RALPH C. WILSON JR. FOUNDATION AWARDS
UB FUNDING FOR PROGRAM AIMING TO HELP CAREGIVERS

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The spring semester is always such an exciting time here in the UB School of Public Health and Health Professions! We have the opportunity to finish out each school year with some of our favorite celebrations that grow richer in tradition with each year.

Since our last edition of Health Impact, we have had so much exciting growth and change within the school with the addition of new undergraduate educational programs in public health and statistics, a graduate certificate in public health and the addition of athletic training, we are growing our school! Our new department chairs bring new energy and leadership. We continue to grow our research portfolio and those efforts continue to be at the forefront of our achievements. On page eight you can read about the new award from the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation focusing on easing the burden on caregivers.

Our University is also looking forward to the excitement that will come with the start of our new campaign. For 170 years, the University at Buffalo has helped make life better in Western New York—and around the world. Now, as we prepare to launch the largest and most ambitious fundraising campaign in university history, we welcome you to join us as we celebrate UB’s proud public heritage, and embrace our bold future. To learn more, visit buffalo.edu/campaign. We will share more details on the campaign in the next edition of Health Impact.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the Health Impact Magazine. Thank you for all you do for our school and UB. Until next time, have a wonderful spring!

Jean Wactawski-Wende
Dean, UB School of Public Health and Health Professions
SUNY Distinguished Professor

Brazilian exchange students taking a tour of the Behling Simulation Center on UB’s South Campus.

**Exchanging Opportunities for Learning**

The Health in Brazil program is a reciprocal study abroad program which offers students from UB and Brazil the opportunity to learn about health in those respective countries. The group of Brazilian students who traveled to Buffalo this fall met with Dean Wactawski-Wende, as well as Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health faculty member Katia Noyes, who provided them with an overview of the U.S. healthcare system. Their itinerary included visits to Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, Gates Vascular Institute, the UB Behling Simulation Center, Vive la Casa, the Center for Victims of Torture, Weinberg Campus, Buffalo Speech and Hearing, Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital and numerous cultural experiences, including a visit to Niagara Falls.

**Building New Collaborations**

Interested students can now earn a Master of Urban Planning (MUP) degree and a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree through a three-year program. This collaborative program trains professionals to develop expertise in creating healthy places and communities, while preparing graduates for a variety of professional roles in public services, health organizations, and consulting firms in planning and public or environmental health.

For more information contact Kim Krytus at krook@buffalo.edu or 716-829-6779.
New Graduate Offering: Advanced Certificate in Public Health

AN ADVANCED GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN PUBLIC HEALTH WILL BE OFFERED BEGINNING IN THE FALL OF 2018.

THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM is designed for individuals who want to gain foundational public health knowledge in as little as one year. It can be completed fully online, and/or on campus through seated courses on a full-time or part-time basis.

It’s specifically designed to fit the demands and schedules of working professionals who want to gain practical public health skills; students who wish to take a few courses before enrolling into a Master of Public Health (MPH) program; current UB students interested in the bigger picture of public health in the U.S.; individuals who want to transition into, or advance in the field of public health; and students who need the flexibility of online courses.

Kim Krytus, director of MPH initiatives, believes that this new program will help meet the growing demand for public health skills in the workforce.

“Public health concepts are prominent in every part of the health system and in our daily lives,” says Krytus. “From healthcare policies to disease prevention to food and water safety, understanding public health concepts can be a great benefit to working professionals or students enrolled in clinical programs who can’t take two years off to complete a MPH degree. Our program provides a strong knowledge foundation and builds skills needed by today’s employers through online or in-person coursework. Most courses can also be applied towards an MPH degree.”

Interested students are encouraged to contact Kim Krytus at krook@buffalo.edu or 716-829-6779.
The conference, which took place Nov. 4–8, brought together public health students and professionals to learn, network, and engage with peers within the field.

APHA showcased the diversity of the projects that our school is involved in through presentations and posters.

APHA presented recipients of its prestigious national awards, which recognize individuals for leadership, innovation, and excellence in the field at the Annual Meeting and Expo.

