

DLSPPH BULLETIN



Volume 1 No. 2 June 2013

DIRECTORS MESSAGE



Dr. Howard Hu, Director

A message to the graduating class of DLSPPH students and our wider DLSPPH community (based on remarks made at the June 5 DLSPPH Graduation Reception)

This week, the Dalla Lana School of Public Health graduated 61 students with MPH degrees, 5 students with MSc degrees (in biostatistics), 13 students with MScCH degrees, and 7 students with newly minted PhDs (by the way, quite a few more will graduate in November). Next to you are the moms, dads, spouses, uncles, aunties, siblings who have helped pay for your education, fed you when you came home,

your heads still buried in your books, and otherwise supported you while you pursued your dreams. And you know, they were all wondering, perhaps, what really is the future for my loved one with this new degree? What the heck is public health anyway?

The answer used to be, simply: we are the ones who track epidemics, who make sure your restaurant food is cooked enough, who talk about the dangers of smoking, who make sure the safety equipment in your workplace is functional, who crunch numbers on who dies of what.

Yes, we are still those folks---but now, we are also much more. More and more, public health is being turned to for answers to new big questions facing society: How will climate change affect millions newly at risk for malaria, dengue fever, and cholera? What is causing the epidemic of childhood obesity—and how will we reverse it? How should the architecture, information systems, and transportation of the new and renewed cities of tomorrow be redesigned to optimize health? What does the globalization of the world's industries, products, wastes, peoples, attitudes and cultural beliefs impact on the risk of the next SARS, the next food poisoning, the next toxic product? And what is the design of the truly sustainable health system of the future---and how will we get there?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This issue of the DLSPPH e-Bulletin was made possible with the technical assistance of Resource Environmental Associates Limited.

*Congratulations to all the
2012-2013 DLSPPH Graduates!*

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(cont.) I am proud to say that you have graduated from a school that is in the fantastic position of being a global leader in responding to those challenges. It is a position that is based not only on our status as the largest school of public health in Canada endowed with some of the most productive scientists and educators in the world, the best staff, and some of the smartest students in Canada.

It also based on our close partnerships with the University of Toronto Schools of Medicine, Nursing, Engineering, Management, Law, Pharmacy and other units; our alliances with Toronto's powerful community of research-intensive hospitals, government agencies, and institutes; and the unique opportunity we have to capitalize on our collective strengths to pursue the vision we have recently embraced. Yes, the students have been hearing me talk about this vision a lot recently. In short, we will lead in scholarship on how public health can help create the Healthy Cities & Communities of today and tomorrow; in Global Health, in all its dimensions but in particular, with respect to equity & innovation; and in the Integration of Public Health with Clinical Medicine and Primary Care in order to build the sustainable health system of the future.

You are special. And I'm not just saying that. You are the first class to graduate for which I have had the privilege of being your leader. You were an active class. You pushed us, and you pushed me. You led in the organization of a student-led conference on "Health in the Age of Austerity" that forced all of us to take a close look at the close links between poverty, widening gaps in income, and risks to public health that eventually threaten us all. As we worked on the ever-challenging plans on funding our PhD students, you made us confront the reality of the financial pressures of students living in one of the most vibrant—but most expensive--- cities in the world. You organized multiple Town Halls that clearly spelled out the bumps in the road in our existing ways of teaching even as we worked on the next generation of a world-class education.

Most of all, you engaged. You will always have a very special place in my heart, and I will be watching out for your successes and great achievements with enormous interest.

Best wishes and please keep in touch. Follow us. After all, our success in pursuing this vision will ultimately increase the value of your degree. We are all connected. As many of you know, DLSPH has launched a Facebook page and in the coming weeks we plan to launch a Twitter feed and

Linked-In page to connect our alumni (i.e., now YOU) and our student body as part of the networking and mentoring strategy of our future. Please log in, tune in, be a part of it. And good luck.

Howard Hu

HAPPENINGS

.....
[Monday June 24th 12 Noon to 1pm—Global Health: Communicating about NCDs \(Eliot Sorel\) 155 College Street Suite 400.](#)

[MPH WEBinars](#)

WHAT'S NEW?

