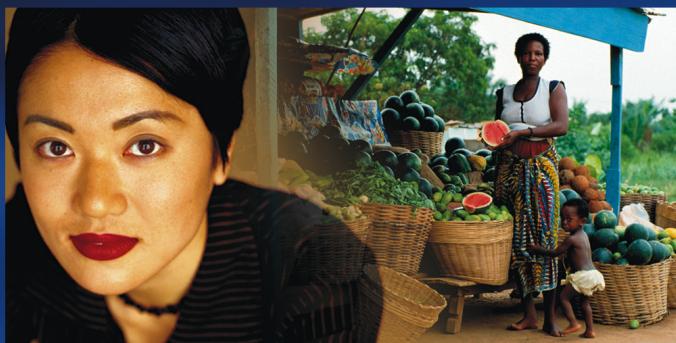




You can make a
DIFFERENCE
Pursue a Career in Public Health





You Can Make a Difference

Pursue a Career in Public Health

Health disparities exist for racial and ethnic populations in the United States

- ▶ While racial and ethnic populations make up approximately one-quarter of the U.S. population, they account for nearly half of all AIDS cases.
- ▶ American Indians have higher death rates as compared to other Americans from tuberculosis (5 times higher) and alcoholism (6 times higher).
- ▶ Infant death rates among Blacks/African Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, and Hispanics are above the national average. The greatest gap exists for Blacks/African Americans, whose infant death rate is nearly double that of White infants.
- ▶ Hispanic children are nearly three times as likely to lack a regular source of health care compared to White children.
- ▶ The rate of kidney disease cases is one-and-a-half times higher in Asian and Pacific Islander Americans than found in White Americans.
- ▶ Diabetes for Blacks/African Americans is approximately 70 percent higher than compared to Whites, and in Hispanics it is nearly double. Diabetes among American Indians/Alaska Natives is more than twice that for the entire U.S. population.
- ▶ Hispanic, Asian and Pacific Islander American, American Indian, and Alaska Native women all have the lowest rates of screening and treatment of cervical cancer.



FACT: *Almost 20% of American Indian teenagers (ages 12–17) use illicit drugs, the highest rate of any group in the United States.*



FACT: *African-American women have the highest death rates from heart disease, breast and lung cancer, stroke, and pregnancy among women of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.*



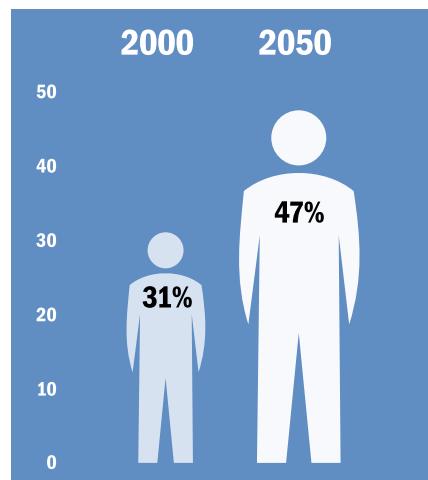
FACT: *Hispanics are about 1.9 times more likely to have diabetes than are non-Hispanic whites of similar ages.*

Causes of Public Health Disparities

While there has been an explosion of scientific and technological discoveries that help diagnose, prevent, and treat disease, racial and ethnic populations have not been able to fully reap the benefits of these breakthroughs for many reasons, including:

- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ Language barriers
- ▶ Cultural differences
- ▶ Lack of health insurance and access to healthcare
- ▶ Immigration status
- ▶ Education levels
- ▶ Access to transportation and child/elder-care services
- ▶ Environmental risks
- ▶ Differences in individual and community support

PROJECTED U.S. MINORITY GROWTH AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL U.S. POPULATION FROM YEARS 2000 TO 2050



Minorities = Asian/Pacific Islander; Black/African American; Hispanic; and American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian

Public Health Addresses Health Disparities in Many Ways

What can you do in public health?

