

Yale Public Health



PIONEERS WOMEN IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Fall 2019


50 & 150 | A Proud Tradition
Women Dedicated to Health

Pioneers | The Current Generation
A Major Boost for LGBTQ Research

Commissioned in 1989 and designed by Maya Lin, the Women's Table is a Yale landmark that chronicles the history of women at the university.

On the cover (from left to right): Associate Professor Yawei Zhang, M.D., M.P.H. '03, Ph.D. '04; Dana Greene, senior administrative assistant; alumna Tracy George, M.P.H. '15; and Taara Prasad, M.P.H. '20 candidate.

Photo credit: Stan Godlewski



*1969 WOMEN ADMITTED TO YALE COLLEGE
THE WOMENS' TABLE WAS BUILT THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF ALUMNI

Yale Public Health

WOMEN IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Fall 2019

50 & 150 CELEBRATIONS

As Yale marks two milestones celebrating women, the Yale School of Public Health reflects on its own rich history.



2 DEANS' MESSAGE

4 ADVANCES

PIONEERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Four accomplished women public health professionals discuss early obstacles as they blazed a path for today's practitioners.



A PROUD TRADITION

Women have been an integral part of the Yale School of Public Health since its beginning more than 100 years ago.

MELINDA IRWIN ON RESEARCH

A Q&A with the school's first dean of research.



HALF THE SKY

Across six departments, scores of women scientists are making significant contributions to better health.

A MAJOR BOOST FOR LGBTQ RESEARCH

A large gift to a researcher at YSPH will bolster research surrounding LGBTQ mental health.



DEDICATED TO HEALTH

In their own words, women discuss their passion for public health and their visions for a future.

43 STUDENTS

47 ALUMNI

58 YSPH NOTES

77 ON THE ISSUES WITH
LAURETTA GRAU

MILESTONES AT YALE—AND AT YALE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

We have much to be proud of as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of coeducation at Yale College and the 150th anniversary of women students at Yale University. In this issue of *Yale Public Health*, we are delighted to showcase the critical contributions our alumnae and women faculty, students and staff have made toward the three pillars of our mission—education, research and public health practice.

The contributions of women at the Yale School of Public Health date back to our founding in 1915. Since then, the proportion of women pursuing M.P.H. degrees at YSPH has steadily grown; women constituted 64 percent of M.P.H. students in 1999 and 73 percent in 2019. Today, 41 percent of assistant professors are women, as are 37 percent of full professors, making YSPH one of the few highly ranked schools of public health where the proportion of women does not significantly drop when comparing assistant professors to full professors.

Our new core curriculum, launched in 2018, is providing students with opportunities to develop competencies in leadership and systems thinking, and to advocate for economic policies and programs that will improve health in diverse populations. We have vibrant student organizations, such as REPROJustice, which promotes gender equity and social justice. Since 2011, the Research Education Institute for Diverse Scholars at CIRA has been bringing diverse, early career faculty to benefit from mentorship in HIV-related science.

YSPH has graduated many distinguished alumnae who now serve in leadership roles in public health. To name just a few, Judith Lichtman received her M.P.H. and Ph.D. from YSPH and is now chair of the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology and Susan Addiss, Jewel Mullen and Renée D. Coleman-Mitchell all earned their M.P.H. from YSPH and went on to serve as commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health (Mullen and Addiss formerly and Coleman-Mitchell currently).

Despite these important contributions made by women at YSPH, women are still underrepresented in public health leadership positions. Research shows that women leaders excel at promoting the needs of women and children. Our 50 and 150 celebrations provide us the opportunity to assess where we have been and look forward to the future.

We are confident that YSPH will continue to lead the way.



Melinda Pettigrew, Ph.D. '99, Professor, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs



Melinda Irwin, Ph.D., M.P.H., Professor, Associate Dean of Research

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TWO MILESTONES CELEBRATED—50 & 150 YEARS OF WOMEN AT YALE

This year marks Yale's celebration of the 50th anniversary of coeducation in Yale College, and next year is the 150th anniversary of women at the university.

At the Yale School of Public Health, it also marks the centennial of the first degree granted to a woman in public health. The Certificate in Public Health (the equivalent of today's M.P.H.) was granted to Helen Robertson Gage, M.D., in 1919. Dorothy FitzGerald Holland and Myra Mae Hulst quickly followed, earning their degrees the following year. In fact, in the first seven years of the school's history, half of 14 certificates were granted to women. Gage was also the third recipient, and first woman, to earn the DrPH, which she completed in 1923.

Today, over 70 percent of the school's students and 49 percent of the faculty identify as women.

The rich and early contributions of Gage, Holland, Hulst and others could not have transpired without the leadership of C.-E.A. Winslow, founder of public health at Yale in 1915, and who, it appears, was an early feminist. He opened access to Yale's educational opportunities to women even before passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920 granted women the right to vote. His wife, and frequent scientific collaborator, Anne Fuller Rogers, whom he met as a student at MIT, was also professionally active in the field.

Rogers coauthored several bacteriology papers and books with Winslow and opened their Prospect Street home for weekly salons for faculty and graduate students and many visiting scientists.

Another important part of Winslow's feminist legacy was his role in nursing education and the founding of the Yale School of Nursing, as he considered the then "female" profession vital to public health. He was also involved in the birth control movement at least as early as 1929, when legislation to legalize birth control failed to pass in the Connecticut legislature. A pamphlet that he created in support of birth control sought to influence men, arguing that birth control was a means to help support their families. He later served on the boards of state and national Planned Parenthood associations.

Advocacy by and for women has been part of the school's culture throughout its history. For example, birth control, still a critical issue for women's health and justice around the world, was not legalized in the state until 1965, when the Supreme Court ruled in the landmark case *Griswold v. Connecticut*. Rosemary Stevens, M.P.H. '63, Ph.D. '68, then a student at the Yale School of Public Health (and later a faculty member) and her husband were one of two married couples to give state's evidence setting the case in motion.

While these pages scratch the surface of the contributions of the women of YSPH, they illustrate the valuable and growing contributions that women have made to the school throughout its long history. Women are essential to our success today and vital to our future and to unlocking the gift of good health for all people.

In addition to this issue of *Yale Public Health*, YSPH's commemoration of the 50 and 150 celebrations includes the following:

- A photo exhibit in the dean's corridor spotlighting YSPH alumnae and women faculty.
- Social media postings will highlight the global impact of our alumnae.
- A Yale Women's Mental Health Conference co-sponsored with the Department of Psychiatry on October 25, 2019.
- Throughout the year, each of our six departments will host a dedicated seminar and/or a named lectureship highlighting a YSPH alumna.
- Commencement speaker announcement of a distinguished YSPH alumna (tentative) on May 18, 2020.
- Portrait unveiling of Dorothy Horstmann, in partnership with the Yale School of Medicine (date pending).
- YSPH Alumnae Symposium in Spring 2020 (date pending).

Denise Meyer

VACCINE COST-EFFECTIVE FOR TYPHOID

COLIN POITRAS



Introducing a typhoid conjugate vaccine (TCV) into routine child vaccine schedules and conducting a catch-up campaign to vaccinate all children up to age 15 are a cost-effective solution for many low- to middle-income countries severely burdened by typhoid.

Led by a Yale School of Public Health researcher, the study is the first comprehensive analysis of the cost-effectiveness of different typhoid vaccination strategies for 54 countries hit hardest by typhoid. The countries, primarily located in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, have access to funding from Gavi, an international organization dedicated to vaccine introduction.

The study analyzed disease transmission rates, hospitalizations, mortality rates, vaccine-related costs and the financial resources of each country. Extensive computer modeling and analysis were applied to evaluate four strategies: no vaccination, routine immunization at 9 months, and routine immunization at 9 months with catch-up campaigns to either age 5 or age 15. An optimum strategy for a country was considered one that maximized the average net monetary benefit.

“We have provided all of the information for decision-makers to evaluate whether the typhoid conjugate vaccine is

a good value,” said Virginia Pitzer, Sc.D., associate professor in the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases and the study’s senior author.

Typhoid is a serious and sometimes fatal disease caused by the bacteria *salmonella typhi*. It afflicts over 10 million people a year and is spread through contaminated food and water, usually due to inadequate sanitation and water infrastructures in low- and middle-income countries. While global incidence of typhoid has declined in recent years, prolonged multiyear outbreaks continue to pose a public health threat. Climate change, urbanization and increasing drug resistance have contributed to typhoid’s significant health and economic burden.

A new typhoid conjugate vaccine was recently approved by the World Health Organization and is recommended as part of an integrated approach to controlling the disease along with improvements in water, sanitation and hygiene.

Funding for the study was provided by TyVAC, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Research Foundation-Flanders and the Belgian-American Education Foundation.

The study was published in *Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

THE HIGH COST OF AGEISM

MICHAEL GREENWOOD

Ageism—a widespread form of prejudice directed at older persons—led to excess costs of \$63 billion for a broad range of health conditions during one year in the United States alone.

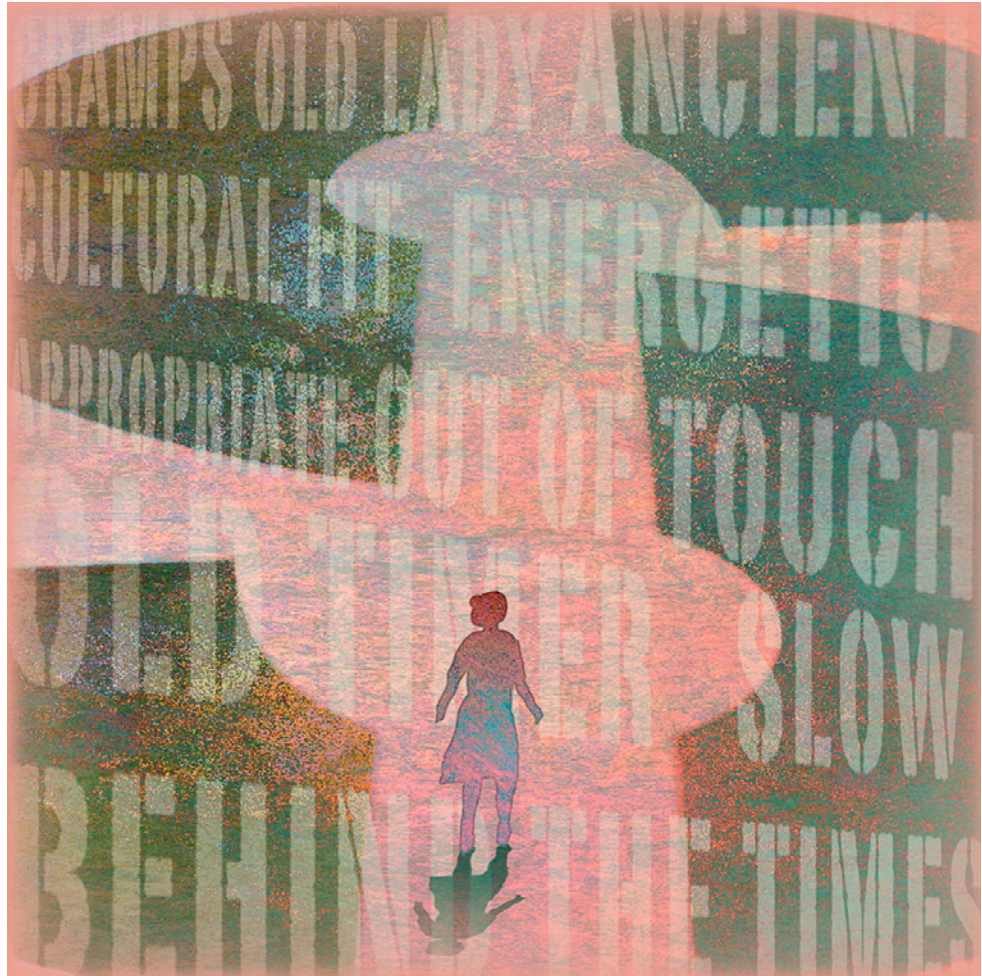
The study, led by Professor Becca Levy, Ph.D., acting chair of the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, is the first to quantify the health costs resulting from ageism.

The researchers also found that ageism was responsible for 17 million cases of the eight most expensive health conditions in one year among those 60 and older.

“Ageism is one of the least visible prejudices,” Levy said. “Our study helps to increase the visibility of ageism by looking at its consequences.”

The \$63 billion cost of ageism amounts to one of every seven dollars spent on the eight most expensive health conditions for all Americans over the age of 60 during one year. Among the health conditions examined were cardiovascular disease, mental disorders and chronic respiratory disease.

Previous research by Levy and her colleagues has shown that ageism adversely affects the health of older persons because it can create stress, which has been shown to have an impact on many types of health outcomes. The types of ageism that were examined for the most recent study included unfair treatment of the old, as well as two categories of beliefs that are learned from society: negative stereotypes about old people in general and older individuals’ negative views of themselves.



MICHAEL WOLOSCHINOW (2)

The results of this study were based on the modeling techniques of health economics that provided estimates derived from national surveys, demographic data and a systematic review of research concerning the influence of ageism on health. The models calculated the cost of ageism on health above and beyond the cost of age alone on health.

“Our findings make a strong case for efforts aimed at reducing the epidemic of ageism, which produces not only a financial cost for society, but also a human cost for the well-being of older persons,” Levy said.

The study was published in *The Gerontologist*.



MICHAEL WOLOSCHINOW

STRATEGIES TO CURB SMOKING IDENTIFIED

COLIN POITRAS

Raising the price of tobacco cigarettes and banning fruit and candy flavors in electronic cigarettes are two options policymakers should consider to help young people resist or stop smoking, a new study from the Yale School of Public Health finds.

The study by Jody Sindelar, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management, surveyed 2,003 individuals ages 18 to 22 across the country who smoked tobacco cigarettes at least once or used e-cigarettes through a process called vaping. The researchers asked participants how different flavor options, costs and health risks might affect their smoking and vaping behaviors.

The results identified two distinct groups – those who clearly preferred smoking tobacco cigarettes and those who preferred vaping e-cigarettes. For the cigarette smokers, raising the price of cigarettes and reducing the potential harms of e-cigarettes might get them to switch to e-cigarettes, according to the survey results.

But such a change creates its own concerns, the researchers said, because reducing the potential harm of e-cigarettes could encourage those currently vaping to keep doing it, raising their health risks, instead of quitting.

“These findings present a conundrum for regulators and policymakers as reducing the harm of e-cigarettes has beneficial effects, but also could have unintended negative effects,” Sindelar said.

In terms of potential policy changes, the researchers said banning flavored cigarettes and e-cigarettes would likely discourage those who are drawn to the products because of their flavor varieties. Raising the price of tobacco cigarettes and not raising the price of e-cigarettes appeared to be the best approach to getting tobacco smokers to switch to e-cigarettes, the researchers said.

While e-cigarettes are considered less harmful than traditional cigarettes because they don’t contain the cancer-causing chemicals found in tobacco, the jury is still out on the long-term health ramifications of electronic cigarettes, with concerns ranging from potential nicotine addiction to consumption of heavy metals, volatile organic compounds and ultrafine particles in the lungs.

The study was co-authored by former YSPH associate research scientist John Buckell and published in *Addiction*.



YSPH'S FIRST WOMAN GRADUATE

HELEN ROBERTSON GAGE,
M.D., M.P.H. '19, DrPH '23

Helen Robertson (Howe) Gage was the first woman to graduate with the Master in Public Health degree in 1919 (then known as the Certificate in Public Health) and also the first woman to earn the DrPH in 1923. A graduate of the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania and Wellesley, Gage was the wife of Brownell Gage (Yale 1898), one of the founders of Yale-in-China (now known as the Yale-China Association). For several years, they lived in Changsha, China, where Helen Gage volunteered her services as a physician. It was after the couple's return that she attended Yale.

Gage's M.P.H. thesis was "A History of Influenza Epidemics to 1889" and her doctoral thesis was a historical study on the "Foundation and Development of the Connecticut State Board of Health." A working mother and wife, she served as health officer in Suffield, Connecticut, and was a lecturer on hygiene and sanitation measures for area communities.



AN EARLY ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

VIRGINIA ALEXANDER, M.D., M.P.H. '41

Born in Philadelphia at the turn of the 20th century, Virginia Alexander was only 4 years old when her mother died, and at age 13, her father lost his once flourishing livery stable. Alexander eventually won a scholarship to the University of Pennsylvania and worked as a maid, a clerk and a waitress to pay for her living expenses. Alexander ranked second highest among medical aptitude test examinees after her entry into the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania. African American physicians were discriminated against in many medical institutions, however, and no Philadelphia hospital would accept her for practical training, so she did her residency at the Kansas City Colored Hospital in Missouri followed by a pediatrics-surgery residency at Wheatley-Provident Hospital, also in Kansas City.

Upon completion, Alexander returned to Philadelphia, where she ran her own community health clinic and served on the faculty of the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania. Subsidized by her earnings in private practice, Alexander founded the Aspiranto Health Home in her own home to serve Philadelphia's poor.

When World War II broke out, physicians from across the country were dispatched to military bases to care for the wounded, leaving many groups at home desperate for medical care. Alexander volunteered for the government and was sent to the coal fields of Alabama to treat miners living in extreme poverty. After the war, she returned to Philadelphia, where she had a medical practice and worked on race relations with the Quakers, of which she was a member. She died of lupus in 1949. She was 49.



PIONEER IN POLIO RESEARCH

DOROTHY HORSTMANN, M.D.

Dorothy Horstmann joined the Section of Preventive Medicine at Yale as a Commonwealth Fellow in 1942 and the Yale Poliomyelitis Unit (YPU) a year later.

In 1952, Horstmann, the John Rodman Paul Professor of Epidemiology and professor of pediatrics, set up an experiment to determine whether polio first appeared in the blood before moving on to the brain. At the time, scientists believed that the polio virus directly attacked the nervous system because efforts to isolate the virus from the blood of paralyzed patients had failed. Horstmann experimented with small quantities of polio virus, then examined blood samples for traces of it. Her work showed that the polio virus reached the brain by way of the blood. This finding helped make polio vaccines possible.

Her work contributed to the licensing of an oral polio vaccine developed by Albert Sabin from a live, weakened virus. From 1955 to 1961, YPU carried out trials in Connecticut, Arizona and Costa Rica of both the Sabin vaccine and one developed by Jonas Salk. Later, Horstmann evaluated the oral polio vaccine program in Russia, Czechoslovakia and Poland for the World Health Organization.

In 1961, she became the first woman to be a full professor at the Yale School of Medicine and the Yale School of Public Health and the first woman at Yale to hold an endowed chair.



PIONEERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH

Four highly accomplished YSPH women share their travails and triumphs in forging opportunities for today's generation.

Succeeding in a career in the health sciences is challenging enough. But imagine your adviser shouting angrily about your pregnancy. Imagine seeing no fellow student who looks like you. Or not daring to display a photo of your child or to bring your spouse to a work function.

The veteran Yale School of Public Health alumnae and faculty in these profiles faced those problems and more as they climbed to the tops of their fields. The 1960s, 1970s and beyond were not the friendliest of times for ambitious young women scientists.

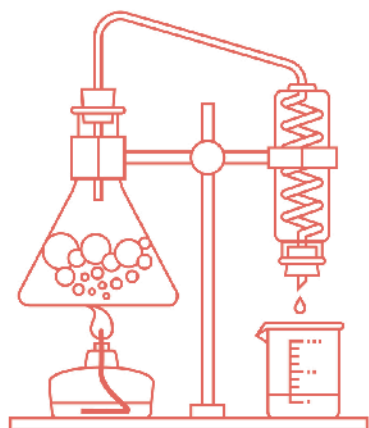
To be sure, gender equity has improved in recent decades. More and more women staff scientific laboratories, offices, classrooms and field stations. Today at YSPH, women outnumber men in the student body by 3 to 1. Women also make up close to half the faculty. And around the world, there are far more women health professionals than men.

