



# Division of Health Policy and Management

2022-2023 Year in Review

## From the Division Head

Greetings from the Division of Health Policy and Management at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Since February 2022, it has been my privilege to serve as division head. One of my favorite parts of this role is to promote the important contributions that our faculty, staff, and students are making through our scholarly pursuits, as well as our educational programming.

Our faculty, staff, and students are curious, collaborative, and actively engaged in the communities we serve with the goal of creating a more equitable, efficient, and effective health system. Our multi-disciplinary faculty leads innovative research that addresses many critical issues today, including:

- health equity
- aging, long-term services and supports, and dementia
- infectious and chronic disease prevention and management
- healthcare operations, quality, management, and information technology
- public health and healthcare workforce
- health insurance and affordability of medical care
- healthcare provider behavior and competition

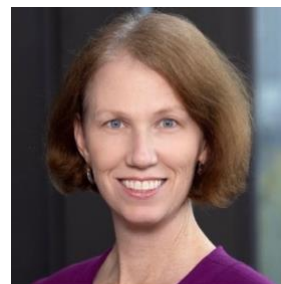
In our division, we also develop more than 300 early- and mid-career professionals annually through four graduate degree programs, including our Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA), Master of Public Health–Public Health Administration and Policy (MPH-PHAP), and our MS and PhD programs in Health Services Research, Policy, and Administration. We strive to deliver an excellent student experience and to create opportunities for students to learn both inside and outside the classroom.

I invite you to take a few minutes to learn more about who we are, what we do, and the impact we are having on health policy and practice today. Special thanks to the faculty, staff, and students who contributed to the creation of this report as well as Mona Rath who oversaw its production.

Sincerely,



Jean M. Abraham  
James A. Hamilton Chair in Health Policy and Management  
Professor and Head  
Division of Health Policy and Management



**Jean Abraham, PhD**  
Professor and  
Division Head

## Mission and Vision

### Mission

The Division of Health Policy and Management at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health improves the health of all populations by

- ▶ creating and sharing research evidence to inform policy and practice
- ▶ developing professionals for administrative, policy, and research careers
- ▶ collaborating with our local, state, and national partners to address critical public health and health care challenges and to design innovative solutions

### Vision

Advancing health and health care for all through evidence and education.

### Values

Impact | Excellence | Equity | Integrity | Collaboration

## 2022-2023





## Distinctive Education Programs

Our diverse programs prepare leaders and enhance mid-career professionals.

### Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA)

The MHA residential program prepares students to become leaders in healthcare delivery and the MHA executive program attracts employed executives, physicians, and other healthcare professionals who want to expand their management and leadership capabilities.

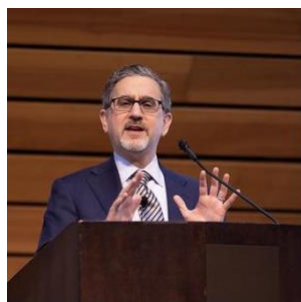
This academic year we welcomed students and faculty to fully in-person lectures, project teams, and extracurriculars. With 147 residential and executive students, the MHA program provides a robust learning environment that combines theory and practice to engage learners and industry in educating the next generation of healthcare leaders. Students and graduates continue the tradition of leadership and impact beyond Minnesota's healthcare landscape. This year, the MHA program retained its #2 ranking in *U.S. News and World Report*—a testament to the robust teaching and learning community of faculty, staff, alumni, industry, and students.



**Katie White, EdD**  
Wegmiller Professor of  
Healthcare Management  
MHA Program Director

After a year of serving in an interim role, Katie White was named MHA program director. Several academic staff also joined the program, including Kim Simensen, MHA/MBA '82, who instructs healthcare finance; Patrick Adams, chief of staff at MHealth Fairview, who instructs strategy; Alison Page, MHA '96 and retired CEO of Western Wisconsin Health who teaches leadership; and Brooke Dressen, MHA '14 who facilitates the summer clerkship course and serves as a career coach.

More than 80 alumni and industry volunteers spent time with students as mentors, project hosts, and summer internship preceptors. Both residential and executive track students directly engaged with healthcare organizations across the country through their capstone projects.



This spring we hosted the inaugural David J. Fine Distinguished Visiting Professorship in Healthcare Administration. **Harvard University Professor Robert Huckman, PhD**, joined faculty, staff, students, and alumni in a series of interactive discussions and lectures to explore innovation in healthcare delivery and financing.

## MHA Residential Track

This year the program developed a new coaching team to guide learners toward summer residency and post-graduate placement into fellowships and other positions. The coaching team is led by Stephanie Hagel, and includes Kristin Chalberg, Jerry Nye, MHA, '77, Brooke Dressen, MHA '14, Jonathan Waller, and Justine Mishek, MHA '02. The coaches worked with students beginning in summer, while students were wrapping up their residencies, to offer programming aimed at preparing for the fellowship and job markets. Their work included: conducting resume reviews, holding case interviewing prep sessions, and offering insights from recent graduates on their experiences with interviewing, placement, and fellowships. Additionally, coaches met with students throughout the year, offering group and one-on-one coaching.

Supporting students through this important stage of their careers is instrumental to their growth and has bolstered recruiting efforts, as prospective students are looking for career support when choosing a program. This year our graduates were placed in healthcare organizations across the country including Mayo Clinic, United Healthcare, and Huron Consulting Group.

Case competitions continue to foster learnings in the residential program, with over half of the cohort participating in a competition over the course of the program. Student and faculty presence on campus is robust in various interprofessional activities, such as the Center for Interprofessional Health Leadership Team, Phillips Neighborhood Clinic, Clarion, Itasca Eco Health, and the Institute of Healthcare Improvement Student Chapter.

