



## IN THIS ISSUE

FALL/WINTER 2016-17

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- Continuing Partnership with Veterans Engineering Resource Center
- Introducing the Dawn Gideon Foundation
- HPM Student Receives Dean's Special Incentive Scholarship

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



### Greetings once again to all our alumni and colleagues.

We have had a recent change in our senior faculty complement—Maggie Potter, JD, MS, director of the Center for Public Health Practice (CPHP)—has retired and been awarded emeritus status. There is an active search to replace her as director of CPHP, but she will be very hard to replace. See details on page 4.

The department's National Advisory Council (NAC) met recently with departmental and school leadership to evaluate the department's activities, and although a formal report is not yet available, the consensus of NAC is that the department is performing with excellence and that we are continuing to improve our educational, research, and service mission. However, we also agree that we must tell our story more effectively to potential students, alumni, and all our stakeholders.

We are both honored and excited about the recent award to the department from the Dawn Gideon Foundation, created in the memory of Gideon (MHA '83), to provide scholarship funding for an incoming student and to fund the alumni educational event each year, now named the Dawn Gideon Lecture and Webinar. The event, held the week of November 14, featured three speakers with expertise in mergers and acquisitions in the health care industry and three prominent alumni discussing the problem of financing and restructuring in the current health care market.

We continue to expand our research faculty and welcome Lindsay Sabik, a health services researcher with expertise in cancer outcomes who was recruited in collaboration with the Health Policy Institute and the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute to develop a working group in cancer health services research. Details are on page 3.

Our recent initiative with the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business to offer a joint MHA/MBA degree has been fully approved by the University. Although the timing of the approval prevented us from adequately advertising the program during this recruitment cycle, two well-credentialed students enrolled in the joint program for the 2016 fall term. Details of this exciting new educational offering are found on page 11. This newsletter also highlights our Graduate Certificate in Health Care Systems Engineering, which we developed with the Swanson School of Engineering (see page 12).

We have had several staffing changes over the past six months and are making progress in achieving a full complement of support staff. Elly Bresz, who had been our research administrator, has taken another position in the University that will expand her experiences in different types of research. Bresz has been an essential part of the administrative team for the past 13 years. Her contributions and dedication have been endless, and the department will greatly miss not only her exemplary work but also her witty sense of humor. We thank her for her service

and friendship. The department also welcomes Doreen Hernandez, Alexandra Pittman, and Rachel Skillman, who are all working with our departmental administrator, Tina Micale, and the Health Policy and Management (HPM) faculty to further the department's mission, including its marketing initiatives, financial operations, special events, and project management. See pages 3 and 4.

We have admitted an outstanding class of students this fall, and I credit many of you who have contributed to our scholarship funds with improving our ability to attract a very strong entering class. A description of our new students begins on page 7. I cannot tell you how appreciative we are for the support that our alumni have provided, both in terms of scholarship offerings and willingness to participate in our recruiting efforts and other department activities. We will continue to call on you to help us recruit outstanding students from your area.

Although the funded research environment has been quite challenging during the past few years, our research portfolio continues to grow and contributes to our department's financial stability. Details are found on page 13. Our faculty members continue to produce outstanding research articles, and have published 77 peer-reviewed manuscripts in the past year. A selection of those papers is presented on page 13.

Mike Evans, FACHE (MPH '80) continues to do an outstanding job as president of the alumni association and has become a vital collaborative partner with the department. Please see his comments on page 15.

As always, please keep us informed about your achievements and activities. We welcome your suggestions for ways that we can serve you better.

Mark S. Roberts, MD, MPP  
Professor and Chair  
Department of Health Policy and Management

*Breaking news at press time! I am pleased to report that we have successfully recruited Kevin Broom, PhD, MBA, from Saint Louis University as the next vice chair for education—details will follow.*

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**On the cover:**

Left to right: Rabikar Chatterjee, associate dean for master's and executive programs and Gulf Oil Foundation Professor of Business, Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business; Arjang Assad, Henry E. Haller Jr. Dean of the Katz Graduate School of Business and College of Business Administration; Donald S. Burke, MD, dean, Graduate School of Public Health; Mark S. Roberts, MD, MPP, professor and chair, Department of Health Policy and Management; Wesley M. Rohrer, PhD, MBA, vice chair for education and director of master's programs, Department of Health Policy and Management, and director of the MHA program

## TINA MICALE: 30 YEARS OF AMAZING SERVICE



Tina Micale, the Department of Health Policy and Management (HPM)'s department administrator, celebrated 30 years of service to Pitt Public Health in 2016. We certainly celebrate her ongoing commitment and dedication to the department.

Micale was hired by Edi Bernardon while she was still a teenager and began her career at the University of Pittsburgh in the Department of Health Services Administration on September 2, 1986.

Described by Bernardon as “having very good skills, potential for growth,” and a “pleasing personality,” she has continued to display those characteristics throughout her career in Pitt Public Health. Of course, originally Micale had a typewriter and bottles of Wite-Out rather than a computer.