Currently, “we’re in a lot better position,” said Jody Sindelar, professor of public health and economics at the School of Public Health’s Department of Health Policy and Management. “Women Ph.D. students [and] women master’s students have much more a feeling of being empowered – that yes, they are smart, they are hard-working, and they can go get a good job.”

“The idea that people will combine family and a career is just standard now,” she added.

Still, much remains to be done. In North America and Western Europe, fewer than 32 percent of researchers are women. Women scientists are underrepresented in tenure-track and leadership positions and in scientific publishing. They also win fewer grant funds. The reasons for these disparities are many, but one of them may be a dearth of role models.

These four women are among a growing number who are lighting the way.



272/99

THE NUMBER OF FEMALE VS. MALE STUDENTS
ADMITTED TO THE YALE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC
HEALTH IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2018-19.

NANCY RUDDLE

“THE END OF YOUR CAREER”



As an emerita professor of and senior research scientist in epidemiology (microbial diseases), Nancy Ruddle, Ph.D., can look back upon an illustrious career as a pioneering researcher in autoimmune disease and as the discoverer of lymphotoxin. But along the way she managed what sometimes felt like an impossibly tricky work-life balance.

After completing her undergraduate education at Mount Holyoke College, Ruddle decided to pursue graduate research at Yale. She married a junior faculty member, and future biology chair Frank Ruddle after her first year of graduate school. When she had nearly completed her research and was writing her thesis, she told her thesis adviser who was going away for the summer, that she was pregnant. The response shocked her.

“He was furious. Absolutely furious. He slammed his hand down on the table [and said], ‘This is the end of your career,’” Ruddle said.

Throughout the pregnancy, Ruddle worked on her thesis amid constant arguments with her adviser, who was also angry that she wasn’t yet writing for publication, a response in retrospect she understands.

“We fought and argued the whole time,” she recalled. “It was a terrible, terrible experience at the end of my thesis. It was just unbelievable. It was unbearable. The reason I was so thrown,” she added, “is that from the sixth grade on I’d been in all-women’s schools and I had never experienced sexism.”

After earning her doctorate, Ruddle got a part-time position doing tissue-typing for a transplant program. The schedule was demanding, requiring that she be

“THE REASON I WAS SO THROWN IS THAT FROM THE SIXTH GRADE ON I’D BEEN IN ALL-WOMEN’S SCHOOLS AND I HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED SEXISM.”

~Nancy Ruddle



available at a moment’s notice. She and her husband struggled to manage with only a part-time babysitter. But she couldn’t imagine how to do a postdoc with a child.

The hardest part?

“There were only a few role models,” she said. “I just didn’t see many women that seemed to be doing it.”

After three years of this grueling schedule, the couple had another child, and then Ruddle decided to do a postdoc after all. Finally, she said, things got easier. The Ruddles found and paid for more extensive day care, viewing it as an investment in her career, and Ruddle did her postdoctoral work with a married couple who became close friends. “I was able to stay at Yale, thrive, advance through the ranks and preserve my marriage,” she said. Ruddle went on to receive a named professorship, chair a department and serve as acting dean, among other achievements.

The situation has improved overall in the years since, Ruddle believes. “Even though people might not in their hearts be particularly devoted to the advancement of women, they kind of know their actions have to be that way,” she noted.

Also helpful, she added, is the “sheer number of women that are in faculty positions.”

What still needs to change? Day care, for one thing, Ruddle said. While it is more readily available now, “it’s so expensive. I just don’t see how people do it financially.”

IRENE TROWELL-HARRIS

“AN EQUITABLE SYSTEM FOR EVERYBODY”



As Irene Trowell-Harris of the Air National Guard looks back on a prestigious nursing career, her greatest joy has been helping others achieve their potential.

“I’ve been paying it forward for many, many years,” Trowell-Harris, R.N., M.P.H. ’73, Ed.D., said. Now a retired major general, she advocates for policy and gender equity in nursing.

Trowell-Harris grew up on a South Carolina cotton farm without indoor plumbing or electricity. Admitted to a segregated nursing school, she paid her first tuition installment with \$61.25 in coins donated by her church congregation.

In 1963, Trowell-Harris joined the New York Air National Guard, then became a flight nurse. Soon she became a medical crew director, jetting to Europe in hospital cargo planes.

In 1971, she decided to pursue her master’s in public health administration at Yale.

“I already knew before I went that the diversity was probably not going to be good,” she said.

Sure enough, she had few women classmates, and fellow minorities were only to be found working in the admissions office, she recalls.

But she found support at church and from academic mentors, and she befriended other students around the university. Overall, she said, Yale was “world-class, inspiring and challenging.” She went on to Columbia University, where she earned a health education doctorate.

“ THIS SHOULD BE AN EQUITABLE SYSTEM FOR EVERYBODY, AS LONG AS YOU’RE QUALIFIED AND YOU CAN DO THE WORK.”

~Irene Trowell-Harris



In her wake, her family soared. Inspired by Trowell-Harris’s success as the first in her family to attend college, and in some cases aided by her loans and encouragement, multiple siblings and cousins went on to careers in nursing, medicine, policing or the ministry. “When each person finished, they helped somebody else,” she said.

Appointed to commander in 1986 of the 105th U.S. Air Force Clinic in Newburgh, New York, she became the Air National Guard’s first nurse and first woman to command a medical clinic. The position had previously been held by physicians, she said.

In 1993, she became the first African American woman promoted to brigadier general one-star and subsequently in 1998 to two-star major general in the Air National Guard. Later, she directed the Department of Veterans Affairs’ Center for Women Veterans and served two presidents as a White House appointee.

Today, unequal gender opportunity remains a problem in nursing, Trowell-Harris said, noting that colleagues in universities and the public health field experience lower pay in senior-ranking or tenured positions. Yet the profession would benefit from more men, she argues, as that would improve benefits and salary for everyone.

“This should be an equitable system for everybody, as long as you’re qualified and you can do the work,” she said. “I believe in a hand up, not a handout.”

JODY SINDELAR

“A FIELD THAT JUST DIDN'T EXIST”



Few researchers can say they helped create their fields. But health economist Jody Sindelar has a credible claim to have done so. A decade ago, with a handful of colleagues, she co-founded the American Society of Health Economists.

“It’s a field that just didn’t exist when I started,” Sindelar, Ph.D., said. Now, it’s thriving. And Sindelar, a professor of public health and economics at the School of Public Health’s Department of Health Policy and Management as well as at the Yale University Department of Economics, is an expert in substance abuse and tobacco economics.

Before coming to Yale, Sindelar earned undergraduate and doctoral degrees at Stanford University, worked with the federal government, and did stints at Georgetown University and the University of Chicago. Along the way, many male colleagues failed to treat her equitably.

At Stanford, where she said all the faculty were men and few Ph.D. students in her cohort were women, the culture was macho. “I was told directly, ‘You’re a sweet young thing. This discipline is for tough people. You should not be in this field,’” Sindelar said.

Moreover, she recalled having a problem with a Ph.D. faculty adviser behaving inappropriately when she was a candidate. “I handled it swiftly, and that was the end of that.”

Other women weren’t so lucky, and did not survive their programs. “Things were happening that wouldn’t be allowed today at all between male faculty and female students,” she said.

“ I WAS TOLD DIRECTLY, ‘YOU’RE A SWEET YOUNG THING. THIS DISCIPLINE IS FOR TOUGH PEOPLE. YOU SHOULD NOT BE IN THIS FIELD.’”

~Jody Sindelar



At Yale, Sindelar joined an “informal, somewhat secretive” group of faculty women that quietly pushed for equal pay and more women department heads—it was too risky for junior faculty to join, she recalls. Having married in Chicago, she had children at Yale, but recalls seeing no other pregnant faculty members there.

Her survival strategy then was: “You just have to act like a man. Don’t put family pictures in your office, don’t reveal your private life. Be strictly business, like the men.... This was the Dark Ages.”

As in society at large, beyond harassment and a lack of role models, there were subtler problems, she said.

At meetings, for instance, women would often make their points without making much of an impression. Then a man would take the floor, make the very same point, and be readily heard.

Today, she said, things are better for women. Women graduate students are more empowered, she points out, and more women are in leadership positions.

“We have good females in faculty roles for students to say, ‘Yes, I can have a career, be a strong woman, work hard,’” she said. “At the School of Public Health right now, I think, things seem quite good.”

PAT MAIL

“A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL FIRST”

After studying health education at Yale, Pat Mail joined the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps (PHS) in 1970 and enjoyed a 27-year career.

Having chosen her job in part to travel, Mail, M.S., M.P.H. '67, got her wish. She was stationed on the Tohono O'odham reservation on the U.S.-Mexico border, then on Washington State's Olympic Peninsula, working with Native American tribes alongside community health workers and alcohol counselors.

In 1986 came a transfer to Washington, D.C., where Mail worked to rally community support for people with AIDS. Next, she worked with then-Surgeon General C. Everett Koop to plan a seminar on drunken driving. Mail earned a doctorate in health education at the University of Maryland, then in 1997 retired and moved back to the Pacific Northwest.

On considering her education and career, Mail said, being a woman wasn't an obstacle. She had supportive male colleagues and doesn't recall denigrating remarks.

But part of what smoothed her path was remaining in the closet.

The PHS application she filled out in the late 1960s included a question about whether the applicant was a homosexual.

Despite being a lesbian, she checked “No,” she said. Mail had gotten a taste of ostracism as a teenager, when her family lived in conservative state of Utah, and she was expelled from a private girls' school for being a lesbian, she said.

Throughout her career, though she wasn't out of the closet, some people knew, she said. “[They] sort of intuited it.” Her orientation helped her reach out to and connect with gay communities. But it affected some career decisions, such as turning down a transfer to the Deep South. “I'd have a cross burned on my lawn in the first six months,” she said.

Moreover, Mail's partner (and, later, her wife) of 32 years, Peggy, had to skip work functions for most of their relationship. “That cheated her of a lot,” Mail said.

“I WAS A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL FIRST, NOT A QUEER PERSON FIRST,” SHE NOTED. “IT'S JUST LIKE BEING MALE OR FEMALE — THAT SHOULD NOT BE A FACTOR IN WHAT YOU DO, OR WHAT YOU CAN DO.”

~Pat Mail



But times changed for the better. In 1996, at a PHS party, the host took Mail aside and told her, “You know, you could bring a friend.” The following year, Peggy came along. That was the last such work party before Mail's retirement.

All in all, Mail said, “I have been exceedingly lucky in collegial support; in my education; in the friends that I have, straight and gay; in the church that we found.

“I was a health professional first, not a queer person first,” she noted. “It's just like being male or female — that should not be a factor in what you do, or what you can do.”

YPH

p.12: Nancy Ruddle on her motor scooter in 1964, and in the lab.

p.13: Irene Trowell-Harris at her office (left) and the U.S. Capitol.

p.14: Jody Sindelar in China (left) and meeting with colleagues at the Yale School of Public Health (third from left).

p.15: Pat Mail and her dog Mac.

HALF THE SKY

WOMEN SCIENTISTS MAKE PROFOUND CONTRIBUTIONS TO ADVANCING HEALTH ACROSS SIX CORE DISCIPLINES

The contributions of women faculty and scientists at the Yale School of Public Health run the gamut, from cancer epidemiology to malaria, health care costs to study design, and from fracking to the health of the elderly.

The research is broad, diverse and detailed and it is moving the needle in improving public health domestically and abroad.

The departmental summaries that follow are a mere introduction to the many and varied contributions made daily by a growing number of women scientists at our school. Not included here are a constellation of talented women research scientists, secondary appointments, voluntary faculty, lecturers, adjuncts and postdocs whose contributions to research, education and the practice of public health are profound. This would fill many additional pages.

To get a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of the contributions that women in all capacities make to the Yale School of Public Health, we encourage our readers to visit each department's website (included at the end of each summary) and explore the transformational work that is underway.

This work is inspiring and impactful. In the meantime, enjoy these highlights as they represent and honor the many women leaders in science, education and practice within our ranks.



DATA ANALYSIS, STATISTICAL METHODS AND STUDY DESIGN

Women in the Department of Biostatistics

Because low-grade glioma is rare, recruiting patients for scientific study is difficult.

Recognizing a critical need for more research on the malignant brain tumor, and how medical treatments are affecting patients' lives, **Elizabeth Claus**, Ph.D. '88, M.D. '94, a professor of biostatistics and director of medical research at the Yale School of Public Health, established an International Low Grade Glioma Registry. The secure web-based registry helps medical officials recruit patients for potential research and provides patients and caregivers critical access to important information. Claus is also developing a related smartphone app that allows patients to report and track their fatigue, cognitive difficulties, mood changes, sleep problems and other treatment symptoms.

Such research leadership is nothing new for Claus, who specializes in cancer epidemiology with an emphasis on developing risk models for breast and brain tumors. An attending neurosurgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston who completed her neurosurgery residency at Yale New Haven Hospital, Claus is also an adviser to the Central Brain Tumor Registry of the United States and principal investigator on a variety of important national studies, including the Meningioma Consortium, and co-investigator of the GLIOGENE (Genes for Glioma) project.

When it comes to expertise in translational research, **Donna Spiegelman**, Sc.D., inaugural director of the Yale School of Public Health's Center for Methods in Implementation and Prevention Science and the Susan

Dwight Bliss Professor of Biostatistics, certainly falls into that category. She is one of the few people with a joint doctorate in biostatistics and epidemiology, and a current recipient of the National Institutes of Health's prestigious Pioneer Award. Spiegelman's expertise lies in study design and data analysis for interventions and programs aimed at improving public health on a large-scale population basis.

Associate Professors **Maria Ciarleglio**, Ph.D. '07, and **Denise Esserman**, M.S., Ph.D., are experts in longitudinal data analysis and clinical trial design methods (Ciarleglio) and clustered randomized trials (Esserman). Their work has been applied to studies involving mental health problems and HIV risk among gay and bisexual men and the importance of antiretroviral therapy in preventing non-Hodgkin lymphoma in people living with HIV/AIDS.

Associate Professor **Zuoheng Anita Wang**, M.S., Ph.D., an affiliate member of Yale's Computational Biology and Bioinformatics program, has developed new statistical methods to better identify genes contributing to complex human diseases such as cancer and alcohol use disorder.

Colin Poitras

Learn more about the many contributions of women scientists in the Department of Biostatistics by visiting the department's website at publichealth.yale.edu/biostat/

EUGENIA BUTA, PH.D.



CYNTHIA BRANDT, M.D., M.P.H.



LISA CALVOCORESSI, M.S.W, PH.D.



ELIZABETH CLAUS, PH.D., M.D.



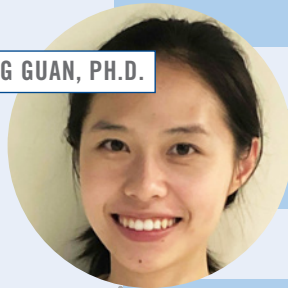
DENISE ESSERMAN, M.S., PH.D.



MARIA CIARLEGLIO, PH.D.



LEYING GUAN, PH.D.



LAURA FORASTIERE, PH.D.



RALITZA GUEORGUIEVA, M.SC., PH.D.



YUAN HUANG, PH.D.



DONNA SPIEGELMAN, SC.D.



NING SUN, M.S., PH.D.



ZUOHENG ANITA WANG, M.S., PH.D.



YIZE ZHAO, PH.D.





BREAST CANCER, STROKE AND GENETIC RISKS

Women in the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology

When it comes to addressing the health needs of women, the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology has an outstanding cohort of women conducting important research.

Professor **Melinda Irwin**, M.S., Ph.D., M.P.H., who also serves as associate dean of research, is a nationally recognized leader in the field of lifestyle factors and chronic disease. An associate director at the Yale Cancer Center, Irwin studies how obesity, weight loss and exercise affect cancer outcomes and quality of life for breast cancer patients.

Behavioral interventions are a key part of Assistant Professor **Leah Ferrucci's** research. Among her many other projects, Ferrucci, M.P.H. '06, Ph.D. '09, is investigating how novel interventions can be used to reduce cancer risks for young women and adolescent girls who use tanning beds.

Assistant Professor **Nicola Hawley**, Ph.D., is investigating how obesity and diabetes affect maternal and child health in developing countries. Pre-pregnancy obesity and excessive gestational weight gain have been linked to a number of poor pregnancy outcomes. Hawley is testing lifestyle interventions among pregnant women in American Samoa that could serve as a model for prenatal care.

Department chair and Professor **Judith Lichtman**, M.P.H. '88, Ph.D. '96, is a national expert on stroke and has been asked to serve on numerous American Heart Association committees and task forces to share her knowledge. In other research areas, Professor **Xiaomei Ma**, Ph.D., studies the effectiveness of various cancer screening and treatment modalities, as well as the risk factors of cancer. Ma, co-leader of Yale's Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program, served as senior researcher on a recent

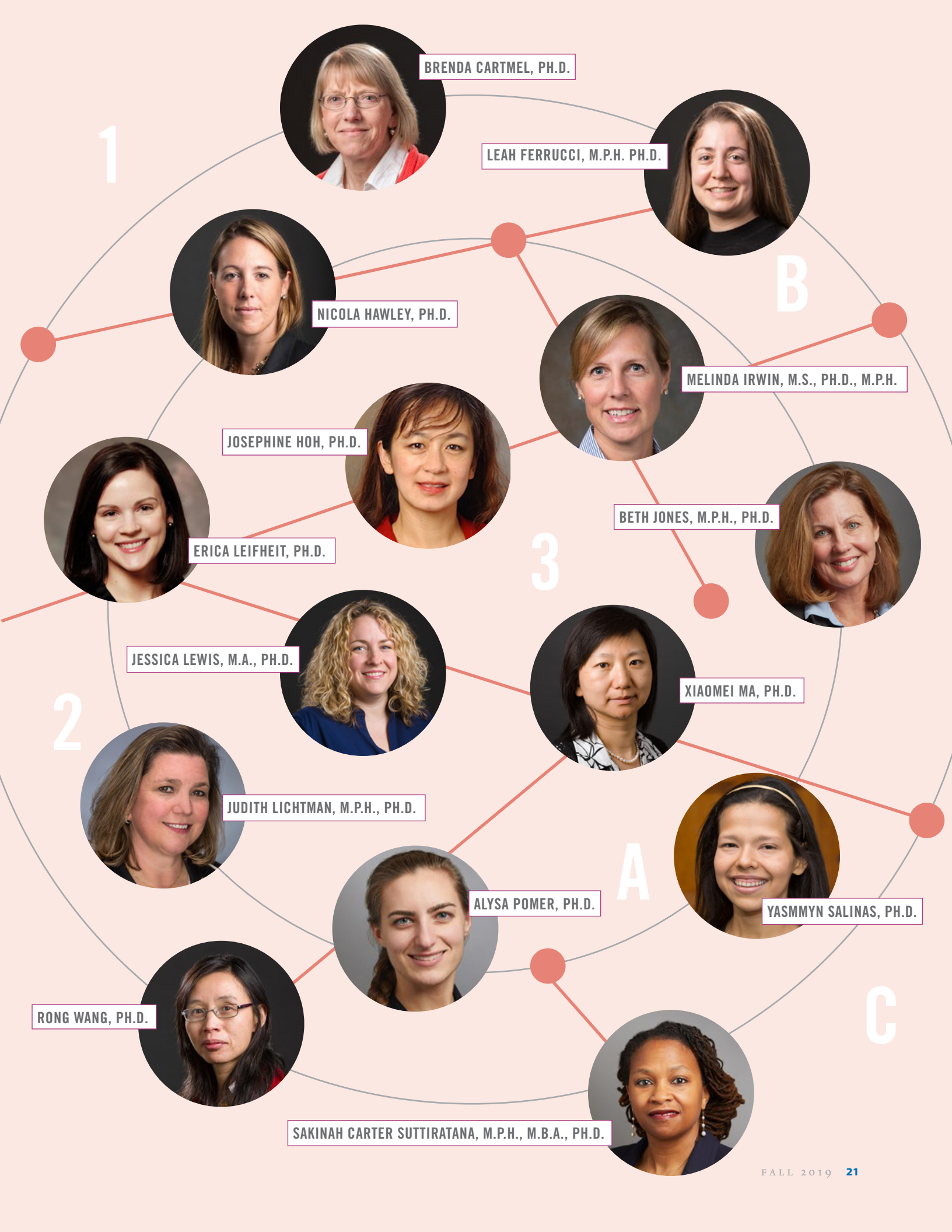
study that identified new genetic factors that increased the risk of childhood acute lymphoblastic leukemia, the most common type of pediatric cancer.

