Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs

Summer Public Health Scholars Program

2015 Participants
Midori Mawi Altamirano

School: Portland State University
Year: Senior

Public Health Interests: Policy and Management / Global Health

Career Goals: I will use my academic knowledge to develop and lead projects that will support the health of communities at a national and international level. In order to achieve this goal, I will apply for a Master’s degree in Public Health with an emphasis on Policy and Management and Global Health at Columbia University. In the meantime, I will continue to expand my experience by working with health organizations in the US and seek opportunities abroad in order to understand how systematic changes can affect the health of specific populations.

Tell us something about yourself: The knowledge I obtained during the lectures at CUMC allowed me to analyze my surroundings from a Public Health perspective. The streets of New York were part of the classroom because I was able to witness how social determinants of health affect the community. The SPHSP cohort and mentors have been incredible and I hope to connect with them as colleagues across our diverse health care fields.

Allison Antoinette Bailey

School: Stanford University
Year: Senior

Public Health Interests: I am interested in multiple areas of public health! Most notably, I enjoy learning about maternal & fetal medicine, epidemiology and reproductive health.

Career Goals: I aspire to become a medical doctor and a surgeon. I have also considered pursuing a masters in public health because I believe this knowledge would supplement my career as a doctor. I've become increasingly interested in maternal and fetal medicine which has lead me to consider a career in obstetrics. I believe that this field aligns well with my interests in global public health as it has many implications abroad. I enjoy learning and discovering ways to alleviate the issues associated with childbirth abroad and would love to become involved with the public health policy side of the matter.

Tell us something about yourself: I enjoy doing backflips in my spare time!
Wyatt James Beckman

School: Truman State University
Year: Junior

Public Health Interests: My public health interests are numerous, but I am most interested in Health Behavior and Social Determinants of health, particularly those having to do with food choice.

Career Goals: I aspire to be a university professor in the area of health behavior and social determinants of health. Ultimately, I want to help keep people healthy and out of hospitals by understanding and modifying the many factors that influence individuals' lifestyle habits. I hope to contribute to this effort by teaching, researching, writing, and advocating to improve the many factors contribute to health promoting lifestyle behaviors.

Tell us something about yourself: I am from a very small town in mid-western Kansas. The population hovers around 1,500 people, the only high school in town has a little more than 100 kids, and there isn’t even a stop light in our town.

Claire Brieva

School: University of Michigan
Year: Recent Graduate

Public Health Interests: Nursing, Nutrition, Chronic Disease Prevention, Health Promotion, Disparities, Social Determinants of Health

Career Goals: I am interested in chronic disease prevention and health promotion through proper nutrition and positive health behaviors. I want to merge my interest in the social determinants of health with nursing and becoming a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) and then Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP).

Tell us something about yourself: I am passionate about running, yoga and wellness! I would love to integrate the healing arts into my nursing practice and pursue yoga teacher training.
Faith Daniel

School: Bryn Mawr College
Year: Junior

Public Health Interests: Population and Family Health & Health Administration. I am specifically interested in women's health and empowerment and creating a healthier and safer environment for women to thrive in.

Career Goals: After receiving my BA, I plan to pursue a MPH and gain hands on experience in the public health arena (clinical and/or administrative). I than hope to begin the process of starting a nonprofit clinic that will provide free health care and resources for minority women in the Bronx.

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LaQueishia Cummins

School: University of Illinois
Year: Junior

Public Health Interests: Social Determinants of Health, Eliminating health disparities

Career Goals: Become an Occupational Therapist working in low income, minority communities. Also I want to pursue a Masters degree in Public Health.

Tell us something about yourself: SPHSP has opened my eyes to the realities of the world and all the options and uncertainties in life. It has shown me that even if I think I know exactly where I want my future to be it can change and you never know where you will be headed in life until you get there. I hope one day to improve people's lives and improve their health situation and that is my ultimate goal.
Danielle Dockrey

School: Oklahoma State University
Year: Junior
Public Health Interests: Health Disparities in rural populations
Career Goals: To become a doctor specializing in rural medicine and use my MPH to help make policy changes to improve the lives of rural residents.
Tell us something about yourself: SPHSP has been one of the most wonderful experiences I have ever had. It has encouraged me to continue my pursuit of a career in public health.

