The Center for Rural Development of Milot (CRUDEM) is an organization founded in 1968 in Milot, Haiti to improve the health and well being of the local people through a network of community services. CRUDEM provides public health services to almost one quarter of a million people in the northern region of Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere. The “heart” of this organization is the hospital, Sacre Coeur. One important service that addresses the overall health of the community’s children is the Nutrition Center, which is situated across from the hospital grounds. Even though malnourished children are referred to the food supplementation program by hospital physicians or by community health workers, there continues to be a lack of recognition of the physical and cognitive delays associated with early malnutrition. Consequently, there is no formal intervention program.

Although many non-governmental organizations like CRUDEM provide care and nutrition to children in need, child health indicators reveal that Haiti continues to lag behind both regional and global indicators for mortality and burden of disease. Concern remains high regarding poor child health and stunted growth due to inadequate nutrition. Studies support that childhood malnutrition affects physical and cognitive development and can also affect productivity in adulthood; literature further supports that developmental delays in early childhood can have detrimental effects on normal development, quality of life, and longevity. Research conducted in developing countries supports the need to improve physical and cognitive developmental outcome through effective program design as an adjunct to nutrition intervention. Therefore, my Tufts MPH Program Applied Learning Experience project, Jwe Amelyore Sante (JAS), “Play to Improve Health,” focused on training caregivers of the Nutrition Center and educating medical staff and hospital leadership about a more holistic public health initiative.

The overarching goal of the JAS project was to improve the health of children in Milot by enhancing their developmental potential. As a supplement to the feeding program at the Nutrition Center, the caregivers benefited from training and support on the develop-

(Continued on page 11)
A few days before International Woman’s Day in March, one of our students in public health, a young woman from Afghanistan, sent this message, prefacing a translation of the recent Ulemi Council statement on the role of women:

“I want to share my concern with you regarding the recent declaration/statement of Ulema Council of Afghanistan that outline the rights and duties of Afghan women under Islam. The declaration that was issued by Afghanistan’s top religious council said that women should be separated from men at work, school, or other aspect of life. The council also said that women should not travel alone without a male relative. (Being here, I am one of those women who travel alone.)

According to media accounts, surprisingly, ‘President Hamid Karzai’s Tuesday remarks backing the Ulema Council’s document, which allows husbands to beat wives under certain circumstances and encourages segregation of the sexes, is seen as part of his outreach to insurgents like the Taliban.’

It just reminded me of those dark days of the Taliban when we Afghan women had lost our freedom. We Afghan women have struggled and fought for the last 10 years to gain our rights back, but now with this declaration I feel that our freedom is taken back from us.”

And what does this have to do with the health status of a population?

Everything.

We know that globally, health indicators—like infant mortality, stunting, immunization, and child survival—improve when women are empowered through education, with the attendant economic opportunities and shared decision-making it brings. The pathways are multidirectional and complex, to be sure, but women’s status in society is arguably the rising tide that lifts all boats with respect to population health.

March is also Women’s History Month in the US and this year’s theme was “Women’s Education – Women’s Empowerment.” In her statement marking the occasion, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kathleen Sebelius, emphasized the extent to which American women have changed the landscape of clinical research, medicine, and public health while they continue to face many obstacles, women continue to encounter in these arenas. She pointed to specific provisions in the Affordable Care Act that: assures women greater control over their healthcare; covers women’s preventive health care services (with no cost sharing for new health plans); and, “calls for an unprecedented coordinated, government-wide effort to end violence against women and girls.”

Here in the United States, college graduation rates of women now considerably outpace men’s. Nevertheless, government protections for women’s control of their own reproductive health suddenly appear to be under siege. And yes, like the concern expressed by our Afghan student, moving backwards seems to be a real possibility.

Dr. Anthony Schlaff, Director of our Public Health Programs, characterizes public health as “applied social justice.” With that as a frame, these issues demand our vigilance and advocacy.

Warm regards and good health,

Aviva Must, Ph.D.
Dean, Public Health and Professional Degree Programs
New Physician Assistant Program

Sarah Gunn, MS – Health Communication Candidate

Administrators at Tufts University School of Medicine are putting the finishing touches on a new Physician Assistant Program. The 25 month-long program will start training the first class of students in January, 2013, pending program accreditation. The new program will be the first in Massachusetts to be sponsored by a medical school, a major advantage for this kind of program.