When the Department of Health Services Administration split into the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences and HPM in 2002, Micale became our administrator, and we have benefited from her leadership and outstanding service ever since. She has been responsible for our budgeting and human resources functions under sometimes very difficult circumstances, and her staff leadership has been exemplary and contributed considerably to the growth and success of the department. We all owe her our thanks and gratitude for her ongoing service. I, for one, am hoping for 30 more years of service!

Mark Roberts, MD, MPP, Chair

## DEPARTMENT WELCOMES NEW HIRES

### Associate Professor Lindsay Sabik



We are pleased to announce that Lindsay Sabik recently joined the Department of Health Policy and Management as an associate professor from Virginia Commonwealth University. In 2010, she completed her PhD at Harvard University in health policy with a concentration in economics. She is currently the principal investigator on a project funded by the National Cancer Institute to investigate the role of Medicaid in breast and cervical cancer screening for low-income women. She also is working on a project that examines the impact of state health reforms on the diagnosis and treatment of breast and colorectal cancer.

During Sabik's undergraduate career studying math and philosophy, she became highly interested in health and the ethics around health care. The relationship between resource allocation and incentive in health care created a series of complex questions she found engaging. The University of Pittsburgh is an exciting place for Sabik to be due to the research opportunities around population health at the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute and the Health Policy Institute. She is looking forward to having the opportunity to collaborate with outside-the-box thinkers, and she advises students entering the field to stay flexible and on top of the changes in this rapidly evolving field.

When she is not at work, Sabik enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband and children.

# DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

## WELCOME TO NEW HIRES (continued)



### Introducing Doreen Hernandez

Doreen Hernandez joined the department in March 2016 as an associate administrator. Some of her duties include acting as assistant to the chairs and vice chairs in various roles, project management, marketing initiatives, newsletter production, and alumni relations.

Hernandez comes to us from Pitt's Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business, where she was the special events, communications, and operations manager for the David Berg Center for Ethics and Leadership. For the past five years, she was responsible for overseeing the center's daily operations, financials, grant administration, events, and stewardship and alumni relations initiatives; advising students; coordinating recruitment and networking activities; and serving as liaison among faculty, the Pitt Business community, and external stakeholders.



### Introducing Alexandra Pittman

Alexandra Pittman recently joined the Department of Health Policy and Management as an administrative assistant. Thus far, Pittman has found that the grant administration aspect of her current position is her favorite because she gets to help faculty achieve their research goals.

Pittman wishes to continue her education at the University of Pittsburgh in the near future. She would like to obtain her master's in business administration to help her achieve her professional goals. Outside work, Pittman enjoys camping and doing anything that allows her to enjoy the outdoors.



### Introducing Rachel Skillman

Rachel Skillman recently joined the Department of Health Policy and Management in administrative support. Skillman is a recent graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, having earned a BS in mathematics/economics and political science. The welcoming department and the variety of tasks make every day enjoyable, Skillman says.

She plans to return to school eventually to pursue a doctorate in political science and hopes to teach at the university level. In her free time, Skillman enjoys reading and running. She says she is excited to be part of the health policy and management department and is eager to see what the position holds.

## CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF MARGARET POTTER

After spending 31 years in different positions within the University of Pittsburgh, Margaret Potter retired from the Department of Health Policy and Management in July 2016.

Potter served as professor of health policy and management and as the associate dean for public health practice. Originally from Illinois, Potter completed her bachelor's degree at Mundelein College, then went to the Illinois Institute of Technology to gain her master's degree in biomedical science information, during which time her interest in policy grew, leading her to earn her Juris Doctor at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.

After Potter's husband received a job offer from Carnegie Mellon University, a move to Pittsburgh sparked her interest in Pitt Public Health. She started her career at the University as a research staffer in 1985. Professionally, she is most proud of getting the Center for Public Health Practice up and running. She also enjoyed the opportunity to interact with leaders around the city to engage them in public health concerns.

## NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Department of Health Policy and Management (HPM) National Advisory Council (NAC), composed of local, national, and international executives, academicians, and alumni, met on November 9, 2016. NAC periodically provides recommendations to HPM and the dean of Pitt Public Health about strengthening HPM. Although a full report from the council is not yet available, the meeting had breakout sessions evaluating our MHA, MHA/MBA, and MPH programs and our research and PhD programs. The preliminary oral report of the NAC was quite positive, and the members feel that the department is making good progress in these areas. A detailed account of NAC and its recommendations will be presented in the next newsletter.

Potter says her favorite aspect of Pitt Public Health is the people. She says she found that everyone within the school is very open to new ideas and willing to participate in interdisciplinary discussions and projects. This willingness leads the school to be very innovative in many disciplines within the public health sector. Potter believes that this drive to create innovation stems from a sincere desire to help people.

Potter remains involved with the field. She serves on the search committee for a new director of the Center for Public Health Practice, advises students, and serves on the editorial committee for her favorite journal. Potter also is enjoying getting to spend extra time with family and more time in the Colorado mountains enjoying nature.

