

February 3, 2016

Hello Team,

Welcome back to a new semester and New Year! I hope 2016 is off to a great start for everyone.

I hope many of you had the opportunity to participate in the symposium “Elevating the Conversation: Stress and Emotional Well-Being”. As Chancellor Gold wrote, “Perhaps no other effort on our campus is as important as our initiative to reduce the outcome and stigma associated with stress, burnout and mental illness, and to provide services for our students, faculty and staff who are experiencing this type of distress.” He couldn’t have expressed this any better. The mental well-being of our team is extremely important and I look forward to continuing the conversation throughout the year.

In January we got to welcome some new members to our team. Dr. Paul Estabrooks finally (smile) joined our team as the Harold M. Maurer, MD, Distinguished Chair of Public Health in the Department of Health Promotion, Social and Behavioral Health. He brought along with him faculty member Dr. Fabio Almeida and doctoral student, Fabiana Brito. Fabio’s focus is on diabetes and Fabiana’s focus is on how the environment impacts obesity in children and health literacy as related to childhood obesity materials. We are thrilled to have them here! We also got to welcome Dr. Jennie Hill who joined the Department of Epidemiology as Associate Professor with focus on physical activity, nutrition and obesity. Ms. Mary Christman is a new Health Data Analyst in the Department of Health Services Research & Admission and Dr. Hyo Jung Tak a new faculty member whose interests include health economics, health policy, health services research, econometrics and public finance. In the Dean’s Office, Ms. Tari Rose is our new Office Associate. Welcome to all!

We had a send-off as well. Robin Jaeckel, who was the Administrative Assistant to our Associate Deans, was snatched up by Vice Chancellor Dele Davies’ office. Robin had been with the College since its beginning; her knowledge and helpfulness will be missed.

This month I got to interact with several of our public health partners. Dr. Brandon Grimm and I made a return trip to the Southeast District Health Department in Auburn, Nebraska. As part of that trip we also met with partners at Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska, and talked to students about our fantastic MPH programs. At the generous invite of Ira Combs, I had a tour of the North Omaha Area Health (NOAH) clinic. The clinic provides many important services to people in our community who are unable to pay for care. I had the honor of meeting with the College’s long-time friend, John Cavanaugh of the Holland Children’s Movement and made a new friend, Gail Graeve of the Mutual of Omaha Foundation. Associate Dean Alice Schumaker



was instrumental in organizing a conversation with the Dean of Palacky University for a possible new COPH campus in the Czech Republic. Thanks to Dr. Pinaki Panigrahi, we had the honor of hosting Professor G.K. Rath, MD, Head, National Cancer Institute, India. All excellent opportunities to discuss collaborative opportunities.

As February begins, I'm getting ready to head to DC where I'll be a panelist at the Institute of Medicine's workshop on our national stockpile. Then, back to Nebraska to prepare for testimony before the legislature on LB 1013 to support the increase of taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products. This is one step we can take to become the healthiest state in the union.

Always listening,
Ask

Ali S. Khan, MD, MPH

Retired Assistant Surgeon General, USPHS

Dean and Professor

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