2023 COMMENCEMENT
Monday, May 15, 2023
ORDER OF CEREMONIES

Processional. ........................................... “Pomp and Circumstance”  
School of Public Health Faculty & Class of 2023  
Performed by University Avenue Brass Band

National Anthem. ........................................ Kate Lamb  
Midwest Soprano

Welcome Remarks ....................................... Timothy Beebe, PhD  
Interim Dean & Mayo Professor

Commencement Address .............................. Brooke Cunningham, MD, PhD  
Commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Health

Class of 2023 Remarks ............................... Thuy Kim  
Candidate for Environmental Health PhD

Presentation of Candidates for Degrees ............ Joseph Koopmeiners, PhD  
Professor and Division Head, Division of Biostatistics

Public Health Professionals Pledge .................... Quin Nelson  
SPH Student Senate President

Greetings from the SPH Alumni Society .......... Susan Leppke, MPH ‘07  
SPH Alumni Society Board of Directors

Conferral of Degrees ................................. Janie S. Mayeron  
Chair, University of Minnesota Board of Regents

Closing and Minnesota Rouser ...................... Timothy Beebe, PhD

Recessional ............................................. University Avenue Brass Band

Taking pictures during commencement? /facebook @UMNSPH  /twitter @PUBLICHEALTHUMN  /instagram @UMNSPH

Please remain seated until the recessional has ended. All guests are welcome to enjoy a reception immediately following the ceremony in the Northrop Lobby.
BROOKE CUNNINGHAM, MD, PHD

Dr. Brooke Cunningham was appointed in January 2023 as commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Dr. Cunningham is responsible for directing the work of the Minnesota Department of Health. The department has approximately 1,400 employees in the Twin Cities area and seven offices in Greater Minnesota.

Prior to serving as MDH commissioner, Dr. Cunningham was appointed assistant commissioner for the MDH Health Equity Bureau in 2022 by Commissioner Jan Malcolm. In that role, Cunningham was responsible for overseeing the Center for Health Equity, the Office of American Indian Health, the COVID-19 Health Equity Team, and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She also worked closely with leaders and staff in MDH's other bureaus to advance health equity in their work.

Dr. Cunningham is a general internist, sociologist, and assistant professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Minnesota. Prior to joining MDH, her research focused on developing strategies to reduce racial disparities in health, including addressing the adverse impacts of exposure to racism. She also co-directed the University of Minnesota Medical School's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Thread in medical education. In 2021, she was selected as one of four inaugural recipients of the University of Minnesota’s Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Award. Cunningham is a primary care provider at the Community-University Health Care Clinic, a federally qualified health clinic in Minneapolis that serves a diverse patient population.

Cunningham received her doctorates in medicine and sociology from the University of Pennsylvania. After completing her residency in internal medicine at Duke University, she completed fellowships in health services research, health policy, and bioethics at Johns Hopkins University and an AcademyHealth Delivery System Science Fellowship at the Medica Research Institute. She received her bachelor's degree in history and African American studies from the University of Virginia.
Thuy Kim is a first-generation Vietnamese American and college student who immigrated to the United States with her family at a young age. Thuy earned a BS in biology with a concentration in molecular biology and a minor in chemistry, an MPH in epidemiology, and a certificate in global health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Thuy's career in public health food safety began as an epidemiologist at the Alabama Department of Public Health, where she helped lead outbreak investigations. This interest ultimately led her to the SPH Division of Environmental Health Sciences, where her research focuses on improving surveillance for foodborne illnesses and outbreak investigations using environmental health data. She has earned several honors including the MnDRIVE Global Food Ventures fellowship, Mary Lauren Olson Scholarship, Donald and Catherine Vesley for Environmental Health Scholarship, James W. Wright Scholarship, Harold R. Shipman Award for Excellence in Environmental and Occupational Health, and first place doctoral student poster at the 2021 SPH Research Day. Thuy served on the SPH dean search committee and is honored to represent SPH on the City of Minneapolis Public Health Advisory Committee.

