

- p1** Message from the Principal Investigators
- p2** National Research Mentoring Network
- p3** Social Determinants of Pandemic Disease / Training and Education
- p4** Bringing More than Smiles to Maryland: A Mid-MD Mission of Mercy & Health Equity Festival
- p5** Upcoming Events & News Worth Reading



11th Annual Maryland Health Disparities Conference 10 29 14 Martins West, Baltimore, MD

## Message from the Principal Investigators

The news headlines this month are full of stories on the growing Ebola epidemic in West Africa and public's fears about the potential for spread of the disease in the US. Public health officials here and abroad are fighting to both contain the disease and communicate with the public about the changing situation and science. M-CHE's Senior Associate Director Sandra Quinn confronts a different issue surrounding global pandemics—the social determinants of pandemic disease spread—in her article in the September special issue of *Biosecurity and Bioterrorism*, and brings a new awareness of how pandemics disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. Dr. Quinn was also interviewed on the Ebola epidemic by *Voice of America*. The full clip of the story by Jeff Seldin can be seen [here](#). For more information on Dr. Quinn's publication, read our article in this newsletter on [Social Determinants of Pandemic Disease](#).



*Principal Investigators:  
Sandra Crouse Quinn and  
Stephen B. Thomas*

**Maryland Center for Health Equity**  
School of Public Health  
The University of Maryland  
3302E SPH Building #255  
College Park, MD 20742-2611

**301-405-8859**

[mche@umd.edu](mailto:mche@umd.edu)

[www.sph.umd.edu/center/che](http://www.sph.umd.edu/center/che)

Find us on Twitter:  
<https://twitter.com/umdhealthequity>



The issue of social and political factors contributing to health inequity, particularly during the current Ebola crisis, was also expressed by Dr. David Satcher, former Surgeon General of the US, during his keynote address during the September *Health Across Borders* Conference. This conference, held on the UMD campus and co-sponsored by the Center for Health Equity and the Center for the History of the New America, brought together a number of experts to talk about global health equity. This conference, however,



September 19, 2014 / The Joseph Goldberger Public Health History Award  
Drs. Ira Berlin, Satcher, Alan Kraut and Stephen Thomas

was unlike all others in that it moved beyond an academic exercise to an event that touched the lives of real people, through the creation of the Mission of Mercy & Health Equity Festival, which was held in conjunction with the conference.

And so, at the same time that the global public health community focuses on Ebola, closer to home we confronted and, through our 4<sup>th</sup> generation approach to health disparities research, helped improve the health of over 1,000 Maryland residents during our 2-day Mission of Mercy & Health Equity Festival (MOM-HEF). Along with Catholic Charities of Washington, and almost 2000 volunteers, the M-CHE transformed the Xfinity Center, the university's basketball arena, into an emergency dental clinic. Our service to the community demonstrates our commitment to transforming our knowledge about health and health disparities into action. Both the number of volunteers and the number of patients served exceeded our expectations. But in the end, we had to turn away many more who came to receive free dental care, underscoring the great need in our country for affordable and accessible dental care for all its residents. Read more about the MOM-HEF [here](#).

Also of note, in our continued efforts to expand worldwide attention to the issue of health disparities, Dr. Thomas accompanied UMD's Vice President for Research Dr. Patrick O'Shea to Ireland to explore the possibilities of research collaboration between UMD, University of Ulster in Northern Ireland, and University College Dublin. A delegation of researchers from Ireland further established the collaboration by returning the visit in October.

Finally, on a more personal note, this summer we lost a great friend and valued colleague, Dr. Kevin H. Kim, Associate Professor in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. Please read our tribute to Kevin [below](#).

## National Research Mentoring Network

With great pride, we announce that we are a part of the newly-funded, \$31 million "National Research Mentoring Network for a Diverse Biomedical Workforce" (NRMN) grant from the NIH, which is led by a team of researchers at Boston College, the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-M), University of North Texas Health Sciences Center, and University of Minnesota. The NRMN initiative calls for an array of activities aimed at facilitating the persistence of under-represented minority students and scholars, from undergraduate through junior faculty, and foster their success in biomedical research careers. The M-CHE will share \$2.2 million awarded to UW-M to establish the NRMN Mentor training Core (MTC), one of three cores in the network. Working closely with the core Director, Dr. Christine Pfund (UW-M), Dr. Thomas will serve as the Associate Director of the MTC. As part of the same core, Dr. Quinn will work closely with other co-investigators to develop training on culturally responsive mentoring. The NRMN is a major component of the NIH's effort to diversify the biomedical research workforce. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Drs. Stephen B. Thomas, Patrick O'Shae, Ross Lewin and David Backer





## Social Determinants of Pandemic Disease

“Imagine for a moment how difficult it is to stop any infectious disease, especially Ebola, when some hospitals have no running water, there are insufficient public health workers, and the stigma of the disease is so powerful.”

