From our TPHA President, Lisette K. Osborne, RN-BC, MSN, CHEP (2021-2022)

Where has 2021 gone? Here we are halfway through August already – kids (and some parents) are going back to school either in person or through remote learning, pumpkin spice everything just around the corner, and fall weather…. OK, I guess I took that one a little too far – this IS Texas after all.

One of the goals of my presidency is to increase our membership numbers and individual participation in TPHA. As an incentive, we implemented the 2021 President’s Membership Challenge. Recruit a new TPHA member and ask them to put your name in the “referred by” section of the online registration form and your name will be entered into a drawing for a $100 Amazon gift card to be awarded December 1st! The more members you recruit, the more chances to win! Ready, set, go! https://www.texaspha.org/JOIN_TPHA. We’ve already gotten a few names in the bucket! Thank you Drs. Sherdeana Owens, Victoria Salinas, Cynthia Sayler, and Cathy Troisi, for referring new members!

This is your organization and the more you participate, the more benefit you receive. Meet your colleagues, share and learn from each other in sections focusing on different public health arenas. It’s easy. Go to the TPHA website www.texaspha.org/page/AboutSections to find out more.

TPHA Leadership is looking forward to our Annual Education Conference (AEC) for 2022, we have explored multiple options for an in-person meeting without success, so we went back to the drawing board. With the uncertainty of COVID-19, we have decided to use the virtual platform once again. Our 2021 AEC was a great success with 244 registrants. In contrast, our 2019 AEC, our last in person conference, had 396 registrants. We miss interacting with our members, and hope to resume offering conferences in person as soon as it seems prudent to do so. Meanwhile, be watching for a “call for abstracts” to be coming soon to email inboxes everywhere!

Although we have had a couple of very challenging years with the cancellation of multiple co-sponsored workshops, TPHA remains in very good shape financially. However, should you wish to donate, be assured that your money will be used wisely to continue our mission toward “Improving the health and safety of Texas through leadership, education, training, collaboration, mentoring and advocacy”.

From our TPHA Executive Director, Terri Pali:

Welcome to our Newest TPHA Members!

We are so thankful you chose TPHA as your professional association! Please take a couple of minutes to browse our website and see what we have to offer you. We offer this newsletter as a method of networking with your fellow TPHA members. We have a quarterly peer-reviewed, indexed journal for professional development, and many public health-oriented groups we align with.
Our strength as an Association lies within our membership and the diversity among our members. Member diversity spans race/ethnicity, levels of experience, and disciplines of expertise. Again, welcome and please contact Terri at txpha@aol.com with any questions or comments.

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<th>Name/Section</th>
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<td>Kimberly Aguillard/EPI</td>
<td>Berford Moncriffe/Student</td>
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<td>Michelle Cajero/Student</td>
<td>Edith Munoz/Student</td>
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<td>Alexis Carbajal/EPI</td>
<td>Arielle Paige/Student</td>
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<td>Annie Drachenberg/UN</td>
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<td>David Marquez/Student</td>
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**New Member Category and Benefits**

The TPHA Governing Council recently finalized a category of membership and benefits for our public health partner organizations who wish to become members of TPHA. **Institutional/Agency Affiliate:** Organizations with a similar philosophy and intent as the Association. An organization may join as an Institutional/Agency Affiliate by paying dues as set by the Executive Board and approved by the Governing Council. In this class of membership. Designated institutional members shall enjoy all privileges of Association membership except for holding office and voting.

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<th>Agency with:</th>
<th>Cost to Agency</th>
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<tr>
<td>1-50 employees</td>
<td>$1000 per year (includes membership for 8 designated staff)</td>
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<td>51-250 employees</td>
<td>$2500 per year (includes membership for 20 designated staff)</td>
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<tr>
<td>251-500 employees</td>
<td>$4000 per year (includes membership for 30 designated staff)</td>
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<td>500+ employees</td>
<td>$6000 per year (includes membership for 50 designated staff)</td>
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Benefits include:
- ¼ page advertisement in 4 issues of the Texas Public Health Journal to promote programs, events and activities;
- Promotion of programs, events, activities in quarterly newsletter;
- Complimentary job announcements on website;
- Listed as agency member on website;
- Opportunities for policy/advocacy;
- Representation on committees, sections, and leadership positions;
- Reduced registration fee ($20) for included designated staff members (non-transferable) at annual education conference.