While her work is professionally rewarding, Thuy’s food safety career is largely driven by her personal passion for food and the connections it fosters. Thuy strives to improve the safety of our food systems to help protect the food traditions that connect us to our heritage and our ancestors.

Susan N. Leppke, MPH is the Senior Director of Public Policy and Strategic Partnerships for the Association for the Advancement of Blood and Biotherapies (AABB), where she is responsible for advancing advocacy and driving public policy initiatives on improving patient access to transfusion medicine and biotherapies.

After completing her undergraduate degrees in physiology and psychology, Leppke completed her Master's degree in health administration and policy from the University of Minnesota, where she focused on health care systems and reimbursement. Leppke has over 15 years of experience in health care reimbursement, access-to-care policy and analysis, and stakeholder engagement. She has worked with a multitude of stakeholders including community partners, policymakers, and patients to focus on strategies to better improve patient lives.

Leppke has been a speaker and facilitator at multiple conferences, providing presentations on a wide range of topics. She is passionate about advocating for patients and providers and applies her tactical and strategic problem-solving skills to improve access and health care systems. In her free time, she enjoys offering her talents by serving on boards in the Twin Cities, running, dancing, and listening to opera.
2023 SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH MACE BEARER

JAN MALCOLM

Jan Malcolm was appointed in January 2018 as commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and served through January 2023. She also held that position from 1999 to 2003. MDH is the state’s lead public health agency and responsible for protecting, maintaining, and improving the health of all Minnesotans.

Prior to serving as commissioner, Malcolm was an adjunct faculty member at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, where she co-directed a national research and leadership development program funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). Malcolm also helped develop initiatives to strengthen the nation’s public health system as a senior program officer at RWJF.

Malcolm previously served as chief executive officer of the Courage Center and as president of the Courage Kenny Foundation following the merger of the Courage Center and the Sister Kenny Rehabilitation Institute. She was also vice president of public affairs and philanthropy at Allina Health.

In 2019, the School of Public Health nominated Commissioner Malcolm for an honorary UMN Doctor of Laws degree. Due to the pandemic, the University was unable to award her this degree in person. We are proud that we can do so today at our 2023 Commencement Ceremony.
ACADEMIC REGALIA

GOWN
The bachelor’s gown is untrimmed, with long pointed sleeves, and is worn closed. The master’s gown has long crescent-shaped sleeves and may be worn open or closed. The doctor’s gown has velvet facing down the front and three velvet bars on the bell-shaped sleeves. The velvet is either black or the color of the major field of study. Historically, most gowns were black, but in the past two decades some American institutions have followed the British use of red or college colors.

HOOD
The hood is the most important and distinctive feature. It was originally intended as a head cover and shoulder cape. The color of the trim (edging) indicates the degree field, and the length of the hood and width of the trim indicate the degree earned, with the doctor’s hood being the longest with the widest trim. The color or colors of the hood lining indicate the degree-granting institution. The University of Minnesota hood is symbolized with a gold background and single maroon chevron.

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Hood Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Public Health and Master of Healthcare Administration</td>
<td>Salmon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Science</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Philosophy</td>
<td>Dark Blue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CAP, TASSELS & STOLES
The academic cap was first worn as a symbol of the master’s degree. The mortarboard style cap is an Oxford University development. European universities have variations—some caps are soft, others square, and some are round with a tuft in the center. The tassel of today is an elaboration of the tuft. The Intercollegiate Code permits the color of the graduate’s tassel to correspond to the authorized color indicating the degree field. Graduation stoles, also referred to as sashes, are worn draped over the shoulders to denote specific achievement in academics or extracurriculars.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT TOWARD A HEALTHIER FUTURE
By supporting students, faculty, and life-altering research, philanthropy builds excellence in everything we do.