Says Associate Professor Gerald Barron: "I have worked with Maggie for many years, starting when I was with the Allegheny County Health Department. [She] was my academic mentor. Her assistance in my transition from practice to academic



was invaluable, and for that I will forever be grateful. I and the other faculty and staff at the Center for Public Health Practice [CPHP] were always astounded with her ability to understand complex federal agency requests for proposal and her ability to put together a team to write the best proposal possible. She will be missed by all of the faculty and staff of CPHP as well as all those she came in contact with in her roles as director of the center and associate dean for public health practice."

## THE NATIONAL ACADEMY FOR STATE HEALTH POLICY (NASHP) ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN PITTSBURGH OCTOBER 17-19, 2016

The University of Pittsburgh Health Policy Institute (HPI) sent 14 researchers, faculty members, and students from the Department of Health Policy and Management (HPM) and HPI to participate in the event. At the conference, health policy and governmental leaders convened to discuss best practices, to share program design and development strategies, and learn about implementation barriers and potential solutions to a multitude of complex health and societal problems.

A full-day preconference was devoted to sharing lessons learned from the opioid epidemic across the nation. HPM Associate Professor Julie Donohue moderated one of the preconference sessions, titled Payer Strategies to Address the Opioid Crisis: Prevention and Treatment. It featured representatives from public and private payers discussing innovative coverage design, access, and financing strategies intended to change provider behavior and to support those with addiction. Additionally, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf spoke at the conference about the changes in the commonwealth's

health policy during his tenure thus far, highlighting the opioid epidemic as the most profound crisis currently facing Pennsylvania. HPM and HPI researchers are actively involved in a variety of projects that are aimed at addressing opioid use and misuse.

Other NASHP conference sessions were focused on implementing managed long-term services and supports for various Medicaid populations, controlling prescription drug prices, integrating physical and behavioral health, and constructing and implementing evidence-based policy. Many of the topics were complementary to ongoing work and projects within HPI and HPM.

Drew Altman of the Kaiser Family Foundation, Marilyn Tavenner of America's Health Insurance Plans, and Governor Peter Shumlin of Vermont also delivered keynote addresses to the NASHP conference attendees. HPI was a platinum sponsor of NASHP 2016.

# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

## INTRODUCING THE DAWN GIDEON FOUNDATION



Dawn Gideon graduated in 1983 from Pitt Public Health health services administration program. Over the years, she built an extraordinarily successful career in the field and was well known for raising the brow and the bar. Many of the highlights of her career revolved around working with cash-distressed hospitals. Those who were lucky enough to know Gideon describe her as a go-getter and an innovative and compassionate individual.

Her life was unfortunately cut short in 2015. It seems fitting that in her memory, a foundation was formed to aid in the education of health care administrators through continuing education opportunities and scholarships. In August 2016, the foundation provided its first scholarship to Kristin Free, a first-year MHA student.

On November 14, 2016, the Dawn Gideon Foundation hosted the first of what is planned to be an annual lecture. The lecture was titled "Health Care's Newest Code Blue: The Need for Cash Infusion and Restructuring." Please look forward to the next newsletter for a full report on the lecture. The Department of Health Policy and Management is thankful and excited to see what the future holds for the relationship between the foundation and the school.



Left to right: James Nugent, Marjorie Guglin, Kevin Altomari, Kristin Free, Linda Antonelli, Linda Lo Cascio, and John DiDonato

Left to right: Donald Katze, Linda Lo Cascio, Mark Kissinger, Linda Antonelli, Dan Kasinec, and Marjorie Guglin



## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS FALL 2016

With assistance from the many alumni who have contributed to our scholarship funds, we have substantially increased our support of incoming and continuing students. We are pleased to announce the scholarships awards below.

STUDENT	AWARD
Yara Elbeshbishi	Thomas and Judy Priselac Endowed Fund for Healthcare Leadership
Evan Finkelstein	Nathan Hershey Endowment in Health Administration
Kristin Free	Dawn Gideon Scholarship
Peter Lewellen	Dean's Special Incentive Scholarship
Sarah Miller	HPM Discretionary Fund
Sushma Narra	Surma Scholarship for Long-term Healthcare Administration in Policy and Aging
Ashley Narvaez	Commonwealth Scholarship/Hunter Scholarship
Nisha Sanghvi	Friends and Family/Holman Scholarship

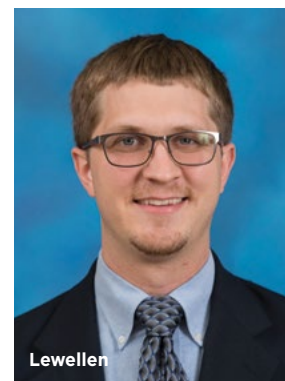
### THE DEAN'S SPECIAL INCENTIVE SCHOLARSHIP: PETER LEWELLEN

Peter Lewellen is the 2016 recipient of the Dean's Special Incentive Scholarship. This extremely prestigious scholarship is a schoolwide award, therefore the Department of Health Policy and Management is very proud of Lewellen for being selected.