“The PA program is a natural complement to the MD program, training [for physician assistants] is not much different from MD training. Physician assistants perform up to 80% of the things a primary care physician does,” says Richard Murphy, PA-C, MBA, director of the program.

Physician assistants are members of the medical team that operate under a supervising physician to provide diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive care. Like physicians, PA’s perform patient exams including pediatric exams, well baby visits, school physicals, and visits for common ailments like sore throats, coughs, and back-aches, and prescribe medications. Physician assistants are not limited to primary care settings, but are seen in almost every medical specialty. The physician assistant’s scope will reflect that of the supervising physician(s), although the PA will have his or her own areas of expertise. For example, program director Richard Murphy worked on a cardiac surgery team on which he was the expert at harvesting veins. Murphy explains, “You develop independence within your dependent practice.”

The field of physician assistants continues to grow as healthcare organizations recognize the effective and efficient care they provide. One particular advantage of having a PA on staff is that they are able to spend more time with the patient than MD’s typically do. “They have the ability to communicate better with patients than MD’s who are overstretched. They can eek out a little bit more time with the patient, explain things better, and get more information out of the patients, “ says Murphy. Physician assistants are also key to maintaining continuity of care in settings where medical residents are in flux, moving in and out for their clinical rotations. “Having a PA there helps level out the care the patients receive. The medical residents come and go and their skills change throughout the rotation, but the PA is there the whole time to give stable care.”

Attaining a Masters of Medical Science in Physician Assistant studies is a very attractive option for those enthusiastic about medicine and working directly with patients. The training program is substantially shorter than MD programs, so it’s a relatively quick route to becoming a clinician or practitioner. Furthermore, PA’s are able to practice more medicine in many situations as MDs can become managers, removed from bed-side work with other duties, according to Murphy. “You also have the luxury of not being the end-line of responsibility. You always have your supervising physician(s) to ask for help to consult on a case.”

The Tufts’ program is poised to be a top performer because of the university’s existing resources, including the library, electronic resources, the state of the art labs, and exceptional faculty. Clinical affiliates are eager to work with Tufts PA students to facilitate clinical rotations. “They recognize the quality of our programs here and offered to be clinical sites. So far, we haven’t had to do recruiting, they’ve been coming to us,” says Murphy. In fact, the PA program was partly inspired by interest in PA’s on behalf of Tufts clinical affiliates. This enthusiasm is shared by distinguished professors and practitioners that are keen to teach courses for the program.

For its inaugural year (pending accreditation), the program will matriculate 30 students, and it will expand to 50 students within the next couple of years.

The job market for physician assistants is expected to grow by 39% in the next decade, and business organizations and magazines continually rank the field as one of the top 5 jobs in America (CNN, US News and World Report, Forbes). The best part of becoming a physician assistant, however, is the ability to provide high quality care to patients. “How many people can say ‘I saved a life this week,’ or ‘I helped keep that baby alive?’” asked Murphy.

To learn more go to: www.go.tufts.edu/PAProgram.
A MD/MBA Alum Putting Program Principles to Work

Matthew Weissman, MD, MBA ’01

Medical Center and when at Baystate Health, he also spent time in a neighborhood health center. “It was a good experience to learn about the community. I learned to be able to be a resource for it,” Dr. Weissman says of his time at Baystate and Mt. Sinai.

Following residency at Mt. Sinai, Dr. Weissman worked as an internal medicine and pediatrics physician at Valentine Lane Family Practice in Yonkers, NY. The majority of his time in Yonkers was spent practicing clinical medicine, but Dr. Weissman was eager to put his administrative skills to use.

“I wanted to be in a place that would tow the line to be able to provide care for everyone and the high quality care that people want to go to,” says Dr. Weissman.

An opportunity at the Ryan Center allowed Dr. Weissman to do just that. The Center is recognized for its high quality care that serves a large population in different New York City neighborhoods. Dr. Weissman’s work at the Ryan Centers is a mixture of clinical medicine and administration, with him spending roughly one third of his time in internal medicine and pediatrics and the rest of his time devoted to improving operations and the patient experience. The administrative side of the job varies, from facilitating residencies to performing quality assurance, even making media appearances to speak about health issues. He has placed emphasis on electronic medical records and data collection, as it drives the way the Ryan Centers look at quality of care and how well they meet the needs of the patients, adding, “We try to figure out what the quality trends are, find where the gaps are in individual sites and across the network, make sure the electronic medical record system is running smoothly, make sure that our connection with the lab company is seamless.”

