USG Public Health Update

Public Health Science Finishes Successful First Year

Ten years ago, the Public Health Science degree at The Universities at Shady Grove was just an idea. Fall 2009 saw its launch, and it continues to gain momentum. A total of 14 students were enrolled into the program for spring semester 2010!

The science-based degree at Shady Grove is ideal for transfer students, returning students, and those who wish to study at the convenient Shady Grove campus in Montgomery County. It accommodates third- and fourth-year college students who plan to work in public health at the local, state, national or international level, and is excellent preparation for those who will want to go on for an MPH degree.

The Curriculum includes courses in epidemiology, biostatistics, global health, health policy, nutrition, biology, kinesiology, environmental health, and others. Students will leave the program prepared for careers in disease prevention, health promotion, emergency preparedness, and wellness, as well as many other public health-related areas. The Public Health Science program is an addition to a host of UMCP degrees already offered at Shady Grove. Though at a satellite location, the degree is with the School of Public Health at the UMCP.

Program director Dr. Jennifer Todd said that she is pleased with the progress of the Shady Grove program, and is optimistic for the future of the program.

For more information about the Shady Grove program, contact Dr. Jennifer Todd at 301-738-6162 or e-mail her at jtodd@umd.edu.

Public Health Science Program Partners with The Dwelling Place

The Public Health Science Program at Shady Grove is pleased to announce a new partnership with The Dwelling Place of Montgomery County. This local non-profit offers transitional housing and support opportunities for families experiencing homelessness.

In March, students from the Public Health Science program participated in a “mini university” for families from The Dwelling Place. Several Public Health students developed a short mini-course covering information on healthy snacks for healthy children, which was then presented to the 16 families from The Dwelling Place. Participating families learned about choosing and preparing nutritious but economical snacks for children.

“The families really seemed to enjoy it, and we had a great discussion about snacks that are processed, cheap and easy, versus snacks that are nutritious, and how to make them more interesting to kids. The public health students did a wonderful job, and we look forward to future projects together” reported Dr. Jennifer Todd, Public Health Science Program Director.
Take a Closer Look—Spotlight on Students

Public Health Science student Evelyn Berkoh Asamoah was one of the first students to enroll in the new Public Health Science program, and she is well on her way to earning a Bachelor’s Degree in Science in Public Health Science.

Evelyn was born in Ghana, but has been living in the U.S. and raising her 4 children. When she moved to the U.S. she realized all the opportunities available in public health, and decided that this is the field she wanted to pursue.

“To realize this goal, I needed an educational institution that provides the environment to balance my educational goals with my busy life as a mother of four and a full time employee.”

Evelyn has been excelling in the Public Health Science program, serving as a tutor, leading study sessions, and becoming involved in the student public health club.

“What I really enjoy about this program is that it goes beyond just educating people. Students in this program have access to an experienced Program Director who helps students meet their goals. The small sizes of the classes afford students the chance to have one on one interaction with the professors who are professionals in various public health fields.”

After completing her Bachelor’s degree, Evelyn plans to pursue a dual master’s degree in nursing and public health. These degrees will give her the training and experience she will need to become established in her chosen career field: global health.

Evelyn would like to “help the global society achieve the challenges facing human kind, especially in public health.”

Course on Public Health Biology to be Offered

The fall semester will bring a new course offering to the Shady Grove campus. Students will be able to enroll in a new course on Essential Public Health Biology: The Cell, the Individual, and Disease.

Through this new course, students will gain an understanding of how and why a disease occurs, and explore the biological basis for common diseases and issues of public health concern, like cancer, diabetes, and infectious diseases.

Students will investigate how to identify critical points in the pathophysiology of disease to target efforts to prevent or interrupt disease pathogenesis.

“Gaining an understanding of public health biology is becoming important for public health practitioners” adds Program Director Dr. Todd. “As we learn more about public health problems and their potential solutions, it is becoming clear that successful interventions are becoming more complicated and involved and public health practitioners need a working knowledge of essential biology.”

Students Start New Public Health Club at Shady Grove

Public Health Science students have a new way to get engaged in the school, the community, and public health! Shady Grove public health students have formed a new public health club, called Students Engaging in Public Health (SEIPH). In the short time that the club has been meeting, they have been very active on campus.

In the spring, SEIPH was involved in fundraising for earthquake recovery in Haiti, donating a gift of $120.

During National Public Health Week SEIPH held a healthy bake sale which raised $212 for The Dwelling Place, a local non-profit which provides transitional housing for homeless families.

SEIPH has plans to hold more fund raisers in the fall, and continue partnerships with Montgomery County community agencies.