree in public health, the possibilities are nearly endless!

By Coni Westmoreland, MHA/MPH student, PHCES Chair 2014-2015
Celebrate Graduation

Thank you to all of those who participated in our Graduation Celebration and the School of Medicine Commencement.

Stay in touch! We are always excited to hear about your endeavors and accomplishments.

The purposes of the SAC are: to promote and organize departmental activities, to promote communication between the Division of Public Health student body and faculty, to coordinate with and promote other student organizations, to communicate activities specific to the department’s discipline, to recommend faculty retention, promotion and tenure (at the Department Chair’s request), to coordinate course evaluations, and to play an active role in community outreach.
All photos courtesy of Adelaide Ryder
Returning from Global Public Health Adventures and Research

“I was able to see public health in action in a real world situation,” said Patom Lerslerphant, MPH student, about his time in Peru this summer. Trent Fowler, a Westmont College graduate in Psychology preparing for medical school, realized in Ghana that he needs to “find out from the community what they need and work with them to achieve it, instead of forcing on them what I think they need.” During her six weeks in Armenia, Valerie Tran, Doctor of Pharmacy candidate, “learned more than I’ve learned in some semester or year-long classes. The program was both a lot of work, and a lot of fun, but most importantly, it was the best learning experience of my educational year.”

This summer, these three students, along with fifty-three other participants, joined faculty-led University of Utah Global Public Health Programs for public health adventures and research projects in Armenia, Ghana, and Peru. Each of these three countries is home to a learning abroad program partnered with local university researchers and community members. Hripsime Wright, MD, MPH and her group of students conducted five research projects in Armenia. These involved assessing Armenian primary care providers’ and medical students’ knowledge of diabetes management and identifying the knowledge, attitudes and practices of immunization among the general public. University of Utah participants came from many diverse disciplines: pharmacy, nursing, medicine, health promotion and education, public health, and international studies. These participants assisted in diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and breast cancer outreach workshops in different rural regions of Armenia among the community members and primary care providers. They even had the opportunity to present 2013 research results to the Deputy Minister of Armenia and senior executives of Yerevan State Medical University. Being immersed in another culture and health system with faculty support also gave students a safe opportunity to step out of their comfort zone. “I learned how to adapt to changing problems and interact with people from a different culture,” said Ryan Ward, MPH student, Armenia Program participant.

Similarly, Carol Foote, a sophomore majoring in international studies and pre-medicine, said students should consider going to Ghana next year “not only because it is a unique learning and cultural experience, but it is a great way to make connections with people that are interested in similar things and gain hands-on field experience.”

In rural and peri-urban Ghana, this field experience included assessing knowledge, attitudes and practices relating to immunizations; identifying risk factors for the recent rise in cardiovascular disease; training community-members to assess sanitation conditions; and sharing past research results through community events while under direction from Scott Benson, MD, MPH, PhD and Ty Dickerson, MD, MPH.
A highlight of this year’s program was the 10-year anniversary celebration of the Barekuma Community Collaborative Development Program — a partnership between twenty rural Ghanaian communities near Kumasi, Ghana, and researchers from the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital, the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and the University of Utah. Attendees included Ghana Global Public Health Program participants, local medical students and faculty, and representatives from the Ministry of Health and other agencies of the national government.

Through all of this, “I made friendships that will last with people from all levels of education, from doctors and residents to undergraduates and Ghanaian medical students — people I otherwise would never have met,” said Claire Lu, a senior in Biology. “I learned a lot about myself, global health, and the way I live.”

Patom Lerslerphant also said he realized there is much more to Peru than breath-taking Machu Pichu and well-known llamas. “It’s full of passionate people and also wonderful places to discover,” he said. He met these passionate people through an on-going partnership with Cesar Vallejo University and Trujillo community partners. Scott Benson, MD, MPH, PhD facilitates the partnership in assessing community-levels of hypertension and cardiovascular risk. In addition, Justine Jennings, MPH student and Global Health Innovation Scholarship recipient, led a unique Down Syndrome evaluation, the first quantitative measurement of the incidence of Down Syndrome births in the Libertad region in Peru.

