Message from the President

Dear Fellow UNMC College of Public Health Alumni:

I am honored to welcome the class of 2018 to the ranks of proud UNMC alumni. A College of Public Health convocation ceremony held on May 4 offered the opportunity to honor these graduates and celebrate with their families. I encourage all new alumni to stay involved in our council.

We had the great pleasure of recognizing two of our alums at the Convocation, Dr. Erin Carlson and Dr. Salomon Compaore. Read on below in this newsletter to learn more about their remarkable achievements.

Our council continues to look for ways to serve and engage students and graduates. I would love to hear from you. In addition, I would like to welcome two new members on the alumni council, Jessica Semin, BSN ’15, MPH ’17 and Katherine Kotas, MPH ’17.

I hope you are having a wonderful summer and I look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Chad Wetzel, MPH’13
President
COPH Alumni Engagement Council
Meet the College of Public Health Alumni Award Recipients

On May 4th the College of Public Health held its 2018 convocation ceremony where two alumni were recognized for their achievements. The awards were presented by Kelly Erickson, MPH ’14, Vice President of the College of Public Health Alumni Council.

Dr. Salomon Compaore MPH ’14 was awarded the Early Career Achievement Award and is currently the head of the Disease Control and Prevention Office at the Center Region Health Directorate in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. His brother Lassoure Sosthene Compaore accepted the award on his behalf.

Dr. Erin Carlson, MPH ’04 was awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award. Dr. Carlson is the Associate Clinical Professor at University of Texas at Arlington’s (UTA) College of Nursing and Health Innovations where she oversees development of graduate public health programs.

Following the ceremony students and alumni joined Dr. Carlson for a networking lunch. Dr. Carlson provided advice to the students as they build their careers, including, “Learn to bridge academics to practice. Ask to volunteer and do something sustainable.” This is only one of the many great pieces of advice that Dr. Carlson gave to current College of Public Health students.

Read the full bios of the 2018 award recipients.

Opportunities Fair

On March 29th all COPH students, alumni, faculty and staff were invited to attend the 2018 Opportunities Fair. This event provides an excellent way for students to network with a number of community organizations and learn how to get involved. Students were also provided with employment, service learning/capstone, and volunteer opportunity information. The Opportunities Fair was sponsored in part by the COPH Alumni Council, Student Affairs and Student Association.
Support our work through the College of Public Health Innovation Fund

In the New Era of Alumni Engagement, College of Public Health Alumni are all welcomed into our organization with automatic membership. This enables us to focus our work on serving and engaging graduates, disseminating effective communications, forming meaningful connections between alumni and students, and facilitating opportunities for alumni to invest in their UNMC passions. Alumni who wish to give back and support the work of the Alumni Council may do so through the College of Public Health Innovation Fund.

We ask for your continued support in the form of time, talent, and treasure. As we value our fellow alumni who came before us and made our University stronger, we now have an important opportunity to make a real difference for the next generation of proud health sciences students at UNMC. Thank you to all the alumni who have supported our work.

College of Public Health News
Message from the Dean, Ali S. Khan, MD, MPH

This is always an exciting time of year. In May, we continue the tradition of Convocation, a time to celebrate and honor our College’s graduates. For those who missed it, this was the first Convocation that I got to use a Jedi Lightsaber! Congratulations to all of our graduates and to all of our students, alumni, faculty, and community partner who received awards during this important celebration. Be sure to check out all the great photos captured. A special thanks to our Academic and Student Services team for making this another fantastic event.

Thank you to our outgoing 2017-2018 Student Association officers, Emma Schultz (President), Sachi Verma (Vice President), Bedant Chakraborty (Treasurer), and Alisha Aggarwal (Secretary) and Student Senate representatives Tanner Clark and Michael Sauter. Your hard work and dedication never goes without notice and is so appreciated, especially considering you balanced these positions with your studies. Congratulations to our incoming 2018-2019 officers Alisa Aggarwal (President), Balkissa Ouattara (Vice President), Jessica Wiens (Secretary), Treasurer (Bedant Chakraborty) and representatives Issaka Kabore, Jessica Wiens, and Orphee Tamba. I look forward to seeing what you have in store for the College this coming year!

Congratulations to those newly elected to faculty leadership positions in the College: Dr. Chandran Achutan (Chair, Governing Faculty), Dr. Evi Farazi (Chair, Curriculum Committee), Dr. Aaron Yoder (Chair, Research & Development Committee), and Dr. David Dzewaltowski (Chair, Promotion & Tenure Committee). A big thank you to Dr. Nizar Wehbi, Dr. Chandran Achutan, Dr. Tricia LeVan, and Dr. Gleb Haynatzki for their past several years’ service in these positions.

Congratulations to Dr. Wael ElReyes who has been appointed Fulbright Scholar Liaison at UNMC. Wael will work with a network across the U.S. who play an important role in the US Department of State’s Fulbright Scholarship Program. The value of this appointment is large in scope as it aims to increase the mutual understanding between people in the U.S. and other countries. This appointment also supports our global health collaborations and opportunities, providing exchange programs and awards for faculty to perform research and teach internationally.

Summer’s lull will give us opportunities to catch up on research, grant writing, and new courses for the upcoming semester, in between some fun in the sun. Wishing everyone an enjoyable and safe summer!

