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INTRODUCTION

Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools (HSHPS) is a 501(c)3 member-based non-profit, established in 1996 as part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ “Hispanic Agenda for Action” initiative, with the intention of addressing the mounting public health issue of providing quality and culturally competent healthcare to Hispanics living in the United States. By supplying essential resources and opportunities for academic and career development to students, faculty, and other health professionals, HSHPS seeks to eliminate the health inequities that exist within the U.S. Hispanic community. HSHPS accomplishes this mainly through the implementation of its training programs, in conjunction with federal agencies and member institutions, as well as through the offering of scholarship and conference awards, professional development seminars, and the bi-annual newsletter and quarterly e-newsflash.

HSHPS, a member-based organization that currently consists of 26 schools of medicine and public health,:  

- Helps medical and public health schools recruit, train, promote and retain Hispanic faculty, researchers and key administrators.
- Develops educational opportunities in health profession schools’ curricula, research, and clinical experience, thus helping students provide better healthcare to Hispanic populations.
- Promotes collaboration at the regional, national, and international levels between educational institutions and other groups with an interest in, or an impact on, Hispanic health.
- Uses research strength and representation of academic institutions to have a significant voice at the table in setting policy on Hispanic health issues.

HSHPS encourages dialogue and relationships between other organizations and the public sector and also acts as an incubator for future doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, public health officials, and other health practitioners who will serve the Hispanic community. HSHPS acts as a unifying voice in bringing about a solution to the Hispanic health disparities in the United States.

HSHPS STRIVES TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF HISPANICS THROUGH ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT, RESEARCH INITIATIVES, AND TRAINING.
As President of the Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools (HSHPS), it is my distinct pleasure to congratulate the HSHPS trainees for 2011. This year, HSHPS has placed 78 trainees at various HSHPS member institutions and government agencies across the United States, including Puerto Rico, and Quito, Ecuador. The goal of the HSHPS student training programs is to foster the development of research skills among health professions students committed to improving Hispanic health.

The HSHPS student training programs began with a humble four trainees in 2002 funded through the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Cycle I Cooperative Agreement. Currently, HSHPS has cooperative agreements with CDC (Cycle II) and the Office of Minority Health (OMH), as well as a new contract with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), enabling us to increase the number of trainees and program sites.

The programs offer students a unique opportunity to better understand the significant health implications along the US-Mexico Border, how to prevent and control specific diseases that are relevant within the Hispanic community, and global health issues affecting Latin America.

The program matches trainees with a mentor, which is an experienced scientist or researcher at the government agency or academic institution, depending on their area of interest and experience. The trainee assists his or her mentor with various aspects of a project, while attending seminars and networking events.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to particularly thank our member schools, government affiliates, and all other constituents for their continued support and dedication in our combined effort to better serve the health needs of the Hispanic community.

Moving forward, we wish the trainees all the best in future endeavors and encourage them to remain in contact with us. We thoroughly enjoy hearing alumni updates, especially those highlighting their service within the Hispanic community.

Mil Gracias,

Francisco A. R. Garcia, MD, MPH
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Director, University of Arizona Center of Excellence in Women's Health
Distinguished Outreach Professor of Public Health and Obstetrics and Gynecology
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Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons
Dartmouth Medical School
Ponce School of Medicine
Stanford University, School of Medicine
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, School of Medicine, El Paso
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University of California, Los Angeles, David Geffen School of Medicine
University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine
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University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, School of Medicine
University of South Florida, College of Medicine
University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston
University of Washington, School of Medicine
Weill Cornell Medical College

SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health
Tulane University, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine
University of Arizona, Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health
University of North Texas Science Center, School of Public Health
University of Puerto Rico, Graduate School of Public Health
University of South Florida Health, College of Public Health
The HSHPS/CDC Student Training Program places students and recent graduates at the CDC Headquarters in Atlanta, GA. These programs highlight the CDC as an international public health agency. Former participants have worked on projects ranging from disease education through visual media to political implications in disease treatment and prevention to the public health workforce on both the national and global levels. In addition, trainees are required to participate in program activities, such as weekly seminars and networking events with CDC affiliates.

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Karen Hoover, MD, MPH
Alexis Kaigler, MPP
Ana Penman-Aguilar, PhD, MPH
Sandra McGill, MPA, PMP, CEA
Robin Collins MBA, PMP
Francisco Tomei-Torres, PhD
Amber Channer graduated from Boston College in 2011 with a BA in Political Science and Pre-Medicine. Amber is currently working at the National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention (NCHSTP) with Dr. JoAna Stallworth in the Capacity Building Branch’s Latino Diffusion Team. During her research, Amber will be evaluating the new medication adherence interventions within the Hispanic/Latino communities. She will also be helping coordinate the Hispanic Work Group Session at this year’s National HIV Prevention Conference, and updating interventions such as RAPP (Real AIDS Prevention Project). Previously, Amber interned at the National Institute for Occupational Health, working primarily on the Promotora’s Health Manual for Spanish speaking migrant workers in the United States.

Amber hopes to pursue a master’s degree in Public Health with a concentration in either Health Policy and Management or Global Health. Amber also hopes to apply her public health skills in the medical field and pursue a medical degree.

**HIV Prevention Capacity Building for National HIV/AIDS Prevention Programs in Support of Hispanic/Latino Activities**

Mentor(s): JoAna Stallworth, PhD; Maria Alvarez, MPA

Under the President’s new National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS), one of the anticipated results for 2015 is to increase the proportion of HIV diagnosed gay and bisexual men, Blacks, and Latinos with undetectable viral load by 20 percent. To achieve this goal it is critical to maximize the strategies of successful antiretroviral adherence in disproportionate communities and an analysis on the medication adherence within Hispanic/Latino communities will help create a quality assessment of the gaps between the work done and the work to be done. To supplement, working on peer-led activities through the Real AIDS Prevention Project (RAPP) aids in reducing the risk of HIV and unintended pregnancies among women through increased condom use. Working closely with the committee for preparations and facilitation of the 2011 National HIV Prevention Conference, “Why NHAS Matters for Hispanic/Latino Communities ¿Ahora Qué? (What Now?)” enables the exploration of the history and future of HIV/AIDS within Hispanic/Latino communities along with discussing the importance of the NHAS within these communities.
Jasmine Walker has lived all over the United States. Most of her childhood was spent just outside of Philadelphia before her family moved to Houston, Texas. She is the definition of diverse, with African-American, eastern European, Puerto Rican and Cruzan (from St. Croix, US Virgin Islands) roots. Jasmine has been a Spanish interpreter for Project Esperanza in the Dominican Republic and at Tulane’s Covenant House clinic. She has also worked at Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services as an intern in the Office of Policy and Planning in Houston, Texas for the past two summers and worked in the Louisiana Office of Public Health’s HIV/STD branch this past semester.

Jasmine attended Tulane University and majored in Global and Community Health with minors in cellular and molecular biology and Spanish. She now attends Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine and is nearly done with her MPH in Health Education and Communication and Maternal and Child Health. She hopes to get her PhD in the near future.

**Marketing Analysis on Hispanic/Latino Consumption of Media and Literature Review of Risk Factors Contributing to High Rates of STIs**

Mentor(s): Natarsha Thompson, MPH, CHES

With Hispanics becoming an ever larger minority group many health disparity issues arise, including providing the necessary health information and making it easily accessible to non-English speakers. At the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention in the Division of STD Prevention’s Office of the Director under the Associate Director for Policy, Planning and External Relations work is being done on how the Division can improve communications to the Hispanic population. This will be done through researching how Hispanics consume media and access health information, then writing a proposal with recommendations and possible media partners the Division should consider contacting. Some methods of media outreach is by creating Spanish tweets for the CDCSTD twitter page and working with another mentee to create the FAQ’s for a new newsletter the Division has created.
José R. Guzmán-Pereira is a HSHPS/ CDC Summer Student Intern. He will be completing a MPH degree with a specialty in Maternal and Child Health at the University of Puerto Rico in the fall. José has a BS in General Science. He is working with Dr. Karen Hoover and Dr. Guoyu Tao at the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STDs, and TB Prevention in the Division of STD Prevention. José’s research project involves analyzing outcomes for different fathers in areas like sexual healthcare service use, STD prevention, and contraceptive methods use from data collected on the National Survey of Family Growth (2008).

Jose's topics of interest include community outreach in the Hispanic/Latino population, maternal and child health, youth and adolescents' sexual education, and improvement of social determinants of health of Latino/Hispanic population.

After completion of his MPH degree, he would like to continue pursuing a doctoral degree in a health related area.

Sexual Behavior and Outcomes among Fathers with and without a Partner from the National Survey of Family Growth 2006-2008

Mentor(s): Karen Hoover MD, MPH; Guoyu Tao PhD

The objective of the study is to identify differences between father’s and non-fathers among 20-44 years men in the use of sexual healthcare services, sexual behavior and parenting trends for those who are fathers. The importance of the role of the men in family well-being is becoming recognized in the literature. NSFS collects data of multiple outcomes like pregnancy, childbearing, men's and women's sexual health and parenting from a national sample of women and men 15 – 44 years of age in the U.S. The current data file is from the first 30 months (2.5 years) of the study. It includes the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Around 13,000 interviews were conducted for this survey. Descriptive analysis and chi-squared tests are used to analyze the different variables. The results will add to a body of research on the roles of men in the lives of children, families and their own sexual health.
Nili Raquel Larish recently received her MPH in Health Promotion from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. While pursuing her MPH, Nili served as a managing editor for the Journal of Global Public Health, and completed internships at the New York City Department of Health as well as Planned Parenthood of New York City. Nili is interested in health communications, sexual health policies and programs, and global health issues. She is also particularly passionate about qualitative and ethnographic research, and is considering a PhD in medical anthropology.

Prior to pursuing her MPH, Nili worked as a travel writer based in Ecuador and Nicaragua, volunteered at an Orphanage in Peru, and spent significant time all over Latin America. In the process, she developed Spanish skills and a passion for Latin American culture. Nili holds a BA in English and Creative Writing from Binghamton University. She was born and raised in New York City, and her family is from Israel. In her spare time, Nili enjoys biking, dancing, cooking, photography and writing short stories.

Recommendations for Evaluation of Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) Legal Toolkit/Legal Analysis of Data Variable for EPT Study/Literature Review of Factors Impacting Hispanic Women’s use of EPT

Mentor(s): Alexis Kaigler, MPP

The CDC’s division of STD Prevention/Office of Policy Planning and External Relations is conducting a large-scale study regarding the national impact of EPT legislation on rates of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea. The study has both qualitative and quantitative components and requires data preparation. In particular, reviewing, analyzing and coding sources of legal authority regarding EPT by the legislation. Interview questions were created for providers, health departments and others, to gather data regarding perceived barriers to the practice of EPT. There is also development on an evaluation plan for a toolkit regarding EPT, targeting government officials and others interested in adopting or implementing EPT in their state. Additionally, literature review regarding best practices for communicating with Hispanics about STDs will be preformed, along with helping health communication specialists in the Division of STD Prevention’s Behavioral Research and Intervention Branch with other communications-related activities. Furthermore, as a member of the Keynote Speaker committee for the 2011 Health Equity Symposium there is involvement in the planning of the symposium and a writing a summary report.
RATHNA RAMANI
MPH CANDIDATE

Rathna Ramani is a HSHPS fellow working with Dr. Ana Penman-Aguilar in the Office of Health Equity under the Director in the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention. Originally from Sugar Land, TX, she completed her Bachelor’s in Sociology and Public Health at Vanderbilt University and is currently pursuing her Master’s degree in Public Health at The George Washington University in the heart of Washington, DC. She has worked at the DC Department of Health in their HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, TB division on social marketing programs such as “Wrap MC,” “Rubber Revolution,” and “DC’s Doin’ It” with the Female Condom, and also had the wonderful opportunity to work in the Office of National AIDS Policy. This summer, Rathna will be researching how CDC divisions incorporate the Social Determinants of Health in their programs, policies, and research as well as organizing the Health Equity Symposium with her team. Her interests include sexual and reproductive health, minority health and health equity.

Advancing Health Equity through Addressing Social Determinants of Health: Perspectives of NCHHSTP Employees
Mentor(s): Dr. Ana Penman-Aguilar

For decades, the primary approach to reducing health disparities has been to intervene to change individual risk behaviors. Little regard has been paid to social determinants of health (SDH), the socially determined factors underlying health outcomes. As reflected by its strategic plan for 2010-2015, the National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention (NCHHSTP) actively seeks to promote health equity by incorporating a social determinants approach to health. The goal is to generate new ideas for how NCHHSTP could address SDH and promote health equity and assess NCHHSTP employees’ perspectives on the role of their Branches and Divisions in addressing SDH and promoting health equity. Another goal is helping NCHHSTP OHE to understand how they can better support Branches and Divisions in their efforts to promote health equity. This will be achieved by conducting a qualitative assessment of the perceptions of NCHHSTP staff regarding what the Center could be doing to address social determinants of HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD and Tuberculosis. The strategic plans for the Office of Health Equity is to better serve branches and divisions and enhance their ability to address SDH.
From Arecibo, Puerto Rico, Stephanie Rivera Pabón is an MHSA candidate in the Department of Health Services Administration at the University of Puerto Rico. She's currently an HSHPS /CDC trainee at the Enterprise IT Portfolio Office, beside mentors: Sandra McGill and Robin Collins.

Stephanie holds a bachelor's degree in Natural Sciences and a Master degree in Public Health both from the University of Puerto Rico. During her studies, Stephanie actively participated in research laboratories. In 2006 she worked as a student researcher in the Centre for Craniofacial Disorders at the University of Puerto Rico. In 2008 her work alongside laboratory partners in the Rosa-Molinar Laboratory, published the scientific article: “The Western Mosquito fish, Gambussia affinis: A new Laboratory Animal Resource for the Study of Sexual Dimorphism in Neural Circuits”. She also participated as a member in organizations such as the Biological Honor Society and the Red Cross University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Chapter. During this period she also worked alongside the executive administrator of Oncology Hospital, Isaac Martinez, acquiring experience in the hospital administration setting.
Suad was born on June 13, 1986 in Bayamon, Puerto Rico with her twin sister Sausan. Suad studied finance and statistics for her bachelors degree at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus. She also pursued her masters, with a concentration in biostatistics, within the Graduate School of Public Health at the Medical Sciences campus. She previously served as a project coordinator at the Statistics Institute of Puerto Rico and was the principal author for a project entitled “Profile of the Private Schools in Puerto Rico 2008-2009”. In 2008, she was also employed as a contract special assistant for the U.S. Census Bureau’s Finance Department. Her long-term goal is to pursue a career related to research and/or statistics in addition to a doctoral degree in statistics.