Associate Professor **Josephine Hoh**, Ph.D., meanwhile, is developing new approaches to discovering genetic risks for common diseases. Her work on age-related macular degeneration, the most common form of blindness, led to the first successful application of genome-wide association research in this area. Two computational methods that she co-developed prior to coming to Yale continue to be widely used.

A new addition to the department, Assistant Professor **Yasmmyn Salinas**, M.P.H. '14, Ph.D. '19, studies the interactions between maternal genetic factors, maternal prenatal diet, and childhood diet and physical activity in relation to obesity and other metabolic outcomes across the life course.

Colin Poitras

Learn more about the many contributions of women scientists in the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology by visiting the department's website at publichealth.yale.edu/cde/



BRENDA CARTMEL, PH.D.

LEAH FERRUCCI, M.P.H. PH.D.

NICOLA HAWLEY, PH.D.

MELINDA IRWIN, M.S., PH.D., M.P.H.

JOSEPHINE HOH, PH.D.

BETH JONES, M.P.H., PH.D.

ERICA LEIFHEIT, PH.D.

3

JESSICA LEWIS, M.A., PH.D.

XIAOMEI MA, PH.D.

2

JUDITH LIGHTMAN, M.P.H., PH.D.



YASMYN SALINAS, PH.D.

A

ALYSA POMER, PH.D.

RONG WANG, PH.D.

C

SAKINAH CARTER SUTTIRATANA, M.P.H., M.B.A., PH.D.



METABOLITES, FRACKING AND POLLUTANTS

Women in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences

A surge in hydraulic fracturing for oil and gas production in the Appalachian Basin has YSPH Assistant Professor **Nicole Deziel**, M.H.S., Ph.D., on the move.

Concerned about the potential public health threat posed by hazardous chemicals used in the practice commonly known as fracking, Deziel is co-leader of a multi-institutional team of researchers that is testing for possible drinking water contamination in about 200 homes in Ohio's Belmont and Monroe counties. The results from the water testing will inform epidemiologic investigations into potential adverse birth outcomes linked to fracking.

Deziel, an expert in environmental monitoring, said the study will provide new insight into an area where current scientific data is thin: whether fracking affects water quality in surrounding communities.

Working in the field and applying the latest scientific technologies to identify environmental health threats are a key part of the mission of the Yale School of Public Health's Department of Environmental Health Sciences. Deziel is one of four female scientists in the division whose research is having an impact globally.

Assistant Professor **Krystal Pollitt**, Ph.D., P.Eng., an expert in the use of mass spectrometry to identify exposure levels to environmental pollutants, discovered that long-term leaching from chemically treated wood used in the construction of some Massachusetts playgrounds led to contamination rates in surrounding soil that were five to 10 times those of acceptable levels. Pollitt has also developed a wristband pollutant sampler to measure personal exposure to airborne contaminants. She has used this wristband to explore indoor household smoke in rural India and whether it contributes to breathing problems for women and children.

Another expert in mass spectrometry, Assistant Professor **Caroline Johnson**, M.Sc., Ph.D., is using the technology to investigate metabolites through untargeted metabolomics and understanding how people's bodies respond to environmental pollutants. Johnson is studying the relationship between genetic predisposition and environment in colon cancer and the impact of certain chemical exposures on pregnancy.

When it comes to global impact, Associate Professor **Yawei Zhang**, M.D., M.P.H. '03, Ph.D. '04, is an internationally recognized expert in cancer prevention and prognosis who has conducted pioneering research into the causes of thyroid cancer. Zhang's extensive work in the United States and China focuses on how environmental and lifestyle factors and gene-environment interactions play a role in various cancers and pregnancy outcomes.

Colin Poitras

Learn more about the many contributions of women scientists in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences by visiting the department's website at publichealth.yale.edu/ehs/



YING CHEN, M.D., PH.D.



GEORGIA CHARKOFTAKI, M.SC., PH.D.



JANNEANE GENT, M.S., PH.D.



NICOLE DEZIEL, M.H.S., PH.D.



CAROLINE JOHNSON, M.SC., PH.D.



NICOLE KLEINSTREUER, PH.D.



KRYSTAL POLLITT, PH.D., P.ENG.



ELIZABETE WEIDERPASS, M.D., M.SC., PH.D.



CATHERINE YECKEL, M.S., PH.D.



Yawei ZHANG, M.D., M.P.H., PH.D.



MALARIA, RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS AND HPV

Women in the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases

Disease-carrying tsetse flies have tormented large swaths of rural Africa for generations, posing a constant threat of potentially deadly African sleeping sickness with a single bite.

But a small team of global researchers, including Yale School of Public Health Professor **Serap Aksoy**, Ph.D., is closing in on innovative new approaches to stop the spread of the disease. Aksoy has unraveled key secrets behind the complex biology that allows deadly trypanosome parasites (the originators of sleeping sickness) to flourish in tsetse flies' bellies. Armed with that knowledge, her lab is pursuing new strategies to control the disease, such as introducing other bacteria into a fly's gut to stymie trypanosome's ability to thrive there and developing vaccines against trypanosomes that are transmitted in the saliva of the tsetse fly.

While Aksoy is taking a biological approach to targeting parasites in the tsetse fly, Assistant Professor **Amy Bei**, Ph.D., is using biochemistry and genetics to develop better malaria vaccines. Working with colleagues in Senegal and elsewhere in Africa, Bei is investigating how a decline in malaria in those regions is affecting people's immunity to the disease and what steps may be necessary to monitor the disease's ever-changing dynamics.

Associate Professor **Virginia Pitzer**, Sc.D., also works with vaccines. She recently completed a cost-effective analysis of different vaccination strategies for 54 countries with varying burdens of typhoid fever. Her findings are helping countries decide whether to introduce a new typhoid conjugate vaccine to control the disease.

Alison Galvani, Ph.D., an expert in infectious disease modeling and analysis and the Burnett and Stender Families Professor of Epidemiology, recently led a study

that showed a Zika vaccine, if created, could have a substantial effect on mitigating and preventing future virus outbreaks. She has also spearheaded modeling work for Ebola vaccine strategies.

The Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases is known for its robust international presence, which has been strengthened by the work of Professor **Melinda Pettigrew**, Ph.D. '99, senior associate dean of academic affairs. Pettigrew's research on antibiotic resistance has attracted global attention. She is currently investigating relationships between the microbiome, antibiotics and risk of hospital-acquired infections.

Debbie Humphries, Ph.D., M.P.H., an instructor of public health practice, focuses on community health and the intersection of nutrition and infectious disease. She has collaborated on research and capacity building projects in Asia, Africa and the United States.

Closer to home, research by Professor **Linda Niccolai**, M.S., Ph.D., into the impact of the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine has demonstrated substantial declines in cervical precancers in Connecticut women.

Colin Poitras

Learn more about the many contributions of women scientists in the Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases by visiting the department's website at publichealth.yale.edu/emd/



AMY BEI, PH.D.



SERAP AKSOY, PH.D.



LAURETTA GRAU, PH.D.



ALISON GALVANI, PH.D.



DEBBIE HUMPHRIES, PH.D., M.P.H.



LINDA NICCOLAI, M.S., PH.D.



AGATHE NKOUAWA, PH.D.



MELINDA PETTIGREW, PH.D.



VIRGINIA PITZER, SC.D.



NANCY RUDDLE, PH.D.



VAPING, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Women in the Department of Health Policy and Management

Yale School of Public Health Assistant Professor **Shelley Geballe**, J.D. '76, M.P.H. '95, is a familiar presence at Connecticut's state capitol. An attorney and longtime advocate for children's rights, Geballe is a vocal leader for improving state policies for children, whether they be in foster care, stuck in poverty or struggling in school.

A former president of Connecticut Voices for Children, an advocacy organization, and an editor of "Forgotten Children of the AIDS Epidemic," Geballe exemplifies the dedication and drive for improving care that defines the Department of Health Policy and Management.

Adding to the depth and breadth of the department is Professor **Jody Sindelar**, M.A., Ph.D., an expert on economic and policy issues of health behaviors. Specifically, she has published on smoking, illicit drugs and alcohol in numerous scientific journals. Sindelar holds appointments in prominent economics research organizations and has had sabbaticals at universities around the world.

Assistant Professor **Abigail Friedman**, Ph.D., studies the effects of federal, state and local policies on tobacco use and disparities therein, with a particular focus on adolescents and young adults. A member of the Yale Tobacco Center of Regulatory Science, Friedman is a national leader in examining how policymakers are responding to the growing use of electronic cigarettes and an advocate for introducing more evidence-based policy into this domain.

Part of the department's mission is to provide national and international leadership and guidance in health care delivery. Professors **Susan Busch**, Ph.D. (past department chair) and **Leslie Curry**, M.P.H., Ph.D., are leaders in this area. Busch's research focuses on the effects of policy on health care quality and cost. She recently found that states that mandate notification of the possible benefits of

additional screening for women with dense breasts modestly boosted cancer detection rates. Curry studies ways to implement innovative, evidence-based practices at multiple levels within health systems. She is working with Project Last Mile in Tanzania, South Africa, Mozambique and Nigeria to evaluate the use of beverage company logistics, supply chains and marketing expertise to improve health care delivery across Africa.

As president and chief executive officer of Yale-New Haven Health and Yale New Haven Hospital, **Marna Borgstrom**, M.P.H. '79, is using the latest data-driven technologies to deliver quality, patient-centered health care along with innovative academic research.

Borgstrom, a lecturer in health policy, is an accomplished and award-winning health care executive who provides students with real-world insight and perspective on health care policy and management, in addition to hosting numerous YSPH students for summer internships. Under her leadership, Yale-New Haven Hospital has risen to become one of the top 20 hospitals in the United States.

She also chairs the boards of the Healthcare Institute and the Coalition to Protect America's Healthcare and serves on the boards of the Connecticut Hospital Association and New Haven Promise. She is a past recipient of the AHA Grassroots Champion Award, the Anti-Defamation League Torch of Liberty Award and the Connecticut Women in Leadership Award.

Colin Poitras

Learn more about the many contributions of women scientists in the Department of Health Policy and Management by visiting the department's website at publichealth.yale.edu/hpm/

N.17



Q.8

MARNA BORGSTROM, M.P.H.

V.3



SUSAN BUSCH, PH.D.



MAUREEN CANAVAN, M.P.H., PH.D.

Z.10

LESLIE CURRY, M.P.H., PH.D.



AMY DAVIDOFF, M.S., PH.D.



ABIGAIL FRIEDMAN, PH.D.



SHELLEY GEBALLE, J.D., M.P.H.



LINGRUI LIU, M.S., SC.D.



FAUZIA AMAN MALIK, M.SC., PH.D.



C.6

JODY L. SINDELAR, M.A., PH.D.



JAMIE TAM, M.P.H., PH.D.



H.2

V.1

A.20



AGEISM, STIGMA AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Women in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences

By 2035, older people are expected to outnumber children for the first time in U.S. history. In the Yale School of Public Health's Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, several top women researchers are addressing the public health challenges presented by the aging of the baby-boom generation.

One of those challenges is ageism—a widespread form of prejudice directed at older people. In a recent study, Professor **Becca Levy**, Ph.D., calculated ageism's impact on health care costs in the United States to be \$63 billion annually. The study found that ageism and the related stress it causes individuals were responsible for more than 17 million cases of the eight most expensive health conditions (among them cardiovascular disease, mental disorders and chronic respiratory disease) experienced by those 60 and older.

In an aging society, caregivers play an important role. To that end, Associate Professor **Joan Monin**, M.S., Ph.D., is studying how certain kinds of emotional support may reduce stress and protect the health of parents with early stage Alzheimer's disease and their adult children caregivers.

Health equity, social justice and human rights define the core of the department's mission and all three are evident in the work of Assistant Professor **Alice Miller**, J.D., who is also an associate professor adjunct at Yale Law School and co-director of Yale's Global Health Justice Partnership. Miller is an expert on gender, sexuality, health and international human rights.

Assistant Professor **Danya Keene**, Ph.D., investigates how social policies contribute to health inequality, with a particular focus on issues related to housing and place.

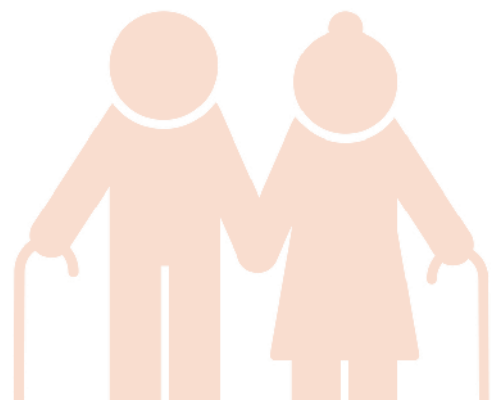
Her current research focuses on the health implications of the affordable rental housing crisis as well as social stigma and its relationship to geographic and social inequality.

Stigma is also the focus of work being done by Assistant Professor **Katie Wang**, Ph.D. '14. Wang is exploring how mental health stigma may increase the risk for substance abuse among adults with depression. While mental health stigma is seen as a major barrier to treatment and recovery for this population, its role as a possible risk factor for substance abuse remains underexamined.

Associate Professor **Marney White**, Ph.D., M.S. '09, a clinical psychologist, specializes in eating and weight disorders. Her recent research focuses on improving student mental health on college campuses.

Colin Poitras

Learn more about the many contributions of women scientists in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences by visiting the department's website at publichealth.yale.edu/sbs/



MARIE BRAULT, PH.D.



GABRIELA BUCCINI, M.P.H., PH.D.



SHAYNA CUNNINGHAM, M.H.S., PH.D.



KATHLEEN DUFFANY, M.ED., PH.D.



ASHLEY HAGAMAN, M.P.H., PH.D.



AMBER HROMI-FIEDLER, M.P.H., PH.D.



DANYA KEENE, PH.D.



BECCA LEVY, PH.D.



SARAH LOWE, M.A., PH.D.



ALICE MILLER, J.D.



JOAN MONIN, M.S., PH.D.



KATIE WANG, PH.D.



MARNEY WHITE, PH.D., M.S.



YSPH OVER THE YEARS:

(IN NUMBERS)



1984-85
63%

WOMEN M.P.H. STUDENTS
ATTENDING YSPH



2006-07
51.7%

WOMEN LADDER TRACK FACULTY



2010

EQUAL NUMBER OF MALE FACULTY
VS. FEMALE FACULTY MEMBERS



2019-20

41 NUMBER OF WOMEN
LADDER TRACK FACULTY



2019-20

392 TOTAL NUMBER OF
WOMEN STUDENTS
AT YSPH (541 TOTAL)



THE SCHOOL'S FIRST DEAN OF RESEARCH

An interview with Melinda Irwin

Scientist. Leader. Mentor. Melinda Irwin, Ph.D., M.P.H., brings years of academic experience and a robust set of skills into her new role as the Yale School of Public Health's first associate dean for research. She is a tenured professor of chronic disease epidemiology, an associate director at the Yale Cancer Center, co-leader of Yale's Cancer Prevention and Control Research Program and deputy director of public health at the Yale Center for Clinical Investigation.

Irwin's research into the effect of obesity, weight loss, exercise and diet on cancer outcomes and quality of life for women diagnosed with breast cancer has appeared in some of the world's top research journals.

As associate dean for research, Irwin recently shared her vision for the Yale School of Public Health and, for this issue of the YSPH magazine, some perspective on the nexus of women, research and public health.

What are your foremost priorities as the new associate dean for research?

MI: My immediate priority is to strengthen the school's research infrastructure. Faculty should be able to spend more time focusing on science and less time on administrative issues. My second priority is to facilitate collaborations across Yale and through multi-investigator grant submissions, with a goal being more impactful research that changes practice and policy and improves public health. A third priority involves working with the offices of development and communications to increase the external visibility and dissemination of YSPH research.

What do you see as the Yale School of Public Health's current research strengths, and what do you envision needs to be done to enhance the school's research efforts?

MI: YSPH has exceptional faculty conducting high-impact public health research. Yale also has other top-rated schools of medicine, nursing, law and management, as well as NIH-funded research centers where many YSPH faculty collaborate with other Yale faculty on translational research. With our highly ranked schools and centers, we have an opportunity to be a thought leader for stakeholders interested in the overlap with law, medicine, policy and management.

We also have incredible opportunities to partner more with the New Haven community and other local institutions to make a huge public health impact locally, with evidence-based strategies disseminated across the state, country and globally. I envision YSPH being a world leader in public health research that shapes practice and policy and improves the health of the public.

You have had a distinguished career as an educator, mentor, leader and researcher. What led you to pursue a career in public health? What led to your focus on cancer research and physical health? And lastly, what drives you to do all that you do? It certainly is a full plate!

MI: When I was young, I wanted to go into orthopedics or sports medicine, primarily because of my involvement in competitive sports. Much of the sports medicine research being conducted in the early 1990s was focused on improving performance. But I was interested in how being physically active could prevent disease and promote health. My mother died of breast cancer when I was 18 years old, and there was very limited research focused on modifiable lifestyle behaviors and cancer prevention. I came to Yale in 2001 with a passion to conduct trials of exercise, diet and weight management in preventing and controlling cancer.

“ I LOOK FORWARD TO THE DAY, NOT FAR OFF, WHEN, WITHOUT REFLECTION, AN AGENDA OR EVENT IS FILLED WITH WOMEN SPEAKERS AND ORGANIZERS BECAUSE OF THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF THE AMAZING WORK AND LEADERSHIP BEING CONDUCTED BY WOMEN.”

~Melinda Irwin



Melinda Irwin

I have been very fortunate to be continuously funded since 2003, with my research findings impacting clinical care.

This year, Yale is celebrating the 50th anniversary of coeducation in Yale College and the 150th anniversary of women students at the university. How do you see public health research addressing the needs of women?

MI: Women experience unique public health issues, such as breast and cervical cancer and sexual/reproductive/maternal health. And then there is violence against women and unique mental health issues. Incredible public health research addressing the needs of women is being conducted at Yale.

There are numerous Yale School of Public Health faculty as well as faculty from other Yale departments and centers examining issues related to maternal-child health, cardiovascular disease in women, gynecologic and breast cancers, and infectious disease research such as HPV vaccination. These findings and others will impact the lives of women today and the future generations of girls and women.

