TPHA News and Announcements:

From our TPHA president, Dr. Raouf Arafat: I would like to thank all our members and colleagues on the front lines of public health and healthcare for your commitment and dedication during this tough time. This pandemic is a public health challenge and responsibility and I believe we must band together as an association. Please reach out to us and let us know how our Texas Public Health Association can support you and the work you are doing. Stay safe and healthy, Texans need you!

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From our TPHA Executive Director, Terri Pali: As all good public health professionals, our association leaders adapted to the current situation and made the prudent, albeit heart wrenching, public health decision to cancel our Annual Education Conference (AEC). Our TPHA year typically begins with this conference where our new leaders and association resolutions for the coming year are announced. The President's awards for exceptional service would also have been announced and presented at the conference. Although these selections have been made the awardees remain anonymous until they can be notified. Therefore, an announcement recognizing these award recipients for their exceptional efforts on behalf of the Association will be included in the next newsletter. Despite the challenges, our 2019-2020 leaders continued to serve our association and once the electronic voting results were tallied, a teleconference was held to complete business for the past year.

Congratulations and welcome to our new President, Dr. Raouf Arafat. Immediate Past President, Dr. Witold Migala officially transferred the gavel to Dr. Arafat during the April 9th Governing Council teleconference. During the meeting the governing council certified the results of the election. Congratulations to Lisette Osborne, elected to serve as President-Elect and our three newly elected Governing Council members: Subi Gandhi, Santos Navarrette and Pat Segu. The council also appointed Linda Kaufman, Ashley Rodriguez and Bobby Schmidt to serve three-year positions on the Executive Board and Laura Feghali was appointed to serve the remainder of a 2-year position on Governing Council. We are very excited to welcome all newly elected and appointed members to both Governing Council and Executive Board. To those whose terms expired, the leadership of TPHA extends their sincere gratitude for their service to the association. Below is a complete list of TPHA Governing Council and Executive Board members for the 2020-2021 term:

Executive Board Members:

Raouf Arafat, President
Lisette Osborne, President-Elect
Witold Migala, Immediate Past President
Linda Kaufman, 3-year term
Ashley Rodriguez, 3-year term
Bobby Schmidt, 3-year term
Elizabeth Cuevas, 2-year term
Jeff Hatala, 2-year term
Melissa Oden, 1-year term
Kaye Reynolds, 1-year term
Governing Council (includes those on Executive Board and the following):

Subi Gandhi, 3-year term  
Navarette Santos, 3-year term  
Pat Segu, 3-year term  
Debra Flores, 2-year term  
Leslie Allsopp, 2-year term  
Laura Feghali, 2-year term  
Maram Museitif, 1-year term  
Sharon Melville, 1-year term  
Melanie Stone, 1-year term  
Vacancy-Administration & Management Section Chair  
Vacancy-Aging & Public Health Section Chair  
Vacancy-Community Health Worker Section Chair  
Julia Butler, Environmental & Consumer Health Section Chair  
Lucille Palenapa, Epidemiology Section Chair  
Jason Rosenfeld, Health Education Section Chair  
Justine Jimenez, Oral Health Section Chair  
Lynette Williams-Public Health Nursing Section Chair  
Vacancy-Student Section Chair  
Bhagya Segu-Vision Care Section Chair

Kaye Reynolds, TPHA Affiliate to APHA Governing Council  
Parliamentarian, Ex Officio Member-to be announced  
Terri Pali, Executive Director, Ex Officio Member

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New TPHA FELLOW MEMBERS
Congratulations to our NEWEST TPHA Fellows Lisette Osborne and Maram Museitif! Both Lisette and Maram’s Fellow Applications were approved by the governing council during its February 27th meeting.

Active or associate members who are in good standing for five (5) continuous years with a recognized professional status, and qualified according to the procedures prescribed by the Governing Council are eligible for Fellow membership. TPHA Fellows pay an additional $10.00 for their annual membership. These funds are used to support keynote speakers at the annual conference. To learn more and/or to apply for Fellow membership go to: TPHA Fellow Application

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National Public Health Week 2020

National Public Health Week was celebrated April 6-12. The theme for this year was “NPHW@25: Looking Back, Moving Forward.” On each day of NPHW a different public health topic was featured. Focused materials for each day were available from the American Public Health Association’s (APHA) website http://www.nphw.org/tools-and-tips.
How TPHA Celebrated

To promote NPHW, the Texas Public Health Association was granted an APHA National Public Health Week Collaboration Award and were invited to partner with the Montgomery County Health District and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) School of Public Health. Many local community events were planned including a Park Cleanup, Blood Drive, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Product Drive with the March of Dimes, Safe Sleep Class, Stop the Bleed with Naloxone Awareness, Suicide Awareness & Prevention Seminar and a Panel Discussion on Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic our partners were forced to postpone their planned activities. The Montgomery County Public Health District posted on social media recognizing NPHW and mental health stigma. Their goal was to engage their community by asking them to post in the comments what they can do to help reduce mental health stigma.