Maxine Hayes, MD ’73, one of the first African American women to attend medical school at UB, was presented with the Martha May Eliot Award. This award honors extraordinary health service to mothers and children; to bring such achievement to the eyes of related professional people and the public; to stimulate young people in the field to emulate efforts resulting in such recognition; and to add within the profession and in the eyes of the public to the stature of professional workers in the field of maternal and child health.

Maxine Hayes, MD, MPH, FAAP, former Washington state health officer, received the Martha May Eliot Award for being an advocate for improving maternal and child health and implementing public health approaches to solve population health issues in the state.

The Martha May Eliot Award has been given since 1964 by the APHA to commemorate the late Dr. Martha May Eliot. Dr. Eliot served as Chief of Children’s Bureau, Department of Health, Education and Welfare (now Department of Health and Human Services) before her retirement in 1956. Dr. Eliot was a moving force in APHA’s Section on Maternal and Child Health and served as APHA President in 1958.
Pictured: 1 APHA Immediate Past President, Tom Quade presents Maxine Hayes with the Martha May Eliot Award. 2 Maxine Hayes gives a speech prior to receiving her award. 3 Sarah Cercone Heavey (MPH ’11, PhD ’17) presents her research on Naloxone access and changes in opioid use behaviors during the poster session at the 2017 APHA Conference in Atlanta. 4 SPHHP students pose for a photo at the 2017 APHA Meeting and Expo in Atlanta. Pictured left to right are: Elisabeth Brisley; Thomas Forrester; Kate Benson; Huiru Chang; Kailey Lopian; and Seanna Pratt. 5 SPHHP Student Ambassadors represent the school at various school functions, recruitment events and national conferences, such as the American Public Health Association (APHA) 2017 Annual Meeting and Expo.

Photos of Maxine Hayes courtesy of Jim Ezell – EZ Event Photography
Sue Ann Sisto joined UB on Jan. 18 and comes to UB from Stony Brook University, where she served as a professor of physical therapy since 2007. She also served as chair of the PhD program in health and rehabilitation science, for which she was director of the rehabilitation and movement sciences concentration.

In addition, she developed and directed the Rehabilitation Research and Movement Performance (RRAMP) Laboratory in Stony Brook’s School of Health Technology and Management since 2009.

“I am thrilled to join such a talented team of faculty with a rich history of scholarly and educational excellence,” Sisto said. “I am particularly excited to work with the physical and occupational therapy programs, the rehabilitation science PhD program, their faculty and the students they serve. I am honored to work with the dean and her leadership team.”

Sisto received her bachelor’s degree in physical therapy from St. Louis University, as well as both a master’s degree and doctoral degree from New York University.

She has been a physical therapist for more than 35 years, specializing in pathokinesiology, the study of human movement as it relates to any abnormal condition affecting movement. Most recently, she has focused on recovery of walking and health outcomes after spinal cord injury.

Sisto’s work has focused on the evaluation of movement using 3-D movement analysis technology, electromyography, kinetic analysis and metabolic exercise capacity.

In 2012, she became the first physical therapist to be named a fellow of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (ACRM), which recognizes individuals who make significant contributions to the field of medical rehabilitation, and she served as president of ACRM from 2013-15.

As the newly appointed chair, Gregory Wilding is focusing on ensuring high-quality academic programs, innovative research, high-impact scholarship and service to the campus and community.

The appointment comes as the school launched a new undergraduate degree in statistics. The program helps students gain solid knowledge in statistical theory, methods and applications, while preparing for graduate or professional study or countless career paths in industry, government or academia.

Wilding is committed to driving the department’s scholarship and research outcomes by focusing on fostering opportunities for methodologic and transdisciplinary research, in partnership and collaboration with various units throughout UB and Western New York.

“I’m honored to serve the students and faculty as chair of the department,” Wilding said. “I take the responsibilities associated with the position of chair very seriously, and I will do my best to further strengthen our already flourishing department.”

