East Stroudsburg University and The Commonwealth Medical College signed an agreement to offer a dual MD (Doctor of Medicine) and MPH (Master of Public Health) Degree program. The Commonwealth Medical College received a $1.5 million federal grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) over five years, with a subcontract for East Stroudsburg University, to provide the funding for enhanced integration of public health and health care through a dual degree program and other health training programs between the two institutions.

The HRSA grant which allows the combination of the MD-MPH dual program combines the strengths of two highly specialized degree program to train medical and health professionals who will help improve community and rural healthcare in northeastern Pennsylvania. TCMC students can receive additional training in public health by integrating public health studies, experiences and research at ESU during their medical school training.

The HRSA grant will provide $300,000 of funding over the next five years for the purpose of enriching the education of future physicians, researchers and public health professionals by enhanced integration and development of public health, medical education and primary care content, experiences and research. Medical students will have the opportunity to complete either ESU’s 18-credit public health certificate during their four year medical school curriculum or, they can earn ESU’s 48-credit Master of Public Health (MPH) degree by devoting an extra year of training. The grant supported program provides mentoring by public health professionals and primary care physicians for participants in the program. Students from both institutions will benefit from participating in classes together and from collaborating on public health projects that will benefit the region.

TCMC assistant professor of epidemiology Mark White, MD, MPH, is principal investigator for the grant. Co-directors of the joint training program are Steven Godin, PhD, MPH, East Stroudsburg University and Olapeju Simoyan, MD, MPH, BDS, The Commonwealth Medical College. The curriculum will be developed on joint studies, research and training activities and other educational programs that will be mutually beneficial to students at both ESU and TCMC. This degree will provide TCMC students with additional training in environmental health, infectious disease control, disease prevention, health promotion, epidemiology and injury control.
In October, 2012, CEPH conducted its scheduled site visit to evaluate our MPH Program for re-accreditation. The site visitors included: David Trump, MD, MPH, MPA, FACPM (Chairperson, and Director, Office of Epidemiology for the Virginia State Department of Health), Darlene Shearer, DrPH (Associate Professor and MPH Program Director at Western Kentucky University), and Site Visit Coordinator Kristen Force, MPH, CHES (Accreditation Specialist from CEPH). We were assessed to have five partially met criteria out of the 22 total criteria evaluated. These partially met criteria required remediation prior to our formal April, 2013 response.

Our first partially met criterion was due to our lack of adequate graduate level coverage of Epidemiology and Environmental Health. The reviewers found our coursework to lack depth and breadth of content needed for CEPH accreditation. In response, Sam Lesko, MD, MPH and Jane Huffman, Ph.D., MPH (ESU Department of Biology), and are now teaching our Epidemiology and Environmental Health coursework. Dr. Lesko was trained in Epidemiology at Yale University, and Dr. Huffman is a Distinguished Professor of Biology at ESU. Both faculty members taught during the 2012-2013 academic year.

Our second partially met criterion was due to environmental health not being a topic of coverage in our MPH Oral Exam. This deficiency was quickly remedied by inclusion of an environmental health question to be used. In 2013-2014, program faculty will be revisiting our Environmental Health content, and move the course to cover current topics consistent with changes that are occurring in health care reform.

Our third partially met criterion was our lack of evidence of links between our 65 MPH Program competencies and the required MPH coursework learning objectives. Since the site visit, we have revisited our competencies, and provided CEPH with a plan to provide a more transparent linkage to course objectives. This work will be completed in Summer, 2013.

Our fourth partially met criterion was our lack of a competency-based assessment of student learning beyond course grades, the MPH Oral Exam, publishable paper, and the internship. Since the site visit, program faculty have developed a rubric linking each of the culminating experiences to the program competencies. This competency based assessment will be used by program faculty in preparation of the oral exam questions for the given student. Competencies not covered within the given student’s publishable paper and/or internship and/or service learning experiences will be identified and assessed during the oral exam. The rubric will help shape the oral exam questions to assure all program competencies have been covered. Using the rubric, the program faculty can assure that all competencies are covered throughout the three culminating experiences. The same rubric was also adapted to serve as self-assessment tool to be used by the given MPH student. This assessment tool will be provided to the student during their initial orientation to the MPH Program. This rubric will be reviewed by the student and Dr. Godin at the start of each semester throughout the training program, with a final self-assessment to be completed during the Hlth 581 Public Health Seminar culminating experience.

