The beginning of a new academic year brings expectations, promise of change, and anticipation about upcoming endeavors. The start of this academic year is especially exciting for us at the Center for Health Equity, because this November marks our five-year anniversary at the University of Maryland’s School of Public Health. We are planning several activities to commemorate this milestone. Visit our website in the coming months for updates and to learn more about our accomplishments over the past five years as well as our vision for the next five (and beyond!) to reduce the burden of health disparities in racial and ethnic minority groups in our mission to achieve health equity.

Even while we plan to celebrate this accomplishment, we remain busy with our daily teaching, research, and outreach efforts. In our research news, we have completed all data collection for our Center of Excellence Research projects, and are in data analysis and dissemination stages. This summer, Dr. Quinn presented results from her Vaccine Research to audiences both stateside and internationally, all the way to Singapore for the World Congress on Risk. More on her presentations is included in our Research Section. We also have a number of our faculty presenting at this year’s APHA Annual Meeting and Expo in Chicago. A complete list of our presentations can be found on our website.

Our teaching efforts have led Dr. Thomas back to the classroom, where he is excited to interact with the next generation of prospective health equity scholars. He has already invited this group of scholars to participate in several of our
RESEARCH NEWS

Center of Excellence Core Research

Each subproject (Vaccine, SHAPE, and Black Men’s Health) had collected sufficient data to begin analysis this summer. Each team is working actively to continue to interpret the results and prepare manuscripts and presentations. With regards to the Vaccine project, Dr. Quinn travelled to Singapore in July to present on *The Role of Risk Perception in Flu Vaccine Behavior among Black and White Adults in the US* at the World Congress on Risk, hosted by the Society of Risk Analysis. This meeting included topics on disaster risk and resilience management, sustainable innovation, nanotechnology, Ebola, as well as discussions on the difficulties laypeople have in grasping fundamental understandings of where technology is heading today, and how marginal communities are most vulnerable to the repercussions of climate change, among others. Dr. Quinn’s presentation addressed the differences in risk perception between black and white adults and discussed the implications of these findings on how risk communication can be most effective for reducing disparities in vaccine uptake in the US.

Dr. Quinn also presented on the Colliding Ethics at the Intersection of 24/7 Global Media, Distrust and Fear: Implications for Emergency Research in Infectious Disease Epidemics at the Oxford Global Health and Bioethics International Conference, held in late September at Keble College in Oxford, and hosted by the Ethox Centre, Nuffield Department of Population Health.
New Publications

We currently have two new peer-reviewed articles that are currently in-press. The first of these comes from our Building Trust initiative, in which we interviewed researchers who demonstrate success in recruiting racial and ethnic minorities. This manuscript focuses on if and how these researchers use the concept of social capital in their engagement efforts, and how this can apply to other researchers interested in becoming more successful with engaging minority communities. Lead author, and M-CHE Project Director Dr. Susan Passmore said “We see that the lack of institutional support of community engagement is a substantial barrier to researchers working with underrepresented minority communities and we hope that our findings will encourage discussions about how we can begin to move in that direction. Ultimately, it would be wonderful if communities and universities and hospitals all saw themselves as working on the same team fighting for health equity.” The article is entitled Building a “Deep Fund of Good Will”: Reframing Research Engagement, and will appear in an upcoming issue of Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved.

The second forthcoming article was led by Dr. David Chae, an M-CHE Affiliate Faculty member, and Assistant Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics in the UMD SPH. The article, Discrimination, Mental Health, and Leukocyte Telomere Length among African American Men has been accepted for publication in Psychoneuroendocrinology, and will be available on-line within the next few weeks.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We continue to expand our presence in the community. Our Health Advocates In-Reach & Research (H.A.I.R.) network now includes ten barbershops in Maryland and D.C., and we have been implementing our barber training for our colorectal cancer prevention project. Over the summer, we were honored to have UMD President Wallace Loh and Dr. John Ruffin, Founding Director (retired) of the NIH NIMHD visit The Shop, our anchor barbershop located in Hyattsville. Their visit signifies institutional commitment to innovative community engaged research and service.

