



2023 COMMENCEMENT

Monday, May 15, 2023



SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

ORDER OF CEREMONIES

Processional	“Pomp and Circumstance” <i>School of Public Health Faculty & Class of 2023</i> <i>Performed by University Avenue Brass Band</i>
National Anthem	Kate Lamb <i>Midwest Soprano</i>
Welcome Remarks	Timothy Beebe, PhD <i>Interim Dean & Mayo Professor</i>
Commencement Address	Brooke Cunningham, MD, PhD <i>Commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Health</i>
Class of 2023 Remarks	Thuy Kim <i>Candidate for Environmental Health PhD</i>
Presentation of Candidates for Degrees	Joseph Koopmeiners, PhD <i>Professor and Division Head, Division of Biostatistics</i>
Public Health Professionals Pledge	Quin Nelson <i>SPH Student Senate President</i>
Greetings from the SPH Alumni Society	Susan Leppke, MPH ‘07 <i>SPH Alumni Society Board of Directors</i>
Conferral of Degrees	Janie S. Mayeron <i>Chair, University of Minnesota Board of Regents</i>
Closing and Minnesota Rouser	Timothy Beebe, PhD
Recessional	University Avenue Brass Band

Taking pictures during commencement?  @UMNSPH  @PUBLICHEALTHUMN  @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.

2023 COMMENCEMENT SPEAKERS

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.

CLASS OF 2023 SPEAKER



THUY KIM

PhD Candidate in Environmental Health

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 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.

SPH ALUMNI SOCIETY SPEAKER



SUSAN LEPPKE, MPH '07

President, SPH Alumni Society Board of Directors

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.

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH TRADITIONS

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.

THE UNIVERSITY MACE

The University's first official mace made its debut in 1961 at the inauguration of President O. Meredith Wilson, 110 years after the University was founded and eight centuries after the mace's warlike image faded and it became a symbol of peaceful leadership. Art professor Philip Morton designed the University's mace, choosing a star as its crowning feature. The University machine shop made the mace with a solid aluminum handle set with the regents' seal and a 4-inch crystal sphere surmounted by the aluminum "Star of the North."

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

HOOD COLOR

Master of Public Health and Master of Healthcare Administration.	Salmon
Master of Science.	Yellow
Doctor of Philosophy	Dark Blue

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.

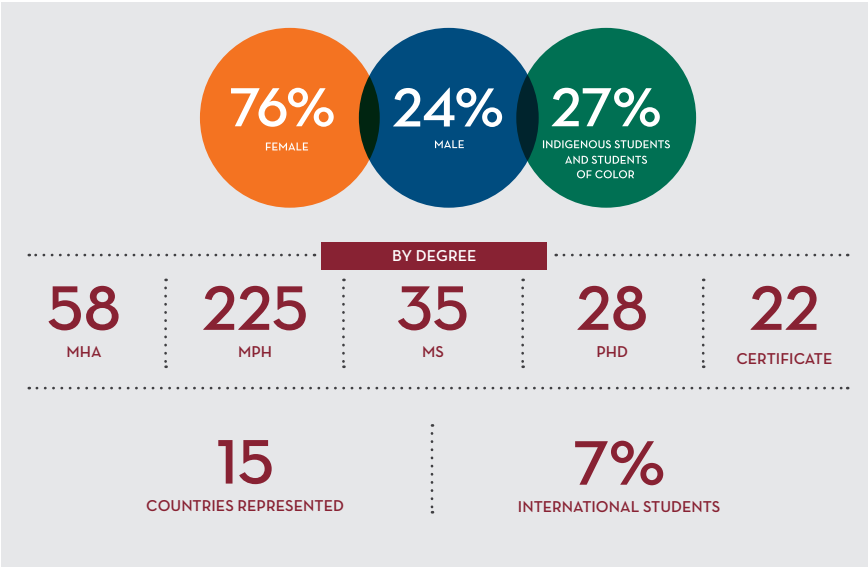
Our Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity (CARHE) is breaking new ground as it works with the community to set research agendas and push into uncharted territory around measuring and ending racism's influence on health. CARHE increases our students' ability to deeply explore and understand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



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

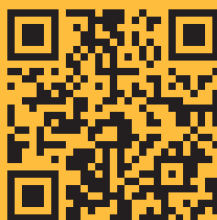
Bruno Bohn, Epidemiology, PhD



Delta Omega

Honorary Society in Public Health

View Research
Day Posters:



[z.umn.edu/
rd-posters-2023](https://z.umn.edu/rd-posters-2023)

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
Victoria Anderson
Zach Anderson
Ria Bardhan
Rebecca A. Bianchi
Henry Michael Joseph Burns <
Elizabeth Marie Case
Candelaria Conde
de Frankenberg
Carly Nicole Critchfield
Daaman Dhawan
Kent Edeburn

Zoe Edwards
Jacob M. Ford
Elliot Forrest
Lucas Halvorson <
Ben Holcomb
Claire Marie Holland<
Navin K. Iyer
Summer Raed Jaber
Megan Jacobson
Laura Anne Knutson
Malia Lambrecht <
Alex Gregory Last

Andy Lindmeier
Brenden Lipp
Jacob Marker
Tyler Richard Moon
Reily Marie Ondrula
Tyler John Robison
Nikhita Sandesh
Lexi Jillayne Schuder
Allison M. Stern
Dana Mary Varughese