If your agency is interested in joining TPHA as an institution please contact Terri Pali at terripali@texaspha.org.

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2021 TPHA Awards

During the 2021 Virtual Annual Conference, Dr. Arafat presented the TPHA Awards and Recognitions for this year. Below is a list of the recipients and awards. Please join us in congratulating the awardees!

**Host Appreciation** - Hosting a TPHA Annual Conference an undertaking in normal times, much less during a worldwide pandemic. It requires a commitment, both financially in dollars and physically by providing staff to carry out the necessary tasks associated with putting on a statewide conference. Last year, when asked, even though they were working day and night to protect their public from COVID-19, Harris County Public Health stepped into the role of Host Agency. As a token of our appreciation we presented a plaque to the Harris County Public Health. The plaque reads:

**Texas Public Health Association 2021 Virtual Annual Education Conference Presented to Harris County Public Health In appreciation for hosting the 97th Annual Education Conference May 17-19, 2021**

Pictured from left to right is: Nathalie Cardona, Martha Monsivais, Radhika Kudchadkar, Gwen J. Sims, William Hudson, Radie Said, Laura Camila Garcia

***

**Immediate Past President** - In recognition of the dedication and commitment of our Immediate Past President- Dr. Witold Migala, President 2019-2020. When Dr. Migala agreed to run for 2nd vice president the officer track was a 5-year track. He agreed to serve our members as 2nd Vice President, 1st Vice President, President-elect and President. This past year he fulfilled the last step in the officer track serving as Immediate Past president. Along with his duties as immediate past president he served as chair of the Planning & Operations Committee. The committee was very busy this year with many bylaw revisions and guidelines for our sections and committees. Dr. Migala’s commitment to TPHA is appreciated.

Dr. Migala’s plaque is engraved with his name, Texas Public Health Association, President 2019-2020 and has an actual gavel on it. Thank you Witold for your dedication to TPHA! A picture was not available for this newsletter, but Dr. Migala promises to provide one for a future newsletter.

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**Ron J. Anderson Thinking Progressively for Health Award** - Dr. Ron J. Anderson Thinking Progressively for Health (TPHA) Award, formerly the Thinking Progressively for Health Award honors the late Dr. Ron J. Anderson and the innovative ideas and practices he established for the public health profession. The award rewards excellence and innovation in current public health practice across the state of Texas.

The recipient of this award receives a $400 cash award and the Dr. Ron J Anderson Public Health Innovation Award Plaque.
This year, the award was presented to Healthy Tarrant County Collaboration for their Tarrant County Food Environmental Study innovation. The Healthy Tarrant County Collaboration developed a method for replicating the Baltimore City’s Food Environment 2018 Report that does not require a large budget. Using google docs, google sheets and google maps, teams of practice experience and service-learning students systematically conducted a health foods availability index survey at every store accepting SNAP in Tarrant County, working one zip code at a time.

The Google platform allows surveyors to complete surveys in the field on mobile phones and devices, making them much less conspicuous than they would be using clipboards and paper surveys. Using mobile data entry also mitigates data entry errors and cuts down on time. The data is accessible in real time.

The resulting data can be displayed on maps and used to help health providers and educators, along with the general public, to identify where the options are for healthy shopping even in areas identified as food deserts. This also helps to identify areas that most need interventions to increase healthy retail food access. The healthy food environmental scan of Tarrant County is very applicable to the greater public health profession. It provides opportunities to develop policy, systems, and environmental changes to improve the health of the population and can also be used to enhance individual knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about healthy food in ones’ community.

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Outstanding Service Award - Each year the president has the pleasure of recognizing a TPHA member for their service to the organization. This year’s recipient has been a member of TPHA for a relatively short time, since 2017, but has continually shown themselves to be an invaluable member of the association. This year’s Outstanding Service Award winner is Ashley Rodriguez. For those of you who know Ashley, you know that she is almost always the first to offer her support and assistance when something needs to be done!

