



PARKINSON
SCHOOL of HEALTH SCIENCES
AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Bachelor of Science in Public Health Spring 2023 Newsletter

Advice from the 2023 BSPH Capstone Professors and Students

by Rose Thornquist



SPARKLE SPRINGFIELD

Assistant Professor, Public Health Sciences, PhD

Along with completing work for her research projects and other teaching assignments, Dr. Sparkle Springfield co-teaches PUBH 399, the Capstone course for Public Health majors. Along with Dr. Justin Harbison, she is co-leading the class in a research paper based on her data. Dr. Springfield's exceptional leadership skills and extensive experience in public health research make her an exemplary source of advice for BSPH students at Loyola University Chicago. Dr. Springfield answers questions below on her path in public health and tips for students.

Tell me shortly about your career path.

I decided to pursue a Ph.D. after my first summer research experience. In the summer of 2007, I was a DoD Summer Intern at Joint Equal Opportunities for Minorities (JEOM), Maui High-Performance Super Computing Center in Maui, HI. I decided to pursue a Ph.D. after this experience. Since the summer of 2007 (my sophomore year of college) I have benefited from consistent NIH and DoD-funded undergraduate and graduate research fellowships right up until I started as an Assistant Professor at LUC.

What has been your favorite job/experience and why?

I worked with Dr. Angela Odoms-Young on the culturally/community-targeted randomized controlled weight loss intervention *Doing Me! Sisters Standing Together for a Healthy Mind and Body*, which focused on preventing cancer by reducing obesity in AA women. By assisting with this project, I gained expertise in conducting qualitative research, adapting health interventions to serve minority communities, and framing health interventions in the context of social justice. On a deeper level, I recognized the unique barriers that AA women face in participating in behavioral interventions and the importance of building on and integrating cultural resources to support health promotion. This experience continues to guide my career path.

What skills have you relied on (or adopted) to get to where you are today?

Writing, communication, patience, critical self-reflection.

What resources does Loyola have that you feel students should be utilizing? What do you feel students aren't doing enough?

Students should be building faculty relationships and joining affinity clubs. I can speak for myself. During undergrad, I was not thinking enough about work/life balance and investment in myself outside academia.

What can students do in their free time to advance their public health skills?

Students should develop a hobby, read a self-help book about boundaries, and engage in the communities they aim to serve.

JUSTIN HARBISON

Assistant Professor, Public Health Sciences, PhD

Dr. Justin Harbison teaches a variety of public health courses for undergraduate and graduate students, holds several administrative roles for the Public Health Sciences Department, and serves as a scientific advisor for a local mosquito abatement district. In addition, Dr. Harbison co-teaches PUBH 399 and leads BSPH seniors into their next steps as public health professionals. Dr. Harbison has experienced a multitude of roles in public health, making him an excellent advisor for students. Dr. Harbison answers questions below on his path in public health and tips for students.

Tell me shortly about your career path.

My first job out of undergrad was working as a research assistant in the labs of a couple of professors in the Entomology Department of the University of Florida. My undergrad GPA wasn't stellar, but I knew I wanted to get a Master's in Entomology from UF. I figured it would help my future application to get to know the department and have the faculty get to know me by working in the department before I applied. I went on to a Ph.D. in Public Health because I felt a Ph.D. would open up more opportunities for me that would give me a certain degree of independence.

What skills have you relied on (or adopted) to get to where you are today? What hard skills should a public health professional have? Soft skills?

I feel that most of the skills that I rely on are skills I learned on the job instead of in undergrad or graduate school. What I try to do is to be willing to learn new things and responsibilities to push my skill-building further. I don't always succeed at that though. I would suggest not thinking of skills being hard or soft but rather if they may be particularly useful to a career that interests you. I think nearly all employers expect to train new employees, so a willingness to adapt, learn new skills, and work with others will always be important.

What resources does Loyola have that you feel students should be utilizing? What do you feel students aren't doing enough?

