Tuberculosis Laboratory Based Research & Public Health Education

Erica Hersh, MS—Health Communication Candidate

Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM) is known both for its world-class research and education and for its commitment to the community, whether the immediate community in Chinatown or the global community. Now, Tufts is extending its commitment to Chinatown, where tuberculosis (TB) rates are three times higher than the Boston average (Tufts Medical Center – Asian Health Initiative), and furthering research by creating a new laboratory to study TB, a bacterial infection that usually infects the lungs and is highly contagious. The lab will be part of the Department of Molecular Biology and Microbiology, but faculty in the Department of Public Health and Community Medicine have come on board to work with the Chinatown community to develop a public health education program on TB.

The TB lab will be Tufts School of Medicine’s first biosafety level 3 (BLS3) lab, a designation which means the lab has specialized equipment, particularly air handling systems that allow researchers to safely work with air-borne pathogens. The lab has recruited one researcher, and the actual BLS3 lab will be built in late spring of 2013. The hope is that it will be a small lab, but with a critical mass of researchers working on TB treatments.

There are many reasons, both research-based and public health-based, that Tufts has decided to build this lab. According to Dr. John Leong, Chair of the Molecular Biology and Microbiology Department, “there are a number of reasons to study TB. It is a global health infection that has huge public health consequences and more and more funding opportunities will be for diseases that affect a lot of people… it appealed to me to be working on an infection that has special reference to the community.” As he sees it, the lab is a “sign of Tufts institutional commitment to look hard at global health issues and put their money where their mouth is.” Dr. Leong also hopes the lab will not only advance research and foster communication between TUSM and the community, but that it can connect with other Tufts schools, such as the School of Veterinary Medicine and its TB lab, to share ideas and connect researchers.

In setting up the lab, Dr. Leong and the rest of the staff on the research side have been working closely with members of TUSM’s Department of Public Health and Community Medicine to educate the Chinatown community about the lab and about TB. This education component was not necessarily in the original plan for the lab, but “the need was very apparent in community meetings. We’re starting to rally the resources and contacts to see what can be done,” says Dr. Susan Koch-Weser, Assistant Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine and the lead on the education program for the TB lab.

Plans for the education program are in the early stages, but Dr. Koch-Weser says that between meetings with Chinatown community groups such as Addressing Disparities in Tuberculosis Laboratory Based Research & Public Health Education

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I've just returned with several other faculty and students from the Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association – a meeting of ~12,000 public health practitioners, researchers, and students. It was an odd meeting—the most apt descriptor of the atmosphere I can offer is uneasy. Attendees seemed distracted, as if they had other things on their minds. Best hunch: the upcoming election and its potential impact on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and for public health more generally. A second distraction, Hurricane Sandy, was widely forecast, and hit the mid-Atlantic and New England states in the middle of the 4-day meeting.

Yes, attendees were concerned about cancelled flights, and the loss of property, but large public health concerns from Sandy loomed as well. The potential risk to health was accompanied by the need to communicate that risk quickly and accurately. Public health was threatened by contaminated water in cities below sea level, like Hoboken, where floodwater was contaminated with sewage or with chemicals stored in basements; food poisoning due to consumption of tainted perishable food, carbon-monoxide poisoning where generators were not properly ventilated and, as things begin to dry out, toxic mold (unrelated to the medication-induced fungal meningitis outbreak). And of course, injuries due to downed power lines, falling trees, and floodwater. Public health is everywhere.

Closer to home, the PHPD Student Senate has taken the University emphasis on active citizenship seriously. The senate hosted “Presidential Debate Watching” parties for every debate, and widely disseminated voter registration information. The Community Health Advocates at Tufts (CHAT) student group hosted a panel discussion on public health issues in the campaigns with panelists from Tufts Medical Center, Tufts School of Medicine and Health Care for All. In collaboration with the TUSM Healthcare Reform Club, the PHPD Student Senate hosted two back-to-back panel discussions on Ballot Question 2 (Medical Marijuana) and Question 3 (Death with Dignity), featuring speakers with the full range of perspectives. And through outreach by an MD/MPH alumnus active in Rx Democracy, an organization of clinicians, students, and health professionals who believe “that the more people participate, particularly in communities that experience the greatest health and civic barriers, the healthier our democracy becomes,” a voter registration day was held in several dental clinics at Tufts School of Dental Medicine (see page 5 for full story). The level of engagement and commitment to ensure an informed electorate was palpable. Kudos to our busy students who prioritized organizing and participating in these important activities this fall!

The PHPD Alumni Organization has continued to host events to bring alumni across the programs together. In October, they held a PHPD Alumni/Student networking and invited faculty, students and alumni to an informal gathering to make professional contacts, learn about career opportunities, and to have a good time. I've taken the liberty of excerpting part of a message sent by a recent alumna to Earlene Avalon, PhD, MPH’01, PHPD Alumni Association President, after the evening:

I've interacted with you twice at alumni functions and each time left feeling inspired. Thank you! You said something (the first time) to the effect of, “you have to go out there and get it, nobody is going to drop anything in your lap!” I had been trying to think about what was next, but when you said that, I realized I was thinking too narrowly. I needed to think outside the box and be inquisitive in this process. You also said, “you gotta take risks.” So true. I did epi/bio and nutrition at Friedman. We had nothing to do with the Dental School when I was working on the MS/MPH, and naturally didn’t consider a position at the dental school as a possibility. If I didn’t question my assumptions and just go for it, I wouldn’t have the great job I have now.