Originally from Manitowoc, Wis., Lewellen is excited to have made the move to Pittsburgh. Lewellen completed his undergraduate career at Duke University with a degree in biology. As the son of a physician, it seemed only natural that he would become engrossed in the health

care field. After completing a year of medical school at Drexel University, he realized that the administrative aspect of health care was his real passion.

The University of Pittsburgh stood out to Lewellen because of the extended residency option for MHA students as well as the high caliber of its professors. He is very interested in the quality improvement aspect of health care and is excited to start his career as an administrative professional. Outside of school, he enjoys spending his time running, canoeing, and playing board games.



Lewellen

### MHA SUMMER RESIDENCIES

ORGANIZATION	PRECEPTOR(S)	STUDENT
Allegheny Health Network Finance	Jeffrey Crudele	Mario Scarpinato
UPMC Departments of Anesthesiology and Surgery	Ed McQuade	Greg King
UPMC Community Provider Services	Deborah Brodine Mary Ann Sander	Rachel Hummel
UPMC Department of Urology	Margaret Ealy	Dante Bongiorno
UPMC Presbyterian/UPMC Shadyside	Tim Kagle	Patrick Lundquist
UPMC International	Jake Collins	Mike Fetterolf
UPMC Mercy	Julie Hecker	Evan Finkelstein
UPMC Wolff Center	Katherine Brownlee Sue Martin	Aleksandra Jurewicz

## MPH SUMMER PRACTICA

SITE	PRECEPTOR	STUDENT
Highmark Inc.	Marylou Buyse	Taru Gupta
Angkor Hospital for Children, Siem Reap, Cambodia	Claudia Turner	Hiroko Henker
Cornell University	Amelia Greiner Safi	Carrie Law
Jewish Healthcare Foundation	Jen Condel	Andrew Gaul
AHN Allegheny-Singer Research Institute	Kyle Bird	Jared Garfield
Sisters Place	Patricia Wood	Alex Budney
Consumer Health Coalition	Sally Jo Snyder	Patricia Raygada-Rabanal
UPMC Health Plan	Patrick Tracy	Yara Elbeshbishi
Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC	Fern Gilkerson	Claire Raible

## INCOMING MPH STUDENTS (FALL 2016)

NAME	RESIDENCE	UNDERGRADUATE INSTITUTION
Marissa Andreassi	Pennsylvania	University of Pittsburgh
Melina Mermigas	Pennsylvania	University of Pittsburgh
Nisha Sanghvi	California	University of California, Irvine
Halley Sonntag	Pennsylvania	Mercyhurst University
Adam Spinelli	Pennsylvania	Bowling Green State University
Kevin Stoner	Pennsylvania	University of Pittsburgh
Abigail Tan	Michigan	University of Michigan
Alix Ware	Pennsylvania	University of Illinois
Nina Yacovoni	Pennsylvania	University of Pittsburgh
Yufei Zhang	China	Applied Technology College of Soochow University

## INCOMING MHA STUDENTS (FALL 2016)

NAME	RESIDENCE	UNDERGRADUATE INSTITUTION
Tanya Bahl	India	Panjab University
Swati Bhosale	India	YMT Ayurvedic Medical College and Hospital
Lauren Borrelli	Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania State University
John Cordier	Pennsylvania	University of Pittsburgh
Kristin Free	Pennsylvania	University of Pittsburgh
Zachary Hayes	Michigan	Michigan State University
Mauriccia Johnson	Pennsylvania	Temple University
Amrit Kaur	India	Guru Nanak Dev Dental College and Research Institute
MonaLisa Leung	Pennsylvania	University of Pittsburgh
Peter Lewellen	Texas	Duke University
Jennifer Longo	New York	James Madison University
Sushma Narra	Ohio	Ohio State University
Ashley Narvaez	Pennsylvania	Ohio State University
Catherine Riccelli	Pennsylvania	University of Pittsburgh
Raul Rios	Florida	Pennsylvania State University
Johanne Ross	Pennsylvania	University of Tennessee Health Science Center
Amanda Wilkins	Pennsylvania	Miami University
Li Yun Wu	Taiwan	Taipei Medical University



## INCOMING DOCTORAL STUDENTS (FALL 2016)

NAME	RESIDENCE	PREVIOUS INSTITUTION
Rachel Butler	Pennsylvania	Rockford University
Damian DaCosta	Pennsylvania	City University of New York
Kirstin Eom	Singapore	Brown University

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

### SNAPSHOTS OF SECOND YEAR HPM STUDENTS



#### Mario "Mark" Scarpinato

Mario Scarpinato is a second-year student in the MHA program. He graduated from Michigan State University with a bachelor's degree in kinesiology and moved on to medical school at the Medical College of Wisconsin. After completing one year, he took a leave of absence from medical school to pursue an MHA so that he would be able to explore that

area of interest. He believes that the degree will help him to bridge the gap between physicians and administrators.