I think because students have spent the majority of their lives taking classes, they tend to think that taking more classes will be better for them. Students should be open to the idea that internships, part-time work, summer work, and volunteering can be as valuable to their future careers as classes. Utilizing things like [Handshake](#) or other such platforms at Loyola to connect to such opportunities can be helpful. The folks at Career Services are very nice and helpful, too.

What is one piece of advice for students considering an MPH program? A Ph.D.?

Graduate school is a big financial, time, and brain-power commitment. I suggest taking time to make sure that the degree is truly of genuine interest to you and is necessary to the job you hope to have.

What can students do in their free time to advance their public health skills?

This is going to sound lame but do public health work. If there is a topic or topic with the field of public health you like or think you might like, start volunteering, interning, or working with an organization that addresses that topic. Employers are always looking for people with experience and this can be one way to start gaining that.

BSPH SENIORS

Students from the Public Health Capstone Class

When BSPH seniors were asked how they got through the program, what advice they would give to future students, and what they learned from their years at Loyola University Chicago, the following quotes were received:

"I think practicing empathy is very important in the BSPH program, public health, and the healthcare industry in general. You know, it can be sensitive for people. Having empathy in public health is of utmost importance because you are in the business of improving people's overall quality of life." – *Maddie Grabow*

"The BSPH program has been a very welcoming community that has helped me reach my goals, in and out of the classroom. Through the Parkinson's mixers and events, I've gained many opportunities and created relationships that have helped me get to where I am today. I'm very grateful for my time in the program!" – *Mikaela Lies*

"It is completely normal to experience feelings of isolation, anxiety, and uncertainty. But the faculty at Parkinson are all amazing and understanding people who have a genuine care for your well-being as well as your transition into the program. My best advice would be to familiarize yourself with the faculty at Parkinson and attend networking/social events to meet people in your major and begin to build relationships outside the classroom." – *Joaquin Guzman*

"If I could give one piece of advice for BSPH students, it would be to exhibit humility and empathy in all that you do. As future public health professionals, society is our patient, and nobody leads the same life. It's important to treat people with kindness and respect, and I feel as though sometimes we students tend to forget that part when we're too focused on our academics. Remember to always exhibit these two traits, because it'll only make you a better public health professional!" – *Shalan John*

"My advice to BSPH students is to take advantage of your time with Keith Kramer! He is super helpful and works really hard to ensure the success of all students in the program and afterward" – *Ellen Beach*

Rose Thornquist is a senior BSPH major and is pursuing a MPH in the Loyola BSPH/MPH dual-degree program.

BSPH Program Director's Note: ChatGPT Chat by Julie Darnell, PhD, MHSA



Welcome to the Loyola University Chicago Public Health Undergraduate Newsletter! We're excited to have so many students interested in the public health field and we hope this newsletter will provide helpful information and resources to help you succeed. This month, we're highlighting the opportunities available for you to gain practical experience and make connections in the public health field. We've compiled a list of internships and volunteer positions for you to explore and take advantage of. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a great place to start. They offer a variety of internships at both the local and national level, in a variety of topics related to public health. Also, the CDC offers the Public Health Associate Program, which is an immersive two-year professional development program with the opportunity to work with state, tribal, local, and territorial public health agencies. The American Public Health Association also has many resources and opportunities for students, including a student membership and access to webinars and events. The National Institute of Health (NIH) is another great resource for students interested in public health. They offer a variety of internships and fellowships, as well as other research opportunities, to those interested in biomedical sciences and public health. Finally, the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) has a great list of internships and

volunteer opportunities with public health organizations. We hope this newsletter has provided you with some resources to explore and take advantage of as you pursue your public health degree. Good luck!

While I hope this newsletter provides useful information and resources for students, I cannot take credit for the internship and volunteer opportunities highlighted above. With the prompt: "Write a newsletter blog for public health undergraduate students at Loyola University Chicago," ChatGPT – not me – constructed the Director's message.

