

THE BRIDGE

A monthly newsletter connecting CSUN public health students, faculty, alumni, and communities



Photo by C. Valdez, July 2024

A Message From the Editors

Hello Alumni, Students, Faculty, and Community Partners—Welcome to the first issue of *The Bridge* for the 2024–2025 academic year. I am pleased to introduce BSPH student, Jenni Medina, the newest member of *The Bridge* team. Jenni is already making valuable contributions to the newsletter (check out her page on the importance of health literacy) and we look forward to working together to connect CSUN students, faculty, alumni, and the local public health community through this newsletter. As always, if you have updates, news, or other content suggestions please let us know by using this [form](#).

-Dr. Carla Valdez

Hello everyone! I am excited to share that I am now one of the editors for *The Bridge*. As a student pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health, I have always been passionate about promoting health awareness and health equity in the community. Addressing the root cause of health problems and advocating for systemic changes is my true passion.

I joined *The Bridge* because I believe in providing valuable resources and information to connect our diverse network of students, faculty, alumni, and communities. It brings together my love for creativity and writing with my passion for public health. I am looking forward to bringing fresh perspectives and ideas to *The Bridge*.

-Jenni Medina

Newsletter Highlights

Wellness: Health Literacy

Program Updates

Student Spotlight

This is Public Health

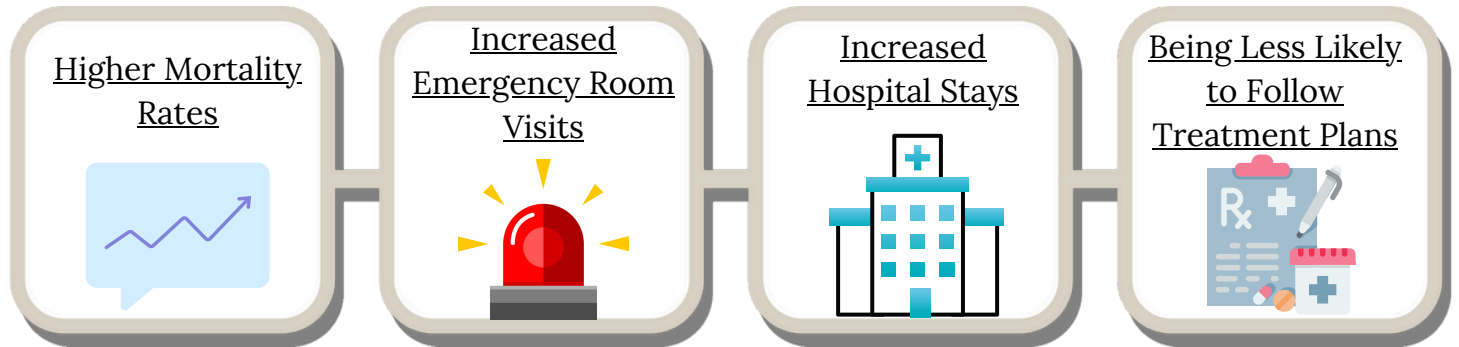
Calendar

Wellness

Boosting Health Literacy: Personal and Organizational Strategies

Health literacy is the ability to understand and use information and services to make health-related decisions that promote and maintain good health.

Low health literacy is linked to:



As public health professionals, we have an opportunity to enhance health literacy within our communities. Here are some strategies, personal and organizational, that can make a meaningful impact:

PERSONAL

ORGANIZATIONAL

Credible Sources

Find reliable sources for health information like government agencies, medical schools, research institutions, and non-profit organizations.
[National Library of Medicine Presentation](#)

Content Free of Jargon

Unnecessary text leads to skipping over valuable information. Aim to eliminate redundancy and ensure clear and concise text.

Encourage Youth

Set up youth for success by encouraging them to ask questions and include them in conversations with their doctor.