Jeremy Figueroa-Ortiz

School: University of Connecticut
Year: Senior
Public Health Interests: Oral Health
Career Goals: I aim to integrate public health knowledge while practicing dentistry in underprivileged communities.
Tell us something about yourself: I like weight-lifting, yoga, and traveling.
Terrell Finner

School: Pennsylvania State University
Year: Recent Graduate
Public Health Interests: Minority Health Disparities
Career Goals: I will obtain my MD and MPH and work in resolving health disparities in minority communities.
Tell us something about yourself: I really enjoy studying human anatomy! I taught anatomy labs for two years in college. In my next life I plan on being an Anatomist.

Lindsey Flournoy

School: Prairie View A & M University College of Nursing
Year: Senior
Public Health Interests: African American and Women's Health
Career Goals: After I graduate with my BSN, RN, I plan to work and go to graduate school to obtain my Masters in Public Health. My long term goal is to open up a free or subsidized clinic in an underserved community in order to give the people in that community quality health care.
Tell us something about yourself: I grew up in an underserved area my entire life. I personally believe that once I become successful and begin to reach my goals in life, it is my moral duty to give back to the community that gave so much to me. This is why I want to work with underserved populations. I want to be able to give them quality healthcare while also encouraging them to follow their dreams and be better than the last generation that they came from.
Emmanuel Yeboah Fordjour

School: University of Texas
Year: Recent Graduate

Public Health Interests: Biomedical research pertinent to reducing health disparities, Medicine, Infectious Diseases, Chronic Diseases, Global Health

Career Goals: I aspire to pursue a combined MD-PhD to investigate the cellular and molecular mechanisms of infectious diseases or chronic diseases of public health importance, and provide patient care to medically underserved populations. I also hope to be involved in the design and implementation of health education and disease prevention programs targeted towards racial and ethnic minorities.

Tell us something about yourself: I am excited to make an impact in biomedical research, medicine and global health!

Frances Tessa Friason

School: Mount Mercy University
Year: Senior

Public Health Interests: My interest is in Population and Family Health, specifically among low-income children and teens.

Career Goals: After earning my BSN, I plan to gain experience as a nurse before pursuing a MPH and/or DNP. Afterwards, I will provide holistic care to low-income families, especially children and teens.

Tell us something about yourself: I attend Mount Mercy on a partial athletic scholarship for women's bowling, a sport I started as a Freshman in high school.
Tomas Galluzzi

School: Northwestern University  
Year: Senior 
Public Health Interests: Research, Policy 
Career Goals: I plan on pursuing an MPH in Epidemiology. I want to use my degree to conduct research on the burden of chronic and infectious diseases and develop new ways to tackle these public health issues. 
Tell us something about yourself: I have studied abroad twice in China and South Africa, and will be going for a third time this fall (2015) to Scotland. Traveling has provided me with a better understanding of how the world operates, and I believe it is something that every public health professional should be able to experience. 

Victoria Garica

School: University of California  
Year: Recent Graduate 
Public Health Interests: My area of interests in public health are Community Health, Minority Health, and Substance Abuse Prevention 
Career Goals: As an American Studies major with an area of concentration in Native American Representations in Film and performance, and a double minor in Native American Studies and Creative Writing, I hope to combine my interests. I plan to pursue a career in medicine and also a Masters in Public Health. With this path, I will be able to focus on individual needs and address health disparities in Native communities. I aspire to establish creative arts programs for Native youth to empower and encourage the development in finding their voice. By challenging the invisibility of Native people through multi-media and spoken word, I will resist the colonial legacy of misrepresentations and bring awareness to current issues in Native communities today. I hope to be a practicing physician at the Round Valley Indian Health Clinic where I am from. 
Tell us something about yourself: I am Chiricahua Apache/Chicana and I grew up on the Round Valley Reservation in Northern California. My drive and passions come from seeing the hardships many people face in our community and in my family. With three nieces and seven nephews, I want to show our youth that we can beat the odds against us to be successful people through community wellness.
Alvin Gordian-Arroyo

School: Harvard University
Year: Junior
Public Health Interests: Global Health, Minority Health
Career Goals: MD/MPH, NGO work in Global Health
Tell us something about yourself: Currently serving as president of Fuerza Latina at Harvard University.