YOU CAN help improve the health and well being of people in your local community, your state, or even your country.

YOU CAN help others follow a healthy lifestyle.

YOU CAN work to prevent health problems before they occur.

YOU CAN find true job satisfaction knowing that you are making the world a better place.

How? Here are some of the many examples:

BY determining the effects of the air, water, and soil pollutants that threaten and harm communities.

BY creating educational campaigns that encourage healthy eating to prevent cancer, wearing bike helmets for greater safety, or exercising to prevent heart disease.

BY developing policies for your city, state, or country that help improve access to health services.

BY investigating the bacterial or viral sources of foodborne illnesses and developing strategies to prevent further contamination.

BY using computers to track and analyze disease outbreaks, disability, or injury trends among communities and populations in the United States.



Ciro Sumaya, MD, MPHTM

Dean and Professor

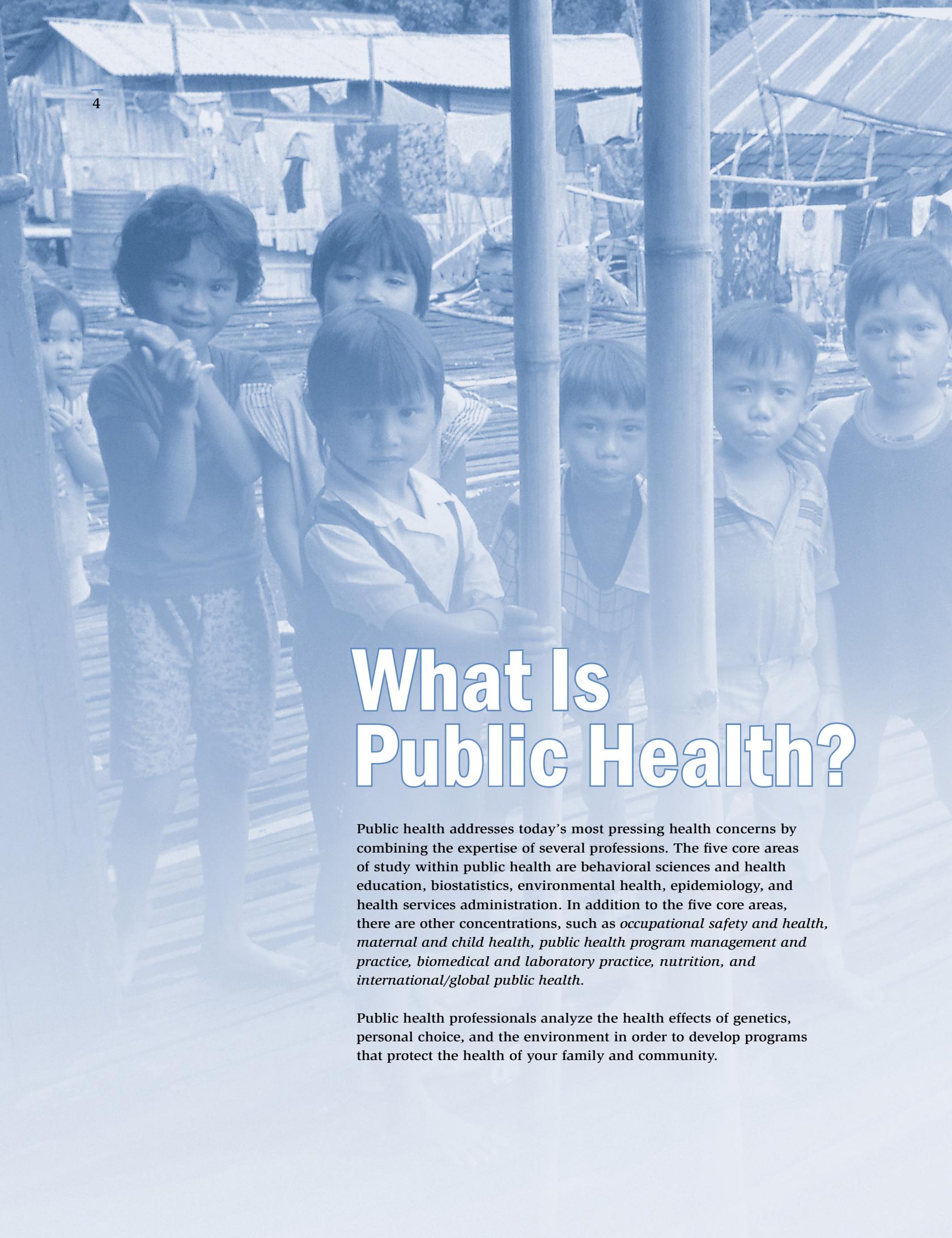
Former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