.....
[Robin Hurst and Ted Myers of DLSPH honoured with UofT Long Service Award](#)

[Jan Kestle and Vivek Goel - The Need For Good Data](#)

.....
 For more visit <http://dlsph.utoronto.ca/new>

The screenshot shows the DLSPH website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'U of T Home', 'Portal', 'ROSI', 'Contacts', 'Maps', and 'HOME'. Below this is a search bar. The main header features the University of Toronto logo and the text 'UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO DALLA LANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH'. A secondary navigation bar includes links for 'About', 'New Initiatives', 'Divisions', 'Programs & Students', 'Research', 'Faculty', 'Events', and 'Alumni'. The main content area has a large banner image of a crowd with the text 'Epidemiology' and 'Dalla Lana School of Public Health'. Below the banner are four columns of news items:

- WHAT'S NEW:**
 - 2013 DLSPH Biostatistics Research Day
 - Dr. Vivek Goel awarded the Distinguished Service Award by aPhA
 - Jessica Dennis DLSPH PhD Epidemiology student and STAGE trainee published in the journal of the British Medical Association
 - Dr. Peter Selby and CAMH HDS awarded the inaugural Ivan Silver Innovation Award
 - Robin Hurst and Ted Myers of DLSPH honoured with UofT Long Service Award
- PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS:**
 - Degree Programs Offered, Application Process, Student Award and Funding Opportunities.....
 - Learn more
- CURRENT STUDENTS:**
 - Important dates, courses, resources and timetables
 - Learn more
- UPCOMING EVENTS:**
 - Global Health Metrics & E... 06/17/2013 (All day)
 - From Waste to Wealth and Heal... 05/20/2013 - 12:00
 - Communicating on Non Commun... 06/24/2013 - 12:00
 - BUILT ENVIRONMENT & HEALT... 06/25/2013 (All day)

YOU SHOULD KNOW...

A major outcome of the MPH Curriculum Renewal Task-force deliberations has been an **exciting redesign of CHL5004H, Introduction to Public Health Sciences**. This is a required course for all Masters and doctoral programs and has been taught as a two-week block at the beginning of the Fall term. The revised course will include a four-day block (September 3 to 6) of interactive lectures and panel discussions, coupled with small group interdisciplinary tutorial sessions. The course will then continue in an innovative fashion with a longitudinal component. Students will meet periodically over the course of the Fall term in their small group tutorial sessions to identify the root causes (social, political, historical, etc.) of public health issues within the context of a specific rural or urban Canadian community; and determine community assets, resources, barriers and create resolutions that fit the community's context. Another innovative feature will be a series of workshops that address important professional skills necessary to become effective change agents and/or team players such as conflict management and group facilitation. In February, the entire class will reconvene for two days (February 20th and 21st) to share and debate their community-based findings, explore career paths and network with alumni.

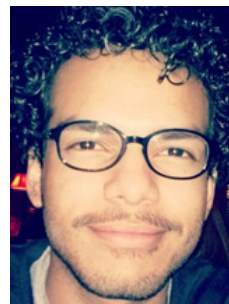
Suzanne Jackson and Anne-Emanuelle Birn have received invitations to the 8th Global Conference on Health Promotion run by WHO in Helsinki June 10-14, 2013. This invitation-only meeting will have about 600 delegates from about 120 countries around the world and a small technical team. The work of the meeting is to produce a declaration about "Health in All Policies" which will be added to the guiding documents produced by this series of meetings since the inaugural one – The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion in 1986. Suzanne and Anne-Emanuelle are part of the technical team that will be synthesizing and communicating the input from the delegates. They will also be connected to the Canadian and the Pan-American delegations in attendance.

The Dalla Lana School of Public Health (DLSPH) welcomes Professor Monica Angelim Gomes De Lima from the University of Bahia as a visiting professor at the DLSPH from June 1st, 2013 to May 31st, 2014. She will be

conducting research in the field of Work Disability Prevention.