Our fifth and final partially met criterion was our lack of clarity regarding our outcome measures that were reported in one section of our self-study document as numbers, yet in other sections were reported as percentages. We understand that the use of numbers vs. use of percentages in reporting our program outcomes can be confusing. We have addressed this concern by starting a process of documenting both numbers and percentages (based on those numbers) within our outcome measures, and data reporting. During Summer, 2013, we will be working to design stronger assessments to capture our program outcomes.

Last, while not deemed a partially met, the site visitors were concerned about our program’s aging goals and objectives. Our faculty decided back in 2010 to monitor how the Affordable Care Act (ACA) may change the face of public health nationally. In 2010-2012, we witnessed significant changes to the types of social service organizations downsizing versus experiencing growth, the specific skill sets needed in the workforce, and where our alumni were being hired. In response, we have made adjustments in the content of our coursework. In 2011, the program faculty and MPH Advisory Committee reviewed the need for a change in the concentration of MPH degree. We are moving in the direction of changing our degree name from “Community Health Education” to “Public Health Practice”. However, it was agreed that given the pending CEPH site visit in 2012, it was best to wait until after our review to undergo a significant program redesign. In sum, our program faculty have been: a) active in reviewing our program goals and objectives; b) assessing the pulse of how the ACA will change the face of public health infrastructure; and c) primed to move forward with modifications to our MPH Program that prepares leaders for the evolving field of public health.
The Evaluation of the Pennsylvania Department of Health’s Diabetes Prevention and Control Program (DPCP) was conducted by East Stroudsburg University between August 2011 and July 2012. The goal of this evaluation was to develop and implement an evaluation of the DPCP.
Dr. Godin is collaborating with colleagues from Hunterdon Healthcare Systems and Hunterdon Prevention Resources, conducting a scan of county policies related to: 1) Tobacco-free living; 2) Active living and healthy eating; and 3) Social and emotional wellness. The scope of work also includes: a) Asset mapping of county resources to address the three targeted areas above; b) Mapping of disparate populations in the County, using BRFSS and Youth BRFSS datasets; and running demographic characteristics (i.e., SES, ethnicity, and unemployment rates) across various identified health issues identified in these risk assessments. The geo-mapping will be done using Business Map V. Completion of the needs assessment positions Hunterdon County, NJ to obtain further funding from the CDC’s Community Transformation Grant initiatives that are underway in NJ.
ESU’S EXTENDED LEARNING CENTERS IN PHILADELPHIA AND BETHLEHEM, PA

Established in 2011, ESU’s Extended Learning Program at the Philadelphia Center enables students to apply existing earned college credits and complete a bachelor’s degree in two years of evening and weekend study in convenient Center City Philadelphia. The fast-track program leads to the public health degree and, depending on the number of existing credits held by a student, can be finished within two years. Concentrations in health services administration and community health further allow students to choose paths that are the most applicable for their experiences and goals. All classes are held at a convenient Center City location in a secure, accessible and comfortable environment which is operated by the PASSHE for partner universities. It is PASSHE’s goal to extend additional options for public higher education to Philadelphia residents through this location, which will offer undergraduate and graduate degree options

A graduate, Miriam White, who has completed her education at the Philadelphia Center stated, “This program was simply amazing, at first I was unsure if I was going to be able to keep up with an accelerated program, but the entire staff was very helpful in our success. When we had questions they were available. If we needed tutoring they were available. And all of my classmates made this journey memorable. We were there for each other.”

