



THE SPH DIGEST

The SUNY Downstate School of Public Health official newsletter

DEC 2018 ISSUE

WELCOME FROM THE INTERIM DEAN

I am pleased to introduce the new electronic newsletter for SUNY Downstate's School of Public Health. In it, we will be sharing updates about our School's activities, information about the work of our students and faculty, and announcements about upcoming events. We are particularly excited to share new and important changes happening here at the School of Public Health, including the completion of our brand new Public Health Academic Building and the exciting appointment of our new Dean, Dr. Kitaw Demissie! The SUNY Downstate School of Public Health is at the forefront of addressing the needs of urban and immigrant populations in Brooklyn and beyond, and as we continue to grow, we aim to find new and better ways to empower our students, faculty, and staff and improve the health and well-being of underserved communities.



Judie H. LaRosa, PhD, RN

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DR. KITAW DEMISSIE APPOINTED NEW SPH DEAN, TO START JANUARY 2019



Kitaw Demissie, MD, PhD

In November 2018, SUNY Downstate President **Wayne J. Riley** announced the appointment of **Dr. Kitaw Demissie, M.D., Ph.D** as the new dean for the School of Public Health. Dr. Demissie is a nationally-recognized academic public health leader and researcher in the fields of health disparities and minority health, perinatal health, and cancer. Dr. Demissie will begin his tenure as SPH Dean in January 2018. A full feature will follow in the next issue. A very special thanks to **Dr. Judith H. LaRosa, Ph.D., RN**, Distinguished Service Professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management for serving as Interim Dean during the transition period, and **Dr. Michael A. Joseph, Ph.D, M.P.H** for serving as Chair of the National Search Committee for the new SPH Dean.

FOUNDING SPH DEAN APPOINTED SENIOR VP OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FOR SUNY DOWNSTATE



Pascal James Imperato, MD, MPH&TM, MACP

The School of Public Health wishes to express our appreciation to our Founding Dean, **Pascal James Imperato, MD, MPH&TM, MACP**, an internationally recognized leader in national and global health, for his remarkable wisdom and leadership in establishing the School of Public Health -- the first and only School of Public Health in Brooklyn, New York. His leadership moved a Master of

Public Health Program, created in 2000, to a fully accredited School of Public Health in 2010. Dr. Imperato has recently been appointed the Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs of the SUNY Downstate Medical Center. The School of Public Health celebrates and applauds this appointment and looks forward to Dr. Imperato's continued service to our students and their academic experience at the SUNY Downstate Medical Center.

2018 RAO SCHOLARS ANNOUNCED

Congratulations to the following doctoral students who have been awarded the Rao Scholarships 2018-2019: **Damian Bird** for *HIV testing and PrEP Utilization among Afro-Caribbean Men and Women*, **Natalie Octave** for *Exploring Acculturation and Generational Differences in Diet in a Brooklyn Caribbean Population*, **Harrynauth Persaud** for *Healthcare Decisions among Indo-Guyanese Immigrant Men in the United States: Behaviors, Barriers and Cultural influences*, and **Mireille St. Pierre** for *Understanding Afro-Caribbean Christian Women Experiences with Intimate Partner Violence in New York City*. **Alicia Rao, M.D.** and **Madu Rao, M.D.** have graciously established this scholarship for Doctor of Public Health students at the SPH. The scholarships will afford opportunities for doctoral students moving forward to their dissertation to be successful in their research and ultimately become contributors to public health science.