Generous gifts from donors and the School of Public Health provides scholarships to hundreds of students each academic year. Consider being part of the movement toward a healthier future: sph.umn.edu/give.
ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

MISSION

The School of Public Health improves the health and well-being of populations and communities around the world through excellence in research and education, and by advancing policies and practices that sustain health equity for all.

SCHOOL AT A GLANCE

Founded .................. 1944
Interim Dean ............... Timothy Beebe, PhD
Ranking .................... No. 6 public school of public health, U.S. News & World Report (No. 12 overall)
                        No. 2 Master of Healthcare Administration program,
                        U.S. News & World Report
                        No. 9 biostatistics PhD program, U.S. News & World Report
Divisions .................... Biostatistics
                        Environmental Health Sciences
                        Epidemiology & Community Health
                        Health Policy & Management
Full-Time Faculty .......... 123
Current students .......... 1,025 from 22 different countries
Accreditation ............... Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)
                        Commission on Accreditation in Healthcare Management
                        Education (CAHME)
                        Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)
                        Accrediting Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)
Alumni ....................... 12,300+ living today

Founded in 1944, the University of Minnesota School of Public Health (SPH) is consistently ranked among the top schools of public health in the nation. We prepare influential leaders in the field, and partner with health departments, communities, and policymakers to advance health equity for all. SPH faculty and student researchers are among the leading experts in public health, regularly featured by national and international media to provide innovative thinking and concrete action to emerging and persistent challenges, including racism, infectious disease outbreaks, rural health, an expanding aging population, and a changing climate.
WHAT IS PUBLIC HEALTH?

Every time you drink clean tap water, buckle your seat belt, enjoy a smoke-free airplane flight, or get a flu shot or COVID-19 vaccine, you are part of public health in action.

Although it touches everyone everywhere, many people don’t know what public health actually is. Public health links to all other health sciences and professions, but stands apart in three key ways:

- **Prevention**: Public health stops suffering before it starts.
- **Populations**: Public health seeks solutions for entire communities rather than treating disease and injury one patient at a time.
- **Partnerships**: Public health research is built on partnerships to explore the root causes of and solutions to persistent or emerging health and policy challenges.

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The University of Minnesota was one of the first schools in the nation to offer classes in public health when in 1874 Charles Hewitt, the secretary of the Minnesota State Board of Health, began teaching personal and community hygiene, epidemic diseases, and physiology. In the following decades, various University departments created programs in public health disciplines, such as biostatistics, environmental health, and epidemiology.

In 1944, the University brought all of these programs together to create the School of Public Health. Today, our school — ranked the #6 public school of public health in the U.S. — serves more than 1,000 students to help meet the increasing demand for a public health workforce. We were the first in the country to grant a master’s degree in hospital administration, establish a doctoral program in epidemiology, launch a graduate program in maternal and child health, and, in 2017, offer a graduate minor in health equity. We will launch the public health undergraduate degree program in fall 2023, helping to prepare the future leaders of our field for success.

FOCUS ON ANTIRACISM AND HEALTH EQUITY

The School of Public Health is determined to increase health and well being in communities. Our school’s guiding belief that “Health is a Human Right” drives our work.

Our Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity (CARHE) is breaking new ground as it works with the community to set research agendas and push into uncharted territory around measuring and ending racism’s influence on health. CAHRE increases our students’ ability to deeply explore and understand racism’s relationship to health and how to affect change.

The Strategic Plan for Antiracism is our school-wide commitment to challenge racism wherever we find it. Both our center and strategic plan are already making our school a national leader in tackling racism and health inequities, especially for Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Learn more: sph.umn.edu/antiracism
GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILE

Each year, the University of Minnesota School of Public Health graduates the next generation of public health professionals who will advance our understanding of how to live a healthier life.

