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

Message from the Chair

Dear HPEB,

Welcome new students and welcome back to returning students, faculty, and staff! We are already knee deep into the fall semester and I hope everyone is settling in comfortably.

How was your summer? I hope you took some time out to enjoy. One of the special moments I had was watching my 7-year-old son play chess with his grandfather. I used to watch my husband play chess with his grandfather. I don’t play well at all but I love to watch the game. Seeing family members connecting over this game is meaningful and touching. Perhaps a chess tournament is in the cards for HPEB?!

We have some wonderful activities planned (and in planning stages) for the year. Please take part. Our initiatives are guided by your input! Please drop by anytime to share ideas and interests with me, with your student representatives, Gaby and Kalvin, and with Dr. Rachel Davis, who is heading up our student engagement committee.

I look forward to another productive and fun-filled year with you all. Important note: We celebrate all milestones in HPEB. Don’t wait until the manuscript is published. Come by to share that it’s been submitted!

Thank you for choosing HPEB! On behalf of the department, I wish you all the very best for this academic year.

-Daniela Friedman
Congratulations Are In Order!

Dr. Xiaoming Li was selected as a Fellow of the Association for Psychological Science.

Dr. Emily Mann was named Associate Director of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program.

Dr. Hoa Nguyen, HPEB alum, has started a position as a health services postdoctoral fellow at the University of South Carolina’s Institute for Families in Society.

Hiluv Johnson, grant coordinator within HPEB, was selected to participate in the 2019-2020 UofSC Emerging Leaders Program.

Brittany Ankrom, HPEB MPH student, is a 2019 recipient of the Arnold School of Public Health Vernberg Fellowship.

Tiffany Fishburne, HPEB PhD student, is the 2019 recipient of HPEB’s Newton Fellowship named in memory of Ms. Elizabeth Newton.

Dr. Jessica Escobar, HPEB alum, was invited to speak about her dissertation research at a round table discussion with FHI 360. Link

Nazratun Monalisa, PhD Candidate, was selected as a 2019 Graduate Scholar in Childhood Obesity in the Arnold School of Public Health.

Dr. Aaron Guest, HPEB alum, accepted a position as assistant professor at Arizona State University in the Center for Innovation in Healthy and Resilient Aging within the newly renamed Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation.

Wendi Da, PhD candidate, received the 2019 APHA Public Health Education Health Promotion Student Abstract Award and has been invited to present at the student poster session in Philadelphia.

Dr. Edward Frongillo will co-chair the biannual meeting of the WHO/UNICEF Technical expert advisory group on nutrition monitoring (TEAM) the first week of October at the World Health Organization in Geneva.

Michael Sumague, HPEB alum, secured a new position as Infection Prevention Coordinator at Inland Valley Medical Center in California.

Dr. Brie Turner-McGrievy presented an invited lecture at the 2019 International Plant-Based Nutrition Healthcare Conference in Oakland, CA entitled, “Adherence is Not the Enemy: Why Patients Still Benefit From a Plant-based Diet Regardless of 100% Adherence.”

Drs. Ed Frongillo and Christine Blake work in a small group during the Drivers of Food Choice learning lab 2019.
Dissertation and Practicum Presentations

We congratulate the following students who completed milestones in their academic programs during the past three months:

Practicum Presentations:

Ashley Hamm: Evaluating ACE Events in Incarcerated Parents Who Participate in CAPA’s Triple P Parenting Program Delivered to this Population at the Beaufort County Detention Center {August 2019}

Benjamin Thomas: A Multidisciplinary Team Approach to Improve Health Literacy and Education in Advanced Heart Failure Patients {July 2019}

Christine Williams: Serving the 29203 Community {July 2019}

Kyra Hood: Stronger Together: Enhancing Communication and Collaboration between Nashville’s Clinical Care Community and the WIC Program to Optimize Outcomes for Families {August 2019}

Matthew Haldeman: Promotion of Antibiotic Stewardship at a Tertiary Hospital in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania {June 2019}