### MHA Class of 2023

31 students  
45% female  
32% Minnesota residents  
65% non-residents  
3% international  
42% persons of color

### MHA Class of 2022

41 students  
54% female  
37% Minnesota residents  
61% non-residents  
2% international  
24% persons of color

## Sustainability Award

The MHA program was named the recipient of the **2022 Award for Sustainability in Healthcare Management Education** by the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) and Canon Solutions America. The program won the award for demonstrating the ways in which it incorporates diversity, equity, and inclusion; community involvement; environmental focus; student experiential opportunities; and alumni involvement in its curriculum.



## MHA Executive Track

The MHA executive program track—a hybrid MHA degree option—is in its 14th year. Cohorts include students from across the country, representing organizations in many sectors of the healthcare industry and a broad variety of mid-career management and leadership roles, including many clinical professionals. Students benefit from a curriculum designed to optimize learning among peers while providing pragmatic and applicable skills to advance careers and influence the field.

In the spring of 2023, the program welcomed 34 students to Cohort 14. Dynamic and interactive course-based learning experiences, professional development sessions, guest speakers, and other events at these on-campus sessions are a highlight of the executive student experience.

### MHA Executive Cohorts 12, 13 & 14

75 students  
57% female  
65% Minnesota residents  
35% non-residents  
24% persons of color

## MHA Alumni

The University of Minnesota's MHA Alumni Association is one of the oldest, largest, and most active alumni networks of its kind. Alumni are deeply committed to the program and its students, and give back in many ways as instructors, lecturers, project advisors, preceptors, mentors, and philanthropic donors.



This year, in conjunction with the inaugural David J. Fine Distinguished Visiting Professor in Healthcare Administration featuring Professor Robert S. Huckman of Harvard Business School, the MHA program brought together its most generous donors for an evening of appreciation and gratitude.

## MHA Scholarship Profile

### Ellen Van Roekel

Lowell & Leslie Kruse Community Performance Excellence Leadership Scholarship

"I am the first in my family to attend a master's program. The impact of this is immeasurable, and I am passionate about applying my skills obtained here to achieve my future goals and continue to serve my community."



## Public Health Administration and Policy (MPH-PHAP)

The MPH-PHAP program equips students to translate public health concepts and principles into the population health arena, whether as managers or as policy analysts. Training and mentored experiences expand participants' ability to work well in the public and private sectors with various cultures and communities worldwide. The executive MPH-PHAP is a hybrid program tailored to public health working professionals seeking leadership roles within their organizations. Graduates work in a variety of organizations, including clinical sites, state and local public health departments, non-profit organizations, and insurance companies.

### MPH-PHAP Residential Track

The residential MPH-PHAP program continues to engage students and faculty in focusing on the development of the skills necessary for population-focused management, policy development, and evidence-based public health. PHAP graduates work in government agencies, healthcare delivery organizations, and non-profit organizations that seek to improve the health of populations.

This year the program developed a new MPH-PHAP alumni group called Career Ambassadors, where alumni generously offer their time to support current and incoming students. The program fosters relationships between students and alumni to help bridge the uncertainty faced by many graduating students. In addition to supporting current students, the new Career Ambassadors program promises to help drive future practice experiences and master's projects.

This past year, Feather LaRoche joined the PHAP staff to provide support to our growing number of Native American students. His work is focused on communicating to them about what resources and benefits are available, and supporting them as they advance in their academic journey.

Finally, the PHAP program continues to innovate its curriculum with new course offerings, including *Writing for Public Health* and *Evaluation Practices in Public Health and Health Care: Applied, Collaborative Approaches*.



**Stuart Grande, PhD**  
Senior Lecturer and  
MPH-PHAP Program  
Operational Lead

### Residential MPH-PHAP

58 students  
85% female  
59% Minnesota residents  
39% non-residents  
2% international  
28% persons of color



### Excellence

At the 2023 School of Public Health Research Day **Phoebe Chastain** took first place overall with her poster titled, *Rural Provider-to-Provider Perinatal Telemedicine Changes during COVID-19*. A team of MPH-PHAP students with **Gabbie Cesarone**, **Laura Farlow**, and **Elena Tran** took third place with their poster titled, *The Landscape of Immunization Information Systems in the United States: An Analysis of the Infrastructure and Readiness of Immunization Information Systems during the COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign and the Effects on Equitable Vaccine Distribution*.



### Distance MPH-PHAP Track

The distance MPH-PHAP program—a fully online, asynchronous MPH—starts its third year in fall 2023. Our distance PHAP students are employed in a variety of organizations and roles, including public health departments, clinical research sites, healthcare delivery organizations, and health insurance companies.

#### Distance MPH-PHAP

23 students  
65% female  
65% Minnesota residents  
26% non-residents  
9% international  
39% persons of color



**Rebecca Wurtz, MD**  
Professor and  
MPH-PHAP Director

### Executive MPH-PHAP Track

Cohort 11 will start in the executive MPH-PHAP program in August as the program shifts to a fall semester start. In spring 2023, there were over 50 students—doctors, nurses, health department managers, Medicaid program directors, substance use counselors, consultants, medical device company supervisors, innovative health start-up leaders, congressional staffers among others—learning together in cohorts to address pressing healthcare challenges. Although the students take

#### Executive MPH-PHAP

53 students  
77% female  
72% Minnesota residents  
28% non-residents  
28% persons of color

many of the same classes as traditional and distance PHAP students, several courses are unique to the executive program, pitched at students who have more managerial experience and more defined professional goals.

### Executive MPH-PHAP Scholarship Profile

#### Stacy Joy Hammer

Lee D. and Donna Stauffer Scholarship

“I have already felt the impact and utilized the new skills my education has had on my current role as director of community health at Lower Sioux Health Care Center. I feel empowered by the acquired skills and tools which will allow me to pursue opportunities to lead indigenous health equity efforts at the national level.”





## Health Services Research, Policy & Administration (HSRP&A) MS and PhD

Our Master of Science (MS) and PhD programs offer students multi-disciplinary training with particular focus on analytical skills to pursue research careers in academic, industry, policy, and governmental organizations.

