



## Doctoral Program Kicks-Off



*Lef to right: Becky Stone, Heidi Hulsey, Matt Walker Krista Mincey, Sara Plaspohl, Kelley Chester, Betty Dixon.*

In August, the Doctor of Public Health degree program kicked off with 13 students. The Doctor of Public Health (Dr.P.H.) is a professional terminal degree with an applied public health focus. Students are trained for advanced science-based practice and practice-oriented research in public health settings and prepared for private and/or public sector careers in public health practice, research and education. The program concentrations for the Dr.P.H. are Biostatistics, Community Health Behavior and Education, and Public Health Leadership. JPHCOPH's Dr.P.H. will provide graduates with the technical and scientific expertise, the tools, and the leadership necessary to create healthier communities with healthier people.



*Chris Rustin and Raymona Lawrence*

The students in the program have an interesting mix of academic and professional experiences which have contributed to a great group dynamic. Some students received their master's degrees locally (Armstrong Atlantic State University, Georgia Southern University) while others obtained their master's degrees in other countries (University of Sydney, Australia). Students' professional careers include a county Environmental Director, a Fitness Director, a county health department administrator, a District Clinical Coordinator, a Research, Ethics and Integrity Officer at a university medical center. Also, several students serve as Graduate Assistants within the college.

The inaugural Dr.P.H. class is listed below:

### Biostatistics

Leigh Kersey

### Community Health Behavior and Education

Betty Dixon  
Raymona Lawrence  
Michele Martin  
Krista Mincey  
Sarah Plaspohl  
Chris Rustin  
Becky Stone

### Public Health Leadership

Joe Atkins  
Debra Blackburn  
Kelley Chester  
Heidi Hulsey  
Matthew Walker



*Dr. Parrillo teaching the Behavioral Determinants of Healthy People and Healthy Communities course.*

## JPHCOPH Participates in State Conferences

### Georgia Rural Health Association

On September 17 – 19, members of the Georgia Rural Health Association (GRHA) met in Athens, GA and convened their 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. This year's theme, Making Rural Healthy People 2010 a Reality in Georgia, highlighted a number of national, state, and local public officials who spoke about rural health priority issues facing many communities in Georgia. Topics discussed included, but were not limited to, principles of public health, access to quality health care, obesity, cancer, maternal-child health, oral health, and mental health.

The featured speakers for this conference were the Associate Director of the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Executive Director of the National Rural Health Association, the Executive Director of the State Office of Rural Health, the Executive Director of the Healthcare Georgia Foundation, the Georgia Insurance Commissioner, the Director of the Division of Public Health, the Executive Director of the Georgia Cancer Coalition, the Director of Policy & Program Planning for the Louisiana Public Health Institute, and the Director of the Statewide Area Health Education Program.

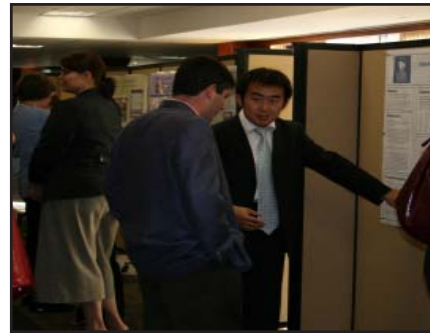
The Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH) was very well represented at this conference and special thanks goes out to Dr. Cassandra Arroyo, Dr. Kari Fitzmorris, Dr. Laura Gunn, Dr. Anthony Parrillo, and Dr. Alison Scott who agreed to present at this conference. All presentations were very well received and I heard many compliments from GRHA members about the quality of our faculty. However, the most exciting part of this year's conference was student participation. For the first time in the history of the GRHA, planners of this year's conference provided an opportunity for college students throughout the state to present poster displays of their on-going work. Poster topics included everything from research to community outreach. I think everyone will agree that the students did an outstanding job in their presentations and most GRHA members I spoke to thought it was the highlight of the conference.