Wilding joined the Department of Biostatistics as a research assistant professor in 2002. He went on to receive tenure in 2009 and achieved the rank of professor in 2015. In 2016, Wilding was named director of Biostatistics, Epidemiology and Research Design (BERD) Core of the UB Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI). He served as interim chair of the Department of Biostatistics from February 2016 until being named chair in July of 2017.

In addition to his work at UB, Wilding has served in various capacities at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center (RPCCC) including director of the Biostatistics Resource and vice chair of the Department of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics. Wilding continues service at RPCCC as a full professor of oncology.

Wilding earned his master’s and doctoral degrees in statistics from the University of Rochester. He received his bachelor’s degree from SUNY Brockport.
THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC killed 64,000 people in the U.S. in 2016—more than those killed in motor vehicle accidents before seatbelts were required, and more than died from HIV before antiretroviral drugs were developed. Those were the stark figures Erie County Health Commissioner Gale Burstein reports. Although Burstein provides a grim picture, she also notes that several local initiatives, including more than 3,000 calls received by the county’s addiction hotline and greatly increased training for medical providers, are starting to have positive effects in our community.

“Confronting Opioid Dependence: An Interprofessional Strategy” is the University at Buffalo’s approach to Interprofessional Education that gives over 800 UB health sciences students in 10 different programs of study an opportunity to work together on this urgent public health problem.

“We are dedicated to ensuring that our students graduate from UB as interprofessional collaborators with a strong moral compass and who are able to perform competently on a team to deliver health care that is safe, effective and equitable,” Dr. Patricia Ohtake, assistant vice president for interprofessional education, said in her opening remarks.

The IPE emphasis is a hallmark of health professions education today and is designed to give students in all the professions a chance to collaborate with, and learn from, one another.

Dr. Ohtake says the opioid crisis is a textbook example of a situation that requires a collaborative approach, with many patients requiring care from physicians, dentists, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, public health workers, occupational and physical therapists, lawyers and health care managers.

Students participate in an exercise by breaking up into small, interprofessional teams and spend time discussing specific patient cases and how each of them could use their professional knowledge and skills to contribute to the patient’s care.

The Office for Interprofessional Education is based on strong collaborations between the School of Public Health and Health Professions, the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, the School of Nursing, the School of Dental Medicine, the School of Social Work, the School of Law and the School of Management.

Taking a Team Approach to the Opioid Epidemic

Photos by Meredith Forrest Kulwicki

Erie County Health Commissioner Gale Burstein, MD, MPH, FAAP, speaks to students on UB’s South Campus about the opioid crisis.

Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health Professor Katia Noyes, PhD, MPH, speaks with students at the IPE work session.

Interprofessional education is required for pre-licensure professional students in these schools. For more information about IPE initiatives at UB, visit buffalo.edu/interprofessional-education.
Easing the Burden for Caregivers
TWO-YEAR PROGRAM INVOLVING OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY GRADUATE STUDENTS IS BEING FUNDED BY THE RALPH C. WILSON JR. FOUNDATION

ANYONE WHO’S HELPED an ailing loved one knows that the job of a caregiver is not easy. The challenges are daily and range from lifting a spouse out of bed, to bathing, to coming to the realization that the care recipient’s condition is likely only to worsen. The challenges become harder when cognitive decline is added.

Funding from the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation will enable University at Buffalo researchers and occupational therapy students to develop a program that aims to ease some of the burden on Western New Yorkers providing care for frail older adults who have dementia.

Machiko R. Tomita, PhD, a clinical professor of rehabilitation science in UB’s School of Public Health and Health Professions, is the lead investigator on the project, which has been awarded $135,000 over two years from the foundation, named after the longtime owner of the NFL’s Buffalo Bills who died in 2014.

Caregiver participants will be referred by three of four Western New York-based Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) centers. PACE is a Medicare and Medicaid program that helps people meet their health care needs in the home rather than going to a nursing home or other care facility.

The UB study focuses on a model in which 10 occupational therapy students will work directly with 75 caregivers to learn more about the problems and challenges they are experiencing.