Your research in particular strives to improve women's health. One project that comes to mind is the Lifestyle, Exercise and Nutrition (LEAN) study involving women with breast cancer. Can you tell us more about the study and its long-term goals?

MI: In the last two decades, considerable progress has been made in combating cancer. Cancer mortality rates have declined 27 percent from a peak in the mid-1990s. However, as cancer mortality has declined, obesity in the United States and globally has increased. Evidence continues to accumulate suggesting obesity plays a key role in both the risk of developing and dying of cancer.

In the LEAN study, we examined the effect of weight loss, via changes in diet and physical activity, on numerous health outcomes in women diagnosed with breast cancer. Our six-month LEAN intervention led to clinically

meaningful average weight losses of 6 percent and a 30 percent reduction in C-reactive protein which is a marker of chronic inflammation. Our intervention has also led to numerous other favorable metabolic and inflammatory marker changes associated with cancer.

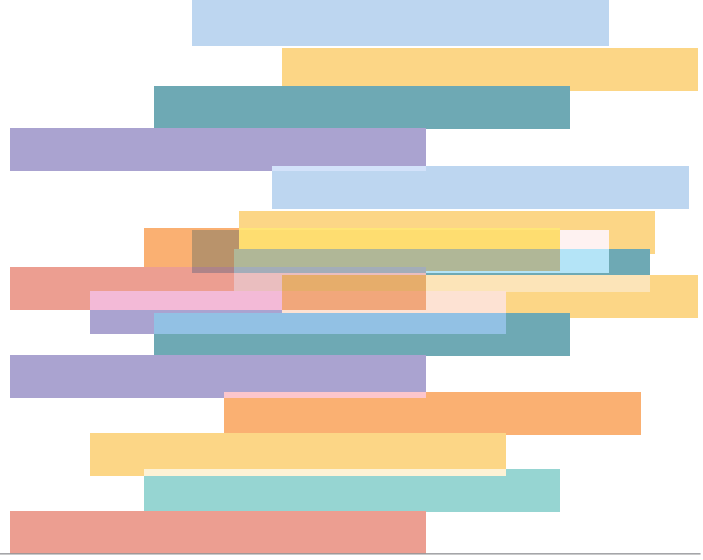
These findings have led us to embark on a new randomized controlled trial implementing the LEAN intervention during chemotherapy for breast cancer. We are examining whether our LEAN intervention reduces chemotherapy side effects and increases adherence to chemotherapy. We hope that our findings will cause a paradigm shift in how cancer care is delivered, including increased access to and reimbursement of weight management counseling and programs.

Women have a proud history of innovation and transformative research in public health. From your perspective, how has the field of public health changed over the years and where do you see it headed in terms of roles for women or accomplishments by women?

MI: While there are more women today in leadership positions (in public health, medicine, higher education) than prior years, there is still much room for improvement. Today, more women than men are graduating from schools of public health and medicine. This in turn will create a positive change in leadership positions held by women.

However, still today, too often, in the boardroom, when organizing local and national meetings or events, we hear “We need to make sure there is a woman presenting or included on the committee.” While these suggestions are well intended, I look forward to the day, not far off, when, without reflection, an agenda or event is filled with women speakers and organizers because of the depth and breadth of the amazing work and leadership being conducted by women. YPH

Colin Poitras



DEDICATED TO HEALTH

In their own words, women faculty, staff, alumnae and students discuss their passion for public health and their visions for the future.



SUSAN NAPPI, M.P.H. '01

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF
PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE

Why is public health important to you, and how has it enriched your professional life? What about public health inspires you the most?

For me, pursuing public health has been a personal as well as a professional journey. While it wouldn't be until I began graduate studies at YSPH that I would understand the concept of "social determinants of health," the experience of economic disparities and food insecurity was real to me and those around me. The ecological model of health, which framed wellness as being in relationship to place, social conditions and forces beyond the individual, complemented my passion for social justice. Pursuing a career in public health allowed me the opportunity to address the root causes of health disparities.

Through this lens, I was given both a framework and a toolbox for quantifying and addressing inequity. My core value, that each of us on this planet has infinite worth, mirrors the World Health Organization's amendment defining health as a "fundamental right of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition."

I am inspired by those who use their power and privilege to give voice to the oppressed and marginalized.



“PURSUING A CAREER IN PUBLIC HEALTH ALLOWED ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF HEALTH DISPARITIES.”

~Susan Nappi

Susan Nappi is a practitioner of the martial art of ki aikido which requires one to love and protect all creation. "In this way, aikido closely mirrors public health," she said.

LINDA S. SCHWARTZ, M.S.N. '84, DrPH '98

FORMER ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF US DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN AFFAIRS

SPECIAL ADVISER TO NATIONAL PRESIDENT, VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC.

What is the greatest barrier today for women who want to enter public health and other scientific fields? Did you face a barrier? How did you overcome it?

As a veteran, my focus is care for America's 20 million veterans and their families. When the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs became a Cabinet position [in 1989] for the first time in its 60-year history, there was finally accountability for the agency's questionable stewardship of caring for America's veterans.

On paper, the VA seemed entrenched and invincible. A closer examination exposed many bureaucratic vulnerabilities, gross inefficiencies and wholesale failure to provide for America's veterans. My appetite and inspiration to engage in this struggle came both from the veterans themselves and numerous injustices and disparities in care. There was skepticism about my capacity as a woman to "do battle" with the powers that be.



Rather than rely on the age-old practice of using guilt or patriotism, I earned acceptance and respect by using science, research, data and evidence-based policies to make my points for change. Speaking truth to power requires more than rhetoric; the power comes from cold, hard facts.

This journey has been a series of engagements, victories, setbacks (never defeats), regrouping and renewing of efforts. There are life-and-death struggles on small and large scales with lives suspended in the balance. There is no more energizing or worthy cause.

STUDENT

BETHELEHEM TESHOME

M.P.H. '20 CANDIDATE

“ENGAGING IN RESPONSIBLE PUBLIC HEALTH WORK INVOLVES REFLECTION ON THE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES THAT CREATE AND REINFORCE POWER IMBALANCES...”

~Bethelehem Teshome

What are your professional goals in public health and why? Do you think that anything is possible today for women entering the field?

Growing up in a first-generation American household, I often found myself navigating the health care system for my parents. This meant experiencing obstacles at each corner: finding providers who accept their insurance, scheduling appointments, making sense of what was going on with their health.

Understanding that these barriers are rooted in greater structures defined my professional goals within public health: to work toward eliminating these structural barriers that perpetuate disparities among minority populations and to make health equity a reality. Part of what makes public health such a fulfilling and continually engaging area of work is that there are ample ways to do just that. From working with a non-profit trying to mitigate food insecurity to learning and applying qualitative research methods to gauge attitudes regarding a curriculum that equips students with the skills to act as advocates, I've been fortunate to engage in meaningful learning experiences while at YSPH.

Engaging in responsible public health work involves reflection on the systems and structures that create and reinforce power imbalances, including those within the field itself. While women (especially those of color) continually make important contributions in public health, the field reflects how society operates more generally in that it remains gendered, hierarchical and racist.



TANYA YAJNIK

M.P.H. '20 CANDIDATE

What are your professional goals in public health and why? Do you think that anything is possible today for women entering the field?

I am passionate about health innovation and specifically how public health entrepreneurship can help address the mental health crisis happening in the United States. I am inspired by the interdisciplinary nature of public health, and how this field allows for the possibility of improving mental health by working at the junction of social and behavioral science, entrepreneurship and the arts.

Toward this, I am developing an algorithm-based app that connects university students to curated mental health resources on campus. The app includes music resources, which may help with anxiety and depression. Public health has enriched my professional life by allowing me to combine my passions for health and music while exploring creative and innovative solutions to complex problems.

The public health community, especially here at Yale, is continuously working to create a space of belonging and collaboration in which women can receive support and mentorship. The more we



continue to create opportunities for women to take leadership roles in public health, the more women can provide their unique perspectives and insight. I currently serve as the chief executive officer for my mental health app venture and have found the support and

mentorship that I needed to serve in this role through the YSPH community.

I hope to continue to learn from and to support other women in the field, so that we can contribute meaningfully to the future of public health.

SAIMA IQBAL, M.P.H. '95

SENIOR PROGRAMME OFFICER, CENTER
FOR DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

What is the greatest barrier today for women who want to enter public health and other scientific fields? Did you face a barrier? How did you overcome it?

There is not a “single” barrier to women entering public health. Rather, multiple structural and socio-cultural factors are undermining women’s growth in public health.

Women account for a majority of the health care and delivery workforce and have direct input in health outcomes. Yet, they are segregated to a lower status and lower paying jobs. Their work often goes unacknowledged. Men hold key leadership positions in the industry. Just look at global health institutions and key government positions.

If we are to achieve better health outcomes, we must do better in addressing these gender disparities by providing: more formal training/ educational opportunities for women to enter the health workforce; equal pay for equal work (pay gap is higher in the health sector than others); and workplace discrimination policies that support a decent and positive work environment for women.

I entered the field of global health and development almost 25 years ago. I have watched it expand to include sectors that directly and indirectly impact the health and well-being of individuals. The female frontline health workers who work diligently and with limited resources to improve health and social outcomes for their communities, be it in India, Brazil or elsewhere, inspire me.

For me, public health is the only field that meets at the intersection of politics,

economics, gender, race, religion, age and social justice. These categorically affect women more than men, both as recipients and providers of health and social care.

As practitioners of public health, the path toward “Health for All” involves us challenging and changing the status quo.



CATHERINE YECKEL, M.S., PH.D.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF
CLINICAL HEALTH, DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES

How is the field of public health changing in terms of opportunity for women? Do women today have access to all facets of the field?

Women health experts are at the forefront of a new health landscape that stems from a rich history of inclusion for women in all facets of public health. It is an exciting landscape that provides opportunity to translate public health research, guidelines and basic health information for diverse audiences. This landscape allows public health interactions to occur in virtual spaces.

Such virtual spaces are exploding with health blogs, podcasts and webinars that regularly attract many thousands of followers. Podcast hosts tackle public health issues surrounding healthy lifestyle choices, diet/nutrition, physical activity, exercise strategies and much more. These hosts are seeking out health topic experts, who can distill complex modern health information for their written pieces and podcast audiences. Women health experts are taking on these new opportunities in great numbers.

I personally never really thought about the potential impact of these virtual spaces until recently. I have been contacted to participate on panels with athletes and/or sports nutritionists



and to provide science content for blog posts. This helps audiences better understand the overlay of diet and exercise practices in their lives and is an exciting and rewarding activity. Blogs and podcasts provide the opportunity to craft accurate and accessible health messages for lay audiences. As I see it, this landscape is an increasingly important resource if we are to make public health fully accessible to all. There are a growing number of women-specific topics and audiences, and hosts want to invite women health experts to participate as their guests.

In this virtual landscape, women in public health now have the distinct opportunity—and challenge—to help readers and listeners balance research-based findings with health strategies for daily living.

“BLOGS AND PODCASTS PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CRAFT ACCURATE AND ACCESSIBLE HEALTH MESSAGES FOR LAY AUDIENCES.”

~Catherine Yeckel

TANYA DAVIS

SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Why is public health important to you and how has it enriched your professional life? What about public health inspires you the most?

Prior to transferring to YSPH from human resources seven years ago, I didn't give much thought about public health or the depth of its importance. It did not take long for the switch to happen.

My public health boot camp started at the Global Health Leadership Institute (GHLI), where I witnessed both domestic and international public health matters and initiatives. I felt like GHLI was out to "save the world"—one city, state, *woreda* and country at a time. I have since realized how impactful public health is to our global existence. Now working in Faculty and Staff Affairs, "saving the world" seems to be the inclusive goal of public health. Whether it's sustainability, newborn screenings, women's health or infectious diseases—I see that public health affects everyone. It is the first line of prevention and I am grateful for the individuals who research, educate and advocate for the betterment of our communities and our world through public health. Their passion and drive are inspirational.

My broader awareness of public health has enriched me professionally and gives my job added value of contributing to better health outcomes. Working closely with faculty and staff in their efforts to recruit others—new faculty, scientists and staff—to further enhance



the school provides a deeper meaning to the daily duties of my job.

Knowing that my efforts directly support the school's mission is a great feeling. It is important to me that what I do is meaningful, and public health's reach and impact within the community and beyond has been the ideal fit. I hope to continue to support YSPH in my current capacity as well as expand my efforts in the future.

BETH JONES, M.P.H. '86, PH.D. '93

RESEARCH SCIENTIST, LECTURER,
DEPARTMENT OF CHRONIC DISEASE
EPIDEMIOLOGY

How is the field of public health changing in terms of opportunity for women? Do women today have access to all facets of the field?

Perhaps unfairly, I have been known to say that “anyone can succeed in a place like xxxx* (**basically any institution you can name*) as long as they walk, talk, think and dress just like a straight white man.”

Yet public health has always been an exception. Public health in general, and here at Yale where I have spent most of my adult life, is that place in which women—as well as people of color, people with accents, people who are from other countries and continents, people with disabilities, people who are whoever they are when it comes to gender and their sexual identity, and yes, many men—study, work, build community, collaborate, share meals, talk science and literature, argue and show their humanity.

Public health is not a monolithic institution of do-gooder scientists and practitioners. With its diversity in people



and perspective, and its eye on the big picture, it is a place that seems to be on the leading edge in sniffing out what is about to go wrong, what is unjust and where we can do better.

I believe that women, with their uncanny ability to see around corners,

have played a critical role in shaping this identity. While the opportunities are boundless, the challenge is in defining our own measures of success and making sure that our work is appropriately rewarded.



VISIONS OF BETTER HEALTH

BY COLIN POITRAS

A dozen YSPH students create original short videos highlighting pressing public health problems – and possible solutions.

Yale School of Public Health students showed off their artistic side during National Public Health Week this year, creating a dozen short videos highlighting important public health messages as part of a schoolwide contest.

Dubbed “The Winnies” after YSPH founder C.-E.A. Winslow, the inaugural Roger Barnett Public Health Video Challenge offered a \$2,500 top prize.

The challenge was meant to show YSPH students alternative ways of getting important health messages to the public beyond published research in scientific journals. It was made possible by a generous donation from Barnett, an alumnus of Yale College and the Yale Law School.

Winners were announced in a special ceremony in Winslow Auditorium, which was transformed into an Oscars-like setting, complete with a plush red carpet, glittering selfie station, catered food and popcorn.

“Last year, I shared with Roger my goal of having students learn how powerful communications and media can be in promoting good public health practice,” said Yale School of Public Health Dean Sten H. Vermund, M.D., Ph.D., who served as the master of ceremonies. “In response, he offered funding for this competition in hopes that these videos will help raise awareness of the incredible work by our students and faculty here at YSPH.”

Entries were evaluated on originality, the way science was presented, how well the chosen topic was explained, how well the video engaged viewers and overall production quality.

The panel of judges comprised television producer and pediatrician Dr. Neal Baer (“ER,” “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit”); four alumni: Emmy-nominated ABC television producer and YSPH alumna Susan Schwartz, M.P.H. ’80; health communications video producer Linda Bergonzi-King, M.P.H. ’90; YSPH lecturer Jonathan Smith, M.P.H. ’11; and Scott Rosenstein, M.P.H. ’04, M.A. ’04; and several YSPH faculty and staff.

The top prize went to Saskia Comess, M.P.H. ’19, for her video “What About the Air We Breathe?” highlighting the global public health threat presented by fine particulate matter in toxic air. Comess took an edgy “Bill Nye the Science Guy” approach to her video that was both informative and entertaining.

“I’m very happy to have won,” Comess, an environmental health sciences student, said later as she cradled her award—a book-sized wire sculpture of a movie camera—that served as the official Winnie. “It was really fun putting the video together. ... I’m just really happy to make people laugh and to have it be educational about a subject that is so important to public health.”

This year’s top winner was announced via video by actress Sara Gilbert, a two-time Emmy Award nominee known for her role as Darlene Conner on the ABC sitcom “Roseanne” and as co-host of the CBS daytime talk show “The Talk.” She also had a recurring role as Leslie Winkle on CBS’s “The Big Bang Theory.”

“ I’M JUST REALLY HAPPY TO MAKE PEOPLE LAUGH AND TO HAVE IT BE EDUCATIONAL ABOUT A SUBJECT THAT IS SO IMPORTANT TO PUBLIC HEALTH.”

~Saskia Comess



Yale SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The Winnies

AWARDS CEREMONY AND SCREENING FOR ROGER BARNETT PUBLIC HEALTH VIDEO CHALLENGE

Short Films/Big Prizes

View 12 short public health videos created by YSPH students

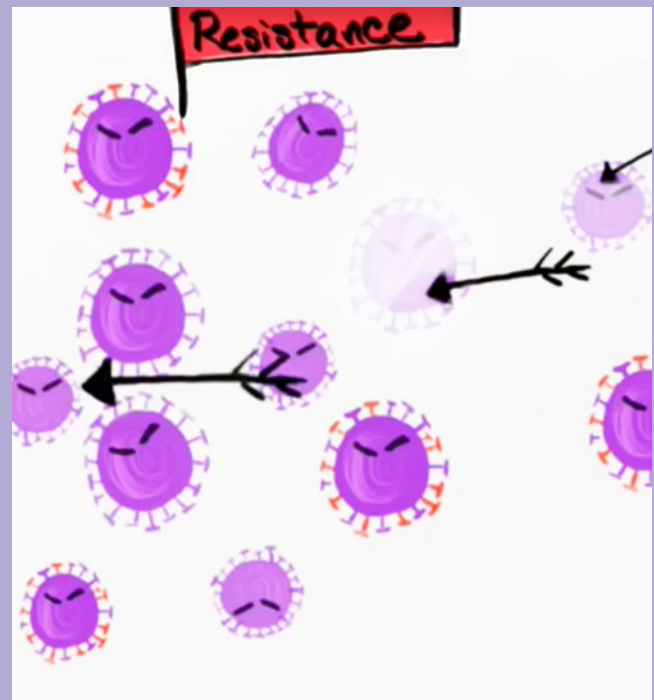
See the top winners!

April 2, 2019

NOON → WINSLOW AUDITORIUM
LUNCH PROVIDED → ALL ARE WELCOME

Participants: Chelsea Brett, Kelsie Cassell & Victoria Harries, Grace Castillo, Saskia Comess, Natalee Desotell, Sacha Hauc, Hannah Ingber, Akshatha Kiran, Leonardo Lizbinski, Emmy Pieper, Nkandu Yumbe, Kevin Zheng

SAVE YOUR SEAT → <https://bit.ly/2TgCeEk>



Clockwise from top left: Saskia Comess' winning video, "What About the Air We Breathe?"; The Winnies poster; A scene from the second-place animated video on antimicrobial resistance; Sacha Hauc's video on suicide placed third.

“Congratulations to the Yale School of Public Health students for bringing attention to these important public health topics with your videos,” Gilbert said in a pre-recorded presentation from the set of “The Talk.” “I admire your passion in pursuing such an important career path to ensure public health equity in the world.”

The \$1,500 second-place prize went to Kelsie Cassell, Ph.D. '22, Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, and Victoria Harries, Ph.D. '24, Department of Anthropology, who teamed up to produce an animated short about antimicrobial resistance. Cassell and Harries said that they used animation to make the science easier to understand.

While it was a first-time effort for both, Cassell said she could see the value in using a video format to present difficult science information to the public. “I think it has great potential,” she said.


“CONGRATULATIONS TO THE YALE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH STUDENTS FOR BRINGING ATTENTION TO THESE IMPORTANT PUBLIC HEALTH TOPICS WITH YOUR VIDEOS.”

