

PHSC PUBLIC HEALTH STUDENT CAUCUS OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

NEWS AND VIEWS

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Letter from the Editor

Graduation season is here once again, and many of us will be starting or have already started searching for a job. Therefore, the summer issue of *PHSC News and Views* is dedicated to "the job search." The topics include matching your strengths to employers' needs, researching salary issues, interviewing and networking skills, and preparing resumes and cover letters. Whether you are looking for your first job after graduation, changing jobs, or preparing for an internship, these articles should prove invaluable.

As always, I invite you to submit articles, letters to the editor, announcements for student opportunities, job postings, action alerts, and ideas for topics you would like to see covered. Submissions may be edited for length and clarity, must be signed, and should include a telephone number or e-mail address.

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APHA 1997 Annual Meeting: *Register Now!*

by Jeanne Alongi, Program Chair, George Washington University

APHA's 1997 Annual Meeting will be held in Indianapolis from Sunday, November 9 to Thursday, November 13. The Annual Meeting is an excellent arena for students to find their niche in public health or to develop further in a known area of interest. This year should be especially exciting since it is the 125th anniversary of APHA, and the meeting is expected to attract more than 10,000 national and international physicians, administrators, educators, nurses, epidemiologists, and health related specialists. This is a meeting you won't want to miss!

Start planning your trip to Indianapolis now. If you register before August 29, you can take advantage of early bird registration discounts. APHA has set up a special student housing request system as well as a roommate referral list to help students save some money on housing.

If you have access to a fax machine, you can utilize APHA's "FAX-ON-DEMAND" service by calling (202) 274-4577. Some of the faxes that might be of special interest to students include: Registration Form (#201); Student Housing Request

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President's Column: The State of the Caucus

In 1993, at the APHA Annual Meeting in San Francisco, several public health students met to discuss plans for re-establishing the Public Health Student Caucus. Subroto Banerji, Nish Jobanputra, Enrico Portuese, and I discussed our vision for an international organization that would serve the needs of APHA student members and would represent the interests of all students in public health and related disciplines. In January 1996, this vision was realized when the APHA Executive Board officially recognized the Caucus.

I am proud to report that the Caucus has grown dramatically in the last one and one half years. We now have almost 500 members from over 100 different universities in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. We have a comprehensive communication network consisting of newsletters, e-mail listservs, and the most creative and comprehensive web pages of any APHA organization (www.sph.unc.edu/caucus/). We provide many services to our members including updates on scholarships and outreach opportunities. And we have an excellent program planned for the 1997 Annual Meeting featuring scientific sessions, leadership development sessions, and business meetings.

Our accomplishments could not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of our volunteer leaders, and the consistent and generous support of APHA. To help us continue to succeed, I encourage *you* to get involved in the Caucus by volunteering to serve on a committee, running for office, or volunteering to serve as a committee chair. Volunteering is a great way to learn about the Caucus and APHA and to help make a difference. You will get to network with other public health students, professionals, and leaders while you work toward taking the Caucus to the next level.

Despite our growth and organizational success, one area where the Caucus could use more help is with our finances. We have successfully raised over one thousand dollars so far this year, but this still does not cover our projected operating expenses. If you have not paid your voluntary dues yet and you can afford to, please send a check for \$10 to the Caucus. If you know of any individuals, organizations, or companies that may be willing to make a donation to the Caucus, please let us know.

To conclude, I am happy to report that the state of the Caucus is one of growth, strength, and success. With the continued help and support of our many members and friends, I predict that the Caucus will continue to serve its members well for many more years to come.

Jay M. Bernhardt, MPH
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
PHSC President

.... Letter from the Editor

Send submissions to me at
1111 Arlington Boulevard, #1010
Arlington, VA 22209

or e-mail
youngh@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu.

I welcome any and all suggestions or ideas you may have so do not hesitate to contact me. I hope that you find this information useful and good luck in your job search!

Heather Young, Editor
George Washington University

PHSC News and Views

Editor: Heather Young
Communications Committee Chair: Deborah Suess
Desktop Publishing: Jay Bernhardt
Web Publishing: Trong Nguyen

Send correspondence to:
PHSC, P.O. Box 9313, Chapel Hill, NC 27515
or via e-mail to caucus@unc.edu

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Getting Students Involved in PHSC

by Christine Haywood, Treasurer
George Washington University

Ami Claxton, president of the University of Minnesota SPH Student Senate and PhD degree candidate, has been working diligently with her fellow Senate officers to find a way to support the Caucus in a way that would facilitate membership of UMN students to APHA and the PHSC, and they did it!