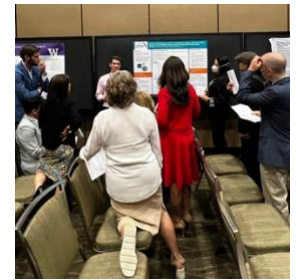
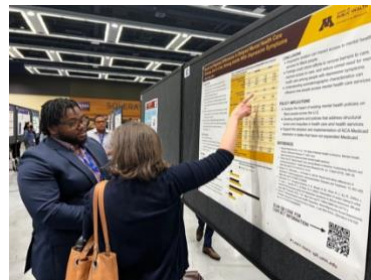
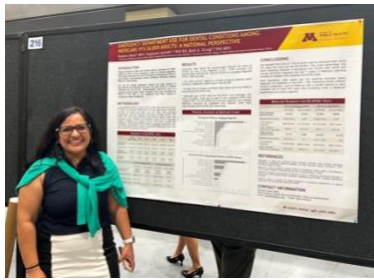
### HSRP&A PhD Program

The doctoral program prepares select participants for research-focused career paths in a wide variety of organizational settings. The program has come through a period of change since 2020, including a focus on developing a curriculum to center health equity and provide all students exposure to the range of theories and methods that comprise health services research.

HSRP&A students actively participate on faculty-led research teams addressing a wide variety of topics, including those focused on payment models, health equity measurement, long-term care, opioid use, health information and care transitions, reproductive health justice, mental health access, and the impacts of structural racism on health. Through their publications and engagement at national conferences such as AcademyHealth, ASHEcon, and the Gerontological Society of America, students are able to apply what they are learning in the classroom to the generation of new knowledge to inform policy and practice.



**Donna McAlpine, PhD**  
Associate Professor and  
HSRP&A MS and PhD  
Program Director



This spring, Cheré Williams joined HPM to serve as the graduate coordinator for the PhD and MS programs. She brings an extraordinary depth of experience in educational leadership and student services, a commitment to advising and mentoring, and a student-centered focus. The close of this academic year also saw the conclusion of Donna McAlpine's four years of dedicated service as the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Donna's tireless advocacy and devotion to student wellbeing throughout her tenure, and intensely during the pandemic, has been a gift to the students as well as to the division. In spring 2023, Karen Kuntz assumed the role of DGS.

### HSRP&A PhD

42 students  
63% female  
23% Minnesota residents  
65% non-residents  
12% international  
50% persons of color

## HSRP&A PhD Program



**Taylor Bucy**  
**HSRP&A PhD student**

“Most of my research is focused on long-term care, and long-term services and supports for older adults. The school has a robust research program in aging and long-term care, and that piqued my interest in the program.”

## HSRP&A MS Program

The MS program explicitly fosters participants’ analytical capabilities. Students acquire the knowledge and skills to be health analysts and researchers who develop evidence used in clinical, business, and policy environments. Over the past year, the MS program curriculum has been revised to emphasize the theoretical foundations of the health and public health systems in combination with the development of data management and analysis skills that can inform decision-making in policy and industry settings.

### HSRP&A MS

22 students  
45% female  
63% Minnesota residents  
10% non-residents  
27% international  
36% persons of color



**Ben Weideman**  
**HSRPA&A MS student**

“Public health has become a place for work that feels aligned with my experiences, skills and values, and it is a place where I can bring these to bear in helping people and communities that have sustained me throughout my life. I am invested in learning about how our social worlds—our relationships, our families, our communities—create and define our health and well-being.”

## Conducting Innovative Research

Our faculty conduct impactful and timely research that influences policy and practice.

### Spotlight on Hannah Neprash, PhD

Ransomware attacks on U.S. healthcare system

As healthcare delivery organizations have increased their reliance on information technology to serve their patients, they have increased their potential exposure to cybersecurity risks, such as ransomware attacks. To track the occurrence of ransomware attacks on healthcare provider organizations Hannah Neprash developed a database called the Tracking Healthcare Ransomware Events and Traits (THREAT), a unique tool that for the first time allows researchers to track the occurrence. In the first-ever comprehensive analysis of ransomware attacks on U.S. healthcare providers, Neprash and colleagues published findings in *JAMA Health Forum* and documented that between 2016 and 2021:



**Hannah Neprash, PhD**  
Assistant Professor

- 374 instances of ransomware attacks on healthcare delivery organizations exposed the personal health information of nearly 42 million individuals.
- Ransomware attacks more than doubled on an annual basis, from 43 to 91 per year.
- The number of individuals whose personal health information was exposed increased from approximately 1.3 million in 2016 to more than 16.5 million in 2021.
- Disruptions in care for patients as a result of ransomware incidents occurred in 166 — or 44% — of attacks.
- Among health care delivery facilities, clinics were the most frequent targets of ransomware attacks, followed by hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, mental/behavioral health facilities, dental practices and post-acute care organizations.

Further research is needed to more precisely understand the operational and clinical care consequences of ransomware attacks on healthcare providers. The researchers also suggest that as policymakers craft legislation aimed at countering the threat of ransomware across multiple industries, they should consider the specific needs of health care delivery organizations and the potentially harmful consequences for patient care.

### Spotlight on Manka Nkimbeng, PhD

Dementia education program for Black immigrant older adults and their caregivers

While research shows that culturally tailored interventions are more effective than generic health interventions, few efforts currently exist to culturally adapt dementia care and caregiving interventions for racial/ethnic minority populations. Also, when these efforts have been conducted, they have not been documented, and none of these adaptations have focused on Black immigrants — despite the fact that Black immigrants are a growing segment of the older adult population.