~Sara Gilbert, actress, talk show host

Harries and Cassell said they felt lucky to be among the prize winners given the strength and creativity of all of the videos entered in the contest. The second-place prize was announced by Baer via a video message.

Sacha Hauc, M.P.H. '20, took the \$500 third-place prize for his video focusing on mental health and suicide awareness. A stark, black-and-white short stressing the importance of breathing to maintain emotional balance, the video featured close-ups of individuals taking a slow, deep breath interspersed with key statistics and important mental health messages.

“I wanted to show that mental health is something everyone experiences to some degree and it shouldn't be stigmatized,” said Hauc, a student in the Department of Health Policy and Management.

The fourth-place \$250 award went to Akshatha Kiran, M.P.H. '20, who produced a video on cultural competency after reading an assignment on the subject in a social sciences class. Kiran, a student in the Department of Health Policy and Management, said she was eager to feature an important aspect of public health care that doesn't get as much attention as disease research or other subjects in the field. 

FOCUS

THE MUSE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Students discuss their inspiration, motivation.

Student contestants in the 2019 Roger Barnett Public Health Video Challenge – a.k.a. the Winnies – focused on an array of public health challenges, including viruses, dental care, air pollution and mental health, among many others. These brief videos introduce public health issues in a way that can be readily grasped by a general audience and, importantly, why each of those issues matter to health outcomes in the United States and around the world. YSPH students are passionate about public health, and their videos provide a glimpse into the commitment and the work they will pursue upon graduation. Here are some of the participants discussing their inspirations. Responses have been edited for length.

Chelsea Brett, M.P.H. '20; Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Title: “How Many Items Do You Touch in a Day?”

CB: It is easy to forget that viruses can be preventable with simple acts like hand washing. The goal of this 30-second PSA is to remind us of how easily germs are transmitted and what we can do to prevent common (and avoidable!) illnesses from spreading.

Kelsie Cassell, Ph.D. '22, Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases; Victoria Harries, Ph.D. '24, Department of Anthropology at Yale

Title: “Join the Resistance Against Antibiotic Resistance”

KC, VH: We chose antimicrobial resistance (AMR) because it's a top issue in public health and also one that's greatly misunderstood by the general public. We aimed to make a cartoon that was very informative and covered some of the main misconceptions regarding AMR.

Grace Castillo, M.P.H. '19; Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology

Title: “Promoting Children's Dental Health”

GC: Dental care is still seen as a luxury in many parts of the United States. Although dental health is just as

important as cardiovascular health, we separate dental care from other parts of the health care system. There are many easy, cost-effective ways to reduce rates of dental decay.

Saskia Comess, M.P.H. '19; Department of Environmental Health Sciences

Title: "What About the Air We Breathe?"

SC: The World Health Organization has recently been focusing on air pollution as one of the greatest global environmental health threats. Preventing pollution and cleaning up the air we breathe could significantly reduce morbidity and mortality related to this environmental exposure. I was motivated to make this video because this is such a critical human and environmental health issue.

Natalee Desotell, M.P.H. '19; Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases

Title: "The Foe of Faux Science"

ND: I selected this topic after becoming frustrated with the menu at The Juice Box in New Haven, which boasts "alkaline water" and "activated charcoal" as ingredients in its juices. I love the place, but come on. These are fad ingredients that simply sound fancy and may make a drink look a pretty pitch black, but how useful are they really?

Sacha Hauc, M.P.H. '20; Department of Health Policy and Management

Title: "Breathe"

SH: Mental health is something that relates to us all, and it often goes unseen and unheard. I felt that it was important to show that the faces of mental health issues are the same as our own.

Hannah Ingber, M.P.H. '19; Department of Health Policy and Management

Title: "Adverse Childhood Experiences"

HI: Before coming to Yale, I worked as a paralegal in NYC Family Court systems and as a research assistant in a clinic that served victims of sexual violence. From my experiences there, I learned that if we want to truly assist patients with behavior change, then we need to think more about the benefits that so-called harmful behaviors can have. The lens of Adverse Childhood Experiences can help us get there.

Akshatha Kiran, M.P.H. '20; Department of Health Policy and Management

Title: "Cultural Competence in Healthcare"

AK: When working alongside underserved communities to increase access to and usage of health care services, I found that cultural barriers often prevented eligible individuals from accessing care that was rightfully theirs. Both locally and abroad, I observed certain providers meet patients halfway, helping educate and offer care in a manner that was respectful and welcoming.

Leonardo Lizbinski, M.P.H. '20; Health Care Management Program

Title: "Drug Overdoses Are a Major Threat"

LL: Drug overdose is a pressing public health challenge that occurs all across the United States. In August 2018, over 70 people were hospitalized for drug overdose on the New Haven Green, near Yale University. Consequences of drug overdose are devastating, with severe symptoms ranging from nausea to hallucinations. Collaboration and community fostering are important measures to build upon while spreading awareness on this pressing public health problem.

Emmy Pieper, M.P.H. '19; Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences

Title: "Saving Wasted Food"

EP: I decided to create a short film about reducing food waste because of the broad public health implications. A massive amount of food is lost along the food chain system, yet hunger and food insecurity are still prevalent global health issues. Food waste is harmful to the environment, is a waste of resources and energy, and is extremely costly. More importantly, food waste is avoidable.

Nkandu Yumbe, M.P.H. '20; Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology

Title: "Intimate Partner Violence"

NY: Understanding the relationship between IPV and chronic diseases can inform interventions and give survivors the quality of life they deserve. This topic is particularly important because of the widespread nature of violence against women.

To view all of the videos, visit
publichealth.yale.edu/about/gateways/students/barnett/

Michael Greenwood

ALUMNA NAMED TOP HEALTH OFFICIAL IN BHUTAN

BY COLIN POITRAS

Dechen Wangmo credits YSPH education as “instrumental.”

Dechen Wangmo has been known to go to great lengths – and heights – to carry out her duties in public health, at one point hiking for several days to reach remote areas in her homeland of Bhutan, some of which were at altitudes as high as 12,500 feet (double the elevation of New Hampshire’s Mount Washington).

After Wangmo devoted a decade working as a public health consultant for eight countries in Southeast Asia, her knowledge and hard work have helped her reach another pinnacle, this one in her professional career.

Wangmo, M.P.H. ’07, was appointed Bhutan’s minister of health in December 2018 by newly elected Prime Minister Lotay Tshering.

A “sacred responsibility”

Wangmo is well versed in the public health needs of Bhutan, a landlocked Himalayan nation of about 800,000 people between China and India. She is the founder and former executive director of the Bhutan Cancer Society and founding chairperson of Lhak-Sam, a civil society organization dedicated to promoting leadership, education and capacity building for people living with HIV.

In 2009, Wangmo visited 250 primary and secondary schools throughout the mountainous country to collect data on water and sanitation facilities as part of a public health survey for Bhutan’s Ministry of Education and UNICEF. Wangmo also worked with Bhutan’s Queen Mother Sangay Choden Wangchuck in promoting a national HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and education campaign.



COURTESY OF DECHEN WANGMO

Dechen Wangmo is welcomed into her new position as Bhutan’s minister of health. She was appointed by Prime Minister Lotay Tshering.

“MY EDUCATION AT YALE HAS BEEN AN INSTRUMENTAL FACTOR IN WHAT I HAVE ACHIEVED OVER THE LAST DECADE.”

~Dechen Wangmo

“THE YALE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH IS PROUD TO BE A PARTNER IN HELPING IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR THE PEOPLE OF BHUTAN.”

~Sten Vermund

32.4 YEARS IN 1960

LIFE EXPECTANCY HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED IN BHUTAN TO 69.5 YEARS IN 2014

“As I take on this sacred responsibility to serve my country, I am humbled and touched by the confidence and trust placed on me by the party and the people of my constituency,” Wangmo said after her appointment.

She credited her time at the Yale School of Public Health with helping her gain valuable perspective. “My education at Yale has been an instrumental factor in what I have achieved over the last decade,” said Wangmo, who holds a Master in Public Health degree with a focus on global health. “During my time at Yale, I learned the art of thinking globally and acting locally, where the knowledge and wisdom of the faculty provided the lens to see commonality and yet appreciate the differences in approaches to delivering public health services.”

A new role

In her new role, Wangmo oversees a predominantly government-funded national health care system that has made significant gains over the past five decades. Bhutan had 194 doctors in 2012. It now has 345. Life expectancy in



Bhutan has more than doubled, from 32.4 years in 1960 to 69.5 years in 2014. Universal childhood immunization was realized in 1990, and immunization levels remain steady at more than 95 percent. Leprosy and iodine deficiency disorders have been eliminated, and significant progress has been made toward eliminating malaria.

Yet notable public health challenges remain.

One of the biggest concerns for Bhutan is an increase in noncommunicable or chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer and kidney disease and their cost to the nation's health care system.

“We hope to focus on prevention of noncommunicable diseases through targeted and comprehensive interventions,” Wangmo said.

In an interview with a Bhutanese newspaper after the her appointment, Wangmo said she would be seeking creative approaches to addressing the country's public health issues.

Experts from the Yale School of Public Health, led by Associate Professor Kaveh Khoshnood, M.P.H. '89, Ph.D. '95,



COURTESY OF DECHEN WANGMO



Left: Dechen Wangmo (fourth from right) and Bhutan's other top cabinet ministers attend a ceremony.
Above: A farm in the eastern mountains of Bhutan.

have been working closely with Bhutan officials to address the country's health concerns for several years. Since 2013, the school has collaborated with the Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan (KGUMSB) to support and promote health care education and research opportunities for both institutions. As part of that effort, Khoshnood, lecturer Mary Alice Lee, M.S.N., Ph.D., '95, and research librarian Kate Nyham last year presented workshops on best research practices in collaboration with KGUMSB, Bhutan's Ministry of Health and the Bhutan Foundation. Yale representatives also took part in a meeting on the efficacy of Bhutan's Nomad Health Camps designed to bring critical health care services to remote regions in the country.

"The Yale School of Public Health is proud to be a partner in helping improve health outcomes for the people of Bhutan," said Dean Sten H. Vermund, M.D., Ph.D. "We look forward to working with Honorable Minister Dechen Wangmo, a Yale M.P.H. alumna from 2007, to explore and implement innovative approaches to Bhutan's public health challenges."

In Bhutan, both allopathic, or Western, medicine and traditional herbal-based medical practices are delivered under the same public health system. While free public health care is guaranteed under the country's constitution, disparities in health care access and quality among rural and urban areas remain a concern.

To address the issue, Wangmo is seeking to upgrade existing hospitals and create a multidisciplinary specialty hospital that can make specialized health care more accessible to everyone. She is also interested in improving working conditions for health care workers.

Ultimately, Wangmo will be leading one of the country's most essential institutions. The guiding governing philosophy of Bhutan's Buddhist society—Gross National Happiness—clearly indicates the importance of physical and mental well-being.

"Five years from now, we look forward to a healthier and happier nation," Wangmo said in the Bhutanese press. "I'm confident that we will be able to achieve it as we already have a hardworking and good team." **YPH**

A HEALTHIER CONNECTICUT

Alumna tapped to lead state's health department.

Renée D. Coleman-Mitchell, M.P.H. '86, was chosen this year by Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont to lead the Connecticut Department of Public Health. She is the third alumna from the Yale School of Public Health to lead the statewide agency.

There has been little down time since taking the helm. Coleman-Mitchell said that new health issues and challenges are always emerging and that officials need to be flexible in order to respond quickly. Among the pressing issues facing the state right now are the opioid epidemic and environmental threats related to some 4,700 synthetic chemicals commonly known as PFAS, as well as vaccinations and measles.

"I've had to adjust, go with the change and then sit down and figure out how we are going to do this as a team with the folks in-house, work with the community, keep people informed, educate them and talk about prevention,"

Coleman-Mitchell said. Heather Aaron, M.P.H. '85, serves as deputy commissioner.

Prior to becoming commissioner, Coleman-Mitchell was executive director of Cougar Health Services at Washington State University. Earlier she worked at the Connecticut Department of Public Health, was a deputy health director in Hartford and headed a health clinic in Meriden. She is thrilled to be back with the state health department.

"[My] biggest challenge is being able to say that I did make a difference as a state public health official and improving the lives of Connecticut residents," she said.

“THERE IS AN EMERGING PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE, THREAT OR CONCERN AT ANY GIVEN MOMENT, AND YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO GO WITH THOSE TIDES.”

~Renée Coleman-Mitchell

Below: Renée Coleman-Mitchell (left) tours the Yale School of Public Health with Georgia Charkoftaki, associate research scientist. *Opposite:* Coleman-Mitchell at her office in Hartford.





“YEARS AGO, THERE WERE NOT AS MANY WOMEN IN THE FIELD AS THERE ARE NOW. ... I FEEL HONORED AND HUMBLLED TO BE SOMEONE IN THIS POSITION [WHO IS] FEMALE AND AFRICAN AMERICAN, TO SET AN EXAMPLE, TO BE A ROLE MODEL. ... IT JUST SAYS THAT YOU CAN DO THIS, TOO.”

~Renée Coleman-Mitchell

The Yale School of Public Health offers numerous services and ways to stay involved and informed to more than 6,300 alumni.



ALUMNI SERVICES

Lifelong email: *YaleMail* is a service for alumni on the G Suite for Education platform, offering free, fully functional, Yale-branded Gmail accounts.

YSPH career services: The YSPH Office of Career Management is committed to providing continued assistance to alumni of YSPH—for free! This includes CareerBoard, a web-based tool that allows alumni to view an array of public health job postings.

Yale Alumni Association: Avail yourself of myriad alumni benefits and services, including:

- ▶ *Yale Career Network*—a database of all Yale alumni who are interested in networking with fellow alumni and current students. This network will allow you to search and connect with fellow alumni to discuss career-based topics.
- ▶ *Yale Online Alumni Directory*—a searchable database of Yale alumni across the globe who have registered to be connected.
- ▶ *Access to JSTOR*—a digital archive with more than 1,000 academic journals, alumni rates for Payne Whitney Gym and borrowing privileges from Yale libraries. You can also access a list of Yale clubs.

Distance learning: Yale provides free online courses through Open Yale Courses, the university's free online education initiative. Over half a million visitors from 187 countries have immersed themselves in this extraordinary experience.

Podcasts by Yale: Yale's podcast collection has grown to over 2,500 podcasts and over 1,000 high-quality videos. All content is available free through the iTunes U platform.



SOCIALIZE, SERVE & SUPPORT

Alumni are welcomed and encouraged to become an active part of the YSPH community. Below are some of the ways you can get started:

Become a mentor: The YSPH Mentor Program is a great way to give back by contributing to the professional development of the next generation of health care leaders. Recruitment for mentors happens by email each summer.

Attend events and reunions: The alumni office coordinates a series of activities and receptions for alumni including:

- ▶ American Council of Healthcare Executives reception (Chicago)
- ▶ Alumni Day (New Haven)
- ▶ Alumni Speaker Series (New Haven)
- ▶ American Public Health Association Reception and Annual Meeting
- ▶ New student welcome reception during orientation week (New Haven)
- ▶ Pop-up events—coming to a city near you

Post a job or internship online: Our students and your fellow alumni would make great colleagues! Contact the Office of Career Management for more information.

Join the board: The Association of Yale Alumni in Public Health (AYAPH) is governed by a board of directors. Graduates of the M.P.H., M.S. and doctoral programs are eligible to represent the social and professional interests of the alumni. With 30 members and 11 committees, the AYAPH Board serves in an advisory capacity to the dean.

Pay it forward and make a gift: Give current and future students the help they need to become public health leaders of tomorrow. Support for scholarships is a concrete way to further the school's mission and to ensure that the best and brightest are able to attend Yale. To make a gift online, visit: www.yale.edu/givesph.



STAY INFORMED & CONNECTED

Update your contact information: The single most important thing you can do to remain involved and connected is to ensure that we have your most current contact information. You can update your information at any time on our website, publichealth.yale.edu/alumni.

Join the YSPH alumni LinkedIn group: The YSPH LinkedIn group is over 1,200 members strong and is open to all alumni and current students of YSPH. Reap the professional rewards of your YSPH degree and grow your Yale network!

Connect with the Yale School of Public Health: Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube) is where you'll find current YSPH news, lectures, tweets and alumni news.

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Yale SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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BROOKE SEVERE, M.P.H. '19

VIKRAM ACHARYA, M.P.H. '04, has been named vice president and chief operating officer of Brandywine Hospital in Coatesville, Pennsylvania. Acharya previously was vice president of clinical and procedural services at the University of Chicago Medicine, where he led operational, financial, strategic and regulatory aspects of Perioperative Services, the Heart and Vascular Center, Radiology, Transplantation Institute, Neurophysiology and the Sleep Lab.

CHARLES ACHER, M.P.H. '08, M.D., has joined Community Physician Group Surgical Specialists in Missoula, Montana. As a board-certified general surgeon fellow trained in colorectal surgery, he treats disorders of the colon, rectum and anus.

ABINASH ACHREKAR, M.D., M.P.H. '98, has been appointed deputy secretary of health for the state of New Mexico. He previously was an associate professor of cardiology at the University of New Mexico.

BRUCE ANDERSON, M.P.H. '79, Ph.D., was reappointed director of the Department of Health for the state of Hawaii. He had been director of the department from 1999 to 2002 and was deputy director of environmental health from 1987 to 1998. Prior to that he was the state epidemiologist.

MARI ARMSTRONG-HOUGH, Ph.D., M.P.H. '16, has been appointed assistant professor of global public health at New York University.

GREGORY BELOK, D.D.S., M.P.H. '74, participated in the first American Dental Association telehealth/teledentistry seminar at the 2018 annual meeting in Honolulu in October. The seminar covered identification of health care environments that would benefit from teledentistry, definition of teledentistry and alternate modalities for its use.

LAWRENCE BROWN, M.P.H. '18, M.D., matched into the general surgery residency program at Johns Hopkins.



MEGAN COLE, M.P.H. '11, Ph.D., was awarded a 2018 Peter Paul Career Development Professorship from Boston University, where she is an assistant professor of health law, policy and management. The professorships are given to outstanding junior faculty

universitywide and provide funding to support research and scholarly or creative work for three years.



RENÉE D. COLEMAN-MITCHELL, M.P.H. '86, was named commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH). Coleman-Mitchell previously was executive director for Cougar Health Services at Washington State University.

U.S. Air Force flight surgeon Lt. Col. **STEPHANIE DAVIS**, M.P.H. '12, has been inducted into the Tuskegee University Athletic Hall of Fame. Davis was a basketball player at Tuskegee.

ASHTON GORES, M.P.H. '18, received the Yale-Jefferson Award for Public Service from the Yale Alumni Association for her work in founding PAWS (Poverty Alleviation through Washing Soles) as an undergraduate. The student group collects shoes, socks, gel inserts, nail clippers and other items and coordinates regular foot-washing events for disadvantaged people in New Haven.

MICHAEL JOSEPH, M.P.H. '96, Ph.D., has been appointed vice dean for academic and student affairs at the SUNY Downstate Medical Center's School of Public Health. Joseph has been a faculty member for nearly 19 years and has worked in many positions, including as a vice chair of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics.

JUDITH LICHTMAN, M.P.H. '88 Ph.D. '96, has been promoted to professor of epidemiology at the Yale School of Public Health. In addition to her teaching and research, Lichtman is chair of the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology and directs the new program: Humanities, Arts, and Public Health Practice at Yale (the HAPPY initiative).

JEANNIE MANTOPOULOS, M.P.H. '08, received a Distinguished Alumni Award from the Moore Catholic High School on Staten Island, New York. After 10 years with the Yale School of Public Health's Global Health Leadership Institute, Mantopoulos was named chief operating officer for Resolve to Save Lives, a groundbreaking \$225 million global health initiative that aims to save 100 million people from cardiovascular disease and to prevent epidemics.

