Department of Health Sciences

More Changes, More Opportunities

Nkechi Nwaoha

Last month the Department of Health Sciences announced the change of name from Bachelor’s of Science degree in Health Sciences to Bachelor’s of Science degree in Public Health. The components of the program still remain the same. Undergraduate students majoring in Public Health (formerly Health Sciences) have the option of choosing between Community Health Education and Environmental & Occupational Safety. This program aims to develop students’ proficiency in the public health core disciplines of behavioral health/health education, epidemiology, biostatistics, health services administration, and environmental health. For students interested in taking other Public Health branches, courses are available in Women’s Health, Public Health Preparedness and Multicultural Health. A B.S. in Public Health offers a great opportunity of an internship experience the final semester. For more information, please visit the web page http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/health_sciences/undergraduate_programs/publichealth.php or contact Stacey Dorsett via email at SE-Dorsett@wiu.edu.

There is yet another great opportunity commencing this fall 2013. There will be an integration of HSM/MBA degree. The integrated HSM/MBA degree will allow students to complete an undergraduate degree in Health Services Management and immediately transition into a graduate program obtaining a Master’s Degree in Business Administration. The fantastic news is that students are able to complete both degrees within five years with reduced tuition rates. For more information, please contact; Dr. Mark Kelley via email at RM-Kelley@wiu.edu.

A healthy attitude is contagious but don’t wait to catch it from others. Be a carrier.

–Tom Stoppard

This is Public Health Campaign

Chazandra M. Bishop

This Is Public Health (TIPH) is a campaign created by the American Schools of Public Health to improve awareness and educate the general public about what Public Health is and how it affects our daily lives.

Unfortunately many people don’t understand what public health is, much less how it impacts their daily lives and this campaign lets people know that public health touches us all every day and reminds us that where and how we live, work and play has a lot to do with how healthy we are.

“Public health works to improve the conditions around us and promote healthy behaviors.”

The TIPH campaign has created stickers, buttons, and T-shirts that provides a fun and easy way to illustrate the many ways in which public health plays a role in their daily lives and how it should be everyone’s concern.

Check out the campaign’s Flickr page for some cool pictures of users demonstrating public health in everyday life!
http://www.flickr.com/groups/683857@N21/pool/

And check out the campaign’s official website at thisispublichealth.org
Starting Spring with a Colorful Event

Bawk Aung

The sun was shining brightly and a mild breeze surrounded us. It was a perfect day for a 5k! Sponsored by Eta Sigma Gamma and Phi Epsilon Sigma, Color Craze 5k started at 10:00am at Vince Grady Field on the Western Illinois University campus. Wearing uniform white t-shirts, over 400 registrants of all ages participated in the run.

The first to finish, Henry Cortes, was covered with the final orange color as he crossed the finish line after a twenty minute run. At about eleven, most of the runners splattered with color arrived back at Vince Grady Field. They were greeted with cheers, cool water, and different kinds of healthy fruits and snacks.

The run ended with a dance party with a DJ and exhilarating Zumba dance moves. While the crowd danced, volunteers were pouring different colors on all the dancers. There were also prizes including gym memberships and grocery store gift cards! This event was all about fun & fitness with friends and family while benefitting the Special Olympics. Check out the pictures!

Public Health Research

Chaundra M. Bishop

Overall, public health is concerned with protecting the health of entire populations. These populations can be as small as a local neighborhood, or as big as an entire country. The purpose of research in this field is to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge to improve public health practices. There are many students performing outside research in conjunction with professors, below are some highlights:

Megha Patel:

Patel is a senior Health Services Management student and will be completing an undergraduate thesis with Dr. Susan Moore on polycystic ovary syndrome (POS). POS is a common hormonal disorder that can occur in reproductive aged women where the ovaries contain cysts along the outer edge. The main concerns that arise from this syndrome are that women begin to have irregular menstrual cycles and difficulty conceiving. There is no exact cause to this syndrome, but Patel says that she is interested in researching the possible causes, which demographic (age and race) of women are at a higher risk, as well as which treatment options (including holistic care) works best for the varying demographics.

Melanie D. Mason:

Mason, a Health Sciences graduate student, is working with Dr. Maureen P. Bezold, conducting research on the utility of online social networks in fulfilling the ten essential public health services, which are essential in promoting health and preventing disease in communities. The ten essential public health services provide a framework for the responsibilities of public health departments. Although the fulfillment of these services is vital, health departments face many obstacles including budget cuts and a reduced workforce that interfere with the delivery of these services. To account for these obstacles, public health departments must find innovative ways to deliver these services. Mason and Bezold are researching whether or not online social networks can serve as a low-resource tool in the delivery of these services.

Angela Castello:

Castello, a senior Health Services Administration student is working on an Undergraduate Thesis with Dr. Bezold entitled “The Ethics of Allocation of (Pharmaceutical) Resources in Public Health Emergencies” with four topic areas: Public Health, Public Health Ethics, Public Health Emergencies, and Resource Allocation. By the end, Castello will have connected these areas in a way to fully understand how public health professionals allocate resources during a public health emergency. Castello says that she has found an interest in emergency preparedness and is exploring different areas to determine if she would like to go into the public or private sector of health.

Chaundra M. Bishop:

Bishop, Health Sciences graduate student, with an interest in public health preparedness is working with Dr. Amanda Divin and Dr. Jack Rozdilsky on research examining the perceived importance of 72 hour disaster kits. Recent emergencies and disasters have highlighted the need for individual preparedness,. As seen with Hurricane Katrina and most recently, Hurricane Sandy, assistance can take time to arrive. As a result of this delay, individuals are strongly encouraged to be prepared by having their own supplies. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) suggests individuals should be equipped to be self-sufficient for at least 3 days following a disaster due to public service interruptions. The 72-hour kit is the staple of preparedness as it contains essential items needed in the event of an emergency. Research on this topic will not only measure the importance, knowledge and attitude toward the 3-day post-disaster survival kit through a pre/posttest with a brief presentation on the kits as the intervention. Bishop hopes that the results will prove that a brief presentation can be an impactful way of conveying the importance of a 72-hour kit in both urban and rural areas.
Check-in

The Start Line!

Members of ESC
Spring is here! This is an exciting season for the field of public health as the warmer weather encourages people to be active and the plentiful fresh produce promotes healthy eating. Below is a recipe for Warm Snow Pea and Chicken Salad—a salad that incorporates fresh vegetables currently in season and offers a spin on the traditional salad. This recipe, rich in protein and Vitamin C, makes 4 servings and takes less than 40 minutes to prepare. Enjoy!

Warm Pea and Chicken Salad

Ingredients:
- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 14 oz reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 3 tbsp rice vinegar
- 3 tbsp reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 3 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 2 tbsp tahini, or cashew butter
- 1 tbsp minced ginger
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lb snow peas, trimmed and thinly slivered
- 2 tbsp chopped cashews

Preparation:
Place chicken in a medium skillet and add broth; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer until cooked through. Transfer chicken to a cutting board and shred into bite-size pieces once cooled.
Whisk vinegar, soy sauce, 2 tsp sesame oil, and tahini in a large bowl until smooth.
Heat 1 tsp sesame oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add ginger and garlic and stir for about 1 minute. Stir in peas and cook until bright green for 3 to 4 minutes.
Transfer to the bowl used in Step 2.
Add the chicken to the bowl used in Step 2; toss to combine. Serve sprinkled with cashews.