



# Pathways

TTUHSC Department of Public Health Newsletter, Spring 2019, Issue 6

## MPH Trip to Peru, June 2019

Dr. Theresa Byrd and Dr. Julie St. John, accompanied by current MPH students Savannah Forsyth, Verneicia Allen, Aksha Upadhyay and Kelsey Sprinkles, traveled to Pedregal Grande, Peru on a TTUHSC International Education Trip. The group was part of a larger TTUHSC contingent led by the Office of Global Health, and accompanied by individuals from TTUHSC School of Medicine and School of Nursing.

Students conducted key informant interviews and focus groups in the community, administered a community survey, and tested for E. Coli contamination in various water sources.

A detailed trip description from Verneicia Allen follows on page 6

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Fall classes start  
on Monday,  
August 19th!

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MPH students and faculty participating in this 2019 Office of Global Health Peruvian International Education trip.

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# Announcements

- Fall registration is now open. Current students should contact their faculty advisor for guidance on fall classes
- Incoming online students will complete MPH orientation entirely online
- Fall 2019 orientation for new students is scheduled for Aug. 19 for incoming students

## Congratulations to our Spring 2019 MPH Graduates!

### MPH

Samantha Curtis  
Ashley Edling  
Asher George  
Damilola Owoade  
Drew Rasmussen  
Joshua Sanders  
Stephanie Sariles  
Sarah Secret  
Ashlee Spann

### MPH/MPA

Yousef Bani Melhem

### M.D./MPH

Samantha Jayasinghe  
Hyunyoung Kim  
Megan Clapp  
Colten Philpott  
Natalie Tully



(L to R): Captain Ryan Braus, Assistant Chief Deputy of Detention Kim Howell, Sarah Dingus, Dr. Nathaniel Wright, Dr. Jeff Dennis, Dr. Lisa Gittner and Captain Johnny Jaquess at the Texas Tech University President's Engaged Scholarship Awards

# Faculty Activities & Honors

- **Dr. Theresa Byrd** received the Silver Stirrup Medical Award from the American Cancer Society at the 2019 Cattle Baron's Ball
- **Dr. Brie Sherwin** received the 2018-19 GSBS Outstanding Faculty of the Year Award for excellence in teaching in the Department of Public Health.
- **Dr. Courtney Queen** and Dr. M Haris Nazim, Department of Surgery-Amarillo received a CRI Seed Grant for "Intergrating and testing a point-of-care diagnostic tool for the early detection of melanoma"
- **Dr. Courtney Queen** received a travel award from the TTU Innovation Hub
- **Dr. Julie St. John** was granted tenure and promotion to Associate Professor
- **Dr. Julie St. John** was selected to the TTUHSC Academy of Distinguished Educators (May 2019)
- **Dr. Julie St. John** was nominated and selected to serve as an advisory committee member, Public Health Funding and Policy Committee, Texas Department of State Health Services
- **Dr. Julie St. John** serves as a charter member for the National Association of Community Health Workers
- **Dr. Julie St. John** was nominated and selected to serve as a board member for the Abilene Chamber of Commerce
- **Dr. Hafiz Khan** was granted tenure to accompany his existing rank of Professor
- **Dr. Jeff Dennis** and **Dr. Lisa Gittner**, along with Dr. Nathaniel Wright (TTU Political Science) received the 2019 Texas Tech University President's Emerging Engaged Scholarship Award for their work with the Lubbock County Detention Center and Starcare. (Picture on page 2)
- **Dr. Jeff Dennis'** coauthored 2018 *Population Research and Policy Review* paper with Denney (Washington State University) & Saint Onge (University of Kansas) received the 2018 IPUMS Research Award from the Institute for Social Research and Data Innovation, University of Minnesota.



# Student Research Week

March 20-23

MPH and M.D./MPH students presenting SRW posters:

- Coy Bolton
- Asher George
- Brianna Hope
- Cain Lara
- Steven Lara
- Damilola Owoade
- Obadeh Shabaneh



Damilola Owoade and Steven Lara presenting their work at Student Research Week (March 2019)



A great turnout of MPH faculty and graduates at the May 2019 TTUHSC Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences graduation! (Photo courtesy of Drew Rasmussen)

## Recent Publications

**Appiah D**, Schreiner PJ, Selvin E, Demerath EW, Pankow JS. Spousal Diabetes Status as a Risk Factor for Incident Type 2 Diabetes: A Prospective Cohort Study and Meta-Analysis. *Acta Diabetol.* 2019 Jun;56(6):619-629.