By now, many of you probably have experimented with ChatGPT. I've tested its ability to create a syllabus, explain the importance of free clinics, my area of scholarship, craft a speech about the uninsured, and write an Op-Ed, an assignment type from my Critical Thinking in Public Health course. My impression based on these experiences is that ChatGPT can offer an instructive entrée point into a topic and may create efficiencies in processing large amounts of information, but that it poses several problems: 1) its output – which can yield inaccuracies – cannot be trusted wholesale; 2) its substance is superficial; and, perhaps most relevant for academic settings, 3) the content if passed off as one's own can represent a violation of academic integrity. Given the high stakes, Loyola has created a Task Force to study AI tools and make recommendations about matters of academic integrity.

In the meantime, I'm interested in gaining an understanding of how our newsletter readers are using and thinking about ChatGPT (or similar tools). I invite you to **take this 3-question survey**:

https://luc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_a9PfroNqDWE5LDM.

This anonymous survey should take less than 5 minutes. Your feedback on this important topic will inform how our BSPH Program responds to this new powerful tool. **Make your voice heard.** Please join the conversation!

Green Element Resale is a Front! *By Tatiana Pasewark*



Green Element Resale, the lovely green building on Broadway, next to the McDonald's and just south of the LUC campus, is the perfect haunt on a rainy day when you just need a break. Browse the CDs, peruse the clothing, stock up on little spoons and any other kitchen ware you may need, and chuckle at whatever absurd outfit the male mannequin perched outside the front entrance is wearing.

Buying second hand is more sustainable than buying new. Giving old things a new life rather than buying something new, likely by someone being paid poor wages that uses more water than many people have access to, is the most sustainable and therefore health option. Environmental health is public health.

Green Element, envisioned and managed by Big Medicine, NFP, is also part of a larger community led movement dedicated to environmental sustainability, energy reform, advancing education on these subjects, and advocating for ecological thinking. They have a variety of education resources and information on the idea of Green Economics—the concept that for a healthy world and therefore population, employment and income growth must come from investment

into sustainable infrastructure and industries aimed at reducing CO2 emission and the prevention of the loss of biodiversity.

Someone once told me that there is no elevator to your path in public health. There is no elevator, no fast track or conveyor belt. No set path to follow. Instead, you have to build your own staircase. Most people in the public health major I know have a double major, or a minor, or maybe two! The ability to explore new fields and specialize where you want is one of the most enticing things about public health. It is an interdisciplinary field with no set path. Green Element is a perfect microcosm of this principle—even a thrift store can be public health.

You can find more information about Green Element and Big Medicine, NFP at www.Big-Medicine.org, a 501c(3) organization, whose goal is “to illuminate sound economic thinking as a natural ally to eco protection.”

Tatiana Pasewark is a senior BSPH major and is pursuing a MPH in the Loyola BSPH/MPH dual-degree program.

Public Health Club

The Public Health Club (PHC) began the spring term with committee work, volunteering, and planning speaker events. Volunteering opportunities will be in an individual and group capacity. More information to come soon.

March 16, 8:00PM

Peace Corp Presentation with speakers Zoe Novic and Anjelica Young on the Peace Corp experience, the application process, and they will have an overall interpersonal talk about public health experiences in the Peace Corp.

April--TBD

Public Health Seminar—this event will focus on how to present oneself at conferences and in general professional settings.

General Body Meetings:

Tuesday Feb. 28th @ 8 p.m. on zoom (most recent)

Tuesday April.11th @ 8 p.m. on zoom (upcoming)

If any students have any questions or want to reach out to become involved, please contact us the Public Health Club at: lucphc@gmail.com.

Stay healthy and safe!

Undergraduate Public Health Fall 2023 Courses

Fall 2023 registration **begins Monday, April 17th** (with the LOCUS Shopping Cart open by April 3rd).