Focusing on the technological side of the community health center is important, as the health care community becomes more consumer-oriented. Dr. Weissman explains, “Patients will have more ready access to their medical records. We are trying to figure out how to make those records available.”

Dr. Weissman’s dual degree from Tufts has given him the tools necessary to successfully fill such a dynamic role. “I think about Tufts a lot, I think about patient interviewing and tell the same stories I heard from Dr. Jody Schindelheim’s patient interviewing class. Not only did the class provide a great framework to talk to patients, but also to fellow employees,” he explains.

The skills from each degree work in both fields, in ways that are not immediately apparent. For example, Dr. Weissman credits his business skill set with helping him manage a team on a medical floor, in which each employee has different incentives and goals. The business skills are immediately useful in Dr. Weissman’s job as he and colleagues are constantly operating a business according to changing health policies, requirements for grants, and fluctuating funding.

Dr. Weissman explains, “The healthcare world is such a moving target. We get used to one style of reimbursement and then the laws and the regulations change. We have to be nimble enough to respond to it, if we hold tight, the pendulum will swing

(Continued on page 5)
Dr. Aviva Must, Dean for the Public Health and Professional Degree Programs had the opportunity to travel to Christian Medical College (CMC) in Vellore, India, with Dr. Harris Berman, Dean for the School of Medicine, in February. The occasion for the trip, the “turning of the sod” (what we call a groundbreaking) for the building that will house the CMC-Tufts Center for Public Health Education and Research.

While the research collaborations between the institutions are of many decades duration, the exchanges of students and faculty for training are more recent. Since about 2002, public health students have lived on the campus of CMC and done projects to meet program requirements for summer field experiences and capstones. Several CMC faculty earned their MPH degrees with us, prior to the launch of CMC’s MPH program in 2009. Last fall, Michael Calitri, MPH’12, a global health concentrator, was our first Tufts public health student to participate in our semester-in-residence program.

Held early in the morning, in the quiet of the campus, the proceedings were complete with an invocation, several speeches, two choirs, and of course, a shovel. For a sample of the sounds of the morning ceremony, visit: http://youtu.be/gS9Nk7u0prw.

Reverend Malhia Joshua offers prayer and dedication at the Turning of the Sod

A MD/MBA Alum Putting Program Principles to Work

(Continued from page 4)

the other way. It’s time consuming to stay on top of changes in federal, state, city, joint commission laws, and the different guidelines for every program.”

The time and effort expended for the job are well worth the rewards, in Dr. Weissman’s opinion. The most rewarding part of Dr. Weissman’s job is when he is thanked by a patient for making a difference in his or her life, whether it was through a personal encounter, a lecture, or behind the scenes work on solving an insurance problem.

Dr. Weissman’s hopes for the future of the Ryan Center are to grow and provide even more services for more people.

For current students, Dr. Weissman encourages exploration. “There are lots of options out there that you don’t come across in medical school. You have to get out there and dig around. [When I was a student] I didn’t know that federally qualified centers existed.

You can learn more about the Ryan Network at www.ryancenter.org
Celebrating Public Health at Tufts University

National Public Health Week (NPHW) was celebrated nationwide during the week of April 2 – 8, 2012. In 1995, President William Clinton declared the first week of April as NPHW to recognize the contributions of public health and highlight important public health issues. Every year since then the American Public Health Association has served as the lead organizer and promoter of the week. This year’s theme was “A Healthier America Begins Today: Join the Movement!” to bring attention to the issues of prevention and wellness.

Tufts University School of Medicine’s Department of Public Health and Community Medicine and the Public Health (PH&CM) and Professional Degree Programs’ (PHPD) celebrated NPHW by sponsoring several events.

