



UC DAVIS

Public Health Alumni Association Newsletter

2017 Edition



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INTRODUCTION

Hello, and welcome to the UC Davis Public Health Alumni Association's 1st Official Newsletter!

As graduates of the UC Davis Master of Public Health Program, we are members of the Public Health Alumni Association (PHAA). As a member of the PHAA, you are a lasting, valued contributor to the public health community and the foundation on which a future School of Public Health will be built. The PHAA, which was established in 2010, greatly appreciates your participation and support.

Mission & Goals

The **mission** of the Alumni Organization is to unite alumni, students, and faculty to support the UC Davis MPH program in developing public health leaders.

The **goals** of the Alumni Organization are:

1. To provide resources and networking opportunities for students and alumni.
2. To promote participation in continuing education and professional development activities.
3. To support efforts to develop a School of Public Health.
4. To maintain presence in the public health community through service and partnerships.

2016 – 2017

Alumni Board Members

Co-Chairs: CJ Calabrese, Elizabeth Dingbaum

Members: Jorge Andrews, Catherine Dizon, Riki Merrick, Hanna Kim, Samantha Smith, and Dan Woo

2016 – 2017

Accomplishments

- Rebranded the MPH Alumni Board to the **Public Health Alumni Association** in efforts to support the creation of a UC Davis School of Public Health.
- Hosted the **Pre-Orientation Campus Tour and Alumni Mixer** for the incoming students of the MPH program.
- Continued the **Cookie Inspiration Program** for students presenting at the June 2016, September 2016, March 2017, and June 2017 Practicum Symposium.
- Matched 29 Alumni and 30 current students for this year's **Alumni Mentorship Program**.
- Hosted the **Fall Quarter Event – Phone Banking** for Proposition 65. Doing our part as public health professionals against the harmful effects of smoking.
- MPH Alumni Board Member, Dan Woo hosted the **“How to Get a State Job” workshop** with the Internship and Career Center.
- Implemented the **“Alumni Spotlight Program”** where we feature UC Davis MPH Alumni for their contributions to public health starting in January 2017.
- Hosted a **Prospective Student Campus Tour** and Meeting for MPH applicants during **Public Health Week**.
- Held regular Alumni Board conference calls/meetings to coordinate and organize Board hosted activities, resources, student support, and strategizing on how best to meet student needs.

2016 – 2017

Alumni Spotlight

Starting January 2017, the MPH Alumni Board has implemented a monthly “Alumni Spotlight,” where we feature UC Davis MPH Alumni for their accomplishments and contributions towards public health. If you are an alumni and would like to be featured next year, be sure to fill out an Alumni Profile at the beginning of the next academic school year.

This year’s featured Alumni Spotlight alumni are:

- Karen Truong, MPH
- Merrill Lavezzo, MPH, CHES
- Dan Woo, MPH, MS, LEED AP ND, BD+C
- Catherine Dizon, MPH
- Linette Scott, MD, MPH
- Riki Merrick, MPH

Please check out their full Alumni Spotlight pages below.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

presented by the UC Davis Public Health Alumni Association



Karen Truong, MPH

Class of 2016

Field(s) of Interest: Disaster/Emergency Preparedness and Management, One Health, Health Education and Promotion.

First Job Post Graduation/Current Position: AmeriCorps VISTA, Community Preparedness Specialist at Linn County Public Health Department.

Karen Truong graduated from the UC Davis Master of Public Health program in 2016, and the UC Irvine Bachelor of Science in Public Health program in 2013. With her immense involvement in her community through volunteerism, Karen was always drawn to a career in community health. Majoring in public health as an undergraduate student was simply a perfect fit when it came time for college. Like many of her public health peers, she used her time to explore different routes in the field by volunteering as a health educator with student organizations (Public Health Association and Student Health Outreach), working as a student research assistant for a corporate health study and malaria study, taking courses focused on developing specific skill sets such as grant writing and GIS, and interning as a scientific aid with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Through her MPH practicum with the Yolo County Public Health Department, Emergency Preparedness Program, she decided to pursue a career in emergency preparedness. Currently she is serving as an AmeriCorps VISTA, Community Preparedness Specialist in Oregon at the Linn County Public Health Department, Emergency Preparedness Program. During her one year of service, she will be developing and supporting the Linn Benton Community Organizations Active in Disaster (LBCOAD), promoting the use of 211 info among social service agencies, developing personal preparedness strategies with Service Coordinators for their clients in the Linn County Developmental Disability program, supporting and providing community partners with business continuity resources, and developing emergency preparedness strategies with residential care facilities.

January 2017

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

presented by the UC Davis Public Health Alumni Association



Merril Lavezzo, MPH, CHES

Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

Class of 2013

Field(s) of Interest: Sexual Health Education, Women's Health, Reproductive Justice, Stress Management, Health Policy.

First Job Post Graduation: Sexual Health Education and Promotion, UC Davis Student Health Center

Current Position: Healthy Relationships Health Educator, Health and Wellness Promotion, California State University, Sacramento

Merril Lavezzo graduated from the UC Davis Masters of Public Health Program in 2013 and completed her Bachelor's at UCD in 2008 in Human Development and Spanish. Merrill was introduced to the importance of maternal and reproductive health at a young age. Her mother's work with new, high school-aged mothers gave her an early appreciation of the social determinants of health and the role that health equity plays in alleviating health disparities.