Data represents degrees cleared Fall 2021 through Summer 2022

OUR GRADUATES BECOME:
- HEALTHCARE EXECUTIVES
- COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS
- HEALTH POLICY AND DATA EXPERTS
- RESEARCH SCIENTISTS
- BIOSTATISTICIANS
- EPIDEMIOLOGISTS
- DOCTORS TRAINED IN POPULATION HEALTH
- OTHER HEALTH-RELATED PROFESSIONALS

NUMBER OF GRADUATES: 368

76% FEMALE
24% MALE
27% INDIGENOUS STUDENTS AND STUDENTS OF COLOR

BY DEGREE:
- 58 MHA
- 225 MPH
- 35 MS
- 28 PHD
- 22 CERTIFICATE

15 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED
7% INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
RESEARCH DAY AWARD WINNERS

The School of Public Health’s annual Research Day event provides our students and faculty an opportunity to showcase their research activities, integrated learning, or applied practice experiences with the University community. Students’ posters highlight their innovative thinking and concrete actions to tackle some of the world’s most emerging and persistent public health challenges.

BEST POSTER AWARD WINNERS SUBMIT THEIR POSTERS TO THE DELTA OMEGA POSTER COMPETITION:

Phoebe Chastain, Public Health Administration & Policy, MPH
Ammar Yasir, Environmental Health, PhD

OTHER 2023 RESEARCH DAY AWARD WINNERS:

Master’s Category
Jackie Johnson, Environmental Health Sciences, MPH
Elena Tran, Gabbie Cesarone, Laura Farlow, Public Health Administration & Policy MPH

PhD Category
Madhura Vachon, Environmental Health, PhD
Allison Domingues, Epidemiology, PhD

People’s Choice Category
Oluwatosin Oluwole, Epidemiology, MPH

3-minute Thesis Competition Winners
First Place
Jiuzhou Wang, Biostatistics, PhD

Runner Up and People’s Choice Award
Bruno Bohn, Epidemiology, PhD

Pi Chapter of the University of Minnesota School of Public Health

Congratulations to the 2023 inductees to the Pi Chapter of the Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health. Membership in Delta Omega is highly selective and each inductee is chosen based on outstanding performance and devotion to public health.

Students are chosen for academic excellence and often rank in the top 25 percent of the graduating class.

Faculty are chosen for excellence based on a review of their work in the field.

Alumni are chosen for their work in the practice of public health that serves as a model for future graduates.

2023 student and faculty inductees are identified in the Commencement Program with < symbol.

Congratulations to all our new members on your accomplishments!
2022-2023 Recipients of the
MASTER OF HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION (MHA)

Yazeed Abdelhay          Zoe Edwards           Andy Lindmeier
Victoria Anderson        Jacob M. Ford           Brenden Lipp
Zach Anderson            Elliot Forrest          Jacob Marker
Ria Bardhan              Lucas Halvorson <       Tyler Richard Moon
Rebecca A. Bianchi       Ben Holcomb             Reily Marie Ondrula
Henry Michael Joseph Burns < Claire Marie Holland < Tyler John Robison
Elizabeth Marie Case    Navin K. Iyer            Nikhita Sandesh
Candelaria Conde         Summer Raed Jaber        Lexi Jillayne Schuder
    de Frankenberg       Megan Jacobson           Allison M. Stern
Carly Nicole Critchfield Laura Anne Knutson        Dana Mary Varughese
Daaman Dhawan            Malia Lambrecht <        < 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee
Kent Edeburn             Alex Gregory Last

MHA EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

Vivian Anugwom            Angela Christine Kierstead    Melissa Sayers
Richard F. Arndt <        Karen N. Larson          Amie Marie Walsh
Alexandra Blixt           Christophe Le Renard
Kevin A. Egan             Stephanie J. Leach
Thorsten Gruenheid        Sarah E. Lee
Rachel E. Gullerud        Luis Lopez
2022-2023 Recipients of the
MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH)

