

The Lattice

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Director's Corner

I am often asked what types of qualities distinguish our nationally accredited MPH and BS-CHE programs from other areas of study. While there is an array of unique features, the following readily stand out:

- **Upstream focus on primary prevention & health promotion**

As brought out at the *World Health Organization 6th Global Conference on Health Promotion in the Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion in a Globalized World*, health promotion is “the process of enabling people to increase control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improve their health.” Candidates in our programs understand the individual and population-based value of avoiding impairments at the outset or reducing their impact on health and well-being at very early stages. Candidates learn about strategies for health enhancement and

have the opportunity to develop, apply, and refine them through class projects, the Preceptorship experience, and capstone projects.

- **Commitment and Passion for Making a Difference**

Learning by doing may be an overused expression, but it conveys the essence of the educational experience in our programs. In addition to coursework, practicum, and project requirements, candidates are encouraged to be actively engaged in volunteer and outreach endeavors. It is not unusual to see candidates coordinating community-based health events like the American Cancer Society's *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer*, or implementing a survey regarding nutrition and physical activity practices at different life stages.

- **Global Perspective**

Opportunities for involvement in cross-cultural experiences are all around us. They are not place-bound, but have to do with our per-

spectives and our openness to differences and distinctions in cultures and health practices. Our formal learning experiences do enable candidates to gain insights into health-related matters in other parts of the world. In addition, there are elective opportunities making it possible to serve on public health teams that work with Native American and Central American communities. Candidates are encouraged to explore and thereby expand their insights in doing so. As has been pointed out by medical anthropologist Mark Nichter (2008): “Global health must be built on mutual respect for different types of knowledge, a common desire for discovery, an exchange of ideas about possible futures, and a sense of health as a global public good” (p. 175). This is a worthy foundation for all who are associated with public health programs.

G. D. Gilmore, MPH, Ph.D., MCHES

Candidate Spotlight: *Gracjan Szulc*

Gracjan Szulc is from Chicago, Illinois, where he received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Illinois at Chicago. He is a Masters in Public Health candidate at the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse. He currently holds a position as a surgical coordinator at Elmhurst Memorial Hospital, E.M.H. In spring of 2010 he traveled to Great Britain on a healthcare study tour with UW-L staff, and students, as well as some of the

nation's healthcare professionals. In addition, he has traveled to the last two American Public Health Association conferences. The annual conference was an opportunity for him to discuss public health topics, with some of the nations leading public health professionals. Currently, he is also a preceptee with the Quality Resource Management and Infection Control Departments at E.M.H. His future interests are the improvement of leadership and

communication in healthcare to include an emphasis on infection control practices.



Gracjan Szulc, (MPH), B.A.
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Candidate Spotlight: *Jennifer Whitty*

Jen Whitty is a graduate of Viterbo University with a BS in Dietetics and Nutrition. She is a registered dietitian (R.D.) and has worked as a public health nutritionist for two WIC (Women, Infant, & Children) agencies in Des Moines and Dubuque, Iowa.

She is the mother of three children (7, 6, and 3 years old) and left the professional workforce to be home with them for the past 6 years. Jen entered the MPH program in the fall of 2008 and has been working towards her MPH degree on a part-time basis since.

"The MPH program at UWL has been extremely flexible and workable for me as a more non-traditional student with my competing family schedules. Two of my life goals have been to gain an advanced

degree and to be home with my children when they are younger. By taking just one or two classes a semester, I will complete my degree in four years and will be ready to re-enter the workforce with an additional, advanced skill set just as my youngest enters school. Attending graduate school part-time has allowed me to obtain a healthy balance of my personal responsibilities of being a good mom/spouse with my professional aspirations."

Jen has a passion for the preventative health and health promotion ideology that is the essence of public health. In the future she would like to apply these principles in a career that helps to reduce the health disparities of disadvantaged populations.



Jen Whitty, (MPH), B.S., R.D.

*Reference: Nichter, M. (2008). *Global Health*. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press.

The Sixth Lattice Editor: *Brittany McIlquham (2011)*

Master of Public Health Alumni and Friends

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MPH-CHE Mission Statement

The mission of the MPH-CHE graduate program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is to prepare professionals, using advanced-level health education competencies and public health core areas, who will address quality of life enhancement through health education and health promotion, being mindful of the holistic, dynamic and interdependent nature of people and their interactions within the environment.



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