As the Dean of these public health and professional degree programs seeing the students draw strength and inspiration from our alumni is about as good as it gets.

Warm regards and good health,

Aviva Must, Ph.D.
Dean, Public Health and Professional Degree Programs
Those of us who had the honor of knowing Dr. John Ludden are mindful of the profound impact he had on the lives of members of the Tufts' community. Dr Ludden served not only as Program Director for the MD/MBA students but as mentor and role model for what began as one of the first such programs in the country. Even today -- with more than 50 programs nationally -- the Tufts and Brandeis University dual degree curriculum remains distinguished as one of only two 4-year MD/MBA programs.

Beginning in 2000 and for nearly a decade beyond, Mentor Ludden ushered in class after class of MD/MBA students in early June. Often anxious -- and universally apprehensive -- students found Mentor Ludden eminently approachable and truly endearing. Cloaked in his psychiatric demeanor, Mentor Ludden always made himself available to lend an ear, to provide direction and to help guide students. Always available to help students navigate turbulent waters, Mentor Ludden was brilliant in the art and the science of his craft, and year after year students came to trust and depend upon his wisdom and moral compass, secure in the knowledge that he always had their interests as his guiding beacon. Nick Frisch (MD/MBA '11) remembers that John inspired "countless medical students to see beyond traditional medicine, acknowledge new opportunities, fuel innovation and aspire to become more than just a physician. He encouraged leadership and provided the venues to build the skills."

Trained as a psychiatrist in the 1960s, after serving a stint in the military, Role Model Ludden, assumed the role of Director of the Alcohol Clinic at Brigham and Women's Hospital while also practicing psychiatry at one of the nation's first HMOs -- Harvard Community Health Plan (HCHP). Appointed as the first Director of the Kenmore Health Center, Dr. Ludden was later promoted to Corporate Medical Director and Chief Operating Officer at HCHP. In the ensuing 15 years, and under his leadership, HCHP burgeoned from 30,000 up to 1,000,000 members. Recognizing Ludden's leadership potential, HCHP enrolled him in a 3-month executive management program at Harvard Business School. When HCHP later merged with Pilgrim Health Care, Ludden served as the Senior Medical Officer for Policy and External Affairs at the newly established Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. Increasingly committed to the idea that physicians also needed to possess command of management skills, Ludden joined the American College of Physician Executives and would eventually serve a term as its President. Role Model Ludden also helped found the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

Apart from his professional roles, it's clear from the outpouring of sentiment from the MD/MBA students and alum that John Ludden was deeply cherished. He displayed the power of his demeanor and experience each time he made himself available to a student in need. The concept of "not now" was simply unacceptable to him. He listened intently, spoke from the heart and didn't shy away from concerns that mattered to his students, both personal and academic. For all that he accomplished in his professional life, those who knew him well remember his wry wit, his common-sense wisdom and his passion for inspiring others.

From the beginning of this tenure at Tufts, John Ludden established a summer tradition for incoming and returning MD/MBA students that served to highlight his generosity and reinforce his position as mentor and role model: a day at his beach home in Orleans. It was a special treat which, reminisces Catherine Logan (MD/MBA '12), she and her classmates fondly anticipated every year. She treasured the way John and his wife, Susan, made everyone feel welcome in their home. And like most other things he tackled, John grilled a mean burger.

Like so many other students, Neal Kuman (MD/MBA '13) attributes his decision to attend Tufts to John: "His vision of affecting change in the medical field through the education of future leaders captivated me and pushed Tufts to my top choice." Similarly, says Frisch, "It's difficult to think where I would be right now had I not met Dr. Ludden. In truth, he's the reason that I chose to move to Boston and attend Tufts ... one of the best decisions of my life ... Not a single day goes by where I don't apply the things I learned in [the MD/MBA] program."
Summer Meals for Teens in Massachusetts

Lauren Park, MS-Nutrition/MPH ’12

Ketchup as a vegetable. Jamie Oliver’s food revolution. New school nutrition guidelines. School food and the National School Lunch program shows up regularly in headlines and has taken center stage for the public as the nutrition issue that impacts school-aged youth. Less public attention has been given to the National School Lunch Program’s sister, the Summer Food Service Program, a federally funded service that provides free meals to low-income kids, under 18, during summer months when school is out. Yet, it feeds 2.3 million hungry kids across the US each summer. Unfortunately, this program is underutilized and only reaches 14% of those children who are eligible to participate.