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION
Noura Almuhanna
Madeline Marie Anderson-Sarno
Maddison Paige Bessler
Spencer A. Czech +
Zachary Davenport
Mary Christine El-Afandi <
Susan Engberg +
Mariah K. Geiger-Williams
August Glomski
Sylvia Gutierrez
Leah Hailu
Tenzin Kunkyi
Kelsie Larson
Victoria Bao Lee +
Madeline Levine-Wolf
Ming-Ching Liang
Adrianna L. Lobitz
Ashton Loehr
Matthew Loewen
Katelyn Maddox
Hailey Nicole Mattson
Emilija C. Motivans
Annie Nguyen
Brooke Robyn Offenhauser <

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
Alaa Alzahrani
Maddie Barkholtz
MacKenzie Laurie Differding
Jonathan P. Evans
Jill Feinstein
Sabine Fritz
Sophie Luz Gonzalez
Salma Issa
Jacqueline Johnson <
Rachel Mansk
Julie Uwineza Ntegeye <
Nicole Renee Oblon

EPIDEMIOLOGY
Abdullahi Mohamed Ahmed
Sumaya Alfath
Mikayla Mary Bartelt <
Anthony Patrick Berg
Madison McKenzie Bissonette
Jasmine Rhianne Burbank
Ethan J. Cannon
Nathan Carroll
Lauren R. Daugherty
Denisha E. B. Deemeritte
Joshua Eklund
Calder Glowac <
Dahaba Warsame Hassan
Grace Hernandez
Ilyana F. Hohenkirk
Andrew J. Hoium
Ingrid Jacobson
Julia J. Jallo
Katie Kallenbach
Ebony Kargbo
Savannah Marie Larkin <
Katherine Lawin
Grace Liu <
Emma M. Matthes
Ian Thomas McKeown
Samuel Moen
Asma A. Mohamed
Ethan D. Moser
Miliki F. Moya
Salma Hassan Noor
Oluwatosin Esther Oluwole *
Yucabeth Oyaro
Lacy Pehike
Elizabeth A. Peterson *
Stephanie M. Jallo
Ferrol Rome
Samantha L. Sanvik
Jaclyn R. Schleper
Kristina Seehusen
Shweta Sharma
Jenna Nicole Slack
Molly Anne Slaughter-Barth
Elizabeth Vaughn Snyderman
Deirdre Sperry
Rebecca Thom
Deidree Summer Voss
Eleanor Jacobah Staub Weissblat ***
Elizabeth Whitcomb <

< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee
+ Candidate for dual-degree: Master of Social Work
* Certificate in Clinical Research
*** Certificate in Global Health
2022-2023 Recipients of the
MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH)
(Continued)

### MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dana M. Akre-Fens</td>
<td>Rosemary E. Laine</td>
<td>Summer Reid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crystal Lynn Alsiyao</td>
<td>Haley Lipo Zovic</td>
<td>Lauren Roach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cailynn Aumock</td>
<td>Mackenzie Lopp</td>
<td>Youa Yang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashlee Kay Beauchamp</td>
<td>Dechelle Lucas</td>
<td>Briana Ariel Wells</td>
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<td>Brandi A. Haar</td>
<td>Brianna Lundgren</td>
<td>Morgan Brown Winegarden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marielynn Herrera</td>
<td>Hibo H. Mohamed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenna Donovan Kacheroski</td>
<td>Amanda M. Moses</td>
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### PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION & POLICY