FIELD: Higher education, federal government, consulting in private and public industries

SPECIALTY: Pediatrics and infectious disease, national health policy

MPHTM 1973, BA Pre-Medicine

“Minority faculty provide leadership, serve as role models, provide perspective on dealing with minority patients, and promote culturally competent approaches to enhance the effectiveness of health service delivery to minority populations.”

A group of children in a slum, looking towards the camera. The image is overlaid with a blue tint. The children are standing in front of a building with a corrugated metal roof. Some children are looking directly at the camera, while others are looking slightly away. The background shows more of the slum, with laundry hanging on lines and other buildings.

What Is Public Health?

Public health addresses today's most pressing health concerns by combining the expertise of several professions. The five core areas of study within public health are behavioral sciences and health education, biostatistics, environmental health, epidemiology, and health services administration. In addition to the five core areas, there are other concentrations, such as *occupational safety and health, maternal and child health, public health program management and practice, biomedical and laboratory practice, nutrition, and international/global public health.*

Public health professionals analyze the health effects of genetics, personal choice, and the environment in order to develop programs that protect the health of your family and community.

What Field of Public Health Interests You?

The public health profession cuts across many different disciplines, so a public health career option exists for everyone!

Do you have strong organizational, communication, planning, and leadership skills? Consider a position in health administration or management. Job settings include: foundations, government agencies, community-based organizations, nonprofit agencies, clinics and hospitals, or managed care organizations.

Do you like working in the community, like solving problems in a team, and enjoy interacting with the public? Look into community practice. Job settings include: community health organizations, institutions that focus on university and community partnerships, state and local public health departments, and schools. A variety of job titles exist among the various settings (e.g., industrial hygienist, social worker, psychologist, community health educator, and public health nurse).

Are you interested in teaching others? Consider a position in education to teach health in a variety of settings including: maternal and child health in a women's clinic; occupational injury prevention with a trade union; stress reduction in a corporate wellness program; and any public health area in which you would like to become a professor in a school of public health, nursing, medicine, or other health profession.

Are you interested in current events, the law, and social change? Think about a career advocating change through developing, implementing, and evaluating health policies or laws. Job settings include: state, local, and national legislative offices; law firms; consulting firms; universities; nonprofit advocacy organizations; professional associations; and foundations.

Are you curious, detail-oriented, analytical, and rigorous in questioning the "hows" and "whys"? Research might be your field. Job settings include: university and medical centers, international organizations, private foundations, pharmaceutical companies, government agencies, and consulting firms.

Pursue a Career in Public Health

Public health has many fields to choose from. Most career opportunities are in the following areas:

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The air we breathe; the water we drink; the complex interactions between human genetics and our surroundings. These environmental risk factors can cause diseases such as asthma, cancer, and food poisoning. Environmental health studies the impact of our surroundings on our health.

BIOSTATISTICS

Estimating the number of deaths from gun violence or looking at trends in drunk driving injuries by using math and science is the study of biostatistics. Biostatistics uses data analysis to determine the cause of disease and injuries, as well as to identify health trends within communities. This field entails collecting and studying information, forecasting scenarios, and making reliable conclusions.

