

MPH NEWSLETTER

Utah State University
College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences



Table of Contents

Letter from the Associate Dean	2-3
2022 MPH Graduates	4-6
USU Food Insecurity Study	7
New MPH Courses	8
Program Partner: Create Better Health	9-10
NDFS Apprenticeship	11-12
Upcoming Events	13



LETTER FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN

Dear readers,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this issue of the CAAS MPH Newsletter. My focus will be on the Veterinary Public Health (VPH) degree program that is built around the concept of One Health. As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes, "One Health is an approach that recognizes that the health of people is closely connected to the health of animals and our shared environment. One Health is not new, but it has become more important in recent years. This is because many factors have changed interactions between people, animals, plants, and our environment" (cdc.gov/onehealth/). Given its focus on the veterinary component of One Health, the VPH degree is attracting veterinarians who wish to broaden their expertise into the area of Public Health, and the on-line structure of the VPH degree program allows veterinarians to complete the program remotely from their current location. Other students have entered the VPH program with the intention of pursuing their veterinary degree afterwards, and we currently have one USU veterinary student concurrently enrolled in the VPH program. Importantly though, the VPH degree does not need to be combined with a veterinary degree, as it opens up many opportunities by itself across the extensive spectrum of One Health. The on-line VPH degree requires completion of 42 credits, and a list of required and elective courses is available at <https://caas.usu.edu/mph/vet-public-health>. As an on-line degree program, students can progress through the program at a pace that accommodates their individual schedule.

**"The program has been
incredibly important to me.
It changed the way I see the
world."**

**-Dr. Rebecca Echols VPH
Graduate**



LETTER CONTINUED

For additional insight on the VPH program, I reached out to recent VPH graduate, veterinarian Dr. Rebecca Echols, who had this to say about her experience completing the degree program. “I started exploring public health through conferences, seminars, workshops. And I started to think that I might want to do a masters in epidemiology or public health. I was so intrigued with the opportunities for protecting human health by preventing disease in animals not just in individuals but across populations. And I wanted to understand the ecology of emerging diseases. So, when USU opened the MPH program – I was probably the first veterinarian to apply!” Dr. Echols went on to say: “The program has been incredibly important to me. It changed the way I see the world. Many courses, like Ecology in Health, Veterinary Epidemiology, Epigenetics, and One Health were so well-organized orienting toward a One Health perspective, systems thinking, and the different research approaches needed to address complex problems. The more traditional public health courses sometimes took me out of my comfort zone, but helped me develop an understanding of the human side of population health and how public health and government organizations develop and implement public health policy. The courses were well designed, and professors were committed to student success and always readily available to answer questions.” In closing, Dr. Echols said: “I cannot imagine going through the pandemic without this knowledge and I have already been able to help so many people understand the public health issues around the pandemic. A public health perspective informs my work with clients, students, and colleagues, and my work with the annual Utah One Health Symposium planning committee. The planning committee’s goal is to provide a forum for One Health in Utah. With the pandemic still upon us, it feels like understanding population health and One Health is a survival skill.”

If you would like more information about the VPH program, please contact Dr. Jane Kelly at jane.kelly@usu.edu. I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the CAAS MPH Newsletter.

Sincerely,

Dirk K. Vanderwall
Associate Dean, USU School of
Veterinary Medicine



2022 MPH Graduates

Brooke Lister



I am currently a Registered Dietitian at Utah State University. I also have experience in the wellness supplement industry and was a Clinical Dietitian previously at Davis Hospital and Medical Center before coming to USU. I chose the MPH program in order to diversify my knowledge about public health issues. Through this program, I have been able to grow so much as a professional. I don't know for sure what I am going to do with my MPH but I would love to be able to work with my local community in some capacity to help improve health outcomes. I am passionate about the field of public health and nutrition and would love to use this to help serve others. This fall, I am looking to build and pilot a diabetes prevention program for faculty at USU. I would also love to incorporate Intuitive Eating practices as part of the wellness program also.