Dr. Farah Ahmad, with four MPH students as co-authors, published: [Resilience and resources among South Asian immigrant women as survivors of partner violence & Exploring ways to overcome barriers to mammography uptake and retention among South Asian immigrant women.](#)

Dr. Anna Charrelli published [Digital Compared with Screen-Film Mammography: Performance Measures in Concurrent Cohorts within an Organized Breast Screening Program](#), which received a vast amount of media attention including the Globe and Mail article, [Ontario junking dozens of mammography machines after screening results questioned.](#)



Roberto Rubem da Silva Brandão

Roberto Rubem da Silva Brandão, is currently a **Science without Borders (SWB)** exchange student at the University of Toronto. He is a student of Nutrition & Public Health at the University of São Paulo, Brazil and is being hosted by the HIV Social, Behavioural and Epidemiological Studies Unit at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health and mentored by Professor Dan Allman, where he is engaged in a 12-week undergraduate

research program that focuses on social vulnerability and marginalized populations with an emphasis on HIV and STIs. [To view the complete story, click here.](#)

PhD. candidate **Kevin Black** (Co-supervised by Margaret MacNeill and Cameron Norman) recently received a **SSHRC PhD fellowship** to study the social marketing of fatherhood and early childhood development.

YOU SHOULD KNOW...

Nivedita Ravi, Anthea Darychuk, and Michelle Olding from health promotion, **Nicole Greenspan** from HPME and **Rebecca Penn** from SBHS- from the CIHR public health policy STIHR - are publishing an article in the Ontario Health Promotion Bulletin about a workshop they facilitated at TOPHC about criminalization of HIV non-disclosure. The article is entitled “Criminalization of HIV Nondisclosure: Imagining a Public Health Response.”

Lisa Dias and **Rebecca Penn** are presenting work at Canadian Sociological Association in Victoria, and **Katherine Radzinski** is presenting work at the international harm reduction conference in Vilnius Lithuania (as is **Professor Carol Strike**).

The 2013 DLSPH Biostatistics Research Day was held on May 21st, and attended by over one hundred people; this was a joint event together with the SORA-BN-TABA workshop on Successful Data Mining in Practice led by Dr. Dick De Veaux (see <http://wlou.biostatistics.utoronto.ca/SORA-BN-TABA/WBRD/2013/Default.htm>). Highlights of this one-day event included an engaging Biostatistics career panel and stimulating research presentations by Biostatistics students.

The inaugural **Paul Corey Awards** for best poster presentations were presented at the end of Research Day.

The members of the award committee were Tamara

Arenovich (chair), Sandra Gardner, Rosane Nisenbaum, and Wei Xu; the award recipients were (1) **Shiyi Chen** (supervisor Andrew Paterson), (2) **Elyse Corn** (supervisor Sandra Gardner) and (3) **Laura Chiarelli** (supervisor Lucia Mirea). Congratulations to all three winners, and special thanks to all four judges!



Left to right: Sandra Gardner, Shiyi Chen, Paul Carey, Tamara Arenovich.

Photograph taken by Billy Chang

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2012-2013 DLSPH AWARD RECIPIENTS

Name of Award	Terms of Award	Awards Recipients
Donald Fraser Memorial Award	Awarded to a graduating Master of Public Health student who has achieved superior academic standing.	Wai-May Wong (CN)
David Hewitt Award	Awarded to a current or graduating student who has contributed substantially to the intellectual and social life of the Public Health Sciences student body. Co-recipients	Marcella Jones (EPI) Alexandra Terrana (HP)
Randall Coates Epidemiology Prize	Awarded to current or graduating student in the Division of Epidemiology whose research is in the area of communicable diseases and demonstrates academic excellence. Co-recipients	Tiffany Fitzpatrick (EPI) Beth Rachlis (EPI-PhD)
Richard J Helmeste Memorial Award	Awarded to a Master of Public Health student in the field of Occupational & Environmental Health who has demonstrated academic excellence.	Alex Hill (OEH)
Anne-Liis Ots-Goodman Prize	Awarded to a Master of Public Health graduating student in the field of Occupational & Environmental Health with the highest academic standing in degree required courses.	Aryeh Frydman (OEH)

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2012-2013 DLSPH AWARD RECIPIENTS (CONT.)