Here in Massachusetts (MA), Project Bread, an anti-hunger organization, and the Child Nutrition Outreach Program (CNOP), work to increase participation in the Summer Food Service Program by providing technical support and outreach materials to communities in need. This past summer I conducted my Tufts MPH Applied Learning Experience with a concentration in Health Communication with the Project Bread team. While Summer Food is a generally underutilized program, older children participate even less than younger ones. CNOP and communities across MA who sponsor Summer Food Programs were interested in attracting older youth to the program.

I started my research, by trying to understand the complex structure of the Summer Food Service Program and who the important players were. Each qualifying community has a “sponsor” who essentially manages the program for that community. Community sponsors are often the school food service director for that town, but they may also be parks and recreation departments, nonprofits like the YMCA, or other community organizations, such as a community college. Within each community there may be several sites and each site has “site supervisors” who implement the program on the ground and run each site. My conversations with sponsors in the communities helped me understand this complex web of relationships, roles and rules that they need to navigate in order to offer the Summer Food Program in their city or town. They’re faced with the challenge of providing a meal that meets the federal nutrition guidelines, travels well (all the meals are prepared off site and brought to the program sites), and appeals to all kids under 18. Most sponsors have settled on providing a “cold meal” such as a sandwich (typically ham and cheese on a wheat roll), with a side of fruit, baby carrots and 1% milk.

“It’s a fun program, wicked fun. And it keeps kids out of trouble. Keeps the drug and alcohol level down,” an 18-year-old, female from Gloucester, MA told me. I conducted three focus groups, in three different communities, with teens ranging in age from 12-18 years old. Those that participated in programs in their towns, typically had positive things to say about them. Teens often said that they stopped going because the programs were geared toward younger children and if there were activities aimed specifically at teens, they’d be more likely to continue participating. They also talked about peers as a key factor in promoting their participation. If their friends were going to be there, they’d go.

I also wanted to learn about what influenced their decisions in attending programs and where they got their information. I was surprised to learn that in this digital age, the teens admitted that they were more likely to go to something that they heard about from word of mouth, either from a friend or an adult in the community that they trusted. The creative programming also appealed to teens, one offered leadership experience by training teens to supervise younger kids at the Summer Food sites, another offered teen-only sports leagues at night.

I compiled all of my findings into program, policy and outreach recommendations for Project Bread and the CNOP team. I will present these findings to Summer Food Program sponsors in Massachusetts at the annual conference this winter. My hope is that this research will contribute to providing improvements in outreach and participation among teens in this program – leading to more youth benefiting from this underutilized program and receiving a nutritious meal during the summer months.
Private Sector Internship at PepsiCo: The Benefits of Networking

Michelina DeGizzi, MS-Nutrition/MPH

There’s no typical day for Ellen Cynar. As an Intern Policy Analyst for PepsiCo, she works for the company’s Global Health and Agriculture Policy Group, which contributes to PepsiCo’s environmental and human sustainability goals. The group functions as a think tank within the company to provide science-to-policy translation and to advise the company on trends surrounding health, nutrition, and agriculture. “I do a lot of research and writing,” Ellen notes. Her current work with the company involves working with producers to track human and environmental sustainability in agriculture production.

Ellen does all of this work while working for PepsiCo only part-time. She is actually still a student in the MS-Nutrition/MPH program at Tufts. Ellen’s initial role at PepsiCo was related to a Gerald J. and Dorothy R. Friedman School of Nutrition, Science and Policy internship and MPH Applied Learning Experience that involved doing research on saturated fat and sustainability around the use of palm oil. “I treat my job like it’s another class in my life,” she says about balancing her time between her work and her studies. Balancing a job and going to school full-time can be a challenge, but a lot of Ellen’s work can be done at home or at school. Not having to travel to an office every day is particularly helpful since PepsiCo is headquartered in New York.

The intersection of nutrition, health, and sustainability was not a path Ellen thought she’d take, though she does come from a science- and health-minded family. “I studied international politics as an undergraduate, and wanted nothing to do with science, but here I am. I’ve done a 180.” After completing her undergraduate work, she travelled, and held various jobs working for law firms, non-profits, and even taught community nutrition classes. Eventually, this sparked her academic interest in nutrition, and convinced her to apply for admission into the Tufts’ MS - Nutrition Program. “I had been following the [Friedman School] for many years before I applied and then realized that there are important interactions between nutrition and public health. I wanted to learn about the broader aspects of public health and to understand nutrition and food policy within that framework,” says Ellen. This prompted her to become a dual degree student in the MS-Nutrition/MPH Program.

Ellen was initially connected to PepsiCo by Dr. Eileen Kennedy, former Dean of the Friedman School, and would love to see more Tufts alumni engaging with the private sector. “For most of us [students] it’s hard to find an alum doing exactly what we want to do but it’s the networking and sharing of experiences that is tremendously useful.”

Like many internships in the private sector, there is a formal application and interview process at PepsiCo. More information can be found at PepsiCo’s career website http://www.pepsico.com/careers.html. For more information on her experiences, contact Ellen at ellen.cynar@tufts.edu.