I plan on using my MPH to improve the health of communities and ameliorate disparities. More specifically, I enjoy researching the intersection between food and health, epidemiology, food insecurity, and child nutrition. My career goal is to increase the quality and length of life for those most in need of intervention and to make the healthy choice the easy choice in the community I chose to serve. I am currently working on a community health assessment and disparity report with Bear River Health Department's epidemiologist, Caleb Harrison. I am also working with Dr. Ward, a food scientist and professor at USU to create a fiber profile of common American diets. This fiber profile will be used to create a more accurate diet for animals involved in research. This is important because, feeding animals diets that accurately represent human diets increases the transmissibility of results from animal drug studies to humans. I recommend looking for TA positions to fund your chosen program! I owe a huge thanks to Mateja for introducing me to this program, helping pay for it through scholarships and TA positions, helping find my two project outputs, and advising me throughout my program!

Hannah Aardema Alexis World

Kyler Crosby



2022 Graduates c.

I am so excited to be completing my master's degree eight years after completing my bachelor's. I have accepted a position working with our local health department supervising the health promotions division. I will be working specifically in tobacco prevention and cessation programs, diabetes prevention, and childhood obesity prevention. I was also involved in a successful grant application to provide diabetes self-management education (DSME) to Uintah County which I am excited to bring to this area. I have enjoyed the MPH Nutrition program so much and am so grateful for the wonderful teachers and peers that I have met throughout it. It has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life!

Ashley Linschoten



I'm from Pleasant View, Utah, I got my undergrad in Public and Community Health Education from UVU, and I'm a big nutrition nerd. I really enjoy cooking, gardening, exercising, and travelling. After I graduate, I'm hoping to continue my education and to certify as a Nutritionist. A project I'm currently working on is with non-profit organization in Medellin, Colombia called Proyecto Florecer. They support women in vulnerable positions, whether they're refugees from Venezuela, single mothers, or pregnant teens. I'm helping them design their garden while creating a menu of nutrient-dense Colombian dishes they can serve to the women using ingredients from the garden. Another project involves supporting pregnant and lactating women in the community, they're creating a food delivery system that will deliver prepared meals containing important vitamins and minerals during pre- and post-natal phases. I'm working to create a meal plan as well as a nutrition guide for each phase that includes basic education, tips, and recipes. Once a week, I travel to comuna 13, a low-income neighborhood in Medellin, and help serve lunch to about 150 kids in the community. All these projects have been really rewarding and have helped me learn Spanish. After I graduate I may choose to continue working with Proyecto Florecer to see some of these projects through.



Anna Cheal

2022 Graduates c.

I have been a Registered Dietitian for 6.5 years working with patients and clients to improve their overall health and wellness through diet. I am currently working with Create Better Health in Utah with their needs assessment to evaluate how they can better serve their population and obtain optimal engagement with nutrition education classes. After graduation, I will continue to work as a Registered Dietitian for elderly patients and I hope to eventually become a Program Manager/Director and manage a public health nutrition program.

Irene Helper



I loved my time in the MPH Nutrition program and am excited to graduate and apply everything I've learned. I currently work at Primary Children's Hospital seeing a wide variety of conditions, but my specialty is in eating disorders. My plan is to (eventually) start my PhD after taking a few years off to work and go on some adventures since I completed my bachelor's and master's back-to-back and haven't had a break from school since Kindergarten!

Lacee Pinkerton



I graduated in 2017 with a BS in Environmental Conservation and moved to Utah in 2019. In my time at USU, I created an Agritourism Education Module for use by agritourism operators in Utah and surrounding states. I also served as the 2021-22 College of Agriculture and Applied Science Graduate Student Council representative. After graduation, I'm moving to Tennessee to start working in their public health sector and continue my educational journey towards vet school.