As an undergraduate, Merrill took advantage of UC Davis's broad academic offerings and opportunities to study abroad in Chile. Abroad, she got involved with causes related to reproductive justice for women in Central American countries, and became more interested in political activism and policy as an opportunity to advance public health.

After graduating with her bachelor's, Merrill took time to serve as an AmeriCorps VISTA member in her hometown of Sacramento on homeless policy and advocacy. She also took on management responsibilities overseeing the statewide emergency preparedness VISTA program in Portland, Oregon, before beginning her graduate studies back at UC Davis for a MPH. Upon completing her degree, Merrill secured a full-time position working on sexual health and mental wellness education at UCD's Student Health and Wellness Center. There she oversaw a volunteer peer-education effort aimed at promoting sexual wellness, anonymous HIV testing, and increasing outreach to the LGBTQIA community and other historically marginalized student groups.

Merril currently oversees California State University, Sacramento's Healthy Relationships programming. In her new role, she helps to program campus events, expand healthcare access for reproductive health products, and manages the contributions of student interns on projects like Take Back The Night and The Vagina Monologues.

February 2017

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

presented by the UC Davis Public Health Alumni Association



Dan Woo, MPH, MS, LEED AP ND, BD+C

Class of 2014

MPH Alumni Board Member, 2014 – Present

Field(s) of Interest: Climate Change and Health Equity, Social Determinants of Health, Built Environment and Health

First Job Post Graduation: Research Associate, Center for Climate Change and Health, Public Health Institute

Current Position: Climate & Health Program Analyst, Climate Change and Health Equity Program, Office of Health Equity – Policy Unit, California Department of Public Health (CDPH)

Dan is currently with the California Department of Public Health's Climate Change and Health Equity Program, and serves as the project lead for many of the program's climate change mitigation efforts related to statewide climate action, policies, and planning. Dan's work requires interdisciplinary collaboration with a variety of local, regional, and state agencies, addressing the climate, health, and social equity impacts related to various sectors, including those associated with land use planning, transportation, housing, energy, food and agriculture, and more. Dan helps to facilitate the California Climate Action Team Public Health Workgroup (CAT-PHWG), which addresses cross-cutting issues related to climate change and health (e.g., extreme heat and health impacts, climate change and mental health, active transportation, etc.), and provides a forum for communication, coordination, and education across agencies and with stakeholders. Dan previously worked for nearly a decade in the urban and environmental planning and design fields, focusing on sustainability in the built environment. Dan's interests center on determining how our physical and social environments can promote long term public and ecological health through policy, planning, and design, with particular emphasis on addressing the health and equity impacts of climate change. Prior to joining CDPH, Dan helped lead sustainability and green building efforts with Cunningham Engineering, including having worked on over two dozen sustainable design and green building projects in the Sacramento region. Dan holds a B.S. in Design and Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning, an M.S. in Community Development, and a Master of Public Health degree, all from UC Davis, and is a LEED Accredited Professional for neighborhood development, and building design and construction.

March 2017

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

presented by the UC Davis Public Health Alumni Association



Catherine Dizon, MPH

Class of 2012

MPH Alumni Board Member, 2012 – Present

Field(s) of Interest: General Public Health, Program Evaluation, Tobacco Control

First Job Post Graduation: Evaluation Associate for the UC Davis Tobacco Control Evaluation Center

Current Position: Project Director for the UC Davis Tobacco Control Evaluation Center

Catherine Dizon graduated from the UC Davis MPH program in 2012. Before that she received her Bachelor of Science in Human Development from UC Davis as well. Her path in public health began with an undergraduate class on prevention, followed by internships at the California Department of Public Health Office of AIDS and the

Lieutenant Governor's office as a communications intern. During her time in the MPH program, Catherine worked as a student assistant for the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development in the Healthcare Information Division, as well as a teaching assistant for the online introduction to public health course through the extension and the environmental health course for the MPH program. Currently, Catherine is the Project Director of the UC Davis Tobacco Control Evaluation Center. The Tobacco Control Evaluation Center provides evaluation consulting and training services to social service and disease prevention programs. It also serves as the statewide evaluation technical assistance provider for California's tobacco control programs. They provide individual technical assistance, training, and evaluation-related resources while striving to build the evaluation capacity of local programs. Catherine focuses on the use of mobile technology for data collection and has presented on this topic for regional and statewide trainings as well as national conferences for Youth+Tech+Health, American Evaluation Association, and American Public Health Association. She has served on the UC Davis MPH Alumni Board since it started in 2012.

April 2017

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

presented by the UC Davis Public Health Alumni Association



Dr. Linette Scott, MD, MPH
Class of 2004

First Job After Graduating: Public Health Medical Officer,
California Department of Public Health

Current Position: Chief Medical Information Officer and Deputy
Director of the Information Management Division, California
Department of Health Care Services

Field(s) of Interest: Informatics, Quality Measurement

Dr. Scott is a Board Certified Physician in Clinical Informatics and Public Health and General Preventive Medicine and is a Fellow of the American College of Preventive Medicine. She has a Doctor of Medicine from Eastern Virginia Medical School, a Master in Public Health from University of California, Davis, and a Bachelors of Arts in Physics from University of California, Santa Cruz.

