



Pathways

TTUHSC Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health Newsletter, Volume 2

Opening Remarks

Dr. Tom Frieden, M.D., MPH, said, “I loved clinical practice, but in public health, you can impact more than one person at a time. The whole society is your patient.” At the Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health, we train our students to educate others that public health is about the population as a whole. A variety of public health issues is affecting not just the community around us, but the whole world. We teach our students to understand and implement that philosophy early on so they will be ready for the challenge ahead.

SPPH Holds Inaugural Commencement

The Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health inaugural commencement ceremony was May 6, at the historic Paramount Theater in downtown Abilene. Thirty graduates were honored and received their Public Health degrees. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to TTU System Chancellor Tedd Mitchell, M.D., TTUHSC President Lori Rice-Spearman, Ph.D., TTUHSC Provost Darrin D’Agostino, D.O., MPH, MBA and former Acting Dean Billy Philips, Ph.D., MPH, for attending and participating in the reception and ceremony. Also, we extend our congratulations to MPH graduates Chelsea Gerlicki, who received the United States Excellence in Public Health award, and Mackenzie Filewicz-Ross, who was named Public Health Student of the Year. Finally, a huge thank-you to the Paramount Theater staff, TTUHSC External Relations team and all of the school staff for their hard work behind the scenes to make this ceremony special.



In This Issue

- Commencement
- Congratulations!
- Recent Graduates
- More Congratulations!
- SPPH In The News
 - Welcome!
- Mark Your Calendars
- Faculty Presentations and Service
 - Publications
- Final Remarks

Congratulations!

- The Texas Tech University System Board of Regents approved the appointment of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center faculty **Dr. Billy U. Philips** as a Grover E. Murray Professor. The Grover E. Murray Professors are faculty members who have attained national and international distinction in their fields for outstanding research, excellence in scholarship and creative achievement. See more [here](#) (time stamp 3:47 - 4:24). Dr. Philips serves as the Executive Vice President and Director of the F. Marie Hall Institute for Rural Health and served as the Acting Dean of the Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health last year. He is also an adjunct instructor with the school. Congratulations, Dr. Philips!
- Congratulations to **Dr. Duke Appiah** for receiving the TTUHSC Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching Award, the SPPH Outstanding Teacher of the Year, and for also being elected Fellow of the American Heart Association. He was also appointed Vice Chair of the Admissions Committee of the American College of Epidemiology and was selected as a Reviewer, AHA study section, Career Development for Population Sciences. He was also awarded tenure on February 24, 2023.
- Congratulations to **Courtney Queen, Ph.D.** and **Rubini Pasupathy, Ph.D.**, who were awarded Texas International Education Consortium (TIEC) grants of \$4,000 each, to support the delivery of Virtual Exchange courses with faculty and students at Rīga Stradiņš University (RSU) in Riga, Latvia and Silliman University (SU) in Dumaguete, Philippines. The news releases can be found at any of the various sites below:

- [Blog](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Instagram](#)



- A Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) grant for \$25,000 was awarded to a TTUHSC team composed of Michelle Ensminger (Global Health Office), Laura Opton, DHSC (SON), Amy Moore, DNP (SON), **Rubini Pasupathy, Ph.D. (SPPH)**, Sarah Johnston, Ph.D. (SHP), and Carmen Prieto, M.D. (SOM, TTUHSC El Paso). This team has developed an International Programs Reflection Guide, designed to support student reflections of cultural immersion and short term global health experiences during International Programs. This Open Education Resource grant will fund the development of a digital copy of the International Programs Reflection Guide that will be available to faculty and students.

Congratulations to our recent Graduates!