Megan Jensen



USU FOOD INSECURITY STUDY

Several NDFS faculty recently published a study in the Journal of Hunger & Environmental Nutrition titled, Food Insecurity Exists among College Students at a Mid-sized University in Utah. This study examined the prevalence of and identified characteristics associated with food insecurity among students (n = 952) at Utah State University. This cross-sectional survey found that 33% (n = 302) of USU students on the Logan campus experienced food insecurity in the 30 days prior to the survey. This means that 1/3 of Logan-based USU students were unsure where their next meal would come from or what types of foods that meal would contain. Only 23% of students had heard of the on-campus food pantry (SNAC) and very few students (7%) had ever used the food campus food pantry. Dr. Mateja Savoie-Roskos & colleagues suggest a need for increased awareness of on-campus programs and policies aimed at reducing food insecurity among college students on all the USU campuses and at higher education institutions across the country.

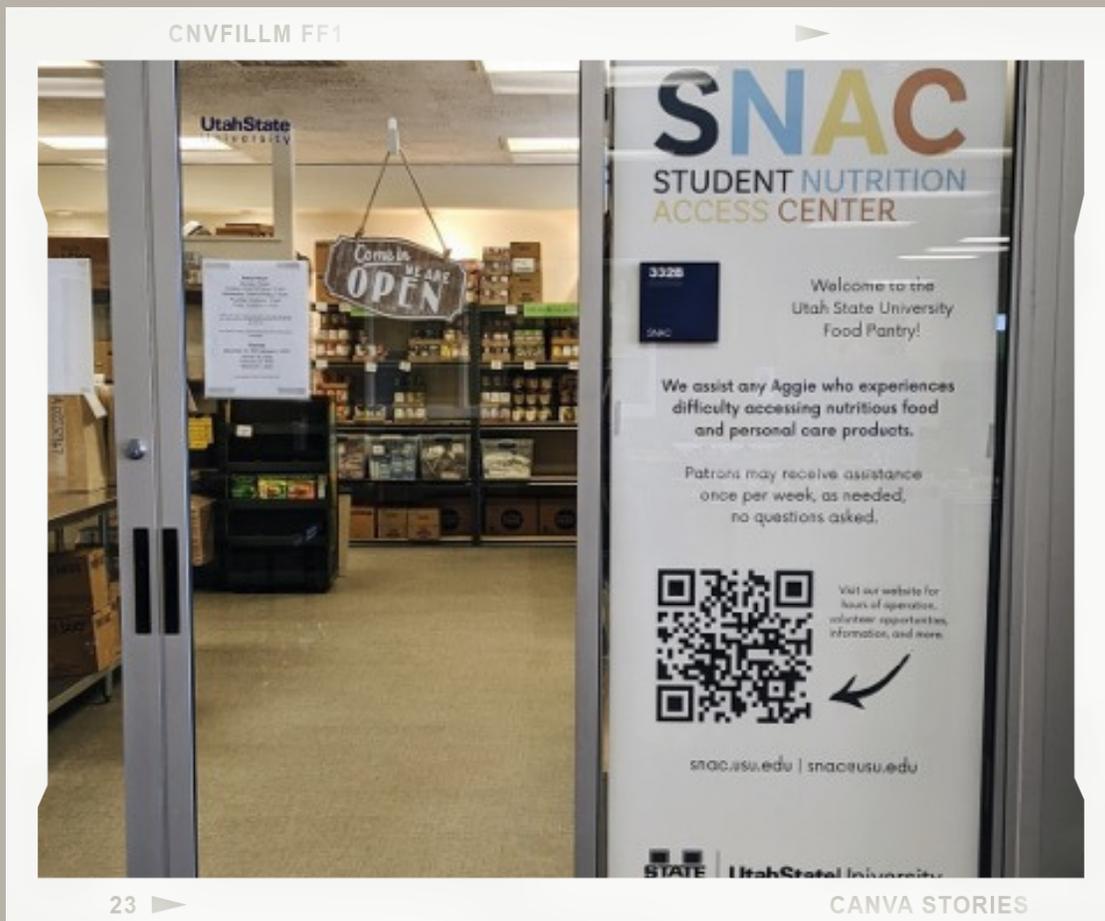


Photo credit: Kara Bachman

NEW COURSES

We are excited to announce new courses that will be offered for our students next year. These courses are the result of our growing program, requirements for accreditation through the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), and student feedback over the years.