Scarpinato says he always knew that he belonged in the medical field. His father is a physician who taught at the Medical College of Wisconsin, and nearly every other member of his family is involved in the medical field to some degree. Over the summer, Scarpinato completed his residency at Allegheny Health Network. Scarpinato believes that the health care industry will continue to succumb to pressures from other industries and it needs more people who are innovative and think outside of the box rather than just keeping the status quo.

Outside the classroom, Scarpinato enjoys exploring new restaurants in the Pittsburgh area. One of his greatest achievements outside the classroom is winning the Rose Bowl in 2014 while playing football for Michigan State. Following a one-year hiatus, he returned to football to play for the University of Pittsburgh during his first year of his MHA program.

Scarpinato finds the rich mentoring culture to be one of the highlights of the MHA program. He truly believes that you get out of the program what you put into it. After he graduates from the MHA program, he will return to the Medical College of Wisconsin to finish medical school. Scarpinato hopes to be able to find a position after graduation that allows him to utilize the skills he has acquired as a clinician and an administrator.



#### Rachel Hummel

Rachel Hummel is a second-year student in the MHA program. She chose to continue her education at Pitt Public Health because of great access to a wealth of different health care organizations. Additionally, she grew up in a more rural area and wanted to experience city life. One of Hummel's favorite aspects of the MHA program is all of the

professors. She says she has found that all of the professors really care about and are major advocates for their students. She feels that the large amount of group work in the program is preparing her for the workforce.

Hummel has a strong interest in long-term care. She says that, growing up, she was always around older individuals and felt very comfortable with them. She decided to make long-term care a big part of her career. Her master's essay focuses on the high turnover rates of certified nursing assistants typically seen in nursing homes. She chose this topic because she felt that the high turnover rate negatively affects the quality seen in nursing homes. Currently, Hummel is waiting to hear back from the commonwealth regarding beginning the nursing home administrator licensing process.

Outside the classroom and work, Hummel enjoys jogging and spending time with friends. She currently is also serving as the development coordinator for the Health Policy and Management Association on campus. This position allows her to work with many local organizations to set up and participate in volunteer activities with her peers. Overall, Hummel is excited to see what her future holds and feels that her time in HPM has prepared her well to launch her career.

## CARRIE LAW



Law

Carrie Law is in her second year of the Master of Public Health program. Law graduated from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown with degrees in geography, humanities, and communications. Law chose to continue her education at Pitt Public Health due to its strong involvement in global health. The diversity within the MPH program is one of Law's

favorite aspects of the program, she says, because it leads to great thought-provoking conversations within the classroom. She recently returned from a practicum at Cornell University, where she was involved in researching what the most effective

warning labels on cigarettes would be. Law hopes to pursue a career in consulting on global health initiatives.

Law is extremely well traveled, having spent time in 16 countries within the last five years. When asked why she is so passionate about public health, she will tell you it is because of her travels. Through her travels, Law has learned to appreciate that a global health initiative is not one size fits all and it is important to discuss the implications of an intervention with the residents of a local populations to truly appreciate the impacts the interventions may have. In addition to travel, Law enjoys photography, cooking, and working in the tech shop. Law would like all of those thinking of entering the public health field to make sure they are really passionate about what they are pursuing and to take the time to find their niche.

## ACADEMIC NEWS

### A CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP WITH THE VETERANS ENGINEERING RESOURCE CENTER

The Veterans Engineering Resource Center (VERC) at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System is the result of a grant application by director Robert Monte in 2009. Since its inception, VERC has led more than 100 health care improvement projects from local to national levels. The goal of VERC is to "facilitate innovative solutions to the health care delivery challenges identified by national, network, and facility leadership as well as propose important opportunities for change and improvement." VERC is able to accomplish this lofty goal by using a multidisciplinary team approach.

Over the past seven years, VERC has had a very close relationship with the University of Pittsburgh. Monte is an alumnus of the University, with degrees from the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business and the School of Pharmacy. Ever since the inception of VERC, Monte has given students from schools across the University, including Pitt Public Health, the opportunity to gain real-life experience in the field of health care



Monte

systems engineering. VERC has given students everything from the opportunity to shadow to fellowships. Monte also serves as a guest faculty member at the Swanson School of Engineering.

The future holds endless possibilities for VERC and the University of Pittsburgh, which, because of VERC's rapid growth, is able to offer students the ability to work on far more complex and high-level problems. Monte believes that the most valuable thing a student interested in systems engineering can do is get some clinical experience to better understand what the system is like before trying to change it. Monte is excited to continue to be highly engaged with

the Health Care Systems Engineering Certificate program through Pitt Public Health and the Swanson School.



## BACK TO THE FUTURE: THE NEW MHA/MBA JOINT DEGREE PROGRAM

A new generation of dynamic leaders in evolving health care systems and networks is on the horizon with the launch of the new Master of Health Administration/Master of Business Administration (MHA/MBA) joint degree program.

“This initiative, after a long gestation, takes us ‘back to the future’ by renewing a comparable program that yielded a highly skilled cohort of graduates in the 1990s who have made a difference in their health care organizations and the profession,” says Wes Rohrer, codirector of the joint program, vice chair of education, and MHA program director at Pitt Public Health.