We are pleased to announce our formal partnership with the UMD Center for Health Information and Decision Systems, (CHIDS). Deputy Director P. Kenyon Crowley is working with the M-CHE to build an electronic health and wellness record to be deployed at health fairs and community events to gather health related information and feedback outside of a clinical setting. This application was field-tested on September 12th at the Reid Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church’s Annual Community-Wide Fair in Glenn Dale. At the event we gathered feedback from community members about their willingness and interest in using health information technology platforms. Their voices will be incorporated as M-CHE expands its use of technology in outreach efforts and in data collection. Also at the event, the M-CHE partnered with Doctor’s Community Hospital to provide a number of health screenings.
TRAINING & EDUCATION

Health Equity Leaders

In June, The M-CHE team hosted, in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the 6th Annual Health Equity Leadership Institute (HELI) held in Madison, WI. This program is a weeklong research “boot-camp” focused on increasing the success of scholars engaged in health equity research. This year’s cohort of 21 scholars had the opportunity to participate in mock interviews and study sections, grant writing workshops, networking sessions, and other interactive events.

This fall marks the beginning of the next Advancing Faculty Diversity (AFD) program at UMD. This year long career development program, led by M-CHE Director Dr. Stephen Thomas and ADVANCE Co-Director and Professor of Higher Education, Dr. KerryAnn O’Meara, creates a strategic network of faculty of color (assistant and associate professors) to enhance the agency participants feel about career advancement and the development of their careers at UMD, as well as advise the Office of Diversity and Office of Faculty Affairs on ways to recruit, retain and support UM faculty from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds.

Mentoring Network

We are moving forward with the development of our mentoring programs through our participation in the National Research Mentor Network (NRMN). The NRMN’s website is now active and available at https://nrmnet.net/. NRMN is a nationwide consortium of biomedical professionals and institutions collaborating to provide enhanced networking and mentorship experiences in support of the training and career development of individuals in biomedical, behavioral, clinical, and social science research careers. M-CHE’s activity in NRMN is focused in the Mentor Training Core (MTC), one of five core initiatives implemented at five different research institutions. Stephen Thomas serves as Associate Director.
and Co-Investigator of the MTC, and Sandra Quinn is a Co-Investigator in the MTC. Dr. Christine Pfund, University of Wisconsin-Madison is the MTC Director and Principal Investigator. NRMN is intended to enable mentees across career stages to find effective mentors who will engage in productive, supportive and culturally responsive mentoring relationships. NR MN is currently accepting applicants for mentees. If interested in becoming a mentee, click here.

A New Degree in Health Equity

This fall, the UMD SPH is accepting applications for its new MPH in Health Equity, which will welcome its first students in the fall of 2016. The school-wide Health Equity degree program, which will be administered by the Department of Health Services Administration, is the first of its kind in the nation. The MPH concentration in Health Equity is an interdisciplinary degree that trains students to recognize and address health disparities. There is a growing recognition within the research and public spheres of the importance of health disparities, which are differences in the health status of different groups of people, including groups identified by race/ethnicity, geographic residence, gender, sexual orientation, age, and disability status.

“The School of Public Health is leading efforts to eliminate health disparities to achieve health equity in the state of Maryland, the Washington, DC region and across the nation,” said Dr. Thomas. “Our approach is focused on taking action to translate the science of medicine and public health into culturally tailored community based interventions and healthy public policy. We are so excited to educate the next generation of scholars with one of the first MPH Health Equity degrees in the US.”