Name of Award	Terms of Award	Awards Recipients
R. B Sutherland Memorial Award	Awarded to a graduating student who has achieved the highest grade in CHL5410H (Occupational Epidemiology) and whose program of study is directly relevant to occupational health research. Co-recipients	Alexandra Budgell (OEH) Aryeh Frydman (OEH) Joanne Kim (OEH)
Mary Jane Ashley Award	Awarded to a student enrolled in the Collaborative Program in Addiction Studies on the basis of academic achievement. Co-recipients	Branka Agic (SBHS-PhD) Gillian Kolla (SBHS-PhD)
Gina Gesser Memorial Award	Awarded to a current or graduating student in the Master of Public Health program in the field of Social & Behavioural Health Sciences (Health Promotion) who shows promise in scholarly and community commitments as reflected by Gesser's work.	Anthea Darychuk (HP)
James A. McNab Award	Recognition to a current student who has demonstrated outstanding potential to contribute to the field of Health Promotion.	Ravinder Gabble (HP)
Peter Kong-Ming New Award	Awarded to a student with the best paper submitted for a course within the Division of Social & Behavioural Health Sciences.	Rebecca Ann Penn (SBHS-PhD)

ACCOLADES

Congratulations to **Dr. Carol Strike**, professor of Social and Behavioural Health Sciences, on receiving tenure.

Congratulations to **Vivek Goel** who was awarded a Distinguished Service Award from the Association of Local Public Health Agencies. The Distinguished Service Award (DSA) is awarded annually by the Association of Local Public Health Agencies to individuals in recognition of their outstanding contributions made to public health in Ontario.

Recipients have demonstrated exceptional qualities of leadership in his/her own milieu; achieved tangible results through lengthy service and/or distinctive acts; and displayed exemplary devotion to public health at the provincial level.

Awards are most often given to individuals within ALPHa's membership (COMOH, Boards of Health Section or Affiliates) but individuals outside the ALPHa membership who have made outstanding contributions to public health in Ontario may also be recognized.

Congratulations to **Dr. Melanie Morris** on her retirement. DLSPH thanks her for all of her tremendous work as the Assistant Director of the MPH Nutrition Program.



Dr. Melanie Morris

Congratulations to **Dr. Donald Cole** on his chapter on the Nigerian lead poisoning epidemic in the new book, "Dilemmas, Challenges, and Ethics of Humanitarian Action," by Caroline Abu-Sada.

<http://www.chapters.indigo.ca/books/dilemmas-challenges-and-ethics-of/9780773540866-item.html>

ACCOLADES (CONT.)

On April 11th 2013, **Professor Liviana Calzavara** was honoured with the Mark Wainberg Lecture by the Canadian Association for HIV Research (CAHR), a professional association which represents over 600 biomedical, clinical, epidemiology, public health and social science researchers in Canada.



Dr. Liviana Calzavara

The award recognizes Canadian researchers in the field of HIV who exemplify the traits of excellence, perseverance, and commitment to the cause of finding innovative and ground breaking ways to address the epidemic. The award is named in honour of Mark Wainberg, Head of the HIV/AIDS research axis, Lady Davis Institute and Director of the McGill University AIDS Centre and Professor of Microbiology and Immunology, McGill University. Dr. Calzavara is the 12th recipient and the second social scientist to receive this honour. “This award is especially meaningful to me as it is recognition of one’s contribution to the field by one’s peers” said Dr. Calzavara upon accepting the award (see photo).

