M-CHE directors Stephen Thomas and Sandra Quinn continue to engage in various health disparities and health promotion activities throughout the nation. Among other activities during the past few months, Dr. Thomas presented the keynote address at SOPHE’s 16th Annual Health Education Advocacy Summit, a keynote address on the Ethical Responsibility of Universities to their Communities at Eastern Carolina University, and a keynote on 4th Generation Health Disparities Research at the University of Hawaii as part of their Comprehensive Cancer Center Distinguished Lecture Series. Additionally, in late March, Dr. Thomas was invited to the White House in for a special ceremony in the East Room.
where President Obama spoke on the need for meaningful change in gun legislation. “...The President was surrounded by mothers who had lost children to gun violence. It sent a powerful message about the importance of survivors as messengers for gun control,” said Dr. Thomas.

Dr. Quinn, in addition to managing the recruitment efforts for her vaccine disparities and FDA studies, continues to work on the developing Collaborative School of Public Health with University of Maryland Baltimore. More details on this collaboration can be found in the article below (MPowering the State). Dr. Quinn was also an invited participant in the panel, The UNC Department of Health Behavior as a Proving Ground: Perspectives from Former Faculty, held on April 12 to honor Jo Anne Earp, a professor at the Gillings School of Global Public Health at UNC-Chapel Hill.

MPowering the State

On April 4, 2013, the SPH sponsored its first Public Health Research@Maryland event, part of the “MPowering the State” initiative, a partnership between the University of Maryland, Baltimore and College Park campuses designed to maximize strengths and resources through linking programs and forming collaborations. Dr. Quinn organized the keynote event and introduced the speaker, Dr. Donald (D.A.) Henderson, the international public health hero who led the global campaign to eradicate smallpox. To see Dr. Henderson’s address, go to http://sph.umd.edu/PHRM/index.html.

The all day event included poster sessions and round-table discussions designed to be inclusive of faculty from both campuses. Dr. Thomas and Dr. Claudia Baquet, UM Baltimore School of Medicine, facilitated the round-table discussion on health disparities and the Maryland Health Enterprise Zones. Additionally, presentations from M-CHE associate directors included James Butler's: National Survey Results on Investigator Strategies used to Retain Minorities in Research, Mary Garza's: Toward a Deeper Understanding of African American and Latino Participation in Research and Craig Fryer's: Racial Concordance in the Respectful Recruitment of Underrepresented Minorities in Research.

Training the Trainers

Developing faculty and researchers today are finding themselves fighting for success in an environment of increasing competition for ever-more limited federal funds. A good mentor can have a huge impact on the success of these scholars, and can help increase the diversity and success of students who choose careers in research. But the difference between a “mentor” and “tormentor” can be hard to spot. Becoming a good mentor can be challenging and many researchers now look for training programs to give them tips on how they can best help the next generation excel in their chosen profession.
The M-CHE is proud to serve as a training site for a new mentoring curriculum being developed by the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. On May 28th, senior faculty from the M-CHE and faculty from the University of Maryland College Park campus, will participate in a beta-test of the UW Research Mentoring Program’s Community Engaged Researchers Curriculum. This curriculum “focuses on training the mentors of researchers whose work is conducted with the input and, in some cases, the direct and full participation of community members”. Organized by Drs. Quinn and Passmore, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, this training will prepare senior faculty facilitators who will deliver the mentoring curriculum to other faculty in the fall semester. The M-CHE supports ways to help researchers successfully engage with communities, and we are happy to assist our partners at UW develop a training program to help researchers work with communities in greatest need of our scientific products.

Cultural Beliefs behind Vaccine Racial Disparities

The vaccine study continues to move forward with a great response to its initial recruitment. The team completed 13 preliminary interviews in Maryland and Georgia, and has begun conducting focus groups in the Washington DC metropolitan area. Thus far, the response has been very enthusiastic. Data collection will continue through June.

Additionally, the Vaccine Disparities team (Sandra Quinn, Vicki Freimuth, Karen Hilyard, Don Musa and Kevin Kim) has a forthcoming article, Exploring Communication, Trust in Government, and Vaccination Intention Later in the 2009 H1N1 Pandemic: Results of a National Survey, due out in the June 2013 issue of Biosecurity and Bioterrorism: Biodefense Strategy, Practice and Science. The online, ahead of print version is available now at: http://online.liebertpub.com/toc/bsp/0/0

Community Engagement and Research

The Maryland Community Research Advisory Board (MD-CRAB) continues to serve as an important resource for investigators to present their research to the community, learn how to culturally tailor their research and for the community to learn more about how research may be a personal benefit to them, their family and their neighborhoods. In addition to educational sessions on the social determinants of health, the MD-CRAB also heard from principal investigators on a range of research topics including: 1) A Predictive Model on Intent to Become a Human Subject (Dr. Quinn); 2) Environmental Justice (Sacoby Wilson); 3) Community Values and Allocation of Resources in a Disaster (E. Daugherty); 4) Cultural Beliefs and Vaccine Disparities (Dr. Quinn); 5) The Black Men’s Health Initiative Part I (Dr. Thomas); 6) The Black Men’s Health Initiative Part II (Jermaine Bond).
We’re also excited to report that the Legacy Leaders in Public Policy completed its work in Annapolis with amazing success. The 2013 Legislative Session will go down in history as one of the most remarkable for advancing legislation on ending death penalty, marriage equality and resources to build a new health care delivery system in Prince George’s County. The class of 2013 also received health equity lectures by Dr. Thomas members of the M-CHE team as one component of our effort to incorporate the health in all policy.