NEW HOME FOR THE SPH

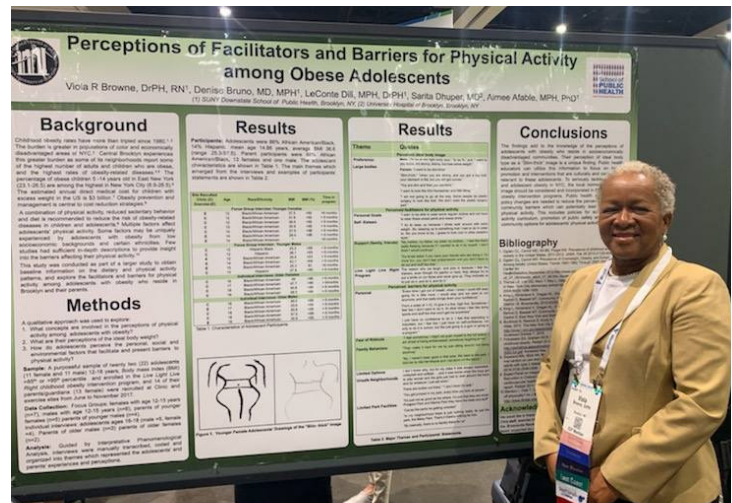
The School of Public Health has recently expanded into our new, state-of-the-art Public Health Academic Building for the Fall 2018 term. The building, designed by Ennead Architects, contains office space for faculty, staff, and graduate students, common lounge areas, conference rooms, classrooms, and event space. It will also contain open-plan research laboratories, a state-of-the-art clinical simulation center, and multi-function spaces designed to accommodate team-based learning. Situated between the Basic Sciences Building (BSB) and Clarkson Avenue, the new building's entrance plaza will open into an expansive lobby serving both buildings.

FACULTY HONORED WITH PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS

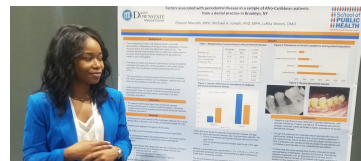
In May 2018, Assistant Professor in the SPH Department of Health Policy and Management, **Dr. Daniel Ehlke**, received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Distinguished Service Professor in the SPH Department of Community Health Sciences, **Dr. Tracey Wilson**, was honored at this year's Sportsball 2018, the 24th Annual Black Tie and Sneakers Gala hosted by the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health, in October 2018; she was awarded for her extensive research efforts towards reducing health disparities in underserved communities.

STUDENTS AND FACULTY REPRESENT DOWNSTATE AT APHA CONFERENCE

A number of Downstate SPH faculty and students were selected to present at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting and Expo on November 10-14, 2018. MPH student, **Mahlaqa Butt**, gave a talk, "Low-dose ketamine versus morphine to severe pain in the Emergency Department geriatric population: A prospective, randomized, double-blind study;" MPH student **Antara Afrin**, on behalf of classmates **Yasmeen Mohammad**, **Khady Ndiaye**, and **Brandon Yarde**, presented a poster entitled, "Barriers and enablers of healthy food access among low-income Afro-Caribbeans in Crown Heights, Brooklyn;" DrPH student, **Chanee Massiah**, presented a poster called, "Factors associated with periodontal disease in a sample of Afro-Caribbean patients from a dental practice in Brooklyn, NY." DrPH student, **Bianca Rivera** taught a class called "Epidemiology for Non-Epidemiologists" with **Dr. Simone Reynolds**. MPH students, **Alyson Clarke**, **Tasnim Ahmad**, and **Maya Lloyd** (on behalf of classmates **Beverly Chang** and **Brittany Daughtry**), presented a poster entitled, "Health disparities in gentrified communities: The ongoing fight for health equality and social justice of minority residents in Harlem." SPH alumna, **Viola Browne**, DrPH presented a poster entitled, "Perceptions of facilitators and barriers for physical activity among obese adolescents," developed with SPH faculty, Drs. D. Bruno, L. Dill, and A. Afable; Dr. Browne was also honored with the Award for Outstanding Research in the Area of Physical Activity by the Physical Activity Section of the American Public Health Association, for her work on the poster presentation!



SPH alumna Viola Browne, DrPH



Clockwise from Top Left: Chanee Massiah, MPH (DrPH student), Associate Professor of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Dr. Michael Joseph, and Nicole McLean, MPH (MPA alumna); MPH students Maya Lloyd, Alyson Clarke, and Tasnim Ahmad; MPH student Antara Afrin; DrPH student Chanee Massiah

In addition, several SPH faculty also participated in the conference: **Dr. Simone Reynolds** taught a 2-day course "Epidemiology for non-epidemiologists;" **Dr. Sergios-Orestis Kolokotronis** gave a talk entitled, "Evolution and epidemic spread of extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa." **Dr. Michael Joseph** taught a course, "Biostatistics for non-statisticians," and was also a co-author on a poster with collaborators from the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health, entitled "Training the next generation of health disparities researchers: Addressing underrepresentation in clinical research through mentored internships with minority high school and undergraduate students."

APHA 2018 | **SAN DIEGO**
Annual Meeting & Expo | NOV. 10 – 14