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leandria Shaquelle Albury</td>
<td>Meghan Ford</td>
<td>Mary Anne Powell</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sabrina Ali</td>
<td>Hannah Geressu</td>
<td>Xiomara Santana</td>
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<td>Victoria Anderson</td>
<td>Allison P. Goeke</td>
<td>Jacob Stauffer</td>
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<td>Maya Benedict</td>
<td>Magann Harvey</td>
<td>Elena H. Tran</td>
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<td>Emiliana Joanne Centrelia</td>
<td>Laura Herman</td>
<td>Miriam Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shehrose Amin Charania</td>
<td>Arantxa Hernandez-Chaire</td>
<td>Abigail Alexis Wenninger</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoebe Lynn Chastain</td>
<td>Emily Noelle Hinton</td>
<td>Katherine Adele White Johnson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashley Alexis Chavez</td>
<td>Sesen Kidane</td>
<td>Maegi Yang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kortni L. Cloud</td>
<td>Kita Lewis</td>
<td>Sophie Zielke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erin S. Collins</td>
<td>Robert John Libal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kelsey Einerton</td>
<td>Shantanu Mallick</td>
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<td>Andrew Etteldorf</td>
<td>Mackenzi Marquette</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura J. Farlow</td>
<td>Katherine Michelle Medina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adey Haile Fentaw</td>
<td>Brittany Nguyen</td>
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< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee
+ Candidate for dual-degree: Master of Social Work
2022-2023 Recipients of the
MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH)
(Continued)

PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION & POLICY EXECUTIVE PROGRAM
Melissa M. Báez
Brandon Bachman
Nicole J. Conklin
Deanna Richelle Drake <
Kathryn Farka
Talía W. Glass
Tony Guzzardo
Holly Hunter
Anna L. Kucera
Erin M. Lenninger
Devon M. Miller
Urszula Parfieniuk <
Judith Schleyer
Jenna Skinner
Angela Sullivan
Amanda Tran
Rachel K. Vohs Nead

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION
Cleome Bernick-Roehr
Tatum Olivia Byhre
Brianna Lee Caverzagie
Shoua Cha
Kaitlyn Cooper
Alec Martin Janning
Melanie Marie Reese Maldonado
Krista Nagel
Abby Rose
Rita S. Stephenson
Mai H Thao
Faith Vang
Kao Yong Yang

PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE
Colton Cannon **
Catherine Eisenreich ****
Katlyn Flannery^'
Jillian Cornelia Lynaugh
Michelle Schultze ++
Maya Sheikh^'
**Candidate for dual-degree: Doctor of Dental Surgery
****Candidate for dual-degree: Doctor of Medicine
^ Candidate for dual-degree: Master of Urban and Regional Planning
++ Candidate for dual-degree: Master of Public Policy
< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee
2022-2023 Recipients of the
MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS)

BIOSTATISTICS
Yixun Chen
Zhirui Deng
Samira Deshpande
Madelyn Duffy
Katherine Giorgio <
Maria E. Godinez
Monica Nicole Iram
Jiayu Lin
Chen Ling
Jialing Liu
Neelanzana Paudel
You Shan Shen
Abby M. Vogel
Daniel C. Waller <
Yansong Wen
Qingyi Zeng
Mengting Zhao
Jiang Ziren

CLINICAL RESEARCH
Vasudha Goel
Nicholas E. Ingraham
Craig F. Tschautscher

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
Julia J. Toothman

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH, POLICY & ADMINISTRATION
Zynab Kamal Ahmed
Umesh Ghimire <
Grace Gilmore
Scott Houle
Amandeep Kaur Ratta

< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee
2022-2023 Recipients of the
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

BIOSTATISTICS

Jessica L. Butts
Methods for Integrative Analysis and Prediction Accounting for Subgroup Heterogeneity

Lily Haine
Bayesian Methods for the Incorporation of Real World Data into the Design and Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials

Ziyu Ji
Bayesian Data Borrowing for Individualized Inference

Zhaotong Lin
Robust Mendelian Randomization Methods Based on Constrained Maximum Likelihood for Causal Inference

Elise F. Palzer
Multi-source Data Decomposition and Prediction for Various Data Types

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Cory J. Anderson
Characterizing U.S. Agency Approaches to Cervid Carcass Disposal in the Context of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Management: A Multi-state, Mixed-methods Analysis