Public health research and education programs cut across all Tufts schools, but it isn’t clear that this is widely known within Tufts or in the wider public health community. This came to light as part of the strategic planning process for the PHPD when the feedback noted a need for more public health strategic partnerships within the University as well as with the Tufts Medical Center. As a result, from the PH&CM faculty thought that NPHW was a good opportunity to highlight Tufts public health research and educational activities and a planning committee, under the leadership of Dr. Aviva Must (PH&CM chair and Dean for PHPD) was formed. The outcome was the event “Celebrating Public Health at Tufts University: Working Across Disciplines and Global Boundaries,” a panel discussion on aging and health with faculty from the Tufts Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, Medical, Dental, Engineering, and Arts and Sciences Schools, and the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts. Open remarks were made by Peggy Newell, Provost ad interim and Vice Provost for Research who noted with fondness her work with the public health programs when she was Associate Dean for the Sackler School in the 1990s.

Tufts’ faculty participants included, Scott Trudeau, PhD, Department of Occupational Therapy, School of Arts and Sciences; Mark Nehring, DMD, MPH, MEd, Department of Public Health and Community Service, Dental School; Elena Naumova, PhD, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, School of Engineering; Susan Gallagher, MPH, Department of Public Health and Community Medicine, Medical School; Miriam Nelson, PhD, John Hancock Center for Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy; Paul Jacques, ScD, Department of Epidemiology, USDA Human Nutrition Center on Aging at Tufts; and Joann Lindenmayer, DVM, MPH, Department of Environmental and Population Sciences, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine.

In honor of World Health Day (WHD), the Department of Public Health and Community Medicine (PH&CM) sponsored “Pain: A Global Health Issue,” another event that was held during NPHW. The symposium included several distinguished speakers who spoke to the global public health challenge of pain treatment: assessment of pain and effective pain management. The Planning Committee included Daniel Carr, MD, DABPM, FFMANZCA (Hon.), Director of the MS – Pain Research Education and Management Program, Odilia Bermudez, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor Linda Hudson, ScD, Assistant Professor, Enku Kebede-Francis, PhD, Assistant Professor, and Paula Minihan, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, all faculty in PH&CM.

The speakers for the WHD event included Kathleen Foley, M.D., World Health Organization Consultant on Pain who spoke about The Global Crisis of Undertreated Pain; Kofi Barimah, MD, MPH, Dean of Faculty of Public Health and Allied Sciences, Catholic University of Ghana who spoke about the Approaches to Pain Control in Buruli Ulcer Patients in Developing Nations; Madeleine Bondolillo, MD, Director, Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, topic of discussion was Increased Opioid Availability: Negative Consequences and Public Health Responses; and Myra Christopher, President, CEO and Kathleen Foley Chair in Pain and Palliative Care at the Center for Practical Bioethics, Kansas City, Missouri spoke about The Inter-Professional Moral Imperative to Treat Pain.

The PHPD student group, CHAT (Community Health Advocates at Tufts – see p. 9), hosted a Health Advocacy Training with Health Care for All, a Massachusetts organization that’s committed to making quality affordable healthcare accessible to everyone. The training provided essential skills to effectively advocate for health issues people are passionate about.

Together the week’s events did an effective job of demonstrating the “value of university-wide programs,” and more specifically, the value of Tufts Public Health.
Celebrating Public Health at Tufts University (continued)
Dr. Eliasziw’s work focuses on advancing methodology in the areas of interrater agreement and intrarater reliability studies, which include inferences for the kappa statistic and intraclass correlation coefficient. Methods arising from her research have been applied in clinical areas such as physiotherapy, epilepsy, and advanced brain imaging. While she has collaborated on various projects, she has done extensive research in the treatment of acute and prevention of secondary strokes, an interest that began 20 years ago during her first academic appointment at the University of Western Ontario.

Along with her extensive knowledge, experience, and skill set, Misha brings with her a unique teaching style. Her classes are taught without textbooks and M&M candy serve as one of her many tools to demonstrate biostatistics principles. For example, she explains, “Mars Inc. claims that of all the milk chocolate M&Ms produced in the world, 13% are red. However, by having 23 students each count the number of red candies in 1.69oz packages of M&Ms, they found that reds only represent 4-12% of the candies in any given bag.”

Dr. Eliasziw noted that experiential learning with M&Ms illustrates the concepts of variability, sample size, and truth in a relatable way. She also uses other commonplace items and media to bring numbers to life. For instance, to demonstrate what a confidence interval is and how it works, she used an article from the Calgary Herald newspaper that surveyed participants’ answers to the question “Which TV Superhero Would You Want to Protect You?” (The answer was MacGyver). It is these types of real world examples that make up her class PowerPoint slides – which serve as the “textbook” for the class.