“We aren’t targeting our interventions for the care recipient. It’s for the caregiver. Many caregivers are a spouse, so they are of similar age to the recipient. They may have a hip problem or muscle weakness and need help, too,” said Tomita, a veteran gerontologist who developed the Home Safety Self-Assessment Tool (HSSAT) to help prevent falls in older adults, which has been translated into five languages and used in more than 40 states in the U.S.

UB occupational therapy (OT) graduate students will talk with caregivers and administer the Zarit Burden Interview, a commonly used caregiver self-report measure, among others. They’ll also try to get an understanding of any emotional and physical issues the caregivers may be facing, such as depression, fatigue and burnout.

Next, the students will conduct a home visit to see firsthand some of the difficulties caregivers are facing. Drawing upon their occupational therapy training, the students may be able to offer on-the-spot solutions. They’ll brainstorm solutions for more complex issues with Jo Schweitzer, an experienced geriatric occupational therapist, other OT students and geriatric researchers at UB. Some solutions may involve use of supportive products, such as a gait belt, that can be supplied to the caregiver by a PACE center.

A month after providing specific interventions for the caregiver, UB OT graduate students will conduct a post-test to see if the proposed solution is working and to determine whether the caregiver’s burden and depression have improved. Two months after the initial assessment, they will conduct a final follow-up to assess the effectiveness of the intervention.

The UB project comes as an increasing number of people assume the role of caregiver for the frail elderly, and as cases of dementia are on the rise. Caregivers are providing $230 billion worth of medical care in the U.S., “and that’s only going to increase,” Tomita said, adding that someone is diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease every minute in this country.

“We are living longer, so the impact on caregiving is going to be greater. We have to do something about it, and that’s what this project aims to address,” she said. “We hope to lift caregiver burden and depression by providing them more support to gain confidence in their ability to care for their loved one. Hopefully, because of that, the care recipients will be able to stay in the home longer and not have to be transferred to a nursing facility, if that is desired;” Tomita said.

“If our program is successful, it could create a model that can be distributed to other PACE programs nationally,” she added.
Jim Lenker, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Science, is a collaborator for a new partnership between UB and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA). The research partnership will allow researchers and the NFTA to work together on dramatically improving the public transit experience for the region’s riders with disabilities who use wheeled mobility devices such as wheelchairs and scooters.

Elizabeth Mietlicki-Baase, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, received a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), to further investigate how amylin impacts food intake, with an emphasis on discovering how amylin signaling in the brain may differ between male and female rats. The study outcomes could help promote a better understanding of—and treatment for—obesity.

Lucia Leone, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Community Health and Health Behavior, is co-author of a new study that finds restaurant placemats can help promote healthy eating among children. The study found that children who were exposed to placemats featuring healthier children’s meal options prior to ordering were more likely to choose healthier food options compared to a control group. “Given how frequently kids eat out, this difference could have a noticeable public health impact on child weight,” said Leone.

Sarahmona Przybyla, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Community Health and Health Behavior, received funding to assess knowledge and attitudes toward an approach to HIV prevention called pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP. “The primary goal of the novel study is to identify knowledge gaps to aid in the development of education programs to improve awareness, attitudes, comfort, and willingness to adopt PrEP among future health professionals,” said Przybyla.

Blair Johnson, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, is conducting a new type of research, funded by The Office of Naval Research (ONR), that may protect Navy divers from oxygen toxicity, a dangerous and sometimes deadly threat to divers. The research focuses on the human body’s sympathetic nervous system, which controls the instinctive “fight or flight” response—a physical reaction to an attack, survival threat or perceived harmful event—in order to maintain proper cardiovascular and respiratory function.

A new Women’s Health Initiative study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society by Michael LaMonte, PhD, research associate professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health, shows significant reduction in death risk among women 65 and older who regularly engage in light physical activities such as ordinary household chores. The findings could have implications for national public health guidelines for physical activity for older U.S. women. The bottom line? “Our results suggest that the health benefits of lighter activity, including usual walking, could reach a large swath of women in an aging society,” LaMonte said.

More details on this study will be made available at the next Women’s Health Initiative breakfast on June 7, 2018. For more information on this event, please call Jennifer Battisti at (716) 645-3963.