Also serving as codirector of the joint program is Rabikar Chatterjee, Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business associate dean for master’s and executive programs.

“[We are] excited about this program because it meets a clear and growing need in the evolving business of health care,” he says.

The new MHA/MBA joint degree program was approved and launched in May 2016 following several years of intensive deliberation and curricular planning. This three-year, 78-credit professional program was designed to attract the best and brightest applicants who are committed to attaining C-suite positions in the challenging and ever-changing world of health care systems. This offering should not only deepen the managerial competencies of our graduates to prepare them for leadership roles in health care but also raise the profile of all of our master’s degree programs nationally.

“The faculties of both schools voted unanimously in favor of the proposal, which reflects the strength of support and enthusiasm for the program and the partnership between the two outstanding schools. This will be among the very best programs of its type in the country,” says Chatterjee.

Specifically, the joint MHA/MBA program will allow for more intense concentration in functional areas of management, such as finance and marketing. Although the full array of academic resources and expertise of the cosponsoring schools will be available to our joint degree program students, their primary home will be in the Department of Health Policy and Management.

The three-year plan of study includes two summer term options for administrative residencies of either two full-time 12-week placements at one health care organization or two independent placements at different organizations. Opportunities for extending the field placements on a part-time basis across the three academic years also will likely be available. The three-year curriculum also will allow students to complete a certificate program of interest without incurring tuition overload.

Because the program just received final approval from the University in May, the department was not able to mount an assertive marketing and recruitment campaign for fall 2016 admissions. However, two of our admitted MHA students applied for and were accepted into the joint degree program, and another first-year MHA student intends to apply for mid-year admission. We anticipate admitting eight to 10 students for fall 2017 and achieving an enrollment of at least 30 students within the following five years. To ensure that applicants are prepared for the rigor of this program and demonstrate indicators of potential leadership and professionalism, they will be screened for admission by both schools.

*Continued on page 12*



Mark Roberts, chair of HPM, with MHA/MBA students Lauren Borrelli and Catherine Riccelli

One of our planning assumptions is that the demand for the traditional two-year, 60-credit MHA program will continue for aspiring health care administrators who decide to enter the job market or pursue postgraduate administrative fellowships.

Says Rohrer: “We are confident that this new competency-based program is designed to build on the strengths of the legacy program reinforced by the strong commitment of the faculty of both academic units to offer a program of the highest quality that will be nationally competitive.”

## GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS ENGINEERING

The Graduate Certificate in Health Care Systems Engineering program promulgates the University of Pittsburgh’s legacy of being the first school (circa 1955) to infuse industrial engineering (IE) principles into health sciences and health care administration curricula. To formalize the integration of IE principles with health care academics, the program was established in 2011 as a collaboration of the Department of Health Policy and Management (HPM) of Pitt Public Health and the Department of Industrial Engineering in the Swanson School of Engineering.

Health systems engineering (HSE) is a term reflecting the evolution of IE in health care. IE rooted itself in health care during the 1950s and was initially applied to the administrative aspects of hospital operations. Today, HSE implies the broader systems perspective IE presents to the health care industry throughout the continuum of care, embracing both administrative and clinical facets.

The program focuses on graduate IE students and on MHA/MPH students in HPM. Accordingly, it is designed to meet the needs of those pursuing careers in the management and redesign of the constantly evolving health care industry. The program is intended to supplement the core strengths of the student’s MHA/MPH or IE master’s program.

For HPM students, the program provides the IE concepts and analytic tools needed for innovative methods, process efficiency, and quality improvements. The IE paradigms and tools learned through the program provide the individual with the acumen for making fact- and data-based objective

decisions. Analytical tools include lean concepts, operations research, and basic IE methods (e.g., productivity, return on investment, cost-benefit analyses, and facilities planning).

For graduate IE students, the program provides a basic understanding of the health care industry and how health care organizations work. Students gain knowledge of health care operations, organizational culture, and strategic issue challenges. With this background, IE students learn how to apply their IE knowledge and talents to health care.

In addition to didactic classroom studies, the program offers exposure to real-life situations. This includes presentations by health care subject experts, including hospital leaders, and work at local health care facilities to solve issues using IE and health care management principles. A case in point is the second-year capstone project, which requires employing the IE and health care management knowledge gained during the two-year program. For any project-related course, HPM and IE students work together in teams to promote synergy from interdisciplinary talents.

Since its inception, the program has witnessed enrollment growth. The 2016–17 program class has 12 students.

For further general information about the Graduate Certificate in Health Care Systems Engineering and/or about the field, contact Barry Ross, coordinator for the Graduate Certificate in Health Care Systems Engineering, at [bross@pitt.edu](mailto:bross@pitt.edu). For admissions and enrollment information, visit [publichealth.pitt.edu/health-policy-and-management/academics/certificates](http://publichealth.pitt.edu/health-policy-and-management/academics/certificates).