ALUMNI NEWS

The World Innovation Summit for Health, sponsored by the Qatar Foundation, highlighted the work of **RUCHIT NAGAR**, B.A. '15, M.P.H. '16, as part of its Young Innovators competition. Nagar was part of the inaugural InnovateHealth Yale's Thorne Prize-winning team, Khushi Baby. Khushi Baby is an electronic patient health record platform that is wearable, digital, durable, battery-free and culturally symbolic.



SUSAN NAPPI, M.P.H. '01, has been named executive director by the YSPH Office of Public Health Practice. She had been the senior community impact director of

United Way of Greater New Haven and previously worked at Griffin Hospital as executive director of the Community Center of Excellence in Women's Health.

RAJA NARAYAN, M.P.H. '14, M.D., married Ruby Gill, Ph.D., on Dec. 29, 2018, at the Fairmont San Jose Hotel in California. Narayan is a general surgery resident at the Stanford University Hospital and a postdoctoral research fellow at the Sloan Kettering Institute, where he studies genomic targets for liver and pancreatic cancer.

JOHN NDIKUM, M.D., M.P.H. '18, has started a new company, Zero Entropy Consulting, based in London, that provides services to companies bringing medical devices to market as well as personal and professional coaching.

KATHERINE QUESENBERY, D.V.M., M.P.H. '06, was named chief medical officer at New York City's Animal Medical Center. She will provide medical oversight for all clinical activities involving 100 veterinarians at the medical center, the world's largest nonprofit animal hospital.

IRENE TROWELL-HARRIS, Ed.D., M.P.H. '73, R.N., FAAN, was named a Fellow by the American Academy of Nursing. She is a retired major general in the U.S. Air Force.

HAVE AN UPDATE? Your classmates want to hear about you! Send your news (and photos) to ysph.alumni@yale.edu.

“COMING OUT WAS A FANTASTIC EXPERIENCE FOR ME, AND THAT’S WHY I’M SO INTERESTED IN HELPING OTHERS.”

~David Kessler

BETTER LGBTQ HEALTH

BY COLIN POITRAS

A \$5 million estate gift from Yale alumnus seeks to help those coming to terms with their sexual identities.

As a psychiatrist, Yale School of Medicine alumnus David R. Kessler understands the swirling mix of anxiety and fear that can consume individuals who identify as LGBTQ if they are struggling to come out about their sexual orientation.

Kessler is not only trained in such knowledge, but he also has lived it. From the intense anxiety attacks he suffered as a closeted gay med student in the 1950s to the fears of persecution he and other closeted gay doctors shared in the 1970s, Kessler lived through a turbulent time for LGBTQ people in American history.

Now retired as a clinical professor of psychiatry and living on the West Coast, Kessler, M.D. '55, who publicly affirmed his sexuality in 1978, wants to help other LGBTQ individuals who may be struggling to come out or who are dealing with stigma, oppression and other issues that can impact their mental health.

“Coming out was a fantastic experience for me, and that’s why I’m so interested in helping others, because I realized from my own experience what a meaningful, life-changing event it is,” said Kessler, no relation to former Yale School of Medicine Dean David Aaron Kessler.

Kessler recently made a gift of \$200,000 to support the work of Yale School of Public Health Associate Professor John Pachankis, Ph.D., and his Esteem Research Program, which is dedicated to addressing the depression, anxiety and substance use problems that disproportionately affect the LGBTQ community and can erode healthy relationships and behaviors. A clinical psychologist, Pachankis

is internationally known for his development of novel psychosocial interventions to improve the mental health of LGBTQ individuals.

“John is just so energetic and productive on the issue of coming out,” said Kessler. “I’m very supportive of his work not only in this country but internationally, which is really unbelievable. People around the world are dealing with issues related to coming out, and John is studying how it affects them in a scientific and rigorous manner, which is very impressive.”

Kessler also is directing \$5 million from his estate to the Yale School of Public Health; part of the bequest is intended to create a David R. Kessler Endowed Professorship. The professorship and accompanying resource fund will support teaching and research associated with improving LGBTQ mental health.

The majority of the world’s population, including in many areas of the United States, live in conditions that are not stigma-free when it comes to LGBTQ acceptance, Pachankis said. In some states, parents still send their children to conversion therapy, and in some countries, conversion therapy, in an attempt to make gay people “normal” heterosexuals, is common, he said.

“As a stigmatized minority in society, people who identify as LGBTQ are subject to continuous assaults on their self-esteem and sense of belonging in their families, schools and workplaces,” said Yale School of Public Health Dean Sten H. Vermund, M.D., Ph.D., who has made improving





MICHAEL FITZSOUZA

David Kessler (left) recently made a gift of \$200,000 to support the work of Yale School of Public Health Associate Professor John Pachankis (right) and also is directing \$5 million from his estate to the Yale School of Public Health. Part of the bequest is intended to create a David R. Kessler Endowed Professorship.

LGBTQ mental health a priority of his deanship. “I cannot think of a higher impact program in which Dr. Kessler could invest than Dr. Pachankis’ Esteem Program. Dr. Kessler’s generosity will ensure that LGBTQ mental health research geared toward preventive and therapeutic interventions will be part of YSPH under Dr. Pachankis’ leadership and on in perpetuity.”

Pachankis’ research is dedicated to delivering effective LGBTQ-affirmative mental health treatments to vulnerable populations in the United States such as those in rural Appalachia, as well as those in China, Eastern Europe and elsewhere in the world. Some of the programs Pachankis has initiated since arriving at Yale in 2013 involve improved training for mental health providers, delivering mental health treatment via the internet and mobile applications and finding ways to sustain such treatments in areas where LGBTQ stigma is present and strong.

“David’s journey inspires all of us to be as courageous and creative as his generation has been in living proudly and meaningfully in the face of societal and emotional barriers,” said Pachankis. “For a lot of LGBTQ people, that journey includes supporting the next generation of LGBTQ individuals. That’s certainly one of David’s major contributions and, in my own way as a researcher and teacher, I hope that it can be one of mine.”

After completing his psychiatric residency at Yale in 1961, Kessler went on to become a faculty member in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of California

San Francisco Medical School and also a unit supervisor at the Langley Porter Institute.

After coming out in San Francisco, Kessler helped launch the Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights, the country’s first formal gay doctors’ organization. He later served as president of the National Gay Caucus of Members of the American Psychiatric Association, which became the Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists. *People* magazine highlighted Kessler’s leadership and advocacy work in 1979. He gave one of the eulogies at the funeral of Harvey Milk, a seminal figure in the gay rights movement.

Kessler credits his friends in the gay community with providing the crucial support he needed to acknowledge his sexual orientation – and his sanity – at a time when the leading psychiatric diagnosis manual, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, or DSM III, classified homosexuality as a mental illness and perversion.

“I had been reading all this nonsense psychiatrists had written about how sick gay people are, and I got so angry I couldn’t stand it anymore,” Kessler recalled. “I just said, ‘That’s it! We need to organize and put an end to this stuff and let people know who we are and that there are gay people everywhere and we’re just like everyone else.’”

Despite San Francisco’s burgeoning gay community, organizing wasn’t easy, Kessler said. Some other medical professionals were fearful of losing patients if their homosexuality became public. The early groups would meet after dark in the shelter of members’ living rooms. There,

“DAVID’S JOURNEY INSPIRES ALL OF US TO BE AS COURAGEOUS AND CREATIVE AS HIS GENERATION HAS BEEN. ...”

~John Pachankis

discussion would drag on for hours about how members would be kept informed, whether there should be a printed members list, who should possess the list and what might happen if the list fell into the wrong hands. Even the group’s initial chosen name – Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights – made no mention of homosexuality.

Scholarship and research

The Lesbian and Gay Studies Center at Yale, established in 1986, was one of the first of its kind in the country. The Research Fund for Lesbian and Gay Studies, established in 1992, supports faculty and graduate student research, and the university is widely known for its national conferences. In 2001, a major donation from Arthur Kramer, ’49, in honor of his brother, the writer, AIDS activist and ACT UP founder Larry Kramer, ’57, led to the establishment of the Larry Kramer Initiative for Lesbian and Gay Studies. LKI, as it was known, was a highly successful five-year initiative that allowed the appointment of visiting lecturers and dramatically expanded Yale’s archive of LGBTQ materials, including the papers of Kramer and fellow activists David Mixner and Harvey Fierstein.

Kessler said he had been interested in creating something at Yale for years, but it took two tries to get it done. The first time he approached the university in the early 1990s, the people he met with weren’t sure where the funds should be directed or how they might be used, and Kessler chose instead to create the David R. Kessler Lectures in Lesbian and Gay Studies at his other alma mater, the City University of New York.

A longtime supporter of the Yale School of Medicine, Kessler decided to make an estate gift to the Yale School of Public Health after speaking with YSPH Dean Sten H. Vermund and Dr. Darin Latimore, the YSM deputy dean and chief diversity officer, who introduced him to Professor Pachankis last year. Kessler hopes his endowment encourages others to support the Yale School of Public Health’s ongoing efforts to improve mental health outcomes for the LGBTQ community.

“Now Yale is ready, willing and able with a research program in full swing that is very close to my heart,” Kessler said. “I am delighted to be able to come back and do it even bigger and better.” **YPH**

If you would like to support efforts to improve LGBTQ mental health and reduce adverse health outcomes related to stigma, donate to the Yale School of Public Health or to its LGBTQ research directly by visiting publichealth.yale.edu/giving/ for more information.



David Kessler (second from right) representing the Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights at a march in San Francisco in the 1970s. Kessler helped launch the group, the country’s first formal gay doctors’ organization.

A WORLD FILLED WITH CHALLENGES

Students urged to use knowledge to improve health outcomes.

The Yale School of Public Health's Class of 2019 entered a world rife with challenges in May, including a resurgence of the highly contagious measles virus, soaring U.S. incarceration rates and a continuing decline in U.S. life expectancy.

"This is the big picture, the broader challenge that awaits you as you leave the classroom," said commencement keynote speaker Mary Travis Bassett, M.D., M.P.H. (top, far right), director of the François-Xavier Bagnoud

Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University and a long-standing advocate for social justice. She urged students to use their newfound knowledge creatively and courageously.

"As someone with 35 years of public health experience, I regret that I can't offer you a better one, but this is your world to change," Bassett told the 229 members of the graduating class. "I know you have the skills. I know you have the commitment. So, go for it, Class of 2019. Speak up! Speak out!"

In her student address, YSPH Social and Behavioral Sciences student Sophie To, M.P.H. '19, praised her fellow graduates for spearheading initiatives that made the Yale School of Public Health more inclusive – from designating more gender-neutral bathrooms to establishing meaningful programming for students of color and having the school provide free menstrual products to all students who need them.

"At the end of the day, we are all united in the fight for health equity, for social justice, for a better world for future generations," she said. "And to do that we must always remain humble and open-minded and never, ever lose that burning desire to learn."



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY HAROLD SHAPIRO



“ I KNOW YOU HAVE THE SKILLS.
I KNOW YOU HAVE THE COMMITMENT.
SO, GO FOR IT, CLASS OF 2019.
SPEAK UP! SPEAK OUT!”

~Mary Travis Bassett





YSPH'S TOP EDUCATORS NAMED

Three Yale School of Public Health instructors were honored this year for their exceptional teaching, mentoring and engagement skills. Associate Professor Mayur Desai (above, left), M.P.H. '94, Ph.D. '97, received the Distinguished Teaching Award, the school's highest honor. Desai, a four-time recipient of the award, directs the Advanced Professional M.P.H. Program and teaches in the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology. Associate Professor J. Lucian "Luke" Davis (above, right), M.D., was honored as the school's Distinguished Student Mentor for his supportive encouragement, attention to detail and generosity with time. Adam Viera, Ph.D. '23 (right) was honored as Teaching Fellow of the Year, an award that recognizes a YSPH doctoral student who demonstrates outstanding performance and shows promise as a future teacher.



Last year the top teaching awards went to a trio of women: Professor Melinda Pettigrew, Ph.D. '99, (Distinguished Teaching Award); Assistant Clinical Professor Shelley Geballe, J.D. '76, M.P.H. '95, (Distinguished Student Mentor) and Ph.D. student Kayoka Shioda (Teaching Fellow Award).

“ DR. GONSALVES AND HIS ACTIVIST AND ACADEMIC COLLEAGUES HAVE LITERALLY CHANGED POLICIES AROUND THE WORLD...”

~Sten Vermund

GENIUS RECOGNIZED

A colleague once described Assistant Professor Gregg Gonsalves, Ph.D. '17, as a “powerful force for good in the world” and someone who combines intellectual brilliance with a humble wisdom acquired from years of working in the trenches.

Those who know Gonsalves were quick to share similar praise when they learned that he was being honored as a 2018 MacArthur Fellow.

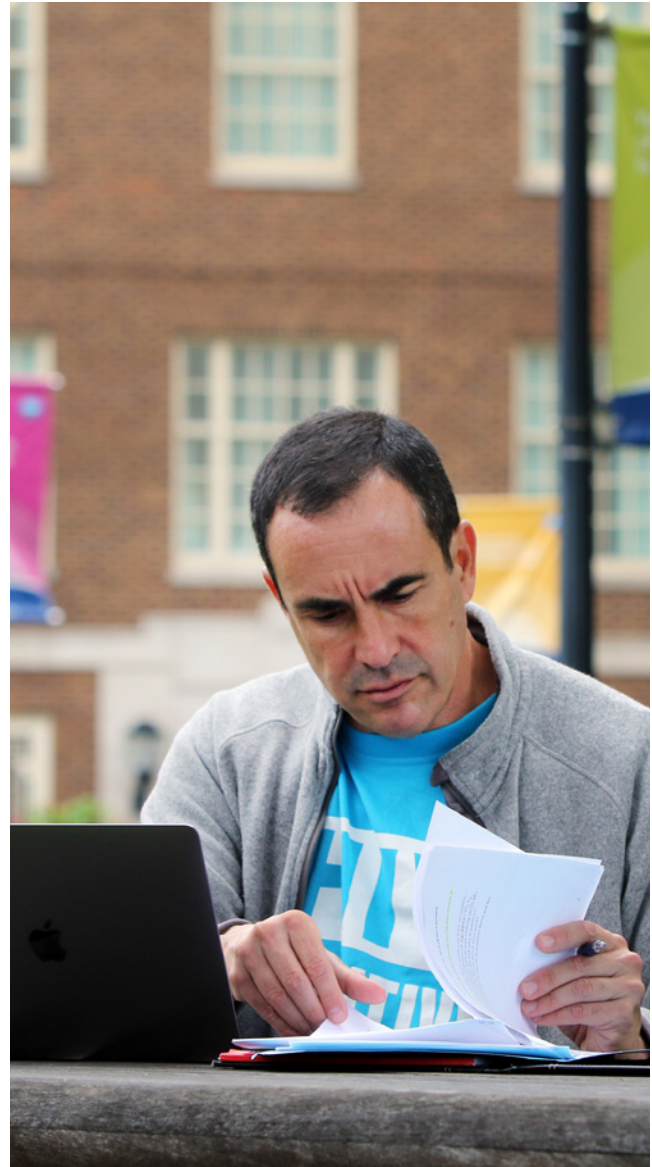
The highly prestigious fellowship, commonly called the MacArthur “genius award,” comes with a \$625,000 prize paid out over five years.

Gonsalves left college as a young man in the 1980s to fight the emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic that was devastating the gay community. He returned to Yale in 2011 to earn a bachelor's degree in biology, followed by a doctorate from the Yale School of Public Health in 2017. A short time later he joined the faculty of the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases.

“I am a product of Yale College and the Yale School of Public Health, which gave me the training to bring new skills and expertise to the questions that have vexed me for decades: how do we get HIV treatment and prevention services to those who need them most, how do we give policymakers better evidence to make better choices about policies on HIV and other infectious diseases?” he said.

Soft-spoken and thoughtful, yet assertive, Gonsalves credits his colleagues and research collaborators – Forrest W. Crawford, A. David Paltiel, Edward H. Kaplan, Paul D. Cleary and Joshua L. Warren, among many others – for inspiring him.

“The Yale School of Public Health is a wonderful place to work to try to answer these questions. There is no place else I can imagine being right now,” Gonsalves said.



STAN GODLEWSKI

Dean Sten H. Vermund likened the MacArthur Fellowship to “a pragmatic Nobel Prize” in that it is awarded to those who are extremely creative and truly make an impact in their discipline.

“Dr. Gonsalves and his activist and academic colleagues have literally changed policies around the world, accelerating drug development and access to care for persons living with HIV/AIDS,” Vermund said. “We are immensely proud to have his leadership in the Yale School of Public Health and our Global Health Justice Initiative with the Yale School of Law.”

Above: Gregg Gonsalves



PATHS TO PUBLIC HEALTH

FROM PANAMA TO NEW HAVEN

Fifteen-hour shifts, working with the community inspire Anumita Bajpai.

Anumita Bajpai's first love, academically, was in microbiology and infectious diseases. After finishing her undergraduate degree, she won a National Institutes of Health fellowship and went to work on diagnostic tuberculosis in Panama.

There, she stepped outside of the lab and got her first taste for public health. It was transformative.

Bajpai went from working in a state-of-the-art lab at the University of Washington to a lab in Ciudad del Saber, Panama, that faced basic challenges. She quickly learned that you do what it takes – when the ice machine breaks, you walk in the tropical heat to the grocery store on the way to the lab to purchase ice. Then you crush the ice used to preserve serum before you begin the day's work. Or, when 1,600 serum samples arrive for processing, everyone – even the principal investigator – pitches in, working 15-hour shifts to get the work done.

Meeting colleagues in Panama and working on public health was thrilling for Bajpai and brought population-focused work to her attention. Now an M.P.H. student in the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases with a Public Health Modeling Concentration, she has seized the opportunities Yale has to offer in social entrepreneurship and helped put together a winning team for the Yale Institute for Global Health Sustainable Health Initiative's first cohort of startups to go through CoWork's intensive training in India. With a focus on tuberculosis, the partnership between Khushi Baby and Médecins Sans Frontières extends Khushi Baby's wearable tag for recording vaccinations to tracking TB treatments to improve drug adherence in a venture called Khushi-TB.



COURTESY OF ANUMITA BAJPAI

"We have so many opportunities and mentors here at Yale," said Bajpai. "That's why I'm here!"

While putting together the Khushi-TB proposal has been an education in itself, Bajpai says she has also grown tremendously through her involvement in the modeling concentration. The seminar portion, in particular, opened horizons, and she interned this summer in Atlanta with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in its Division of Global HIV & TB. There, Bajpai helped develop models to understand the relationship between TB preventive therapy and its impact on mortality for people living with HIV. Being surrounded by professional epidemiologists working on global issues further cemented for her the idea of wanting to continue graduate studies in epidemiology.

"Modeling is so underused and cost-effective. But it is the future," she said. So, despite a brief hesitation about the math, she is totally sold on modeling's worth and potential to revolutionize drug discovery and improve public health implementation. "This is where I want to go," she said. "The Yale School of Public Health is helping me get there."

Denise Meyer

Above: Anumita Bajpai (right) learns ELISA techniques from research associate Sara Rosero in Panama City. She was part of the tuberculosis research group working on diagnostics.



CARNEGIE HONORS COOPER

Finding ways to make prescription drugs more affordable is a challenge of the highest order in today's complex health care environment, but one Zack Cooper, Ph.D., a Yale School of Public Health associate professor of health policy and economics, is eager to take on.