With a new grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Manka Nkimbeng and SPH researchers will be immersed in Black immigrant communities in the Twin Cities to explore how their cultural beliefs, values, customs, language, learning methods, and healthcare practices can be incorporated to improve care practices for Black immigrant older adults with dementia. The local partner for the study is African Career Education and Resources, Inc, a nonprofit based in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota. Immigrant communities in the study will include people from African and Afro-Caribbean nations.



**Manka Nkimbeng, PhD**  
Assistant Professor

### Spotlight on Sarah Gollust, PhD

Rapid response media messaging to promote health and racial equity

The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the dire consequences of conflicting health recommendations and their politicization and the propagation of misinformation. Sarah Gollust is collaborating with two other universities on a unique, rapid-response research endeavor to investigate how media sources portray racial and health inequality in social safety net policies. They are measuring the impact on the public and policymakers of stories designed to advance social change and sharing findings on evidence-based communication strategies that can accelerate support for targeted investments to improve health and racial equity. Their project also aims to establish a model for effective research-practice partnerships so that accurate information can rapidly enter the nation's media ecosystem.



**Sarah Gollust, PhD**  
Professor

Funded with a \$5 million grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), this project is unprecedented in its goals, scope, and integration of teams from the three universities, which collectively call themselves the Collaborative on Media and Messaging for Health and Social Policy (COMM). The Collaborative's [dedicated website](#) includes media tracking reports to provide insight on issues that are immediately actionable as well as blog posts, reports, and links to scholarly research.



## Research Centers

The Division of Health Policy & Management is home to seven research centers. Major public and private funders frequently select us to lead critical research, training, and policy development projects.

### State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC)

[SHADAC](#) works to inform state health policy, increase the quality and accessibility of state-level health care data, and help states use data to inform policy decisions related to health insurance coverage and access.

**Lynn Blewett** serves as SHADAC director with **Elizabeth Lukanen** as Deputy Director.

SHADAC faculty and staff are nationally recognized experts who collect and apply health policy data to inform or evaluate policy decisions and provide technical training on data use, produce state-specific reports and analyses, and host webinars to translate complex research findings into actionable information that is accessible to a broad audience.

In 2022-2023, SHADAC provided Graduate Research Assistant opportunities to three MPH students and four PhD students who are considered part of SHADAC's research and communications teams. Students leave SHADAC well-equipped for work in the fields of health services research, public health, and policy. This year, SHADAC established the Health Equity Fellowship for Public Health Administration and Policy students to contribute to recruitment, hiring, and training of students from historically underrepresented groups.

Key contributions and partnerships in the last year include:

- SHADAC facilitated convenings of Medicaid and marketplace staff from several states exploring strategies for improving collection of race, ethnicity, language, and disability data, foundational for addressing health disparities. This work was supported by the State Health & Value Strategies program at Princeton University.
- SHADAC led an initial phase of a collaborative project funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to explore the need for a Medicaid Equity Monitoring tool.
- Also with Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funding, SHADAC maintained and updated State Health Compare, a web tool providing state-level estimates on topics related to health and health care.
- In partnership with health insurance navigators, SHADAC enhanced the Community and Uninsured Profile for the State of Minnesota, a project funded by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of Minnesota.
- For the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission, SHADAC continued to provide quantitative analyses and technical support using a broad array of survey and vital statistics data.



**Lynn Blewett, PhD**  
Professor

## Research Data Assistance Center (ResDAC)

Established in 1996, [ResDAC](#) is funded by a contract with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). As a CMS contractor, ResDAC provides technical assistance to academic, other non-profit, for-profit and government researchers interested in using CMS data to improve health outcomes and innovate new programs and services. ResDAC's mission is to help CMS increase the number of researchers skilled in accessing and using CMS databases for studies of the Medicare and Medicaid programs and beneficiaries.

In 2022, ResDAC welcomed **Nathan Shippee** as principal investigator and director, succeeding Beth Virnig who left the University of Minnesota to serve as the Dean of the College of Public Health and Health Professions at the University of Florida - Gainesville. Nathan has been affiliated with ResDAC since 2015 and has extensive experience using Medicare and Medicaid data in his research, which focuses on how social, clinical, and behavioral factors complicate care for individuals with chronic conditions.



**Nathan Shippee, PhD**  
Associate Professor

This year, ResDAC continued to provide researchers with services and resources for conducting high-quality research using CMS data. ResDAC Analysts and Technical Advisors specialize in providing guidance on data access, use, and analysis for researchers seeking to use complex CMS-related data sources including claims, assessments, and survey linkages. ResDAC Executive Advisors, with specialized training on federal privacy rules, assist researchers in CMS data requests. ResDAC also regularly provides technical advice/assistance to CMS and other federal agencies. ResDAC faculty actively use their research expertise to develop and facilitate ResDAC trainings, workshops, and materials for other researchers.

ResDAC holds four workshops per year, with offerings including:

- Use of Medicare Data for Research
- Use of Medicare Part D Data for Research
- Use of Medicare Encounter Data for Research
- Use of Medicaid T-MSIS Analytic File (TAF) Data for Research

ResDAC also continues to develop other resources available on its website, including workshop and other videos, Knowledgebase articles (which provide free resources for researchers for both basic and in-depth research guidance), website content and announcements, staffing an assistance desk, and other functions.

## Minnesota Evidence-based Practice Center (EPC)

The EPC is a collaborative venture between the University of Minnesota and the Minneapolis VA Health Care System and is dedicated to helping people become better stewards of the healthcare system and their own health by conducting evidence synthesis projects, supporting the generation and transfer of knowledge along the learning health system cycle, and collaboratively curating and facilitating public forums about health and healthcare stewardship.

Directed by **Mary Butler**, the [EPC](#)'s primary focus is conducting systematic reviews to synthesize research evidence on a range of health care topics for federal and state agencies, professional associations, and foundations and include literature from the fields of medicine, psychology, behavioral health, and organizational development. These reviews also include an assessment of the quality of evidence for clinicians, patients, guideline groups, policymakers, purchasers, payors, researchers, and other healthcare decision makers and stakeholders. The Center has served as one of nine evidence-based practice centers funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) since 2002.