Her lecture, titled Re-focusing our efforts: Addressing the unspoken structural factors that shape HIV research, applied a historical lens, identifying and discussing structural forces that shape what research is done and how it is done. These powerful forces (including policies, programs, practices, norms and expectations of governments, funding bodies, academic institutions and society) are seldom challenged, sometimes invisible, and rarely the focus of research or open dialogue. (The lecture can be viewed at: http://www.srchiv.ca/en/index.php/knowledge/podcast/mark_wainberg_lecture_cahr2013).

Professor Wendy Lou has been named a fellow of the American Statistical Association (ASA), the preeminent professional statistical society of the US, announced ASA President Marie Davidian, a professor of statistics at North Carolina State University.

To be recognized as a 2013 ASA Fellow, each honoree must make outstanding professional contributions to and have exhibited leadership in the field of statistical science. Prof. Lou was honored for her notable contributions to the distribution theory of runs and patterns, for remarkable collaborations in the biomedical and healthcare sciences, for exemplary leadership in statistical education and outstanding service to the profession.

Professor Lou will be awarded a certificate at a ceremony on August 6 at the annual Joint Statistical Meetings in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

On Thursday, May 23, **Dr. Steven Narod** was selected by the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) to receive its highest honour, the prestigious O. Harold Warwick Prize. The prize is given to a scientist whose research has had a major impact on cancer control in Canada. Dr. Narod’s award was formally presented by Victoria Warwick, a cancer survivor and daughter of the late Dr. O. Harold Warwick, a pioneering researcher in cancer control and treatment, who became the first executive director of both the former National Cancer Institute of Canada and the Canadian Cancer Society.



Dr. Steven Narod

Solly Benatar was recently presented with the 2011 Henry Knowles Beecher Award at the Hastings Center in New York. The Hastings Center is an independent, nonpartisan, and non-profit bioethics research institute founded in 1969 with the mission of addressing fundamental ethical issues in the areas of health, medicine, and the environment as they affect individuals, communities, and societies. The Beecher Award ‘recognizes individuals who have made a lifetime contribution to ethics and the life sciences and whose careers have been devoted to excellence in scholarship, research, and ethical inquiry. <http://www.thehastingscenter.org/About/Default.aspx?id=2972>

ACCOLADES (CONT.)

DLSPH PhD Epidemiology student and STAGE trainee **Jessica Dennis** published her first major independent work in the prestigious scientific journal BMJ. <http://www2.macleans.ca/2013/05/15/no-evidence-cycle-helmet-laws-reduce-head-injuries-study/>

Laila Rahman is the recipient of the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) Population and Public Health Student Award for a PhD Student.



Laila Rahman

Dr. Peter Selby and the CAMH Nicotine Dependence Service (NDS) are excited to report that on May 7th, 2013 they were the recipients of the inaugural Ivan Silver Innovation Award, presented by the University of Toronto's Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development (CEPD), in honour of Dr. Ivan Silver, past Vice Dean of CEPD. This award recognizes individuals and teams who have developed and delivered an innovative initiative that aims to affect health professional performance or health outcomes. The NDS provides formal training to organizations and health professionals offering smoking cessation treatment, to tailor implementation models to the needs of specific organizations, and provide ongoing coaching, support and education to individuals and agencies providing smoking cessation to their clients.

The DLSPH is pleased to congratulate **Christopher Fraser**, a first year MPH, Occupational and Environmental Health student as a 2013 recipient of the 3M's Personal Safety Division (PSD) Occupational Health and Safety Scholarship. Chris has received one of four \$5,000 scholarships awarded to outstanding students pursuing an education in a graduate occupational health and safety / industrial hygiene program. The purpose of this award is to recognize graduate students for their high level of academic achievement, contributions to the profession, and intent to pursue careers in the discipline of Occupational Health and Safety. As part of the award, 3M also generously provided for Chris to travel to and attend the American Industrial Hygiene Conference and Exposition that was recently held in Montreal. It has been a long time since a Canadian student has won this award, Congratulations Chris!



Left to right: Professor Paul Bozek, Professor Andrea Sasse-Kortsak, Christopher Fraser, Program Director Lisa Ceolin, Dan Curts

Jannice So received a tuition scholarship for the 5th Summer Institute in Statistics and Modeling in Infectious Diseases. Jannice is a second year Master's student in Epidemiology.