This quote from Sandra Quinn highlights the need for global public health officials to focus on the social determinants and inequalities that contribute to the spread of pandemic disease, and this idea is at the core of her article in the September theme issue on global health security in *Biosecurity and Bioterrorism: Biodefense Strategy, Practice, and Science*. Today, the US is committed, along with multiple other nations, to strengthening global health security through a variety of actions aimed at creating a stronger and collaborative public health infrastructure across the world. In the article, authors Quinn and Dr. Supriya Kumar, research assistant professor of behavioral and community health sciences in the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, illustrate the ways social determinants including poverty, race, ethnicity, social marginalization, and physical environment contribute to differential exposure, susceptibility to infectious disease, and access to care and treatment once exposed. Moreover, in their article, “Health Inequalities and Infectious Disease Epidemics: A Challenge for Global Health Security”, Drs. Quinn and Kumar chal-



lenge public health and health care professionals to do more within our organizations, with communities, and with policymakers to reduce the unequal burden of disease and death among socially disadvantaged subpopulations. Building on their previous research on disparities during the H1N1 influenza pandemic, they offer specific actions aimed at better coupling the ability to understand the core social determinants driving disease outbreaks, develop innovative surveillance mechanisms, and build community engagement to address the complex factors associated with infectious diseases.

“Today’s rapidly evolving outbreak across the West African region is a glaring example of the contribution of social determinants to outbreaks,” says Dr. Quinn. “Although in the U.S., our media focus was heavily on the few Americans who contracted the disease and had access to the most cutting edge treatment and care, in West Africa, this outbreak continues to spread among the poor and in communities where there are not enough doctors to even track down all the individuals who have been exposed, much less be able to treat them with the limited facilities and supplies available.” The full article is available [here](#).

## TRAINING & EDUCATION

This fall, the Legacy Leadership Institute (LLI) graduated another class of Legacy Leaders. The LLI invites Maryland residents who are 50+ years of age to apply for, and complete, an eight week, 64-hour instructional session that prepares them to participate in the Maryland government and legislative process. This year’s class of nineteen was the first to take part in the new health disparities unit, which was developed by faculty at M-CHE and Wesley Queen, coordinator in the SPH’s Department of Health Services Administration. These legacy leaders will take their newly gained knowledge of MD legislature and policy, in combination with their life experience, to the MD legislative session beginning January 2015.

For more information about the Legacy Leader Institute, click [here](#).

## Bringing More than Smiles to Maryland: A Mid-MD Mission of Mercy & Health Equity Festival

On September 4, 2014, the Xfinity Center was a basketball court. On September 5, 2014, the basketball court had been transformed into an emergency dental clinic to provide free dental care for the 2014 Mid-MD Mission of Mercy & Health Equity Festival (MOM-HEF). This event, held September 5-6, was a collaborative effort by the dental and health care community, Catholic Charities of Washington and the University of Maryland Center for Health Equity to provide free emergency dental care to the poor and underserved. The event assembled 1,800 volunteers, provided care to over 1,200 patients, and delivered approximately \$1.5M in services over the two-day event. It set a state record for the number of people served.



This event was more than a dental clinic, however. In addition to providing a number of free dental services to adult patients in need, the group sought to enhance the overall health of this population by creating a caring environment for health screening, education and referral services. While waiting to receive their dental services (which included cleanings, root canals, fillings, and extractions), patients could visit the 20 exhibitors to receive additional free services such as flu shots, rapid HIV screens, eye exams, cholesterol checks, and education and counselling from attorneys, nutritionists, and other health professionals.

The MOM-HEF was inspired by M-CHE Director Stephen Thomas. After learning about other MOM events across the state, and noting the number of people who came seeking care, but were turned away once capacity was reached, Thomas was inspired to bring a new kind of MOM event to the UMD campus, one that incorporated other health services in addition to the free dental care.

Said Dr Thomas, "This event gave us the opportunity to provide comprehensive wrap-around health services to a population in need, in the context of an emergency dental clinic. While addressing the oral health crisis our nation faces, we were able to engage this population in great health promotion efforts."

Despite the record number of people served at this event, over 1,000 had to be turned away, highlighting the need for more comprehensive dental care coverage in this country.

