

Joint MSPAS/MPH Program

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*Congratulations
Graduating
Class of 2008!!!*

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Program Awarded State Funding

At its November 2007 meeting, the California Health-care Workforce Policy Commission voted to award the Joint Program \$43,000 in Song-Brown base funding to support the development of a pipeline program to increase the number of underrepresented clinicians from California's health professional shortage areas (HPSAs).

The Song-Brown Health Care Workforce Training Act, under the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) was passed by the California Legislature in 1973 to encourage program graduates to practice in designated underserved areas of California. It has expanded the training programs of family practice residents

and primary care physician assistants.

As part of the California Health and Human Services Agency, OSHPD's mission is to ensure equitable health-care accessibility for California.

This was the program's first application and presentation for funding and among 15 other California universities and colleges presenting and competing for this funding including Stanford, UCSF and UCLA.

The award in part will be used to develop a pipeline program between Touro and other stakeholders including community colleges and grantmakers.

Welcome Class of 2011!

This year's entering class faced stiff competition for admission. Over 1,100 applications were received for this year's entering class. Congratulations 2011s!

The program's mission is to increase the number of underrepresented minority (URM) students and recruit students from areas of unmet need. The program is pleased to announce that 30% of the class is made up of URM students and over 93% of those students coming from California, are from a county with HPSA designations.

HPSAs are defined as urban or rural areas, population groups or, facilities with shortages of health professionals. HPSA federal designation documents a shortage of health care providers as well as the existence of barriers to accessing care such as travel time and high poverty.

Meet the New Senior Provost & CEO

Michael Harter, Ph.D. has been named Senior Provost and Chief Executive Officer for the university system's Western Division and leads both the California and Nevada campuses. Dr. Harter has worn several hats at TU - Nevada. As one of the founding members of the Nevada campus, he has served as dean of students, acting dean for College of Health and

Human Services, and chief administrator. His colleagues in Nevada have stated that his teamwork, creativity, commitment, educational achievement and leadership have contributed toward the success of the university. **On behalf of the College of Health Sciences, welcome Dr. Harter!!**



Dr. Michael Harter

Public Health Club Impacting Vallejo Community



TUNE-UP participants with Joint Program students



“Get ready 2010s, you will enjoy clinical experiences and patients so much - it is the reason you learn all the medicine you do in class!”

Melissa Duerr, Class of 2009

“It is harder to be a teacher than a student... I am enjoying teaching and giving back to the program.” Lamont Hunter, PA-C, MPH, faculty and alumnae

By Meghann DeVito, PA-S
Class of 2010

The Public Health Club (PHC) is making an impact on the lives of students in the Vallejo community. PHC functions with the support of the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program, Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and Pharmacy and other faculty.

A main focus for the club has been with the Touro University Nutrition and Exercise Program (TUNE-UP). TUNE-UP is an after-school program that edu-

cates Mare Island Elementary School children about healthy lifestyles. Twice a week, members from the public health club teach and promote healthy eating and good exercise habits to the children. Over 70 elementary-school children participated in this year's TUNE-UP.

Club members truly enjoy the bonds that form between themselves and the children. The children were proud to report what fruits they had consumed for dinner. The children's enthusiasm is

evidence of TUNE-UP's impact on the children.

The club also participated in the Teen Life Conference (TLC). This year's conference brought local high school students to Touro's campus providing important health-related information to teens. The PHC is dedicated to meeting its mission by promoting the health and well-being of local communities through education and service.

Class of 2009 on Clinical Rotations

The Class of 2009 began their clinical year rotations this year. The clinical year consists of fifty-four weeks of supervised clinical practice. All students first do their Public Health Field Experience and work in places like Planned Parenthood, the Success Center, Fighting Back Partnership, and Solano County Public Health, to name a few sites. I asked two student to share their clinical year experiences. Melissa Duerr, Class of 2009 said "I am finally getting



to apply what I learned in the classroom to what presents in real life." Her advice to the Class of 2010—"get ready... you will enjoy clinical experiences so much and this is the reason you learn all the medicine you do in class." Xochitl DeLaCruz,

Class of 2009 remarks that her ability to understand Spanish is essential to patient care. "I saw a Spanish speaking patient with a chief complaint of headache. When I saw him, it turned out he needed some stitches removed from his head. His real complaint was abdominal pain. This misunderstanding developed because no one could communicate with him in his language." Xochitl plans to return to Butte County to practice upon graduation.

Class of 2006 Graduates Teaching in the Program

The program is pleased to welcome Class of 2006 program graduate Lamont Hunter, PA-C, MPH as faculty. Mr. Hunter has been working in family practice and emergency medicine and is teaching in the Clinical Applications course series. Lamont is doing great as new faculty and has remarked to me, "that it is harder to be a teacher than a student...I am very much enjoying teaching and giving back to my program..." The program and students are fortunate to have Lamont as faculty. Jay Frazer, PA-C, MPH, Class of 2006 has recently joined the program to teach the EKGs in Clinical Medicine. Welcome Jay!