Cooper's deep dives into some of the most critical health care issues of the day led to his being awarded a prestigious Andrew Carnegie Fellowship in April. The grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York will allow Cooper to examine factors influencing the pricing of biologic drugs, which are pharmaceuticals produced from living organisms instead of synthetic chemicals. Biologics are used to treat many diseases, including rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, Crohn's disease and several forms of cancer.

"Biologic drugs are emblematic of the tensions we face in health care at the moment," said Cooper, director of health policy at Yale's Institution for Social and Policy Studies. "Consumers are worried about the rising costs of biologics and other prescription drugs. On the flip side, many people rely on these innovative medications to protect their health. The question is how we make this sector of the economy more efficient, increase access to vital medications, and continue to drive innovation?"

Cooper has previously examined the pricing of hospital care, the role of consumerism in the health care space, and the influence of politics on health care spending. He has presented his work at the White House, Department of Justice, Federal Trade Commission and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Above: Zack Cooper

“ BIOLOGIC DRUGS ARE EMBLEMATIC OF THE TENSIONS WE FACE IN HEALTH CARE AT THE MOMENT. CONSUMERS ARE WORRIED ABOUT THE RISING COSTS OF BIOLOGICS AND OTHER PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.”

~Zack Cooper

“GLOBAL HEALTH NEEDS AND DESERVES THE INVOLVEMENT OF AN INSTITUTION SUCH AS YALE.”

~Saad Omer

VACCINE EXPERT LEADING NEW GLOBAL HEALTH INSTITUTE

Saad Omer, an international vaccine expert whose work has informed clinical practice and health legislation in multiple countries, joined the Yale Institute for Global Health (YIGH) as its inaugural director on July 1.

Omer, M.P.H., Ph.D., came to Yale from Emory University's Schools of Public Health and Medicine, where he was the William H. Foege Professor of Global Health, Epidemiology, and Pediatrics. He holds joint appointments

at Yale School of Public Health and Yale School of Medicine and a secondary appointment at Yale School of Nursing.

“Some of the most pressing problems of our time are related to global health. Addressing them will require us to bring our ‘A game,’” Omer said. “Yale’s breadth of excellence is matched by only a few institutions in the world and, therefore, global health needs and deserves the involvement of an institution such as Yale.”

Omer plans to leverage Yale’s preeminence in research, teaching and clinical care to address major health problems around the world. Known for his support of junior faculty and research trainees, Omer wants YIGH to be an international leader in producing the world’s top researchers in global health.

In addition to the United States, Omer has conducted studies in Australia, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Pakistan, South Africa and Uganda. His research portfolio includes clinical and field trials to estimate the efficacy and/or immunogenicity of influenza, polio, pertussis and pneumococcal vaccines; and clinical trials to evaluate drug regimens to reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV in Africa.

The Yale Institute for Global Health was established in 2017 to foster new collaborations between Yale and partners around the world to improve global health through high-impact research, education, service and advocacy.



Saad Omer



CLIMATE CHANGE IS PUBLIC HEALTH

Former U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry called the struggle to stop global warming nothing short of a matter of life and death as he urged students to take action on the issue during a February visit to the Yale School of Public Health.

One of the architects of the landmark 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, Kerry said the world's citizens “by acts of omission and commission, are living out a mutual suicide pact because of the massive changes that are going to take place on our planet.”

He urged everyone concerned about climate change to get engaged and join the growing worldwide movement to raise awareness about the issue. He suggested sponsoring community discussions and events and visiting local schools.

“I know it’s daunting,” Kerry said. “Everybody is wondering, ‘Can I really make a difference?’ And the answer is yes. Yes, you really can, and you must.”

Kerry, who came to Yale as a guest of the Yale School of Public Health, the Yale Climate Change and Health Initiative, and the Yale Institute for Global Health, said climate change is “enormously a matter of public health.”

“EVERYBODY IS WONDERING, ‘CAN I REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?’ AND THE ANSWER IS YES. YES, YOU REALLY CAN, AND YOU MUST.”

~John Kerry

“Things are happening faster and with greater damage than we ever imagined,” said Kerry, a 1966 graduate of Yale College and a Distinguished Fellow for Global Affairs at Yale University. He repeated scientists’ warnings that the world community has 12 years to prevent another 0.5 degree Celsius increase in average temperatures worldwide or suffer the consequences.

Calling climate change a “catastrophe in the making,” Kerry warned, “we are not getting the job done.”

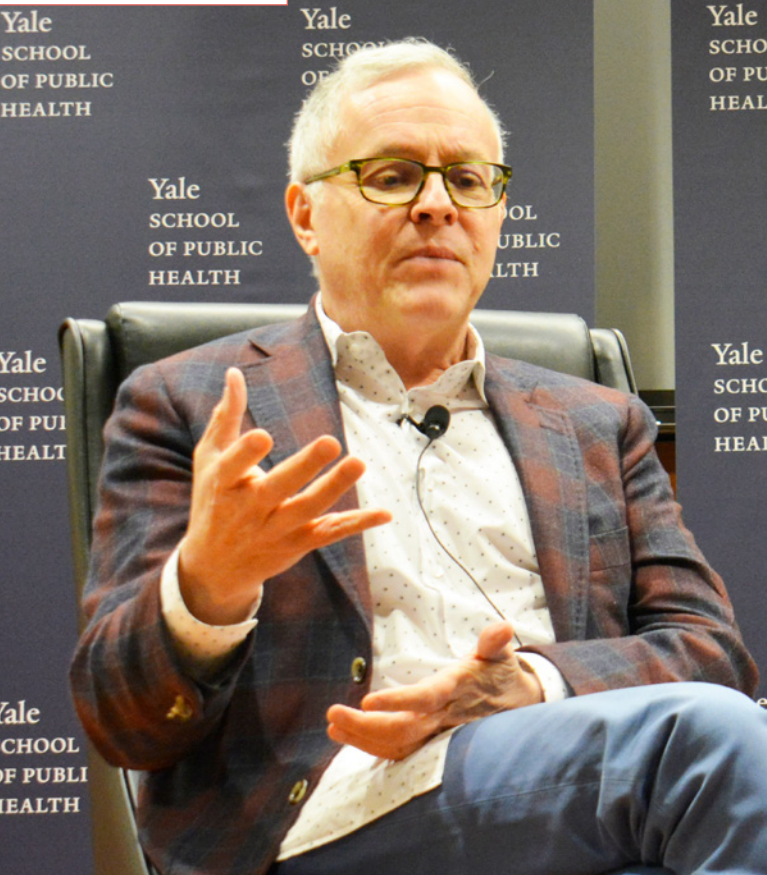
Above: Former U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry (left) addresses the public health challenges surrounding climate change on February 22. With him is Yale School of Public Health Professor Robert Dubrow, director of the Yale Climate Change and Health Initiative.

SERVICE WITH A SMILE

Close to 100 Yale School of Public Health faculty, staff, alumni and students fanned out across New Haven and beyond in May, donating their time and energy for the Annual Day of Service. The various projects included sprucing up playground equipment at New Haven's Ronald McDonald House of Connecticut, clearing brush at the New Haven Land Trust's Martin Luther King Peace Garden and joining residents for arts and crafts at New Haven's Leeway center for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The event was part of the Yale Day of Service sponsored by the Yale Alumni Association.







THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

Neal Baer, M.D., is one of those rare individuals who can consistently apply his knowledge of public health to a broad and diverse audience. A pediatrician by training, Baer is the creative force behind such hit TV shows as “China Beach,” “ER” and “Law & Order: SUV.” During an April visit to the Yale School of Public Health at the invitation of Dean Sten H. Vermund, Baer explained how he uses creative storytelling to share important public health messages with an audience of millions. Baer said people are more likely to engage with emotional stories than globs of big data. We can “provide the data, give them context, give them evidence. But they need to be moved by the story first,” he said. Baer’s talk was titled “Storytelling and Public Health: The Power of Emotion in Science.” He was interviewed by YSPH lecturer James Hamblin, M.D., M.P.H. ’18.

Above: Television producer Neal Baer discusses how powerful stories can influence health outcomes on April 9.

DEI DEAN DESIGNATED

Mayur Desai selected to lead inaugural deanship.

Associate Professor Mayur Desai, M.P.H. ’94, Ph.D. ’97, has devoted his career to studying ways to improve quality of care and health care equity.

He plans to bring that same drive and energy to his new position as the Yale School of Public Health’s inaugural associate dean for diversity, equity and inclusion.

A four-time recipient of the YSPH Distinguished Teaching Award, the school’s highest honor, Desai sees a commitment to these values as an important pillar in the YSPH mission.

“The core values of diversity, equity and inclusion are at the heart of what we do,” Desai said. “Our successes depend on the creativity, contributions and expertise of so many people in so many different fields working in concert. This provides an endless opportunity to learn new things and see things from different perspectives.”

In his new role, Desai said he looks forward to building on YSPH’s already strong foundation prepared by Professor Trace Kershaw’s leadership.

“One of the many wonderful things about people in public health is our unwavering commitment to equity, justice and improving the health and well-being of the communities that we serve,” he said. “I would like to see some of that passion directed inward in order to make sure everyone at YSPH feels welcomed, valued and respected to improve our collective well-being.”

Desai’s work has always had a public health focus.

“I suspect that, like most of us in public health, I see



our work – which affects everyone in every community – as rooted in social justice,” he said. “I’ve had an opportunity to learn from and work with amazing colleagues on a range of projects – from studying the quality of care provided to veterans with psychiatric and substance use

disorders to strengthening health systems in low-income countries. A common thread running through all this work is an emphasis on health equity and improving access, quality and outcomes of care for diverse and vulnerable populations.”

Has he experienced bias or exclusion?

“Unfortunately, yes. Like so many individuals of color who grew up in an immigrant family, I have painful memories of people hurling racial slurs at my parents because of their accent and dress. My family and I have been told to go back to where we came from. Nevertheless, I believe in the inherent goodness of people and in our capacity to do great things when we see our diversity as a strength.”



Cynthia Brandt

HEALTH INFORMATICS DIVISION LAUNCHED

In response to an urgent need for information specialists to help manage and analyze the big data being gathered in public health clinical trials and research, the Department of Biostatistics has established a Health Informatics Division at the Yale School of Public Health.

The department also created a Master of Science track in health informatics that will train students in such areas as data mining, algorithm development and human-computer interaction. Informatics is the science of managing large volumes of information. Specialists in informatics support researchers and clinicians by organizing and analyzing data in ways that assist studies and help with decision-making.

“This division will prepare much-needed specialists to work with clinical and public health groups to deal with their growing and unique data challenges,” said Cynthia Brandt, M.D., M.P.H., professor of emergency medicine and biostatistics, who will be the division’s director. “The need is great, and I am thrilled that the Yale School of Public Health is taking the lead in this crucial field.”

The National Institutes of Health has identified the scarcity of individuals trained in informatics as an urgent national problem and as a pressing need for biomedical research in the 21st century.

“ THIS DIVISION WILL PREPARE MUCH-NEEDED SPECIALISTS.”

~Cynthia Brandt

NEW M.S. PROGRAM IN INFECTIOUS DISEASES

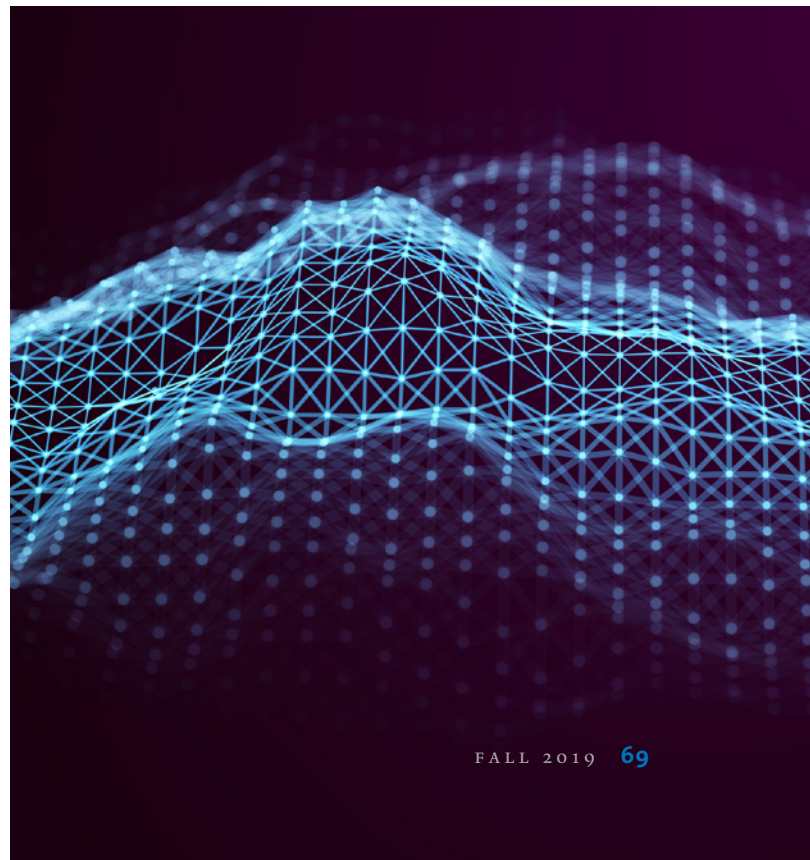
With new infectious diseases emerging and older diseases reemerging, the Yale School of Public Health is launching a one-year Master of Science program with a concentration in the epidemiology of infectious diseases for the 2020–21 academic year.

The program will focus on building technical and research skills and knowledge and is intended for individuals seeking careers in research in academic, government or industry settings or clinicians who want to perform research.

In contrast to the existing Master of Public Health program, the M.S. in infectious diseases is more focused on applied analytic and epidemiologic methods and provides opportunities for more advanced coursework in these areas. Additionally, the M.S. program can be completed in one year or, on a part-time basis, in two years.

“This new program will train the next generation of analysts and clinicians in cutting-edge research methodology for infectious diseases,” said Daniel Weinberger, Ph.D., and Lucian “Luke” Davis, M.D., associate professors at the school who will be leading the program.

The Yale School of Public Health’s Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases is one of the only public health departments in the world focused solely on the epidemiology of infectious diseases.



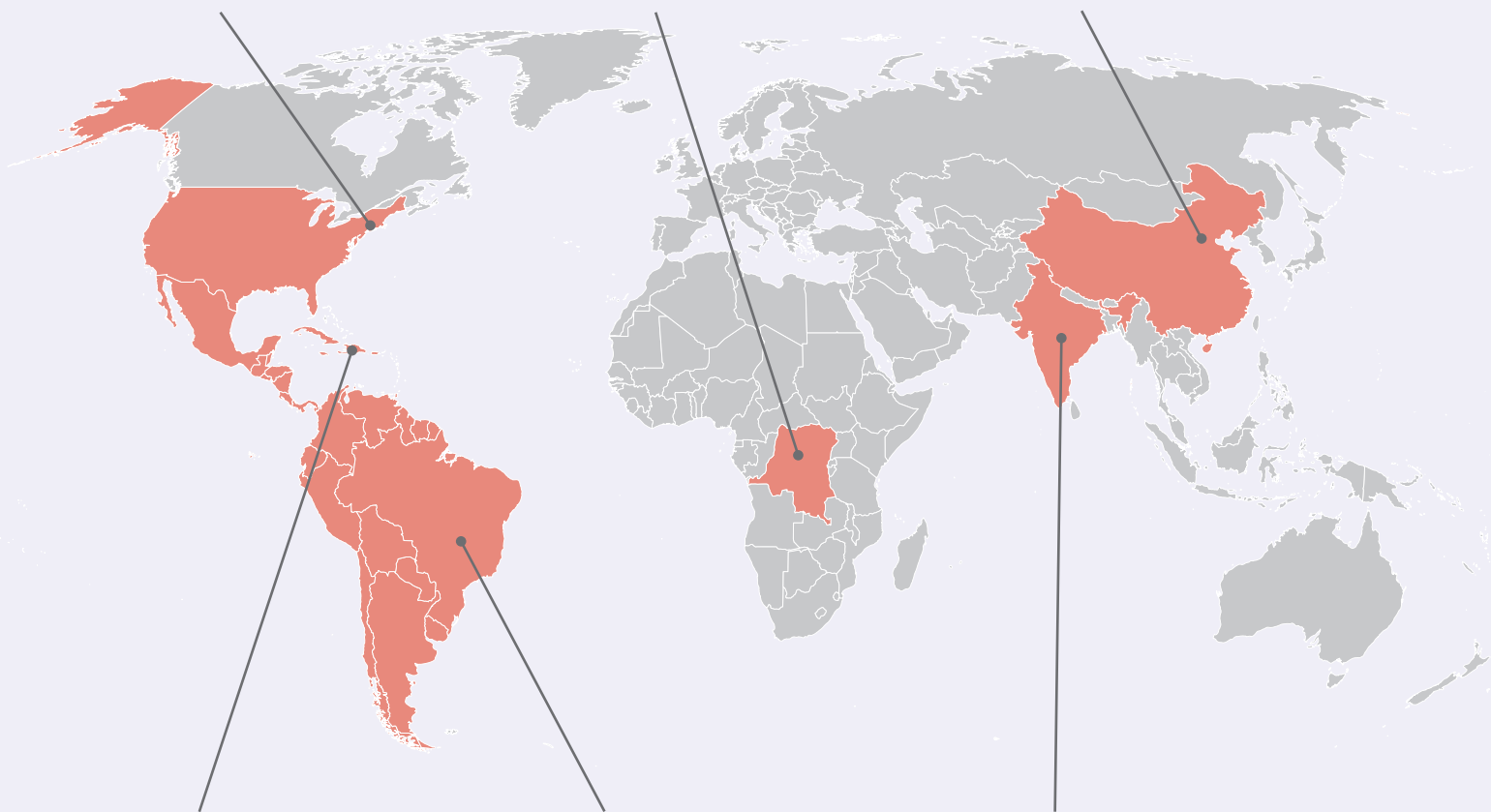


YSPH AROUND THE WORLD

NEW HAVEN YSPH hosts a symposium that draws people from around the world to explore the health benefits associated with olive oil—a cornerstone of the Mediterranean diet.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO Published YSPH research finds that rapid deployment of Ebola vaccines during outbreaks is critical to containing widespread transmission.

CHINA YSPH researcher attends the first NCI-NSFC Integrative Oncology Workshop in Beijing to promote collaborative research between U.S. and Chinese scientists.



LATIN AMERICA Twenty health professionals from 10 Latin American countries and the Caribbean attend a YSPH conference for training in a new statistical method that evaluates the effectiveness of vaccines.

BRAZIL YSPH contributes to a Yale Global Health Justice Partnership report that finds that increasing rates of drug-related incarcerations are perpetuating tuberculosis infection among Brazil's general population.

INDIA The Sustainable Health Initiative is launched to promote business startups that have the potential to create innovative solutions to health care problems.



HEALING SOLES

YSPH students wash the feet of disadvantaged residents to promote health, build bridges.

Volunteers from the Yale School of Public Health, Yale College and the New Haven community gathered at the Episcopal Church of St. Paul & St. James in the city's Wooster Square neighborhood for hands-on public health: washing feet of people in need.

During the December 2018 event, the volunteers cleansed the feet and administered other foot care to over 70 individuals in a relaxing, judgment-free environment. Each person was able to engage in various foot health services and select foot hygiene items to take with them. Additionally, through a partnership with Soles4Souls and community donations, over 150 homeless people received free shoes and socks. The event was part of the New Haven PAWS Project (Poverty Alleviation through Washing Soles).