NDFS 6240 Program Planning and Evaluation:

This course provides students with an overview of how to develop culturally competent and effective public health programs at the local, state, and national levels. Students develop a program and evaluation plan for an innovative public health program. This course will be required for all CAAS MPH students who start in the fall of 2022 or after and it will be an elective course for a current MPH students! This course will be taught by Dr. Mateja Savoie Roskos.



NDFS 6550 Policy and Advocacy:

Advocacy and policy are key strategies used by public health professionals to make large scale improvements in population health. This course will focus on the policy making process including the role of ethics and evidence, policy evaluation, and effective advocacy strategies for public health professionals. This course will be required for all CAAS MPH students who start in the fall of 2022 or after and it will be an elective course for a current MPH students!

NDFS 6450 Global Public Health:

As the world becomes increasingly connected the health of one population often affects the health of another. Global Public Health will look at public health issues and solutions at the global level. This course will be an elective for MPH students and is encouraged for students interested in international work. The course will be taught by Casey Coombs.



MPH Program Partner Highlight Create Better Health (SNAP-Ed)

The Create Better Health Utah (SNAP-Ed) (CBH) program is a partnership between Utah State University Extension and Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Sciences Department (NDFS), Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS), and many other collaborating agencies. CBH provides nutrition education and obesity prevention interventions to low-income individuals in all 29 counties in Utah. Programming and strategies include online and/or in-person nutrition education classes, policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) changes, social marketing campaigns, indirect education, and partnerships/coalition work. CBH provides these strategies along with other health promotion efforts to help the SNAP-Ed target audience establish healthy eating habits and a physically active lifestyle.

The goals of the CBH program include:

1. Improve the likelihood that persons eligible for SNAP will make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the USDA Food Guidance.
2. As a result of Utah's Policy, Systems and Environment (PSE) work, SNAP target audiences will have improved access to nutritious food and physical activity opportunities in their communities.

Create Better Health partners with the MPH-Nutrition program to provide experiential learning opportunities for students. Through this partnership, Heidi LeBlanc, the director of the CBH program, focuses on providing opportunities for MPH students to evaluate and expand CBH programming to better meet the needs of low-income individuals and families throughout Utah. Heidi stated,

“the [MPH] students have assisted in program growth through projects that enable programming to be expanded, conducting evaluations to help guide programming, and coming up with new ideas to reach our audience in ways that keep [CBH] innovative and relevant. Students bring opportunities and fresh ideas that are critical to remaining current in the field of public health nutrition.”

CREATE **BETTER HEALTH**™ **SNAP-ED**

Create Better Health Utah c.

Heidi also shared this advice for MPH students preparing to work in the field of public health, “If you enjoy community nutrition or other public health related work, a career with [SNAP-Ed] can provide so many benefits, such as making a difference in the world. Grass root efforts are amazing, when you’re on the ground making a difference in the lives of those you are helping, and they are changing behaviors because of your efforts. Nothing is better. But the next best thing is when you’re at the administrative level, bringing in funding, programming, and evaluations to see the difference that is being made through your team – that is pretty cool. SNAP-Ed is the best job in the world!”

Heidi would love to work with more MPH students. Heidi values when interested students know their own talents, are open to feedback and guidance, and bring innovative ideas.