Accessibility

Make sure any websites and apps are easy to use and contain visual aids when necessary.
[Guidelines for Effective Writing](#)

Digital Health Literacy

It is crucial to understand how to navigate health websites, search effectively, and avoid harmful information.
[Online Health Information Learning Activities](#)

Dedicated Translators

Having dedicated translators can provide a more unbiased healthcare experience and supports health literacy with diverse audiences.
[Language Access Services](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM UPDATES

Message from the Public Health Program Director

Welcome back! I hope you all had an enjoyable summer and that your semester is off to a great start! Below are a few important reminders:

- Students should meet with our department academic advisors for general HSCI academic advising, graduation checks, and change of majors. The following two academic advisors are generally available M-F from 9 am-5 pm. Please email them to schedule an appointment, or ask about walk-in hours:
 - Josefina Gudino: josefina.gudino@csun.edu (JD 2554)
 - Moises Hernandez: moises.hernandez@csun.edu (JD 2550)
- All BSPH students are assigned a faculty advisor alphabetically by last name. Please see the list below and contact your faculty advisor for career guidance and mentorship as we move through the semester

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me (stephanie.benjamin@csun.edu). Best wishes for a safe and successful semester!

Dr. Stephanie Benjamin

BSPH Faculty Advisors

Student last names beginning with:	Advisor:	Contact Information:
A-Bre	Bahr, K.	kaitlin.bahr@csun.edu
Bri-Cruz	Benjamin, S.	stephanie.benjamin@csun.edu
Cu-Fay	Emetu, B.	bobbie.emetu@csun.edu
Fe-Had	Forster, M.	myriam.forster@csun.edu
Haf-Lee	Kwan, P.	patty.kwan@csun.edu
Lef-Mia	Blackman, K.	kacie.blackman@csun.edu
Mic-Och	Sawyer, M.	mirna.sawyer@csun.edu
Od-Rav	Rogers, C.	christopher.rogers@csun.edu
Ray-Sand	Madjzoob, G.	gretta.madjzoob@csun.edu
Sant-Z	Young, K.	kathleen.young@csun.edu

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM UPDATES

Awesome NEWS



Dr. Kathleen Young was recently elected to the Los Angeles Fulbright Board of Directors and is the new Director of Advocacy 2024-present.

Dr. Young is also scheduled to present at the 6th International Conference on Public Health and Well-Being. Her session is titled *Important Elements in Community Organizing and Community Building in Municipal Development.*



Congratulations, MPH Students!



CSUN MPH Students Selected for the CSU Sally Casanova Scholars Program

Sally Casanova Scholars have unique opportunities to explore and prepare to succeed in doctoral programs. Scholars receive one-on-one guidance provided by faculty members within the CSU and the opportunity to work with faculty from doctoral-granting institutions.



Top (left to right): Stephanie Orijiakor and Renee Medina

Bottom (left to right): Jorge Vigil and Mikaela Rojas

more
great
news...

Dr. Bobbie Emetu, who serves as a Commissioner for the Commission for Women and chairs the Sexual & Gender Diverse Women Committee, developed a new curriculum that focuses on the wellbeing of lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer women. The curriculum will be made available at the LA County Commission of Women [website](#).



The **Health Education Student Organization (HESO)** was recently awarded the Thomas E. Piernik Matador Spirit Award from the Matador Involvement Center (MIC). This award recognizes an individual or organization that has expressed and continues to demonstrate CSUN spirit and pride. BSPH students are encouraged to check out [HESO's website](#) for the calendar of events, how to join, and the meeting schedule.



Left to right: HESO members Sarah Hernandez, Belen Contreras, Stephanny Salas



Left to right: Liz Casillas (BSPH student), Adriana Abraamyan, MPH (CSUN 2020), Genevieve Thomas (WIC), and Brenda Vieyya (WIC).

CSUN Students and Alumni Attend the BreastfeedLA 2024 Conference



BreastfeedLA is dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of infants and families through education, outreach, and advocacy to promote and support breastfeeding.

CSUN students partnered with iDREAM for Racial Health Equity to table the BreastfeedLA conference.

Left to right: Mahi Morou (CSUN BSPH '24, Tseng MPH student), Toni Walker (CSUN MPH student), Wenonah Valentine (Executive Director, iDREAM for Racial Health Equity), Oscar Chavez (CSUN BSPH student), Courtney Frazier (CSUN Biology Alumna), Selena Haddad (CSUN BSPH student), and Ellen Branch (Asst. Program Manager, iDREAM for Racial Health Equity)



PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM UPDATES

Welcome New Health Sciences Lecturers

Tahsin Rahman, MPH



Hi everyone! My name is Tahsin Rahman, and I am a part-time lecturer at CSUN and a fourth-year PhD student in the Health Behavior Research program at USC. My ultimate goal this semester is to provide academic support to my HSCI 390 and 391 students, while also helping them feel empowered and confident in their learning journey. Having completed my MPH in Community Health Education at CSUN in 2020, I truly believe this institution and its dedicated faculty have been an integral part in shaping my growing passion for the field of public health. Coming back as a lecturer now, my hope is to continue this momentum and share this passion with my students, highlighting the field's vital role in promoting wellness, reducing the burden of disease, and mitigating the salient health disparities in our communities.