May 2023

Cheryl Antal
Jack Armstrong
Sophia Cabrera
Prince Dimgba
Alyse Dowell
Mackenzie Filewicz-Ross
Riya Ganji
Chelsea Gerlicki
Carolyn Gonzalez-Ortiz
Yesenia Harper
Elizabeth Hernandez
Hailey Kreusel
Sunday Lawal
Amy Le
Ben Leah
Jennifer Lezama Sierra
Maireigh McCullough
Chrystal McCutchen
Akua Mensah
Jenesis Montemayor
Marcia Nascimento
Nima Nasserzare
Chandler Nolte
Ifeyinwa Onwudiwe
Pujan Patel
Ana Pizarro
Laura |Price
Sneha Reddy
Rachel Rose
Julie Sang
Paige South
Valerie Stewart
Lesly Villanueva
Andrea Zarecky

Summer 2023

Buse Baykoca-Arslan
Renee Buster
Brittany Escobar
Karina Escobar
Chamini Mahawewa
Blasé Martin
Sephonie Moore
Alejandra Ortega
Frances Turnbough
Winifred Udeh

More Congratulations!

- Congratulations to SPPH team members Corey Patterson and Aaron Brooks for 5 years of service to TTUHSC! Corey is the Director of Admissions, Marketing and Special Projects at the Abilene campus. Aaron is the Senior IT Specialist also at the Abilene campus.

SPPH In The News!

- Dr. Julie St. John conducted an interview with Melissa Whitfield titled, “What is Human Trafficking and Why it's a Public Health Issue?” published January 11, 2023. Texas Tech Health Check Podcast. January was Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The podcast can be found [here](#) .
- Dr. St John was featured on the January 13, 2023 edition of StatlineTV, the Internal News Source for TTUHSC, where she talked about human trafficking. The edition can be found [here](#). (time stamp: 3:19-4:14)
- SPPH Dean Dr. Gerard Carrino was featured on the March 31, 2023 edition of StatlineTV, talking about large-scale simulations during disaster day. The edition can be found [here](#). (time stamp: 5:23-6:00)
- In the current issue of TTUHSC’s Pulse Magazine, DPH alumnus Ashley Edling, MPH, (Public Health '19) discusses the job market for nonprofits, and what public health professionals bring to the industry. Ashley also discusses how her MPH degree has enabled her to better approach community members of her nonprofit organization, Read more [here](#).

Welcome!

- We extend a warm welcome to Sheray Hancox, who joined our team on July 17. She is the Senior Administrative Assistant at the Abilene campus. Welcome, Sheray!

Mark Your Calendars!

- Monday, October 23 and Tuesday, October 24, 2023—CEPH Accreditation Site Visit
- Thursday, November 23 and Friday, November 24, 2023—Thanksgiving
- Friday, December 15, 2023—Official Last Day of Fall Semester

Faculty Presentations

Presentations

- Robert Levine, **Lisa Gittner, Ph.D.**, Maria Mejia, M.D., MPH, Brittany Tu, BSc, Roger Zoorob, M.D., MPH, Dennis Patterson, Ph.D. ***Deaths from causes amenable and not amenable to health care: Natural experiments in local politics***
- Robert Levine, M.D., **Lisa Gittner, Ph.D.**, Maria Mejia, M.D., MPH, Roger Zoorob, M.D., MPH, Dennis Patterson, Ph.D. ***Firearm and non-firearm fatality: Natural experiments in local politics.***
- **Chelsea Gerlicki, BS**, Katherine Holder, BBA, Bernardo Galvan, BS, Lila Carden, Ph.D., MBA, PMP, M. Haris Nazim, M.D., George Zouridakis, Ph.D., **Courtney Queen, Ph.D.** ***Acceptability and feasibility of end-user digital tools for the management of dermatologic issues secondary to chronic conditions in hard-to-reach communities***
- Reagan Collins, Jad Zeitouni, Amanda Veersart, Jessica Chacon, **Cynthia Jumper, M.D.**, Theresa Byrd, DrPH. ***Establishment of a Hybrid, Intradisciplinary Vaccine Administration Training Program for First and Second Year Medical Students***
- Jad Zeitouni, BBA, Reagan Collins, BA, **Cynthia Jumper, M.D.**, Aliza Wong, Ph.D., Theresa Byrd, DrPH. ***The Inception and Establishment of a Student-Led Health Policy and Public Health Think Tank Serving Greater West Texas***
- **Julie St John, DrPH, MPH, MA, CHWI.** ***Qualitative findings from a human trafficking community needs assessment conducted within a health sciences center***
- Jessyca Cripps, MPH, **Julie St. John, DrPH, MPH, MA, CHWI**, Jeff Dennis, Ph.D., Chwan Li-Shen, Ph.D.. ***Applying Diffusion of Innovation to the Texas Mother Friendly Worksite Program: Does early adoption lead to lower rates of infant mortality***
- Ashley Rodriguez, CCHW, CCHWI, **Julie St. John, DrPH, MPH, MA, CHWI.** ***How CHW Associations Strengthen and Support the CHW Workforce: Examples from the Texas Association of Promotores and CHWs***
- ***The C3 Project's next steps to an engaged national review of CHW roles and competencies.*** Lee Rosenthal, Paige Menking, **Julie St. John, DrPH, MPH, MA, CHWI**, Lily Lee, & Durrell Fox. Annual American Public Health Association Meeting, November 6, 2022, Boston, Massachusetts.
- **Sehar, Ujala, Rawat, Priyanka, Choudhury, Moumita, Boles, Annette, Culberson, John, Khan, Hafiz, Malhotra, Keya, Basu, Tanisha, Reddy, P. Hemachandra.** ***Caregiving Practices in the Hispanic population and Urgent Need for Developing Interventions for Hispanic Family Caregivers.*** Student Research Week, 3/2023.
- Tanisha Basu, John Culberson, Keya Malhotra, Erika Orlov, Hallie Morton, Chanda Bose, Lisa Gittner, **Hafiz Khan**, and P. Hemachandra Reddy. ***Lifestyle and Biological Factors in Cognitively Healthy Superior Agers in Rural West Texas,*** Student Research Week, 3/2023.