The Bioethics Research Infrastructure Initiative: Building Trust Between Minorities & Researchers

We continue to work with Interactive Knowledge on the development of our online Building Trust curriculum. The on-line program will feature three Units designed to help the viewer understand health research and how to become informed and involved in health and medical research. While we provide the content, Interactive Knowledge transforms it into an interactive experience on the web, with activities, videos, and engaging graphics. We have finalized the visual design for Unit 1, are nearly finished with Unit 2, and are focusing our current efforts on our third, and final Unit. We are very excited about the development of this program and the progress we’ve made and are projecting an early summer release date!

For now, to see some examples of Interactive Knowledge’s other work, please visit their website at: www.interactiveknowledge.com. We were especially inspired by their Roots of Health Inequity program, available here: http://rootsofhealthinequity.org.

Staff and Student News

The Maryland Center for Health Equity (M-CHE) is pleased to announce that its team continues to grow, with the recent additions of two new staff members, LaShae Green and Catherine Pickles. LaShae joined M-CHE in February as the Center’s business manager. She came to us with over 18 years of combined administrative and business experiences including over seven years in the University of Maryland system. Cathy arrived at the Center in late March as our Administrative Assistant. She brings over 15 years of experience as an administrative assistant and an educational background in women’s history, particularly the experiences of African American and Native American women during western expansion. We extend a warm welcome to both LaShae and Cathy!

We are also happy to host a student intern this summer at M-CHE, Amelia Jamison. Amelia is a graduate student in anthropology, and is required to complete an intern project as part of her degree requirements. In choosing to work at M-CHE during her paid internship, she will have the opportunity to merge the field of health disparities research with her background in anthropology. At M-CHE, we maintain a commitment to training the next generation of health disparities leaders, and we are always happy to help developing researchers learn more about health disparities, and more importantly, about emerging and innovative strategies designed to identify and eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities.

We also have two new student workers joining us this semester, Danielle Motley and Aliea Clark-Fobia. Danielle is a Master’s student in the Community and Behavioral Health in the SPH and Aliea is a PhD student in Sociology. They are
helping with overall functioning of the Center, and are instrumental in assisting with both our FDA funded study on minority participation in clinical trials research and the NIH-NIMHD funded study on Vaccine Disparities.

Finally, with the UMD School of Public Health Spring Commencement just behind us, we extend our congratulations to our graduating students. We extend a special note of thanks to graduate Ebony Edwards, who worked with us as a graduate assistant for the past year and a half while she completed her Master’s degree in the Department of Family Sciences. We wish her, and all the other graduates, great success in their future endeavors.

Events Featuring the Maryland Center for Health Equity

- **The Health Equity Leadership Institute**, June 9-14, 2013. An intensive weeklong “research boot-camp” focused on increasing the number of investigators engaged in health equity research. http://heliuw.wordpress.com

- **Developing Health Equity Leaders, University of Arkansas for the Medical Sciences**, May 30-31, 2013. A one-day professional development conference addressing issues related to career advancement for professionals interested in health disparities and health equity research. Featured Speaker: Stephen Thomas, with break-out sessions led by Sandra Quinn, James Butler, Mary Garza and Craig Fryer. http://tri.uams.edu/2013/04/may-30-career-development-conference-focuses-on-health-equity

- **Civil War to Civil Rights: The Well-Being of a Nation**, September 5-6, 2013. A special partnership with the School of Public Policy, School of Public Health and the Clarice Smith Center for the Performing Arts. The event will feature civil rights leaders Julian Bond and Marian Wright Adelman. http://bit.ly/ZUWvVh

Public Health Critical Race Praxis Institute

February 17-19, 2014

The M-CHE is pleased to announce the new dates for its Inaugural Public Health Critical Race Praxis Institute!

This Institute is intended for scholars and researchers interested in learning how to incorporate the principles of Critical Race Praxis into their work. Join us to learn more about:

- Application of Public Health Critical Race Praxis to research
- Potential contributions of Public Health Critical Race Praxis to eliminating health disparities

Participants will engage in a variety of interactive and didactic sessions, small group work and a cultural experience that explores race and racism in contemporary America.

For more information and to apply, please visit: http://www.healthequity.umd.edu

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In The News

- Eliminating Health Disparities: UMD Center Serves as National Model. 
  (Research@Maryland Newsletter, May 2013) 

- The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, the Sequel 

- Study: Black Children are Less Likely to be Prescribed Antibiotics than Children of Other Races 
  (The Atlantic, March 22, 2013, by Lindsay Abrams) 
  Doctors were less likely to diagnose and treat black children with antibiotics for respiratory infections, compared to their non-black peers. http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/03/study-black-children-are-less-likely-to-be-prescribed-antibiotics-than-children-of-other-races/274261/

- Echoes of Tuskegee: The Socioeconomic Cycle of Heart Disease 
  (The Atlantic, February 28, 2013, by Theodore R. Johnson) 
  Being poor and uneducated remains a health risk to large segments of first-world societies. 

- President’s Bioethics Commission Releases Report on Pediatric Medical Countermeasure 
  (Press Release, March 19, 2013) 
  Recommends that multiple steps must be taken before ethical pediatric anthrax vaccine trials can be considered by the U.S. government. 
  http://bioethics.gov/node/838

- Study of Babies Did Not Disclose Risks, U.S. Finds 
  (The New York Times, April 10, 2013, by Sabrina Tavernise) 
  A federal agency has found that a number of prestigious universities failed to tell more than a thousand families in a government-financed study of oxygen levels for extremely premature babies that the risks could include increased chances of blindness or death. 