Veronica Handunge

School: Columbia University
Year: Junior
Public Health Interests: Healthcare Administration, Policy and Management
Career Goals: I hope to receive an MPH or MHA and work in the global health sector.
Tell us something about yourself: I was born in Dubai and my family is from Sri Lanka.
Jonathan Harrell

School: University of Alabama
Year: Senior
Public Health Interests: Policy and Management
Career Goals: I plan to pursue a Master's in Social Work and then a MPH. I would like to be a health policy analyst or work with a non-profit organization and develop programs to improve community health outcomes.
Tell us something about yourself: I love photography and making documentaries.

Nisha Hodge

School: New College of Florida
Year: Senior
Public Health Interests: Medicine in Particular Maternal and Child Health
Career Goals: My aspiration is to obtain my MD/MPH focusing on Maternal and Child Health to become either a pediatrician or obstetrician/gynecologist. My ultimate career goal is to open a non-profit clinic on my home island that is focused on lowering teen pregnancy rates, decreasing the transmission of STDs and HIV/AIDS as well as widening the access to healthcare for all women and children.
Tell us something about yourself: "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work." I live life each day keeping this quote in mind. The opportunity to participate in this program has afforded me opportunities that I would've never been able to experience anywhere else being raised in the US Virgin Islands. Even though the US Virgin Islands is apart of the US, there are deficit in the healthcare system that I hope to begin to fix starting with improving the healthcare for women and children.
DaMarcus Ingram

School: Lafayette College
Year: Recent Graduate
Career Goals: MD/MPH
Tell us something about yourself: I have a major in both natural science and liberal arts.

DeMone Johnson

School: Xavier University of Louisiana
Year: Senior
Public Health Interests: Chronic Disease/Disease Prevention
Career Goals: I have the aspirations of becoming an MD/MPH with the dream of one day opening a youth clinic in which I would like to focus on disease prevention, especially chronic diabetes. After several successful years of practicing medicine, I would like to fulfill my dream of also becoming a full time professor teaching medical students the valuable knowledge which I have gained.
Tell us something about yourself: I'm from a very small country town in rural Louisiana where I grew up going to the one high school in my community and where the sight of a stop light, McDonalds, Walmart, or any industrialized/fast food business was non-existent. Also having lived in Louisiana all my life, I visited over 12 states before ever going to New Orleans, thanks in part to my campus visit of the school which I now attend.
Jamal Johnson

School: SUNY Albany
Year: Senior

Public Health Interests: Establishing equity in low income/minority communities.

Career Goals: My career aspirations are in Health Policy and Management. I want to manage or work closely with a non profit organization, analyzing the development and effectiveness of strategies geared towards improving the public's health.

Tell us something about yourself: This upcoming academic year I will be serving as the 1st Vice President of the SUNY Albany Chapter of NAACP.

Drennon Kristopher Leverette

School: University of Missouri
Year: Recent Graduate

Public Health Interests: Health Administration

Career Goals: My career goals are to become a health administrator at a health care facility and/or hospital as well as venture into adjunct teaching. I'm also interested in doing public health work and administration in Japan preferably in Kyoto or Tokyo.