PUBH 300, Introduction to Public Health—*Open to sophomores and higher as well as non-majors*

Tues/Thurs, 1PM – 2:15PM, Anthony Mcintosh (4158)

Tues/Thurs, 2:30PM – 3:45PM, Anthony Mcintosh (4738)

PUBH 306, Critical Thinking in Public Health

Tues/Thurs, 10AM – 11:15AM, Julie Darnell (4270)

PUBH 307, Foundations of Public Health Policy

Tues/Thurs, 11:30AM – 12:45PM, Michelle Kavooosi (4279)

***If you are considering the BSPH/MPH dual-degree (five year) program, please contact Keith Kramer before enrolling in PUBH 303, 307, HSM 210 or ENVS 380**

HSM 110, Healthcare in America

Mon/Wed/Fri, 1:40PM – 2:30PM, Daniel Swartzman (1518)

Tues/Thurs, 2:30PM – 3:45PM, Jo Ann Verdin (2202)

Tuesdays, 4:15PM – 6:45PM, Bernadette Lim (3411)

Wednesdays, 4:15PM – 6:45PM, Vikas Gandhi (5103)

Thursdays, 4:15PM – 6:45PM, Cheryl Grendahl (4191)

HSM 210, Global Health (fulfills PUBH 314)*

Mon/Wed/Fri, 11:30AM – 12:20PM, Daniel Swartzman (2351)

Tues/Thurs, 11:30AM – 12:45PM, Donald Zeigler (6056)

***If you are considering the BSPH/MPH dual-degree (five year) program, please contact Keith Kramer before enrolling in PUBH 303, 307, HSM 210 or ENVS 380 this term.**

HSM 230, Fundamentals of Health Equity

Mon/Wed/Fri, 2:45PM – 3:35PM, Daniel Swartzman (1785)

Wednesdays, 4:15 – 6:45PM, Mervin Josh Dino (5106)

HSM 310, Healthcare Project Management

Mondays, 7PM – 9:30PM, Lynette Wilkos-Prostran (4193)

Mark Your Calendars – PHS Alumni Panel & Reception

Please join us for our Public Health Alumni Panel & Reception on **Thursday, April 13th** from 6:30PM – 8PM in Cuneo 311 on the Lake Shore Campus. Panels from the LUC BSPH and MPH programs will talk about their successes and challenges post-graduation. There will be a reception and networking time following.

APHA Promotes LUC Student Champions of Climate Justice

APHA in their follow-up of naming Loyola **Student Champions of Climate Justice**, further recognized our students' efforts in APHA social media and newsletters. Check out the links below:

Public Health Newswire: The Nation's Health:

<http://www.publichealthnewswire.org/?p=student-champs>

APHA's Nation's Health newspaper:

<https://www.thenationshealth.org/content/reports-campus-student-champions-climate-justice-awards>.

Resources

Public Health Resources:

[BSPH Program Students Sakai Site](#)

[Public Health Job Board](#), this site serves to function as a central location for public health job opportunities, internship opportunities, and volunteer events for students and alumni.

[Career Services](#), phone: 773.508.7716, email: careercenter@luc.edu

[Handshake](#), schedule career/pre-health advising & coaching meetings, find jobs, register for career fairs and events.

Librarian for the BSPH Program, Cara Forster, MLIS (they/them), Research & Learning Librarian,

cforster1@luc.edu; [Public Health Guide](#)

Parkinson Experiential Learning: ParkinsonEXPL@luc.edu

Parkinson Weekly Student Life Newsletter, contact: ParkinsonStudentLife@luc.edu

Student Support Resources:

[Parkinson School of Health Sciences and Public Health Student Handbook 2022-2023](#)

[Student Accessibility Center](#)

[Tutoring Center](#)

[Writing Center](#)

[Wellness Center](#), medical, mental health, and health education professionals committed to your well-being.

[Center for Student Assistance and Advocacy \(CSAA\)](#), an LUC centralized website for reporting student concerns.

Interested in Contributing to the BSPH Newsletter?

We are always looking for new content – and new contributors -- for the BSPH Newsletter. Please let us know about accomplishments we can celebrate, events we can highlight, organizations we can profile, and topics we can explore. As a newsletter contributor, students may hone their communication skills, network, and share their thoughts, interests, and ideas on a variety of public health topics. Email Keith Kramer, kkramer4@luc.edu.

For more information about the B.S. in Public Health program:

Keith Kramer, Senior Program Advisor, kkramer4@luc.edu
Julie Darnell, PhD, BSPH Program Director, jdarnell1@luc.edu

Know someone who is interested in public health? Please share this newsletter.



Think Spring!