Along with this on-the-ground public health experience, participants enjoyed immersing themselves in the history and natural beauty of these countries and cultures. “Armenia truly contains it all: natural beauty, historic cultural and religious sites, performing arts, museums, and most importantly, a great global health need,” said Diane Chapman, who is near completion of the Doctor of Nursing Practice program. These interdisciplinary, community-driven global health programs provide invaluable cross-cultural skills and translate classroom learning into applied knowledge in ways that are difficult to describe. “I wouldn’t trade my experiences in Ghana for anything in the world. Ghana has changed me in ways that no other study abroad trip could have,” said Claire Lu.

~Scott Benson, MD, PhD, MPH and Grant Sunada, PhD student, MPH

Learn more and enroll in University of Utah’s Global Public Health Programs at www.globalhealth.utah.edu.
2014 Scholarship Recipients

F. Marian Bishop Scholarship: This scholarship is specifically designated to support a female student. Awarded to: Sakineh Najmabadi

Pete Suazo Scholarship: This scholarship is specifically designed to support a student of Hispanic descent. Awarded to: Anna Gardiner

Minority Endowed Scholarship: This scholarship is specifically designed to support minority students. Awarded to: Patom Lerslerphant

Charles Hughes Scholarship: This scholarship was established in honor of the former director of the Public Health Program (1979-1997). Awarded to: Cory McCann

James C. Reading Scholarship: A scholarship specifically designed to support a public health student who has demonstrated excellence in Introduction to Biostatistics. Awarded to: Jared Hansen

Jacalyn S. Leavitt Endowed Maternal and Child Health Scholarship: A scholarship designed to support a student focused on maternal and child health. Awarded to: Nicole Bailey

Meghan Arnold Memorial Scholarship: This scholarship is provided to public health students in good standing interested in global environmental health projects. Awarded to: Jessica Hawks

Dean Byrd Scholarship: This scholarship is to support students who are pursuing socially engaged careers that will lead to advances in health. Awarded to: Sharon Talboys

Utah Public Health Association (UPHA) Scholarship: A scholarship selected by UPHA to support a student with a promise to applied public health. Awarded to: Hilary Kohler

The Global Public Health Learning Abroad Scholarship: This scholarship is specifically designated to support students engaged in global health learning. Awarded to: Carol Foote and Patom Lerslerphant

The Global Health Innovation Competition Fund: A scholarship designed to support students doing innovative global health work with a mentoring Division of Public Health faculty member. Awarded to: Justine Jennings
The Mission of the Division of Public Health is to advance the scholarship of promoting and protecting the health of communities in Utah and around the globe.

**We research**... (*Knowledge production through use-inspired research and innovation* )
- Causes and risk factors of disease
- Effective methods of prevention
- Health services
- Advances in public health and health service delivery

**We educate**... (*Knowledge reproduction including education and other learner-orientated activities*)
- Dedicated individuals who serve the public’s health in government, non-profit and private organizations, and academia
- Current and future health professionals
- Community members to make informed health decisions

**We serve**... (*Knowledge implementation which is commonly referred to as engaged scholarship*)
- Community members striving to improve health
- Health professionals engaged in research and care
- The global community of science

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**Other Division Info:**

*Global Public Health Grand Rounds*

*contact* [grant.sunada@utah.edu](mailto:grant.sunada@utah.edu) *to be added to the e-mail notification list*

*Public Health Grand Rounds*

*contact* [anne.berger@utah.edu](mailto:anne.berger@utah.edu) *to be added to the e-mail notification list*

*For more information on these or other events, please visit the Division of Public Health’s home page:*

[http://medicine.utah.edu/dfpm/public-health/](http://medicine.utah.edu/dfpm/public-health/)

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**Get Involved ~ Get Involved ~ Get Involved**

If you are interested in providing financial support for our students and faculty, please contact Courtney DeMond at [courtney.demond@utah.edu](mailto:courtney.demond@utah.edu) 801-585-6225 or visit [https://urmarket2.utah.edu/ugive/index.php](https://urmarket2.utah.edu/ugive/index.php)