Please join us as we congratulate HPEB students and faculty on their accomplishments and recognitions.

Message from the Chair
Dear HPEB,

Welcome and welcome back to HPEB! How is it already September?

Please join me in welcoming Dr. Leila Larson, new assistant professor, in HPEB!

We know 2020 has been and continues to be a very different kind of year. While we have daily schedules to keep up with for classes, assistantships, teaching, research, and family responsibilities, how can we not get distracted, frustrated, and angry when so many are suffering? I’ve been thinking back to when I started graduate school. I was under the impression that taking fewer classes than in my undergraduate life and doing a bit of grading as a teaching assistant wouldn’t take up the full week. Well, that ‘brilliant’ idea flew quickly out the window. It took me a few weeks to get into the swing of things. Support from my advisor and peers was tremendous! With their help, I figured out how to manage my time as a graduate student and still enjoy my coffee talks and walks with friends and fit in some volunteer opportunities. Starting graduate school now in 2020 is a whole new ballgame. As I’ve shared several times, “Forget trying to find unicorns and balance. If you were perfectly balanced, you’d never have to take anyone’s hand to steady yourself, and that would be a tragedy” (Glennon Melton Doyle, 2014). Now more than ever, let’s take time to support each other and be patient with each other. Yes, we still need to meet our deadlines but let’s work together to achieve them while still giving each other permission to take time with our feelings. One of the most informative books I’ve read (and re-read) on conscious leadership, reminds us that “every feeling we experience invites us in a specific way to grow in awareness and knowing” (Dethmer, Chapman, and Klemp, 2015). I’m trying my best at this – let’s try together.

Our gatherings and seminars are going to look different this year. Please take part – we have an opportunity to explore our creative sides and try something new and exciting. Felt uncomfortable wearing a top hat to an in-person seminar? Don’t be! If you’re Zooming from home, that top hat might be in the room right next to you and you can wear it proudly for our next virtual gathering. I tried something new this summer. I attempted to turn the Arnold School leadership into a choir on Zoom. Unfortunately, I failed miserably and promise I won’t try this with HPEB … unless you’re interested 😊.

Please email or call anytime to share ideas and interests with me, with your student representatives, Gaby Armendariz and Kristine Arnau, and with Dr. Rachel Davis, who is heading up our Student Engagement Committee. Students - your input matters and it is your feedback that has led to improvements and new initiatives. Thank you for choosing HPEB! On behalf of the department, I wish you all the very best for this academic year. And .... What's most important? Health, safety, family, and loved ones. Please take good care.

-Daniela Friedman
Congratulations are in Order

Dr. Stephanie Child, HPEB alum, recently accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor Position at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

Dr. Tracey Thomas, HPEB alum, has accepted a position as a Senior Evaluation Associate with LeCroy and Milligan.

Dr. Spencer Moore co-edited a special volume about social capital and Health in Social Science & Medicine. Link

Dr. Donaldson Conserve was selected as an HIV Prevention Trials Network Scholar for the 2021-2022 domestic cohort.

Dr. Sarah Kershner, HPEB alum and assistant professor at Francis Marion University, will be starting as Chair of the Department of Healthcare Administration at her institution. Link

Dr. Andrea Warren, HPEB research associate and HPEB alum, has been named a 2020-2021 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She accepted a placement with the Office of Food for Peace at USAID as a nutrition research advisor.

HPEB second-year MPH student Wendy Besmann received a Pathways to Practice Scholar Award from the Region IV Public Health Training Center for a Spring 2021 field placement with the Mississippi Public Health Training Institute. She will work remotely on developing and evaluating content for Mississippi Behavioral Health Learning Network, a program that provides training for professionals in the substance use disorder treatment and prevention fields.

Funding News

Victoria Lambert, Dr. Jim Thrasher, Dr. Rachel Davis, and Gaby Armendariz of HPEB and Dr. Diego Leal in the UofSC Department of Sociology received funding from the American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant to study how communication, acculturation, and the structure of social networks influence smoking cessation among Mexican Americans.