Tell us something about yourself: I'm currently teaching myself Japanese and Spanish. I currently practice my speaking and writing skills with individuals in Japan, South Korea, Spain, Mexico, and the U.S via online resources.
Rowan Lowden

School: Mount Holyoke College
Year: Recent Graduate
Public Health Interests: LGBT health, mental health, informatics, prevention
Career Goals: I plan to pursue a dual degree that will allow me to do clinical work as well as public health research. I hope to research how technology can be used to improve care for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.
Tell us something about yourself: This experience has presented unbelievable opportunities. I am extremely grateful. Thanks SPHSP and Columbia!

Maygen Maldonado

School: Bridgewater State University
Year: Recent graduate
Public Health Interests: Community Health, School health, Minority Health
Career Goals: I am apart of the unique group who is unsure of what lies ahead. There are so many career paths to take in the Public Health field that I am having trouble figuring out which is best for me. However, whatever I decide to do as a career, I hope it is fulfilling and that I am creating healthier lifestyles for those around me.
Tell us something about yourself: I love to dance, though I am not a pro. After this program, I hope to take salsa and ballet classes.
Alexandria Marshall

School: University of Nevada–Las Vegas
Year: Recent Graduate
Public Health Interests: Sexual Education and Preventative Health Care.
Career Goals: I would love to eventually receive my PhD. I also want to work abroad during the beginning years of my career. Although I am not completely certain of what career path I would like to pursue, I know that I want to be the best at whatever I choose. It is very important to leave my mark.
Tell us something about yourself: My lively sense of curiosity makes every day of life enjoyable. I am constantly learning and evolving as an individual, and I am beyond appreciative.

Christine McComb

School: Ohio State University
Year: Junior
Public Health Interests: Sociomedical Sciences
Career Goals: Complete a dual masters program in Public Health and Social Work, become a commissioned officer in the U.S. Public Health Service and eventually get my doctorate in Public Health.
Tell us something about yourself: I am a member of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians in northern Michigan.
Nathan Money

School: Brown University
Year: Junior
Public Health Interests: Health Law & Policy
Career Goals: After graduation I plan to obtain a Juris Doctor (JD) and a Masters in Public Health (MPH). I hope to influence national health policy in the private sector before eventually running for public office in the US Senate. My health policy interests include increasing access to services for low-income communities, quality improvement, and health system design.

Tell us something about yourself: Story telling is by far my favorite past-time. Stories about me, my favorite people in history, or otherwise. Add in a nice glass of lemonade and I'm sitting pretty.

Alohi Nonies

School: Creighton University
Year: Junior
Public Health Interests: Social and Cultural Determinants of Health with a focus on medical applications
Career Goals: I hope to become a practicing physician in the Emergency Department. I plan on working in marginalized communities and engaging in some form of health education/advocacy in my free time.

Tell us something about yourself: I do not have a concrete idea of where I will be in the future, however, I am confident that I will end up making a difference in the medical and public health fields.
Autumn Vivian Only A Chief

School: Oklahoma State University

Year: Junior

Public Health Interests: Sociomedical Sciences & Health Policy and Management

Career Goals: First, attend graduate school for an MPH/OT dual degree. I want to practice as an Occupational Therapist, while becoming more involved and influential in health administration with the Indian Health Services in order to change guidelines, environments, and promote education.

Tell us something about yourself: I am a Gates Millennium Scholar serving as the Miss American Indian OSU 2015 representing the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma. SPHSP allowed me to meet scholars and faculty with all different backgrounds while learning difficulties throughout various communities that I would have never imagined; I hope to help improve these areas in the future.

Ingred Prince

School: University of Pennsylvania

Year: Senior

Public Health Interests: Nursing, Global Health, Health Disparities and Minority Health, Occupational Health Opportunities for Sex Workers, Performance Art Therapy for Mental Health/Behavioral Health Disorders

Career Goals: I hope to gain my MPH and my DNP as a Family Nurse Practitioner. Then, work as a healthcare consultant in both the domestic and international arenas for a couple years. I hope to transfer the skill sets gained from the private sector to the public sector and develop and manage my own primary care community health center for underserved populations. Another big dream of mine is to establish a community clinic in my native country, Haiti.