THE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

In January of this year the DLSPH and PHAA re-launched the Mentorship Program, a yearlong initiative that pairs public health alumni mentors with current graduate students. The Program's 60 participants represent the fields of epidemiology, health promotion, occupational and environmental health, as well as biostatistics. Supported with regular check-ins, the *Mentorship Monthly* e-newsletter, and group events, mentors and mentees meet regularly to discuss coursework and practicum opportunities, work-life balance, career aspirations, and interesting topics in public health.

On Monday, May 27th mentors and mentees were brought together for a unique networking opportunity. In speed dating-like fashion, mentees had



Mentorship Program

Photograph by Gustavo Toledo Photography

two minutes to practice their 'elevator speech' and ask their most intriguing and purposeful questions of a mentor they did not already know. In turn, mentors were put in the hot seat to provide meaningful feedback. The event proved to be both challenging and exciting, and most importantly, new networks were created and all had fun.

The Mentorship Program is already looking ahead to next year. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, or wish to know more about the program, please contact [jill.charnaw.burger@utoronto.ca] or [public.health@alumni.utoronto.ca].



Mentorship Program

Photograph by Gustavo Toledo Photography

PUBLIC HEALTH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (PHAA) SPRING SPEAKER PANEL

On Monday, May 27th the PHAA hosted a Spring Speaker Panel - a new initiative that aims to explore a hot topic in public health, showcase the incredible expertise of our alumni, and provide a forum for alumni to learn from, and network with, one another.

The panel discussion was entitled "*The Skinny on Taxing Junk Food*" and examined the taxation of unhealthy foods as a policy tool for reducing obesity and improving public health. The panelists were all alumni representing different fields of public health, and included **Dr. Hazel Lynn (MHSc, 2003)**, Medical Officer of Health, Grey Bruce Health Unit; **Dr. Laura Rosella (PhD, 2009, MHSc, 2005)**, Scientist, Public Health Ontario, Adjunct Scientist, Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences, and Assistant Professor, DLSPH; **Bronwyn Underhill (MHSc 2008)**, Health Planner, Flemingdon Community Health Centre; **Kiran Kapoor (MHSc, 2000)**, Manager, Research & Program Evaluation, Workplace Safety and Prevention Services; and moderator **Roselle Martino (MHSc, 2006)**, Executive Director, Public Health Division, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.



Left to right: Kiran Kapoor, Dr. Laura Rosella, Bronwyn Underhill, Roselle Martino, Dr. Hazel Lynn

Photograph by Gustavo Toledo Photography

PUBLIC HEALTH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (PHAA) SPRING SPEAKER PANEL (CONT.)



Public Health Alumni Association Spring Speaker Panel

Photograph by Gustavo Toledo Photography

The rich dialogue and collegial debate among the panelists, which was further enhanced by contributions from the audience, highlighted the importance of numerous public health perspectives ranging from food security, socioeconomic equity and the built environment, to measurement and evidence, to the roles of industry and government. At the heart of the discussion lay the challenge of defining ‘junk food’, and the political realities that limit our ability to develop comprehensive, multi-prong approaches to addressing complex public health issues like obesity.

A reception offering plenty of healthy food options followed the panel discussion, and allowed for small groups to continue the conversation. Networking continued well into the evening and the feedback that has poured in has been overwhelmingly positive.

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to our fantastic panelists for making the event such a tremendous success!

ALUMNI

To be sure you receive invitations to exciting PHAA events such as this, please update your email address either online (https://secureca.imodules.com/s/731/index_clean.aspx?sid=731&pgid=1363&cid=2576&gid=1) or by email (address.update@utoronto.ca)

INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH EQUITY AND INNOVATION WELCOMES FIRST POST-DOCTORAL FELLOW

This month, we are excited to welcome **Lincoln Lau**, our first post-doctoral fellow to join the Institute for Global Health Equity & Innovation.