**Mary Butler, PhD, MBA**  
Associate Professor

Interdisciplinary collaborative teams are integral to EPC's effectiveness. The Center draws on clinical, topical, and methodological experts from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health and other schools and departments within the University, as well as the Minneapolis VA Center for Care Delivery and Outcomes Research (CCDOR) and the Minneapolis VA Evidence Synthesis Program Center. Central to the philosophy of the center is a belief that our health system should be sustainable, self-sufficient, and built on mutually respectful interrelationships. From this human-first perspective, EPC's collaborative interdisciplinary teams of staff, graduate students, faculty, and community members work together to help everyone understand what we know, what we don't know, and our certainty or uncertainty about that knowledge.

In the past year, EPC has:

- Provided foundational evidence synthesis for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Pathways to Prevention workshops on nutrition to improve cancer care outcomes and maternal morbidity and mortality
- Partnered with PCORI on evidence synthesis for several professional organizations for clinical guideline development
- Used its expertise in evidence synthesis as a springboard to collaborations with the UMN Center for Learning Health System Sciences to inform and adapt clinical practices to support Learning Health Systems.

## Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity (CARHE)

CARHE develops antiracist research to understand and measure the impact of racism on health through community engagement, education and training, racial equity narrative, and service as a trusted resource for policymakers, payers, and the media on issues related to racism and health equity.

Directed by **Rachel Hardeman**, the Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity ([CARHE](#)) celebrated its second anniversary. CARHE is committed to a focus on *racism*, not *race*, as a fundamental cause of racial health inequities. Working with journalists, CARHE seeks to change the narrative through local and national news platforms. In the 2022-2023 academic year, CARHE experts have been featured in many national news outlets, including CNN, NBC News, AP, STAT, The Washington Post, and The Guardian.



**Rachel Hardeman, PhD, MPH**  
Professor

Research is driven by collaboration, and the CARHE website's curated research catalog demonstrates the power of academic partnerships and authentic community engagement. In the past academic year alone, CARHE and its direct collaborators have had numerous scholarly articles published. These publications span many journals, including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Health Services Research*, the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, and the *American Journal of Public Health*.

The research undertaken by CARHE faculty and staff is fundamentally fueled by and grounded in love for Black, Indigenous, and racialized people. CARHE's amazing community partners provide invaluable contributions to their past and ongoing research.

Notable accomplishments in the last year:

- CARHE co-led the launch of the Minnesota Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth (MN DiPC) Act Black [birthing module](#). Developed in a partnership with Diversity Science and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the DiPC anti-bias continuing education training courses focus on the root cause of racial maternal health inequities: racism.
- The CARHE team authored more than 20 scholarly publications.
- CARHE participated in Urban Research and Outreach Engagement Center (UROC) Community Day and worked with a group of participants who created a community-made vision board of a "Racial Justice Future".
- Doctoral student and CARHE Sr. Graduate Assistant Asha Hassan was recently awarded a competitive two-year NIH Diversity Supplement Grant. This grant was made through the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), one of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

CARHE is grateful to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota for their financial support of our research and translation activities to address racial health inequities.



## Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation (CHAI)

The mission of the Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation (CHAI) is to advance interdisciplinary aging science; create meaningful and immersive educational experiences in aging; build and sustain innovations in care and services; and establish vibrant community, governmental, business, and individual collaborations to promote healthy aging for Minnesotans and people across the country. **Joe Gaugler** directs the center.

This year [CHAI](#) membership grew to more than 150 faculty and staff at the University of Minnesota and beyond, including over 100 community partners. CHAI also maintains a Community Advisory Board (CAB) with engaged, diverse members whose life stories, experiences, and insights are invaluable to the Center's community engagement work across many culturally and ethnically diverse Minnesota communities. Over the past year, the CAB convened regularly and were instrumental in the successful creation of a community education toolkit, a multicultural center, and a provider education tool.



**Joseph Gaugler, PhD**  
Professor



This spring, CHAI focused on the long-term care workforce and convened a virtual panel of nationally recognized speakers in an event titled: "Nursing Home Workforce: Challenges and Opportunities to Meeting Recommendations from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Report." And, in fall 2022, as part of its focus on health equity, CHAI hosted Luis Medina, a bilingual and bicultural licensed clinical psychologist and cultural neuropsychologist, whose talk was titled: "From Neurons to Nations: The Road to Health Equity in Aging and Alzheimer's Disease."



Last year, CHAI launched the inaugural Age-Friendly University event. The day kicked off with former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice and Minnesota Viking Alan Page in a fireside chat with acclaimed author, Richard Leider. Betty Sandison set the tone for the day by sharing her story of starting in a one-room schoolhouse in rural Minnesota to graduating from the University at age 84. Breakout groups on finding purpose in later life, age-friendly communities, and brain health rounded out the day.

## Center for Public Health Systems (CPHS)

The CPHS supports public health practitioners and public health systems using evidence-based research and generates evidence about public health systems where it does not yet exist. It is directed by **JP Leider**.

In September 2022, [CPHS](#) and a consortium of five other universities were designated as the Public Health Workforce Research Center by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The award includes approximately \$4.7 million over 5 years to look at what drives public health workforce turnover, ways to recruit and retain staff, and how to fill workforce gaps. The Consortium for Workforce Research in Public Health (CWORPH) received an additional \$4 million from CDC's Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, and Data Systems award to conduct an enumeration of the public health workforce and help the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) build a harmonized public health data system that combines datasets from across the field.



**JP Leider, PhD**  
Senior Fellow

This year CPHS worked with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and local health departments across the state to assess health departments' capacity to ensure public health in the state of Minnesota. The project involved collecting extensive data from the health departments to develop models for current staffing and spending and provide recommendations for future transformations. Data from this project have already been provided to the Minnesota State Legislature to support requests for public health funding.