Civic Engagement in Health Care

Audra Williams, MD/MPH ’15

Tufts University had the honor of welcoming back Dr. Rishi Manchanda, MD/MPH ’03 to the Tufts Health Sciences Campus in October. He founded a non-profit organization, RxDemocracy (rxdemocracy.org), a nationwide nonpartisan effort to promote civic engagement in health care. Civic participation is becoming more recognized as a social determinant of health. Based out of Los Angeles, California, the organization aims to connect health care students and professionals interested in increasing civic participation with local civic organizations that can help achieve that goal. Through his connections to Tufts as an alumnus, he inspired medical students to create voter registrations drives within the Tufts and Chinatown communities. RxDemocracy quickly put students in contact with the Boston-based nonprofit, MassVOTE. They were able to help organize voter registration drives by engaging Tufts student volunteers to stand out in the Chinatown community with clipboards and register voters. Soon after, Tufts School of Dental Medicine volunteered space and helped set up registration tables in their clinic lobbies.

Dr. Manchanda proved to be an inspiring Tufts alumnus that was dedicated to the success of the voter campaigns in the community of his alma mater. Through these efforts, students were able to register 140 voters in the Tufts Community. Students plan to continue to use the inspiration of RxDemocracy and Dr. Manchanda to engage the Tufts Community in encouraging patients and the health care community to take an active stand in their community and health.

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Erica Hersh, MS-Health Communication Candidate

When most people think of public health, medicine-based or public safety interventions often come to mind. While those programs have been prevalent throughout public health since its inception, public health dentistry has only been gaining interest and recognition more recently, with a particular focus on dental disparities and access to care issues. With this in mind, Tufts School of Dental Medicine has answered the call for more dentists who are specifically trained in public health issues and set up Tufts’ newest combined program in collaboration with the Medical School’s Public Health Program, where students can receive both a Doctorate of Dental Medicine (DMD)/MPH degree. Tufts University is one of only approximately 20 schools that offer a specific dual DMD/MPH degree program.

The program was started with funding from the Health Resources and Service Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which offered five-year grants for dental schools to develop public health training programs. Despite the limited term of the grant, Dr. Wanda Wright, Program Director, says that the school is absolutely committed to continuing the dual degree as a long-term program, as she believes “it’s important for dentists to get a broader sense of public health first” and “important to address the oral health needs of a population...to improve the overall health of a population.” Her hope is that these students will go on to do their residencies in public health dentistry, making the Tufts’ program an integral step in the path to becoming a practicing public health dentist.

Dr. Anthony Schlaff, Director of the MPH Program reiterated the importance of public health dentistry and Tufts’ commitment to the program, saying “The addition of the DMD/MPH continues the Tufts Public Health tradition of interdisciplinary education. Public health dentistry is a vitally important field. Fluoridation of drinking water is listed by the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) as one of the 10 great achievements of public health. Despite this achievement, inequities in access to fluoridated water and dental care continue, and dental caries remains one of the most significant public health problems affecting children in the U.S. The Tufts MPH program is pleased to include a greater number of dentists and dental students in our program.”

However, availability of a grant was only one push for the establishment of this program. Prior to the setup of a formal program, many dental students already showed an interest in public health, working with community health organizations for externship projects and undertaking public health research programs. Students currently in the program echo the idea that their public health interests and interest in dentistry are closely intertwined.

One of the first students to enroll in the program, Khara Gresham, DMD/MPH ’14, noted that she always had a strong interest in public health and planned on getting her MPH after Dental School so the DMD/MPH program at Tufts started at the perfect time for her. She went on to add, “I am so excited that I am on this path. I plan to use my degree to better serve underrepresented communities through dentistry. I also hope to use the degree to have some influence on increasing dental insurance and having better dental health policies.” Nicholas Gordon, DMD/MPH ’15, also wants to work to serve underrepresented communities, “I chose to enroll in the DMD/MPH program at Tufts because I knew that as a dentist I wanted to not only treat dental disease on an individual patient level, but also prevent dental disease in the general population. A Master of Public Health degree provides me with the knowledge to understand the factors that are at work in perpetuating disparities in oral health in the U.S., so that as a dentist I can work to eliminate them.”

Students apply during their second year of the dentistry program and take one public health course per semester for their last two years of dental school. After they complete the full four years of dental school, students spend at least a year completing the rest of their MPH courses and capstone project, and then graduate with a DMD/MPH. After graduation and completing their residencies, these students can do anything from epidemiologic research to establishing community dental programs to working for government dental boards. There are currently three students in the program, and Dr. Wright envisions two or three students joining every year. For a specialty that has only ~100 trained practitioners nationwide, these few students will make a huge difference in advancing the cause of public health dentistry and creating healthier populations. Tufts DMD/MPH program stands to put Tufts at the forefront of another area of public health education.

