



Date: 5/01/2006

>> TAKE NOTE !

Public Health in India - From Pune to Tampa and Back

In 2004, seven Indian students joined the health informatics program to earn a USF MPH degree in Pune, India. Their backgrounds ranged from information technology to medical practice, but they came with a common interest—seeing how informatics could help revolutionize health for the Indian population of over a billion. India has a serious shortage of trained professionals to address its critical health issues. They hoped to help change this situation. This January, four of the seven students came to Tampa and the USF College of Public Health to complete their courses and work for their MPH degrees.

George Thomas, a general physician practicing in Pune and Kolhapur in India, saw 120 patients a day, 60-70% of whom couldn't afford to fill the prescriptions he might recommend. He felt that preventive health was absolutely needed, but impossible to carry out with that kind of patient load.

Gopichand Mukkapati, from a village near Hyderabad, had just finished his Bachelors in information technology and decided to apply for the MPH Health program. He knew almost nothing about public health, but saw it as an emerging field with a huge potential impact on the economy—as he said, the country's population depends on good public health.

Originally from Hyderabad, Padmavati Vegesna had worked as a medical transcriptionist for the previous five years, when she decided to join this Masters program.

Parag Borkar grew up in a small village in the eastern part of the State of Maharashtra. Dr. Borkar and the other I²IT visiting students are here in the US for the first time, and each is working on one aspect of the USF [Health Patient Centric Information Solution](#) (PCIS) Project. We asked:

Q: What have been the highlights of your time in Tampa?

Parag: The intensive work here has been a "good thing"! I realized that I've accomplished a lot in a short time, and I've learned how to work intensively. The USF environment—the people working here—has been very helpful; people have been approachable and welcoming.

George: It's been great interacting with people here—they're friendly and helpful (exactly the opposite of what I was told in advance). This includes my neighbors, the faculty, the dean (in India, hierarchy is terribly important to recognize).

Q: What do you think you'll be taking back to India?

Parag: Our experiencing open communications in public health here in the US gave us lessons in communicating with the public. If you're working in an office, you're not engaging people in public health. Of course, we will be sensitive to the health culture in India (which is more formal), but it's helpful to realize the importance of being open and approachable as well. My field experience will be helpful, particularly identifying preventive strategies for maximizing health where there are minimal resources, as well as the strategies for managing disease-related stress.

Padma: I hope that for IT, newly generated public data will be able to help in health training, reports, tracking and forecasting diseases and even disaster management. As a result of this MPH program and the public health schools just emerging in India, I hope to be able to help the country by incorporating IT into training.

Gopi: I would still like to go further with my education (and get a PhD)—I'm interested in continuing in IT in health-related projects, and may have an opportunity to work in IT with an Indian state program on HIV/AIDS.

George: Before departing, I would hope to have more opportunities to see how health is practiced in poor areas here in the states. Once back in India I hope to be involved in policy design at the country level.

The four students are completing their field experiences, classes and special projects for their MPH degrees this summer, 2006.



>> TAKE NOTE continued



Check out the new USF Health International Programs website! Go the USF Health Home page <http://www.hsc.usf.edu/> and follow the link to our new site!

Drs. Karen Liller and Hanna Osman are Interviewed for WUSF Program "University Beat"

The University Beat report on the College of Public Health's work on the Engaged Institutions Initiative will run on WUSF 89.7 FM, starting Monday (5/1) and Thursday at 3:57 p.m. and Tuesday and Friday at 9:05 a.m. In addition, promos for the report will run throughout Morning Edition (5 to 9 am) on Tuesday and Friday and during the late morning/early afternoon hours on Monday and Thursday. The piece can be heard anytime at: http://www.wusf.usf.edu/wusf-fm/programming/highlights/FM_UniversityBeat_TVlk.cfm.

>>Students



Kid Fair for Florida KidCare, Saturday May 6

Time: 10 am- 2 pm **Location:** Bowers/Whitley Career Center 13609 N. 22nd ST (one block north of Fletcher) **Description:** Florida Covering Kids and Families presents *Kid Fair for Florida KidCare*, a community event that will inform Tampa's families about Florida KidCare, the state's low-cost or free health insurance program for uninsured children under age 19. The event is part of the local celebration of *Cover the Uninsured Week*, May 1 to 7. The *Kid Fair* will also provide valuable information and incentives from a variety of health and community resources. **What you can do:** COPH students can assist with helping parents with signing up for the KidCare program. **Bilingual students** are needed to serve as interpreters, as there are many Hispanic families in this community that we are targeting. Please contact Ellen at event@hsc.usf.edu asap to sign up!

Student Research Information

Research: For information on additional internal (USF) and external funding opportunities for COPH students, go to <http://publichealth.usf.edu/officeresearch/fundingopps.html>. For more info on the Student Honorary Award for Research and Practice "SHARP" awards go to <http://publichealth.usf.edu/officeresearch/sharp.html>.

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>> Faculty

Dr. Karen Liller Invited to Become Member of SAVIR

Dr. Karen Liller has been invited to become a member of the Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research (SAVIR), an organization devoted to promoting scholarly activity in violence and injury research.