- This past year, when our Executive Board voted to hold a mini-conference she immediately volunteered to assist.
- She volunteered to serve on the ad hoc committee to research virtual conference platforms and once a platform was selected, she agreed to work with a small team of TPHA members to coordinate the logistical details of this event.
- When our Abstracts coordinator had to resign, Ashley, without hesitation, agreed to step in and take over her duties.
- Ashley led the membership Recruitment, Engagement and Development committee efforts to reach out to public health students via the recently held Student Symposium.
• Ashley worked with our conference exhibitors to help them set up in our virtual exhibit hall, assisted with Q&A in several of our session and was also a presenter!

   Ashley has worked very hard for TPHA in the past year and we are pleased to recognize her with the TPHA outstanding Service Award. Thank you and Congratulations.

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**President’s Award** - The TPHA President’s Award recognizes individuals who have gone above and beyond in their support to the organization as well as to the President. They have provided countless hours to promote the association to others and ensure that TPHA is a known entity in public health for Texas.

   This year’s recipient, Dr. Catherine Cooksley, does that and more. Dr. Cooksley has been a member of TPHA since 1979. She has held every office and served on most, if not all, committees. She represented our association on the governing council of the American Public Health Association for many years. Catherine is our current Journal Editor where she spends hours coordinating each issue to bring our members the latest in public health research. She volunteered to add the Association newsletter to her editing duties to bring our members association news and give them an opportunity to network and share their news from around the state! She also works behind the scenes updating our TPHA website!

   Dr. Cooksley worked with TPHA leaders to draft a letter to Texas Legislators regarding the need for a well-resourced state health department and critical infrastructure to support infectious disease testing, surveillance, laboratory capacity and support to local health departments throughout the state.

   Most recently, Catherine coordinated a Call for Member Participation to solicit input for a Governing Council Position Statement to address public health funding and infrastructure in Texas. This was a huge undertaking and one that required time and research. The final document was then shared with our Texas Legislators along with a letter highlighting National Public Health Week.

   We are pleased to recognize Dr. Catherine Cooksley for her tireless commitment and dedication to this organization. Catherine, thank you and congratulations.

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**TPHA 2022 Awards**

Start thinking now about deserving individuals you can nominate for next year’s awards!

[https://www.texaspha.org/page/Awards](https://www.texaspha.org/page/Awards)
**Past President’s Award** – Dr. Raouf Arafat served as TPHA president from 2020 to 2021. To recognize his service to TPHA, incoming TPHA president, Lisette Osborne, presented Dr. Arafat with his Past President’s Plaque. Additionally, as a thank you gift from TPHA leadership, Dr. Arafat was also given a specially designed TPHA tie. Check out the tie in the picture to the left, looking very dapper Dr. A! Seriously, Dr. Arafat served our Association during a year fraught with public health challenges. He recalled the past years’ accomplishments under his guidance as he accepted his plaque.

“We adapted quickly to the ever-emerging new environment of virtual life and used technology to connect and communicate with our members, committees, and our community. This conference is an example of this development. We made many bylaws revisions, established guidelines for our sections and committees, and held a mini-conference in November 2020. We refused to stop working. TPHA continued to produce all of our journals and newsletters on time.

Lots of effort was put on membership recruitment, engagement and development. In March 2021 we held the first Student Symposium which was well attended by students from all over the State. We worked with TPHA leaders to educate our Texas Legislators and advocate for the need for a well-resourced state health department and critical infrastructure to support essential public health services and the local public health agencies providing those services across our massive state of Texas. Members were engaged in drafting a Governing Council Position Statement detailing needs to address public health funding and infrastructure in Texas. This position statement is now part of the TPHA records and was shared with our Texas Legislators during National Public Health Week.” Thank you Dr. Arafat!

Please join us in thanking and congratulating this year’s award recipients!