When she suggested making a monetary donation to the Caucus, another Senate member, Trent Green, proposed a more direct way. He proposed that a certain amount of money be made available to subsidize the cost of UMN students joining APHA on the condition that they also join the PHSC as a dues paying member. There has been an overwhelming response to this idea and several new members have joined us from the University of Minnesota.

We would like to thank Ms. Claxton and her fellow collaborators for initiating such a successful program. Please contact me for more information about this plan or to share your other ideas on fundraising or increasing student involvement (cjhay@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu).

PHSC News and Views: Advertising Policy

PHSC News and Views is distributed to over 300 members and public health leaders. Don't miss out on this great chance to advertise your school, product, services, meeting, or program. Rates are for space only with camera ready ads supplied by the advertiser. Fees are due with advertising contract. For more information, contact Heather Young at (703)516-7067 or youngh@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu.

Rates (for single issue — discounts available for multiple issues):

Full page — \$150; **Half page** — \$75;

Quarter page — \$40.

Call for Nominations

by Trong Nguyen, Nominations Chair
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

At the Annual Meeting in Indianapolis this November, the new Public Health Student Caucus's Executive Board will assume responsibility for the 1997-98 year. This is a **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS** for three officers to be elected prior to the Annual Meeting.

According to the PHSC's bylaws, the Caucus is governed, between meetings of its governing body, by an Executive Board composed of the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past President. Elections are held each year for the President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The role of the President is to chair the Governing Board (composed of one representative of every public health school and program) and to be a liaison between the Caucus and various outside interests. The President-Elect will chair the Executive Board in the absence of the President and will oversee all committees and internal Caucus operations. The Secretary will chair the Communications Committee and be responsible for all administration and communication. The Treasurer will chair the Finance Committee and will oversee the budget, fundraising, and accounts.

If you are interested in serving as an Officer, please send your name and desired position to the Caucus e-mail account (caucus@unc.edu) **by noon EDT on August 1, 1997**. The three Officer positions are open to anyone who is both a Caucus member and an APHA member at the close of nominations. You **MUST** be a member of both the PHSC and APHA to be eligible.

Please get involved! The Caucus will prosper only if we all get involved and work hard together! For further details on the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Board members and on the elections procedures themselves, please feel free to consult the Public Health Student Caucus webpage (<http://www.sph.unc.edu/caucus/>).

Check out the PHSC *on-line*! Point your browser to <http://www.sph.unc.edu/caucus/> or e-mail us at caucus@unc.edu!

Networking Tips

by Heather Young, George Washington University

Networking is one of the most important parts of starting the job search and begins far in advance of actually starting to look for a job. According to a study done by the Stanford Research Institute, Harvard University, and the Carnegie Foundation, technical skills and knowledge account for only 15% of the reason a person gets a job. The remaining 85% is dependent on people skills.

Networking does not only mean meeting people at receptions and chatting for a few moments. Working on a committee, a project, or in a volunteer organization with someone is the best type of networking. Future employers and co-workers are more likely to remember you and be familiar with your skills and work ethic if you have served on a committee or worked on a volunteer project with them. Alumni have reported that a former classmate's overly competitive attitude, lack of cultural sensitivity, or lack of cooperation on a group project actually prompted them to step forward and give an unsolicited negative reference when a former classmate applied for a position in the organization where the alumni worked.

Fellow students also are great sources of networking. Make an effort to introduce yourself to classmates and faculty because many friendships and professional contacts develop during the course of a graduate school program. Classmates are your future co-workers, employers, and employees. It is important that you use a positive, professional manner in dealing with fellow students as well as with faculty and guests. If you always act and dress extremely casually, you may be dismissed in the minds of older, experienced students and faculty.

If you are hoping to go to medical school, keep it to yourself until your plans are definite. It is unwise to alienate faculty, guests, or fellow students with statements about choosing public health because you did not get into medical school or because you hope it will improve your chances of getting into medical school. If you are not accepted, you do not want to be remembered as the person who failed to get into medical school.

Business cards are the standard way professionals exchange names and network. Consider having personal business cards created with your address, telephone number, and e-mail address printed on them. If you are a current student, you can include the name of the university and school as long as you clearly identify yourself as a student, for example Mary Jones, MPH Candidate. Get in the habit of writing things down because networking is not helpful if you cannot remember who you have met. Start a Rolodex or notebook to keep track of contacts that may be helpful in your search for future employment. Write identifying information on the backs of business cards as soon as possible including the date and where you met the person.

The following are some more hints on introducing yourself to fellow students, faculty, and other professionals:

- Always state your name clearly and slowly.
- Starting today, consistently use the name that you want to be referred to professionally. Young women may find it particularly helpful in future job searches if they stop using diminutive nicknames now.
- Don't tell anyone things about your past or about medical or personal problems that you would not want a future employer to know.
- Be positive; always talk about what you have done not what you have not done.
- Be prepared to talk succinctly about your area of interest.
- Take advantage of professional conferences and trade associations to make contacts.