Prior to coming to UC Davis, Dr. Scott served as a General Medical Officer with the United States Navy, first as squadron physician with the Regional Support Group and later as the military physician for an Active Duty clinic. While earning her MPH from UC Davis, Dr. Scott worked with the vital records program at the California Department of Health Services. She then completed the Preventive Medicine Residency at the California Department of Health Services in 2006 with a focus on informatics. Since then, Dr. Scott has been a member of the California Health and Human Services Agency team, working first as a Public Health Medical Officer and then being appointed as the Deputy Director of Health Information and Strategic Planning and California State Registrar in the California Department of Public Health. While in that position, Dr. Scott worked closely with local health officers in California and with federal partners at the National Center for Health Statistics. Dr. Scott also worked closely with the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS), serving as a Board Member and with multiple committees to assist ongoing improvements to vital records organizations and systems.

May 2017

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

presented by the UC Davis Public Health Alumni Association

In 2011 to 2012, Dr. Scott served as the Interim Deputy Secretary for Health Information Technology at the California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS). In this role, she was the Health Information Technology (HIT) Coordinator for the Health Information Exchange Agreement received from the Office of the National Coordinator for HIT. As such, she worked closely with the various HITECH grantees throughout the state as the teams worked to advance the adoption of electronic health records and use them in meaningful ways. This included focusing on improving the interoperability of systems to support improved quality of care and outcomes for patients as well as opportunities for public health improvements through monitoring, assessment and interventions.

In 2012, Dr. Scott joined the team at the Department of Health Care Services as the first Chief Medical Information Officer (CMIO). She was appointed Deputy Director of the Information Management Division in July 2014. Dr. Scott works across the Department and with stakeholders to ensure reliable data and information are available, and used to drive improvements in population health and clinical outcomes through the Department's programs and policies. She oversees the Office of the CMIO, the Office of HIPAA Compliance, and the Office of Health Information Technology. Dr. Scott has led efforts both within the Department and the Agency related to the development of data de-identification which resulted in the first CHHS Data De-identification Guidelines that are now in use by departments.

Dr. Scott continues to be involved in the field of informatics and public health nationally through current appointments with the Board of Scientific Counselors, National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Academy for State Health Policy, Academy Steering Committee, Health System Performance & Public Health, and the American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM), Annual Conference Planning Committee. In the past she participated in the Institute of Medicine/Association of State and Territorial Health Officers Public Health and Primary Care Strategic Mapping Meeting, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers eHealth Committee and the National Center for Health Statistics, New Model Law Workgroup.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

presented by the UC Davis Public Health Alumni Association



Riki Merrick, MPH
Class of 2003
MPH Alumni Board Member

First Job After Graduating: Implementing Electronic Lab Reporting in CA-CALIP program at UC Davis

Current Position: Lead Terminologist at Association of Public Health Laboratories and Independent Consultant

Field(s) of Interest: Epidemiology, Informatics

Riki was attending Medical School in Berlin, Germany, where she decided to do a 3-month rotation at Highland Hospital in Oakland. Her exposure to the infectious disease program, in addition to her thesis work in the field of opportunistic infections in HIV-infected people, sparked her interest in the public health aspect of medicine, and the desire to work in the public health field. Life took some turns, but in 2003 she decided to pursue a Master of Public Health at UC Davis. She stumbled across her first job at UC Davis Health System, helping the California Department of Public Health implement electronic reporting of lab results for reportable conditions. The position required learning about standard rules of how computers communicate with each other – her husband likened it to “learning a new language.”

She also worked with the California Public Health Laboratory in Richmond on a nationwide project to send influenza test results to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. This project opened the door to her current work of eleven years with the Association of Public Health Laboratories, where she helps laboratories or health departments implement electronic data exchange, while improving the underlying standard rules at the national and international level.

Stay Connected

Stay Connected with the Public Health Alumni Association! Make sure you submit an "Alumni Profile" every year, and to subscribe to the UC Davis MPH Alumni listserv. Please contact the board at mphalumniboard@ucdavis.edu if you would like to be added. Also, please check out our page at: http://mph.ucdavis.edu/alumni_network.php

Social Networking:



Like us on Facebook here!
<https://www.facebook.com/UCDPHAA/>



Join our group on Facebook here!
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/181236245230953/>



Join our group on LinkedIn here!
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4375291>

Apply for the Alumni Board

Are you excellent at coordinating events?

Do you have a passion for social media and outreach?

Or do you just enjoy staying connected with faculty, students, and other alumni?

If you said **yes** to any of these questions, please consider on applying for a board position!
Applications for the 2017 – 2018 Academic Year will be sent out to the alumni listserv in mid-June.

Make a difference.

Apply for the MPH Alumni Board!

Credits

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MPH Alumni Board

Thank you for a great year everyone!
- Your MPH Alumni Board