*Faculty, students and alumni in bold

More Faculty Presentations and Service

Presentations

- Bellacicco N, Jaffry M, Benalcazar J, Mandava K, Mostafa F, **Khan H**, Souayah N. ***No Association Between Non-arteritic Anterior Ischemic Optic Neuropathy and COVID-19 Vaccination.*** American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting 2023; Boston, Massachusetts April 22-27, 2023.
- Jaffry K, Jaffry M, Trivedi R, Ors M, Mostafa F, Shaikh A, Mandava K, Faiz I, **Khan H**, Souayah N. ***Global Mortality of Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy Patients Treated with Intravenous Immunoglobulin versus Steroid Therapies.*** American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting 2023; Boston, Massachusetts April 22-27, 2023.
- Mandava K, Jaffry K, Shaikh A, Trivedi R, Ors M, Faiz I, Ali RM, Mostafa F, **Khan H**, Souayah N. ***Mortality in Mechanically Ventilated Myasthenia Gravis Adult Patients: Comparing Intravenous Immunoglobulin vs Steroids.*** American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting 2023; Boston, Massachusetts April 22-27, 2023.
- Mohammed Pourghaed, Felipe Ramirez Velandia, Ashish Sarangi, John Culberson, Gabriela Ashworth, **Hafiz Khan**, Annette Boles, Antwi-Adjei Philip, Volker Neugebauer, J. Josh Lawrence. ***Associations between Vitamin D levels and diabetes in Elderly Hispanics of Rural Western Texas.*** Student Research Week, 3/2023.
- Sarangi A, Pourghaed M, Velandia FR, Ashworth G, Culberson J, **Khan H**, Boles A, Neugebauer V, and Lawrence, JJ. ***Vitamin D, Depression, and Health Disparities among Hispanics in Older Rural West Texans: A Project FRONTIER Study.*** Student Research Week, 3/2023.

*Faculty, students and alumni in **bold**

Service

- Dr. Julie St. John recently led a group of MPH students on international trips to Panama and Peru. The students were able to use these trips as their Applied Practice Experience and will present on their work soon.