**Awards 2022**

Please consider nominating a deserving individual for a TPHA Award. Awards include the James E. Peavy Memorial, TPHA Honorary Life Member, Legislative Excellence, Dr. Ron J. Anderson Thinking Progressively for Health; and Public Health Award for Media Excellence Award. To learn more go to: [https://www.texaspha.org/page/Awards](https://www.texaspha.org/page/Awards)

**News from TPHA Boards, Committees and Sections**

**TPHA Editorial Board Report**

Submitted by Catherine Cooksley, Editor, and Mathias Forrester, TPHA Editorial Board Chair

In our last board report we introduced you to and extended our thanks to our TPHA Editorial Board for all they do for our Association. For those of you who may be less familiar with the operations of TPHA behind the scenes, here is a quickie TPHA 101 as related to our TPHA Editorial Board.
According to the [TPHA Bylaws](#), the TPHA Editorial Board members apply for and are approved by the TPHA Executive Board to serve a two-year term. Our current Editorial Board members have now completed their 2019 – 2021 term and each member has the option to request to continue to serve or to resign. We are pleased to announce that most will continue their service to TPHA and to the community of Texas by serving another term on the Editorial Board. Their service allows TPHA to fulfill its mission of “Improving the health and safety of Texas through leadership, education, training, collaboration, mentoring and advocacy” and, to attain our vision of “A safe and healthy Texas”. We sadly, but gratefully, say “thank you” to departing members, Drs. E. Susan Amirian and Wei Chen (Miso) Lee. Your contributions to our TPHJ were immense and so greatly appreciated!

We will be seeking qualified members to fill their vacancies. The TPHA Editorial Board and TPHJ Editor sincerely hope that you will take advantage of this great CV building opportunity! Need to accrue some community service to fulfill academic obligations? This is a great way to provide community service through our Texas Public Health Association and our Texas Public Health Journal! If you are interested, please review the [Editorial Board Members, Requirements, and Duties](#) document. To apply, just email your CV and a short message of why you are interested in an Editorial Board position to Editorial Board Chair, Mathias Forrester, at [tphajournal@gmail.com](mailto:tphajournal@gmail.com) with the Attn: Editorial Board. We will accept applications until [September 30, 2021](#). We hope to hear from many of you soon! The TPHA Executive Board meets October 6, 2021, and will review the Editorial Board recommendations to approve renewing and new TPHA Editorial Board members.

Now, about those manuscripts, commentaries, brief reports, and reviews, thanks to all who have submitted! Help us continue to provide our Texas public health professionals with the latest research and public health practice findings by keeping those scholarly documents coming our way! Please encourage your colleagues to submit with us too! Check out the journal pages on our website at [https://www.texaspha.org/page/Authors](https://www.texaspha.org/page/Authors). We look forward to receiving your submissions soon!

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**Membership Recruitment, Engagement and Development Committee**

Submitted by Ashley Rodriguez, CCHW, CCHWI, Chair and Terri Pali, Executive Director

The Texas Public Health Association Executive Board and Membership Recruitment, Engagement and Development Committee are pleased to announce this year's TPHA Scholarship Award recipient. John Lin plans to attend Brown University where his field of study is A.B. in Health Systems and Policy, Sc.B. in Biology.

In his scholarship essay John stated, "I have been a proud member of TPHA for over a year now. I’m a hard-working student who enjoys conducting public health research and is interested in public health work. I
was delighted to present two abstracts on my research at the TPHA Annual Education Conference, where I had the opportunity to meet some of the top public health professionals in my home state. I look forward to contributing to TPHA for decades to come as a public health researcher and provider. My experiences in low-cost clinics, the state legislature, and TPHA have helped me discover the importance of bridging community health and public service. Exploring the systemic issues at the root of modern healthcare have compelled me to pursue public health. By joining the constantly-improving field of public health and contributing to its innovations, I can answer my calling and determination to serve and heal patients”.

Following completion of his education he plans to get his MD/MPH and work as a public health researcher & provider. TPHA congratulates and extends our best wishes for success to John!