To learn more about the DMD/MPH program go to http://publichealth.tufts.edu/Academics/MPH-Program-and-Combined-Degrees/Degree-Pathways-and-Combined-Degrees/DMD-MPH.
New Doctor of Public Health Program

Michelina DeGiggi, MS-Nutrition/MPH

Applications are currently being accepted for a new Doctorate of Public Health Program (DrPH) as part of Tufts University School Medicine’s Public Health Program that offers an interdisciplinary approach for students, focusing on public health through the lenses of many different disciplines. The development of this program launches Tufts among only about 40 other schools in the country offering doctoral public health degrees. “We have wanted to develop a doctoral program for a long time,” says Janet Forrester, PhD, Associate Director of the Doctorate of Public Health program. In talking to Master’s degree students, Dr. Forrester heard recurring interest for a DrPH program, citing that many students expressed a desire to stay at Tufts if only a DrPH program existed.

The 14-credit program that was approved almost a year ago and accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health has already attracted a broad spectrum of applicants. “People are really attracted to the interdisciplinary nature of the program,” says Dr. Forrester. She describes the program’s vision and strength as tying public health across disciplines and creating strong links between the different Tufts campuses, professors, and students interested in public health topics.

Though doctoral students are required to complete courses to meet specific competencies, they can choose their electives from any of Tufts’ graduate schools. The DrPH program is built on the strengths of these schools and this collaboration creates a truly unique and richly diverse education for students. In addition to core courses, electives, and a dissertation, students must complete a practicum with either a professor or other adviser at a public health agency. This part of the program pushes students to use the knowledge and skills they are learning in the classroom and to apply that knowledge to real-life situations. This points to one of the distinctions not only between Tufts’ and other DrPH programs, but also with traditional PhD programs. “Traditional PhD programs train and create independent researchers to work in academia or industry research fields. The DrPH, on the other hand, aims to create leaders who can do more than research,” states Dr. Forrester.

At a time when public health priorities are changing rapidly, public health students need to go out into the world and practice what they’re learning, exploring options and fields in which they are most interested. This practical experience is not only encouraged but required in the Tufts DrPH program. Dr. Forrester acknowledges that this distinction can be a tough one for students to grasp when they are deciding which path to follow for their doctoral studies. If students want to do pure research, perhaps the PhD is the right path. For students who are more interested in setting out to do work in the community, or in government or non-profit agencies, however, the DrPH might better serve their goals.

A doctoral degree should not be considered as a substitute for real life work experience. In fact, Dr. Forrester suggests working before beginning a doctoral program of any kind. “If you’ve never been out in the workforce, [going back to school] is a big commitment. Working allows students to really solidify their interests before jumping into a doctoral program,” she advises. This is not to say that staying for a doctorate immediately upon finishing a master’s degree is a bad idea, but it may not be the best option for every student. In fact, in applying to the program, applicants’ work and life experiences are significantly taken into account. A great majority of current applicants are returning to school after careers in urban planning, engineering, public health, and a broad spectrum of other fields. This abundance of experience is what will make the Tufts DrPH program so richly rewarding for students.

Dr. Forrester notes that the DrPH program will train leaders. It’s ideal for public health professionals who want to increase their qualifications and transition into the sort of senior positions that are competitive with both a doctoral degree and extensive work experience. “People are much better focused and have different attitudes towards their studies if they’ve worked a bit between degrees. The richness of a doctoral program like the DrPH comes from learning from your peers. And when it comes to jobs, if you’ve got a master’s degree-holder with ten years of work experience up against a doctoral degree-holder with no work experience, who looks more competitive?” Dr. Forrester adds enthusiastically, “The presence of doctoral students in public health, particularly those with extensive experience, will act as mentors for our masters degree students and will hopefully stimulate them to consider staying on (or eventually returning) for a doctorate themselves.”

To learn more about the Doctorate of Public Health program, contact Janet Forrester at janet.forrester@tufts.edu or visit http://publichealth.tufts.edu/Academics/DrPH.
Michelina DeGizzi, MS - Nutrition/MPH Candidate

When Mireille “Mickey” Aramati, Assistant Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine, joined Tufts University School of Medicine’s Department of Public Health and Community Medicine last August, she was excited to bring over 20 years of global health experience to the school.

Professor Aramati joined Tufts as a part-time global health faculty member and as the new course director for the Global Health Applied Learning Experience (ALE) planning, implementation, and fieldwork courses for MPH Global Health concentrators.

Professor Aramati is no stranger to being a leader in public health. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Arts before starting a career in banking and finance. A position as financial manager on the Suez Health Training Project in Egypt drew her to global health, however, and she eventually enrolled in Boston University’s School of Public Health. After receiving her MPH in 1986, she began working at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. While there, Professor Aramati was the Director of Finance for the Healthy Start Program, a program that provides prenatal care to low-income women, before becoming the Maternal and Child Health Coordinator for the department’s childhood lead poisoning prevention program.

In 1990, Professor Aramati took a position as a technical assistance manager and director for Egypt programs at Pathfinder International. This launched a global career and she went on to provide technical assistance and training in reproductive health programs in Tanzania, Morocco, Egypt, Bangladesh, and other countries, as senior program associate for Management Sciences for Health. These projects were funded by USAID.