Tell us something about yourself: Whether we are creators or consumers, I’m convinced the arts are vital to our well being. Spoken word, theatre, dance, fashion, graphic design etc., the arts provide us with a outlet for our frustrations and fantasies. I have personally used theatre as a vehicle of expression and therapy when dealing with the stressors of nursing school. If any researcher proposes an investigation of the role of arts in mental hygiene or if Bill Clinton, Bill Gates, Fulbright or anyone with money gave me the opportunity to research this phenomenon on a global scale, I would drop everything to do it. I would then use the data to advocate for the sustainability of the arts in schools, especially in low socioeconomic communities, where the arts seem to go first with budget cuts. That’s how much I believe in the transformative and healing powers of the arts.
Jada Pulley

School: Brown University
Year: Senior
Public Health Interests: Health disparities & community empowerment; mental health; education
Career Goals: My goal is to do community organizing work that uplifts the traditionally marginalized -- the specifics are negotiable.
Tell us something about yourself: I am also going to be a professional cuddler. (Choose the hug life).

Emilio A. Rivera

School: University of Maryland
Year: Senior
Public Health Interests: Global Women's Health, Reproductive Health and Advocacy, Gender Equity and Women's Empowerment
Career Goals: After I graduate, I hope to start off my career volunteering for the Peace Corps, then attain a dual Master's degree in Public Health and Social Work. I'm not sure what will come after that, but I'm excited to find out!
Tell us something about yourself: “My will is mine. I shall not make it soft for you.” - Agamemnon, Aeschylus
Chelsi Marie Robertson  
School: Louisiana State University  
Year: Senior  
Public Health Interests: Nursing, Health disparities  
Career Goals: I have contemplated between becoming a Pediatrician or a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. Through my learning experiences this past semester, I have leaned towards earning a DNP to become an advanced practice nurse practitioner. My ultimate goal is to start my own practice in a high-need underserved area, because my mission is to provide equal health opportunities to people that cannot afford proper care. I would like to start my endeavors in my hometown of New Orleans, because a vast amount of children are not getting the proper care or even worse, any care at all. Everyone is deserving of the vital knowledge and help that leads to the chance of a healthy life, regardless of what their background, race, or situation may be. 
Tell us something about yourself: I am looking forward to furthering my education, and working towards the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS as it relates to women's health. I hope to advocate for comprehensive sexual education for young women throughout my career.

Joseph Romulo  
School: Hunter College  
Year: Senior  
Public Health Interests: Epidemiology and Veteran/LGBTQ Health  
Career Goals: I plan to complete my MPH with a focus in Epidemiology. I hope to work on improving health access for Veterans, in particular for LGBTQ individuals. I hope to work to implement programs once I complete my B.S. Degree in Community Health Education. I will use my Epidemiology training to research health disparities amongst LGBTQ Veterans. I plan to use my research to improve and implement health programs within the Veteran Affairs Health system. 
Tell us something about yourself: I am a proud gay veteran of the United States Air Force, looking to help other veterans feel comfortable in their skin and help them return to a life that they can feel proud of no matter their sexual orientation and gender identity.
Manal Sidi

School: University of Rochester
Year: Junior
Public Health Interests: Chronic Health Management in Immigrant/Refugee Populations
Career Goals: My career goals include becoming a community liaison that connects the growing immigrant/refugee community to the complex American healthcare system. Whether through community organizing or clinical practice, I hope to ease the transition and acclimation by advocating for cultural competency and improving access to crucial resources.

Tell us something about yourself: My family is a huge part of my life. Their constant support and patience has helped me overcome mountains of challenges and obstacles. I am where I am because of them and it's all for them.

Zoe Snow

School: Mount Holyoke College
Year: Recent Graduate
Public Health Interests: I am interested in LGBTQIA healthcare as well as it's intersections with race and class and the resulting impact on equitable healthcare.
Career Goals: I plan to pursue an MD/MPH dual degree in order to integrate intersectionality and public health issues into the practice of medicine.