Hi everyone! I'm Anju Kane, and I'm excited to join CSUN this fall as a part-time lecturer teaching HSCI 431. I'm currently a 3rd-year Ph.D. student at the Keck School of Medicine of USC, with research interests in sexual and reproductive health, climate change, and health equity. Beyond academia, I've spent nearly ten years in the Los Angeles birth equity space and have led community-based health initiatives and interventions. This semester, I'm looking forward to sharing my passion for public health and global health equity with the Matador community and to creating an engaging and impactful learning experience!

Anju Kane, MPH, MA



Lizbeth Becerra, MPH



Hello, I'm Lizbeth Becerra, and I'll be teaching HSCI 441 for Fall 2024. I'm a proud double Matador, having earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Health in 2016 and later returning to complete a Master of Public Health in Community Health Education in 2020. My professional background includes experience as a community health worker and educator, program management, and co-leading various health initiatives in both the non-profit and government sectors, in addition to consulting services. My hope for this semester is to ensure that my students feel comfortable with program planning (part 1) and offer my relevant insights from working in non-profit and LAC-DPH.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

UCLA Public Health Scholars Training Program



CSUN BSPH students were selected for the UCLA Public Health Scholars Training Program, a competitive program that took place in summer 2024. Read about Luis Arenas and Erica Lopez's experiences as part of a cohort of approximately 30 students. They share insights into their rigorous 8-week workforce training, details about their Health Equity Poster, and their experiences collaborating with other scholars.

The UCLA Public Health Scholars Training Program was an experience full of learning, professional development, networking, and working collaboratively with the other cohort members and mentors.

I was placed at Venice Family Clinic for my internship site and I had the opportunity to work as a health education intern for the diabetes management program. Through the program and field placement, I was able to develop my skills as a public health professional and also build my network with the faculty at UCLA and professionals at Venice Family Clinic.

What I most cherish about my experience with the program is making genuine connections and memories with my fellow cohort members. They inspired me and I know that the future of Public Health is in good hands.

The health topic for the Health Equity Poster was "The Impact of Critical Health Literacy On Diabetes Outcomes among Latinx Adults in the United States." I worked with 3 other exceptional, motivational, and intelligent Public Health Scholars who shared the same passion and enthusiasm for public health. The collaboration process for the Health Equity poster was relatively smooth because my group members and I were proactive in doing the research and conducting the literature review. I can say that my group members were easy to work with because we communicated well with each other and when we did split up the research process, everyone delivered multiple peer-reviewed articles. We actually ended up having more references than we needed at the end. When it came to presenting our poster at the CDC, despite the nerves we knew

that we were the masters of our material and because we practiced presenting several times, we felt confident and prepared so that the presentation felt almost like a conversation. Overall, I built meaningful connections with my group that I know will last a lifetime. To anyone thinking about applying for the UCLA Public Health Scholars Training Program, I say do it because it really is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I can honestly say that I am a different person than I was before the program.

Luis Arenas, BSPH Student



Left to right: Luis Arenas (CSU Northridge), Andrea Rodriguez (CSU Long Beach), Seblework Alemu (University of Virginia), and Santiago Fuentes (CSU East Bay)

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

UCLA Public Health Scholars Training Program



Erica Lopez, BSPH Student

I had the privilege of being part of the UCLA Public Health Scholars Training Program, where I was able to apply my knowledge of public health in the community, network with public health experts, and develop my professional skills. I was placed at Peace Over Violence, where I worked as a Community Outreach and Engagement Assistant. Peace Over Violence is dedicated to building healthy relationships, families and communities free from sexual, domestic, and interpersonal violence.

While there, I created a training curriculum for the incoming violence prevention volunteers. In this role, I learned how to tailor intervention trainings to be most effective for different

populations. I also assisted with outreach to establish connections at other non-profit organizations in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. Both the UCLA program and field placement nurtured my passion for health equity and helped me fine-tune my public health and professional skills.

One aspect of the UCLA program is working with a team on a poster presentation and I had the honor of collaborating on the presentation with three amazing scholars. The title of our Health Equity Poster was "Barriers to Accessing and Completing Tuberculosis Treatment Among Foreign-Born People in California."