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES/HEALTH EDUCATION

Stopping the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, such as herpes and HIV/AIDS; helping youth recognize the dangers of binge drinking; and promoting seatbelt use. Behavioral Sciences/Health Education focuses on ways that encourage people to make healthy choices. This includes the development of community-wide education programs that range from promoting healthy lifestyles to preventing disease and injury, to researching complex health issues.

EPIDEMIOLOGY

When food poisoning or an influenza outbreak attacks a community, the “disease detectives” or epidemiologists are asked to investigate the cause of disease and control its spread. Epidemiologists do fieldwork to determine what causes disease or injury, what the risks are, who is at risk, and how to prevent further incidences. They understand the demographic and social trends upon disease and injury. The initial discovery and containment of an outbreak, such as West Nile virus, often comes from epidemiologists.

HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Managing the database at a school clinic; developing budgets for a health department; creating policies for health insurance companies; and directing hospital services all depend on health administrators. The field of health services administration combines politics, business, and science in managing the human and fiscal resources needed to deliver effective public health services.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Providing information and access to birth control; promoting the health of a pregnant woman and an unborn child; and dispensing vaccinations to children are part of maternal and child health. Professionals in maternal and child health improve the public health delivery systems specifically for women, children, and their families through advocacy, education, and research.

NUTRITION

Promoting healthy eating and regular exercise; researching the effect of diet on the elderly; and teaching the dangers of overeating and overdieting are the responsibility of public health nutritionists. This field examines how food and nutrients affect the wellness and lifestyle of populations. Nutrition encompasses the combination of education and science to promote health and disease prevention.

INTERNATIONAL/GLOBAL HEALTH

Addressing health concerns from a global perspective and encompasses all areas of public health (e.g., biostatistics, epidemiology, nutrition, maternal and child health, etc.). International health professionals address health concerns among different cultures in countries worldwide.

PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORY PRACTICE

Public health laboratory professionals perform tests on biological and environmental samples in order to diagnose, prevent, treat, and control infectious diseases in communities, to ensure the safety of our food and water, to screen for the presence of certain diseases within communities, and to respond to public health emergencies, such as bioterrorism.

For each of these public health career areas, opportunities exist in:

- ▶ Administration and Management
- ▶ Regulation and Law Enforcement
- ▶ Advocacy/Policy Development
- ▶ Research
- ▶ Teaching
- ▶ Delivery of public health services (public health nurse, public health doctor, public health dentist, etc.)
- ▶ Community Outreach

Obtain a Degree at a School of Public Health

CEPH-accredited schools of public health are located across North America and offer a wide range of educational opportunities. All accredited schools of public health offer high academic standards and the assurance that your educational opportunities will make you competitive in the job field after graduation. Accredited schools of public health offer many benefits:

- ▶ Wide variety of degree options and concentrations
- ▶ Hands-on training to prepare you for the workforce
- ▶ Interactive learning with communities
- ▶ Innovative research opportunities
- ▶ Refinement of skills and knowledge
- ▶ Mentorships
- ▶ Unique internships and fellowship opportunities
- ▶ Professional contacts



Many students gain practical experience through internships.

To determine if a career in Public Health is right for you...

- ▶ Contact a public health association for more information.
- ▶ Talk with professionals in the various public health fields, and ask questions about how they got to where they are.
- ▶ Schedule time to speak with faculty at any of the accredited schools of public health.
- ▶ Visit with current graduate students in public health.
- ▶ Conduct research on the Internet or at a library on the field of interest.
- ▶ Visit www.whatispublichealth.org for detailed career profiles.



Jan T. Liu, MHS

Policy Analyst

FIELD: Nonprofit National Asian American and Pacific Islander policy and advocacy organization
SPECIALTY: International health, health policy, minority health
MHS 1999, BS Biology

"I analyze state and federal administrative policies, monitor legislation, and coordinate advocacy efforts on behalf of Asian American and Pacific Islander American communities. I have been able to combine my interest in health and science with my passion for social activism. To me, public health is part of the broad struggle for social justice, equality, and human rights for all."