With funding from the National Association of County and City Health Officials, CPHS staff are undertaking research to assess current health equity policies in place within health departments, health equity measurement innovations, and understanding the role that community health workers can play in improving health equity.

Exciting events and achievements from this year include:

- CPHS participated in a SPH meeting with U.S. Senator Tina Smith about public health workforce shortages and research to inform the Senator's push for stable and sustainable public health funding.
- CPHS received the 2022 Partnership Award from the Minnesota Local Public Health Association for its work to elevate the workforce-related challenges faced by local public health.
- The TRaining in Informatics for Underrepresented Minorities in Public Health (TRIUMPH) consortium wraps up the second year of a four-year grant in September 2023. So far, the consortium has educated 146 undergraduate and graduate students on the fundamentals of public health informatics (PHI), trained 72 governmental public health workers in an 8-week PHI course, and placed 9 students in PHI internships, and this year CPHS employed three doctoral students and nine master's students as graduate assistants.

## Rural Health Research Center (RHRC)

The Rural Health Research Center (RHRC) conducts policy-relevant research to improve the lives of rural residents and families, to advance health equity, and to enhance the vitality of rural communities. Directed by **Katy Kozhimannil** in partnership with Deputy Director **Carrie Henning-Smith**.

The [RHRC](#) encompasses three distinct rural health-related programs. These include the Rural Health Research Center Grant (a cooperative agreement funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy), the Flex Monitoring Team (also funded by the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy and led by Megan Lahr), and the Rural Health Program (funded by the University of Minnesota Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute and Office of Academic and Clinical Affairs).

The primary RHRC grant research portfolio is national in scope, encompassing a range of rural health issues across the United States. Each year, RHRC works on four research projects, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to understand and address a variety of rural health challenges.

For 2022-2023, the RHRC focused on four projects:

- Rural-urban differences in domestic violence
- Postpartum morbidity and mortality and access to care
- Housing as a social driver of rural health
- Ransomware attacks on rural hospitals

The RHRC aims to maximize the reach and impact of all their research efforts. To do so, they target key rural audiences and stakeholders, including federal, state, and local policymakers; rural stakeholder organizations (e.g., the National Rural Health Association and the Minnesota Rural Health Association); rural health care and social service providers; community-based organizations; and the academic research community at large. To make their research accessible to the public, the RHRC frequently publishes policy briefs, case studies, infographics, chartbooks, and other products that are freely available and written in plain language.

Notably this past year, Carrie Henning-Smith delivered invited testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry and participated in a rural roundtable with the U.S House Select Committee on Economic Disparity and Fairness in Growth. In addition, Katy Kozhimannil met with staff from the U.S. Government Accountability Office on the topic of obstetric service availability, barriers to obstetric care, and efforts to improve access to obstetric services in rural areas, which informed House Report 116-450. Members of RHRC's research team have also responded to multiple stakeholder invitations, including from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) national and regional offices, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), state and federal legislators, and health care delivery systems.

The RHRC makes available a variety of information resources in the public domain and actively disseminates their work through local and national media organizations, such as CNN, The New York Times, Kaiser Health News, National Public Radio, and Vox.



**Katy Kozhimannil, PhD, MPH**  
Professor



**Carrie Henning-Smith,  
PhD, MPH, MSW**  
Associate Professor

## Minnesota Learning Health System Mentored Career Development Program

The Minnesota Learning Health System Mentored Career Development Program ([MN-LHS](#)) is a K12 scholar training program led by Timothy Beebe that trains embedded researchers to systematically generate, apply, and translate evidence quickly within health systems to improve personalization, quality, equity, and outcomes of care and reduce waste in the health care system.

Since 2018, the program has trained 14 local and regional researchers to conduct patient-centered outcomes research within learning health systems. The program recently formed an educational partnership with the Medical School's Center for Learning Health System Sciences.

HPM faculty engage as scholars and mentors.

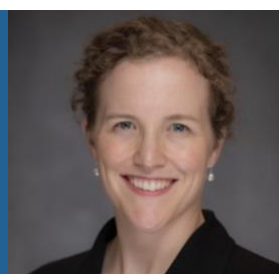
- Bjorn Berg spent his time as a scholar on an embedded collaboration with the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Minnesota to study balanced residency schedules.
- Katie White mentored LHS scholar Debbie Pestka who worked with Fairview Health Services in implementing comprehensive medication management services as part of their population health primary care transformation.
- Joe Gaugler mentored Chris Tignanelli on a project focused on reducing variability in the delivery of evidence-based practice for patients with rib fractures and other complex traumatic injuries.
- Nathan Shippee directs curriculum and methods.



**Timothy Beebe, PhD**  
Interim Dean and  
Mayo Professor  
Director, MN-LHS Program

### Improving COVID treatment

MN-LHS scholar Carolyn Bramante, MD, MPH, led the nation's first study on whether metformin, fluvoxamine, and ivermectin, or their combinations could serve as possible treatments to prevent ER visits or hospitalization, as well as Long-COVID.





## Excellence

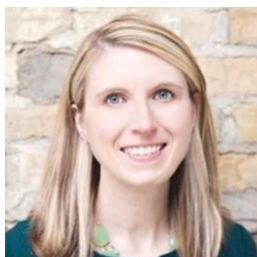
This year four faculty members were recognized for their collaborative research and determination to improve the health of vulnerable populations.



**Joseph Gaugler, PhD**  
Professor

### **Joe Gaugler Honored with Distinguished McKnight University Professorship**

Joseph Gaugler, Robert L. Kane Endowed Chair in Long-Term Care and Aging, received the 2023 Distinguished McKnight University Professorship for his scholarship in helping people with dementia and those who care for them. The award is one of the University of Minnesota's highest honors and he will hold the title for as long as he remains at the university. Gaugler launched the Center for Healthy Aging and Innovation (CHAI) in 2020 and serves as its director.