Once you have started networking, be sure to remember that although "knowing someone may get you in the door, knowing yourself and your focus will keep you there."

Editor's Note: Special thanks to Susan Schneider, Acting Career Coordinator and Maternal & Child Health Special Projects Director at George Washington University SPHHS, for resources and information provided for this article.

First Impressions: The Do's & Don'ts of Resume Writing

by Ponn P. Mahayosnand, University of Connecticut Health Center, Graduate Program of Public Health

DO:

- Make sure your resume sounds like you. If you plan on paying a professional to write your resume, he/she should understand who you are. A good resume writer will make you feel good about yourself and make sure you are in control of your own job search.
- Summarize and review important facts.
- Write an objective for an entry-level position, otherwise write a summary
- Use one page if possible. Never exceed two.
- Use dates with all work history.
- Summarize early work in blocks if you have a long work history. Highlight the aspects of past jobs that are the most pertinent to the area of public health in which your interest lies.
- Go backwards in time from most recent experience to the last.
- Have someone proofread your resume.
- Include relevant activities and leadership qualities, not hobbies.
- Highlight your skills and back up each claim with evidence.
- Use complimentary action words, i.e., origi-

nated, implemented, or designed

- Add language, computer, and laboratory skills. Specify “experience with, skilled in, proficient in...”
- Be concise. Simplicity, accuracy, and focus are the key. Be specific while outlining your experience and achievements.
- Tailor your resume to the position. It is best to have your resume saved on a computer disc so that you can easily customize it to the position.

DON'T:

- Think your resume will get you a job. Resumes get you an interview. Since a large part of getting a job is determined by your interview, first set your goal to get the interview.
- Think you have to account for every month of your life. Add only relevant experience and education.
- Use unnecessary phrases such as “duties included, tasks performed...”
- Use general descriptions or repeat information.
- Include irrelevant information such as health, marital status, religion, etc.

On behalf of the Public Health Student Caucus, I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the Caucus since the first issue of *PHSC News and Views*. Your support helps us to continue to develop and maintain services for all our members.

Organizational/Institutional Contributors:

University of Minnesota School of Public Health Student Senate

Tufts University, School of Medicine, Program in Public Health

Nationsbank East Falls Church Office:

John L. Manning, Banking Center Manager; Debbie Carrington, Consumer Banker

PHSC Student Member Contributors:

Maria Cervania, Ami Claxton, Joanna Cohen, Michael Fagan,

Jonathan Levy, Vanessa Ramirez, Cheryl Rudy, Kris Shields, Katie White

Christine Janel Haywood, PHSC Treasurer

George Washington University

And... How Much Do You Make?

by Heather Young, George Washington University

A question that many students have when starting the job search is how to research salary issues. Many students are confused and uncertain as to how to investigate this issue. In order to gain insight on the best approaches to researching salary issues, I spoke with Susan Schneider, Acting Career Coordinator and Maternal and Child Health Special Projects Director at the George Washington University SPHHS. According to Ms. Schneider, "possibly the worst gaffe you can make is asking someone, 'So how much do you make?'" A person's salary is a personal issue and attempting to obtain information about salaries in this manner is considered poor form. A better way to ascertain this information is to ask about salary ranges in general such as, "What is the salary range that an entry level health educator can expect to earn in your organization?" Many professional associations may also have statistics available as to the average salaries in their respective fields.

The answers to salary range questions can be quite broad and general. At a recent health career panel, panelists' answers ranged from \$20,000 to \$40,000 for a professional entry level position. Salary levels are dependent on type of organization, experience within the field, education, and, quite importantly, past salary history. Ms. Schneider emphasized the need to pay attention to your salary history and seek help to learn how to put your past work experiences in the best possible light. Prospective employers often verify your salary history by asking the people that you

listed as references. It can be tricky to translate a part-time position or work as a short-term consultant into the appropriate full-time equivalent salary. Often women pay less attention to salary and benefit issues than men and are more uncomfortable than men in engaging in salary negotiation when being offered a position. In their thirties when they are ready to start a family, some women may work part time, do consulting, or even take a break from work. Public health is a good field for accommodating this kind of work, but having an established salary history before that is especially important.

The best advice when dealing with salary issues is to have your own salary history well documented, do some research on salary ranges, and understand that salaries are based on many factors and may vary widely. Many university career centers offer workshops on salary negotiating.

APHA 1997 CareerMart

There will be a great opportunity to search for jobs at the 1997 Annual Meeting.