Another graduate, Sara Fleming-Donley stated, “ESU has given me the opportunity to not only further my education, but embark on a new life path. The class size, flexibility of our instructors, and adult learning format made it possible for me to complete my degree and still work full-time and care for my family. ESU has prepared me for the inevitable challenges that life brings, as well as opened my eyes to all this possible and a new career path.”

In addition to the Philadelphia Center, ESU has established another Extended Learning Center in the Lehigh Valley in August of 2012. The Center is located in Bethlehem, PA. Dr. Marcia G. Welsh, East Stroudsburg University President stated, “Like other colleges and universities, ESU intends to provide convenient, accessible, and affordable education alternatives to interested individuals with a busy lifestyle. It’s not about inviting students to campus anymore—it’s about taking the educational experience to them, where they live and work.”

The Lehigh Valley Center will be the first extended learning facility operated by ESU, modeled after the universities first successful program in Center City of Philadelphia. ESU’s Lehigh Valley Center will offer undergraduate degree completion programs in public health (with concentrations in health services administration or community health) based on a feasible study conducted by MGT of America that predicted economic growth in this industry.

Dr. Van Reidhead, provost and vice president for academic affairs stated, “Another great aspect of the Lehigh Valley Program is that there will be opportunities for East Stroudsburg University to become part of the local community, and their hopes are that local businesses and organizations will take the opportunity to use ESU’s Lehigh Valley Center for meetings, seminars and workshops at a reasonable cost.”

Twelve students were the first to graduate from East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania’s extended Learning site in Philadelphia in December of 2012. The students received bachelor of science degrees in public health at commencement ceremonies on the ESU campus in East Stroudsburg, Pa.
“Setting the Sexuality Education Agenda: A Retrospective Policy Analysis from the Reagan to the Obama Administration.”

“Estimation of Relative Radiation Exposure and Risk to U.S. Populations Following the Aftermaths of the Chernobyl and the Fukushima Nuclear Incidents: Putting in Perspective the Individual and Combined Exposures”


“An Assessment of the Nutrition Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviors of East Stroudsburg University College Students.” -Jessica L. Malachowsky

“An Evaluation of the Innovative Health Coaching Program at East Stroudsburg University”—Melissa Potter
**WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

Following graduation in December 2011, Candace was hired as a project director for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), to which ESU is a member. Her job was to oversee the final operations of a two year, $500,000 Department of Education grant that helped build structural capacity for alcohol prevention efforts across the state through the use of an extremely efficient coalition. Candace stated that she actually received the job because she was a graduate assistant with the grant for a year and a half while she was studying for her MPH at ESU. Candace says, “It was a wonderful job, but I gained a lot of knowledge from mentors from all over Pennsylvania.” By the time the grant ended, Candace was accepted to a PhD program at the University of South Carolina for the Fall 2012 semester.

Currently, she is almost finished with her first year of the PhD program with a focus in Health Promotion, Education and Behavior. She chose the University of South Carolina because she is interested in community-based participatory research in rural communities, and she wanted more expertise in healthy aging and chronic disease issues.

Since coming to Columbia, she has worked as a graduate research assistant for the Center of Disease Control’s Healthy Aging Research Network. Candace says, “It is super exciting, especially when I get to visit the CDC in Atlanta, GA and meet researchers from all over the United States.” Candace is currently assisting with evaluation of STEPS, a self-directed arthritis management program, and just finished working on a grant application that, if funded, would look to extract items from validated measures, to help understand healthy cognition and stigma in persons with dementia and their caregivers. Candace is also working on writing two journal articles to submit for publishing by this summer as well.

“It has been a LOT of hard work, and I’ve been extremely lucky but because of ESU’s Department of Health Studies’ faculty and staff, the opportunities afforded to me through ESU’s service learning club, the Community Health Organization and the knowledge I gained in the MPH program, I know that I have the building blocks necessary to succeed in my goal of becoming a public health researcher and professor!”

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**KRISTIN WENRICH**

Kristen Wenrich earned her bachelor’s and master’s degree in public health from East Stroudsburg University.

Following graduation, she has been trained on Continuous Improvement, a 5-year-old initiative to streamline city operations.

