



DOWNSTATE
SCHOOL OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

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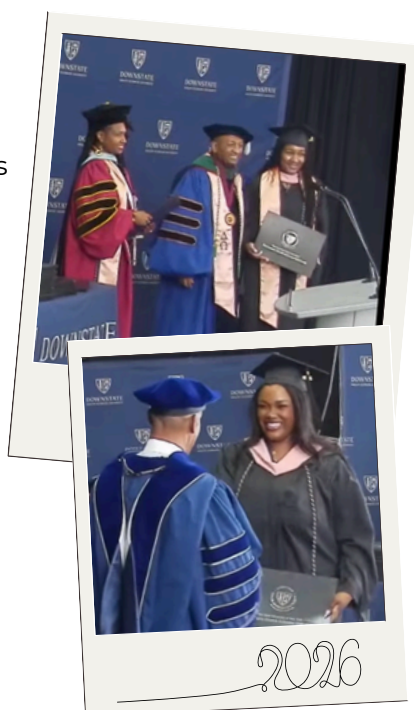


CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University celebrated a historic milestone with its first-ever university-wide Commencement on Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 1:00pm at the Amphitheater at Coney Island, uniting graduates from all five schools. More than 500 graduates earned degrees and certificates, reflecting the collaborative nature of today's healthcare workforce.

For the School of Public Health, the ceremony highlighted the critical role public health professionals play in addressing health disparities, advancing health equity, preventing disease, and improving population health through interdisciplinary collaboration. As Brooklyn's only academic medical center, Downstate equips SPH graduates with the knowledge, hands-on experience, and leadership skills to work alongside healthcare professionals in creating healthier communities.

The Class of 2026 now joins a workforce dedicated to strengthening public health systems, improving healthcare delivery, and making a lasting impact across Brooklyn, New York City, and beyond.



DELTA OMEGA AWARD CEREMONY

SUNY Downstate School of Public Health honored exceptional students, faculty, alumni, and community leaders during its 2026 Annual Awards and Delta Omega Induction Ceremony. Among the evening's top honorees, Tobi Somorin received both the 2026 Excellence in Public Health Award and the Dean's Medal of Excellence. Hannah Brown was recognized with the Samuel Kavalier, MD Award for General Excellence and the Roy Milner Seideman, MD Award for Academic Excellence, while Jenelle Cocorpus earned the Roy Milner Seideman, MD Award for Academic Excellence and the John J. Walsh, MD Award for Extraordinary Leadership. Additional award recipients included Rebecca Song (Lowell E. Bellin, MD Award), Julia Mullins-Manetas (Dr. Allen D. Spiegel Memorial Award), Madison Thomas (Dr. Mahfouz H. Zaki Memorial Award for Maternal & Child Health), Sapana Bastola (William Kuchler Award for Excellence in Biostatistics), and Alishia Goodridge, MLS, MBA, who received the Community Change Maker Award.

The Delta Omega Induction Ceremony recognized Jeffrey Putman, EdD, as the honorary inductee, Dr. Simone Reynolds as the faculty inductee, alumni Bradley Bodoosingh and Chizoba Ndulue. The ceremony concluded with congratulations from Dr. Marlene Camacho-Rivera, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, celebrating the accomplishments of the honorees and inductees while reaffirming the School of Public Health's commitment to developing future leaders dedicated to improving the health of communities.

We are interested in your accomplishments, personal or professional. If you would like us to highlight your achievements or be an alum feature, please email: Paula.Spann@Downstate.edu



CALL FOR ALUMNI ADVISORY MEMBERS

Join the SUNY Downstate School of Public Health Alumni Advisory Committee

Your journey with the SUNY Downstate School of Public Health doesn't end at graduation—it continues through your impact and leadership. We are seeking passionate and engaged alumni to serve on our Alumni Advisory Committee. This is an exciting opportunity to give back to your alma mater while helping shape the future of public health education and networking with others!

As a committee member, you will:

- Share your professional expertise and perspectives.
- Mentor and inspire current students.
- Strengthen alumni engagement and networking opportunities.
- Support strategic initiatives that advance the school's mission.
- Engage in thoughtful discussions with other alumni and SPH faculty - valuable networking opportunities!

Whether you're a recent graduate or a seasoned public health professional, your insights and experiences are invaluable. We invite you to join our Alumni Advisory Committee and help shape the future of the School.

To join, please contact Paula Spann at Paula.Spann@downstate.edu

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MHA TEAM!



**Mohamed Rami Nakeshbandi,
MD, MHA, FACP**

Dr. Nakeshbandi was appointed as **Executive Director of the MHA Program**. He currently serves as Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at UHD, where he provides clinical and strategic leadership across the clinical enterprise. He leads the institution's High Reliability Organization journey and health equity initiatives, advancing a culture focused on safety, accountability, and equity. His background as a clinician and healthcare executive positions him to guide the MHA Program in preparing future leaders for complex and rapidly changing health systems.



Ludmila Ferruzzi, DrPH, LMSW

Dr. Ferruzzi serves as a **Clinical Assistant Professor and Director of Masters of Healthcare Administration Program**. She has extensive experience in both clinical and administrative healthcare settings, including frontline hospital practice as a medical social worker and leadership roles in healthcare operations, care coordination, and project management. She previously served as a Senior Project Manager at a large healthcare organization, where she led corporate care coordination initiatives and operational improvement projects.



Jenna Noray, BS

Jenna serves as the **Professional Development Coordinator for the Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) Program**. In this role, she supports students throughout their academic journey by providing academic advisement, coordinating practicum and capstone experiences, facilitating career development initiatives, and building partnerships with healthcare organizations and community stakeholders. She is a proud alumna of SUNY Downstate, having completed her Advanced Certificate in Public Health through the School of Public Health.

SPOTLIGHT: EXCELLENCE IN HEALTHCARE



Downstate proudly celebrated four distinguished faculty and academic leaders at Schneps Media's 2026 Healthcare Heroes awards, one of New York's premier celebrations of healthcare excellence. **Dr. Elizabeth Helzner from the School of Public Health was recognized for advancing public health through leadership in epidemiology, education, and community-based research.** As Interim Chair of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, she has strengthened academic programs, expanded opportunities for students, and advanced research focused on aging, chronic disease, hearing loss, cognition, and health disparities among underserved urban populations.

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