“One day a student [at the University of Calgary] inquired as to why I used textbooks given my class notes were so good, and I didn’t have an answer. … People tend to teach how they were taught. Many don’t realize that when you use a textbook, you are essentially teaching from someone else’s class notes,” she said.

Her presentations are easily accessible online and occasionally include voice narration for students who need review of a particular topic. Dr. Eliasziw believes technology adds to teaching and advocates for blended learning. Through her use of technology and mixture of media and real world examples, she hopes students will walk away from her class with not only a solid grounding in biostatistics but also an appreciation for the subject.

Dr. Eliasziw said, “Teaching is fun. I think biostatistics is fun. Numbers can be fun. … I’ve heard people say ‘I hate statistics, I’m afraid of math, statistics is the worst course I’ve ever taken, etc.’ but, to me, that just means they’ve been traumatized by the subject matter in the past. … Bad teachers can ruin any subject. … I see my role as empowering students and making the numbers come alive [for them].”

Dr. Eliasziw lives with her partner, Sheila, and their 12-year old dog, Kelpie, in Salem, Massachusetts. In November of last year, the three of them drove through 10 states in six days to reside in their new home and are very much enjoying the fresh seafood, fruits, and vegetables that can be found year round at Boston’s farmers markets.
Faculty Notes

Ylisabyth Bradshaw, DO, MS, Assistant Professor of Public Health & Community Medicine (PH&CM), presented in February at the annual scientific meeting of the American Academy of Pain Medicine on “Training the Trainers: The First Decade of Tufts’ Onside Interprofessional Pain Education Program.” Co-authored by Richard Glickman-Simon, MD, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, Wendy Williams, BSN, M.Ed., Associate Director of PREP, and Daniel Carr, MD, Professor of PH&CM. Dr. Bradshaw’s poster described student feedback and graduates’ career activities. In addition, the aforementioned, along with Carol Curtiss, MSN, RN, BC, Adjunct Clinical Instructor for PH&CM, presented a workshop at the PAINWeek Conference on “Pain Education in the Real World: Opportunities and Challenges from Tufts’ First Decade.”

Doug Brugge, PhD, MS, Professor of PH&CM, chaired one of the first Patient Centered Outcome Research Institute grant review panels in March and has accepted an invitation from the NIH to become Chair of the Community-Level Health Promotion Study Section, Center for Scientific Review from July 2012 – June 2014.

Daniel Carr, MD, Professor of PH&CM, was closely involved in planning, editing and authoring of eBook Pain Management: A Systems Approach to Improving Quality and Safety, along with two other prominent pain clinician researchers, Debra Gordon, RN, DNP, FAAN, Senior Clinical Nurse Specialist at the Department of Anesthesiology and Pain Medicine at the University of Washington, and Judy Paice, PhD, RN, Director of the Cancer Pain Program for the Division of Hematology-Oncology at Northwestern University.

Olaf Dammann, MD, SM, Research Professor for PH&CM, is a co-author of a paper from the EL-GAN (Extremely Low Gestational Age Newborn) study published in March entitled “Elevated Concentrations of Inflammation-Related Proteins In Postnatal Blood Predict Severe Developmental Delay At 2 Years of Age In Extremely Preterm Infants” (J Pediatr 2012;160:395-401).

Misha Eliasziw, PhD, Assistant Professor of PH&CM was the recipient of a 2012 Tufts Teaching with Technology Award for her innovative and effective integration of technology into her course. See article on p. 8.

Lisa Gualtieri, PhD, ScM, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, was appointed Consumer Representative at the FDA, serving on the Arthritis Advisory Committee.

Ronald Hollander, MS, Adjunct Professor of PH&CM, has been appointed the new Executive Director of The Caring for Carcinoid Foundation – an international organization which funds research for cures and treatments for patients with neuroendocrine cancers.

Julie Riley, MS, Adjunct Clinical Instructor for PH&CM, has a new position at the Informed Medical Decisions Foundation as the Adult Development and Learning Specialist. In this role she is responsible for developing curricula and tools for physicians to support them in practicing shared decision making with patients.