Samuel A. Jacobs
Risk Factors and Decision-making in Potentially Injurious Motor Vehicle Activities

Thuy N. Kim
Evaluating Environmental Health Agency-Level Interventions for Foodborne Illness Outbreak Prevention and Surveillance

Vu Thuy Huong Le
Temperature, Heatwaves, Crime and Injury in Hanoi Vietnam

Matthew Joseph McFails
A Study of Work-Related Injuries Among Older Medicare Enrollees

Ali J. Strickland

Madhura Sundararajan Vachon
Preventing the Zoonotic Transmission of Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli and Subsequent Development of Post-diarrheal Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome at Animal Contact Venues using a One Health Approach

< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee
2022-2023 Recipients of the
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)
(Continued)

EPIDEMIOLOGY

Bruno Bohn
The digestive tract microbiome and cardiometabolic disease: exploring nitric oxide and lipopolysaccharide syntheses as mechanistic intermediates

Laura Houghtaling
State healthcare policy environment and the well-being of transgender and gender diverse youth

Sydney T. Johnson
The Impact of Prior Traumatic Experiences and Resilience Factors on the Long-Term Health and Recovery of Disaster Survivors

Sara Lammert
Evaluation of Facilitators and Barriers to Achieving Steps on the HIV Care Continuum

Rebecca Lynn Molinsky
Investigating the Association between Infection-Related Hospitalization and Incident Heart Failure and Mortality

Ramya Ramasubramanian
Evaluation of the association of Aging-Related Immune Phenotypes (ARIP) with aging outcomes using transcriptomics

Shuo Wang
Proteomic Aging Clock and Cancer Risk and Mortality

< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee
2022-2023 Recipients of the
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)
(Continued)

HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH, POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

Odichinma Akosionu-DeSouza
Private Equity Acquisition of Nursing Homes
and the Impact on Care Quality and Racial
Inequities

Julia D. Interrante
Payment Policies to Optimize Care and Improve
Equity for Postpartum People in the United
States

Alex Kristensen-Cabrera
Structural Racism and Associations with Maternal
and Infant Birth Outcomes

Zachary Levin
Essays on Hospital Infrastructure Investment

Meghan E. Munger
Understanding Parental Goals and Decision
Making in Ambulatory Children Living with
Cerebral Palsy

Margaret Ellen Tait
Influences on Support for Health and Social
Policy Reform: Exploring Religiosity and Media
as Contributors to Public Understanding of
Health Equity

< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee
All students have a story to tell. Amidst their demanding coursework, they take advantage of many opportunities to shape and define their future in public health. We’re pleased to share a few of their stories with you and express our school’s pride in what our students have accomplished.

Hannah Geressu
Public Health Administration & Policy MPH

Hannah Geressu didn’t always know that she would be studying public health. When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged, she was an immigration paralegal.

“I was laid off from my job and had to decide whether to continue on my path as a paralegal or try something new. I chose the latter and began searching for public health degree programs that would help me redirect my passion for law and policy in a way that would be useful during the pandemic.”

Hannah is driven by her desire to improve health insurance coverage and affordability in the United States. “In my ideal world, the U.S. would have universal healthcare just like every other wealthy, industrialized nation.” To learn more, she applied for SPH’s Public Health Administration and Policy (PHAP) MPH program. She says that the knowledge she gained here will help prepare her for the work she wants to do in the future. “I knew very little about America’s health insurance landscape before starting the PHAP program, but now I feel like I have learned enough from my graduate coursework to be critical of the U.S.’s employer-based health insurance model.”

After graduating, Hannah plans to work in health policy and wants to help expand Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to provide coverage to immigrant communities. She hopes to bring the knowledge and skills she’s gained from working as a graduate assistant at the State Health Access Data Assistance Center (SHADAC) and the Center for Public Health Systems (CPHS) to her future endeavors.
Ziyu Ji
Biostatistics PhD

SPH students are encouraged to find innovative, enriching, and fun ways to apply their knowledge and skills to real world experiences, and that's just what Ziyu Ji did.