Left to right: Jennifer Longo, Marissa Andreassi, Tanya Bahl, Swati Bhosale, Melina Mermigas, Wes Rohrer, Jeremy Bonfini, Bryan Norman, John Cordier, Barry Ross, Kannop Mitsantisuk, Lilian Wu, Peter Lewellen

## GRANTS RECEIVED APRIL–OCTOBER 2016

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	FUNDING AGENCY	TITLE
Cindy Bryce	Penn State University under, Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute	A Patient Centered PaTH to Addressing Diabetes: Impact of State Health Policies on Diabetes Outcomes and Disparities
Evan Cole	Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, sub under Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	Enhancing the Access and Quality of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) for Individuals with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) in Rural Pennsylvania's Medicaid Primary Care Practices
Howard Degenholtz	Center for Organ Recovery & Education	West Virginia Physician Advocacy Campaign
Howard Degenholtz	Health Resources & Services Administration	Patients Save Lives: Integrating Real-Time Electronic Form Generation into Primary Care Office Procedures to Test and Tailor Donor Designation Messages to People Age 50 and Older
Hawre Jalal	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	CDC IPA Trends of the Opioid-Heroin Epidemic
Julia Driessen	Deloitte, sub from Pennsylvania Department of Health	Deloitte Pennsylvania Medicaid Expansion Report Support
Lindsay Sabik	National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Cancer Institute	Disparities in Cancer Screening: The Role of Medicaid Policy
Lindsay Sabik	American Cancer Society	The Impact of Massachusetts Health Reform on Cancer Diagnosis and Treatment
Lindsay Sabik	Virginia Commonwealth University, sub under NIH	Delivering High-Quality HIV Care in the South: System-Level Policy Alternatives
Marian Jarlenski	Magee-Womens Research Institute, sub under NIH	Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Womens Health in Pittsburgh
Walid Gellad	Pennsylvania Department of Health	Identification of Education Best Practices for PDMP System Users

## SELECT PUBLICATIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Faculty, students, and research staff in the Department of Health Policy and Management continue to produce outstanding research that informs important current health care policy questions. Since the publication of our last newsletter, we have produced the following important publications in several policy areas:

Castle, N.G., and Resnick, N. Service-Enriched Housing: The Staying at Home Program. *Journal of Applied Gerontology*. 2016 [in press].

Chidi AP, Bryce CL, Donohue J, Fine MJ, Landsittel D, Myaskovsky L, Rogal S, Switzer G, Tsung A, Smith KJ. Economic and Public Health Impacts of Policies Restricting Access to Hepatitis C Treatment for Medicaid Patients. *Value in Health*. 2016 Jun; 19(4): 326-34. PMID: 27325324. doi:10.1016/j.jval.2016.01.010.

Huber GA, Roberts CA and James AE. The Converging Public Health Responsibilities of Nonprofit Hospitals and Government Hospitals, Government and Public Health. *Civil & Legal Sciences* 2015, 4:3.

Kaplan CM, Zhang Y. Anticipatory Behavior in Response to Medicare Part D's Coverage Gap. *Health Economics*. 2016 Jan 7. PMID:26749399. doi:10.1002/hec.3311.

Lo-Ciganic W, Donohue JM, Jones BL, Perera S, Thorpe JM, Thorpe CT, Marcum ZA, Gellad WF. Trajectories of Diabetes Medication Adherence and Hospitalization Risk. *J Gen Intern Med*. 2016 May 26 (Epub ahead of print).

Lo-Ciganic W, Gellad WF, Huskamp HA, Choudhry NK, Chang CH, Zhang R, Jones BL, Guclu H, Richards-Shubik S, Donohue JM (2016). Who Were the Early Adopters of Dabigatran? An Application of Group-Based Trajectory Models. *Medical Care* 54(7):725

Roberts, MS. The Next Chapter in Cost-effectiveness Analysis. [editorial] *JAMA* 316(10) 1049-50. 2016

Zhang Y, Ma Q, Chen Y, Gao H. Effects of Public Hospital Reform on Inpatient Expenditures in Rural China. *Health Economics*. 2016 Feb 4. PMID:26842555. doi:10.1002/hec.3320.

# ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

## MS GRADUATE SALLY CAINE LEATHERS



Leathers

Sally Caine Leathers graduated with an MS in health services research and policy from Pitt Public Health in the spring of 2016 and is currently serving as a health insurance specialist at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' Innovation Center. At present, her focus is on the Million Hearts Cardiovascular Disease Risk Reduction Model. Project

Million Hearts is a large-scale randomized study that focuses on the use of a risk calculator to determine an individual's risk for a cardiovascular event. This tool could potentially improve health outcomes.

Leathers strongly believes that her time in the Department of Health Policy and Management (HPM) was well spent and prepared her for her current position. HPM's focus on research design and implementation along with statistical analysis has allowed her to be successful in her current position. Leathers stressed how important it is to learn to communicate effectively early in a career, both in person and through e-mail. To those entering the field, she recommends getting involved while still in graduate school in any activity that allows practicing the skills from the classroom so that they can ask questions.