Professor Aramati went to Washington, DC in 2003 as a public health contractor assisting the USAID Office of Iraqi Reconstruction in coordinating health services in Iraq. After that, she continued her technical assistance role as senior reproductive health policy advisor at Futures Group for projects in Egypt, Jordan, and Madagascar. Currently, Professor Aramati serves on the Women’s Forum Steering Committee of the United Nations Association of Greater Boston. These positions solidified her global health interests in maternal and child health, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS. In fact, Professor Aramati is hoping to expand the global health ALE to emphasize these areas so more students can get practical experience in these issues within a global context.

One of Professor Aramati’s goals is to provide students with a more realistic view of what working in global health is like, emphasizing the importance of collaborating with multiple sectors and multiple stakeholders, including the community and donors.

Professor Aramati is looking forward to working with the concentration leaders, faculty members, and with students. Having been an active member of Boston University School of Public Health’s Alumni Board, and a recipient of the 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award, she also recognizes the important role that alumni play and would like to involve them in her work at Tufts. “I believe that alumni play a major role in networking with and mentoring students. Public health is a common language,” she says, “a language that binds the profession together worldwide.” This language, perhaps, is passion. “You have to have passion for [public health] to serve the people, the community, locally, nationally and globally.” The key to keeping this passion alive, according to Professor Aramati, is threefold. First, she urges students to use their time and efforts while at Tufts to learn as much as possible about public health. Secondly, passion is about believing in what you’re doing. “You have to work really hard, and always support the programs and organizations you are working with. Their vision must be your vision,” she advises. And third, Professor Aramati states, “if you have the passion for what you want to do, and never give up.”

“It is a privilege for me to work with the Deans, students, faculty, and staff at Tufts University,” Professor Aramati says. With all of her expertise, Professor Aramati is an exciting addition to the Tufts faculty.
Faculty Notes

Marcia Boumil, JD, LLM, Associate Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine (PH&CM), held the first JD/MPH Program reception for students who will finish the program at the end of the year and graduate in February. The JD/MPH program allows students to obtain a law degree at Northeastern and an MPH degree at Tufts in 3 1/2 years. Graduates sit for the bar exam in February.

Libby Bradshaw, DO, MS, Academic Director of the MS-Pain Research Education and Policy Program (PREP), along with core faculty has begun transitioning PREP courses into a hybrid onsite/online format. The program has also enhanced their web presence and submitted two grants this fall on inter-professional web-based pain education.

Doug Brugge, PhD, MS, Professor of PH&CM, gave two presentations in Bamako, Mali at a conference on uranium mining in Africa sponsored by the International Physicians Against Nuclear War. Interesting note, his flight back was the day before the government coup!

Daniel Carr, MD, Professor of PH&CM, was invited to sit on several boards and councils that include Analytic Clinical Trials Translations, Innovations, and Networks (ACTTION), Coalition to Transform Advanced Care (C-TAC), Hospice and Palliative Care Federation of MA, International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP), and special interest groups on Acute Pain, and Pain Education, Mass Pain Initiative. He was also interviewed for several media reports (e.g., Mass Ballot Question 2).

Carol Curtiss, MSN, RN-BC, Adjunct Clinical Instructor of PHCM, presented, "Is it Pain? Is it Addiction? Or is it Both?" at PAINWeek 2012 in Las Vegas, Nevada in September. In addition, Ms. Curtiss and a colleague co-authored "Assessment and Management of Delirium: A Focus on Hepatic Encephalopathy" in Palliative and Supportive Care.

Sue Gallagher, MPH, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, was an invited panel participant at "20 Years of Injury and Violence Prevention: Celebrating the Past and Protecting the Future," a special session at the American Public Health Association (APHA) 2012 Meeting in San Francisco.

Lisa Gualtieri, PhD, ScM, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, presented "How Disease-Specific Online Health Communities Differ between Mobile and Web Access" at Medicine 2.0 and "Mobile Advantage: Context and Immediacy in Health Information Seeking" at APHA’s 2012 Meeting.

Paul Hattis, MD, JD, MPH, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, was invited by Attorney General Martha Coakley to serve as a member of the new Massachusetts Health Policy Commission Board that is Chaired by Stuart Altman, PhD, Adjunct Professor of PH&CM. The Board was created as part of the recently passed health care cost containment legislation to monitor the reform of Massachusetts health care delivery and payment systems.

Pamela Katz Ressler, MS, RN, HN-BC, Adjunct Lecturer for PH&CM, and co-authors Dr. Ylisabyth Bradshaw, Lisa Neal Gualtieri, PhD, ScM, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, Kenneth Kwan Ho Chui, PhD, MS, MPH, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, published the findings of their research, ‘Communicating the Experience of Chronic Pain and Illness through Blogging’ in the Journal of Medical Internet Research. Her interest in the intersection of social media and chronic pain was highlighted in the summer 2012 issue of Tufts Medicine, “A World of Hurt” by Bruce Morgan.

Barry Levy, MD, MPH, Adjunct Professor of PH&CM, and Victor Sidel, MD, Professor of Social Medicine at Montefiore Medical Center and Albert Einstein College of Medicine Dr. Levy who has co-edited 16 multi-contributor books, wrote a piece for the "Take It from Me" section of the fall issue of Tufts Magazine with advice on how to edit a multi-author book.