Publications

- Ebong IA, Michos ED, Wilson M, **Appiah D**, Schreiner PJ, Racette SB, Allison MA, Watson K, Bertoni A. Adipokines and Adiposity Among Postmenopausal Women of the Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis. *Menopause*. [In press]
- Diala MU, Usman F, **Appiah D**, Hassan L, Ogundele T, Abdullahi F; Satrom KM, Bakker CJ, Lee BW; Slusher TM. Global Prevalence of Severe Jaundice in Neonatal Admissions: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *J. Clin. Med.* 2023, 12(11), 3738; <https://doi.org/10.3390/jcm12113738>.
- Doan K, **Appiah D**, Aljanabi N, Hall R. Analysis of County-Level Pharmacist and Pharmacy Deserts in Texas. *WTJOM*. 2023;1(2):24-30.
- Kim C, Schreiner PJ, Siscovick D, Huddleston HG, Wellons MF, Ebong I, Vu H, **Appiah D**, Catov J, Schisterman EF. Factors associated with self-report of polycystic ovary syndrome in the Coronary Artery Risk Factor Development in Young Adults Study. *BMC Women's Health* 23, 248 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-023-02394-0>
- **Appiah D**, Fuquay T, Aryee I, Kim C. Racial and ethnic disparities in the association of maternal infection during pregnancy and risk of cyanotic congenital heart defects In the United States, 2011-2020. *Ann Epidemiol*. 2023; 81:1-5
- **Appiah D**, Hedderson MM, Kim C, Sidney S, Sternfeld B, Quesenberry CP, Wellons MF, Gunderson EP. The Prospective Association of Hyperandrogenism, Oligomenorrhea and Polycystic Ovary Syndrome with Incident Gestational Diabetes: The Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults Women's Study. *Diabetes Res Clin Pract*. 2023; 198:110593.
- **Appiah D**, **Kamrudin S**, de Riese C. Factors associated with potentially inappropriate screening for vitamin D deficiency among women in medically underserved regions of West Texas. *J. Clin. Med.* 2023, 12, 993; <https://doi.org/10.3390/jcm12030993>
- Sehar, Ujala, Rawat, Priyanka, Choudhury, Moumita, Boles, Annette, Culberson, John, **Khan, Hafiz**, Malhotra, Keya, Basu, Tanisha, Reddy, P. Hemachandra. Caregiving Practices in the Hispanic population and Urgent Need for Developing Interventions for Hispanic Family Caregivers. *Student Research Week*, 3/2023.
- Tanisha Basu, John Culberson, Keya Malhotra, Erika Orlov, Hallie Morton, Chhanda Bose, Lisa Gittner, **Hafiz Khan**, and P. Hemachandra Reddy. Lifestyle and Biological Factors in Cognitively Healthy Superior Agers in Rural West Texas, *Student Research Week*, 3/2023.
- Bellacicco N, Jaffry M, Benalcazar J, Mandava K, Mostafa F, **Khan H**, Souayah N. No Association Between Non-arteritic Anterior Ischemic Optic Neuropathy and COVID-19 Vaccination. American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting 2023; Boston, Massachusetts April 22-27, 2023.
- Jaffry K, Jaffry M, Trivedi R, Ors M, Mostafa F, Shaikh A, Mandava K, Faiz I, **Khan H**, Souayah N. Global Mortality of Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy Patients Treated with Intravenous Immunoglobulin versus Steroid Therapies. American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting 2023; Boston, Massachusetts April 22-27, 2023.
- Mandava K, Jaffry K, Shaikh A, Trivedi R, Ors M, Faiz I, Ali RM, Mostafa F, **Khan H**, Souayah N. Mortality in Mechanically Ventilated Myasthenia Gravis Adult Patients: Comparing Intravenous Immunoglobulin vs Steroids. American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting 2023; Boston, Massachusetts April 22-27, 2023.
- Mohammed Pourghaed, Felipe Ramirez Velandia, Ashish Sarangi, John Culberson, Gabriela Ashworth, **Hafiz Khan**, Annette Boles, Antwi-Adjei Philip, Volker Neugebauer, J. Josh Lawrence. "Associations between Vitamin D levels and diabetes in Elderly Hispanics of Rural Western Texas". *Student Research Week*, 3/2023
- Sarangi A, Pourghaed M, Velandia FR, Ashworth G, Culberson J, **Khan H**, Boles A, Neugebauer V, and Lawrence, JJ. "Vitamin D, Depression, and Health Disparities among Hispanics in Older Rural West Texans: A Project FRONTIER Study. *Student Research Week*, 3/2023.