Leathers says that working at the centers is very rewarding and that she is enjoying the fast-paced work culture. In order to maintain a healthy work-life balance, Leathers schedules her hobbies, such as yoga and ballet classes, into her days. Leathers says she takes inspiration from many people she admires and strives to emulate their best characteristics. She says her greatest achievement is following her passion for making a difference in the health of our country at a large-scale policy level.

## TWO NEW PITT AMBASSADORS

During the 2016 homecoming celebration, the Pitt Alumni Association launched a new initiative, the Pitt Ambassadors Program. This program offers current students a special networking dinner to learn about different careers and paths. The two ambassadors from Pitt Public Health were Natalie

Bulger (MHA '12) and Alex Sundermann (MPH '14). Bulger serves as director of compliance, risk, and regulatory at the Children's Institute. Sundermann serves as an infection control preventionist for UPMC. The evening was full of engaging conversation for students and hosts.



The 2016 MHA and MPH Incoming Cohort



Many congratulations to the 2016 December graduates. Left to right: Anupama Sharma (HPM '16), Gerry Barron, Elizabeth Van Nostrand, Andrew Gaul (HPM '16), Wes Rohrer, Yara Elbeshbishi (HPM '16), and Mark Roberts

## LETTER FROM MIKE EVANS



Dear Health Policy and Management (HPM) alumni,

As president of the HPM Alumni Association, I am pleased to provide you with my third update on the activities of our association. We continue to actively engage with the HPM program as it strives to compete with the very best health policy and management programs in the country.

As an alumnus, I am personally

very proud of our program's progress in recruiting great students, building upon an excellent faculty, and continuing to offer a contemporary curriculum that keeps pace with our dynamic industry.

### Bylaws and Strategic Plan

Our alumni officers and I are excited to inform you that we have crafted new bylaws and a strategic plan for our association. Our three-year plan (2016-18) focuses on improving alumni communications; educational offerings; fundraising efforts; association governance; and recognition of deserving alumni, faculty, and students to better support the HPM program. The bylaws and strategic plan can be found on our Web page at [publichealth.pitt.edu/health-policy-and-management/about/alumni](http://publichealth.pitt.edu/health-policy-and-management/about/alumni).

### Appointment of Alumni Relations Coordinator

As a visible and much appreciated show of support for our alumni association, the HPM program has appointed Kristin Lazzara (MHA/MBA '95) as alumni relations coordinator. In addition to her research duties and other responsibilities within Pitt Public Health, Lazzara will assist our association in facilitating communications and interactions with alumni, updating our alumni directory, and publicizing opportunities for alumni to provide support to our program. Welcome, Kristin!

### National Network of Alumni

We are working to establish a national network of our alumni to provide needed assistance to our program. In doing so, we are looking for alumni willing to help identify and interview outstanding student candidates so we can continue to attract the best and brightest students from across the country. In addition, we would like to recruit alumni who are willing to host alumni socials in metropolitan areas where we have a nice

cluster of our alumni. We hope to have representatives of our program attend these events to enhance communications and connections with our alumni throughout the country. If you are interested in helping as indicated above, please contact me at [mikee2020@comcast.net](mailto:mikee2020@comcast.net) or 724-875-9649 or Kristin Lazzara at [kal137@pitt.edu](mailto:kal137@pitt.edu) or 412-648-1392. Thank you!

### Inaugural Dawn Gideon Lecture and Webinar

I am very pleased that the response to the inaugural Dawn Gideon Lecture and Webinar has been overwhelmingly positive! More than 130 participants registered to attend, while another 50 elected to join via webinar. The topic, "Health Care's Newest Code Blue: The Need for Cash Infusion and Restructuring," served as a basis for response from an alumni panel composed of David Hunter (MPH '70), past managing partner, Hunter Partners; Robert Henkel (MPH '83), president and CEO, Ascension Health, and executive vice president, Ascension; and

Michael Young (MPH '82), president and CEO, PinnacleHealth.

The Dawn Gideon Lecture and Webinar, graciously sponsored by the Dawn Gideon Foundation, will now serve as our second annual rallying event for our HPM program (the first being the annual American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) Congress

on Healthcare Leadership, which will be held in Chicago, Ill., March 27-30, 2017.

### ACHE Congress on Healthcare Leadership

The annual meeting in Chicago continues to serve as a venue where we celebrate all that's good about our program and recognize deserving alumni, faculty, and students. Over the past three years, our attendance has grown (we've needed bigger rooms!), and we expect more of the same as we gather on Tuesday, March 28, 2017, at 6 p.m., (hotel and room to be determined). As in past years, we will kick off our annual fund drive to support important student award funds as we compete with other top-tier programs. Lastly, we will conduct a special presentation that evening, so you won't want to miss it. See you in Chicago!

Once again, thank you for your continued support of our HPM program, its students, faculty, and alumni. We are moving in the right direction!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mike Evans (MPH '80)  
HPM Alumni Association President

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Back row, left to right: MonaLisa Leung, Swati Bhosale, Wes Rohrer, Lilian Wu, Amrit Kaur; front row, left to right: Tanya Bahl, and Marissa Andreassi