Guan Yu, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Biostatistics, has received an award to research factors that activate TLR signaling pathways in Sjogren’s syndrome. Sjogren’s syndrome is a systemic autoimmune disease that affects the entire body. Along with symptoms of extensive dryness, other serious complications include profound fatigue, chronic pain, major organ involvement, neuropathies and lymphomas. “The goal of the project is to evaluate the means by which Myeloid Differentiation Factor Primary Response Protein 88 (MyD88) mediated signaling contributes to Sjogren’s syndrome and to identify specific factors that activate Toll-like receptors (TLR) signaling pathways in Sjogren’s syndrome,” stated Yu. Yu is working on this project along with principal investigator, Dr. Jill Kramer, assistant professor of oral biology in UB’s School of Dental Medicine.
International Experience Opens New Doors

WILL I meet new people and make friends? Will I fit in? Will I even like it there? These are all questions that ran through the mind of Huiru Chang as she explored the possibility of pursuing her graduate education in the United States. Almost two years later, she looks back on all the anxiety she felt as an international student with a sense of calm. Not unlike many other international students, Huiru remembers quickly realizing UB was the right place for her.

“UB is one of the leading public research universities in the United States,” says Chang. “The graduate programs at UB are well known for having a rigorous and challenging curriculum. I have benefited tremendously from the great diversity of people and thinking, the friendly learning environment, and the practical experience with mentors and collaborators. I enjoy my life and work here and appreciate the strong and caring support throughout the university.”

Chang always had a strong and sincere feeling of duty to help improve the health of individuals. Prior to pursuing her master’s degree in biostatistics, her research experience was in the field of nutrition. Ever since she gained more exposure to fieldwork and became increasingly aware of global epidemics, she felt as if her responsibilities to help stretched beyond the provision of patient care.

“Biostatistics is an exciting field that merges my passion and skill, in which biostatisticians use the tools of statistics to help solve pressing issues in public health and medicine,” says Chang. “I have thoroughly enjoyed the theoretical and applied courses in statistics. I acquired the systemic and in-depth knowledge on study design, analysis, evaluation, and result interpretation which has made me more confident in my research abilities.”

Throughout her studies, Chang has collaborated as part of a team of students and professors from epidemiology, sociology, geography, economics and with international collaborators, to study the global trends, lifestyle risk factors, and prevention of childhood obesity. “It was a great experience to work on a long-term project with a group of distinguished scholars,” says Chang.

She currently works at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, where she is involved in the Flaxseed and Cancer Risk study with Dr. Susan McCann. “We aim to investigate the relationship between diet, gut microbiome, race, host genetics, and breast cancer risk,” explains Chang. Through this experience, Chang believes she has had a unique opportunity to obtain exposure to clinical data and learn to model metabolic and genetic networks.

“The practical training in the biostatistics program is very attractive and enjoyable. It encourages students to work closely with faculty, promotes the exploration of career options and generates collaborative opportunities with other public health professionals. Through the participation in collaborative and interdisciplinary research, I have dedicated myself to help promote health across broader communities and populations.”

With the solid theoretical knowledge and the valuable hands-on experiences that she gained in the program, Chang says she hopes to become a researcher who can see through the problem beyond the symptoms and draw valid conclusions from the ever-expanding sources of information. “I believe the education I am receiving from UB will help prepare me to become a strong candidate in the job market and have far-reaching impacts on my future career.”

To learn more about Huiru’s journey, visit sphhp.buffalo.edu.

Above left: Huiru and Chuishi are both from the same town in China, and completed their undergraduate education at Tianjin University, but did not know one another. As fate would have it, they both found their way to UB, met during their studies and are now married!
Three Minute Thesis Boils Down the Best of UB’s Doctoral Research

A TYPICAL DISSERTATION might contain more than 50,000 words and takes hours to present. What if you have only three minutes?

Participants in the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition proved that it is not only possible for graduate students to explain their research in that abbreviated timeframe, but it’s interesting and entertaining, too.

