

University of Michigan SPH students worked at Greening of Detroit, a community gardens project, in August, 2007.



Practice Plunge

A Yearly Event for UM SPH students

Public health students begin their school year experiencing local public health and their communities.

Among the many activities that the Office of Public Health Practice at the University of Michigan School of Public Health organizes are those that bring together students and practitioners. One of the particularly popular and well-established events is the *Practice Plunge*, which is an opportunity for incoming public health graduate students to the University of Michigan to step outside the classroom and into a hands-on orientation to public

health practice. In each of the past two years, before academic classes begin, students on this day-long immersive learning experience have visited Detroit's public health department. At the health department, they gain exposure to the role of practitioners and the health issues faced by a large city. The *Plunge* concludes with an afternoon session where students roll up their sleeves to work on community health projects. For many students, this *Plunge* experience is

their first exploration into local public health practice, providing a context for their course work.

This August the *Practice Plunge* expands to include more students, two health departments and additional community health projects. The Practice Office thanks both Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion for their ongoing commitment to this student program and welcomes the Washtenaw County Public Health and its Health Officer and Medical

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The Community-Based Public Health (CBPH) program is based in the Office of Public Health Practice.

Tech Hubs Connect UM SPH with Southeast Michigan Community Partners

On September 26, 2008, CBPH will launch 'technology hubs' at community partner sites and the University of Michigan School of Public Health. Funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation these technology hubs will engage and strengthen partnerships and collaborations between SPH, practitioners and community-based organizations. The technology at these locations will include computers and videoconferencing equipment to facilitate research

Practice Plunge, cont.

Director, Ellen Clement and Diana Torres-Burgos, respectively, as a 2008 partner. The *Practice Plunge* is expected to draw close to 150 students, a 50% increase over 2007. Community health projects for students include a community garden project and assisting a community-based organization in its initiative to create safe, clean environments for youth.

"Students have indicated on surveys that the *Practice Plunge* and other practice-based activities have exposed them to the rewards of working in the community to improve the public's health and sometimes fundamentally altered their career goals," says Dr. Matthew Boulton, who heads the Office of Public Health Practice at the University of Michigan School

development and translation, virtual meetings, data sharing, and reciprocal teaching and learning, including community service learning.

Community technology hub sites include Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) in Dearborn, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation (DHDC) in southwest Detroit, and Warren Conner Development Coalition in eastside Detroit.

of Public Health. "The staff of the Practice Office are constantly working to create more such practice opportunities and further enrich public health students' educational experience here."

One of those opportunities will happen at the *Practice Summit*, which is hosted by the Office of Public Health Practice and occurs every September for public health practice leadership and our community partners in Michigan. Students have been invited to join roundtable conversations with practitioners and UM SPH faculty on a range of topics including public health workforce recruitment and retention, joint applied research opportunities and more.



New CBPH Website

Check out the revised CBPH site that now features a community-based partners database.

<http://practice.sph.umich.edu/practice/cbph.php>.

MICHR Awards CTSA Grants To UM SPH and Partners

CBPH is working closely with the Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research (MICHR) Community Engagement Program. MICHR's "Pilot and Collaborative Grant and Community Engagement Program" awarded its first four pilot CTSA (Clinical and Translational Science Awards) grants in summer, 2008. Three of the four pilot grants involved UM SPH partnerships, including UM SPH faculty, community-based organizations and practitioners. Bettenia Campbell of Your Center and Marc Valacak from Genesee County Health Department were awarded a grant to examine healthy sleep patterns. Lee Bell of Neighborhood Roundtable and John Sonnega from UM-Flint are co-investigators on a project focusing on sexually transmitted diseases. Kai Zheng, a UM SPH faculty member from the Department of Health Management and Policy, partnering with the National Kidney Foundation - Michigan, received a grant to study improved ways to empower patients to manage their chronic kidney ailments.

Congratulations to our CBPH partners and faculty for their success at garnering these awards by MICHR!

Public Health Lifelong Learning Opportunities

ACCESSIBLE THROUGH THE TRAINING GATEWAY AT www.umsphpractice.org.

Announcing New Courses-Free and Online

Healthy Children, Health Communities: A Learning Series on Strategies to Reduce and Prevent Childhood Obesity. The [Michigan Public Health Training Center](#) will be launching a free web-based course on strategies to reduce and prevent childhood obesity. Learners will explore experts' multi-faceted efforts to promote both physical activity and healthy eating for children (available October, 2008). The course contains six sections based on learning sessions held by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan in cooperation with the University of Michigan School of Public Health. At the completion of the course, learners will have a greater awareness and a framework for community and organizational action strategies to reduce and prevent childhood obesity.



Public Health Response at International Ports of Entry.

This 10-part course explains the role of federal quarantine stations, as well as other agencies and partners, in communicable disease control at airports, seaports and land borders. The role of public health professionals, acting as surge capacity personnel, to support quarantine station personnel is described. Information about screening, detecting and intervening with passengers ill or at risk for serious communicable diseases is explained. Each part may be taken by itself. This course was developed by the [Michigan Center for Public Health Preparedness](#) which has worked closely with the CDC Detroit Quarantine Station to provide trainings for surge capacity teams at international ports of entry.



Making Data, Policy and Politics Work for Public Health. This online course examines how public health stakeholders and policymakers can select appropriate data sources, use data responsibly, and represent important public health issues in a data-driven way. At the same time, the interplay of politics, public health, and health research is highlighted. Data sources are identified and there are activities to practice using them. Real-life examples are used throughout to highlight key ideas. This 2.5 hour course can be done individually or with a group. A supplemental facilitators manual will be available in September, 2008 so that a facilitator may conduct the course with a group of co-workers. This course was developed by the [Michigan Center for Public Health Preparedness](#).



*Colleen M Bridger, MPH,
course instructor, shown here.*

Courses offered by MPHTC have been made possible through funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions. MI-CPHP courses are supported through funding provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Meet Heidi Durbeck Public Health Liaison



Heidi Durbeck, MPH, MA joined the Practice Office in July, 2008. She will assist with preparedness efforts of state and local health departments in Michigan and will help to develop academic, governmental and community partnerships. A graduate of the University of Michigan School of Public Health, Ms. Durbeck previously worked for Migrant Health Promotion where she directed a National Capacity-Building Technical Assistance Program.

Practice Office Collaborates with Saginaw County on Community Health Assessment

The Office of Public Health Practice partnered with the Saginaw County Department of Public Health to conduct a community health status assessment for Saginaw County. Data were provided by Saginaw County to the Office of Public Health Practice, which compiled the data using NACCHO's Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) as an organizing framework. The report follows MAPP guidelines and includes a gap analysis to inform future data collection. The health assessment touches on all aspects of the current health status of the county.

Saginaw County and the Practice Office are collaborating to draft the final report, which will be a useful tool to aid the county health department, healthcare

entities, and community members in decision-making processes, priority setting, and intervention evaluation. The final report will be completed in October, 2008.

Events Calendar

- Practice Plunge (Detroit & Washtenaw County) Aug 26, 2008
- Practice Summit (Ann Arbor) Sep 15, 2008
- Empower Your Staff: Create Your Vision, coaching and mentoring workshop (Ann Arbor) Sep 16, 2008
- Budgeting and Cost Accounting for Public Health course (Southeast Michigan location TBD) Oct, 2008

This newsletter is produced by the
UM SPH Office of Public Health Practice.
For more information about Office of Public

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SAVE THE DATE
Practice Office Symposium
Tuesday, January 27, 2009