*Student Sarah Jones discusses her poster about STDs.*

Of the sixteen student posters presented, twelve were from JPHCOPH students. Students participating included Holly Karlman, Amber Erickson, Sarah Jones, DeAnna Keene, Tiffany Jackson, Lauren Baker, Kelley Chester, Chang-lu Liu, Shrikrishna Shroff, Raymona Lawrence, Krista Mincey, Sara Plaspohl, Christopher Rustin, and Rebecca Stone. I want to express my sincere appreciation to these students, and to the faculty that mentored them, for making this year's GRHA Conference so special.

*~Dr. Stuart Tedders*



*Biostatistics student, Chang-lu Liu describes his findings on clinical trials.*

### Georgia Public Health Association



*Left to right: David Bostick, Rebecca Wilson, Dr. Alison Scott, Kelley Chester, Sarah Jones, Dean Charlie Hardy.*

The Georgia Public Health Association (GPHA) held its 78th Annual Meeting and Conference in Savannah, Georgia on September 5 - 7. JPHCOPH participated in many ways including hosting a booth in the vendor area, submissions in the student poster session and multiple educational sessions. The theme of the conference was "PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT." The conference hosted talks from Dr. Deborah Klein Walker, Preseident of the American Public Health Association, Dr. Stephanie B. Coursey Bailey, Chief of the Office of Public Health Practice at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and Georgia House Representative Ben Harbin, Chairman of the Appropriations Committee. David Bostick, a student in the M.P.H. Biostatistics program was awarded a scholarship to attend the conference.

Student presentations were given by alumni Rebecca Wilson and Kelley Chester. Educational sessions were given by Dr. Fitzmorris, Dr. Parrillo and Dr. Woodhouse.

## Public Health Student Association Begins New Year

It's a new and exciting year for the Public Health Student Association (PHSA) hopes to hit the ground running. PHSA is a student organization at Georgia Southern University in the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health. PHSA was started last year to bring students together to get to know one another while providing service to University and the surrounding community. Development of the PHSA was guided by Dr. Swati Raychowdhury, who served as the founding faculty advisor.

Even in the early stages PHSA was able to accomplish a lot with over \$1000 in canned food donated during National Public Health Week and over \$1000 donated in the fight against cancer to the American Cancer Society during Relay for Life. This year the PHSA is under new leadership and the officers are listed below:

**President:**

David Bostick, 2nd yr. Biostatistics

**Vice-President:**

Amber Erickson, 2nd yr. Epidemiology

**Treasurer:**

Sarah Jones, 2nd yr. Epidemiology

**Treasurer Elect:**

Holly Karlman, 2nd yr. Community Health

**Secretary:**

Kristin Westphal, 2nd yr. Health Services Administration

**Community Involvement Chair:**

DeAnna Keene, 2nd yr. Environmental Health

**Advisor:**

Dr. Kari Fitzmorris, Environmental Health



*Left to right: Amber, Sarah, David, Kristin & DeAnna*

These new officers have been an influential part of this group since its inauguration. They hope to take the PHSA to new heights with a hope to provide beneficial fellowship to the very diverse student body of this college and university.

The PHSA Exec Board would like to welcome all new students and all faculty members to join PHSA and to participate in all of our activities. Please send an email to [dbostick@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:dbostick@georgiasouthern.edu) for information about future meetings. ~David Bostick, PHSA President

## Student Spotlight...



*Sarah Jones, 2nd year  
Epidemiology*

Sarah is from Moultrie, GA. She received a B.S. in Health Science with an emphasis in Community Health from Georgia Southern University in 2005.

She is a 2nd year student in the MPH program with an emphasis in Epidemiology. Sarah is a graduate assistant for the Center for Rural Health and Research. She is also the treasurer for the Public Health Student Association. Sarah hopes to obtain a fellowship in Epidemiology or work at the state level as an Epidemiologist once she graduates.