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Epidemiology Section
Submitted by Diana Cervantes, Epidemiology Section Chair

Call for Nominations! As the largest section of TPHA with over 70 members, it is important that we have a voice and strong presence in TPHA as the association serves a very important function in representing public health professionals in Texas. The TPHA Epi section works to support the mission of the association which is to improve the health and safety of Texas through leadership, education, training, collaboration, mentoring, and advocacy. In order to carry out the mission of TPHA and the Epi Section specifically, I am requesting that you nominate yourself or someone who you know is a TPHA Epi Section member to the positions of Chair-elect, Secretary, or Secretary-elect. Please check out the position job descriptions and see the “Call for Nominations” poster.

I want to stress that these positions are GREAT for anyone new to public health, epidemiology, and/or Texas public health in general. You do not need to have work experience in public health to serve as a section officer. Students are welcome and encouraged to apply! This is a great way to meet others and strengthen your leadership skills and résumé!!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thanks so much and I look forward to working with you as an officer for the TPHA Epi Section!

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TPHA Vision Care Section
Submitted by Dr. Christina Kinate

A Vision Care Section Milestone! The Vision Care Section participated in its first ever oral presentation at the 2021 TPHA Annual Education Conference. The first talk entitled “Sight for Success: Learning and working together as an inter-professional team to promote childhood vision” was presented by Dr. Lenora McWilliams and Dr. Pat Segu. The second talk entitled “Healthy Development of Visual System by Improving Follow-up Eye Care for School-Aged Children” was presented by Dr. Khadijah Sutarwalla and Dr. Pat Segu. Both provided invaluable information and lessons learned from first-hand experience in efforts aimed at promoting healthy vision in children. The speakers shared details on their respective work as well as thoughts on future direction to continue promoting their objectives. Excellent discussion followed the oral presentations with questions stemming from a variety of disciplines. We look forward to more opportunities for collaboration and presenting in the future!

The Vision Care Section also presented its annual awards to those who went “above and beyond” in their contributions to our section. Please join me in congratulating our winners.

Lastly, the TPHA Vision Care Section wants to share the important information below. Please pass it along to your colleagues.

Prevent Blindness Texas Circle of Caring Symposium

Women’s health care has made great strides in the past two decades. The recognition that women have different health care needs than men has enabled changes to take place in clinical care, research, and education. However, much remains to be done.

As a way to empower women in their eye health and overall health, Prevent Blindness Texas has created the Circle of Caring Giving Society. Join Prevent Blindness Texas on Sept. 16, 2021 at the Houston Health Museum for an evening focused on high-lighting women and discussing how to empower women in their eye health and overall health. This will be an opportunity to candidly discuss how women navigate the healthcare system, both as a doctor and patient. Register Here: https://preventblindnesstexas.donordrive.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=ticket.start&eventID=652
From our TPHA Members

Submitted by Oluwaseun Akinrinmola, TPHA Health Education Section Member

Lifeteam invites applications for our six-month paid mentorship program from all Public health professionals. Our mentorship program is a two-way relationship. Mentors will be paid per mentees assigned to them. Applications will be accepted until October 12.

Apply here: lifeteaminc@gmail.com, Lifeteaminc.com

Submitted by Kimberly Aguillard, PhD, TPHA Epidemiology Section Member

Eighteen months into this pandemic, critical questions remain about the amount of COVID-19 antibodies needed for protection, how long that protection might last, or if people with antibodies can still infect others. A research team with The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health and the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is partnering on the Texas Coronavirus Antibody Response Survey (Texas CARES) to provide answers to these pressing questions. This statewide longitudinal project uses a 2-in-1 serology test to explore natural and vaccine additive antibodies over time.