After completing his bachelor’s degree at Queen’s University, Lincoln had the opportunity to do an internship in rural Bangladesh (CIDA-funded) where he became convinced of the importance of public health and infectious disease control. As a result, he pursued a PhD in Infectious Disease Epidemiology at the University of Hong Kong, graduating in 2012. The focus of his doctoral research was the dynamics of influenza viral shedding and the heterogeneity of potential infectiousness among infected children and adults.

While working on influenza in Hong Kong, he also volunteered for an NGO that provides a poverty alleviation program in the Philippines. The organization targets households where individuals report living on less than \$0.50 per day. It reaches approximately 20,000 households a year with its varied livelihood, nutrition and health programs. His primary post-doctoral project will involve assessing relationships between social determinants and health in this very poor population and evaluating the health impact of the NGO’s programs on health, both relevant to the mission of IGHEI.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT SHAWN CHIRREY, MHS_c 1997
Senior Manager, Prevention CancerCare Ontario

The strength of our School is exemplified by the success and prominence of our graduates throughout the public health world, locally and abroad. Our alumni uphold the School's reputation for being the best institution of its kind, and in turn carve the way for future and current students to develop their own expertise.



Shawn Chirrey,
Gustavo Toledo Photography

We are excited to introduce the *Alumni Spotlight*, a new series highlighting the accomplishments and experiences of our DLSPH alumni. Each DLSPH Newsletter will feature an alumna/us who was asked to describe their current career pursuits, reflect on their time as a student at the School, and provide advice for current and prospective learners.

How did you become interested in your field of public health? What lead you to DLSPH? I had an understanding of community health and determinants of health from my previous sociology and

anthropology degrees, but I didn't know that "health promotion" existed. I had worked in both epidemiology and community economic development. I found that health promotion really as a fusion of these experiences, and I had inadvertently found myself employing health promotion principles in the projects I was working on.

At the time, DLSPH (then the Department of Public Health Sciences) was **the leading** health promotion program in the country (and arguably still is today). The quality of the academic staff, the program, the ability to develop connections for practicum, the opportunities, set you up for a career. The breadth of scope, the skills and experience, the connections, all of it combined made it an easy choice.

In what ways has your DLSPH experience had an impact on your career? The program is set up to provide students with the fundamentals such as program evaluation and health promotion strategies and theories. The connections and practical experiences I developed from my practicums in my degree lead to consulting and project work right after graduation.

What have you been doing since leaving DLSPH? Prior to my current position I was working at Toronto Public Health as Manager of Healthy Public Policy working on issues related to environmental determinants. Most of my work experience has been in management roles in health charities including the Heart and Stroke Foundation and Osteoporosis Canada. My focus has been a dichotomy of work in developing e-health promotion resources or advocacy and policy development, sometimes doing both in one organization.

Now I hold the position of Senior Manager, Prevention at CancerCare Ontario which has launched a new prevention focus. This includes an online cancer risk assessment tool for the public set to launch in late 2014 and creating a chronic disease prevention strategy building on the "Taking Action" report and including the establishment of a prevention performance measure framework.

Was there a specific faculty member or course that was particularly influential? The Health Promotion Strategies course was probably my favorite because of the breadth of guest speakers that came to talk to us, folks that had been "in the trenches". Those were the people we contacted afterward, and they provided us with potential opportunities for practicum placements during the degree as well as project work after graduation.

What advice would you give to younger alumni or current students who aspire to follow a similar career path? In the world of health promotion there's a great deal of project funding out there and when you're just starting out you're likely to find yourself in contract positions, but in that you can demonstrate and develop skills and expertise, with the benefit of flexibility. There are experiences you can obtain through project work that you wouldn't necessarily get from a starting position somewhere else. Certainly having a wealth of experience under your belt makes it easier to transition into those management positions down the road.

What would you say to a prospective student who is considering DLSPH? DLSPH has a great reputation and great faculty. What sets it apart are the relationships and networks that are fostered through practicum, and the testing of skills. As a student you are set-up for all the skills needed in the field. Training plus reputation leads to credibility.