Follow Dean Khan on Twitter.
Public Health Week Features Student Research

The Student Research Conference poster competition, part of the annual celebration of Public Health Week, is getting harder to judge each year, said Dean Ali S. Khan, M.D., M.P.H. "The quality of these projects keep going up. And soon, we’ll outgrow our space."

Public Health Week poster presentation winners
Studies on air quality in research labs and daycare centers, HPV vaccinations of refugee children and awareness of colorectal cancer and screening in Omaha's Latino community were among the winning student research projects.

Out of the 24 posters submitted, the 21 that were accepted crammed the third floor commons area. Tricia LeVan, Ph.D., associate professor, epidemiology, and chair of the research committee, said that this event is becoming more popular every year. Fourteen faculty members and alumni judged the event.

The following students were awarded $100 for their top projects:

**MPH students:**
- Rima Albalushi;
- Anthony Blake;
- Gaurav Kumar;
- DaiTrang Lee; and
- Richard Sleightholm.

**Ph.D. students:**
- Karl Bisselou;
- Roger Gonzales;
- Minh Nguyen;
- Gwenndolyn Porter; and
- Zijian Qin.
Awards Presented at 2018 Convocation highlight faculty and student excellence

Faculty and student awards were presented at the College of Public Health's convocation held May 4 at the Durham Museum. View a full list of award recipients.

In addition, 15 students, faculty, alumni and one honorary person were inducted into Delta Omega; two students received certificates in public health and community-oriented primary care; and 24 students received master's degrees in public health.

Under the microscope: Public health work in Bangladesh

UNMC Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., talks with Ali Khan, M.D., M.P.H., dean of the College of Public Health, about working in Bangladesh as part of the World Health Organization's response to the Rohingya humanitarian crisis. Click on the image above to play the video.
Faculty Spotlight
Christine Arcari, Ph.D., is a new faculty member at UNMC

Name: Christine Arcari, Ph.D.

Hometown: Huntington, N.Y.

Title and department at UNMC: Associate dean, academic and student affairs, and associate professor of epidemiology, College of Public Health

Professional Interests: Public health education; infectious diseases; and disease prevention.

How I fell in love with public health: I like a challenge and I believe in the power of prevention.

Click here to learn more about Dr. Arcari.

Agricultural Health and Safety Course for Medical and Safety Professionals

July 10-13, 2018

The Agricultural Health and Safety Course for Medical and Safety Professionals is designed to examine key health and safety issues specific to rural and agricultural workers. Experts will present course material relevant to those working in health care, public health, education, and safety professions. This course is intended for professionals who work with or have an interest in agricultural health and safety including physicians, nurses, emergency medical responders, physician assistants, health educators, advanced practice nurses, Ag extension, migrant health clinicians, physical therapists, insurance specialists, veterinarians, and safety professionals. Click here for more information.
Apply Now for the Great Plains Leadership Institute

The Great Plains Leadership Institute is designed for emerging, mid-level and senior leaders from the Great Plains Region (Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, South Dakota, and more) who play essential roles in keeping communities healthy. Scholars come from governmental public health, insurance companies, community health centers, civic and elected positions, community-based organizations, the business community and more.

Applications are due June 29. Learn more.

UNMC News

NU President Hank Bounds, state leaders unveil Blueprint Nebraska
University of Nebraska President Hank Bounds, Ph.D., joined leaders in business, agriculture and government in May to launch Blueprint Nebraska, a citizen-led, statewide economic development initiative. The effort seeks to establish a comprehensive and pro-active plan to stimulate the state’s economic growth, competitiveness and prosperity, while building on its many strengths. Read more.

Legislative Update

On Wednesday, April 4th, Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts signed the state budget package approved by the legislature with no vetoes. Under the budget, the University of Nebraska’s funding will be reduced about $11 million in the current year, and next year’s appropriation will be cut about $6 million. An original proposal had called for a $23 million cut to NU for 2018-2019.

President Hank Bounds, Ph.D., issued the following statement thanking the many Nebraskans who have spoken out in support of the University over the past few months: "I am extraordinarily grateful to the thousands of students, faculty and staff, business and agricultural leaders, and Nebraskans across this state who have lifted up their voices for an affordable, competitive public University that transforms lives and grows the economy." Read more here.
To continue to stay informed, alumni are welcome to sign up for the University of Nebraska Advocate program.

UNMC’s Impact on Nebraska’s Legislative Districts

As Nebraska’s only public academic health science center, UNMC is committed to the education of a 21st century health care workforce, to improving the health of Nebraska and beyond through its premier educational programs, innovative research and the highest quality patient care, and to serving the state and its communities through award-winning outreach.

Submit your news for Class Notes

The UNMC Alumni Relations Office publishes class notes in the UNMC CONNECT magazine. We want to hear your stories.

Please consider using this link to provide your personal or professional news, including:
- Employment news: new job, promotion, or retirement
- Awards: Professional or service related recognition
- Personal: Weddings and births

Submit your class notes and based on publication space, we will share your good news in an upcoming issue of Connect.
Engage With Us On Social Media

College of Public Health on Facebook
College of Public Health on Twitter
College of Public Health Alumni on Facebook
UNMC Alumni Association on Twitter

Are you interested in getting involved with a new alumni and student social media engagement project? If so, please contact us to learn more.