Integration of the National Examination Survey (NHANES) Data with Case Studies in Environmental Medicine (CSEM) – A Continuing Education Program for Environmental Health Professionals

Case Studies in Environmental Medicine (CSEM) are self-instructional, continuing education primers designed to increase primary care providers’ knowledge of hazardous substances and aid in the evaluation of patients potentially exposed to hazardous substances. These materials are designed to increase awareness and knowledge of how the environment interacts with human health and includes tools to promote the positive health aspects and prevent and/or minimize the known adverse health impacts of these interactions. Moreover, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) designed the NHANES survey with the purpose to promote the assessment of health nutritional status of adults and children in the U.S. It is used to determine the prevalence of major diseases and risk factor for diseases and collect data from diseases, medical conditions and health indicators. According to some studies, selenium has received considerable attention because it may affect several cardio-metabolic risk factors in the human body. Literature suggested that high serum selenium concentrations were associated with higher prevalence of diabetes. This information promotes research on serum selenium in blood related to the prevalence population with diabetes.
The HSPHS/NIOSH Student Training Program places students and recent graduates at the Washington, DC office. These programs highlight the role of the federal agency NIOSH in conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related injury and illness. Participants in the programs have worked on projects concerning disease education for migrant workers, analysis of fatalities among firefighters, and community initiatives designed to improve conditions for home health caregivers. In addition, trainees are required to maintain a summary of their progress throughout the program.

We would like to thank the following for their support:

**Government Liaison:**
Pietra Check, MPH

**Program Mentors:**
Pietra Check, MPH
Matthew Groenewold, PhD, MSPH
Charissa Dowdy is a recent graduate of Florida International University where she received her Masters of Public Health specializing in Environmental and Occupational Health. During her time at FIU, she had the opportunity to work as a graduate research assistant to the Hispanic/Latino Tobacco Network. This work allowed her to assess the need for culturally and linguistically appropriate tobacco prevention programs geared towards Hispanic/Latinos. In addition, she received her bachelor’s degree in Anthropology from Rollins College. At Rollins, she had the opportunity to work with a farm worker community located in Central Florida. She learned that the Apopka farm workers lived in an environment with high levels of toxicity, such as exposure to large amounts of pesticides over their lifetime. Therefore, this sparked her passion to work in the field of public health.

Her career goal is to work on maintaining health policies to ensure that they are efficient in reducing the risk of disease and illness. In addition, Charissa want to develop innovative techniques to ensure occupational health and safety is a priority.

**Strategic Research Translation for Spanish-speaking Immigrant Workers: Creating Replicable Models/ Communication support for National Conference on Eliminating Health and Safety Disparities at Work**

Mentors: Pietra Check, MPH and Matthew Groenewold, PhD, MSPH

Occupational Safety and Health is often neglected in terms of identifying health disparities and establishing equity. Furthermore, individuals of color, non-English speakers and women face considerable barriers in the workplace. Therefore, efforts to increase awareness of available resources and worker rights are a key priority in remedying health disparities that exist in the workplace. The National Conference on Eliminating Health and Safety Disparities at Work seeks to examine social, cultural and economic factors that contribute to occupational safety and health disparities. By compiling a chart book that illustrates the disparity that exists across industry sectors, communication support can be provided for the project. Integrating health promotion services into occupational health allows for advocacy, improved training and access for workers. This requires an examination of health behavioral theory literature in occupational safety and health. Adapting an activity for Labor Rights Week to emphasize women’s occupational health has focused on the objectives of identifying specific risks, the social atmosphere and hazards women face in their occupation. Research on women’s health issues as it pertains to occupational safety and health is imperative as they face different risks and barriers.
Parisa Damadi graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Community Health from the University of Maryland. Coming from an immigrant family, Parisa has always been exposed to the problems that immigrants are dealing with in regards to their health needs. Therefore, she has developed an interest in the public health field, especially in health disparities and health equity. Parisa believes that all people have the right to live a healthy life and one way to achieve this is through effective education and training.

During her training program at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Parisa has been working on different projects that focus on Hispanic immigrant workers and occupational hazardous they face at the work place.

In her free time, Parisa likes to read and listen to music.
The HSHPS/OMH Student Training Program places students and recent graduates at the Office of Minority Health (OMH) in Rockville, MD. HSHPS fully supports OMH’s mission of eliminating health disparities among racial and ethnic minority populations. The HSHPS/OMH Internship Program matches trainees with a mentor, an experienced researcher/administrator at the OMH, depending on their area of interest and experience. The intern will assist his or her mentor with various aspects of a project, while at the same time attending seminars and networking events that OMH offers. Current projects have supported OMH’s National Partnership for Action to End Health Disparities initiative as well as the management of data on race and ethnicity to help reduce disparities.

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**Program Mentors:**
Mirtha Beadle, MPA
Theresa Chapa, PhD, MPA
Elizabeth Perez, a southern California native, comes to Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools with a diverse background. Over the last several years Elizabeth has worked as a clinician within several health care settings. During her time as a health care worker, Elizabeth held many leadership positions and worked on several quality improvement projects and policies within various health care institutions. With a passion for improving the quality of health and health care, Elizabeth went back to school and obtained her Master’s Degree in Public Health with an emphasis on health policy and leadership from Loma Linda University, where she is currently finishing her Master’s in Health Administration.

She has worked as a Rogers Scholar for the National Coalition on Health Care in Washington, D.C. During her time there she worked on cost containment, health policy and advocacy.

She has collaborated on research and policy development with Loma Linda University School of Public Health and Hospital Association of Southern California. She has also facilitated research highlighting the role environmental influences have on health disparities in San Bernardino County.

The Affordable Care Act: What’s In It for Me? A Look at the ACA’s Impact on Minority Health
Mentor: Mirtha Beadle

A Kaiser Poll revealed that many individuals are confused or unaware about provisions in the new health care law, the Affordable Care Act. There are many provisions within the Affordable Care Act that Americans will benefit from, especially racial and ethnic minorities who often experience worse health care outcomes than their white counterparts. The Affordable Care Act attempts to close the gap on racial and ethnic disparities and inequities that plague the U.S. health care system. With the increased diversity of the nation’s population, and with minorities set to make up over half of the entire population, it is imperative that we make the necessary changes in our health system to ensure that we have a more equitable and healthy population in our future. The Affordable Care Act has the potential to help bridge the gap in differences in access, quality, and coverage that communities of color face.
Luisa F. Soaterna, a native of Bogotá, Colombia, migrated with her parents when she was 11 years-old to Alexandria, Virginia. She attended Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia earning a double major in Physics and Mathematics. She is currently pursuing a Master’s degree in Public Health at the Virginia Commonwealth University. Luisa had the pleasure of being appointed as the Latino Liaison for former Virginia Governor Timothy M. Kaine. She has also worked as a Grant Manager for the Virginia Department of Social Services.

Luisa has served, for the past two years, as the chair of Colaborando Juntos (CJ), a not-for-profit organization working with service providers in the Richmond-Metropolitan area who work with the Latino community. She is also the secretary and founding member of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Council 4611 in Richmond, Virginia and the chair of LULAC Council 4611 Latino Film Festival. Luisa loves working for the community, dancing, reading, traveling and studying metaphysics.

Access to Health & Behavioral Health Care Study: Targeting A Spanish-speaking Latina Perinatal Population at Local Community Health Centers in Richmond, Virginia
Mentor: Dr. Teresa Chapa, Ph.D. MPA

At the OMH Behavioral Health Team work has been done on learning about depression and how it affects Latino populations. Thorough literature reviews have been conducted, looking at the questions of access to care, including barriers to behavioral services for women who are pregnant or have just had a baby. During this process, informative interviews were conducted with Latino professionals in the field to help guide research questions and focus the scope of the project. A proposal is being prepared for a mixed methods research project to be submitted to the Virginia Commonwealth University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). The proposal will include a summary of the literature search on perinatal depression, access to healthcare, the Latino community, and the interaction patterns of the population with behavioral health services. The proposal will also include surveys, interview guides, marketing materials drafted in Spanish and translated to English, along with a copy of the Primary Care Evaluation of Mental Disorders Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) used to measure depression. Finally, basic non-identifiable data will also be collected from all study participants and such forms will also be included in the IRB proposal.
HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (HRSA)

A branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, HRSA is the Federal Agency dedicated to improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated or medically vulnerable. HRSA provides leadership and financial support to healthcare providers in every U.S. State and territory.

The HRSA Training Program places the trainee at its headquarters in Rockville, MD. The goal of the 10 week paid traineeship is to increase the trainee’s overall knowledge of health care equity issues, to provide the necessary tools needed to enhance trainees’ career in the health field, and to increase the overall understanding of HRSA’s services.

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Patrick Lockett
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Avni Patel Shridharani
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BS, MPH CANDIDATE

Ariana graduated from Indiana University-Bloomington (IUB) with a Bachelors of Science in Public Health and a double minor in Spanish and Human Development and Family studies in May, 2011. Ariana participated in the Groups Student Support Program, receiving financial and academic support to study in other countries like Africa, as well as China, Japan, South Korea and Thailand to learn more about different health care systems and global health disparities. She will begin a Masters of Public Health (MPH) with a concentration in epidemiology at IUB in the Fall of 2011. Ariana plans to study how to decrease health disparities among minority populations, relating many of the challenges affecting minority groups such as the Latino community.

In 2009 Ariana was selected for the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaurate Achievement Program. Within the McNair Scholar program, Ariana conducted an independent research project under the supervision of Dr. JoAnne C. Bunnage from the Department of Applied and Health Sciences. The research project focused on Health care access among undocumented immigrant Mexican women in the state of Indiana.


Mentors: Holly Grason, Christopher Dykton, Imelda Rocha

Hispanics are the fastest growing minority and have become the largest minority across the United States; drawing attention to the changing healthcare needs of every community, the arising concern of the health disparities within the United States and the need for a MCH health care workforce that has a Hispanic presence and is culturally competent. Research indicates that an increase in the Hispanic staff in the MCH workforce will positively affect patients’ access, satisfaction, communication, and quality of care. Working with the Maternal and Child Health Bureau’s (MCHB) Division of Research, Training and Education’s Training Branch project will aid in reviewing and analyzing promising recruitment and retention of long-term Hispanic trainees in current training programs. By identifying these practices that can be shared among the training programs, the goal of creating and ensuring a more diverse MCH workforce can be addressed.
Sausan El Burai-Félix was born in Bayamon, Puerto Rico with her twin sister Suad. She completed her bachelor’s degree in Special Education at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras and then master’s degree in Public Health, with a concentration in Biostatistics, at the Medical Sciences Campus. She worked with a professor in the Red de Asma Infantil de Puerto Rico (Childhood Asthma Network of Puerto Rico) as an asthma educator and staff assistant.

Her first internship experience was with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). As an intern at the National Institute of Mental Health, she participated in the Media and Outreach Branch and was specifically involved with supporting health science education projects such as the National Drug Fact Week and NIDA’s teen website.

Currently, she is an intern for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Long-term, she is interested in pursuing a career as a public health advisor.

Air Bridge: Understanding the issue and providing recommendations

Mentor(s): Avni P Shridharani, MHS

Migrations of HIV/AIDS positive persons between different countries can adversely affect medical care and the epidemiology of the pandemic. According to Deren, et.al, “An air-bridge – mobility pattern- has been identified between New York and Puerto Rico that represents high rates of travel and migration” of HIV/AIDS patients. This mobility increases the risk of interruption of care and services for people with HIV/AIDS. Keeping the mobile population in a system of care is a challenge due to the issue of immigration, disparities of health care access, and the availability and variance in the social services systems. The main purpose of creating this policy paper is to understand the air bridge and provided recommendation for how to minimize the negative impact of migration on the continuity of care for HIV/AIDS patients who traverse the New York-Puerto Rico air bridge.
Audilis Sánchez Fuentes was born in Aibonito, Puerto Rico. She grew up in Guaynabo, studying at the American Military Academy. In 2008, she completed her Bachelor’s Degree in Natural Sciences from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. That same year, Audilis entered the Graduate School of Public Health at the Medical Sciences Campus and graduated with her Master’s in Public Health (MPH) in 2010 with the thesis, *Use Description of Alternative Complementary Medicine in the Population of Bayamón, Puerto Rico*. She is continuing her studies in the University of Puerto Rico’s Health Services Administration program. She is the Executive Secretary of the Students’ Council and a member of the Informatics Committee.

Currently, she is working in an internship at the HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). She is conducting an analysis of the Ryan White Part D program for the Division of Community Based Programs (DCBP) with Dr. Margarita Figueroa-Gonzalez, Dr. Anna Huang, and Dr. Matthew Newland.


*Mentors: Margarita Figueroa, MD; Anna Huang, MD; Matthew Newland, PhD*

Ryan White Part D Program supports family-oriented, primary medical care, provided directly or indirectly through contractors, for women, infants, children, and youth living with HIV/AIDS. An evaluation of Part D grantees’ performance and use of Ryan White funds during a recent five-year period will demonstrate how grantees have responded to the changing HIV epidemiology and the impact on HIV services for these populations. The analysis will assess grantees’ ability to find new cases of women and behaviorally infected youth in high prevalence areas, their capacity to recruit and retain adequate numbers of women and youth in HIV medical care, and their utilization of grant funds. The results of the analysis will be presented to the senior leadership of the Division of Community Based Programs (DCBP) in the HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and will also include recommendations for programmatic changes based on the analysis and on training in the evaluation of public health programs.
Jacqueline graduated from the College of William and Mary with a Bachelors degree in Neuroscience and International Public Health.
She was a Howard Hughes Medical Institute-funded researcher in 2007 under Eric Bradley, Ph.D. In 2008, she received a summer fellowship to work under Owen Witte, Ph.D, M.D at UCLA studying a fibroblast growth factor in a mouse prostate cancer model.
Jacqueline worked as a five-year member of Medical Aid Nicaragua Outreach Scholarship, running free rural clinics and social data collection.

She will begin a Master’s of Science degree in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Georgetown University this year, focusing on biohazardous threat agents and emerging diseases. She aspires to work in a field that blends national security and healthcare, while remaining committed to serving the Latino community. In 2010 she was a National Latina Health Network’s Emerging Leaders Health Institute Fellow. As a first generation college student, coming from a family of curanderos and braceros, public policy issues from immigration reform to Head Start early childhood educations are of great interest to her.

**Developing a communication strategy to increase awareness of the Countermeasures Injury Compensation Program among Latinos**

Mentor(s): Vito Caserta MD, MPH

Latinos are the second largest demographic in the country and as the fastest growing group, there are many challenges that need to be addressed urgently concerning health disparities. These issues combined in the event of a bioterrorist attack, pandemic, or radiation disaster can be devastating when trying to reach out to Latinos. The type of program that we will be marketing is unusual in that it deals with adverse reactions to certain countermeasures and compensation.