STUDENT AND STAFF NEWS

We are pleased to welcome a new member of the M-CHE team. This summer, Devlon Jackson, PhD, joined the M-CHE as Study Coordinator. Devlon earned her PhD in Communications and Culture from Howard University and her Masters of Public Health degree from Florida International University. Her research interests include assessing communication facilitators and barriers in the medical shared decision making process within and outside of the clinical care setting and determining existing communication inequalities. Devlon brings over 10 years of public health research and practice experience that has served diverse populations, including underserved racial/ethnic populations within the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention and care, and cancer control. Her initial focuses at M-CHE include analysis of the MOM&HEF data and development of the M-CHE’s new health information technology platform initiative. Said Dr. Jackson, “I’m excited to be a part of this initiative as it relates to some of my prior work in health information technology as a postdoctoral fellow at the NIH National Cancer Institute. I enthusiastic about the meaningful for M-CHE is doing in the community and glad to join the team.” Welcome Devlon!
We also extend our congratulations to M-CHE Research Associate Danielle Motley, who has just accepted a position as a Science Research Analyst at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS). Danielle joined the team while she was studying for her MPH, and continued in a full-time capacity after she obtained her degree. She has been an invaluable addition to M-CHE. While we are happy for Danielle and the new opportunity she is following, we are sad to say goodbye to her. Best wishes to Danielle!

We also send congratulations to Dr. Michel Boudreaux, who has received a Loan Repayment Program (LRP) award from the NIN NIMHD. Stephen Thomas has served as a primary mentor to Michel, and Michel’s acceptance into the LRP lays the foundation of a successful career. Participation in an NIH Loan Repayment Program is shown to have a major impact on the careers of research scientists. Initial evaluation findings from the NIH show that research scientists who participated in LRPs stay in research, apply for and receive more research grants, continue to publish in scholarly journals, and contribute to science. Congratulations Michel!

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **Collegium of Scholars: New series**
  Starting September.
  Second Wednesday of each month, September-May, 12:00pm-1:30pm.

- **143rd APHA Annual Meeting and Exposition**
  October 31-November 4, Chicago, IL. Health in All Policies
  M-CHE presentations begin Monday!

- **SOPHE’s Health Education Advocacy Summit**
  October 15-17, 2016
  Washington Court Hotel
  Washington, DC

  Let the Health Education Advocacy Summit help you polish your advocacy skills in just 48 hours!! This event offers basic, intermediate, and advanced level advocacy training. Faculty, practitioners, and students are welcome. The Summit culminates with visits with legislators or key staff on Capitol Hill—either individually or in state/district delegations.
  [http://www.sophe.org/AdvocacySummit.cfm](http://www.sophe.org/AdvocacySummit.cfm)
Bring Back House Calls
By Sandeep Jauhar, October 14, 2015, The New York Times

A FEW weeks ago, in the hospital where I work, I was telling a 92-year-old patient about her discharge plan. I wanted her to follow up in my office in a week. Frail and soft-spoken, she asked me if instead I could visit her at home. “I’m afraid not,” I said automatically, but when she asked me why, I didn’t have a good answer… more.

The secret surveillance of ‘suspicious’ blacks in one of the nation’s poshest neighborhoods
By Terrence McCoy October 13, 2015, The Washington Post

It was nearing closing time in March last year when a manager at Boffi Georgetown dispatched a series of alarmed messages. Observing two men yelling outside the luxury kitchen and bath showroom, Julia Walter reached for her phone and accessed a private messaging application that hundreds of residents, retailers and police in this overwhelmingly white, wealthy neighborhood use to discuss people they deem suspicious... more.

It pays to shop around for health care, study finds
By Jonathan LaPook, October 7, 2015, CBS News

NEW YORK -- A new study out Wednesday found patients are often charged drastically different prices for the same medical procedures… more.

Texas Mother Teaches Textbook Company a Lesson on Accuracy
By Manny Fernandez and Christine Hauser, October 5, 2015

HOUSTON — Coby Burren, 15, a freshman at a suburban high school south of here, was reading the textbook in his geography class last week when a map of the United States caught his attention. On Page 126, a caption in a section about immigration referred to Africans brought to American plantations between the 1500s and 1800s as “workers” rather than slaves… more.