Ball S, Arevalo M, Wongsangsak S, **Dennis JA**, Nugent, K. 2019. Implications of mean platelet volume in health and disease: A large population study on data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. *Thrombosis Research*, 175,90-94.

**Dennis JA**, Wright NS, **Gittner LS**. 2019. A justice and mental health collaborative in Lubbock County, Texas. *Psychiatric Services*,70(7), 636. doi: 10.1176/appi.ps.70702

**Mangold C**, **Dennis JA**, Dame M, Grossman O, Gavin M, Peiris AN. Forthcoming. Temporal characteristics of missed clinic appointments in an academic center in west Texas. *Journal of Medical Practice Management*.

Peiris CD, Jaroudi S, **Byrd TL**. Role of Monthly High-Dose Vitamin D Supplementation in Cancer Prevention. *JAMA Oncology.* 2019 Apr 1;5(4):572

Thavaraputta S, **Dennis JA**, Laoveeravat P, Nugent K, Rivas AM. Forthcoming. Hypothyroidism and its association with sleep apnea among adults in the United States: NHANES 2007-2008. *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*.

Wongsangsak S, **Dennis JA**, Ball S, Arevalo M, Nugent K. 2019. Significance of platelet count in health and diseases: Insights from a population study using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Study. *Southwest Respiratory and Critical Care Chronicles*, 7,1-8.

Zmora R, Schreiner PJ, **Appiah D**, Lloyd-Jones D, Lewis CE, Rana JS. Racial and Gender Differences in Biological and Chronological Heart Age in The Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults (CARDIA) Study. *Ann Epidemiol.* 2019 May;33:24-29

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



## Peru trip - as told by MPH student Verneicia Allen

Our time in Peru flew by, with us hitting the ground running. Day one we divided into groups, paired with translators, and shared our chronic disease teachings with local Peruvian college students, who worked with us during our time in Peru. We spent the week assessing four small flood-stricken communities. We conducted several focus groups, key informant interviews, 100 surveys, and 100 water tests as part of our community assessments. We learned about the local culture, which included hand-made paja toquilla (artisan craft using a type of straw to make a number of times), sun-brewed purple corn drink and the healing powers of an Incan Dog. From our interviews, surveys, and focus groups, we learned that the communities were left to rebuild and regain control of their health by themselves. We will also have the opportunity to share the results from our assessment with the community, and the hope is the MPH program will continue to develop relationships with these communities and take future MPH students back to Piura to assist the communities in developing and implementing interventions.

In addition to working in Piura, we had the option of extending our trip to include a cultural immersion component, in which we visited Machu Picchu one of the seven Wonders of the World. We were immersed in Peruvian culture in the southern part of the country, including the ancient Incan capital of Cusco and the Sacred Valley. In closing, this 2019 TTUHSC Peruvian International Education Trip was such a fantastic experience that combined work, learning and relaxation. We highly recommend MPH students participate in a TTUHSC sponsored international trip!



2019 Peruvian International Education trip TTUHSC participants

## Faculty presentations

- Appiah D.** Does the country you live in influence the disparity between your chronological age and the age of your heart and arteries? TTUHSC Global Health Lecture Series, 9/19/18.
- Appiah D,** Nwabuo CC, Ebong I, Vasconcellos HD, Wellons MF Lewis CE, Lima J. Schreiner PJ. The Association of Age at Natural Menopause with Changes In Left Ventricular Structure And Function During The Menopausal Transition: The CARDIA Study. (Presented at the American Heart Association's Epidemiology and Prevention/ Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Health Scientific Session, Houston, TX), March 5, 2019.
- Brindle, A., Koganti, S., & **Pasupathy, R.** Dietary Supplement and Medication Use and Knowledge in Collegiate Athletes of rural West Texas. American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) Annual Meeting, Pharmacy Education 2019, Chicago, IL. 7/14/2019.
- Dennis, JA.** Population research, retrospective research, and publishing. Clinical Research Institute Summer Research Course. TTUHSC, 6/10/19
- Pasupathy, R.** Clinical Self-Efficacy of Pre-Professional Healthcare Students. 31<sup>st</sup> World Congress of IALP: Innovations in Supporting Communication Participation, Taipei, Taiwan. 8/19/2019.
- Pasupathy, R.** Enhancing Interprofessional Conflict Resolution Skills of Healthcare Students. 31<sup>st</sup> World Congress of IALP: Innovations in Supporting Communication Participation. Taipei, Taiwan. 8/19/2019.
- St. John, J.** Engaging learners through a live museum (ePoster session). Julie St. John. DT&L Conference, August 7, 2019, Madison, WI.
- St. John, J.** I'm a MaMa first: Tips for CHWs in their homelife (workshop). Julie St. John. Northeast Texas Community Health Worker 2019 Annual Conference, 7/19/19, Tyler, TX.
- St. John, J.** The Community Health Worker Core Consensus (plenary session). Lee Rosenthal, Julie St. John, Flor Redondo, Gail Hirsch. Unity 2019. "Community health workers unlocking the door to healthier communities," April 14-17, 2019, Las Vegas, NV
- St. John, J.** I'm a MaMa first: Tips for CHWs in their homelife (presentation). Julie St. John. Unity 2019: The 20th Anniversary of the National Conference For and About CHWs, April 14-17, 2019, Las Vegas, NV.
- St. John, J.** Telling our stories: A CHW textbook describing their roles, competency, and practice (poster). w/ Susan Mayfield Johnson, Wandy Hernandez, **Brittany Duhart.** The 20th Anniversary of the National Conference for and about CHWs 4/14/19, Las Vegas, NV.
- St. John, J.** Integration of community partners into a culminating project for a public health course (presentation) APTR Annual Conference, April 1-2, 2018, Columbus, OH.
- St. John, J.** Engaging community partners in a practice based project for a public health course (poster) w/ J Dennis ASPPH Annual Meeting, March 20-22, 2019, Arlington, VA.
- St. John, J.** Integrating Telehealth into Inter-professional Curricula (presentation). with Kathryn Whitcomb, Gayle Stegall, Nancy Ochs, Terran Keidl, Bill Davis. 19th International Meeting on Simulation in Healthcare, 9/28/19, San Antonio, TX.