Hosted by the Graduate School and Blackstone LaunchPad, 3MT challenged UB doctoral students from all disciplines across the university to inform an audience what their research is—and why it matters—for a chance to win monetary prizes. Twelve contestants were selected to compete at the event, held in the Center for the Arts before a panel of guest judges this March.

Of the twelve finalists, three were doctoral students from SPHHP, including Joshua Gordon, Epidemiology and Environmental Health; Lynne Klasko-Foster, Community Health and Health Behavior; and James Sackett, Exercise and Nutrition Sciences.

Lynne Klasko-Foster’s presentation was titled, “Understanding How People Think About Their Personal Risk for Sexually Transmitted Infections,” and detailed her research on understanding how individuals think about their own risk for sexually transmitted infections so that interventions can take place prior to someone becoming infected with a chronic disease that will impact quality of life and may result in early death.

“Most individuals tend to think others are more likely to get HPV or HIV than they are and may not choose one of the aforementioned prevention strategies,” explains Klasko-Foster. “Classic health decision making behavior theories tend to focus more on the beliefs component of risk and less on the emotions piece, which may explain the disconnect between perceived risk and prevention behavior. My goal is to understand how these components of risk work together so we can design effective primary prevention interventions and reduce incidence of HIV and HPV in the population.”

James Sackett’s presentation was titled, “Carbon Dioxide Retention: A Potential Life Threatening Consequence of Underwater Diving,” and detailed his research on carbon dioxide retention, or the buildup of carbon dioxide in the blood, which occurs during underwater diving and harms the safety of divers.

“Our laboratory conducted experiments on humans during water immersion to investigate if sensors (i.e., chemoreceptors) that regulate the chemical control of breathing contribute to carbon dioxide retention,” explained Sackett. “So far, our findings indicate that the sensors that contribute to the chemical control of breathing are not affected by water immersion in a fashion that would cause carbon dioxide retention. We plan to continue to conduct investigations to determine the underlying mechanisms that contribute to carbon dioxide retention.”

Joshua Gordon’s presentation was titled, “Bacteria and Blood Pressure: Exploring the Link Between the Oral Microbiome and Hypertension,” and detailed his population-based research that utilizes epidemiologic methods to study the associations between oral health, inflammation and oral bacteria with high blood pressure.

“It was a great opportunity to develop my communication skills and practice presenting our research to a broad audience,” says Gordon while reflecting on the experience. “I was thrilled to be chosen for this competition; I was really impressed by the research being done by my colleagues and would recommend others to participate or attend in future years.”

The 3MT competition was started at the University of Queensland in Australia in 2008 and has spread to more than 600 universities across more than 59 countries, with twin goals of celebrating student research and sharing it with the community at large.

“Most doctoral students spend their days in libraries and laboratories talking to other academics,” said Graham L. Hammill, vice provost for educational affairs and dean of the Graduate School. “If research is to have an impact on the broader world—and we hope it does—it has to be communicated.”
Marianthi Markatou, PhD, was among the panelists at a public forum on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (USFDA) electronic system for monitoring the safety of FDA-regulated medical products. She was invited to speak at the 10th annual Sentinel Initiative Public Workshop on Feb. 7 in Bethesda, Maryland.

Sentinel is the FDA’s national electronic system that has transformed the way the FDA monitors regulated medical products, such as drugs, vaccines and medical devices. Panelists included scientists from Harvard, McGill and Duke Universities, as well as FDA and industry representatives.

Markatou’s expertise was sought for the panel session titled, “A Look into the Future of the Sentinel System,” which will cover challenges and opportunities that need to be addressed to improve Sentinel and continue its modernization over the next decade.

Jessica Kruger, PhD, clinical assistant professor in the Department of Community Health and Health Behavior, has been appointed to the national Board of Directors for the Society of Student Run Free Clinics (SSRFC.)

As the first non-medical member appointed to the board, Kruger will help provide guidance and representation for the allied health professions, especially emphasizing the importance of public health in free medical clinics.

The SSRFC Board of Directors serves to ensure that the charitable purpose of the organization is met while providing continuity for the organization especially on financial matters. The board is made up of health professionals, recent graduates and current student leadership.