Dr. Caroline Rudisill received funding as PI for a grant entitled Evaluating a Technology EMR-based Strategy to Intervene on Social Determinants of Health-related Needs in a Large Health System. Link

Dr. Caroline Rudisill was awarded a COVID-19 Seed grant, A Data-Driven Model to Predict Demand for Inpatient COVID-19 Care in the Prisma Health System.

Drs. Xiaoming Li and Shan Qiao received a supplemental grant from the National Institutes of Mental Health to continue their research on HIV-related health outcomes among men who have sex with men living with HIV in China. Link
Dr. Edward Frongillo and collaborators at the University of California at San Francisco have recently been awarded three research grants and one training grant from the National Institutes of Health. He is one of three multiple principal investigators for the first one, co-investigator for the next two, and trainer for the fourth:

- "Intersection of Material-Need Insecurities and HIV and Cardiovascular Health" (R01, NHLBI)
- "Food is Medicine: Randomized Trial of Medically Tailored Food Support for Diabetes Health" (R01, NIDDK)
- "Pilot Study of the Nutrition-Enhanced Wellness for Diabetes Self-Management Program among Low-Income Adults with Type II Diabetes" (R21, NIDDK)
- "Sustainable Development for Improved HIV Health and Prevention in Kenya" (D43, Fogarty International Center)

Dr. Deborah Billings received a mini-grant from Eat Smart Move More to support the Sabor Latino initiative.

Drs. Xiaoming Li and Bankole Olatosi, co-principal investigators, were awarded $1.25 million from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to develop a state-wide data-driven system to fight COVID-19 in South Carolina. Link

**HPEB in the News**

Dr. Andy Kaczynski alongside Dr. Jan Eberth were recognized on the Arnold School website for their recent development of the first comprehensive obesogenic environment index for youth in the United States. Link

Dr. Tramaine Paul McMullen, HPEB alum, was featured on the Arnold School's website for her work as grant manager for SC DHEC. Link

Selena DeConti, online professional MPH student in HPEB, was highlighted for her work as a public health advocate and pharmacist. Link

Emily Loud, MPH graduate and new doctoral student, had a feature on the Arnold School's website that described her passion for and experience conducting public health work. Link

Carrie Draper, HPEB senior research associate, and her team received recognition for the publication of SNAP-Ed program's inaugural report. Link

Dr. Donaldson Conserve was featured on the Arnold School's website for his work on bringing the STEP project to the Caribbean. Link

Dr. Deborah Billings was invited to speak about pregnancy and birthing during COVID on the show, Watching the Hawks. Link
Dissertation and Practicum Presentations

**Practicum Presentations:**
Audrey Gleaton: Improving Health Knowledge and Health Seeking Behavior of Unaccompanied Minors in the Hope for Children Shelter in Nicosia, Cyprus {July 2020}

Emily Loud: Evaluation of Rescue Agency Media Campaigns Year 1 in South Carolina {August 2020}

**Dissertation Proposal Defenses:**
Akeen Hamilton: Effective Strategies to Increase Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Knowledge, Willingness to Use & Uptake Among Black Heterosexual Men {April 2020}

Chengbo Zeng: Applying Health Stigma Framework to Examine the Mechanisms of HIV-related Stigma on Treatment Outcomes {September 2020}

**Dissertation Defenses:**
Shilpa V. Constantinides: Determinants of Nutrition Agenda Setting in the Context of the Double Burden of Malnutrition in Tamil Nadu, India. {June 2020}


Olivia Whitt: Examining the Organizational Capacity of Public Libraries That Offer Obesity Prevention Programs {July 2020}

Publications and Presentations


Please send submissions for News and Kudos to Grace Lewis so that we can share and celebrate your work!
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Soon-to-be HPEB graduates and alumni, please continue to keep in touch with us! Please also ensure your contact information is current with the Arnold School by updating your information here: Link