MHA EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

Vivian Anugwom
Richard F. Arndt <
Alexandra Blixt
Kevin A. Egan
Thorsten Gruenheid
Rachel E. Gullerud

Angela Christine Kierstead
Karen N. Larson
Christophe Le Renard
Stephanie J. Leach
Sarah E. Lee
Luis Lopez

Melissa Sayers
Amie Marie Walsh

< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH)

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION

Noura Almuhanha	Kelsie Larson	Kayla Peterson <
Madeline Marie Anderson-Sarno	Victoria Bao Lee +	Rachael Rich
Maddison Paige Bessler	Madeline Levine-Wolf	Joy Schmidt
Spencer A. Czech +	Ming-Ching Liang	Zachary Joseph Schmit
Zachary Davenport	Adrianna L. Lobitz	Madeline Weuve Shearer
Mary Christine El-Afandi <	Ashton Loehr	Emily Skalla
Susan Engberg +	Matthew Loewen	Bridget Lorraine Stollfus
Mariah K. Geiger-Williams	Katelyn Maddox	Katie Twyman-Metzger
August Glomski	Hailey Nicole Mattson	Madison Elizabeth Weirick
Sylvia Gutierrez	Emilija C. Motivans	Claire Elise Weiss
Leah Hailu	Annie Nguyen	Martha Essi Williams
Tenzin Kunkyi	Brooke Robyn Offenhauser <	Hannah Yee

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Alaa Alzahrani	Sophie Luz Gonzalez	Maria S. Roeser
Maddie Barkholtz	Salma Issa	Aakehtee Sneh
MacKenzie Laurie Differding	Jacqueline Johnson <	Ellen Szostak
Jonathan P. Evans	Rachel Mansk	Zachary Zirnhelt
Jill Feinstein	Julie Uwineza Ntegeye <	
Sabine Fritz	Nicole Renee Oblon	

EPIDEMIOLOGY

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

< 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

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (MPH)

(Continued)

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

Dana M. Akre-Fens	Rosemary E. Laine	Summer Reid
Crystal Lynn Alsiyao	Haley Lipo Zovic <	Lauren Roach
Cailynn Aumock <	Mackenzie Lopp +	Youa Vang
Ashlee Kay Beauchamp	Dechelle Lucas	Briana Ariel Wells <
Brandi A. Haar	Brianna Lundgren +	Morgan Brown Winegarden +
Marielynn Herrera <	Hibo H. Mohamed	
Jenna Donovan Kacheroski	Amanda M. Moses +	

PUBLIC HEALTH ADMINISTRATION & POLICY

Leandria Shaquelle Albury <	Meghan Ford	Mary Anne Powell
Sabrina Ali	Hannah Geressu	Xiomara Santana
Victoria Anderson	Allison P. Goeke	Jacob Stauffer
Maya Benedict	Magann Harvey	Elena H. Tran
Emiliana Joanne Centrella	Laura Herman	Miriam Valley <
Shehrose Amin Charania	Arantxa Hernandez-Chaire	Abigail Alexis Wenninger
Phoebe Lynn Chastain	Emily Noelle Hinton	Katherine Adele White Johnson
Ashley Alexis Chavez	Sesen Kidane <	Maegi Yang
Kortni L. Cloud	Kita Lewis	Sophie Zielke
Erin S. Collins	Robert John Libal	
Kelsey Einertson	Shantanu Mallick	
Andrew Etteldorf	Mackenzi Marquette	
Laura J. Farlow	Katherine Michelle Medina	
Adey Haile Fentaw	Brittany Nguyen	

< 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	Tony Guzzardo	Judith Schleyer
Brandon Bachman	Holly Hunter	Jenna Skinner
Nicole J. Conklin	Anna L. Kucera	Angela Sullivan
Deanna Richelle Drake <	Erin M. Lenninger	Amanda Tran
Kathryn Farka	Devon M. Miller	Rachel K. Vohs Nead
Talia W. Glass	Urszula Parfieniuk <	

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION

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

PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE

Colton Cannon **	Jillian Cornelia Lynaugh
Catherine Eisenreich ****	Michelle Schultze ++
Katlyn Flannery^	Maya Sheikh^

< 2023 Delta Omega Honorary Society in Public Health Inductee

**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

2022-2023 Recipients of the

MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS)

BIostatISTICS

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

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 McFalls

*A Study of Work-Related Injuries Among Older
Medicare Enrollees*

Ali J. Strickland

*Power in Numbers: Quantitative Microbial Risk
Assessments of Salmonella in Federally Sam-
pled Ground Meat Products and the Resulting
Impact of Risk Management Strategies on
Public Health*

Madhura Sundararajan Vachon

*Preventing the Zoonotic Transmission of Shiga
toxin-producing Escherichia coli and Subse-
quent Development of Post-diarrheal Hemolyt-
ic Uremic Syndrome at Animal Contact Venues
using a One Health Approach*
*Multi-source Data Decomposition and Prediction
for Various Data Types*

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*

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*

STUDENT STORIES

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."



STUDENT STORIES

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

Public Health Nutrition MPH

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!

**Join the celebration
on social #SPHGrad**

THANK YOU!

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

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Congratulations Graduate!

The University of
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welcomes you to a
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CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2023!

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