**Helen Parsons, PhD, MPH**  
Associate Professor

### **Helen Parsons Receives American Cancer Society Research Award**

Associate Professor Helen Parsons received a 2022 ResearchHERS™ Rising Star Award from the American Cancer Society for her work on advancing research that addresses underlying barriers to the receipt of high quality cancer care for vulnerable populations. ResearchHERS™: Women Fighting Cancer is a movement that engages women to raise funds to directly support women cancer researchers.



**Rachel Hardeman, PhD, MPH**  
Professor

### **Rachel Hardeman Named 2023 STAT News Status Leader**

Rachel Hardeman, Blue Cross Endowed Professor of Health and Racial Equity and Director of SPH's Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity (CARHE), was honored by STAT News as one of the 2023's "Status Leaders" for her work in exposing racism's role in maternal health disparities. STAT, an influential media company focused on medicine, health tech, science, and public health, chose 46 leaders from across the country representing a range of professions and fields, including academia.



**Sarah Gollust, PhD**  
Professor

### **Sarah Gollust Receives David Kline Jones Distinguished Scholars Award**

Professor Sarah Gollust was named one of the inaugural recipients of the David Kline Jones Distinguished Scholars Award for her contributions to the field of health policy and politics. Gollust's work examines processes through which health information gets translated in the media, shapes public attitudes and opinions, and influences the health policy process.

## Alumni Spotlight

Our alumni are committed to the School of Public Health and engage in local, national, and global efforts to improve population health.



**John Amuasi, PhD '14**

Senior Lecturer and Department Head  
School of Public Health Global Health Department  
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology

John Amuasi, PhD '14, earned a doctorate in Health Services Research and Policy along with an MS in Health Services Research and Policy, and an MPH in Public Health Administration and Policy. In 2023 he was honored with the University of Minnesota School of Public Health Alumni Award of Merit for his global efforts towards addressing emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.

Amusai's research focuses on improving health systems, services and outcomes, including policy analyses using both primary and secondary data in low and middle-income countries. His current research involves field epidemiologic studies on malaria, snakebite and other neglected tropical diseases.

As a trained physician he served as head of the R&D Unit at the 1,200-bed Komfo Anokye teaching Hospital in Kumasi, Ghana. He serves as an executive committee member of the African Coalition for Epidemic Research, Response and Training where he coordinates research on the clinical characterization of COVID-19 in Africa and is the PI for a number of studies on COVID-19 in Ghana. He serves as a technical advisor to the WHO, Africa CDC, IPBES and the World Bank on a wide range of global health subjects.



**Maria Bitanga, MPH-PHAP '16**

Principal Service Design Consultant  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota

Maria Bitanga, MPH-PHAP '16, is deeply committed to the School of Public Health. She volunteers as the vice president of the School of Public Health Alumni Society Board of Directors and serves on the School of Public Health Executive and Alumni Society boards. She is a mentor in the award-winning SPH Mentor Program.

The School of Public Health gave Maria a platform to build relationships by connecting with other professionals in the field and access to mentors to advance her career. She now leads ongoing efforts to provide lifelong learning, networking and growth opportunities for alumni. By volunteering, she is able to share ideas and ensure that the future of public health is bright. Maintaining a connection to SPH is a way of giving back to her alma mater.

As a mentor, Bitanga has learned that mentoring is all about authentically engaging with others, whether lending an ear, providing advice, or words of encouragement. She encourages her fellow alumni to volunteer to connect and foster a community of engaged alumni and students.

## Faculty



**Jean Abraham, PhD**

*James A. Hamilton Chair in Health Policy and Management  
Professor and Division Head*

Private health insurance, impact of the Affordable Care Act, employer wellness programs, chronic disease prevention and management



**Timothy Beebe, PhD**

*Interim Dean and Mayo Professor*

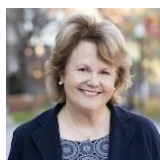
Survey methods, patient reported outcome measurement, access for vulnerable populations, learning health systems research



**Bjorn Berg, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

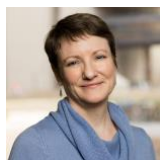
Healthcare operations, scheduling in healthcare, stochastic optimization, simulation



**Lynn Blewett, PhD**

*Professor*

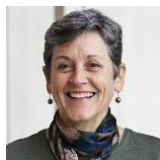
Healthcare policy, access to care, Medicaid/CHIP, immigrant health, survey research, international health systems



**Mary Butler, PhD, MBA**

*Associate Professor*

Evidence-based practice, evidence synthesis methods, learning health system cycle, evidence-based research, knowledge generation



**Kathleen Call, PhD**

*Professor*

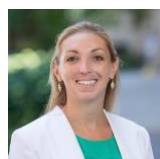
Health insurance, Medicaid, insurance-based discrimination, equitable access to care, survey research, community collaborative research



**Caitlin Carroll, PhD**

*Assistant Professor*

Health economics, health policy, hospital markets, rural health care, payment reform, physician behavior



**Dori Cross, PhD**

*Assistant Professor*

Health information technology, health information exchange, handoffs and transitions of care, delivery system reform, implementation science, mixed methods



**Janette Dill, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

Health care workforce, direct care workers, human resource practices and policies, career mobility in health care organizations



**Bryan Dowd, PhD**

*Professor*

Health policy analysis, health economics, public finance, quantitative methods



**Eva Enns, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

Mathematical modeling, decision analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, economic evaluation, network analysis, model calibration, infectious disease, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections, COVID-19



**Shekinah Fashaw-Walters, PhD, MSPH**

*Assistant Professor*

Post-acute care, long-term services and supports, home- and community-based care, structural racism, social determinants of health, health equity, access to care, quality of care, colorblind and racism-conscious health policies