Any Texan 5-80 years of age can participate, regardless of previous COVID-19 infection or vaccination status. Participants complete an informed consent and questionnaire, and receive free blood draws at 3 time points (each 3 months apart). Review FAQs and enroll here: www.texascaresproject.org

Visit the Texas CARES dashboard to see what we have learned so far:
https://sph.uth.edu/projects/texascares/dashboard

Submitted by: Sherdeana Owens, DDS, MPA, TPHA Oral Health Section

Innovative Readiness Training Comes to Nueces County

Nueces County, Texas — Those in need of health care without the means to pay had the opportunity to access screenings and treatment due to a collaboration between the Texas A&M Colonias program, Nueces County, and the Army Reserve. The Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) began on June 15 and ended on June 24, 2021. It was titled “Operation Health and Wellness”. IRT is led by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Students from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and the Rangel College of Pharmacy from Texas A&M University-Kingsville participated in an Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) mission to support medical, dental, and optical care to rural and underserved communities; Dental Hygiene students from Del Mar College were also participants. Dr. Sherdeana Owens, TPHA Oral Health Section Chair, was instrumental in the planning and oversight of health administration student participation in this project. She was joined by nursing, pharmacy, and dental hygiene faculty. Students reported that this was an amazing experience and provided them with “real world” experience.

Services were provided at five sites in Nueces County and included diabetes screenings, women’s services, behavioral health, back-to-school physicals and vaccinations. Dental care included cleanings, fillings, and extractions. Optometry and pharmacy services were also offered. Locations of IRT included: Robstown, Banquete, Bishop, and Petronila, Texas. Over 2600 patients were served with nearly 19,000 prescriptions provided. The most used service was dental. There is a true need for dental services in under-resourced populations in Nueces County.
Along with the Marine Corps Reserve, Army Reserve, and the Navy Reserve, more than 500 Joint Service Members supported key utility and resource assessments throughout economically distressed areas where more than 40 percent live below the poverty line, and an additional 20 percent live at or just above the poverty line. Assessments supplied baselines for training in basic medical, dental, and behavioral health skills not addressed during typical weekend drills. For Sailors, this mission furnished civil engineering training in force movement, preventative maintenance, construction management, facilities operation, safety and occupational health programs, and electrical construction. Marine Reservists supported mission activities with training, supplying data networks, high-frequency communications, network extensions, and satellite link capabilities for five medical sites across the area of operation. Army Reservists provided medical clinics offering various services. IRT missions deliver unparalleled military training opportunities across the state of Texas and the country.

Nueces County has applied to participate in IRT in 2021. One of the major goals is to increase the provision of dental services.

**FREE Farm First Aid Training**

The Southwest Agricultural Center is now offering Farm First Aid training. Rural living often means YOU are the first responder to a crisis or medical emergency. Take the time to learn basic first aid that could save someone's life. The training is FREE.

Topics to be covered:

- Bleeding from burns or lacerations
- Asthma & Allergic Reactions
- Stroke & Seizures
- Heart Attack & Chest Pain
- Diabetic Emergencies
- Heat Illness
- Bites and Stings
- Injuries
- And more!

Participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to identify and assist persons experiencing common medical emergencies.
- Demonstrate the ability to identify and assist persons experiencing common injuries.

To schedule a training in your community, organization or school, contact Shelbie Powell at shelbie.powell2@uthct.edu | 903-877-1440 | www.swagcenter.org.

Thank you to all who submitted their news! We look forward to receiving brief announcements about the work you, our members, are doing and the achievements you have made.

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your colleagues and encourage them to join us! As members, their important announcements can be shared as well, once they become part of the TPHA crew! Check out the guidelines for submitting newsletter items that can be found on our TPHA website at www.texaspha.org/page/journal.

Our next newsletter is due out in late November, 2021. Start gathering the information you want to share with the Texas public health community now. We love hearing what y’all are up to!
Thank you for the public health work you do! Please stay safe and healthy during these challenging times! Contact TPHA and let us know how we can help you keep your communities safe and healthy.

**Please share the TPHA Governing Council position with your families, patients, clients, and colleagues. We encourage all Texans to ....**

Continue practicing the recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for preventing and limiting the transmission of COVID-19:
* Wearing a mask indoors in public places,
* Washing your hands frequently,
* Avoiding touching your face,
* Disinfecting touched surfaces,
* Maintaining a safe distance,
* GETTING THE COVID-19 VACCINE!

All those aged 12 and older are now eligible to be vaccinated!

Stay Healthy Texas!

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