The approach of this research includes doing an in depth literature review of health communication outreach dealing with countermeasures as well as health related injury compensation. Since there is not much information focused on the demographic of interest, the research will be supplemented with advice from various health communication program experts that work with Latinos and/or emergency preparedness. Their contributions ranged from reviewing and commenting on existing plans to providing real-life examples to illustrate key concepts. All this information is intended to help guide an effective communication outreach strategy to increase awareness of the benefits that the CICP can provide to eligible individuals.
MICHELLE ISLAS
MS CANDIDATE

Michelle Islas is a Master’s of Science candidate in Counseling Psychology with an emphasis in Mental Health Administration. She has worked in the social service field for three years with a diverse range of populations including autistic children, adolescents with co-occurring disorders, and families on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Michelle holds a Bachelor’s degree in Sociology and Cognitive Science from the University of California, Irvine. During her time at UC Irvine, Michelle was active on and off the campus. She held internships, did volunteer work, participated in clubs, and held the community service chair position of the Epsilon Beta Chapter of Sigma Lambda Gamma. She is currently the Vice President of the Southern California Alumnae Association.

Michelle was born in Long Beach, California, and her family is from both Mexico and Italy. She is the first person in her immediate family to graduate from college. In her free time, Michelle enjoys traveling, cooking, playing sports and maintaining an active lifestyle.

Clinical Workforce Preparedness Task Force: Surveying Current Trends to Develop Clinical Standards for Suicide Identification
Mentors: Dr. Marquita Mullan and Dr. Alex Ross

Although suicide in America is widely recognized as a compelling and preventable problem, finding effective means of prevention, identification, and treatment has been complicated. The National Action Alliance of Suicide Prevention (NAASP) is the first coalition between the public and private sectors aimed at championing suicide prevention as a national priority. The Clinical Workforce Preparedness Task Force (CWPTF), one of the twelve NAASP task forces, is focused on establishing a benchmark accreditation of training programs for the certification of competencies in the clinical workforce that interacts with individuals within the suicide continuum. There is a current lack of data with regard to the trends in core competencies and training materials for suicide identification and prevention. In order to facilitate the creation of a set of standards, the CWPTF established a goal to create an initial survey of current trends in clinical standards, core competencies, and training materials through the various applicable stakeholders. While there is general consensus on the risk factors, accurate knowledge as well as early recognition of patients at risk is still lacking in everyday clinical practice.
Monica Bautista is a recent graduate from the School of Community Health at Portland State University in Portland Oregon and is currently a summer trainee at the Health Resources and Services Administration Office of Workforce Development.

Monica was born in Houma, Louisiana and grew up in Illinois where she began pursuing her Bachelor of Science in Biology at Loyola University Chicago. After two years at Loyola, Monica realized Biology was not the field for her and took a break from school. When she moved to Oregon, Monica was introduced to public health through her coursework and developed a passion for it during her internship with the Multnomah County Health Department’s Environmental Health Section.

In March 2011, Monica earned her Bachelor of Science with Latin Honors in Community Health Education. She has plans to earn a dual degree MPH/JD in the future and work in Health Law and Policy. Monica has interests in Veteran’s health, Women’s health, and eliminating health disparities. She is also a Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Public Policy Fellow for 2011-2012.

**Combining Models of Instructional Design and Public Health to Create and Deliver Effective Health Education**

*Mentors: Patrick Lockett, Vickie Baldwin, Brandon Guzzone*

Upstream Public Health has always focused on access to education, services, and resources to prevent disease and infirmary. Health education is vital to prevention and must be created and delivered in a manner that is both concise and effective. Currently, Certified Health Educators are required to master a set of seven responsibilities that include a series of competencies and sub-competencies. Although these in-depth responsibilities, competencies, and sub-competencies are comprehensive and necessary, they may not include principles of modern learning theory and instructional systems design. A cohesive model can be developed through a comparison and analysis of existing health education practices, the competencies required of (the US federal government’s Instructional Systems Occupational Job Series 1750), and requirements for the Certified Health Educator examination. Combining the basic principles and competencies of Instructional Design and Public Health Education would allow for a more effective and meaningful approach to health education creation and delivery. Effective health education serves as a basic building block to the prevention of disease and infirmary.
Natalia Vargas is a recent Master’s of Public Health graduate from the University of South Florida, specializing in Global Health Practice and Infectious Diseases.

Natalia holds a national certification in public health by the National Board of Public Health Examinees (CPH), and completed a graduate certificate in infection control. She is currently serving as principal investigator and project manager for an international study funded by the University of South Florida Graduate Studies, titled: “Enteroparasitosis risks in indigenous children of a rural community of the Ecuadorian Andes: can under-nutrition, and selenium deficiency affect the pathogenic process?” Natalia is a public health consultant for a rural hospital in Ecuador where she provides technical assistance in the improvement of food security community programs, and the design and development of a small-scale breast milk bank.

Natalia has co-authored four published academic papers, and attended multiple professional conferences to showcase her research. She hopes to obtain more experience in public health policy and advocacy, before she pursues her goal of obtaining a Ph.D degree in public health.

**HRSA Internship Project: Narrowing the Scope for Developing Healthy People 2020 Objectives in the Social Determinants of Health Topic Area**

Mentor(s): Sylvia Fisher, Ph.D.

Health status is influenced by multiple external and internal conditions of our living environment and upbringing, or our unique social context. This issue of social determinants of health was incorporated into Healthy People 2020, which provides science-based objectives for improving the health of all Americans. A team, composed of Federal and non-Federal members, brings together professionals from many areas of expertise to inform the objective-identifying process. A proposed method for identifying social determinants of health objectives was developed involving the integration of existing frameworks, the concept of “place” and its impact on health status, relevant existing objectives at the Federal, state and local level, and nationally representative data sources. Some activities completed as a member of the inter-agency team include developing a visual summary map of domains and indicators grounded in the overarching concept of “place” and the current health policy priorities. Cooperative work is being done to construct an Access database that will serve as an important tool in the categorical organization of domain/indicator-related data.

The database will allow us to effectively identify social determinants of health priority areas.
Yelile Saca has a proven ability to develop
and implement evidence-based marketing
strategies that support public health objectives.
Previously, Yelile managed nutrition education projects
of several nonprofit organizations, working closely with
state and federal partners. She has been recognized as an expert
on applying language translation and cultural adaptation concepts to the
development of health education materials and mass communication strategies that
target Hispanic populations. She has extensive research, leadership, training, mentoring, grant writing and
consulting experience in public health. Yelile’s research interests include cross-national research on minority health disparities and understanding and reducing gender-based health disparities.

During her HSHPS traineeship with the HRSA Office of Legislation, Yelile successfully assisted in the research and development of the congressional briefing materials in preparation for a hearing on Children’s Hospital Graduate Medical Education (CHGME). The experience has sparked a growing interest in bridging research with services delivery and policy development. Yelile was awarded her Bachelors of Arts from the University of California at Berkeley and this fall she will receive a Masters in Public Health from Columbia University.
SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)

The SAMHSA Training Program places the trainee at its headquarters in Rockville, MD. A branch of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, SAMHSA is the body dedicated to improving the quality and availability of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services for those suffering from substance abuse and mental illness. By doing this, SAMHSA aims to reduce illness, disability, and death resulting from those ailments.

Potential trainee projects include implementation of the National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month educational campaign, preparation for scientific meetings on drug testing for employers, and analysis of MRT-related qualitative data to develop analytical plans and progress reports.

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Karen Armstrong, MSW, LICSW, JD
Alina Salvatore, RPh, MS
Capt. Carol Rest-Mincburg, MPH
Ron Flegel, MS, BSMT (ASCP)
Charles LoDico, MS, DABFT
Costella Green
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Jeff DeSanto
Adriana Medina
Amanda Nugent has been an avid researcher and advocate for minority health issues since graduating from Florida International University with her Bachelors of Science. Whether it was in the classroom or in her professional career she has always championed the issues of the disenfranchised. To prepare for her public health career she gained hands on experience doing three internships. Her first was a research based internship at the Health and Wellness Center on campus at her university, the second was a program manager for Victim Advocacy in and on-campus rape crisis center, and the third she is doing currently with SAMHSA. Since graduating with her Master’s of Science in Public Health she has interned with SAMHSA in the Office of Policy Planning and Innovation within the Office of Behavioral Health Equity helping to support work in minority health policy issues. Her ultimate goal is to develop and implement policies that promote violence prevention programs that include education, social skills training, and also job training for minority youth.

**Administrator’s Office of Policy, Planning and Innovation (OPPI) within the Office of Behavioral Health Equity (OBHE) at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**

Mentor(s): Dr. Larke Huang

Health policies are important to addressing the social determinants of health such as level of income, education, and social interactions. Work has begun at SAMHSA to establish the SAMHSA Office of Behavioral Health Equity (OBHE), which was created in a provision of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). This consisted of developing strategic action items for the office and building the data strategy plan, along with a language proficiency access logic model. In this office research, literature reviews, policy reviews and concept papers are conducted, which helps contribute to the agency’s strategic plan by adding focus on disparities. This office also does federal interagency work, such as participating in the National Forum on Youth Violence and providing staff support on the Coordinating Council of the Office of Juvenile Justice. Further research is being conducted on current health care plans to influence the construction of future health insurance plans under the ACA. Office support was provided through supplying concept development to the office of Adolescent Health for mental health and substance abuse meetings, along with providing logistics and creating documents for the National Network to Eliminate Disparities conference, NNEDLearn 2011.
Anthony Lathon, is a senior at the College of Pharmacy, Nursing, & Allied Health Sciences at Howard University in the District of Columbia. He was born and raised in the state of Maryland currently residing in the small court of Anne Arundel County. He has years of work expertise in customer service and human resource relations, volunteer work providing the underserved population in needed communities whether be prevention, food donation, and/or clothing donation, and also serving as a community service representative in extracurricular & outreach programs at Howard University. He currently holds the title of Mr. College of Pharmacy, Nursing, & Allied Health Sciences at Howard University serving as a Health advocate and spokesperson for the entire student body representing Health Sciences for its achievements.

Upon graduation he plans to pursue an MPA in Health Policy & Management with a concentration in International Studies at NYU with the goal of becoming a Health Administrator.

**Prevention White Paper-Executive Summary/ New Grant Modification & Application Recording**

Mentor(s): Thomas Deloe, PhD; Helen Hernandez

Health care is undergoing a paradigm shift with the focus shifting to prevention, rather than treatment of diseases. Prevention White Paper-Executive Summary samples as a guidance document in providing a vision for the future of disease prevention in the United States. Literature research on the Prevention White Paper, Quality Control checks on New Awards and continuation documents will help obtain relevant information on prevention in the Health Reform Initiative. This will be supplemented with abstract projects, along with attending various meetings throughout the different SAMHSA programs.
Clara Inés Yuvienco was born in Cali, Colombia and in 2001 became a U.S. Citizen. She worked as an elementary school teacher for several years, received her bachelor degree in Biology-Chemistry, and came to the United States to pursue her graduate studies at New Mexico State University. In 2008 she received her Master’s in Public Health with minors in U.S. Mexico Border Health, Environmental/Occupational Health, and Gerontology.

As a Colombian-American, Clara has witnessed firsthand the impact of disease and disability in vulnerable populations as a consequence of health disparities. This has motivated her work as a health educator, health/medication technician, mentor for high school and minority college students, and an interpreter/translator for the Social Security Administration and the public school system. She has also worked for the US-Mexico Affairs Office of the National Park Service, the National Physical Science Consortium, and the Center for Latin American Studies at New Mexico State University.

I enjoy reading, listening to music, salsa dancing, cooking, yoga, traveling the world, and the company of her two loving children and husband.

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**

*Mentor(s): William Trefzger*

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is committed to reducing the impact of substance abuse and mental health illness in America. SAMHSA pursues this mission at a time when a Health Reform has been enacted and the nation poses economic challenges. Web & Social Media Workgroup, part of the Communications Governance Council, work on SAMHSA web improvements to comply with the administration’s effort to eliminate unnecessary government printing and websites. Projects include, managing spreadsheets, collecting web metrics, learning about Google Analytics, webtrends, and Socrata, attending meetings, webinars, and serving as a point of contact. To help spread public awareness updates are kept on SAMHSA’s Facebook page, Twitter page, and SAMHSA’s internal and external blogs. These postings on the websites are multilingual and culturally competent in accordance with Executive Order 13166, which requires agencies to provide limited English proficient (LEP) individuals access to their websites information.
Born on Fort Drum military base in Watertown, NY, Cornelius Fletcher is a Masters Candidate in the College of Arts and Sciences at Howard University in Washington DC with his focus being Public Administration. He holds a Bachelors degree in Political Science from Norfolk State University. He plans on attending Law School to help shape legislation in the public sector. He is currently a HSHPS intern at SAMSHA in the Office of Planning, Analysis and Coordination within the Center for Substance Abuse treatment.

In his free time he enjoys sports, reading, the beach and good food. He is a member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. as well as Phi Alpha Delta Pre Law Fraternity. He has also worked on various political campaigns including Jim Webb, Terry McAuliffe and President Barack Obama. Cornelius has served as a mentor to several area youths in neighborhood elementary schools and has also given back to the community through food and clothes drives as well as assisting with Meals on Wheels.

Young minorities and Substance Abuse and HIV/AIDS Treatment
Mentors: Danielle Johnson-Byrd, Warren Hewitt

Past research has shown that recreational drug use correlates with sexual behaviors that confer high risk for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. The present study tested the hypothesis that sensation seeking, a disposition characterized by the tendency to pursue novel, exciting, and optimal levels of arousal, accounts for a majority of the variance in associations between substance use and high-risk sexual behavior. Little has been written about the character patterns that are developed by minority youths that allow them to be more susceptible to contracting HIV. I will examine different ways to help prevent the abuse of drugs and alcohol through community and school based outlets that will in turn help to curve the growing number of minority youth cases of HIV.
Glorynes Torres Alejandro, born in Caguas, Puerto Rico, recently graduated Magna Cum Laude with her BA in Business Administration and Accounting from the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey.

She was an active member of the Board of Directors of the Accounting Association of Students and held membership in the Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce, Student Chapter. Glorynes won first place in Accounting Challenge at University of Puerto Rico at Cayey in March 2009, and then took second place at the National Accounting Bowl and the Convention of Accounting Student Associations. She has experience working as a University Representative of the Accounting Firm and also, worked as Administrative Assistant at Milton Flores and Associates responsible for registering appraisals of real property and drafted letters. Glorynes is a member of the National Society of Hispanic MBAs.

Apart from her aspirations of becoming a CPA, Glorynes’s long term goals are to complete a Master’s Degree in Human Resources and a Doctorate Degree in Finance.
NAIARA SALGADO
MS CANDIDATE

From Bayamón, Puerto Rico, Naiara Salgado is currently pursuing an MS degree in Environmental Health applied to Industrial Hygiene. She also has a bachelor’s degree in Human Biology from the University of Puerto Rico at Bayamón. After graduation, she worked as a laboratory technician in the Medical Mycology Laboratory at the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus. She performed drug susceptibility tests for Candida strains and culture media preparation.