Kristen has worked with the Bethlehem Health Bureau since 1998 and was the community health risks behavior manager. In January of 2013 she was recommended to the health board to become the new health director, in which she was rewarded.

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**NANDI MARSHALL**

Dr. Nandi Marshall obtained her MPH from ESU and went on to continue her doctorate work in Community Health Behavior and Education from the CEPH Accredited Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health at Georgia Southern University. She received her DrPH in December, 2012. She just sent us her good news that in August, 2013, she will start her new position as an Assistant Professor teaching and conducting research in the Department of Health Sciences at Armstrong Atlantic State University.
Peter Costa graduated from the MPH program in 2005. Peter currently works for Lehigh University as the director of the Center for Health Advancement and Prevention Strategies within the Division of Student Affairs. In this role Peter is tasked with setting a campus-wide agenda to advance the health of Lehigh students by developing and implementing a high-level strategic plan that fully coordinates all prevention-related efforts and supports Lehigh's core competencies for student learning and personal development.

Peter's position at Lehigh represents a paradigm shift in the way colleges and universities address student health through prevention and a shift from individual- to population-level prevention; and from direct health education to program, policy and coalition development. This approach brings Lehigh University into alignment with best practices in the Student Affairs industry and demonstrates Lehigh's strong commitment to being a national leader in prevention.

The MPH program at ESU prepared Peter very well for the theory- and evidence-based community health assessment, program planning and evaluation activities he undertakes routinely in his position. As the single point person for prevention-related activities at Lehigh, Peter also attributes his interpersonal abilities to communicate to and collaborate with a campus-wide network of partners for a shared vision of health to his daily interactions with his cohort, ESU faculty members and the full foundation of skills provided by the accredited curriculum.
Steven Godin, PhD, MPH, PHI Certificate,

During the 2012-2013 academic year, Dr. Godin took the lead role in preparing for our CEPH accreditation site visit in October, and then worked with faculty to address issues identified during the site visit. The report back to CEPH in April, 2013 had addressed those issues. The CEPH Board meets in June, 2013 to make a final decision regarding our CEPH accreditation, and we remain positive regarding our re-accreditation for the next seven years 2013-2020. He also served as Chair of the Faculty Search Committee to hire our new faculty member, Dr. Clare Lenhart who will be starting her new position as an Assistant Professor of Health Studies. Dr. Godin won a national election to serve a two year term as “Member at Large” on the Executive Council of the American Association of Public Health Programs (AAPHP). Beyond his administrative duties, he has been working on three grant funded projects: 1) The Hunterdon Partnership for Health: A New Model Linking Assessment, Collaboration and Technology (funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation); 2) Hunterdon County Environmental Scan (federally funded through a Community Transformation Grant with the New Jersey Prevention Network); and 3) Primary Care Training and Enhancement: Interdisciplinary and Inter-professional Joint Graduate Program. (federally funded by the Health Resources & Services Administration or HRSA).

Steven E. Shive, Ph.D., MPH, CHES

Dr. Shive was promoted to Full Professor in July 2012. He continues to serve as a research associate at the Center for Asian Health at Temple University and has recently published four co-authored papers entitled, “Social Influences on Cigarette Smoking among Mainland Chinese and Chinese Americans: A Comparative Study”; in the American Journal of Health Studies, “Health Seeking Behavioral Analysis Associated with Breast Cancer Screening among Asian American Women,” in the International Journal of Women’s Health, “Factors Associated with Colorectal Cancer Screening among Cambodians, Vietnamese, Koreans, and Chinese Living in the United States” in the North American Journal of Medicine and Science, and “Socio-cultural Factors Associated with Prostate Cancer Screening among Chinese American Men: A Structural Model” in the American Journal of Health Behavior. In addition to his research, he has developed three undergraduate distance education courses and trains people in the community in Basic Life Support for Cardiopulmonary resuscitation and First Aid, including Instructors, through his affiliation with the Emergency Care/Basic Care Life Support Training Center.