Anthony Schlaff, MD, MPH, Director of Public Health Program, Professor of PH&CM, has been appointed to a national task force convened by the Association of Schools of Public Health on Framing the Future: The Second 100 Years of Education in Public Health. Information about this task force (and opportunities to participate) can be found at the project website: http://www.asph.org/document.cfm?page=1184

Aviva Must, PhD, Madoff Professor and Chair of PH&CM was lead author on two recent publications, “Occurrence and Timing of Childhood Overweight and Mortality: Findings from the Third Harvard Growth Study”, co-authored by Elena N. Naumova, PhD, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and of PH&CM, and alumnus, Sarah M. Phillips, MS, MPH, and published in the Journal of Pediatrics; and “The Association Between Childhood Obesity and Tooth Eruption”, co-authored by David J. Tybor, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, Catherine Hayes, DMD, Sc.D, and former alumni, Sarah M. Phillips, MS, MPH, and Keith Lividini, MS, MPH, and published in Obesity.

Margie Skeer, ScD, MPH, MSW, Assistant Professor of PH&CM, was awarded a grant by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) for her project, “A Brief Substance Use Preventive Intervention for Parents of Pre-Adolescents.” The purpose of the study is to test the acceptability, feasibility and preliminary efficacy of a brief substance use preventive intervention for parents/guardians of 9 – 12 years old.
Welcome New PHPD Student Services Staff

Please join us in welcoming several new staff members to the Tufts Public Health and Professional Degree (PHPD) Programs’ Student Services Team. With the growth of the PHPD programs, we’ve added two new positions, a Director of Career Services and a Student Services Coordinator. In addition, we have a new Registrar and Assistant Registrar on board. Details about all of the new staff are noted below.

Janice Gilkes, M.A., Registrar for PHPD Programs
Janice Gilkes, M.A. came to Tufts in October 2011 from the University of Connecticut School of Medicine, Dental Medicine and Graduate School where she was the Registrar. She has a MA in Higher Education with a concentration in Student Personnel Administration and has more than 10 years of higher education administration experience.

In Janice’s role as Registrar for the PHPD Programs, she is responsible for overseeing all functions and activities of the Registrar’s Office including management of student academic records, registration, grades, enrollment projections and verifications, graduation certification, production of transcripts and diplomas etc. She expressed that she’s “thoroughly enjoying learning her new responsibilities and is excited about the new programs and student information system.”

Janice’s goal for the PHPD Registrar’s Office is to streamline processes and utilize the new SIS for maximum efficiency. In addition, she aims to provide excellent customer service to students and faculty in a stress free environment. To assist Janice in achieving these goals is Matthew Williams, former Student/Academic Services Assistant, who was promoted to Assistant Registrar.

Cynthia Dantas, M.A., New Director of Career Services
In evaluating the PHPD student services’ needs in light of the growth of our programs and alumni, it became very apparent that a seasoned career services professional was needed.

Therefore, the new position of Director of Career Services was added. The PHPD was very fortunate to recruit Cynthia Dantas, who came to us from the Fletcher School at Tufts University where she was the Associate Director for Career Services. She has a MA in International Relations and over 10 years of graduate level career development experience.

Cynthia’s role as Director of Career Services is to provide the overall leadership and management of career services. She has already begun to start to build on the New England area employer connections while also creating new employer relationships in other geographic regions e.g. Washington, D.C., New York etc. and industries.

Cynthia is still fairly new to the PHPD Programs, but indicated that “everyone has been extremely open and helpful in navigating the different academic programs and career trajectories of our student population.” She added that she’ll be working to build new relationships with employers to increase the number of applied learning experiences, internships and job opportunities while also supporting students through individual coaching and career education. Helping Cynthia to achieve these goals will be Doina Iliescu, Assistant Director of Career Services.

Victoria Lee, M.Ed., Student Services Coordinator
Victoria (Vicky) Lee has taken on the new role of Student Services Coordinator. She’s responsible for coordinating the activities of the Office of PHPD Student Services e.g. admissions, registrar, career services and assisting the PHPD Dean and Associate Dean with projects. She’s a recent graduate of Harvard Graduate School of Education where she received a M.Ed. in Human Development and Psychology.