Naiara has presented her research findings in “Back Injuries with Mechanical Lifts Among Nursing Personnel” through the Sunshine Education and Research Center Research Poster Session at the University of South Florida. She also has experience participating in an epidemiological research study titled: “Musculoskeletal Disorders among Puerto Rican Dentist”. Naiara has also worked at the Veterans Hospital in San Juan Puerto Rico as a student volunteer.

Naiara aspires to earn her PhD in Environmental Health and becoming an accomplished Industrial Hygienist in the near future.

Primary Abuse Prevention through workplace testing programs
Mentor(s) Carol Rest-Mincberg, Ron Flegel, Charles LoDico

Work is being done at the Division of Workplace Program/CSAP to address primary substance abuse prevention through workplace testing programs. Research includes reviewing DWP website for current scientific information. The research is then shared at staff, division, center and agency operational meetings, focusing on preparation of scientific presentations. These presentations include Drug Testing Advisory Board (DTAB) and the Society of Forensic Toxicologist (SOF). Other tasks include attendance and preparation of discussion and presentation material for meetings with other Federal Departments and doing data analysis.
Jennifer Lugris is a student at the University of Barcelona in Barcelona, Spain where she is completing a Master in Sociological Research. Her Masters thesis will focus on the use of alcohol among victims of intimate partner violence in Spain. She completed her Undergraduate degree at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey where she majored in Sociology and minored in French.

During the completion of her undergraduate degree she worked at the Rutgers Center of Alcohol studies under mentors Dr. Helene R. White and Dr. Eun Young Mun. She assisted in various investigations regarding alcohol and drug use and rehabilitation, and mental health problems in adolescents and young adults. Two of her most accomplished works include an investigation evaluating the efficacy of a brief personalized written feedback intervention for alcohol use reduction among mandated college students and an investigation which examined the effects of incarceration on Oppositional Defiant Disorder and Attention Deficit Disorder problems and alcohol use in adolescent males.

Her research interests include substance abuse, mental health problems and intimate partner violence, with an interest in how culture affects and interacts with these issues. Her other interests include traveling, music, and photography.

**SAMHSA/ Office of Planning Policy and Innovation (OPPI)**

**Mentor: Stephen Wing**

Healthy People 2020 is a nationwide health promotion and disease prevention plan instituted by the US Department of Health and Human Services. It uses data from national surveys to identify benchmarks, set goals, and monitor progress over a period of ten years. Data is used from Healthy People 2020 to identify at risk populations for mental health and substance use disorders. In a study of at-risk populations it has been found that females were more likely to suffer from a major depressive episode (MDE) than males. For instance in 2008, female adults were two times more likely to suffer from MDE than males. When looking at adolescents the problem was even more elevated. Adolescent girls from 12 to 17 years old were three times more likely to suffer a MDE than males. Mental health problems such as depression may contribute to other adverse behaviors. For instance, more adolescent girls from 12 to 17 years old binge drank than their male peers. Furthermore, in 2008 more adolescent girls from 12 to 17 years old reported using inhalants within the past year in comparison to boys. The results of this study indicated that substance abuse in females may be related to mental health problems such as depression. Therefore, prevention and intervention strategies for substance use in females should target substance use as emotional relief.
Maria Martinez is an undergraduate student at Marymount University about to complete her degree in Business Administration with a minor in Economics. She has interned at two different government agencies: once at the John D. Dingell Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Detroit and twice at SAMHSA. Her work has focused around government accounting and grants management.

Though a Maryland native, Maria’s Salvadorian family background has made her very passionate about the social issues that have shaped El Salvador and continue to affect its people. Maria hopes to pursue an MBA degree with a focus on International Business and Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Her career goal is to eventually work in small communities in El Salvador. She hopes to inspire and empower people to take initiative, provided the correct tools and support, to improve their lives and positively support their families.

In her spare time, Maria is active in her church community, teaching pre-school Sunday School for many years now. She also works at an elementary school in Arlington, VA.

Office of Financial Resources/ Division of grant Management- Drug Free Communities
Mentor(s): Virfinia Simmons, Nadine DeJesus

Over the summer the Drug Free Communities (DFC) managed a grant portfolio of 144 grant awards. Budget analysis for Continuation Applications, awards to grantees that will be moving into the next year of the grant cycle, were conducted. DFC awards run for either five or ten years. The process includes contacting grantees to request additional information and further justification for budget requests. The HHS Grants Policy Statement, DFC RFA, and cost principles provide guidance to grantees. The scope of issues includes indirect costs, allowable and unallowable costs, match requirements and administrative issues. After the budget review was complete focused turned to creating the Notice of Award. Throughout the Continuations process grants specialist interns also managed Post-Award actions for my grant portfolio – distributing them to the corresponding Grants Management Specialist. Post – Award actions consisted of key staff changes to personnel, requests to carryover funds, and budget revisions. After Continuation Awards are finally released, the review for new grant applications will follow.
Courtnay holds a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Spelman College, MPH in Health Education and Promotion from University of Southern California, and a Masters degree in Psychological Studies in Education from University of California, Los Angeles. Her research and career emphasizes empowering communities with adequate resources and knowledge.

Courtnay was born in California. She has many years experience working towards eliminating disparities in underserved populations. During her graduate studies at USC Courtnay worked on her practicum at Instituto Nacional De Salud Publica, Mexico in Cuernavaca, Mexico. She worked with the native women, educating them on diabetes, obesity, proper nutrition, and empowering them as the women of their household. Courtnay also served as the Health Educator/Volunteer Director for a nonprofit health clinic. She was responsible for the design and evaluation of programs promoting better health practices for the community. Currently, Courtnay is a trainee in SAMHSA’s Office of Communications. She contributes to the design and oversight of communications strategies for SAMHSA. She is an active member of various community engagement organizations and enjoys traveling and reading.

Communication Specialist Fellowship
Mentor: William Trefzger

It is important that community members are aware of the progress of substance abuse and mental health initiatives. This fellowship gives the opportunity to contribute to the development and implementation of SAMHSA beta test plan, Text4Treatment locations. This project allows for text-based access to information on SAMHSA’s mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities. Furthermore, working on communication efforts through Blogs, Facebook, Twitter and other such outlets enables an easy access for community members to information about substance abuse and mental health issues, as well as information on new developments and initiatives. By contributing to the progress of SAMHSA’s publications and websites development it allows for a more rapid spread of this information.
Danielle Tarino earned her Bachelor’s from Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ in Political Science with minors in Psychology and English.

Danielle served as Resident Assistant at the Rutgers Recovery House. Danielle has worked as a campaign coordinator and team leader for the SouperVan project (soupervan.org), an organization that addresses food insecurity in New Jersey. She also served as a hospital liaison for the Embrace Kids Foundation, where students spend time with a child cancer patient during treatment. She has interned with a high-profile political communications firm in New York City. Her interest lies in policy and communications, and discovering creative mechanisms to spread political and social messages via social networks. She is also learning pieces of the Health Information Technology curriculum recently created by the Office of the National Coordinator.

Danielle is also a member of the French National Honor Society and a youth member on the Board of Advocacy for the Association of Recovery Schools. A strong believer in advocacy through technology, Danielle’s endeavors are to continue to work in the field of addiction and adolescent health, as well as future aspirations of getting her J.D.

The focus project of the SAMHSA internship is to explore the benefits of incorporating Substance Abuse Disorders (SUDs) and behavioral health illnesses into Electronic Health Records (EHRs). This is directly associated with SAMHSA’s Strategic Initiative 6. The research will entail previous studies done on EHR’s “meaningful” use and some historical references to its creation and implementation as a device to improve the overall health of the public. Research will also touch on the concept that, without proper care for mental and psychological needs, a person cannot sustain overall health. It will provide the knowledge necessary to achieve the full spectrum of what it means to be a healthy individual. If mental health issues are treated with the same caliber as physical ailments, many other related health issues will be resolved by treating a person’s mental condition. The argument being proposed is the necessity of medical providers and members of legislative bodies who make the decisions about Health Reform to include SUDs and behavioral health in an EHR in order to provide fair care for all and close disparity gaps.
Gihane Jérémie-Brink currently is a second year Ph.D. Counseling Psychology student at Loyola University Chicago. Gihane earned her B.A. from Calvin College and she holds an M.A. (Community Counseling) from Loyola University Chicago.

Currently Gihane is an APA Minority Predoctoral Fellow through the American Psychological Association. Her research interests include the study of racial and ethnic identity formation and socialization experiences of black immigrants, children of immigrants, and bicultural individuals. She is also interested in examining the psychological effects of oppression on people of color and how resilience and protective factors can work to increase the well-being of ethnic minorities. Clinically Gihane’s interests include developing and providing culturally effective mental health services and interventions to combat psychological distress, anxiety and depression in ethnically diverse and immigrant adolescents, adults and families.

Gihane served as an Albert Schweitzer fellow, where she worked to provide psychoeducation awareness on substance abuse and HIV risk taking behaviors within ethnic minority communities. Gihane, daughter of Hatian immigrants, also worked at Bernard Mevs Hospital located in Port-au-Prince, Haiti providing counseling and psychoeducation to Haitian trauma survivors.

Mentor(s): David deVoursney

With the major advancements in medicine and technology, our society has the ability to provide everyone with access to adequate healthcare services. However, this is not available to all people due to the existence of healthcare disparities and inequalities, which are especially evident in different racial and ethnic populations. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has created an Action Plan to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities (“HHS Disparities Action Plan”) which build upon the Affordable Care Act. Research being done at SAMHSA will analyze national collected data on behavioral health disparities answering questions raised, such as who has access to healthcare and where are these groups located? In addition, what are their diagnoses and what communities are adequately being funded and provided resources in order to ensure quality healthcare services? This research analysis will provide information on how the current healthcare system is contributing to health disparities and also help enact preventive methods and effective solutions to our healthcare system.
Gregory Williams is Public Policy Master’s Candidate from New York University specializing in behavioral health policy. Greg is a 27-year old in long-term recovery from drugs and alcohol since age 17. His home is in Connecticut where he is the volunteer co-director of a non-profit organization, Connecticut Turning To Youth and Families (CTYF). Greg is a communications specialist, and a public policy advocate. His work is dedicated towards creating positive changes in prevention, treatment and recovery policies for youth and families. As an advocate Greg has spoken to legislative bodies and has been featured in news stories surrounding youth addiction recovery by ABC World News, NBC News, Family Circle Magazine, and The Hartford Courant. Through his advocacy and research work, Greg, recently co-authored, Youth In Recovery, for The Prevention Researcher (Volume 18, Nov. 2, 2011, Item #182). He is an award winning documentary filmmaker specializing in the creation of compelling and purposeful content with a Bachelor’s degree in Communications and Media Production from Quinnipiac University.

Healthcare Reform Policy Research for Behavioral Health Systems

Mentor: John O’ Brien, Senior Advisor on Health Finance

Over the next three years the implementation of the new Mental Health Parity and Addictions Equity Act, as well as the new Affordable Care Act will have profound impacts on how the treatment of mental health and substance use conditions are structured, insured, and paid for in the United States. The Healthcare System will need to expand capacity and improve quality to meet the demands of serving a greater number, and a more diverse population than ever before. The effective implementation of these laws requires thoughtful research and consideration. Throughout the training this summer research tasks will be performed on strategies and policies for the behavioral health population. The focus of this research will look at essential benefit design, health homes, and enrollment outreach for newly eligible health insurance populations. The overarching goal is to assist SAMHSA staff in the Office Of Policy, Planning, and Innovation in making informed and effective decisions to realize the full potential and intent of the sweeping new federal legislations.
Idaliz Noble holds a BBA in Accounting and a minor in Management from the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey. Idaliz participated in a HACU internship at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration. As an intern she served as a grant specialist in the Division of Grants Management/OFR where she was in charge of various tasks such as: preparing administrative reviews, analyzing project budgets, interacting with grantees, attending seminars, conferences, and activities.

Before then, she worked in two private accounting firms where she served as an administrative assistant, auditing assistant, and accounting assistant. She is currently doing her MBA in Finance at the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico, Metropolitan Campus, and hopes to graduate by the year 2012.

While doing her BBA, Idaliz was an active student who participated in several student organizations. She was president of the Chamber of Commerce during 2008-2009 and vice-president of Muziek, a musical organization, during 2007-2008. She performed throughout her undergraduate career in the university’s band which provided her with a scholarship.

Office of Financial Resources/Division of Grants Management/Center of Mental Health

Mentor(s): Kathleen Sample, Gwendolyns Simpson

The Division of Grants Management provides knowledge on new things about the grants procedures. Working specifically with the Center of Mental Health in different programs that included youth and children, it is necessary to analyze and review budgets to make sure that all the requested costs are reasonable, allocable and allowable for the success of the projects. This is manageable through the use of different programs and pages that DGM work with like: SGIMS, IMPACT II, PMS, CCR, EPLS, and etc. Participation in several conference calls, seminars, and staff meetings is required to ensure everyone in the department is on the same page with the grant handling. To obtain these grants communication with the grantees/grants management specialist/grants management officer is required whether by telephone, in person, email and correspondence. Different reviews such as: carryover request, new applications, continuations and non-cost extensions helps ensure the longevity of the grants.
LATRINA C. DAVIS
MPH

Minority Health, health disparities, childhood obesity, and mental health are among the community health concerns of 30 year old Public Health professional, LaTrina C. Davis.

LaTrina has completed an independent study on obesity and nutrition in adolescents. The autonomous study focused on the obesity rate of students in an urban middle school in Richmond, VA. The study also examined the school’s nutritional program, as well as the student’s diet in their home.

LaTrina is an active member of the American Public Health Association (APHA) and frequently volunteers with the American Cancer Society, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and the March of Dimes.

She is a proud alumnus of Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA where she earned a BS in Psychology. She also has earned a Masters of Public Health (MPH) degree in Health Policy from Benedictine University in Lisle, IL.

LaTrina is an active member of both alumni associations and regularly attends school events.

LaTrina resides in Rockville, MD with her two daughters and her Yorkshire Terrier.

“Are Girls More Resistant?”: Challenges in Female Substance Abuse Treatment for African American, Hispanic/Latino, and American Indian/Alaska Native Adolescent Populations

Mentor(s): Senior Program Management Officer Melissa Rael

There are major differences in enrollment of males versus females in adolescent (12-17 years of age) Substance Abuse Treatment (SAT) Programs. Females have a substantially lower rate of enrollment in SAT Programs across the country, despite a need for treatment. This research will explore possible resistance to treatment from adolescent females and investigate the idea that Adolescent Programs may be ineffective in engaging, recruiting, and treating female populations. The purpose of this research is to identify the causes for decreased enrollment and lack of participation in SAT Programs, and to discuss the impact of the lack of treatment with the female adolescent population.
LINDSAY WOLFE  
MPH CANDIDATE

Lindsay Wolfe is a Master of Public Health candidate at George Washington University (GWU), Public Health Communications and Marketing track. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC.