*Public health faculty, alumni & students in **bold**

Publications

- Brooke Jensen, **Hafiz Khan**, and Rakhshanda Layeequr Rahman. “Sociodemographic Determinants in Breast Cancer Screening among Uninsured Women of West Texas”, Medicina (Kaunas), 2022, 58, 1010. <https://doi.org/10.3390/medicina58081010>.
- Palle, Komaraiah, Mani, Chinnadurai, Acharya, Ganesh, Kshirsagar, Sudhir, Vijayan, Murali, **Khan, Hafiz**, and **Reddy, Hemachandra**. “A Novel Role for BRIP1/FANCD1 in Neuronal Cells Health and in Resolving Oxidative Stress-induced DNA Lesions”, Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease, 2022;85(1):207-221. doi: 10.3233/JAD-215305.
- Sonia Y Khan, Michael W Melkus, Fahmida Rasha, Maribel Castro, Victoria Chu, Luis Brandi, **Hafiz Khan**, Harvinder Singh Gill, Kevin Pruitt, Rakhshanda Layeequr Rahman. “Tumor-Infiltrating Lymphocytes (TILs) as a Biomarker of Abscopal Effect of Cryoablation in Breast Cancer: A Pilot Study”, Ann Surg Oncol., 2022, 29(5):2914-2925. doi: 10.1245/s10434-021-11157-w.
- Akalanka Mailewa, Susan Mengel, **Lisa Gittner**, and **Hafiz Khan**. “Mechanisms and Techniques to Enhance the Security of Big Data Analytic Framework with MongoDB and Linux Containers”, Array, 2022, 15:100236, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.array.2022.100236>.
- Secondary faculty member and epidemiologist **Zuber D. Mulla, Ph.D.**, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, TTUHSC El Paso recently co-authored the following two publications: Tullius Z, Helgesen W, Mulla ZD, Chheda S. An Evacuation Simulation in Multiple Neonatal Intensive Care Units across a Single City: Lessons Learned. Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness 2022; 17:e244, and Ogbutor C, Mishaw SMM, **Mulla ZD**. A mediation analysis of maternal smoking, gestational age, and birth weight on the Texas-Mexico border. Southern Medical Journal (in press).
- Secondary faculty member and epidemiologist **Zuber D. Mulla, Ph.D.**, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, TTUHSC El Paso, and his maternal health colleagues published the results of a statistical mediation analysis in the peer-reviewed Southern Medical Journal in June of 2023: Ogbutor C, Mishaw SM, **Mulla ZD**. Mediation analysis of maternal smoking, gestational age, and birth weight on the Texas-Mexico Border. South Med J 2023. 116(6):478-481.. The full text of the article is available [here](#).
- **Dr. Hafiz Khan** participated in a Rutgers-led study which showed there is no evidence that the COVID-19 vaccination increases the incidence of Guillain-Barré syndrome, a rare neurological disorder in which the body’s immune system attacks the nerves. The study was featured both nationally and internationally and can be found in the news releases below.

[-TTUHSC News](#)

[-U.S. News](#)

[-Rutgers News](#)

[-Koam News Now](#)

Public health faculty, alumni & students in **bold*

Final Remarks



Dr. Gerard Carrino, Ph.D., MPH, began his duties as Dean of the Julia Jones Matthews School of Population and Public Health on February 1. Since then, he has settled into his new role on the Abilene campus, has actively engaged the community and other universities on the future of the school, has presided over the school's inaugural commencement, has participated and helped host new student orientations and is now focused on leading the school's accreditation efforts with the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). Dr. Carrino is excited about where our school is now and what our future holds. A huge 'thank you' to Dr. Carrino for his leadership and work so far. We look forward to the results.

Contact Us

1650 Pine St.
Abilene, TX 79601

and

3601 4th St. MS 9430
Lubbock, TX 79430

325-696-0632
spph@ttuhsc.edu

Newsletter Information

To include pictures or other items for future newsletters, submit details to:

Patrick.Lloyd@ttuhsc.edu