## TTUHSC Student Public Health Association

<b>Lubbock 2019-2020 officers</b>		<b>Abilene 2019-2020 officers</b>
<b>President</b> – Savannah Forsyth	SPHA is a student organization that promotes community service and public health research at TTUHSC.  <b>Upcoming plans</b> With next year’s officers in place, please watch for email announcements and follow our chapters on Facebook at SPHA Abilene and SPHA Lubbock for updates on upcoming activities!	<b>President</b> – Amelia Carnagey
<b>Vice President</b> – Marissa Matthies		<b>Vice President</b> – Samantha Guerra
<b>Social Chair/Secretary</b> – Cain Lara		<b>Treasurer</b> – Sidonie Ngangmi
<b>Treasurer</b> – Obadeh Shabaneh		<b>Secretary</b> – Kelsey Rosenberger
		<b>Public Relations</b> – Verneicia Allen

## National Public Health Week

April 2-6

National Public Health Week is an American Public Health Association event. This year’s theme was “Healthiest Nation 2030”

TTUHSC Events included:

- ◆ *Community Health Workers Presentation by Dr. Debra Flores and Dr. Theresa Byrd*
- ◆ *Donation drive for the Center for Superheroes*
- ◆ *“The Other Side of Immigration” a Global Health Alliance Film Series*
- ◆ *Pledge Wall for Healthiest Nation*
- ◆ *Climate Change Panel: Professor Alex Pearl, Dr. John Zak, and Dr. Robert Forbis in attendance, mediated by Dr. Brie Sherwin*
- ◆ *National Eating Disorder Association walk*
- ◆ *Celebrate Global Health at the Lubbock Community Garden*



## Alumni job spotlight

**Chris O'Dell** (MPH '18) — Associate Director, Office of Global Health, TTUHSC

**Samantha Curtis** (MPH '19) — Disease Intervention Specialist, Department of State Health Services

**Kelsey Launer** (MPH '18) — Standardized Patient Education, TTUHSC School of Nursing

**Christine Lucio** (MPH '18) — Assistant Health Services Director, Abilene-Taylor County Public Health District

**Kandi Quesada** (MPH '18) — Associate Director, TTUHSC Garrison Institute on Aging

**Joshua Sanders** (MPH '19) — Public Health Liaison for the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program, City of Lubbock Health Department

**Tiffany Torres** (MPH '18) — Epidemiologist and Medical Technologist, City of Lubbock Health Department

## Contact Us

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## Student Recognition

- Cheyenne Mangold received the 2019 Excellence in Public Health Award from the U.S. Public Health Service Physician Professional Advisory Committee
- Thank you to May 2019 MPH graduate Samantha Curtis for her work on the newsletter over the past 2 years!
- Thanks to M.D./MPH graduate Natalie Tully for facilitating the 2019 M.D./MPH panel during P3 Week!
- View past students' Applied Practice Experiences on the MPH Web site [here](#).

## Newsletter Information

To submit pictures or other items for future newsletters, submit details to:  
Jeff.Dennis@ttuhsc.edu