

Karla A. Ortiz García, MPH

With An Advising Concentration in Epidemiology

What brought you to the field of Public Health?

From a young age I was taught that it is our responsibility as human beings and caring citizens to aid those in need. As the daughter of a physician and a registered nurse, I was able to see their passion for service and knowledge of their professions, which served as my inspiration to also pursue a career in public health.

Why was SUNY Downstate SPH the school for you?

While I decided which dental schools I wanted to apply to, I worked toward an Advanced Certificate of Public Health at SUNY Downstate because it was a one-year informative certification and it was in New York. After finishing this certification, I decided to complete the full Master of Public Health program because I enjoyed the environment and academic opportunities it provided me, such as gaining first-hand experience working with underserved communities through the NYSDOH Cancer Services Program.

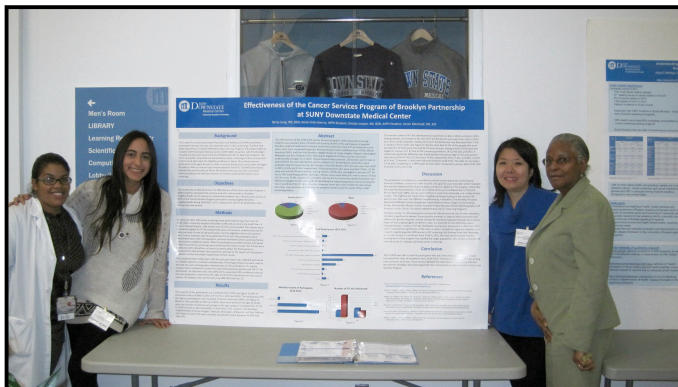


What would you say to students considering studying public health at SUNY Downstate?

I would say that it is a great school with faculty and students from many different racial/ethnic and religious backgrounds that creates a unique learning environment for students to learn how to approach all public health issues with cultural competence.

Could you tell us about your fieldwork?

For my field experience I developed a complete database based on the 2014-2015 data from the NYSDOH Cancer Services Program (CSP) and performed statistical analysis using SPSS. As a result, I



was able to complete a research paper and a poster, which was presented in the First Annual Cancer Health Disparities Symposium. I also had the opportunity to be familiarized with public health events where we provided community health education and screenings (blood pressure, asthma, BMI and body fat % measurements).

How has studying at SUNY Downstate prepared you for a career in Public Health?

Attending graduate school at SUNY Downstate Medical Center School of Public Health has been a life changing experience, which continues to provide me with public health knowledge and skills needed when working in any medical field. Completing an MPH, with a concentration in Epidemiology, has been a rewarding experience that has taught me about various fields in the public health arena. I believe my time at SUNY, volunteering and participating in research in the field of dental epidemiology, have prepared me to fulfill my future academic endeavors in dental school, which I plan to attend this Fall 2016.