An article on MedPage Today about an integrated program of balance and eye-movement exercises that improved balance, dizziness, fatigue and quality of life in people with multiple sclerosis quotes an editorial coauthored by Susan Bennett, PT, DPT, EdD, NCS, MSCS, clinical professor in the Department of Rehabilitation Science, that accompanied the article. “The results of this study should inform how we deliver balance retraining in a population at high risk of falls,” she wrote. “These findings are promising and encourage future work to further probe the benefits and mechanisms of Balance and Eye-Movement Exercises for Persons with Multiple Sclerosis (BEEMS).”

Arthur Michalek, PhD, FACE, affiliated faculty member in the Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health, has been appointed chair of the Education Committee for the International Cancer Prevention Consortium.

In his role as chair, Michalek is tasked with leading a committee responsible for establishing post graduate, clinical and scientific training opportunities for physicians and scientists in Oman—a country located on the southeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula—with specific interests in cancer prevention, diagnosis and control focused on Eastern Mediterranean, GCC and Eastern African countries.
The research of Sarahmona Przybyla, PhD, MPH, assistant professor in the Department of Community Health and Health Behavior, was announced as one of the most popular articles of 2017 in the Friday Letter—a weekly publication of the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH). The article titled, “University at Buffalo Faculty Receives Funding to Assess Knowledge and Attitudes Toward Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis Among Future Health Professionals,” summarized Przybyla’s research to assess knowledge and attitudes toward an approach to HIV prevention called pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP.

Hailey Banack, PhD, a postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health, was awarded a Banting Fellowship, Canada’s most prestigious award for postdoctoral researchers. The majority of Banack’s research is focused on understanding the relationship between obesity, chronic disease, and mortality in older women and using novel methodologies to address complex statistical issues in aging research.

Banack’s postdoctoral award from the Canadian Institute of Health Research will enable her to study healthy aging in postmenopausal women. She will first explore how body weight and body composition change over time in post-menopausal women and how these changes affect risk factors for heart disease, such as high blood pressure and cholesterol. Next, she’ll use advanced statistical methods and bias analysis techniques to investigate the effect of body weight changes on mortality. She will also examine whether hormone therapy and obesity interact to increase the risk of cardiovascular disease in post-menopausal women.

Yang Chen, a biostatistics alumnus, was awarded the “Best Young Researchers Award in Bronze” for the category of Methodology by the Upstate Chapter of the American Statistical Association. Chen’s research is at the interface of statistics and machine learning and contributes fundamental understanding of the properties and use of statistical distances to address problems in comparative effectiveness research and other areas where direct comparisons are of interest.

Lynn T. Kozlowski, PhD, professor in the Department of Community Health and Health Behavior and former dean of the School of Public Health and Health Professions, has been appointed as a Fellow of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco (SRNT). Kozlowski was one of the founding members of SRNT and is one of only eight SRNT members to receive Fellow status in 2018. The SRNT describes the status of Fellow as a, “distinction conferred by the Society on members in recognition of outstanding contributions to the field having to do with the generation of new and useful knowledge; meritorious accomplishment can include contributions to scientific research, clinical practice, public health, public policy, regulation, legislation, or advocacy. Significant accomplishments in dissemination of science and exemplary service to the Society also will be considered. The program is intended to be prestigious while appropriately and inclusively recognizing SRNT members who have achieved this level of excellence.”

Lynne Klasko-Foster, a doctoral student in community health and health behavior, was presented the “Outstanding Trainee Abstract in Health Decision Making Award” from the Society for Behavioral Medicine’s (SBM) Health Decision Making Special Interest Group. The SBM award committee reviews all the health decision making abstracts with a trainee as the primary author/presenter that are accepted for presentation at the SBM Annual Meeting to select the finalist which is highest in quality based on significance, innovation, and research quality. Klasko-Foster’s submission, “Patterns of Change Over Time for Psychosocial Constructs in Response to a Culturally Targeted Colonoscopy Intervention” will be presented at the annual meeting in April where she will also officially be presented with her award. Klasko-Foster is the third UB SPHHP student to receive this award from SBM. Dr. Erin M. (Walsh) Ellis won the award in 2012 for “Priming affective associations with fruit changes fruit consumption behavior” and Dr. Caitlin Biddle won in 2016 for “Illness information avoidance is associated with lower need to cognition and intuitive risk beliefs.”
Alumni and Friends