Academics

The following is a sample curriculum that is generally expected of students.

Core Public Health Courses

5 courses

- ▶ Introduction to Epidemiology
- ▶ Principles of Biostatistics
- ▶ Foundations in Health Administration
- ▶ Introduction to Environmental Health Sciences
- ▶ Introduction to Health and Community Behavior

Concentration Courses

7-8 courses

Elective Courses

0-4 courses

Practice Experience or Thesis

Culminating Experience (culminating exam, special project, etc.)

Please note that each school of public health will have different requirements. Check with each school for degree requirements and more information.

▶ Core Public Health Courses

To ensure a strong foundation for a public health career, every student is required to take coursework in epidemiology, biostatistics, health policy/administration, environmental health sciences, and the behavioral and social sciences.

▶ Concentration Courses

In addition to core courses, concentration courses are additional courses required within a student's selected major.

▶ Elective Courses

Elective courses are additional courses that are freely selected by students to further refine their interest area.

▶ Practice Experience

Most students are required to complete a practice experience for graduation. This activity is conducted outside the classroom, usually in a work setting, to enable students to apply classroom knowledge and improve practice skills.

▶ Culminating Experience

This is an activity that enables students to demonstrate their mastery of everything they have learned in graduate school. It may take the form of a comprehensive examination, a written thesis paper, or a special project.



David Satcher, MD, MPH
U.S. Surgeon General (1998-2002)

Broaden Your Career Horizons... Consider a Dual or Joint Degree!

Combination degree programs are excellent programs for people with a wide range of interests, diverse education, and multiple talents to gain expertise in both public health and another discipline, such as medicine, law, public policy, education, social work, etc. Most schools of public health offer joint or dual degrees in distinct combinations tailored for your professional interests.

A dual degree is when a student completes all or most of the requirements for each individual degree. Some overlapping and shared requirements may occur; if so, these are usually through elective courses.

A joint degree is one in which two degrees can be completed both simultaneously and in less time than it would take to complete two degrees independently. The curricula of joint degrees are far more integrated than dual degrees.

The following are examples of common joint and dual degrees offered through schools of public health:

- ▶ MPH/MD (public health/medical degree)
- ▶ MPH/MSN (public health/nursing degree)
- ▶ MPH/JD (public health/law degree)
- ▶ MPH/MBA (public health/business degree)
- ▶ MPH/MSW (public health/social work degree)
- ▶ MPH/MPP (public health/public policy degree)
- ▶ MPH/DDS (public health/dentistry degree)
- ▶ MPH/DVM (public health/veterinary medicine degree)



Caroline Volel, MD, MPH

Assistant Clinical Professor and Physician

FIELD: Public health education, clinical practice; hospital, school clinic, and university
SPECIALTY: General pediatrics and public health
MPH 2001, BA Comparative Literature

“A public health perspective allows me to examine how so many different, and at times, seemingly unrelated, factors interact and affect health. Health issues have roots that reach far beyond any individual patient. I need to understand these relationships if I wish to guide my patients to the road to wellness.”

Application Process

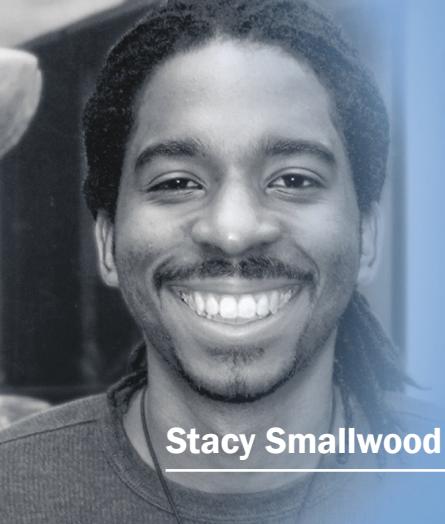
There are many factors to consider when applying to a school of public health.