Lindsay is currently a research assistant at the Center for Health Care Quality in the Department of Health Policy at GWU. In this role, she aids in the research of best practices and the development of communication materials for Urgent Matters, a program to improve emergency department quality of care. In addition to work experience, she has served as a volunteer in Public Health initiatives, specifically performing event planning and administration within women’s organizations and as a research assistant for a hospital’s orthopedic clinic.

As an HSHPS summer trainee hosted within the SAMHSA Office of Communications, she hopes to gain a broader outlook on substance abuse and mental health, including developing a more in-depth consideration of the mental health status of the nation and its connections to other significant issues such as homelessness and healthcare.

**Text 4 Treatment Locations**

*Mentor(s): William Trefzger*

“Text 4 Treatment Locations” is a beta test for a new service to be developed to allow for mobile phone text-based access to SAMHSA’s mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities. The purpose of the beta test was to determine the usability and functionality of the tool and make recommendations for improving the tool before release to the general public. Drafting the participant feedback design involved critical brainstorming and researching effective beta tests and similar mobile services. Detailed instructions and a feedback form were created for all beta testers available on the SAMHSA website. Phase one of the beta test recruitment strategy included outreach to partner organizations and distribution of the T4TL Beta Test materials to participants. Phase two marked the beginning of using more wide-ranging promotion techniques to recruit additional testers in a more open format, including a “Call for Beta Testers” notification on the SAMHSA Treatment site and Facebook postings. The final task is a summary to report final findings based on feedback monitoring and recommendations for a local coordinated roll-out of the service.
Mario Castillo

**MPH**

Mario, a native Texan from Houston, completed his undergraduate degree in Political Science at Texas A&M. After graduation, he took a year off from school, moved to Green Bay, WI to work as a field organizer during the 2008 election cycle. After the campaigns were over, Mario returned to Texas to attend the Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Rural Public Health (SRPH) where he earned his MPH (Health Policy & Management) in May 2011.

While a graduate student at the School of Rural Public Health Mario served as the President of the Medical Group Management Association student chapter and member of the Rural Public Health Student Association student organization. He also served on the SRPH 5K Fun Run Committee and the Brazos Valley Medical Practice Management Association as membership chair.

Currently, Mario is a Hispanic Serving Health Professionals School summer Trainee with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in Rockville, MD. In his free time Mario enjoys staying active, reading, keeping up with politics, and spending time with his family and friends.

**Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI)**

Mentor(s): Karen S. Armstrong, MSSW, LICSW, JD

The PAIMI program is located within the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), Division of State and Community Systems Development (DSCSD), State Planning and Systems Development Branch (SPSDB), Protection and Advocacy Section (PAS). The PAIMI program is responsible for oversight of the Protection and Advocacy programs run by the individual States, the territories, and the District of Columbia. Administrative work required at this office includes reviewing and editing individual State P&A reports, composing, editing, and reviewing the annual PAIMI report delivered to the U.S. Congress. Other responsibilities include creating a database of individual PAIMI program coordinators and contact information, along with participating on revamping the PAIMI monitoring site visit protocols with PAIMI Program coordinators and division leadership.
Melody Sun is going to pursue her master of science in Health Care Administration in the fall of 2011, from University of Maryland. Melody recently graduated from University of Maryland, College Park with a Bachelor of Science in General Biology. While studying for undergraduate degree, Melody actively participated in group activities. Melody was the marketing chair in Biology Engaging Students Together (B.E.S.T.) club, and contributed to various activities around the campus that led to a Leadership Award.

Melody was born in China, and came to the United States with her mother eight years ago. While carrying on learning the good sides from both worlds, Melody firmly believes in pursuing an education beyond undergraduate studies. Melody has many interests, including painting, practicing calligraphy and singing.

**Mortality Reports of Opioid Treatment Programs into SAMSHA’s OTP extranet database**

*Mentor(s): Alina Salvatore*

Prescription drug abuse by youth is an increasing trend, and President Obama established strategic initiatives to fight off this epidemic. In this program efforts are contributed in fighting drug abuse problems, especially, on opiates and prescription drugs. This done through gathering specific Mortality Data among all the Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) throughout the nation. This data, being accurately recorded, is useful to evaluate the effects of OTPs, and improve OTPs in serving clients to help them function normally in their lives.
Michele Mercedes Vella received her B.A. degree at Middlebury College (Middlebury, VT) in English and History; a M.S. degree from The Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism (New York, NY) in Journalism; a M.A. degree in Spanish from The City College of New York (New York, NY); and an M.Ed. degree in Counseling and Human Services and a graduate certificate in Women’s Studies from Lehigh University (Bethlehem, PA). She is currently a fourth year doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at Lehigh University; APA Minority Fellow Program MHSAS Pre-doctoral Policy Fellow; a United Nations Department of Public Information intern; lead writer and facilitator of the 55th Session on the Commission on the Status of Women’s Girl’s Statement; and a Global Public Health Advisor to the International University Center Haiti (Uni Haiti). Her research interests include domestic and international mental and physical healthcare disparities in ethnic and racial minority populations including concomitant substance abuse and psychiatric issues and HIV/Hepatitis C risk behaviors (infectious disease) with special emphasis on psychological adjustment and resiliency in environments affected by war/poverty/natural disaster and the psychological aspects of international peace and war.
Nora Younes just graduated from Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina with her Bachelor’s in Arts. She is currently interning with the Office of Communications at SAMHSA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This is Nora’s third summer interning at SAMHSA. Her previous two summers she interned with the Immediate Office of the Administrator where she mostly worked on human capital projects.

Nora was born in Santiago, Chile and came to the United States when she was two months old. At Guilford, Nora was involved in coordinating the “Soy Un Lider” Conference. The “Soy Un Lider” Conference is a one day event to educate Latino youth on how to apply to higher education institutions regardless of their immigrant status. This is the first conference of its kind in the Piedmont/Triad Area.

Health communications is an essential part to informing, influencing and motivating the public on the importance of behavioral health programs SAMHSA provides. Some of our tasks include preparing request for proposals for grants from the many centers to help ensure financial resources to properly and efficiently run the varies programs. Additionally, organizing and facilitating interviews with the media to help expand public awareness to health related information. Furthermore, the department compiles weekly and nightly reports/updates on press releases and interactions between the office and reporters keeping a track on the flow of information.
Sarah Ndiangui is working in the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) at SAMHSA through HSHPS. Previously, Sarah participated in the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention fellowship program (2009-2010) with the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS). For this Fellowship, Sarah worked mainly on the State Prevention Framework- State Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG) process, and Co-facilitating training for sub-grantees. She also collaborated with Regional Prevention Coordinators on their lead projects such as suicide prevention, injury prevention, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) prevention, Stigma reduction, Underage Drinking prevention, and offered technical assistance to local programs on the State web-based Prevention Investment Planning and Reporting (PIPAR) system. She also assisted the ODADAS grant writer in researching information to develop text for Federal RFP’s.

Having grown up in a marginal community in Kenya, East Africa, where health care was not easily accessible; she developed a desire and passion to work in Health promotion and Education areas. In this position she is able to apply her experience in prevention and also learn about government systems and their role in the current health care reform.

**A Review of the STOP Act to Address Underage Drinking in the United States**

Mentor(s): Costella Green

Sober Truth on Preventing (STOP) Underage Drinking Act was signed into law on December 20, 2006. This law requires the Department of Health and Human Services to collect data and conduct research on short and long-term effect of alcohol on the adolescent brain, comprehensive community programs and strategies to prevent underage drinking, improved knowledge of the extent of the problem of underage drinking and progress made in prevention and treatment, and improved data collection on the consumption, brand preference and youth exposure to alcohol advertising. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) has taken the lead in this initiative to prevent underage drinking by funding STOP Act Block grants for community prevention programs. During this project research will also be on looking at the lessons learned, in addition to exploring progress and recommendations made from the first evaluation of the STOP Act Block grants.
Sadhana Chunduri is an HSHPS trainee in the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Originally from Cary, North Carolina, Sadhana obtained a Bachelor’s Degree in Biology from East Carolina University and a Master’s Degree in Public Health from the George Washington University. Her public health interests include substance abuse prevention, reproductive health, health disparities, and minority health. Over the past year, Sadhana has been working with the Whitman Walker Clinic to create, implement and evaluate a smoking cessation program for low-income, HIV-positive, minority patients in Ward 8 of Washington D.C. She has also been working at the George Washington University to improve their health outreach by creating and implementing nutrition, sexual health, and smoking cessation programs across campus. In her spare time, Sadhana enjoys singing, dancing, and traveling.

Mentor(s): Richard Moore

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) provides block grants to states to support them in their efforts to promote substance abuse and mental health disorder prevention and treatment. In response to the Affordable Care Act (ACA), SAMHSA has recently consolidated its block grant applications into one, comprehensive block grant for all substance abuse and mental health programs. Technical assistance will be provided to the Division of State Programs on the new SAMHSA block grant in North Carolina. The transition to the new block grant application and the influence of the ACA have provided states with the opportunity to improve their strategies for addressing substance abuse prevention and mental health issues in their communities. Research conducted will determine how specific states’ programs reflect such changes and a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis conducted on North Carolina’s substance abuse and mental health programs and policies will enable comparison between it and other states. Research will include an analysis of the transformation of the block grant to highlight substance abuse prevention among communities of need and the states’ program and policy responses to this transformation.
TARAH GRIEP
MPH

Tarah Grieb’s experience of growing up in a blended Mexican-American family, combined with her academic and extracurricular interest in racial/ethnic disparities in maternal and child health, compelled her to apply to the SAMHSA traineeship through HSHPS. Tarah received a BA in International Development Studies with minors in Spanish and Latin American Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

In San Diego, Tarah established the San Ysidro Maternal and Child Health Center’s first Family Resource Center, a place where families can access information on healthy foods, exercise and enroll in the federal aid programs needed to achieve a healthier lifestyle. Working with the Latino population further inspired her to pursue a Masters in Public Health.

While in graduate school at UCLA, Tarah served as Chair of Research and Evaluation for a sexual health education program called ‘Sex and Cookies,’ Co-Chair of the Students of Color for Public Health mentorship program and Co-President of the Public Health Student Association.

As a public health professional, I hope to expose the Latino community’s assets and contribute to a healthier and empowered community.

Health communications is an essential part to informing, influencing and motivating the public on the importance of behavioral health programs SAMHSA provides. Some of the tasks include, preparing request for proposals for grants from the many centers, organizing and facilitating interviews with the media, compile weekly and nightly reports/updates on press releases and interactions between the office and reporters.

Interns facilitate press conferences hosted by the many centers at SAMHSA and update senior SAMHSA staff on SAMHSA’s weekly news coverage, which includes radio, television, print and documentaries where a SAMHSA staff or data is cited.
Wilmarie Hernández was born the oldest of three siblings in Caguas, Puerto Rico. She knew writing was her passion from a young age, but began studying Civil Engineering at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez Campus. She chose to switch gears and is now a journalism student at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus with a minor in public relations & advertising.

Her work as a journalist for the University of Puerto Rico newspaper, Diálogo, also gave her the experience of connecting with people, interact with governmental officials, and write about a wide variety of topics including health, politics, culture and environment.

Wilmarie participated in the HACU National Internship Program in 2009 and 2010 in Washington, DC. During these internships Wilmarie learned about health issues, and collaborated with the Recovery Month Campaign.

Wilmarie Hernández enjoys reading, traveling and connecting with other cultures.

**SAMHSA/Center for Substance Abuse Treatment/Consumer Affairs**

Duties at the Consumer Affairs Office consisted of revising Spanish translated 2011 Recovery Month informational materials, this provides culturally accurate event information for non-English speaking Hispanics/Latinos. Workloads also include working with the SWIFT System as a Gatekeeper for the Consumer Affairs Office and attending meetings and lectures. To supplement the translations, attendance to 2011 Recovery Month campaign related meetings, assist in the recording process of Road to Recovery Public Services TV shows and PSA's is also required. This is all done along side working on the Road to Recovery Month e-newsletter for the 2011 Recovery Month Planning Partners, sending out 2011 Recovery Month campaign materials and communicating with national non profit organization’s staff.
The Administrative Management of Public Health Organization is creating a database for travel documents, updating many official documents for travel. This also includes changing and creating travelers files, which requires several copies. They are participating in the process of scrutiny for the HHS travel area and creating an official document for the Agency. The organization requires an update on the database about the SAMHSA offices and it offers a tutorial class for its employees about how to use the new documents and database.
21 year-old Yashira Marie Valentin Gonzalez was born in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. She spent part of her childhood on the border of Tennessee and Kentucky due to her father’s Army placement there. Once back in Puerto Rico, she enrolled in a Pre-Business Administration Curriculum High School in order to develop as a Business Leader. She now attends the University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez campus where she is finishing her studies in Human Resources, Marketing and getting certified in the Future Teacher Program. Yashira’s goal is to become a Human Resource professional and expand her knowledge in areas where she can work with people directly.

Yashira strongly feels she has already started to make her way into the future she desires. She has a wonderful partner that has given her the opportunity of helping him raise his daughter and son. She hopes to keep developing professionally in order to achieve her life goals.

**Investigation Requests**

**Mentor(s): Adriana Medina**

The Office of Management, Technology and Operations /Division of Management Services helps new and current employees to be processed. This includes a background investigation, which requires the employee to be fingerprinted before they acquire their badges. The office also helps determine the budget for the employee investigation process so that all of the budget requests are accurate and within the requested line of money granted. The office began a new project of creating a database for easier managing of confidential employee information. For daily procedures to run smoothly, editing of official documentation in order to organize and prepare it is required.
The HSHPS/VA Student Training Program The VA Training Program places the trainee at a variety of VA Medical Centers, Healthcare Care Systems Offices, and research centers throughout the U.S. The goal of the 10 week paid traineeship is to increase the trainee's overall knowledge of healthcare equity issues amongst veterans, to provide the necessary tools needed to enhance trainees' career in the health field, and to increase the overall understanding of the VA's services. Current projects focus on areas such as patient safety, management assistance, cardiac cancer study, medical administration, and community health education.

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**Government Liaison:**
Durodgio Peterson

**Program Mentors:**
Lt. Col. Jolisa W. Dudley
Sharon Valente, PhD, APRN, CNS
Angela Albright, PhD, RN
Sheila Miller
Susan K. Burke
Michelle Steinwand
David L. Vesely, MD, PhD
James Chung, MPH
Johnny Quinones
Having parents who migrated from Mao, Valverde in the Dominican Republic, Alana Peralta is a first generation Latina from New York City. She is an MPH-Health Policy and Management candidate at New York Medical College. At a very young age she was exposed to the hardships of Alzheimer’s disease through her father’s Dimentia diagnosis. She became passionate with being able to make a difference in the life of those affected by Alzheimer’s disease.

She graduated from Binghamton University, with a Bachelors of Science in Human Development. Alana is a member of Hermandad de Sigma Iota Alpha, Inc, an organization that encourages awareness of the Latino culture, academic excellence and achievements among women. Through her organization she was able to bring to workshops on Alzheimer’s disease, Child Brides, March of Dimes, and Organ Trafficking to the student body.