International Distinguished Alumnus

Holger Schünemann, PhD ’00, MS ’97, chair of Health Research Methods, Evidence and Impact at McMaster University visited UB’s South Campus to give a seminar in the SPHHP Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health. The seminar titled, “Why Do Organizations Use GRADE to Make Decisions? From Risk of Bias to Evidence to Decision Frameworks,” took place on Friday, December 1. A reception was held prior to the seminar to honor Schünemann for his recent honor in receiving the UB International Distinguished Alumnus award, one of the highest honors alumni can receive from the University at Buffalo.

Above (from top): 1. Rita Andolina, BA ’80 MSW ’88; Jo Freudenheim, Holger Schünemann, PhD ’00, MS ’97; Jean Wactawski-Wende, MS ’83 PhD ’89; Robert Klocke, ’62; and Michael Noe; 2. Holger Schünemann, PhD ’00, MS ’97, speaks to the audience at UB’s South Campus on December 1.

Coffee and Conversations

UB Alumni and friends met and mingled for a night of coffee, dessert, and conversation with some of UB’s leading research faculty at the Atrium inside the Center for the Arts during “Coffee and Conversations” on the evening of October 25. SPHHP faculty member R. Lorraine Collins discussed the differing policies on recreational and medical use of marijuana.

Calling all Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy alumni!

Join us for our spring receptions in Buffalo! Join fellow University at Buffalo School of Public Health and Health Professions Doctor of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy students, faculty, alumni, and clinical preceptors as we celebrate the class of 2018 moving on to the next phase in their careers!

Occupational Therapy Spring Reception: Wednesday, May 9

Physical Therapy Spring Reception: Thursday, May 17

For more information, visit sphhp.buffalo.edu/alumni

STAY CONNECTED.

We want to hear from you! Visit the UB Alumni Association’s UB Connect page and let us know what you’ve been doing since graduating.

>> sphhp.buffalo.edu/alumni/connect
UB in the “Big Easy”

The 2018 American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Combined Sections Meeting took place in New Orleans from February 21-24. Alumni and friends had an opportunity to join together, reconnect and meet new faces at the annual UB Alumni reception hosted in the “Big Easy” at The Rusty Nail.

OUR DEAR FRIEND and emeritus clinical faculty member, Alfred (Al) Caffiero, passed away this past February at age 84. Al had been living with Lou Gehrig’s disease for more than 20 years, yet each year he traveled back from California to Buffalo to attend the Doctor of Physical Therapy White Coat ceremony with pride to be part of this pivotal transition for our first-year students as they begin their clinical experience.

He will always be remembered for his distinguished career in health care, passion for teaching, philanthropic dedication to ALS research, and a loyal supporter of scholarships for UB physical therapy students and the White Coat Ceremony. A memorial service on Saturday, May 5, 2018 at 10 a.m. in 403 Hayes Hall on UB’s South Campus honors his life and legacy.

If you are interested in making a memorial gift to the school in honor of Al Caffiero, please email Jennifer Battisti at jsbattis@buffalo.edu in or call 716-645-3963.

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#UBSPHHP ON SOCIAL MEDIA
Corinne Abrams became interested in public health while growing up on the Tuscarora Indian Reservation north of Buffalo. “I saw many health disparities firsthand,” she says. “Being able to understand the underlying reasons for disease in my community became important to me.” Abrams chose to learn about disease and prevention through the UB master’s program in public health. She was able to afford a graduate education through a diversity scholars program, supported by the UB Fund. A fulltime student who works and raises a family, Abrams said she has “deep appreciation” for UB donors, whose support means she will someday bring public health programs to her community.

Gifts to the UB Fund have an immediate impact on students.