Dr. Andrea Spehar Has Article Published

Dr. Andrea M. Spehar and her colleagues' article was published in the current issue of *Clinical Therapeutics* (<http://clinicaltherapeutics.com/>): French DD, Campbell R, Spehar A, Cunningham F, Bulat T, Luther SL. (2006) Drugs and Falls in Community Dwelling Older People: A National Veterans Study. *Clinical Therapeutics* 28(4):619-630.

Dr. Andrea Spehar Presents Poster

Dr. Spehar also presented a poster at the annual national conference on **Transforming Fall Prevention Practices** at the Sheraton Sand Key Resort, Clearwater Beach, FL. April. 24-26, 2006. The poster was entitled "Concomitant Use of Benzodiazepines and Other Drugs and Risk of Injury in Community-Dwelling Veterans."

Dr. Mortimer Provides Overview at International Conference on the Epidemiology of Alzheimer's Disease

Dr. James Mortimer provided the overview presentation to participants at the Conference on Epidemiology of Alzheimer's Disease in San Diego, April 28-29, 2006. This conference brought together prominent researchers from around the world conducting epidemiologic research on this illness. On April 6, Dr. Mortimer presented a paper on his research showing olfactory impairment to be a very early sign of impending cognitive decline and dementia at the 58th Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Neurology, also held in San Diego.

Dr. Michael Reid Presents at St. Louis Department of Health Meeting

Dr. Michael Reid, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, gave a presentation on leadership and public health preparedness to the senior staff of the St. Louis (Missouri) Department of Health on April 24. He also met with the Director and the Commissioner to discuss training programs for the Department.

Dr. Michael Reid Meets with National Public Health Leadership Development Network Executive Committee

Dr. Michael Reid, Director of the Public Health Leadership Institute of Florida, met with the other members of the Executive Committee of the National Public Health Leadership Development Network on April 25, 26, and 27 to formulate strategies for the Network for the coming months. He participated in the Network's Nominating Committee meeting on April 26 to prepare a slate of officers for the coming year.

Dr. Jay Wolfson Speaks at Symposium

On 30 April and 1 May 2006, Dr. Jay Wolfson was a featured speaker at the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the University of Pennsylvania Center for Bioethics in Philadelphia.

Dr. Amy Stuart Receives Grant Award

Dr. Amy Stuart received the USF Sponsored Research Programs' Spring 2006 New Researcher Grant in the amount of \$8,000.00.

Dr. Dennis Kyle Presents Research at Meeting

Dr. Dennis Kyle was invited to participate and present work from his NIAID R01 grant at the NIAID International Malaria Research and Prevention Meeting in April 2006 in Abuja, Nigeria. Dr. Kyle's presentation was entitled "Mechanisms of Resistance and Recrudescence to Artemisinin Drugs."

>>Resources

This link at <http://www.fic.nih.gov/news/directory.html> provides an excellent Directory of Grants and Fellowships in the Global Health Sciences, that can be helpful to COPH faculty and students.

>>Employment Opportunities

Department of Health - Tallahassee - Director of Minority Health
Salary: \$80,000-\$110,000

The Florida Department of Health has a challenging opportunity available in Tallahassee for the right candidate. This is a senior level leadership position that provides direction for the Florida Department of Health in the area of Minority Health. The employee in this position is responsible for benchmarking, strategizing and creating innovative approaches to reduce health disparities among racial and ethnic populations within the State of Florida. The employee is responsible for implementing the Reducing Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities: Closing the Gap grant program and the Florida Healthy People 2010 program.

Please utilize the link below for additional details and to apply for this exciting opportunity.

<https://jobs.myflorida.com/index.html>.

>>Recruitment Activities

Below are some recent recruitment activities

- April 4th: Public Health Awareness Conference & Graduate Recruitment Fair at Spelman College in Atlanta
The Fair is hosted by: Public Health Sciences Institute (PHSI) of Morehouse College, Spelman College, Morris Brown College, Clark Atlanta University, and Morehouse School of Medicine
- April 24th: Orlando Regional Healthcare College/University Fair
Represented by Natalie Preston
- April 29th: Steps to a Healthier Florida - Tampa Bay Wellness Day
Held at the University Mall - will exhibit our academic programs

Important Dates

Wednesday, May 3, 2006

College of Public Health Graduation Luncheon
12:00 pm, Marshall Center

Saturday, May 6, 2006

6:00 pm - College of Public Health Graduation
USF Sundome

Friday, May 12, 2006

10am Domestic FE Orientation
11am International FE Orientation
Orientation will be held in the Distance Learning Studio.
Contact feadvisor@hsc.usf.edu with questions.

Friday, May 26, 2006

Dean's Public Health Lecture Series - 12-1 pm, 1023A COPH
Dr. Henry Falk: "Environmental Public Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention"

November 4-8, 2006

Annual APHA Meeting, Boston, MA. For more information visit:
www.apha.org/meetings or e-mail conventions@apha.org.

Links of Interest

[Meetings, Courses and Training Opportunities](#)

[Calls for Proposals](#)

[USF Health Funding Finds](#)

[Directory of Grants and Fellowships in the Global Health Sciences](#)