Amy Lischko, MSPH, DSc, Associate Professor of PH&CM, has been working with the State of Alaska conducting a feasibility study of establishing an all-payer claims database. She has also conducted work for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regarding implementation of the Affordable Care Act.

Ewan McNicol, MS, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, co-authored a paper “Methadone for Chronic Non-Cancer Pain in Adults” with Simon Haroutunian and Arthur G Lipman in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2012, Issue 11.

Paula Minihan, MSW, MPH, PhD, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, presented, “Oral Home Care for Adults with Developmental Disabilities: A Survey of Paid and Family Caregivers about Roles and Responsibilities” at a Disability session at APHA’s 2012 Meeting.

Aviva Must, Ph.D, Morton A. Madoff Professor and Chair of PH&CM, participated in the commentary panel for a symposium on “The Link between Work and Weight in the Low Wage Workforce,” convened by MassCOSH, University of Massachusetts - Lowell, the Center for the Promotion of Workplace Health, and the Boston Workers Alliance in November 2012.

Flavia C. Peréa, PhD, MSEd, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, has been named a Diverse: Issues in Higher Education Emerging Scholar for 2013. Every year, the Emerging Scholars edition features a diverse group of rising researchers, thinkers and leaders in various fields. Their credentials and accomplishments distinguish them, but it’s the level of social consciousness among the members of this year’s class that makes them truly excellent.

Anthony Schlaff, MD, MPH, Professor of PH&CM, Director of the Public Health Program, testified at the Massachusetts State Health Department in October 2012 regarding regulations promulgated after the state legislation (Continued on page 12)
Alumni Notes

MPH

Arielle Carpenter, BA/MPH '11, of Boca Raton, FL, completed her MBA at the Collège des Ingénieurs in Paris, France last year. Arielle is currently the Project Manager of the Employee Wellness Program at Sanofi headquarters in Paris where she was hired with the goal of establishing the employee wellness program in France and eventually expanding it to all Sanofi sites worldwide.

Laura Lessard, BA/MPH '05, of Philadelphia, PA, started a new position at Arcadia University, just outside Philadelphia, as Assistant Professor of Community and Global Public Health in August.

Arielle Levy, BA/MPH '12, of Cambridge, MA, worked with Operation Understanding DC as a Program Leader for the Summer Civil Rights Journey through the Deep South, which examines issues of social justice, equity, and the Civil Rights Era. Arielle is currently working at the YWCA Boston coordinating the Community Dialogues Program on race and ethnicity.

Nkemdiri (Iruka) Wheatley, BA/MPH '05, of London, England, completed her doctoral studies at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, in May 2012, and was inducted into the Delta Omega Honor Society. She is pleased to announce that she is newly married and has relocated to London, England with her husband where she will be working as a Senior HIV/STI Prevention and Surveillance Scientist at the Health Protection Agency.

Tina Bramante, MPH '06, of Wakefield, MA, completed her medical studies at the University of New England in Maine in November, 2012. She is currently interviewing for a residency position in emergency medicine.

Allison Dempsey, MPH '12, of San Diego, CA, is a Statistical Programmer for Synteract, a contract research organization that runs clinical trials for pharmaceutical and biotech companies.

Ashley Grant, MPH '11, of Baltimore, MD, is a Research Program Manager with the Institute of Global Tobacco Control at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, managing multiple projects in the fields of research, technical assistance, and capacity building.

Michelle Liu, MPH '12, of Bala Cynwyd, PA, presented “Progress Tracking of Country Roll-Out of the 2010 WHO HIV and Infant Feeding Guidelines” on behalf of UNICEF at a WHO conference in Nairobi, Kenya.

Nick Preneta, MPH '11, of Unionville, CT, presented on “Thermophilic Composting in Haiti” at the 2nd International Faecal Sludge Management Conference in Durban, South Africa, this past October.

Congratulations to Meredith H. Spacie, MPH '06, and her husband Tom, of Seattle, WA, who welcomed a son, Samuel, to their family in July, who also joins his two year-old big sister Alice. Meredith is a Project Manager in Data Warehousing and Analytics at Group Health Cooperative. She just completed her fifth year of managing medical record review assuring her organization received Medicare Five Star status for the second year in a row.

Alyssa Ursillo, MPH '12, of Boston, MA, is a Data Quality Specialist on two CDC funded evidence-based behavioral interventions for HIV prevention in the Section of Infectious Diseases at Boston Medical Center.

Jenna Usedom, MPH '12, of Somerville, MA, is working at the United States Army Research Institute for Environmental Health as an Epidemiologist.

Congratulations to Alia Vasconcellos (Hastings) Hayes, MPH '08, of Haverhill, MA, who was married on October 7, 2012. She now goes by Alia Vasconcellos Hayes.

Adriana Monge Urrea, MS-Nutrition/MPH '12, of Cuajimalpa, Mexico City, moved back to Mexico City and is working at the National Institute of Public Health of Mexico as the Director of Nutrition of a large cohort of women teachers called ESMaestras.

