

July 2, 2018

Dear Team,

After such a busy May, June seemed so tame!

Dr. Sharon Medcalf - Assistant Professor, Director for the Center for Biosecurity, Biopreparedness and Emerging Infectious Diseases, and Faculty Advisor for the Student Response Team – represented us at the World Health Organization's (WHO) GOARN (Global Outbreak Alert Response Network) Executive Steering Committee Meeting in New York this month. Dr. Medcalf updated partners across the globe on our training activities, National Ebola Training & Education Center, and progress of iExcel and the national quarantine facility. UNMC is a proud member of GOARN, a network of institutions who are ready to respond to an outbreak at a moment's notice. The UNMC College of Public Health is renowned for our emergency preparedness training programs and was asked by WHO to be part of a sub-group of educational institutions tasked with assisting in a full revision to GOARN's training program. Dr. Medcalf serves as our point of contact for this project and works with global experts to improve the world's response to infectious disease outbreaks.

This month, the Center for Reducing Health Disparities supported the Bridge to Care Legacy Project annual summer Refugee Health Fair. Free vision, dental, blood pressure, and glucose level screenings were available to several hundreds of refugees from communities in Omaha, including Sudanese, Somali, Karen and Bhutanese. There was representation from each College on campus and several of our great community partners, including the Douglas County Health Department, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, One World, and Charles Drew, joined us.

Although temperatures have been mild the last couple of weeks, we've already experienced some scorching temperatures this month and are sure to experience more this summer. Don't forget to learn about ways you can help with energy curtailment on campus. We can do many quick and easy things to help with this effort. In an office? Close your blinds. Been looking for another reason to get more steps in? Take the stairs instead of the elevator. It's truly surprising how many "little" things can result in less stress on our resources.

A warm welcome to Dr. Jesse Bell who joins our team in the Department of Environmental, Agricultural and Occupational Health as an Associate Professor for

Climate Science (talk about scorching temperatures!) and Ms. Kelinda Cobb who joins the College's Health Professions Tracking Service. Best wishes to Mr. Joe Michaelsen from the Dean's Office as he departs the College for a new opportunity.

Congratulations to Dr. Brandon Grimm, who has been promoted to Associate Dean of Practice, effective July 1, 2018. Dr. Grimm is a respected leader in our college, throughout the university system, and in our communities and has a strong dedication to public health and the growth and success of our College.

An underpinning for our public health science, education, and service efforts is social justice. I was keenly reminded of that during my visit to Germany and the Netherlands as part of an eMBA project. Equity and ethics was foremost in discussions about healthcare and public health. Their healthcare systems are fundamentally different from ours, because healthcare is a right, not a privilege. They are perplexed by a country that allows people to get sick and die without healthcare just because they are poor.

I encourage all of you, as social justice champions, to be actively engaged in critical issues that help define healthy, equitable communities. Regardless of where you may fall on the political spectrum; immigration, Medicaid expansion, reproductive rights, and equal rights for LGBTQA people require your informed voice and advocacy. However, recent events such as denying services to the Press Secretary and heckling a cabinet secretary during dinner are disturbing. I know we can demonstrate our passionate views in a way that doesn't come at the expense of civility and social cohesion. As a collective body of faculty, staff, students, and alumni with this mindset, we will have greater success strengthening and promoting our education, research, service, and practice activities that help secure the nation's health.

Always listening,

ask

Ali S. Khan, MD, MPH

Retired Assistant Surgeon General, USPHS

Dean and Professor

College of Public Health | Office of the Dean