Sarah is also a gymnastics coach at America's Finest Gymnastics Center in Statesboro. In her spare time she enjoys hanging out with her boyfriend and friends, traveling, and watching sports.

## Faculty Spotlight...



*Cassandra Arroyo, Ph.D  
Assistant Professor  
Epidemiology*

Dr. Arroyo is in her second year as an Assistant Professor of Epidemiology and was recently named Masters Program Director for the JPHCOPH. She received her Ph.D. in Biostatistics with a minor in Social and Behavioral Determinants of Health from Harvard University. Dr. Arroyo's research focuses on social and behavioral risk factors for disease and elimination of health disparities

Dr. Arroyo thoroughly enjoys being involved with students interested in careers in public health, or furthering their education beyond undergraduate studies. She currently serves as research mentor, research methods instructor, and advisory board member for the Ronald E. McNair Program.

Dr. Arroyo is a member of APHA, SER and GPHA. She is also an active member of the Bulloch County NAACP and the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Iota Iota Zeta Chapter, and serving as Undergraduate Advisor for Zeta Phi Beta at Georgia Southern.

She is committed to the idea that health disparities elimination cannot happen without substantial social, political, ethical, economical and emotional changes that empower disadvantaged communities to create sustainable solutions.

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## Alumni Spotlight...

La'Shanda graduated with her M.P.H. with a concentration in Community Health Education in 2006. She is currently the Assistant Director of Health Education and Promotion at Health Services at Georgia Southern University. She plans, promotes and evaluates health promotion plans for the University and community.

La'Shanda recently organized the visit to the campus by the Susan G. Komen "Komen On The Go" community education and outreach tour. "We are delighted to have the Komen On The Go visit Georgia Southern, because we have a very special tie to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure organization," said La'Shanda.

She is also interested in the HIV testing and counseling that Health Services offers to all students. Her goal is to help students identify risk factors and guide them into making healthy behavior choices. She said that her M.P.H. education at Georgia Southern prepared her very well and, "the public health program is tremendous and directly relates to my job everyday".

In her spare time, La'Shanda enjoys doing calligraphy and shopping for her neice and nephew.



*La'Shanda Johnson  
M.P.H. 2006  
Community Health Education*

## Give to JPHCOPH...

Public health touches every aspect of our life. Our nation's economy, security, environment and the quality of our daily lives depend on the strength of the public's health and on the systems that support it. You can do your part to prevent disease, protect the public from harm, and promote the health of communities throughout the state, the nation, and the world by making a gift to the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH).

Every gift to the JPHCOPH plays a vital role in improving the public's health by supporting:

***Excellence in Public Health Education.*** Provides scholarships and fellowships to highly qualified, committed, and diverse students, many of whom cannot attend the JPHCOPH without financial help. Gifts will also support curriculum development, innovations, and linkages with public health practice.

***Excellence in Public Health Research.*** Supports distinguished faculty in their work to find answers and solutions to public health problems.

***Excellence in Public Health Service and Outreach.*** Supports programs that focus upon the development of community-based participatory programs and research.

Gifts to the JPHCOPH are critical to our development. Private financial support provides the margin of excellence that distinguishes good universities from great ones. As a Doctoral Research University, Georgia Southern University is proud to be a public university. But direct public support accounts for less than half of Georgia Southern University's annual operating budget. We rely on the generous support of our alumni, friends, and the research grant support of our faculty to make up the difference.

Please consider making a gift to JPHCOPH today. For more information contact Charles J. Hardy, Founding Dean, JPHCOPH at 912-681-5653 or check out our website at <http://jphcoph.georgiasouthern.edu>

## Public Health Matters...

Public Health Matters is a publication of the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH) at Georgia Southern University. Public Health Matters is published monthly for faculty, students and friends of JPHCOPH. If you would like to contribute to this publication please contact the office of the Dean.