Her main focus now is to continue to care for her father while finishing up her last year at New York Medical College. She hopes to continue onto a PhD in the near future.
Chelsea Frost is pursuing her M.S. in the College of Medicine at the University of South Florida and is a research technician on Dr. David Vesely’s research team that is exploring cardiac peptide hormones and their potential inhibition on the VEGF pathway in prostate and pancreatic cancer cells.

Chelsea holds a Bachelors degree in Biomedical Science with minors in both Public Health and Biomedical Physics from the University of South Florida. She completed two thesis projects, “Anatomy of a Concussion” and “The Role of Epicene Reference in Editorials and Collegiate Writings”. The first consisted of a literature review to explore the anatomical and functional effects of sports-related mild traumatic brain injuries, while the second utilized student-based participatory research to examine potential trends in pronoun usage as compared to data collected in 1999.

Chelsea was born in Dade City, Florida, with her father from Indonesia and mother from Florida. In her free time, Chelsea enjoys spending time with her niece and nephew as well as actively competing with the University of South Florida’s swim team.

Inhibition of VEGF and VEGF Receptor by Four Cardiac Peptides  
Mentor(s): Dr. David L. Vesely, MD, PhD

Vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) is a glycoprotein that plays an essential role throughout tumor development by helping blood vessels establish and grow into tumors. Growth of human tumors depends on formation of new blood vessel and VEGF helps control this process via inducing new capillaries to sprout from pre-existing blood vessels (i.e. angiogenesis). The present investigation was designed to determine if four cardiac hormones, i.e. long-acting natriuretic peptide (LANP), vessel dilator, kaliuretic peptide, and atrial natriuretic peptide (ANP), which each have anticancer effects, inhibit VEGF. VEGF has its cancer growth enhancing effects via stimulating Ras-MEK 1/2-ERK 1/2 kinase cascade while cardiac hormones strongly inhibit (95-98% inhibition) the Ras-MEK 1/2-ERK 1/2 kinase cascade. With the use of human pancreatic adenocarcinoma cells and human prostate adenocarcinoma cells, the present investigation examines whether the hormones also inhibit an early step before this kinase cascade, i.e. VEGF.
Edith Gamboa is a MPH—Health Policy graduate from George Washington University. She has an undergraduate degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara in Business Economics and Spanish with an emphasis Accounting. After her undergraduate work at UCSB, she moved to Washington, DC where she volunteered at the Children’s National Medical Center on the Project Health Staff as a Family Help Desk Advisor, and with the ISCOPES program at a group home of mentally disabled women. She continued to work with the National Hispanic Medical Association in the Government Affairs Office as a liaison for Congress and other advocacy organizations working to improve Latino health. Edith continued her public service with the Federal Government, first as an Accountant and Finance Officer, and then as a Publications Editor and Project Manager in global health issues. Edith is extremely interested in working to improve health care access for minorities and increasing the efficiency of the health care system nationally.

**Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing: Department of Veterans Affairs, Greater Los Angeles Cohort**

Mentor(s): Sharon Valente, PhD, APRN, CNS; Angela Albright, PhD, RN

Due the ever-changing environment of health care, it is essential for all professional staff to keep abreast on the latest information and technology for better and more efficient care. Registered nurses represent the largest occupation in the healthcare sector, and in order to address the issue of best practices in this essential workforce, nurses must be up to date in their knowledge of new evidence-based findings. Evidence-based practice aims to outline the research and findings that will positively impact practice to increase patients’ health, efficiencies, and safety. This project was developed in the Department of Veterans Affairs, Greater Los Angeles Medical Center, Department of Nursing Research and Education. It aims to quantify the use and knowledge of evidence-based practice in nurses in the Los Angeles area. Having a baseline of current knowledge, use, and attitudes will enable the Nursing Education Staff to address the deficiencies and develop more training and acceptance of evidence-based practice.
In 2006, Gilda Cornejo became the first member of her family to earn a college degree. An alumnus from the University of Texas at San Antonio, she major in Health. Community outreach and volunteering became passions of hers after paring up with organizations such as V.O.I.C.E.S., the Physical Therapy Social and Alpha Phi Omega.

She has been employed by: Laredo Community College, University of Texas at San Antonio, AmeriCorps – Texas Medical Rangers, Texas A & M International, and Department of Veterans Affairs. She has also participated in internship programs, HACU and HSHPS. Gilda has been an intern for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VHA) in Columbia, MO from Summer 2010 through December 2010. In March 2011, she was placed with the Department of Veterans Affairs (Central Office) in Washington DC with the department of Veterans Affairs Learning University (VALU).

She is currently working on her Master's degree in Public Administration with a concentration in Health Administration from Texas A & M International University in Laredo, Texas.

The Department of Veterans Affairs – Veterans Affairs Learning University (VALU) – Communications Team
Mentor(s): Jolisa Dudley, Lisa Allison-Lee.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is the second largest government department and helps in the aiding of veterans by providing certain services and benefits. Clerical and logistical task for the Leadership Veterans Affairs (LVA) programs help aid in the preparing of the men and women serving the VA department. Event set up for the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) program enabled thousands of PMF finalists to attend a job fair in the Washington DC convention center to meet and interview with all the branches of VA. An article describing the job fair for the VA's magazine, Vanguard followed up the event. The smooth operation of Veterans Affairs Learning University (VALU) was enabled by the completion of different tasks such as ordering supplies, contacting vendors, event set up, event planning and other logistical needs.
Héctor Julio Robles-García was born in Bayamón, Puerto Rico. Hector first earned an Associates Degree in Natural Sciences at the University of Puerto Rico, Bayamón Campus. He then pursued a Bachelor’s degree in Social Anthropology at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras campus. Hector is currently at the University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Campus in a Master’s in Public Health Education program.

His main research interests are sexual health, cultural competence, community work, and studies of the LGBT population. Hector has worked as a researcher, interviewer and caller in research related to those interests. Most of these investigations were related to sexually transmitted infections and risky sexual practices. Hector is currently working on an investigation called Código de Barra. This research focuses on relationships between sexual practices and gender. Hector’s thesis project focuses on male sex work in Puerto Rico.

Hector is also an experienced hand bell choir director and avid flute player.

**Determine and Improve Access Measures for Patients**

*Mentor(s): Shella Miller*

Access to health services is one of the essential parts to eliminate inequities in health. Programs in favor of access to health services are an important part of running hospitals. That’s why hospitals like James A. Haley for Veterans, do their best to provide access and service to their patients. The James A. Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa provides space to create new and better alternatives accessible to their patients. Thus, this hospital has the professionals in this area to improve access to hundreds of veterans who come to this hospital. These professionals provide follow up to patients about his upcoming appointments. The problem is that dozens of patients not attending appointments after registering in the system. Some of them say they do not want or need the service. It’s that this project based on the access sought to establish the reasons for this. The main idea is that the survey is give to us the main reasons for what some patients choose not to return. This result may improve access for these patients in a very near future.
James Leopore is a student pursuing a master's degree in Health and Medical Policy at George Mason University. His focus is the application of technology to ensure that health care practitioners are performing effectively. He has written short papers discussing the financial and legal implications of video records for medical procedures, and alternative licensure schemes for primary care practitioners.

Outside of the healthcare industry, he has tutored math and statistics for a private school, done quality control for a bottle factory, and organized a walking tour in the Everglades. He is an actuarial candidate with two exams completed, and has a B.A. in Classical Studies from the University of Florida.

James is originally from South Florida, and is an electronics hobbyist, interested in computer vision and motion capture technologies. He has produced award-winning entries in competitions sponsored by Microsoft and Freescale.

**Goalpost: a system for managing the follow-up process for patient safety issues.**

Mentor(s): Susan K. Burke

The VA investigates all incidents affecting the safety of patients and staff, in order to identify and correct the root causes of serious problems. Potential failure modes of current processes are also regularly investigated in order to identify latent hazards. The findings of these reports include corrective actions to be taken, and outcome measures to ensure adequate progress. Getting usable data about the actions and outcome measures is currently difficult and time-consuming, often involving informal contact with involved parties by telephone and email. Goalpost is a system that formalizes and automates much of the follow up process using VBA. Data can be imported from local or national databases, worksheets can be created for team members to mark their progress in achieving their assigned outcomes, and scheduled reminders can be sent, using a control panel which performs these operations using Excel and Outlook. We solicited user requirements, identified shortcomings in the current process, and established performance measures to quantify improvements. Patterns in the resulting data might suggest changes in how responsibility is assigned within teams correcting patient safety issues.
Lorinet Martell-Martinez is from Añasco Puerto Rico. She completed a Bachelor’s degree in Sciences and is a candidate for a Master’s degree in Public Health with a specialty in Maternal and Child Health at the University of Puerto Rico. Lorinet works as a volunteer of the Night Health Intervention with the Homeless Program in San Juan, and Woman Violence Prevention Program of Woman and Health Center from the University of Puerto Rico.

She has been a researcher and a collaborator of several studies conducted at the Maternal and Child Health program at the University of Puerto Rico including “Hispanic Religious Leaders’ HIV/AIDS Knowledge: Milestones to Fight the Epidemic among Hispanics” and various others. Her thesis examines the influence of the religious beliefs in the prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections among Puerto Rican adolescents.

Among her research topics of interest are: maternal and child health, STD prevention, religion and health, health disparities among minorities and global health. After she completes her Master’s degree, one of her goals is to pursue a Doctoral degree in the health field.

**Patient Education for New BeneTravel Payment Process**  
**Mentor(s):** Shelia Miller, Michelle Steinwand, Susan Burke

Patient education is one of the key elements to produce a healthy hospital environment. However patient transportation plays a major role in patients accessing healthcare. Often times patients may no show or cancel appointments due to travel related issues. VA currently provides mileage reimbursement payments to eligible patients that have to come in for their scheduled medical appointments and is exploring options to move towards automatic bank transfer or mailed out checks. The aim of this project is to explore patient’s perception concerning the change of this process, to develop an appropriate educational campaign for these patients and to identify any impacts on patients due to the change. The first phase of the project include to develop and administer a questionnaire. This will help us in learning about the patients’ concerns with the current process. Then, when the information is recollected and analyzed, an educational campaign about the new process will be developed. Finally, a second educational campaign will be created, to prevent the misuse of this patient’s benefit with the purpose of maximize the hospital’s resources and the improvement of patient services.
MEHRA NAMIRANIAN
BS CANDIDATE

Mehra Namiranian is a senior undergraduate public health student at the University of Washington. She was born and raised by Persian parents in Seattle, WA. Mehra grew up speaking Farsi, and speaks Spanish and French also. During her time at the UW, she dedicated three years as a Jumpstart corps member, preparing children attending preschool in low-income neighborhoods for school success. She has traveled all over the world, from India, to Costa Rica, Guatemala, Ecuador, and Mexico, participating in volunteer work, study, and internships. During her most recent travel experience, she went with the UW public health study abroad program, CIMAS, and stayed in Ecuador for eight months. She was first educated on the health care systems in Ecuador, and then completed an internship working in an Ecuadorian hospital, learning about the traditional and alternative methods of health care. During her free time, Mehra likes to play volleyball, tennis, and go hiking. Currently she is pursuing her love for dance at the University of Washington, obtaining a dance minor and public health major.

Suicide Prevention Program
Mentors: Susan Burke, Michelle Steinwand

Patient safety is an increasingly high priority in health care. Crucial to the improvement of patient safety are tools to investigate system vulnerabilities. One such tool, root cause analysis (RCA), has become the backbone of patient safety efforts within the Veterans Health Administration. An RCA is used to systematically investigate an event to find and correct root causes to prevent reoccurrence. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) also uses aggregate RCAs to examine multiple cases simultaneously in a single review for certain categories of events. The aggregate RCA tool is used to identify trends and systems issues across groupings of similar events, thereby supporting process and systems improvements. The process consists of steps to comprehensively analyze a priority high-risk process, select a focus for improvement, and design and evaluate critical interventions. Coordinating and leading performance improvement groups such as Root Cause Analysis to help reduce healthcare performance gaps. Other responsibilities include collecting and analyzing data, reports to benchmark and improve healthcare safety.
Born in Puerto Rico, Odalys M. Crespo, is currently living in Laredo, TX. She earned her BA in Philosophy at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus. She is currently working towards a Master’s degree in Spanish Language and Literature at Texas A&M International University. Her area of interest in language is in Carribean Literature, Philosophy of Language, and the different aspects the same language can have amongst different Spanish-speaking cultures.

Having worked for three years in the Administration Department of a Community Health Center, she started to become more aware of the help that the underserved population needs, especially by living in a border town, South Texas. Coming from Puerto Rico and being exposed to health care need in a different way has made her understand and comprehend a lot more about what people need to do and work on to help the underserved Hispanic population. Based on her experiences, she has decided to start a Master Degree in Public Health and is now in the process of researching for recognized schools in that area.

**Improving Quality of Care through Patient Satisfaction Surveys**

*Mentor: Sheilla Miller*

Customer Service is one of the keys to health care. As we move to involve the patient and their family in care and operations of the facility, a Patient Satisfaction Survey will address major needs from a specific area. This project will utilize the survey process to collect data, suggestions, and concerns the patients may have. The information will be used in the hospital setting, in order to analyze data trends and recommend improvement actions. The study’s data will give an overview of the needs of the hospital and will work towards an improvement within the patient treatment areas.
Tahimina Popal is Nursing student at George Mason University, located in Fairfax, Virginia and a research intern at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Los Angeles, California. She’s working on several research projects but her main focus is “Health Effects of Exposure to Second Hand Smoke.” Tahimina is part of SNA (Student Nurses Association) and AAMP (Afghan American Medical Professionals).

Tahimina was born and raised in Kabul, Afghanistan until 2001, when she had to leave the country because of war. She has lived in a war torn country for 11 years and has seen the lack of medical professionals and devices, factors which have motivated her to pursue a career in the medical field. She speaks five languages which include: Pashto, Farsi, Urdu, English and Spanish and wants to put the languages to use one day as a traveling nurse. In her free time, Tahimina likes to read and play volleyball and on holidays, she likes to volunteer at the Leewood Adult Care Center.
The U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Health Fellowship Program is based at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. One trainee will be placed at UTHSCSA’s extended campus in Laredo while another will be placed at the extended campus in Harlingen. Past trainees participated in an EPA project called Teach Back, Reach Out: Professionally-trained Environmental Ambassadors for Community Health (PEACHes) and will be part of the PEACHes research team. Some trainees may be involved in developing and implementing teaching and evaluation materials designed to teach promotoras (lay community health workers) about asthma and how to manage their environment to limit asthma triggers.

Both the Laredo trainee and the Harlingen trainee will serve a ten week paid fellowship working with a faculty mentor. Trainees and mentors will collaborate on projects that include the cultivation of experiences highlighting the interdependence of the U.S. and Mexican public health systems in the Border region, and the fellow’s participation in a range of Border-related leadership and educational opportunities.