► Preparatory Coursework

Most students in schools of public health come from a wide range of academic backgrounds. The following is a broad sampling of undergraduate majors that may help prepare you for your field of interest.

* SAMPLES OF UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS/MINORS	POSSIBLE FIELD CONCENTRATION(S)
Math, Statistics, Basic Sciences, Computer Sciences	Epidemiology or Biostatistics
Education, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Biology, Marketing, Communications, Criminology	Behavioral Sciences/Health Education
Business, Economics, Public Policy, Political Science, Health Science, Marketing	Health Services Administration
Social Sciences, Linguistics, Political Science, History, Biology and other basic sciences, Anthropology, Communications	Global/International Health
Biology, Chemistry, Engineering, Agriculture, Earth Sciences (Geology, Meteorology), Archeology, Psychology	Environmental Health
Biology, Social Sciences, Health Science, Public Policy, Social Work	Maternal and Child Health

**The suggested majors/minors are only examples and should not be considered as pre-requisite for any graduate public health concentration. Any discipline can prepare a person for most public health studies. For example, a person doesn't necessarily need a major/minor in math or science to study biostatistics; competence in the appropriate math principles suffices.*



Stacy Smallwood

MPH Candidate

FIELD: Exercise science

"I chose to pursue a career in public health because I wanted to take a proactive approach to health. Public health is important because it affects all aspects of people's lives. A career in public health means that I have the opportunity to affect the education, behavior, and health of African-American communities. There are many health issues that affect our communities disproportionately, yet there's also a lot of information out there about the solutions to the problems. We need people to bridge that gap."

▶ Work Experience

Many schools of public health favor relevant work experience in applicants. From recent college graduates to working professionals, the array of individual experiences brought to the classroom enriches student diversity. Work experience may be volunteer, school-based (e.g., internships), or paid employment. Work experience provides valuable insight into a profession and develops knowledge and skills that can assist you in graduate school.

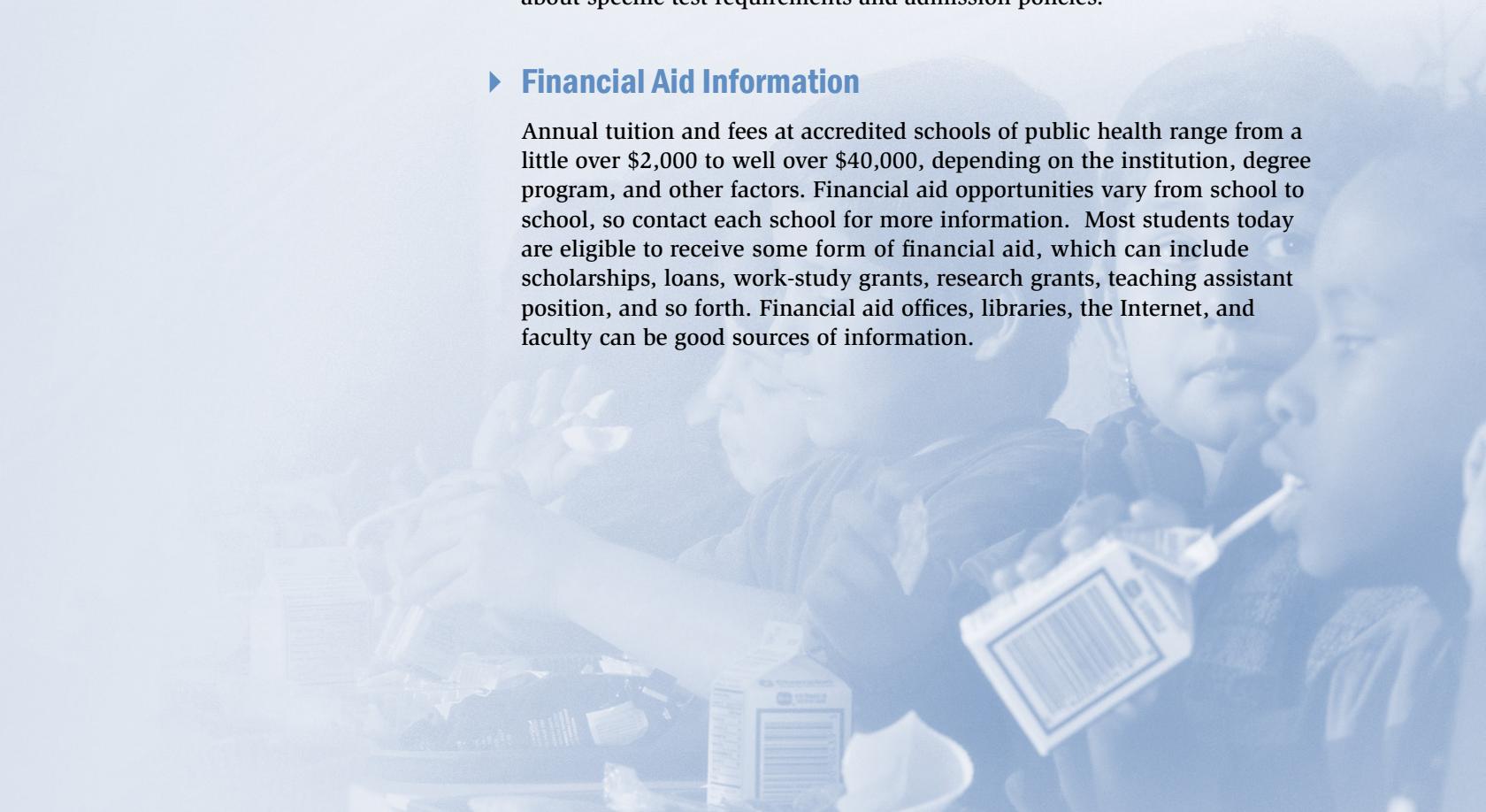
Frequently, early-to-mid career professionals return to school and seek a master of public health not only for their future goals, but also because public health complements a wide range of job experiences and previous studies.