Additionally, TPHA promoted NPHW each day with emails to our members, NPHW themed posts to the TPHA Home page and Texas Public Health Association Facebook posts. If you are on Facebook go to our page and like us!

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TPHA Member Record Spring Cleaning

We want to make sure you receive all of the TPHA announcements and updates. Please take a moment to log-in to your TPHA membership account and update any outdated information. Go HERE to log-in. You should see the following screen:
TPHA AWARDS

It’s never too early to begin the process of nominating someone 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

Attention 2020 AEC Conference Presenters

As you all know, unfortunately the TPHA 2020 AEC was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We very much share your disappointment in not being able to present your poster and/or breakout session presentation as planned.

However, we have exciting news! TPHA is providing you with an opportunity to present your accepted poster or presentation by way of a virtual platform. This virtual conference presentation can be included in your resume and/or curriculum vitae. Additionally, the online format may actually allow your work to receive even more exposure than usual.

We will be sending you instructions soon on how to submit your presentation – stay tuned!

We appreciate your continued contribution and participation during these extraordinary times.
News from TPHA Boards, Committees and Sections

TPHA Editorial Board News:

We hope you enjoyed our Spring 2020 Texas Public Health Journal that included a special feature section on Vision Health that was coordinated by the TPHA Vision Care Section. We are in the process of compiling materials for our Summer 2020 issue now. We have several intriguing and innovative Texas-based articles you are sure to enjoy and learn from.

Presenters, in addition to the special event announced above, want to draw additional attention to your work? Please consider reformatting your presentation as either a public health brief report or a public health research/practice manuscript and submitting it for consideration of publication in the Texas Public Health Journal (TPHJ). Please visit the journal pages of our website for complete author guidelines https://www.texaspha.org/page/Authors.

Members, as you continue your COVID-19 efforts in our communities, please consider documenting those and submitting your articles, according to our guidelines, to our editorial board for consideration. Additionally, we know other important public health work must continue and look forward to receiving all submissions detailing your efforts. Please encourage your colleagues to submit to our TPHJ also. Please see the announcement below for more information.

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<th>TPHA Texas Public Health Association</th>
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<tr>
<td>Publish with us!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas Public Health Journal (TPHJ)</td>
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<td>Members and non-members are invited to submit the following:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Public Health Practice Commentaries</td>
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<td>• Brief Reports</td>
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<td>• Public Health Book or Software Reviews</td>
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<td>• Original Public Health Research Manuscripts*</td>
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<td>• Original Public Health Practice Manuscripts*</td>
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*are externally peer-reviewed by field specific public health professionals

There is no charge for submission or publication when guidelines are followed.

https://www.texaspha.org/page/Journal
Update on the TPHA Policy and Advocacy Committee (acronym - Policy, Advocacy and Resolutions Committee - PARC)

The TPHA PARC worked between November 2019 and March 2020 to confirm ten advocacy priority issues to present to the TPHA Membership for a vote. We are happy to report that all ten issues were approved. Make sure you are signed in to our website and check out the 2020 TPHA Resolutions that TPHA will be advocating for this year. We also asked the Membership to prioritize their top three issues for a more focused approach for future advocacy with policymakers.