Vicky stated that there is a real sense of camaraderie at Tufts, which she noted is wonderful. Her initial goal in her new position is to get to know the programs and provide quality service and support to students, fac-

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Student Group: Community Health Advocates at Tufts (CHAT) Empowers and Educates

By Erica Ballard, MS - Health Communication Candidate

The Community Health Advocates at Tufts (CHAT), a Tufts Public Health and Professional Degree Programs’ (PHPD) student group has been hard at work providing students with opportunities that empower and educate them. CHAT members include PHPD and other Tufts University graduate students in health related fields, including the MD students and those at the Friedman School of Nutrition, Science and Policy, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, and the School of Arts and Sciences’ Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning. Amy Lischko, DSc, MSPH, Associate Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine, serves as the group’s faculty advisor.

“The Tufts Public Health Program has social justice as a vital component to its operations within the classroom. All classes in one way or another make the point that decreasing disparities in the health care field through different strategies is one of the biggest drivers of public health. We believe that CHAT can help students achieve this through different activities organized by us,” said Alejandro Alvarez, MPH’12, President of CHAT.

Started in 2010 by Allison Lipps, MPH’11, the CHAT has sponsored numerous events for students interested in honing their craft and expanding their networks. Some of CHAT’s recent activities include: a hike to New Hampshire’s Mount Monadnock to provide students and faculty with a venue outside of the classroom to discuss public health and their interests within the field; a three-part Health Advocacy Training workshop to arm students with practical tools to advocate for health issues at the community, state, and federal level; partnering with the Friedman School of Nutrition, Science, and Policy in an ongoing effort to push for healthier vending machine options around campus; and hosting Spanish classes taught by Alvarez for students who are interested in working in under-served Spanish-speaking communities. “To be able to communicate with the Spanish-speaking populations in their native language without an interpreter is the starting point to building a trusting relationship that can allow you to make a bigger impact in their lives and ultimately help decrease healthcare disparities,” said Alvarez.

Moving forward, CHAT is looking to host another Health Advocacy Training and is working to identify additional organizations to partner with in an effort to increase opportunities for community involvement within the school. Currently, the group partners with Healthcare for All and the Massachusetts Association of Public Health.

CHAT is currently working to recruit new officers for the 2012-2013 academic year. If you’re interested, contact Alejandro Alvarez at alejandro.alvarez@tufts.edu.

Play to Improve Health

(Continued from page 1)

opment of age-appropriate physical, cognitive, and emotional developmental milestones and methods to mitigate delays. JAS not only provided the caregivers with knowledge of age-appropriate milestone development, but also introduced activities that incorporate physical, visual, and auditory stimulation needed for healthy child development. One of JAS’ objectives was the demonstration by caregiver’s of awareness and advocacy for children’s health by independently providing consistent, organized stimulation.

The intent of this public health project was to create a pathway towards improved health by improving cognitive, social, and developmental potential of every child in Milot. The envisioned outcomes of promoting development through play by actively engaging the children was piloted by educating and training on-site caregivers on consistent child stimulation through structured, goal oriented activities. The outputs of the JAS project demonstrated that the program was feasible in this low income and limited resource setting. Positive outcomes were also seen: caregivers demonstrated awareness of the components for the JAS project.

In developing countries, healthcare needs to transition from simply providing individual care to assessing the overall needs of a community and implementing care from a public health standpoint. Although many acute health needs continue to exist in Haiti, a more preventive approach to addressing the healthy child development is needed. The focus on the healthy development of the children drives the mission of CRUDEM and holds the potential for improving the health of a nation. Other health care organizations in Haiti will benefit from programs such as Jwe Amelyore Sante.
Welcome New PHPD Student Services Staff

(Continued from page)

ulty and staff. She added that “Since my position works with so many different parties, I’m hoping to bring cohesion to the position in a way that gives a common thread to all the work I do.”

Jessica Farias, Student/Academic Services Assistant
Jessica is the newest member of the staff and in her role as Student/Academic Services Assistant, she is responsible for providing frontline student services to students and faculty as well as assisting the PHPD Student Services’ staff. She’s a recent graduate of the University of Rhode Island where she majored in English and most recently worked as a teacher assistant at the Cranston Child Development Center.

Although Jessica has only been at Tufts since February she noted that it has been a lot of fun. She went on to add that she’s learning a lot and every day is different. Jessica’s goal in her position is to achieve efficiency and for faculty, staff and students to feel confident that she can assist them. She also hopes to add to the friendly and supportive atmosphere of the office.

Join us in welcoming all the new PHPD Student Services Staff. If you’re in the neighborhood, please stop by and introduce yourself.