▶ Admissions and Entrance

The entrance requirements differ by school and program area. For example, the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required by some schools, but not by others. Contact the schools that you are interested in attending to inquire about specific test requirements and admission policies.

▶ Financial Aid Information

Annual tuition and fees at accredited schools of public health range from a little over \$2,000 to well over \$40,000, depending on the institution, degree program, and other factors. Financial aid opportunities vary from school to school, so contact each school for more information. Most students today are eligible to receive some form of financial aid, which can include scholarships, loans, work-study grants, research grants, teaching assistant position, and so forth. Financial aid offices, libraries, the Internet, and faculty can be good sources of information.





Ann-Gel S. Palermo, MPH

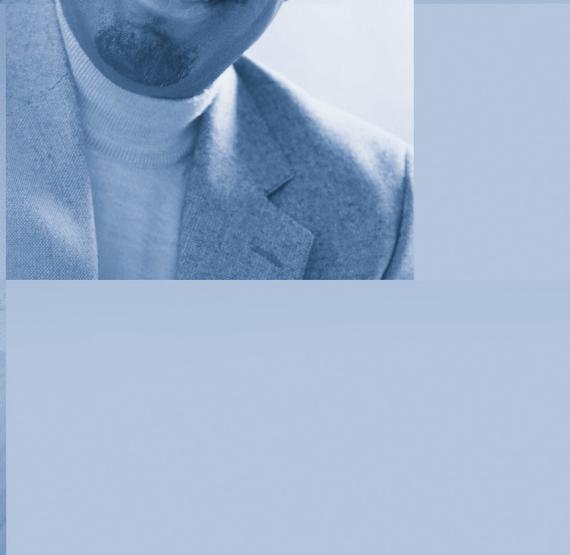
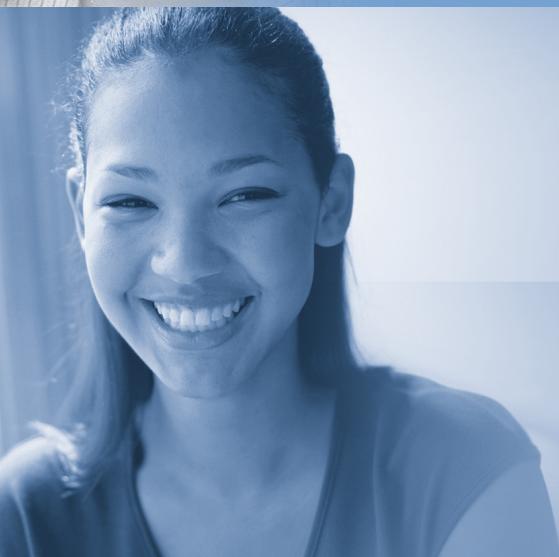
Research Associate