Priority topics/issues that were approved, and in prioritized order are:
- Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Public Health System
- Medicaid Manage Care/Expansion
- Public Health Workforce
- Chronic conditions: including Wellness for children and adults and E-cigarettes
- Preventing Gun violence: including senseless shooting and easy access to guns.
- Opioid/substance abuse epidemic
- Sexual Violence and Human Trafficking (Intimate Partner (Domestic) Violence)
- Texas Health Literacy - Culturally Linguistic Standards
- Routine Vaccinations Against HPV

If you are interested in, or have expertise within any of these topics, and would like to participate in the development of a more strategic approach to advocating on the topics, please contact: Executive Director - Terri Pali (txpha@aol.com) or Chair - Jennifer Smith (jenniferbsmith@earthlink.net)

Vision Care Section
The Vision Care Section wishes to announce the Vision Care Section award winners for 2020:
The TPHA- VCS Distinguished Service Award is the highest honor the Vision Care Section can bestow and is presented to an individual, institution or organization that has made an outstanding contribution or demonstrated continual high quality service in the area of public health eye/vision care. 2020 Award Recipient: Pat Segu, OD, FAAO
The TPHA-VCS Advocacy Award - This award is presented to an individual, institution, or organization that has significantly helped to serve client populations through advocacy efforts in the area of public health eye/vision
care. This award recognizes and honors those who have given their time and energy to making a difference through community efforts. 2020 Award Recipient: Judy Harris, MBA

The TPHA - VCS Visionary Award - This award is presented to an individual, institution, or organization for exceptional contributions in groundbreaking efforts and/or innovation in eye health and vision care. The award recognizes those who have displayed commitment and dedication to vision. 2020 Award Recipient: Sima Taj Mozdbar, OD

The TPHA-VCS Outstanding Faculty Leadership Award – This award is presented to a faculty member at an academic institution who exemplifies outstanding leadership in eye health and vision care that enhances teaching and learning through community engagement and/or research. 2020 Award Recipient: Prevent Blindness Texas

Submitted by Vision Care Section Chair, Dr. Bhagya Segu Bhagya.Segu1@va.gov

Submitted by Paul McGaha, D.O., M.P.H. Paul.McGaha@uthct.edu

Karan P. Singh, PhD, FMSSANZ, FSMS, FASA, brings a wealth of experience and research to The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler, where he serves as professor and chair of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics for the School of Community and Rural Health. Adding to his multitude of accolades, he has garnered yet another international recognition. Dr. Singh was recently elected Fellow of the Indian Society for Medical Statistics (ISMS), the society's highest honor.

"This is the highest award of the society, awarded annually to an eminent member by recognizing their contribution to the cause of medical statistics," noted ISMS General Secretary N. Sreekumaran Nair, PhD.

"It is a true honor to be recognized by my home country," commented Dr. Singh. "I am undoubtedly grateful to the ISMS for their selection. Being elected fellow by such a prestigious society brings great pride as I join the ranks of such esteemed colleagues. I am excited to continue my work and contributions to the field of medical statistics."

The award ceremony was held in December at the society's national conference at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Patna, India. While in India, Dr. Singh continued to embody the aforementioned tenets of contribution, lecturing at the Indian Spinal Injuries Center and Bihar Animal Sciences University, as well as presenting at the International Conference on Agricultural Statistics.

This award is in addition to Dr. Singh's election as a Fellow of the American Statistical Association and the Modeling and Simulation Society of Australia and New Zealand. He is also an elected member of the International Statistical Institute. Please read the complete announcement at https://www.uthct.edu/article/131

Submitted by Dr. Christie C. Osuagwu Christiana.Osuagwu@uthct.edu

We regret to announce that our UT Health Northeast 3rd Annual ABCs (Access, Behavior and Costs) of Health Disparities Conference previously scheduled for September 4-5, 2020, has been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The theme was to be Education. We hope to host this regional conference on our campus in early September 2021. Our theme will remain Education (Overcoming the ABCs of Health Disparities).
Please watch out for our announcement regarding the specific dates in September 2021. If you have any questions or if you would like to be a Speaker at this conference, please do not hesitate to contact me. Everyone, please stay safe and well!

Submitted by Dr. Teresa Wagner Teresa.Wagner@unthsc.edu

First, the Health Literacy Collaborative that I established with the DFW Hospital Council Foundation (Chaired by me and co-chaired by Carol Howe from TCU, Tracy Adame at Medical City and Brennan Lewis at Children's Dallas) just received the National Library of Medicine South Central Region Health Literacy Grant for the second year in a row.

The first year we developed WebLitLegit to help teens discern credible vs. non-credible information on the internet. We will also be adding 5th-8th grade and adult versions of this workshop.
https://www.safercaretexas.org/weblitlegit/

This year we are developing workforce development tools to help healthcare entities become Health Literate Healthcare Organizations called: Innovate to Communicate: Health Literacy Workforce Development. Once developed, we are open to working with healthcare organizations across the state.