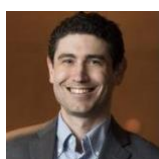


**Joseph Gaugler, PhD**

*Professor and Robert L. Kane Endowed Chair in Long-Term Care and Aging*

*Distinguished McKnight University Professor*

Alzheimer's disease and long-term care, longitudinal ramifications of family care for persons with dementia and other chronic conditions, community-based and psychosocial services for older adults with dementia and their caregiving families



**Ezra Golberstein, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

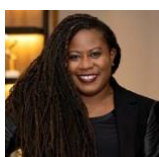
Health economics, health care policy, mental health, quantitative methods, health insurance, provider incentives



**Sarah Gollust, PhD**

*Professor*

Politics of health policy, health equity, public opinion, mass communication, news media influence on public health, content analysis, survey research



**Rachel Hardeman, PhD, MPH**

*Professor and Blue Cross Endowed Professor of Health and Racial Equity*

Maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, health equity, structural racism, population health, medical education





**Carrie Henning-Smith, PhD, MPH, MSW**

*Associate Professor*

Rural health, aging, long-term care, disability, health policy, health equity, social/structural/political drivers of health, social well-being



**Peter Huckfeldt, PhD**

*Associate Professor and Vernon E. Weckwerth Professor in Healthcare Administration Leadership*

Aging, chronic diseases, post-acute care, Medicare, health insurance, consumer directed health plans, diabetes, health economics, health care provider organization and payment



**J'Mag Karbeah, PhD, MPH**

*Assistant Professor*

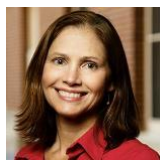
Structural racism, social determinants of health, health equity, population health sciences, maternal and child health, adolescent health, medical education



**Katy Kozhimannil, PhD, MPA**

*Professor and Distinguished McKnight University Professor*

Health care policy, maternal and child health, rural health, health care quality, policy evaluation, health equity



**Karen Kuntz, ScD**

*Professor*

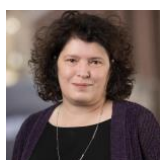
Chronic diseases, methods, decision analysis, simulation modeling, cost-effectiveness analysis, cancer screening



**JP Leider, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

Public health systems research including workforce and finance, evaluation, disaster response, and the ethics of resource allocation



**Donna McAlpine, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

Equity, mental health, methods, mental health services, race and ethnic inequities, survey methods, community engagement



**Hannah Neprash, PhD**

*Assistant Professor*

Health economics, health policy, quasi-experimental methods, public insurance programs, physician behavior, payment and delivery system reform



**Sayeh Nikpay, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

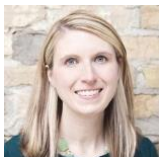
Health care policy, health and labor economics, economic demography, 340B drug pricing program, safety-net providers



**Manka Nkimbeng, PhD**

*Assistant Professor*

Minority aging, immigrant health, transnational aging, health equity, cognitive function, physical function, cultural adaptation, cultural humility, community engaged research and community based participatory research, intervention development



**Helen Parsons, PhD, MPH**

*Associate Professor*

Cancer survivorship, administrative/claims data, health policy, adolescents and young cancer survivors, Medicare/Medicaid, chronic disease, quality of care



**Todd Rockwood, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

Equity, measurement, survey research, social class



**Nathan Shippee, PhD**

*Associate Professor*

Patient and system complexity, chronic disease management, health care delivery, mental health, barriers to care, diabetes, depression, quality of care, publicly insured and low-income (Medicare/Medicaid) populations, learning health systems



**Tetyana Shippee, PhD**

*Professor*

Aging, equity, methods, quality of life, long-term care, racial disparities, life course, cumulative inequality, Alzheimer's disease and long-term care quality, community-engagement



**Katie White, EdD, MBA**

*Associate Professor and Wegmiller Professor in Healthcare Administration.*

Healthcare organizations, health system organization change initiatives, evaluation of delivery system innovations



**Rebecca Wurtz, MD, MPH**

*Professor*

Immunization barriers, electronic laboratory reporting, population health data standards, "data exhaust," and open health data

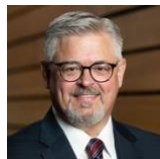


**Xiao Zang, PhD**

*Assistant Professor*

Simulation modeling, model calibration, cost-effectiveness analysis, distributional cost-effectiveness analysis, quasi-experimental methods, HIV/AIDS, opioid overdose

## Senior Lecturers and Senior Fellows



**Matt Anderson, JD**

*Senior Lecturer*

Government and nonprofit organizations, legal experience in litigation and in-house counsel, healthcare consulting



**Ryan Armbruster, MHA**

*Senior Fellow*

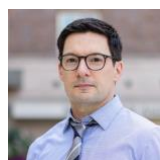
Healthcare innovation, healthcare service design, climate change and healthcare organizations



**Brooke Dressen, MHA**

*Senior Lecturer*

Healthcare administration summer residency and clerkship, career coaching, student mentor, and clerkship advisor



**Stuart Grande, PhD, MPA**

*Senior Lecturer*

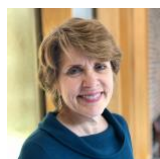
Patient-provider communication, health utilization behavior, shared decision making, knowledge translation, health disparities among Black males, community-based participatory research, qualitative methods



**JP Leider, PhD**

*Senior Fellow*

Public health systems including workforce, finance, evaluation, disaster response, and the ethics of resource allocation



**Ruth Mickelsen, JD, MA, MPH**

*Senior Lecturer*

Health law and policy, board governance, public health ethics, bioethics, management ethics



**Justine Mishek, MHA**

*Senior Lecturer*

Healthcare administration problem solving, experiential learning



**Kim Simensen, MHA, MBA**

*Senior Lecturer*

Healthcare finance, strategy, mergers and acquisitions



**Division of Health Policy & Management**  
<http://sph.umn.edu/academics/divisions/hpm>