Trainees will also participate in workshops throughout the summer, which will allow them to gain first hand knowledge of major health challenges that confront public health workers in this region. Among these are obesity, tuberculosis, diabetes, and zoonotic diseases. In addition, trainees will have the opportunity to visit clinics, health departments and hospitals on both sides of the border, and spend time with families in colonias, or underserved and underdeveloped communities.

We would like to thank the following for their support:

Principle Investigator:
Claudia Miller, MD, MS

Program Support Staff:
Pat Bortoni
Stella Oveda
Noe Garza, DDS, MPH

Program Mentors:
Roger Perales, MPH, RS
Rodolfo Rincon, MD, MPH
Claudia S. Miller, MD, MS
Beatriz Tapia, MD, MPH
CHAITY NAIK

Born in Mumbai, India, Chaity Naik has lived in the U.S. for 13 years. She possesses Bachelor of Arts degrees in both Sociology and Journalism, and a Masters of Public Health degree in International Health. She is interested in environmental epidemiology because that type of work gives her the opportunity to monitor areas; design surveillance systems; and evaluate prevention programs.

Chaity’s ultimate goal is to pursue a career in environmental law that that uses the public health skills that she has gained to reduce disparities among Hispanics and promote a healthy environment. She believes that the skills attained through her participation in the HSHPS/U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Health Training Program will help her achieve those career goals.

Chaity hopes that her HSHPS experience will enhance her epidemiological, policy, and administration skills while also giving her the hands-on experience she needs to better understand and directly benefit the Hispanic population along the Texas-Mexico border.
MEAGHAN SHERDAN
MPH CANDIDATE

From Rochester, MN, Meaghan Sherden is a MPH candidate in her final semester studying International Health and Development at Tulane University in New Orleans. She received her Bachelors of Individualized Studies in Spanish, Latin American Studies and Public Health from the University of Minnesota.

Meaghan participated in many community outreach groups at the University of Minnesota, which led her to volunteering at clinics that serve the Hispanic population of Minneapolis and St. Paul. In New Orleans, Meaghan is a volunteer for NO/AIDS Task Force, where she is a HIV tester and counselor. She participates in outreach events especially focusing on high-risk groups. Her main areas of interest/research are HIV/AIDS prevention, environmental health and health disparities. As an HSHPS Trainee, she has had a key role in the finalization of the IRB application and in the development of teaching aids for promotoras (lay health workers) in South Texas.

Health Education Piece on Autism for Promotoras and Families living in Cameron and Hidalgo County
Mentor(s): Claudia S. Miller, MD, MS; Beatriz Tapia, MD, MPH

It has been hypothesized that the lower rates of Autism among Hispanic schoolchildren in Texas is due to the under diagnoses of Autism within this population. The goal of this health education piece is to increase the community’s knowledge of Autism within the Cameron and Hidalgo County by providing the families with culturally and educationally tailored information. Importance needs to be placed on making the health education piece simple, having one clear message, repetition of important information and be at a basic reading level. Given that early diagnosis is key, the main focus of the piece will be on warning signs at each age, starting at age one. Other focuses will be on a general description of what Autism is, what to do if the parent suspects their child has Autism and resources available for families. Since the objective of this piece is to benefit the community, focus groups will be formed including parents, promotoras and other community members to review the health education piece and ask for their input. Promotoras will be the disseminators of this health education piece because of this they will also receive additional information so they can answer questions families or individuals have on Autism. Involving the community will create investment and further the aim of increasing Autism awareness in Cameron and Hidalgo County.
FRONTERA: FOCUSING RESEARCH ON THE BORDER AREA IN TUCSON, AZ

FRONTERA: Focusing Research on the Border Area is based at the University of Arizona, College of Medicine/Arizona Hispanic Center of Excellence. This unique 10-week paid training internship provides an increased understanding of public health along the U.S.-Mexico border through practical hands-on training, role model mentoring and collaboration, and building networking skills in a supportive environment. Each FRONTERA trainee is matched, according to the trainee’s area of interest, with a faculty mentor whose research has an impact on border health.

We would like to thank the following for their support:

Principle Investigator:
Ana Maria Lopez, MD

Program Support Staff:
Oscar Beita, MD, MPH
Alma Aguirre

Program Mentors:
Celia Valenzuela, MD
Horacio Rilo, MD
Renee Cercone
Irene Valdes Wochinger is from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Having been an advocate for women’s reproductive health, her mother’s death from cancer when Irene was six inspired her career goals.

A Carson Carr Diversity Scholar Fellow, Irene is continuing her doctoral studies in Anthropology and the School of Public Health at UAlbany with the mentoring of Dr. Lawrence M. Schell.

After receiving a Fulbright grant, she conducted a cross-sectional study on individual and socio-environmental factors influencing utilization of maternal healthcare among indigenous women in the small cities and highlands of Oaxaca and Chiapas. Irene also volunteered as a research consultant for the non-for-profit organizations Grupo de Estudios de la Mujer Rosario Castellanos and Global Alliance Pediatrics.

Irene’s long-term goals are to be a professor and to conduct research in areas that most impact the well-being of vulnerable communities and address health inequities through health policies and health education. She also wishes to be a role model and mentor to other underrepresented students interested in serving as health professionals.

**Characterization of Women Receiving Blood Transfusions for Heavy Uterine Bleeding and Comparison to Women Receiving Treatment in a Clinic Setting**

Mentor(s): Dr. Celia Valenzuela

Women with heavy uterine bleeding often present emergently with severe anemia requiring transfusion of blood products and hospitalization. In order to prevent and reduce the disparity between women seeking emergent care and those seeking care in a clinic, a comparison must be made of these two groups of women. This retrospective cohort study will identify demographic characteristics of women treated emergently at University Medical Center with blood transfusions for severe anemia secondary to uterine bleeding, compared to those treated for heavy vaginal bleeding in clinic at the Women’s Health and Resource Center at UMC. The purpose of this study is to identify healthcare disparities between these two groups of women. It will determine whether women who seek care emergently are of a lower socioeconomic position. Identification and characterization of women seeking care emergently for heavy uterine bleeding will inevitably lead to better management of this group of women. The ultimate goal of this study is to provide data that will support a grant to offer women, who otherwise cannot afford care, treatment in a non-emergent setting.
JOHN JARCZYK
MD CANDIDATE

Raised in Phoenix, AZ John “JP” Jarczyk attended the University of Notre Dame where he majored in Math and Spanish. He studied abroad in Santiago, Chile, and after graduating, accepted a position as a Jesuit Volunteer in Tacna, Perú. He taught English and math to at Colegio Miguel Pro.

Upon returning to the U.S, JP began teaching high school science, middle school math, and Spanish in Nogales and Phoenix Arizona. Having decided to pursue medicine, he also began volunteering as a Spanish interpreter at a mobile health clinic for uninsured patients.

Upon getting married, JP returned to Tacna, Peru with his wife in 2009 to volunteer at the small clinic located in same neighborhood where he lived before. He then returned to begin medical school at the University of Arizona. He is currently the patient coordinator at Shubitz Family Clinic which is run by medical students and serves uninsured patients. JP also volunteers at a small first aid station set up by the Kino Border Initiative in Nogales, Sonora that serves deported migrants.

Comparing Outcomes: Total Pancreatectomy with Autologous Islet Cell Transplant (AIT) Versus Total Pancreatectomy without Transplant

A total pancreatectomy (TP) is a last option for chronic pancreatitis (CP) patients seeking permanent pain relief. A TP will affect alpha cell production of glucagon and beta cell production of insulin, which can cause the patient to become a brittle diabetic. By isolating the islet cells and infusing them into the liver, this side effect can theoretically be avoided or minimized. Pre-surgery charts were reviewed for CP patients who have had a TP with AIT and for patients who had only a TP through the Comprehensive Center for Chronic Pancreatitis at the University of Arizona. The post-surgery hospitalizations and Emergency Department (ED) visits were then compared for the two groups. The result showed that the TP only patients had a shorter hospitalization for the procedure but came back to the hospital much longer post-surgery hospitalization and ED visits than the AIT patients. While private insurers cover the cost of AIT, Medicare and Medicaid do not despite the numerous publications that demonstrate it to be medically effective. AIT should also be considered a cost-effective procedure.
FRONTLINE EXPERIENCE IN TUCSON, AZ

Based at one of the HSHPS member institutions: University of Arizona, Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health, FRONTline introduces students to research activities that emphasize alleviating health disparities in Arizona-Sonora border communities with programs focused on chronic disease prevention through community advocacy and the dissemination of effective interventions targeting obesity and diabetes prevention. In association with Arizona Prevention Research Center (APRC), the FRONTline trainees will benefit from extensive research focusing on border health, hands-on training, world-renown research faculty, and local and regional groups and individuals affecting the outcomes of public health.

We would like to thank the following for their support:

**Principle Investigator:**
Cecilia Rosales, MD

**Program Support Staff:**
Jillian de Zapien
Cazandra Zaragoza, MPH Candidate

**Program Mentors:**
Raquel Rubio-Goldsmith, PhD
Anna Ochoa O’Leary, PhD
Luis Torrens is an MPH Candidate at CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College, concentrating on health policy and management. He earned his Bachelor’s degree in Art history from Syracuse University in 2009.

For the past two years, Luis has been actively involved in obesity-related projects and research. He served as Project Coordinator for Housing as an Obesity Mediating Environment (HOME), which works to understand how residential characteristics affect physical activity and eating habits in Latinos in the Bronx. He has also been working to collect data on street vendors in the Bronx in an effort to better understand the food available to the residents versus those of the borough. Both projects aim to strengthen the notion of how impacting an environment can affect health.

**Protocol Development for the Standardization of Identification and Processing of Undocumented border crossing bodies along the U.S.-Mexico Border**

*Mentor(s): Raquel Rubio-Goldsmith, PhD*

Deaths on the U.S.-Mexico border persist despite measures to deter unauthorized border crossing such as Operation Gatekeeper in California and Operation Hold the Line in Texas. It is estimated that 3,000 to 5,600 migrants have died on the border since 1994; that is approximately 300 to 800 bodies a year. These total deaths are of humanitarian and public health concern. This current project with the collaboration of the Binational Migration Institute and the University of Arizona is creating a best practice remain protocol. The goal will be to create a model of standardizing the counting, identification, and processing of the deceased undocumented border crossers (UBCs) in the U.S. counties bordering Mexico. Data will be collected from the medical examiners of the 44 counties on the border, through the use of surveys to interview medical examiners, coroners, and other pertinent officials. This data will be used to compile a “best practice” handbook that will be used in the expert training of those who engaged in the process and increase the identification and return of the remains to their family.
Zoila Carolina Sanchez obtained a Bachelor’s degree from Stony Brook University in Psychology and Women’s Studies. Upon graduating, she worked at Urban Health Plan, a community health center located in the South Bronx, New York for two years as Assistant to the Director and Health & Wellness Coordinator for the Institute for the Advancement of Community Health.

Zoila joined the MPH program with a concentration in Health Behavior and Health Promotion at the UA Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health. Zoila’s area of interests include working with populations in the U.S.-Mexico border region, and border health and human rights advocacy. Zoila works as a Graduate Research Assistant for the Communities Putting Prevention to Work in Pima County, a national initiative led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Zoila aspires to further her education with a graduate degree in Law, where she can combine this expertise with Public Health. Her long-term goal is to advocate for the improvement of health outcomes of populations needing considerably more attention in the U.S.-Mexico border region.

**Binational Migration Institute Pilot Study: Child Well-being in U.S. Mixed Immigrant Status Households: A Community Assessment**

*Mentors: Dr. Anna O’leary and Dr. Raquel Rubio-Goldsmith*

Previous unsuccessful immigration enforcement policies such as California’s Proposition 187 in 1994 and Arizona’s Senate Bill 1070, signed into law April 2010, generate concerns over their health and social implications on immigrant communities. Laws that target the livelihood of undocumented immigrants lead to an intensified political climate of exclusion and fear. Furthermore, mixed-status households face many challenges as members of both documented and undocumented status. This pilot project intends to bring attention to the impact immigration laws have on the well-being of family members residing within mixed-immigrant status households, with an emphasis on children. Furthermore, the study aims to further understand the ways that the implementation of harsh immigration policies can lead to unintended consequences on the utilization of health care services for those entitled to accessing them, particularly for citizen children. Using a community-based participatory action approach, focus groups will be conducted with parents of children and youth in the Tucson immigrant community in efforts to identify and contextualize important socio economic factors that affect household migration and settlement. A content analysis of the testimonials will provide baseline data for a future comprehensive study.
DISEASE SPECIFIC TRAINING PROGRAMS

CANCER PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

The HSHPS/Cancer Prevention and Control Program is either a nine-week internship or six month fellowship based at the University of Puerto Rico, Graduate School of Public Health, Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences. This program provides trainees with an increased understanding of cancer prevention and control through practical hands-on experience regarding cancer research, community outreach, preventive clinical practice, seminars and workshops. The traineeship specifically focuses on Hispanics, with a special emphasis on health disparities in Puerto Ricans and other Hispanic populations.

Each trainee is matched with a research mentor based on his/her area(s) of interest. The trainee will assist his/her mentor with various aspects of a specific project. Examples of potential research projects include: knowledge and attitudes toward Human Papillomavirus Vaccination (HPV), seroprevalence of HPV, hepatitis C epidemiology, insulin resistance and risk of endometrial cancer, epigenetics of colorectal cancer, and breast and cervical cancer screening.

We would like to thank the following for their support:

Principle Investigator:
Ana Patricia Ortiz, MPH, PhD

Program Mentors:
Vivian Colón López, PhD, MPH
Ana Patricia Ortiz, MPH, PhD

Program Support Staff:
Vivian Colón López, PhD, MPH
Marievelisse Soto Salgado
Lisa Martinez grew up in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and graduated from Harvard University with a B.A. in Biological Anthropology. After college, she worked as a medical writer for the Surgery Department at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons. She was actively involved in developing a wound-specific patient education program and writing both grant proposals and scientific articles.

She then pursued a Master’s of Public Health in Social and Behavioral Sciences at the Yale School of Public Health. For her MPH thesis, Lisa studied the relationship between diabetes-specific self-efficacy and diabetes self-care behaviors and glycemic control in a population of Hispanics taking part in a community-based diabetes education program.

Lisa is currently a medical student at the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine. She has a great interest in women’s health, particularly in sexual and reproductive health issues, and plans to practice as an obstetrician/gynecologist in Puerto Rico, a specialty which is greatly needed on the island.