CBH Youth Nutrition Class



CBH-led school garden in Uintah County

**Interested MPH students
should reach out to:
Heidi LeBlanc
435-760-0925
Heidi.leblanc@usu.edu**

NDFS ASSISTANTSHIP

The Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Sciences Department at Utah State University is looking to fill a ½-time (20 hours/week) teaching assistantship that will include the following responsibilities:

Primary Job Duties:

- Teach NDFS 1600 Medical Terminology (online) in fall and spring semester.
- TA for NDFS 4480 Community Nutrition (fall course)
- TA for NDFS 6140 Introduction to Public Health (fall course)
- TA for spring MPH course (TBD)
- Assist with content and posting on the MPH social media platforms (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram).
- Assist with design and content for the quarterly MPH newsletter.
- Other duties as assigned by the MPH program director.

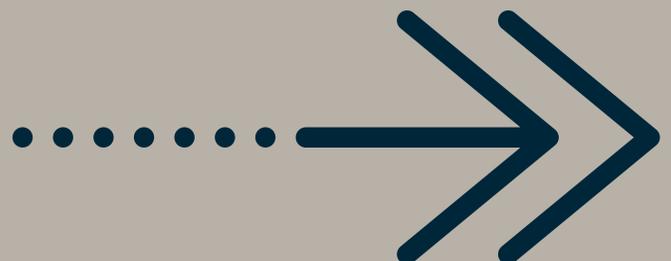
Required Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited university in nutrition, dietetics, public health, or a related field.
- Must have a 3.5 GPA in the last 60 credit hours of bachelor's degree.
- Must be pursuing a graduate program in the Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Sciences Department at USU (MPH, MS, MDA, or PhD).
- Must be in good academic standing (if currently a graduate student in the NDFS department).
- Must have taken and passed (with a B or better) undergraduate courses in medical terminology and introduction to nutrition.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Experience as a teaching assistant or instructor in an academic setting or experience teaching in a nonacademic (ie. public health or clinical) setting.
- Interest in teaching in academic or non-academic settings after graduation.

Position Dates: August 17th, 2022 - May 17th, 2023



ASSISTANTSHIP c.

Compensation:

- \$13,500/year for a 9-month appointment
- Subsidized health insurance (the student would be required to cover a portion of the health insurance cost)
- The graduate assistantship does not cover the cost of tuition however, having an assistantship does make you eligible to apply for college and department level tuition waivers that may be available in the future.

To apply, prepare and submit the following required documents by JUNE 1, 2022

- Cover Letter (1-2 pages)
 - Please include the following information in the cover letter
 - How you meet the minimum requirements
 - How you meet any relevant preferred qualifications
 - Any relevant previous job or academic experience
 - Why you are interested in teaching these courses
 - What you want to do when you are done with your degree
- Resume/CV including education details, GPA, TA experience, work experience, other relevant training/skills/experiences.
- Names and contact information of 3 professional references
- English language proficiency exam scores (if ESL applicant)

Apply today at handshake.usu.edu. Look for job #6377922!



Please do not hesitate to reach out to Dr. Mateja Savoie Roskos (mateja.savoie@usu.edu) if you have any questions about this position.



Upcoming Events

SNEB 2022 Annual Conference

Atlanta, GA - July 29th-31st, 2022
[Click Here to Register](#)

The Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior Annual Conference is the premier event for nutrition education professionals from around the world. Attendees have the opportunity to interface with influential nutritionists from extension, public health, government, academia, industry, and community settings. Throughout the conference, attendees will be able to experience education sessions featuring the latest information on dietary guidelines, educational strategies, nutrition policy, technology advances, and wellness initiatives with a focus on putting research into practice.



International Conference on Public Health

Virtual - July 28th-29th, 2022
[Click Here to Register](#)

We hope ICOPH 2022 will unite diverse researchers and case studies from all over the world, in parallel sessions while offering many networking and publishing opportunities. Discover the latest trends and challenges in the field at this leading conference and enjoy everything the Virtual Conference has to offer.



Don't Forget to Follow Us!

Be the first to hear about MPH program updates by following our social media handles! This is a great way to stay up to date on program changes, class highlights, public health events, and potential job opportunities.

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