Tell us something about yourself: I am a New York City native and I dance hip hop on the side.
Dianne Gene Uwayo

**School:** Wake Forest University  
**Year:** Recent Graduate  
**Public Health Interests:** Violence Prevention; Maternal and Child Health  
**Career Goals:** My experience working with domestic violence victims in Kenya, impoverished women in Rwanda and low-income children in Harlem, has fostered a deep passion for addressing the health disparities facing vulnerable and stigmatized populations. As a result, my career goal is to advocate for the health of vulnerable women and children. Although unsure if I’d like to work domestically or internationally, I plan on obtaining a Master’s Degree in Public Health and being engaged with community health outreach work. Eventually, I want to help effect policy change by conducting research and informing leaders of the health crises facing women and children.  
**Tell us something about yourself:** I’m bilingual! I speak English and Swahili.

Denzel Tongue

**School:** Occidental College  
**Year:** Junior  
**Public Health Interests:** Health Policy  
**Career Goals:** To influence the crafting and implementation of public policies that affect the health of minority communities.  
**Tell us something about yourself:** I'm currently a junior class senator at Occidental College who is devoted to promoting the important values of diversity, multiculturalism, and equity. Additionally, I am committed to dismantling the oppressive structures that perpetuate violence against marginalized communities.
Isaiah Wales

School: University of Washington
Year: Recent Graduate

Public Health Interests: My areas of interest in public health include but are not limited to: health disparities between geographic and economic groups, especially populations of color. Such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, etc. In addition, I am interested in social and environmental factors of health such as access to healthy food and basic need services, social capital in undeserved communities, and mass incarceration.

Career Goals: My career goals involve leadership roles in the health sector. This may be in the form as a physician, community member, or simply a friend. Public health is dear to my heart and I will find a way to include it in my future professional endeavors one way or another.

Tell us something about yourself: I believe health is not a hobby, it's a lifestyle.

Brianna Warner

School: Mississippi University for Women
Year: Senior

Public Health Interests: LGBTQ health, HIV/AIDS, Public Health Social Work, Health/Sexuality Education

Career Goals: I hope to become a public health social worker and work in health and sexuality education. I want to work with LGBT adolescents and young adults. To this end, I hope to do direct practice with LGBT youth as well as develop, implement, and evaluate programs for LGBT youth.

Tell us something about yourself: I feel very passionate about the South. I see that it has a deep well of activism and potential for social change. I am passionate about devoting my life toward working to improve my home.
Karelle Webb

School: University of Illinois–Chicago
Year: Senior
Public Health Interests: My interests in public health lie in maternal health, specifically pregnancy outcomes in the US, adolescent health, and the impact of the built environment on health inequities in underserved minority communities
Career Goals: After completing my BSN, I will practice for two years as a nurse in a clinic that serves low-income minority communities in Chicago. By pursuing both a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) and MPH, I intend to be a nurse practitioner who practices clinically and conducts relevant public health research on teen pregnancy, childhood obesity, and health inequities in minority communities.
Tell us something about yourself: One of my most strongest convictions is my belief in the necessity of changing the culture of healthcare in the US. To truly become a healthy society, we must support preventative care, focus on the environmental burden of low-income communities, and stop overmedicalizing childbirth in this country.

Hunter White

School: Syracuse University
Year: Senior
Career Goals: My career goals are to pursue a Public Health degree to always go back to my native community to see what I can do to help. I’m currently working on a Food Studies minor, so being able to link my interests with addressing health disparities will definitely benefit me as well as my native community. I’m thankful for the opportunities that I’ve been given throughout my life. Also being able to take what I’ve learned to encourage and empower future generations along with Native people throughout Indian country is what I aspire to do.
Tell us something about yourself: I’m a member of the Seneca Nation of Indians on the Cattaraugus territory, which is located 30 minutes south of Buffalo, New York. I like to play softball, basketball, volleyball, and many other sports that keep me active. I also enjoy spending time with my family.
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