The individuals I worked with were determined, dedicated, and overall passionate about minority health and infectious diseases which is what led us to finding our research topic. We collectively researched, organized, and finalized every aspect of the presentation. We were part of the first group to present at the CDC showcase, which definitely heightened the nerves. On the other hand, we knew that we completely understood our material and that gave us confidence. Presenting with my group felt natural.

I highly recommend everyone apply to the UCLA Public Health Scholars Internship Program. The program facilitators and mentors were extremely supportive in nurturing our interests. This program gave me the confidence I needed to throw myself into the Public Health field.



Left to right: Hannah Aguinaga (UC Merced), Rosie Yang (CSU Chico), Erica Lopez (CSU Northridge), and Aisling Murphy-Gonzalez (CSU San Bernadino)

PUBLIC HEALTH ALUMNI UPDATES

Alumni Needed for Public Health Alumni Chapter Leadership Positions!



Would you like to play a leadership role with the Public Health Alumni Chapter?

The chapter supports member networking, professional development, continuing education, student scholarships, and other programs.

Please complete a [brief form](#) to express interest. If you have any questions, please contact Carla Valdez (mary.valdez@csun.edu), faculty liaison to the chapter.

Join the Chapter!

All Public Health alumni are invited to join the CSUN Public Health Alumni Chapter! It's easy and FREE to become a member of the chapter. Membership has benefits! [Learn more.](#)



JOIN NOW

Congratulations to **Dr. Carla Valdez** who was named *Chapter Faculty Advisor of the Year* by the CSUN Alumni Association. She was recognized for her on-going work with the Public Health Alumni Chapter as well as her contributions to the CSUN Public Health 50th Anniversary Gala.

Well done!

THIS IS PUBLIC HEALTH

The Bridge Team has curated a list of podcasts, recommended readings, community events, and job/internship opportunities. Click on the underlined hyperlinks to be redirected to each one.

PODCASTS



Public Health On Call: [Everything You Need to Know About Sunscreen](#) (15 min.)

Breastcancer.org Podcast: [Summer 2024 Breast Cancer Research Round Up](#) (37 min.)

CDC Podcast: [Emerging Infectious Diseases Series](#) (24 min.)

RECOMMENDED READING

[A Look at State Efforts to Ban Cellphones in Schools and Implications for Youth Mental Health](#)
State-level cellphone bans at school are being considered due to the rise of student academic and mental health concerns. These bans have received bipartisan support but face obstacles in enforcement.

[The Health Gap: The Challenge of an Unequal World](#) by Michael Marmot (Book)
Health disparities reflect not just poverty but deep social inequalities. Marmot states that addressing these disparities requires empowering individuals and addressing systemic imbalances.



COMMUNITY EVENTS



[Summit 2024: Strategies for Unhoused Youth](#) hosted by The Village Family Services at CSUN

Naloxone (Narcan) Clinics offers an in-person program at [San Fernando Library](#). Receive free doses and a brief training on how to administer Naloxone.

[Family Hike](#) at Eaton Canyon Nature Center hosted by Awenesst Birth

JOB/INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

CSUN Klotz Student Health Center: [Health Promotion Specialist](#)

Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science: [Program Coordinator](#) & [Program Manager](#)

Tarzana Treatment Center: [SUD Trainer](#)

The Whole Child: [Health Educator](#)





News and Updates from SOPHE

Since 1995, SOPHE has led the National Health Education Week (NHEW) celebration during the third week of October. NHEW activities increase awareness of major public health issues and promote a better understanding of the role of health education and health promotion.

Join SOPHE, its chapters, members, and partners every October for events, webinars, and activities across the country.



Register now for the following 2024 daily webinars:

- Monday** Artificial Intelligence and Health Education: Understanding Future Implications for the Profession
- Tuesday** Nurturing Mental Wellness for a Healthier Tomorrow
- Wednesday** Environmental Wellness: Health in the Age of Climate Change
- Thursday** Health Literacy Game-Changers for Health Equity Champions
- Friday** Workforce Development: Growing the Pipeline and Exploring Career Options

SOPHE Offers CHES Exam Preparation Modules

Prepare for the Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES®) exam with this comprehensive eight-part webinar package. Aligned with the Health Education Specialist Practice Analysis II (HESPA II 2020) model, each module provides essential knowledge and skills for each key health education and promotion responsibility and includes handouts and tools. Available on demand. [Learn more here.](#)