FIELD: Community-based research and policy on Medicare and Medicaid

SPECIALTY: Community-based public health, health service research, health policy research

MPH 1999, BS Biological Sciences and Sociology

“As a Latina, I have been able to incorporate my own experiences as well as gain insights into the way in which public health practice and research is conducted with the Latino community.”





An Invitation to Join the Public Health Profession

The field of public health needs your passion and your skills. Public health practitioners do everything from promoting hand washing to statistical analysis of health-related studies to informing policy makers of the impact of their decisions on people's health. They look at cultural factors related to health behavior, including interaction with health systems. Public health focuses on promoting health and preventing disease.

Jobs in public health range from providing direct care in health clinics (usually people who do this have a clinical specialty as well) to working in health programs as a health educator, administrator, or evaluator. They include doing research on health problems, tracking down epidemics, teaching public health, and shaping health policy.

CEPH-accredited schools of public health all graduate master's and doctoral-level students. Many also teach undergraduate students and offer continuing education opportunities for current professionals. Students entering these programs come from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from liberal arts backgrounds to technical science fields.

The field of public health embraces diversity. Health professionals from a variety of ethnic backgrounds are a valuable asset to public health because their unique perspectives on culture and communities enhance prevention and wellness. As stated by the Sullivan Commission on Diversity in the Healthcare Workforce, "The fact that the nation's health professions have not kept pace with changing demographics may be an even greater cause of disparities in health access and outcomes than the persistent lack of health insurance for tens of millions of Americans."

CEPH-accredited schools of public health offer many opportunities for students, including a wide variety of concentrations, hands-on experiences, interactive learning, and innovative research opportunities. If you want a rewarding career that contributes to improving our health and well-being, accredited schools of public health can help you reach your goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia W. Wahl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Patricia W. Wahl, PhD
Dean, School of Public Health and Community Medicine
Professor of Biostatistics
University of Washington

Benefits of a Career in Public Health

Be a part of the Public Health profession and you will gain:

- ▶ A variety of opportunities to work in many settings and disciplines;
- ▶ Professional growth and leadership skills;
- ▶ Personal and professional satisfaction from having a positive impact upon society's well-being;
- ▶ Opportunities to interact with and learn from a wide array of professionals in diverse fields;
- ▶ A chance to “give back” to the community and become a more actively engaged citizen;
- ▶ A deeper appreciation of multicultural perspectives; and,
- ▶ A chance to promote change by combining your interests and passions toward social activism and justice.

The boundaries of what you can do in Public Health are limitless...

You can make a difference pursue a career in Public Health!



Assistant Professor

FIELD: Education and community-based, applied research

SPECIALTY: HIV/AIDS, ethnic minority health issues, program evaluation, and social determinants of disease

MPH 2001, BA Psychology

“I fell in love with public health because of its applied nature. It developed out of a need to improve populations. My research seeks to understand how social factors relate to disease among ethnic minority populations...it facilitates changes that will improve health outcomes of people of color in this country.”

Kimberly Jacob Arriola, PhD, MPH



Please visit www.asph.org for more information.