



February 3, 2020

Welcome back to the new semester and thanks to everyone who attended All Hands, it was a great time! I'm happy to be back home from my WHO deployment in Tonga and Fiji.

There are many to be recognized this month in the college:

- The Center for Reducing Health Disparities was one of seven individuals/organizations recently honored by the Metro Omaha Tobacco Action Coalition (MOTAC) at its annual Champions for Tobacco-Free Living Luncheon. Dr. Dejun Su, center director, received the Community Impact of the Year Award. In addition, the center has launched an incentive program at the Nebraska Medicine Fontenelle Clinic that pays people every 90 days for achieving a healthier weight. So far, about 150 people already have enrolled in the free program. The research study title is, "Sustaining the Reach of a Scalable Weight Loss Intervention through Financial Incentives: An Exploratory Randomized Controlled Trial".
- Dr. Rogan was recently awarded grant funding from Sammy's Superheroes Foundation. The organization was close to donating their "millionth" dollar overall to Pediatric Cancer Research, and therefore rounded the dollar amount up to be able to achieve that goal, which increased the award amount.
- CS-CASH recently awarded researchers in Nebraska, Iowa and Indiana funds for seven pilot projects. Project investigators received awards of up to \$20,000 over an 18-month period. The projects selected for support by this program must address a critical issue in agricultural safety and health and lead to a more extensive study of the issue.
- Drs. Jennie Hill and Daisy Dai have been awarded UNMC New Investigator Award. Dr. John Lowe has been awarded UNMC Distinguished Scientist Award. A campus ceremony will be held at 4 p.m. March 3 in the Durham Research Center Auditorium to recognize the awardees. In addition, Dr. Dai's research has recently been highlighted in the Omaha World Herald.
- Dr. Armando De Alba was invited by the central office of the Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs to be a panelist in a plenary session of a forum of migrant health Mexico-United States in Mexico City. He will be presented as a healthcare consultant to the Government of Mexico and has been requested to talk about the current challenges on health for Mexican immigrants in the US.
- Roger Gonzales, a doctoral student in health promotion at the UNMC College of Public Health, has been selected as a member of the American Journal of Public Health's 2020 Student Think Tank. The Think Tank is a group of six emerging public health practitioners who have a significant role in decisions related to the AJPH. These six students will work closely with the AJPH Editor-in-Chief Alfredo Morabia,



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MD, PhD for the upcoming year. Group members will be involved in selecting the monthly cover design for the AJPH, developing a public health podcast, writing editorials to inform and advocate about public health issues, and boosting engagement between the journal and the broader public health community through social media.

Welcome to our new team members Ms. Amber Cummins, my new Executive Assistant; Dr. David Brett-Major, Professor in Epidemiology; Ms. Regina Nailon, Patient Safety Program Director, Center for Health Policy; Ms. Abigail Lowe, Preparedness Program Specialist; Ms. Nicole Kolm-Valdivia, Director of Professional programs.

If you're like me and have made a new year's resolution to be more physically active again, check out the challenge to "walk the walk" of Public Health by becoming part of a collective group working (or walking) together? The 2020 APHA Billion Step Challenge has begun! Join several of your UNMC and COPH colleagues, faculty, staff, students and alumni in participating in the 2020 APHA Billion Step Challenge as part of the UNMC COPH team! Thanks to our Wellness Council and Leslie Scofield for keeping us informed of these activities!

Please keep in mind the happenings in February:

- Student Association's Dean's Forum will take place on February 6 at noon. It's one of my favorite events each semester and I hope to see many of you there.
- ASPPH has selected the College of Public Health at UNMC as one of the two finalists for this year's ASPPH Harrison Spencer Award for Outstanding Community Service. Representatives from ASPPH will be visiting our college on February 12. This is awesome news and thank you to Dr. Su and Dr. Grimm for helping to arrange this visit.
- February marks Black History Month, and UNMC has a number of events planned to celebrate. Please make time to stop by one of these events.

I will be keeping busy in February taking Analisa's online Canvas course. I want to make sure I am also on top of my game when building online course content. I learnt last semester that it is really hard, and I admire all of the faculty and staff who have become experts at it!

Always listening,

ASK

Ali S. Khan, MD, MPH

Retired Assistant Surgeon General, USPHS

Dean and Professor

College of Public Health | Office of the Dean