Registration for the April 2025 CHES exam opens November 1, 2024. [Learn more!](#)

OCTOBER 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

3

CSUN event: Breast Cancer Awareness
10:00am-2:00pm at Sierra Lawn

10

CSUN event: Mental Health Awareness Fair
10:00am-2:00pm at Sierra Lawn

16



CSUN event: Campus Sustainability Day
10:00am-2:00pm at Sierra Lawn

19-21

SOPHE'S 26th Annual Advocacy Summit: Advocating for
Equity Where we Live, Work and Play



27-30

2024 APHA Annual Meeting and Expo



OCTOBER

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Read about breast cancer basics, reducing the risk, and screening guidelines.

SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTERS!

Subscribe to get monthly access to The Bridge.



CONTRIBUTE TO THE BRIDGE

Please use this form to submit updates, news, and other content suggestions for The Bridge.



CSUN

CALIFORNIA
STATE UNIVERSITY
NORTHRIDGE

**ALL CSUN FACULTY, ALUMNI AND STUDENTS
are invited to join the**

CSUN APHA 2024 SOCIAL

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28

6:30 PM

SONORA MEXICAN KITCHEN & BAR

[HTTPS://SONORAMEXICANKITCHENANDBAR.COM/](https://sonoramexicankitchenandbar.com/)

**PLEASE RSVP BY OCTOBER 4
WITH THE QR BELOW**



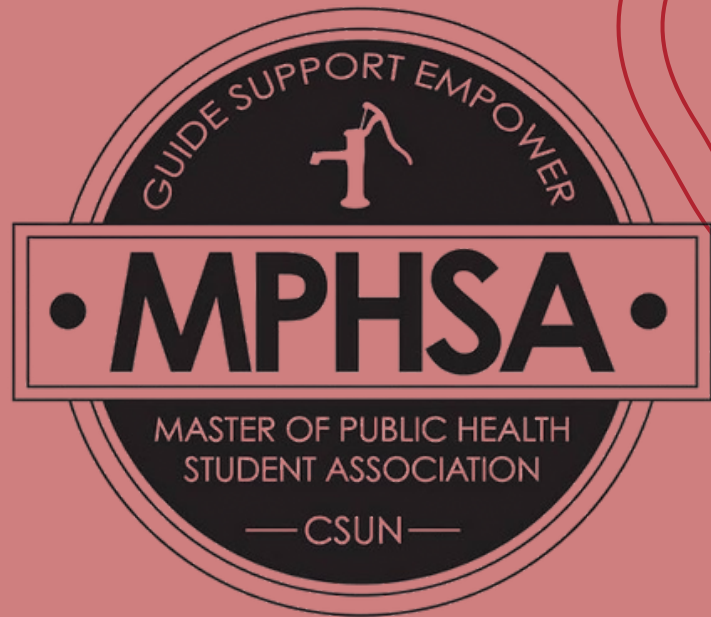
B.Y.O.H.S

(BRING YOUR OWN HOT SAUCE)

MINNESOTA SPICE IS NOT EQUAL TO CALIFORNIA SPICE

MPHSA

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH



WHAT IS MPHSA?

AN ORGANIZATION THAT SEEKS TO GUIDE, SUPPORT, AND EMPOWER STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE MPH PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE THEIR ACADEMIC, PROFESSIONAL, AND SOCIAL GOALS.

MEMBER OPPORTUNITIES

- NETWORKING
- CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- GUIDANCE ON MPH PROGRAM
- SOCIAL EVENTS



JOIN MPHSA:

WE ARE ACCEPTING MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS!

FILL OUT THE GOOGLE FORM TODAY!

CONTACT US VIA EMAIL:

Follow us: @csun_mphsa

Fall 2024 September 3-December 10

SANGHA AT CSUN

PRACTICING MINDFULNESS TOGETHER IN COMMUNITY

TUESDAYS 8:30AM-9:30AM,

@ GARDEN LEVEL OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY IN ROOM 3 (FACDEV COMMONS)



A collaborative effort between:

The Institute for Community Health and Wellbeing, Family Consumer Sciences Department & the Child and Adolescent Development Department.

Join the Sangha at CSUN for weekly group mindfulness practice sessions led by trained facilitators. The aim of this group is to provide a communal space for **CSUN students, faculty, staff, administrators, and external community members** to engage in meditation and mindfulness practices together.

Registration suggested