Perpetua Lekia Bello-Ogunu: Clinic Based Health Education and Chronic Disease Prevention/Management {August 2019}

Rena DeVeaux: Use of Technology to Improve Access {August 2019}

Dissertation Proposal Defenses:

Elyse Iruhiriye: Understanding the Enabling Environment for Improvements in Nutrition and the Coordination and Implementation of a National Multisectoral Nutrition Policy in Rwanda {July 2019}

Ellen Stowe: Greenspace Across the United States: Exploring Equity and Associations with Physical Activity, Obesity, and Health-Related Quality of Life {August 2019}

Final Dissertation Defense:


Funding News

Ashley White, PhD candidate, received the Emerging Scholars in Family Planning grant through the Society of Family Planning in order to conduct nationally representative surveys addressing the use and attitudes of men towards vasectomies.

Dr. Jim Thrasher received two new NIH grants: one to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of warning labels for cigarillos and little cigar through online experiments, and the other for data collection in order to inform communication efforts about nicotine, reduce nicotine products, and decisions around modified risk products.

Dr. Courtney Monroe was awarded the 2019 Southeastern Conference Faculty Travel Grant.
Jennifer Mandelbaum, Ashley White, and Marilyn Wende were all awarded Travel Grants from The Graduate School.

Dr. Daniela Friedman (PI), along with Dr. Heather Brandt and other Arnold School faculty and community and clinical partners, have been awarded another five years of CDC funding for the South Carolina Cancer Prevention and Control Research Network.

Dr. Spencer Moore received a grant through The Duke Endowment for his project on capacity-building in the social determinants of health among independent community pharmacies.

Dr. Daniela Friedman and Co-Investigator Dr. Heather Brandt were also awarded a grant from The Duke Endowment for their work on improving health literacy.

Dr. Donaldson Conserve’s work with the Self-Testing Education and Promotion (STEP) project was featured on the Arnold School’s website for its recent launch of the Peer Education component. [Link]

Ashley White, PhD candidate, was highlighted on the Arnold School’s website for winning the 2019 Outstanding Student Abstract Award from the South Carolina Institute of Medicine and Public Health. [Link]

Carrie Draper, research associate, was recognized on the Arnold School’s website for her research and efforts to combat food insecurity in a local and state-wide manner. [Link]

Ansley Lee, HPEB alum, was recognized on the Arnold School website for her dedication to improving the public health of South Carolinians. She is currently serving as the American Heart Association’s Midlands Community Impact Director. [Link]

Dr. Basia Bujak’s accomplishments in the field as a physical therapist in the military as well as her doctoral studies within HPEB were highlighted on the Arnold School’s website. [Link]

Dr. Sayward Harrison received recognition on the Arnold School’s website for being named as one of the 2019 Women of Influence by the Columbia Regional Business Report. [Link]

Dr. Alycia Boutté, HPEB alum, was highlighted on the Arnold School’s website for joining the National Cancer Institute as a communication postdoctoral fellow.

Drs. Xiaoming Li and Sayward Harrison and the Center for Healthcare quality were recognized for publishing three special journal issues on HIV resilience. [Link]


Walsemann KM. 5 steps to establishing an interdisciplinary population health consortium. August 12, 2019. Interdisciplinary Association for Population Health Sciences Blog. https://iaphs.org/5-steps-establishing-interdisciplinary-population-health-consortium/

Walsemann KM. “Exploring the health implications of the student debt crisis for mid-life parents”. Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA. September 26, 2019.


Coffee and Conversation

Date: Wednesday, October 23rd
Time: 3:00 - 4:00 pm
Conference Room 530

Students, come chat with HPEB faculty over coffee and snacks. Bring questions!

Contact Us

Please send submissions for News and Kudos to Grace Lewis so that we can share and celebrate your work!

HPEB Discovery I 915 Greene Street Suite 563 Columbia SC, 29208
Tel: 803.777.7096
ghlewis@email.sc.edu