"I thought it would be interesting and different to work with an entertainment and internet-focused industry. It's been a unique and rewarding experience being able to apply my data science knowledge [at Netflix]."

Ziyu grew up in Beijing, China and went to Shanghai when she was 16 to study mathematics. When her grandmother was diagnosed with lung cancer, Ziyu recognized that there were warning signs that could have made a difference if detected and treated earlier.

"I decided that public health was a meaningful path for me, so that I could help prevent diseases at early stages. Since I had studied mathematics, I thought that biostatistics would be a good combination of my passion and skill set."

Ziyu came to Minnesota and completed her master of science in biostatistics at SPH, where she decided to stay to pursue her PhD. Ziyu most recently worked for Netflix's data science and engineering team, where she built models and analyzed the results of their experiments to help the company make better decisions.

"What I was working on at Netflix was not directly related to public health, but the methodology framework I was developing could potentially help experiments in public health as well. I was working on a tool that could be applied to public health projects and help innovate the way in which we approach similar types of health data in the future."
Aaron Berg
Executive MHA

Dr. Aaron Berg wanted to go back to school while working full-time as a physician.

“Physicians can typically only help one patient at a time, and while I find that portion of my job important and very rewarding, layering in public health skills and this degree will allow me to broaden my impact.”

Aaron went to medical school at Touro University, completed his anesthesia residency at the University of Michigan, and did a fellowship in regional anesthesia and ambulatory medicine at the University of Minnesota. He is an associate professor at the U of M Medical School. His research has been focused on reducing the prescription and use of opioids. “Currently, I’m trying to find ways to minimize opioids during surgery and post-operatively, but in the scope of public health, I’d be able to look into things like prescribing trends and limits, chronic addiction, and the conversion from acute to chronic use.”

Aaron chose SPH because the MHA program worked with his work schedule while still allowing him to be actively engaged in class. He seeks to be in more leadership roles in the future so that he can have an influence in the decision-making process that impacts public health, and says that the MHA degree “helps you do your job better.”
Faith Vang attributes her interest in public health and nutrition to her upbringing. “There were so many levels to my experience growing up in the Hmong community of St. Paul…I realized that my family utilized a ton of public health resources, such as SNAP and WIC. That’s when I realized that I’ve been impacted by public health, nutrition, and food access all my life.”

Growing up in Minnesota, Faith found opportunities to be involved in her community. She participated in student organizations and volunteered at a local hospital before completing her undergraduate degree in nutrition dietetics from the College of Saint Benedict.

Recently, Faith was one of five students across the country to participate in the Nutrition and Physical Activity Traineeship, which she conducted with the Illinois Public Health Institute. The traineeship was offered by the CDC and the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists and focused on advancing health equity and expanding the diversity of the public health workforce — efforts that Faith is passionate about.

“I’ve seen so many family members struggle with health issues, and when their healthcare providers are not culturally competent, they cannot accurately prescribe a diet or lifestyle change that will work for my family…We need more representation and people who will advocate for us.”
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As a public health professional dedicated to enhancing the health status and well-being of individuals and communities, I pledge to hold the public interest and health of populations as my high professional goals.

MINNESOTA ROUSER

Minnesota, hats off to thee!
To thy colors true we shall ever be,
Firm and strong, united are we.
Rah, rah, rah for Ski-U-Mah
Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah!
Rah for the U of M.
[Repeat]
M-I-N-N-E-S-O-T-A!
Minnesota, Minnesota!
Yeah, Gophers!
THANK YOU!

Thank you to the individuals who helped make SPH Commencement possible.

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CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2023!

Welcome June 10 for our Alumni Welcome Picnic where we’ll welcome you to the SPH Alumni Society. Learn more: z.umn.edu/sph-alumni-picnic.

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