Clinical Applications Faculty, left to right: Maude Anderson, PA-C, Colleen Wight, PA-C, MA, Le'Anna St. John, PA-C, MPAS, and Lamont Hunter, PA-C, MPH

Recruiting URM Students

The program participated in the 2007 Mentoring in Medicine Conference (MIM). MIM is a non-profit operating in New York and California; its mission is to reduce disparities and improve health outcomes by increasing the number of URM healthcare professionals through mentorship and leadership development. The conference was attended by 200 African-American and Latino students. The program successfully recruited one student from this conference who will be starting in the fall 2008.

Program Hosts 2008 Western Consortium for PA Programs

This year the program proudly hosted this year's Western Consortium Conference held in beautiful Asilomar, California. The consortium is made up of PA programs in the US Western region including University of Washington, Stanford, University of Colorado, and UC Davis, to name a few. The conference is held yearly and provides programs the opportunity to discuss among other items, educational and accreditation issues. The agenda was full and a productive conference was realized. A very special and inspirational presentation by the California Farmworker Leadership Network was held. Thanks to all programs who participated and contributed to a great conference!



Western PA Program Participants

Class of 2010s Speak Out.....

We spoke with two of the members of the Class of 2010, Ms. Desiree Westfall and Mr. Ricki Nolley. Both are in their third of four didactic sessions.

Ms. Padilla: What do you find to be the most challenging part of this program?

Ms. Westfall: Combining the PA and public health parts of the curriculum. On one hand, we are tested through multiple choice for the medicine and science and then we must be ready to write extensive papers on public health.

Mr. Nolley: Scheduling time for each assignment and navigating the differences between the PA part of the program (lots of tests) and the public health part of the program (writing).

Ms. Padilla: What is your favorite class?

Ms. Westfall: Clinical Medicine—I feel like we are inside this cool club learning all there is to know to help our patients, getting pearls from our professors so we don't miss those important things you need to know to keep your patients from harm.

Mr. Nolley: My favorite class is Anatomy—I learn through hands-on, and I was able to learn the “systems I will be interviewing”.

Ms. Padilla: How important is cultural competency/humility in providing health care?

Ms. Westfall: We live within a very diverse population; it's important to be exposed to cultural practices and customs so we never make any

assumptions about a patient; in turn we will win a patient's trust and be able to better serve their needs.

Mr. Nolley: Cultural competency is important for me as someone who comes from an underserved community. I feel I have something also important to impart to my fellow students as I am from an underserved area. Lost of times those who are underserved or who are minority may not be considered as important or may perceive they aren't as important because they don't have health insurance.

Some patients feel they won't be taken seriously when they present to the clinic or ER. I want to be that bridge as a clinician.

“Cultural competency is important for me as someone who comes from an underserved community. I feel I have something also important to impart to my fellow students as I am from an underserved area.”

Ricki Nolley,
Class of 2010

An Interview with Robin Wempe, PA-C

The faculty are the driving force behind the program's success. Among the dedicated faculty is Robin Wempe, PA-C. Ms. Wempe is course director for the Clinical Medicine series. Prior to becoming a PA, she was a reproductive health assistant for Planned Parenthood providing family planning counseling, health education and prenatal care. She met her first PA at this same clinic.

This experience compelled to her pursue the PA profession, graduating from the MCP/Hahnemann University PA program in 2001. Upon graduating she returned to Planned Parenthood and practiced primary care and women's health for 7 years.

Ms. Wempe always knew she wanted to teach in her undergraduate years. Joining Touro has allowed her to

develop her teaching as well as continue to practice medicine. She has found she absolutely loves teaching and watching that “light bulb” go on when a student understands an important clinical concept. Her greatest challenge is recognizing that as teachers you can't possibly know all the answers. The program is fortunate to have her among the faculty.



Robin Wempe, PA-C
Assistant Professor



**TOURO UNIVERSITY-
CALIFORNIA**
Joint MSPAS/MPH
Program
1310 Johnson Lane-Mare Island



PROGRAM MISSION: To improve the health of individuals and communities with a focus on recruiting and serving underserved populations, by training clinicians who integrate the Physician Assistant and Public Health Principles.

MISION DEL PROGRAMA: Mejorar la salud de individuos y comunidades con un enfoque de reclutar y servir comunidades de poblaciones vulnerables y capacitar prestadores de salud que integran la medicina y salud publica.

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Welcome Newest Staff and Faculty Members



Pamela Bowler, MSc., joined the program in 2007. Ms. Bowler holds a Master of Science in anthropology from the University of Sheffield, UK. She is bright, and brings enthusiasm to the program. She assists in the clinical year and admissions responsibilities among many other duties.

Lesley Ryan, MD is our medical director and faculty. Dr. Ryan is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania College of Medicine, and has been practicing medicine at Kaiser Santa Rosa and Planned Parenthood. She is clinical faculty at UCSF and we are excited to have her with us.



Le'Anna St. John PA-C, MPAS, is a wonderful addition to the faculty. Ms. St. John is a practicing physician assistant in otolaryngology and substance abuse medicine. She teaches in the Clinical Medicine Course series and is Co-coordinator of the Clinical Skills course series.