Secondly personally, I received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Texas Christian University this spring.
https://www.unthsc.edu/newsroom/story/wagner-named-distinguished-alumna-by-tcux/

Submitted by Dr. Melissa Oden drmissy2011@gmail.com

Dr. Candace Robledo and colleagues at UTRGV have compiled an online, anonymous survey to examine how sheltering in place is impacting mental health and well-being. The survey is available in English and Spanish. We would like your help in promoting people across the State of Texas to complete the survey and are also interested in collaborating with researchers across the state.

Please respond to and share link to survey to help us understand how sheltering in place is affecting our mental health and well-being (Spanish Survey Link included).
English Survey: https://redcap.utrgv.edu/surveys/?s=74LTK4H37M
Spanish Survey: https://redcap.utrgv.edu/surveys/?s=MKDD8CFH49

Submitted by Susan Rodriguez Susan.Rodriguez@uthct.edu

Home Visiting Success in East Texas Leads to Expansion

The University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler (UTHSCT) is proud to host the Texas Home Visiting (THV) program. THV comprises both the Parents as Teachers (PAT) and the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) home visiting models. Both are highly respected evidence-based home visiting programs shown to improve birth outcomes, positively impact parenting, and provide young children the developmental skills needed for school and life. THV has the potential to serve 210 Smith County families.

Since NFP came to Smith County in the Fall of 2016, the health horizon for low-income, first-time pregnant women has been elevated and continues to rise and brighten. NFP pairs voluntary first-time-pregnant, low-income women with a BSN-educated nurse who visit together regularly in the family home from early in the pregnancy until the child turns age two. NFP has three program goals: (1) Improve pregnancy outcomes; (2) Improve child health and development; and (3) Improve the economic self-sufficiency of the family. As of January 2020, there have been 943 women referred to the program. Two hundred seventy-seven
Texas Public Health Association

May 15, 2020

women have voluntarily welcomed an NFP nurse into their homes, and 183 babies born. While the focus is on a healthy pregnancy that is full-term and with a healthy infant weight, there is so much more to the impact of NFP. Mothers learn about child health and safety, child development, and the critical importance of attachment. They learn to think critically about what they want for their child and how they will get there. Many mothers have returned to school, be it for a GED or college. Many seek employment to support their child. Many break unhealthy habits and end relationships that put them and their infant at risk. Many have sought counseling to address issues that interfere with parenting. All of them learn to trust, to reach out when they need help, and to put their own health and that of their infants first.

Due to the success of the six-nurse NFP team in Smith County, UTHSCT was recently awarded funding for two additional NHVs to offer services to 50 eligible pregnant women in adjacent Henderson County, which was identified as having elevated levels of risk for infants and children. Outreach to develop NFP as an available service has been impacted by the pandemic but is still ongoing. To learn more about NFP, or to make a referral for services in Henderson County, please contact NFP Supervisor Laura Young, 903.877.8087 or laura.young@uthct.edu

Submitted by Dr. Michele Bosworth Michele.Bosworth@uthct.edu

The UTHSCT’s Breath of Life Mobile Asthma program has been awarded the EPA’s Leadership in Asthma Management Award. Please see the complete announcement at https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/observing-asthma-awareness-month-epa-honors-leading-community-asthma-care-programs

Submitted by Dr. Subi Gandhi gandi@tarleton.edu

The CogniAim team is excited to share the work they are doing with researchers in the current COVID-19 pandemic using predictive analytics. Using the machine learning tools, we are able to predict the incident and mortality rates associated with COVID-19 for Texas (see an example below). We intend to submit our work to the Texas Public Health Journal in July, so be on the lookout for our complete report that will highlight some of our groundbreaking work related to the pandemic.
Thank you to all of our members who submitted their news! We are overwhelmed by your response! We hope you find this TPHA newsletter engaging and informative. We look forward to receiving more brief announcements about the work you, our members, are doing and the achievements you have made. TPHA congratulates all members who have received prestigious awards in recognition of the outstanding work they have done.

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your colleagues and encourage them to join us so their important announcements can be shared as well! To improve our newsletter, be on the lookout for newsletter guidelines in the near future. Our next newsletter is due out around late August.

Thank you for the amazing 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.

Disclaimer: The Editorial Board of the Texas Public Health Association has the right to exclude any materials, including but not limited to those that may jeopardize our non-profit status.