**Triple-Negative Tumor Sub-Type as a Predictor of Metastasis in a Hospital-Based Sample of Breast Cancer Patients in Puerto Rico**

Mentor(s): Ana Patricia Ortiz Martinez, PhD, MPH

During the summer, the UPR Comprehensive Cancer Center in San Juan, PR is running a study entitled “Anogenital HPV Infection in a Population-Based Sample of Puerto Rican Women,” funded by the NIGMS (NIH). The study’s goal is to establish the prevalence and knowledge of HPV infection in a sample of women from the San Juan metro area. Census tracts were used to identify communities that are representative of the social and demographic characteristics of the population of the general metropolitan and once these communities are chosen, smaller segments are randomly chosen for us to canvas. Recruitment is then done door-to-door and during interviews, basic demographic, socio-economic, and health information is assessed. During this interview, more elaborate health information is also provided about HPV infection. A second project is a secondary analysis of data collected from a local public cancer care hospital. Breast cancer prognosis and treatment can be predicted by tumor subtype. With this analysis, the aim is to examine the relationship between breast cancer tumor sub-type and other clinical factors with the development of metastasis.
Precious Ann Ventura Fortes grew up in Stockton, CA and graduated with University honors in Anthropology from Johns Hopkins University. She then completed her Masters in Health Science at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

During her undergraduate years, Precious volunteered at “Mi Espacio,” a teen pregnancy prevention program sponsored by the Baltimore City Health Department as a Líderes mentor. Through the program she developed a deeper understanding of the disparities that existed within the Hispanic community. Precious then started working as the Education Coordinator for Mi Espacio and translated for Hispanic families at the Family Planning Clinic. She was also involved with the Hispanic pre-health honors society at Hopkins and received a research grant from the Johns Hopkins Urban Health Institute to further understand the mental health and social issues faced by Hispanic youth in Baltimore.

In her graduate studies Precious worked along side Hispanic youth to produce a short documentary focusing on education disparities in the city of Baltimore.

Precious aspires to be a future physician, medical anthropologist and public health researcher.

Prevalence of Abnormal Cytology and Risk Factors Associated in HIV+/HIV- Women Attending an STD Clinic in Puerto Rico

Mentor(s): Vivian Colón López, PhD, MPH, Ana Patricia Ortiz, MPH, PhD

A disproportionately higher burden of HIV/AIDS has been observed among minority populations, including Puerto Ricans. Co-infection with HIV may increase the risk of cervical cancer, as immunosuppression may compromise the ability of the host to clear the HPV infection. It is important to develop this study in a high-risk setting such as an STD clinic, in order to translate the findings of this study in the development of effective clinical practice among HIV+ women and women at high-risk of HIV infection.

Specific aims of this study are: (1) To describe the prevalence of abnormal cervical cytology in a sample of women 21 years and older attending a STD clinic in PR; (2) describe cervical cancer screening practices and identify risk factors associated with increased odds of abnormal cervical cytology; and (3) describe the prevalence of HR-HPV genotyping. This application addresses the objectives of the PRCTRC by 1) supporting a new researcher; 2) creating a foundation for expanding research to health disparities, HIV/AIDS and cancer; 3) expanding the network of investigators from UPR, PSM and CCC and will 4) help in advance translational research in PR.
HIV/AIDS AND ASSOCIATED COMORBIDITIES IN THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER IN SAN DIEGO, CA & TIJUANA, MX

The HIV/AIDS and Associated Comorbidities in the U.S.-Mexico Border Fellowship began in summer 2007 and is based at the University of California, San Diego, Division of International Health and Cross-Cultural Medicine. The program can be either a three-month internship or six-month fellowship, depending on the trainee’s availability. The goal of this program is to train the next generation of Hispanic public health and biomedical researchers with expertise in substance abuse and its infectious disease consequences, especially HIV, viral hepatitis, TB, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in the U.S.-Mexico border region. The program targets those interested in research experiences in HIV/AIDS and related infections with Hispanic populations. Each trainee is matched with a UCSD principal mentor and together they will plan a research project and design a customized program of activities based on areas of interest and level of experience.

We would like to thank the following for their support:

**Principle Investigator:**
Maria Luisa Zuniga, PhD

**Program Support Staff:**
Justine Kozo, MPH
Fatima Muñoz, MD, MPH

**Program Mentor:**
Maria Luisa Zuniga, PhD
CARLOS ISLAS
MD

Dr. Carlos Islas, born in San Diego California and graduated from Xochicalco University, School of Medicine in Tijuana, Baja California. He completed his undergraduate studies in biology at the University of California, San Diego. Dr. Islas was the first in his family to become a medical practitioner. During his studies, he interned at the General Hospital in Tijuana, where he was able to obtain leadership skills, and serve as head chief of about 50 interns. He also participated in a research study that is currently being revised for publication in Mexico.

His interest in research dates back to when he was in his second year of medical school. He was able to do quantitative experiments through a paper related to sex workers with HIV-AIDS in Tijuana, B.C. Currently, he does community service in a semi-urbanized region in Tijuana and is working in an intervention study with people who abandon their treatment for tuberculosis.

Dr. Islas plans on continuing his work as a medical doctor while attaining more skills and expertise as an investigator.
Natasha Ludwig-Barron, a recent graduate from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University, earned a Masters of Public Health (MPH) in 2011. As an MPH candidate, she worked for CARE USA, Inc., a non-profit, global health organization that focuses on educating and empowering women in resource poor settings. Natasha was given the task of overseeing grant performance measures in seven countries. In her second year, she worked at the Emory Prevention Research Center (EPRC), where she focused on grant and data collection projects dedicated to eliminating cancer in Southwest, rural Georgia using community-based approaches. Prior to academia, she worked for the American Cancer Society, Los Angeles, as a Health Programs Manager and provided prevention and continuation of care cancer services in predominantly Latin communities. Natasha has a Bachelor of Science from University of California, Irvine, in Biology and Chicano/Latino Studies.

Natasha’s professional career plans include creating comprehensive national and state-based, culturally appropriate, disease prevention programs to serve Latinos and their surrounding networks.

**Examination of a continuum of sexual coercion and associated HIV risk behaviors in HIV-negative methamphetamine-using minority women in San Diego**

Mentor(s): Maria Luisa Zuniga, MD, PhD

Globally, HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death in women of reproductive age. Nationally, racial and ethnic disparities are evident among African American and Latino women who account for 80% of the AIDS cases, though they represent 25% of all women living in the U.S. Heterosexual sex continues to be the predominant mode of transmission for new HIV infections in women. Violence and the treat of violence can hinder a women’s ability to adequately protect themselves from HIV infection or assert healthy sexual decision-making. Currently, twelve qualitative interviews have been completed and more are underway in efforts to gain information on perceptions and experiences with female-initiated barrier methods as part of a UCSD research sub-study, out of the Division of Global Public Health. Through the information provided by HIV-negative women with a history of partner violence and methamphetamine use, a research question will be proposed and statistically tested from data collected during a prior baseline survey. These findings will be presented to UCSD researchers and HSHPS staff in December 2011 and will be submitted to conferences and/or peer-reviewed journals soon thereafter.
The Improving Diabetes Self Management in the Chicagoland Training Program is based at one of the HSHPS member institutions: The University of Illinois, Chicago College of Medicine. This program focuses on introducing students to clinical and translational research relevant to health issues within the Latino communities in the US. Led by top research investigators, trainee research will focus mainly on diabetes issues that affect the Latino community, but also cover topics ranging from “Hispanic/Latino Women’s Concerns Regarding Skin Care and Skin Cancer Prevention” to “Assessing Health Literacy Amongst Hispanic/Latinos”.

We would like to thank the following for their support:

**Principle Investigator:**
Jorge Girotti, PhD, MA

**Program Mentor:**
Ben Gerber, MD

**Program Support Staff:**
Juan Pablo Mosqueda, MPH
Lizette Rangel obtained a Bachelor of Science in Biology with a minor in Psychology from the University of Houston. This May, she finished her MPH program in the Division of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences with a concentration in Global Health at the University of Texas, School of Public Health.

Her interests include diabetes prevention and management, childhood obesity, health disparities, and global health. In addition to school, she worked as a Research Coordinator in the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine. Currently, Lizette is working on a bilingual diabetes intervention called “Sugar, Heart and Life” that includes a computerized telenovela and interactive games to help educate patients about diet, exercise, and medications.

Lizette looks forward to applying to the Dr.PH program and continuing her studies in various aspects of public health especially those affecting the Hispanic population.

**Pharmacists and Community Health Workers**

*Mentor(s): Ben Gerber, MD*

This summer the “HSHPS/HCOE-Diabetes in Chicagoland” at the University of Illinois in Chicago has an on going study on Pharmacists and Community Health Workers. The study that aims to improve diabetes management and thus reduce the current burden of Type II Diabetes in the African-American and Latino populations. One of the components of the study is a multimedia program called “Living Well with Diabetes.” This program will be used by the study’s community health workers as well in waiting room areas in the various Cook Country clinics in the Chicago area. The “Living Well with Diabetes” program will include animations, graphics, and narratives that will help educate viewers about diabetes and its management. The study works on narrative communication in diabetes management. Conducting interviews and editing them into narrative format are required to create the final narratives used in the program. The final goal is for these narratives to be culturally sensitive, language appropriate for the two targeted populations and ultimately improve the diabetes burden in these populations.
Perlita Carrillo graduated from the University of Southern California (USC) in 2010 with a Bachelor’s in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and a minor in Health Communication. She is continuing her education at USC as a current Master of Public Health candidate with a Global Health emphasis.

She has a variety of interests within public health including minority health disparities among Latino communities and underserved populations. Specifically, she is interested in the impact factors, such as access to education, systematic barriers and cultural stigmas have on reproductive health and utilization of family planning services. Further, Perlita believes that global health is not distinct from public health and also integrates health education and promotion, so she would like to implement her skills and knowledge to help provide culturally competent care in our global communities in low and middle income countries.

Perlita is a first-generation American with family from Mexico and Ecuador. She is the eldest of four children and hopes to be a role model and mentor for her younger siblings.

**Health Promoters and Pharmacists in Diabetes Team Management**

*Mentor(s): Ben Gerber*

Many African-Americans and Latinos with diabetes do not achieve the recommended goals for normal blood sugar, blood pressure, or cholesterol level, placing them at high risk for complications. This study evaluates the impact of a novel intervention designed to improve lifestyle behaviors and medication adherence, and intensify therapy to reach goals. The first component of the intervention includes a clinic-based pharmacist disease management program. The second component of the intervention includes health promoters (HPs) that provide autonomy support and solve problems related to medication adherence barriers. Furthermore, health promoters may complement pharmacist activities by improving access to medications, assisting in continuity of care with providers, monitoring response to therapy, and reinforcing educational messages. The study will involve the recruitment of 300 African American and Latino adults with uncontrolled diabetes through the University of Illinois Medical Center in Chicago and randomization to one of two groups: (1) pharmacist management (Pharm); or (2) pharmacist management with HP support (Pharm+HP). The study will determine whether the addition of health promoters to clinic-based pharmacist service delivery improves care.
In collaboration with the University of South Florida’s School of Public Health and HSHPS, the Tropical Disease and Global Health Fellowship was initiated in the summer 2009 and is based at the Bio-Medicine Center and its three satellite campuses in Quito, Ecuador. The ten week traineeship will train future health professionals serving Hispanic communities in the areas of Tropical and Infectious Diseases, nutrition, high altitude problems, travel medicine and global health. Students will have the unique opportunity to investigate the maladies that affect three completely different ecological areas in the context of three different cultures. In addition, they will be able to observe the provision of health services in the rural clinics as well as urban hospitals.

We would like to thank the following for their support:

**Principle Investigator:**
Ricardo Izurieta, MD, DrPH

**Program Mentor:**
Mañuel Calvopiña, PhD
Claire Petersen is currently in her first year of medical school at The Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. Claire currently volunteers at pulmonary clinics, primarily at Clinica Latina. There she evaluates, counsels, and treats patients suffering from obstructive lung disease and asthma.

During her undergraduate studies at Georgetown University, she had the opportunity to study in Ecuador. Following graduation, she returned to Ecuador for eight months as a volunteer at the San Lucas pediatric surgical clinic and a community clinic in Portoviejo, Ecuador. Claire enjoyed assisting Ecuadorian health professionals caring for patients who would otherwise not receive treatment. The work was dynamic and team-based; ranging from calming children to translating for visiting orthopedic teams to helping physicians discuss available medical options with families. There, she learned to care for patients in a culturally and socially relevant manner.

While still undecided on a specific pathway in medicine, Claire has a strong commitment to serve as not only a physician, but as a patient advocate and educator, to uphold each patient's dignity and care for the underserved.
Originally from San Juan, Puerto Rico, Edith Lopez-Toro is an MPHE candidate in the Department of Social Sciences at the University of Puerto Rico, Medical Science Campus. She works as a research assistant in a project on the comorbidity of ADHD and Substance Abuse. She also works at the Graduate School of Public Health in the Student Assistantship Program as a Professor's Assistant doing research primarily on methamphetamines.

Edith earned her Bachelor’s Degree in General Sciences from the Faculty of Natural Sciences at University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus. She finished her master’s degree in General Public Health and was then reclassified to the MPHE program in Public Health Education.

Edith is involved in Organization “Iniciativa Comunitaria,” which provides food, medical attention, clothing, and other basic necessities to the homeless.

**Tropical Medicine and Global Health Training Program**

*Mentors: Dr. Izurieta & Dr. Calvopiña*

The Tropical Disease & Global Health Training Program works in collaboration of the University of South Florida’s School of Public Health & Bio-Medicine Center in Quito, Ecuador. The program works with the Hispanic community in the areas of Tropical and Infectious Diseases and Global Health. The program focuses on understanding and investigating the maladies that affect three completely different ecological areas in the context of three different cultures. By doing these investigations, it allows for the observation of the provision of health services at the primary level in the rural clinics and the tertiary level at the urban hospitals.
Originally from a small town in South Carolina, Katie Stilwell earned her MPH from the Tulane University, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. While in the Department of International Health and Development, Katie completed a summer class in Italy in conjunction with the United Nations, a practicum in Molle Molle, Bolivia, and an analysis of the ability of microcredit programs to increase the health status of populations. Since graduation, Katie has been working for an organization in New Orleans that provides shelter and counseling for victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault.

Previous to her MPH experience, Katie worked as both a pharmacy technician and a Restaurant Inspector for the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

In the future, Katie would like to work in Central or South America on gender-based violence prevention programs and women’s empowerment initiatives involving microfinance as well as general health education and promotion for mothers.

**Global Health and Tropical Medicine in Ecuador**

Mentor(s): Dr. Izurieta, MD, DrPH and Dr. Calvopiña

Focus of the program is on gaining knowledge and field experience with notable diseases found primarily in tropical regions. Program participants attended classes in conjunction with professors at La Universidad Central in Quito, Ecuador. After training, participants embarked on several excursions to various regions of Ecuador to see examples of these illnesses in the field. The purpose of the field experience was to view health practice, prevention of illness, and promotion of best practices in various contexts, and also to ascertain how budget constraints and cultural norms factor into healthcare provision. Work and skills gained here has lead to an independent project on the impact of the new Rotavirus vaccine once incidence information can be obtained from Ecuador’s Ministry of Health.
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