Data was also collected to better understand the experience of the homeless community and to develop strategies for foot health management. Some clients said they walk anywhere from 6 to 15 miles a day and that as a result their feet are a constant health issue. "Some people have cars and, well, I have shoes," one client said.



ELM CITY HEALTH

“YOU DON'T KNOW HOW AMAZING THIS IS. I HAVEN'T BEEN TREATED LIKE A HUMAN BEING IN A VERY LONG TIME.”

~Anonymous client

The range of foot problems common among homeless people includes sores and infections, as well as complications from chronic conditions such as diabetes that cause the feet to swell and trap lint and dirt between the toes. After extended time on the street, and especially in wet and freezing conditions, homeless people can find it difficult and painful to remove shoes.

"It takes tremendous trust for someone to take off their shoes in front of a bunch of Yale students," said Marina Marmolejo, M.P.H. '19, who organized the event along with fellow Yale School of Public Health student Trisha Ramsdell, M.P.H. '19. "As Yale students, it can be difficult to engage with someone who is experiencing extreme poverty. It's awkward and uncomfortable to have such a different lived experience than someone else, but it's necessary for starting to dismantle the large systemic issues that have allowed our country to become so polarized."

After choosing a fragrant essential oil to add to the basin of warm water, one client said, "You don't know how amazing this is. I haven't been treated like a human being in a very long time."

The PAWS Project was founded in 2017 by Ashton Gores, M.P.H. '18, now a medical student in Oklahoma, to promote foot health as a basic human right.

Volunteers led by the Yale School of Public Health participating in the New Haven PAWS Project (Poverty Alleviation through Washing Soles) tend to the foot health of more than 70 disadvantaged city residents.



AWARDS & HONORS FALL 2019

The Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering elected 24 new members, including six who have appointments at the Yale School of Public Health: **SERAP AKSOY**, Ph.D., professor, Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases; **MICHELLE BELL**, Ph.D., Mary E. Pinchot professor of environmental health, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and Professor of Environmental Health; **SHUANGGE (STEVEN) MA**, M.S., Ph.D., professor, Department of Biostatistics; **HARVEY RISCH**, M.D., Ph.D., professor, Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology; **EUGENE D. SHAPIRO**, M.D., professor of pediatrics and of epidemiology, Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases; and **JEFFREY TOWNSEND**, Ph.D., Elihu Professor of Biostatistics, Department of Biostatistics.

M.P.H. '20 candidates **STEVEN SUSANA-CASTILLO**, **RUOCHEN ZHANG** and **RUOCHEN SUN** were part of the Dream ER team that won the MIT Policy Hackathon's Health Challenge and the overall hackathon for their work on addressing hospital emergency room overcrowding.

ALEXIA AKBAY, M.P.H. '19 in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences, won the 2019 MIT Water Innovation Prize. Her company, Symbrosia, developed a system to produce a sustainable seaweed supplement that reduces methane in livestock while symbiotically producing shrimp for human consumption. Symbrosia won

Yale's Sabin Sustainable Venture Prize in 2018 and was also a finalist for the Pritzker Emerging Environmental Genius Award.

AMY BEI, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, will lead a four-year research group (G4) at the Institut Pasteur de Dakar to study experimental genetic approaches and vaccines for malaria in Senegal.

ANJULI BODYK, assistant director of the Global Health Concentration, was presented the Yale Working Women's Network award for exemplifying family life balance. The award, given at a ceremony in March at the provost's house, recognizes Bodyk's work to create lactation rooms at the Yale School of Public Health.

JULIO CRODA, M.D., Ph.D., associate professor adjunct in the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, has been named chief of the Department of Communicable Diseases at the Secretariat of Health Surveillance in Brazil.

HOWARD FORMAN, M.D., M.B.A., professor of diagnostic radiology, economics and public health and director of the Health Care Management Program at YSPH, received the 2018 Award of Excellence in Journalism from the American College of Emergency Physicians. Forman is part of The Experts, a group of thought leaders who offer opinions in *The Wall Street Journal*.

GELIANG GAN, Ph.D., a biostatistician at the Yale Center for Analytical Sciences, received the SAS Global Forum 2019 Young SAS Professional Award.

SAPPHO GILBERT, a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology, was a 2018–19 Kerry Fellow at Yale's Jackson Institute. The fellowship featured a yearlong seminar series with former Secretary of State John Kerry and senior members of Kerry's policy and research team in addition to a scholarship award. Gilbert is using the funds to support her work in the Canadian Arctic.

NATHAN GRUBAUGH, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, was recognized with the Scherer/Hardy Award by the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene for his work in arbovirology.

JUDITH LICHTMAN, M.P.H. '88, Ph.D. '96, professor and chair of the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology, received the C. Miller Fisher, MD Neuroscience Visionary Award from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association for her work in the epidemiology of stroke, including disease trends, readmissions and mortality rates. She also served on a National Expert Panel for an American Heart Association meeting in December on the mental health of the U.S. workforce.

LINGENG LU, M.D., M.S., Ph.D., research scientist in the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology, has been named a deputy statistical editor for *The Journal of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery*.

KA'IMI MASUNAGA, M.P.H. '19 in the Health Care Management Program, was awarded a Pat Tillman Foundation scholarship. The foundation helps veterans and service members pursue higher education. Masunaga served in the U.S. Air Force.

JOHN PACHANKIS, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, has become a member of the Social Psychology, Personality and Interpersonal Processes Study Section of the National Institutes of Health's Center for Scientific Review.

VIRGINIA PITZER, Sc.D., associate professor in the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, was named to the World Health Organization's Immunization and Vaccine Related Implementation Research Advisory Committee.

KAYLA RINGELHEIM, M.P.H. and M.B.A. '18, was recognized along with other founders of the U.S. Health Justice Collaborative by Yale University's Graduate Ivy Award in recognition of its work with the city of New Haven. The collaborative seeks to fill a gap in health professions education around health disparities, inequities and structural determinants of health.

HARVEY RISCH, M.D., Ph.D., professor in the Department of Chronic Disease Epidemiology, was included in the "Best of the AACR Journals" collection that highlights the most cited articles across the American Association for Cancer Research journals. Risch also received the Ruth Leff Siegel Award for Excellence in Pancreatic Cancer Research from the Pancreas Center at the Columbia University.

WILLIAM SCHPERO, Ph.D. '19 in the Department of Health Policy and Management, was awarded a grant from the Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy for his project, "Evaluating the Marginal Benefit of Investments in the U.S. Health Care Safety Net."

JASON SCHWARTZ, Ph.D., assistant professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management, has been named to the New England Comparative Effectiveness Public Advisory Council of the Institute for Clinical and Economic Review.

VICTORIA SHIRRIFF, M.P.H. '19, leader of the Sustainable Waste Reduction at YSPH (SWAY) student group, was awarded a Certificate of Outstanding Recognition by the Yale University Office of Sustainability. SWAY has implemented a waste reduction challenge and promoted reusable dishes and composting, among other initiatives.

VEERAYA (KATE) TANAWATT-ANACHAROEN, a five-year B.A. '18, M.P.H. '19 student, won two student awards from the Human Biology

Association—a travel award and an award for her poster presentation on her work in Samoa with Assistant Professor Nicola Hawley, Ph.D., that examined the role of maternal beliefs about food in shaping child dietary intake and obesity risk.

ALEXANDER URRY, M.P.H. '19 in the Health Care Management Program, will be a 2019–20 David A. Winston Health Policy Fellow. The postgraduate fellowship in Washington, D.C., enables recipients to expand their knowledge of political systems and health policy.

HONGYU ZHAO, Ph.D., the Ira V. Hiscock Professor of Biostatistics and chair of the Department of Biostatistics, received the triennial Pao-Lu Hsu Award from the International Chinese Statistical Association.

YONG ZHU, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences, was invited by the National Cancer Institute to participate in the first Integrative Oncology Workshop jointly held by the NCI and the Natural Science Foundation of China. The meeting, which took place in Beijing in April, promoted collaborative research efforts among scientists at U.S. and Chinese institutions.

IN MEMORIAM

MARGO JEAN INGLESE BIEBER, M.P.H. '79, died on Oct. 18, 2018, at The Connecticut Hospice in Branford at age 79. A nursing executive, educator and psychotherapist, she held clinical positions at St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford, Massachusetts, Rhode Island Hospital, the Connecticut Mental Health Center and Connecticut Valley Hospital. She also held faculty appointments at Brown and Quinnipiac universities.

ROSLYN R. BILFORD, M.P.H. '45, died on Aug. 30, 2018, at age 95. She was the director of the New York Metropolitan Commission on Aging from 1975 to 1992, where she was instrumental in developing programs to assist seniors in remaining independent. She was a founding member of Meals on Wheels; a member of the steering committee that founded Hospice of CNY; a founding director of the CNY Alzheimer's Association and a founding member of the NYS Home Care Association.

EDWARD R. DELOUISE, M.P.H. '57, of Guilford, Connecticut, died on Aug. 21, 2018, at age 90. During his career in public service in New Haven, he served as director of the Division of Neighborhood Improvement and Housing Code Enforcement director of the Bureau of Environmental Health and director of the Health Department, the first nonphysician to hold that position. He created New Haven's first housing safety code and established Connecticut's first Health Department-based HIV/AIDS testing and counseling site. He held a faculty

appointment at Quinnipiac University and lectureship at the Yale School of Public Health. Upon his retirement, an office complex at the city health department was named in his honor.

GERREN JOSEPH FAUSTINI, M.P.H. '06, died on April 13, 2019, at his home in Rockville Center, New York, at age 36. A graduate of Cornell University and the Yale School of Public Health, he was associate vice president of operations for faculty practice at Montefiore Health System in New York. Earlier, he held positions at the New York-Presbyterian Health System, AdvantageCare Physicians (NYC), Northwell Health and North Shore University Hospital. His many awards included the LIJ President's Award for Innovation, Saul B. Katz Administrative Fellowship and American College of Healthcare Executives Award for Excellence in Leadership at Yale.

CHARLES WILLIAM FELIX, M.P.H. '69, died on Oct. 3, 2018, at his home in Raleigh, North Carolina. He was 89. He worked for 30 years at the Food-service Packaging Institute, where he was the founder and editor of *Environmental News Digest* and a founding member of the National Conference for Food Protection. He later launched Charles Felix Associates, which provided consulting services and published the newsletters Food Protection Report and Food Talk.

SYLVIA N. HOLTZBERT, M.P.H. '69, died on March 9, 2019, at age 95. After earning her Master of Public Health degree, she went on to become deputy

director of Hudson Valley Hospital and vice president of Nyack Hospital.

BURNICE ELEANOR FUSSELL HUBBARD, M.P.H. '46, died at her home in Greenwich, Connecticut, on April 7, 2019. She was 105. Before attending college and receiving a Master of Public Health degree, she worked as a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse in Geneva, Nebraska. She also worked as a nutritionist in Greenwich.

FRANCES LILLIAN KENDALL, M.P.H. '82, died on Nov. 21, 2018, at her home after an eight-year battle with cancer. She was 64. After serving two years in the Peace Corps on the South Korean island of Ulleungdo, she received a Master of Public Health degree from the Yale School of Public Health and a doctorate in communications from the University of Missouri. She worked in the Communication Arts Department at Salisbury University in Maryland for 28 years.

CATHERINE MCQUILKIN KRAUJA, M.P.H. '86, died Oct. 12, 2018, in Tucson, Arizona, at age 66. She combined her interests in law and medicine in writing about bioethics and the right to die. She worked for the Hartford, Connecticut, law firm Day, Berry & Howard; the New York City Department of Veterans Affairs; and UnitedHealthcare. Later in her career, she worked in managed care and conducted epidemiology research for the U.S. Department of Defense.

JEAN C. MACCORISON, M.P.H. '68, died on Feb. 15, 2019, at age 93. She lived in Barrington, Rhode Island. Her career in public health spanned from Boston, Cape Cod and Northampton, Massachusetts, to locations in Rhode Island. Her last position before retirement was as executive director of the Rhode Island Lung Association, having guided the association over the years through a merger of local affiliates and a change of name. She was a past president of the Congress of Lung Association Staff.

JOHN F. MULLETT SR., M.P.H. '56, of Southington, Connecticut, died on Nov. 21, 2018, at the age of 90. A World War II veteran who served with the U.S. Navy, he attained the rank of commander before his retirement from military service. After earning a Master of Public Health degree, he served as an administrator at Boston University Medical Center before becoming director of St. Francis Hospital in Poughkeepsie, New York, and then director of Bradley Memorial Hospital in Southington.

EDWARD HAGOP NOROIAN, M.P.H. '58, died on Jan. 24, 2019, in Canaan, Connecticut, at the age of 91. After earning his Master of Public Health degree, he held various positions at Hartford Hospital, University Hospital in Baltimore, Presbyterian-University Hospital in Pittsburgh and Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia. In 1978, he was named executive vice president and chief operating officer of Presbyterian Hospital, the teach-

ing facility for Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. He later became president of Professional Health Services, Inc., a health care consulting firm that specialized in assisting hospital management.

SARUNG L. PHANG, M.P.H. '91, died on March 15, 2018.

NANO RUSH, M.P.H. '83, died on July 31, 2018, in Sarasota, Florida, at the age of 67. She had a career in public health administration in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Virginia and Florida and championed women's health, equal rights and other progressive causes. She enjoyed kayaking and was a certified nature guide. She also enjoyed traveling, volunteering at radio station WSRQ (public radio for the people) and volunteering for political campaigns.

MONROE W. SPERO, M.D., M.P.H. '64, died in New York City on March 15, 2019. He was born in Brooklyn, New York, and was a veteran of the U.S. Army.

ELLEN E. BANACH SULTANA, M.P.H. '88, died on April 30, 2019, at her home in Mansfield, Massachusetts at age 55. After working in health care administration for over 30 years, she launched her own successful health care consulting company in 2016.

J. LAWRENCE TANENBAUM, D.D.S., M.P.H. '74, died on April 7, 2019, at his home in New Haven at age 90. His dental practice specialized in treating facial pain, temporomandibular

disorders and sleep related breathing disorders. He was a clinical assistant professor at the School of Dental Medicine at the State University of New York in Stony Brook, section head of the Division of Orofacial Pain/TMD/Dental Sleep Medicine in the Department of Dental Medicine at the Long Island Jewish Medical Center and clinical assistant professor at Hofstra North Shore, LIJ School of Medicine. He was a past president of the American Academy of Orofacial Pain.

COL. WENDELL USSERY, M.P.H. '62, died on May 16, 2017, at age 82. He was a U.S. Air Force colonel who served in hospital administration at many Air Force bases including those in Alaska, Mississippi, Florida, Illinois and Washington, D.C., and an air base in Taiwan. After retiring from the military, he was an associate administrator for the Medical College of Georgia's hospital and clinics for four years before returning to his love of pharmacy. He worked for CVS Pharmacy and the VA Hospital until he retired.

SEND OBITUARY NOTICES TO
ysph.alumni@yale.edu.

IN MEMORIAM

LOWELL S. LEVIN

Founder of Yale School of Public Health's Global Health Division

Lowell S. Levin, M.P.H. '60, Ed.D., professor emeritus of the Yale School of Public Health and an adviser for more than three decades to the World Health Organization's European Region and to nongovernmental organizations throughout Europe and the Western Hemisphere, died on April 14. He was 91.

Dr. Levin joined Yale in 1963, and he ultimately led the Division of International Health and the Yale/WHO Centre for Health Promotion Policy and Research. He founded the Yale School of Public Health's Global Health Division in 1994. In 2009, YSPH created the Lowell Levin Prize, which is awarded annually to a graduating student whose work addresses health promotion and global health.

Dr. Levin's research often challenged established public health beliefs and practices. He was a pioneer in the self-care movement and a longstanding advocate of nonprofessional resources that strengthen personal capacity for health and well-being. Dr. Levin pressed for improvement in the quality of medical care, notably as a co-author of "Medicine on Trial," a groundbreaking volume documenting the extent of medical mistakes and other widespread medical scandals. Although highly controversial at the time, its findings were later confirmed.

Throughout his career, Dr. Levin published extensively, led numerous international seminars, served on editorial boards of scholarly journals, and spoke to a wide range of audiences. He emphasized health in the global context of social and economic development and the social determinants of health. Clarifying the links among poverty, social inequity and health, he coached policymakers in creating sustainable public health policies with a commitment toward the goal of investing in health. Dr. Levin participated in the creation of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, an international agreement signed at the first World Health Organization International Conference on Health Promotion in 1986.



Dr. Levin also had a long history of serving his community in formal and informal ways. He was a co-founder of Yale University Health Services for students, faculty, staff and their families. He took morning walks for many years with his beloved dogs and picked up litter ranging from a discarded cup to a tire. He organized a "We Mean Clean" initiative for New Haven volunteers to pick up neighborhood litter on Saturday mornings and was a founder of Friends of Beaver Ponds Park, previously a New Haven garbage dump, now a beautiful city park. He also served on the New Haven Solid Waste Management Commission.

Dr. Levin is a graduate of the University of California Los Angeles, Stanford University and Harvard University, where he received his doctorate in education. He received his training in public health at Yale University. He formally retired from Yale in 1998.

ON THE ISSUES

WITH LAURETTA GRAU

The number of opioid-involved overdose deaths has increased in Connecticut over the past few years, reaching nearly 1,000 in 2018 alone. What caused this increase? And what measures can be taken to reverse the trend?

Opioid-involved overdose deaths have been increasing in Connecticut (and nationally) for the past decade. Several events contributed to creating this public health crisis. In the 1990s, there was growing concern among some health care providers and stakeholders that chronic, non-cancer pain was not being adequately treated. This resulted in the Joint Commission identifying pain in 2001 as the “fifth vital sign” and recommending to screen for pain in all patients.

Based on little evidence, long-term opioid therapy became an accepted approach to chronic pain management. Potent, long-acting opioids were developed and marketed aggressively by the pharmaceutical industry. The number of opioid prescriptions and amount of opioids dispensed per prescription increased. “Pill mills” were opened.

As a result of all this, the availability of diverted opioids within the community at large and nonmedical use of prescription opioids mushroomed. The

Food and Drug Administration responded by encouraging the development of abuse-deterrent formulations of some oral opioids which, in turn, led to decreased availability of and higher prices for these pharmaceutical opioids on the illicit drug market.

The number of deaths involving pharmaceutical opioids began to decrease, but those involving heroin—a more potent and less expensive drug—increased. Deaths associated with illicitly produced fentanyl have increased dramatically in the past four years in Connecticut and now account for well over half the state’s accidental and undetermined deaths.

Just as no single event gave rise to the opioid crisis, no single strategy will mitigate or solve this problem. Multiple strategies are needed to address the crisis. These include supply-side harm reduction; expanded availability and easy access to methadone, buprenorphine or naltrexone treatment; and wider distribution of naloxone, a medication that can reverse an opioid overdose.

Prescribers and patients should receive education about the risk of opioid use and the benefits of non-opioid, non-pharmacologic approaches to chronic pain management. Health care providers need to learn effective ways to engage patients in discussions



STAN GODLEWSKI

about treatment options and how to counteract the stigma often associated with these effective medications.

The number of buprenorphine providers in the community should be increased, particularly in more remote regions where easy access to methadone treatment may be unrealistic.

Laretta Grau, Ph.D., is a research scientist in the Department of Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases at the Yale School of Public Health. She works on the overdose epidemic in Connecticut.

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From left to right:
Faith Crittenden, M.P.H. '20
candidate; Associate Professor
Marney White, Ph.D., M.S. '09;
alumna Dashni Sathasivam,
M.P.H. '19; and Brittany
Connolly, YDS '17, director,
Office of the Dean.