## STUDENT AND STAFF NEWS

M-CHE Associate Director Mary Garza has a new publication in the American Journal of Public Health on the relationship between nativity and prevalence of cardiovascular risk factors in US- and foreign-born Latinos living in the US. Authors Gneisha Dinwiddie, Ruth Zambrana, and Garza examined cardiovascular disease risk factors by nativity and gender, evaluating evidence for education and health behaviors in explaining the "Hispanic Health Paradox." They concluded by calling into question the assumptions of the Hispanic Health Paradox and recommend the development of appropriate new interventions to decrease health disparities in Latinos. Their article, *Exploring Risk Factors in Latino Cardiovascular Disease: The Role of Education, Nativity, and Gender*, was published in the September 2014 issue of AJPH. The full article is available [here](#).



## In Memory of Kevin H. Kim, Colleague and Friend

In July 2014, the Maryland Center for Health Equity lost a major collaborator in all of its research studies, Dr. Kevin Kim. Kevin was an associate professor in the Research Methodology program at the University of Pittsburgh School of Education, with a secondary appointment as an associate professor of business administration in the Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business at the University of Pittsburgh. We first began working with Kevin in 2009 when we were still at the University of Pittsburgh. When we moved to the University of Maryland in 2010, we knew that Kevin was so valuable to our work, we made all the necessary arrangements to have him continue with us on existing studies, and in fact, over the subsequent years, he was included as a co-investigator or statistical consultant on virtually all of our studies.



His loss is a huge one for our Center. Not only did Dr. Kim understand our work, he made substantive intellectual and scientific contributions and amazed us with his facility with complex statistical procedures. His knowledge of psychometrics was invaluable and his expertise in cultural identity was critical to our work. Moreover, he was the consummate teacher, even with the M-CHE faculty, because he was able to patiently explain (sometimes more than once) statistical methods and results in language we could understand. We often said "He spoke English, not statistics." He was always responsive, even when we had late night, last minute requests for just one more statistical test or one more explanation of a result, so that we could write our articles.

Please visit our [website](#) to view our full tribute to our friend and colleague, Kevin H. Kim. His loss is a great one.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



MARYLAND CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY at the

**142nd Annual Meeting and Exposition**  
November 15-19, 2014 | New Orleans

[Color of Smoke: The Experience of African Americans and Latinos with Tobacco and Discrimination](#)

**Craig S. Fryer**, James Butler III, Kevin H. Kim, Mary A. Garza, Stephen B. Thomas, &  
Sandra C. Quinn

**Sunday, November 16 | 4:30pm - 5:30pm** | Poster Presentation

Session 2051.0 | The Color of Smoke: Advancing Tobacco-Related Health Equity



**Session 3018.0** | [In the context of vaccine disparities: exploring issues of race, culture and communication inequalities](#)

Organizer: **Sandra C. Quinn**

**Monday, November 17 | 8:30am - 10:00am** | Panel Session

**Session Objectives:** To effectively tailor communications to promote vaccine uptake, researchers must examine the social, cultural, familial and structural factors that may influence vaccine uptake. In this session, we will explore and compare vaccine disparities and communication inequalities in the context of Public Health Critical Race Praxis.

[Role of religion and social support in willingness to participate in future research among a national sample of African Americans and Latinos](#)

**Mary A. Garza**, Luciana Assini, Sandra C. Quinn, Kevin H. Kim, Erica T. Casper, James Butler, Craig S. Fryer, & Stephen B. Thomas

**Tuesday November 18 | 3:10pm** | Oral Presentation

Session 4306.0 | Faith-Based Approaches in Addressing Public Health Challenges

## In the NEWS

### Why Don't We Treat Teeth Like the Rest of Our Bodies?

By [Olga Khazan](#) Sep 25 2014, The Atlantic

Dental care is excluded from most insurance plans for a bizarre and antiquated reason, and millions of people suffer as a result...[Read more](#)

### How the Big Tobacco Deal Went Bad

By Jim Estes Oct. 6, 2014, The New York Times

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. — WHEN was the last time you saw an anti-smoking ad? In November 1998, the tobacco industry and 46 states reached what is known as the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (four states reached separate settlements)...[Read more](#)

### What the Ebola outbreak tells us about global inequality

By [Ylan Q. Muji](#) Oct 1 2014, The Washington Post

When the first case of the Ebola virus entered the United States this month in Dallas, the medical team that treated the infected patient was quarantined and even the ambulance in which he was transported was decontaminated. When the virus entered Sierra Leone, an entire hospital was forced to shut down...[Read more](#)

### Diversity in Science: Why It Is Essential for Excellence

By Fred Guterl, Sept 16 2014, Scientific American

Science and technology are society's main engines of prosperity. Who gets to drive them?...[Read More](#)