Katherine Bishop, MS-Nutrition/MPH '12, of Washington, DC, has new position as a Nutrition Policy Associate at the Center for Science in the Public Interest in May.

Erin Boyd Kappelhof, MS-Nutrition/MPH '05, of Seattle, WA, relocated with her family from Amsterdam to Seattle where she is a Consultant on International Food and Nutrition Communications. She is also President of the American Overseas Dietetic Association.

Julia McDonald, MS-Nutrition/MPH '07, of Somerville, MA, recently accepted a position as Research Project Manager at Kaiser Permanente Northern California. In her role she will be working in the Vaccine Safety Study Center coordi-
Alumni Notes

nating research studies and managing contracts with the CDC.

Tawny Wilson, MS-Nutrition/MPH '11, of Cincinnati, OH, recently left Boston for an epidemiology position at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, Center for Bariatric Research and Innovation.

MS–Health Communication (HCOM):

Heather Angstrom, MS-HCOM '10, of Cambridge, MA, was promoted to Senior Project Coordinator for Healthy Kids Out of School, an initiative of ChildObesity180 at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy in June. The initiative focuses on physical activity and nutrition in out-of-school-time programs for children.

Claire Berman, MS-HCOM '12, of Watertown, MA, started a new job as the Director of Health Education and Communication for the Pediatric HIV/AIDS Cohort Study at the Harvard School of Public Health. Claire is responsible for creating and implementing the health communication strategy, particularly for finding ways to engage and educate perinatally HIV-exposed youth and their caregivers.

Freelance health writer and editor Alia Bucciarelli, MS-HCOM '05, of Belmont, MA, is excited to expand her service capacity by teaming up with Emerson HCOM graduate Claudia Dolphin.

Tammy Nguyen, MS-HCOM '10, of Boston, MA, is a Clinical Trial Manager for a start-up biotechnology company based in the Boston area. Congratulations to Sudha Raminani Chatterji, MS-HCOM '04, of New York, NY, on the birth of her son, Kaiden Ranjil Chatterji, on September 26, 2012. Sudha is currently Manager of Analytics, Enterprise Business Process Improvement at Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey.

Sara Rattigan, MS-HCOM '09, of Malden, MA, d.b.a Rattigan Health Media, was awarded a contract by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to be an approved vendor for Writing and Editing Services (effective November 9, 2012).

Ellyson Stout, MS-HCOM '07, of Belmont, MA, was recently promoted to Project Director II at the Education Development Center and is leading two new projects this coming year: one to document recommendations for sustaining suicide prevention efforts, and one to develop a resource to support suicide prevention programs in collaborating with substance abuse prevention and treatment efforts.

MD/MBA:

Congratulations to Shirley Huang, MD/MBA '04, on the birth of baby Noura born in April, 2012. Shirley is already back to full-time work on two hospital committees, managing clinical practice in two office locations, and offering expertise in potential elder abuse and neglect.

MD/MPH:

Congratulations to Amy F. Lin, MBS/MPH '09, and Michael J. Strong, MBS/MPH '09, of New Orleans, LA, on their marriage at Chateau Elan Winery and Resort in Braselton, GA on September 16, 2012. They are currently 4th year MD, PhD students at Tulane University School of Medicine.

Justin Rice, MBS/MPH '09, of Albany, NY, is Class President of the Albany Medical School Student Council and was selected by his peers for membership in the Gold Humanism Honor Society for demonstrating excellence in clinical care, leadership, compassion, and dedication to service. He will graduate from Albany Medical College in May 2013.
Faculty Notes

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relaxed the ban on pharmaceutical companies giving free restaurant meals to physicians. He testified in favor of imposing a dollar limit on the amount that could be spent on such meals and was quoted in a Boston Herald article that was subsequently published on the issue.

Margie Skeer, PhD, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, gave a featured presentation at APHA 2012 Meeting entitled “Alcohol and Drug Use Differences by Behaviorally Versus Perinatally HIV-Infected Adolescents in Care.” She will be teaching a new Tufts MPH course in spring 2013 entitled “Snort, Swallow, Smoke: Drugs and Behavior”

Tuberculosis Lab.

(Continued from page 1)

Asian Populations through Translational Research (ADAPT) and what has been seen in Tufts Medical Center’s TB clinic, the team has an idea about what direction to go in. The largest area of interest is education for patients who have had a positive TB test, but do not know how to proceed from there. The education program will encompass everything from how to get treatment and what treatment entails to information about the transmission of TB. In community meetings, it became clear that there are a lot of misconceptions about TB in the Chinatown community, and so the education program also hopes to raise a basic level of awareness about TB in the community as a whole. Dr. Koch-Weser envisions this education happening mostly in English as a Second Language class, with in-person visits by either a Tufts employee or Chinatown community member who has been trained in health education. If the program is successful in Chinatown, it will possibly expand to Quincy and Malden, putting Tufts on the front lines of combating misinformation about TB all around the Boston area.