APHA offers an extensive CareerMart, available to all registrants at the Annual Meeting. This popular service facilitates the employment process by displaying hundreds of announcements of public health job vacancies in the US and abroad. Job recruiters may also review candidates' resumes and arrange interviews through the CareerMart Message Center. The CareerMart will be open throughout the meeting and is available exclusively to registrants.

CareerMart forms will be published in the preliminary program in the July issues of *The Nation's Health*. Advance registration guarantees maximum exposure. Be sure to register by September 19. You can also access CareerMart forms by calling APHA Fax-On-Demand at (202) 274-4577 after July 1, 1997.

Public Health Student Caucus

1997 APHA Annual Meeting Schedule:

Sunday, November 9	2:00 - 6:00 pm	Business Meeting
Monday, November 10	7:30 - 9:30 am	Business Meeting
	4:15 - 5:45 pm	Public Health Students' Welcome & Orientation
Tuesday, November 11	12:15 - 1:45 pm	Insights in Public Health Leadership
	4:15 - 5:45 pm	PHSC Awards Session
Wednesday, November 12	8:30 - 10:30 am	PHSC Leadership Roundtable
	12:15 - 1:45 pm	PHSC Poster Session

The PHSC is co-sponsoring many other sessions. Please check the final program for session locations.

The Public Health Student Caucus Needs Your Help!

The Public Health Student Caucus needs your help! We are asking Caucus members to donate \$10 in voluntary dues to cover membership through the 1997 APHA Annual Meeting. If you are not a Caucus member, please give what you can to help us continue to serve and represent the student members of the APHA. Make checks payable to Public Health Student Caucus, P.O. Box 9313, Chapel Hill, NC 27515. Thanks for your support!

Name: _____ \$10 _____
Address: _____ \$25 _____
_____ \$50 _____
E-Mail: _____ \$100 _____
Phone: _____ \$ _____

Please Give Us Feedback on this Newsletter!

Reactions and feedback from readers can help us plan future issues. Please fill out the following questionnaire and let us know what you think. Please return to: Heather Young, Editor, 1111 Arlington Blvd., #1010, Arlington, VA 22209 or e-mail youngh@gwis2.circ.gwu. Thanks for your help.

Name (optional): _____
Address / E-Mail: _____

- Please rate this issue on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the best):
_____ length of articles _____ photos/graphics _____ usefulness of content _____ readability
- What did you like *best* about this issue?
- What did you like *least* about this issue?
- What topics would you like to see covered in future issues?

Join the APHA and PHSC Today!

Caucus membership is available to all APHA members. To join, please complete and return the following form or, if you prefer, you can send the requested information via e-mail to caucus@unc.edu. Membership is currently free but a donation of \$10 is greatly appreciated from those who can afford it. **If you are not a member of the APHA, you need to join before you can join the Caucus.** APHA offers a discounted rate for students (\$50 per year) that is more than 50% off the regular membership price. All student members receive subscriptions to the American Journal of Public Health and The Nation's Health as well as discounted registration fees for the Annual Meeting. For APHA membership information, call Membership Information at (202)789-5674 or visit their web site at <http://www.apha.org>.

Please return this form to PHSC, P.O. Box 9313, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail the information to caucus@unc.edu.

Name: _____ E-Mail: _____
Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City: _____ State / Province: _____
Postal Code: _____ Country: _____
University: _____
Degree (sought): _____ Graduation Year: _____

Current APHA Member? YES NO APHA Primary Section: _____ APHA Member#: _____

... APHA 1997 Annual Meeting!

Form (#203); Travel Discounts (#205); Student Shared Housing Referral Form (#208); and Annual Meeting Session Titles (#221). Much of this information can also be found in *The Nation's Health* and on the APHA web pages (www.apha.org).

Many members of the Public Health Student Caucus will be staying at the Courtyard Marriott Downtown. It is just a few blocks from most of the sessions and has the most reasonable rate downtown. You can find less expensive housing further out if you don't mind the distance.

The Public Health Student Caucus is very proud

to be sponsoring our first scientific sessions. We also will be hosting a Welcome and Orientation session to help students make the meeting as useful, productive, and enjoyable as possible. A complete schedule of the sessions primarily sponsored by the PHSC can be found on page 6.

As the meeting gets closer, watch the web pages for up-to-date information. If anyone is interested in being involved in staffing the PHSC booth or annual meeting preparations, please contact Jeanne Alongi, Program Committee Chair, at jalongi@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu.

Top 10 Ways to Make the Most of Your Internship

1. Don't be afraid to talk with people.
2. Ask for things to do. Don't wait to be told what to do.
3. Learn all you can about the industry.
4. Read everything you get your hands on. Be informed in and out of the office.
5. How long you do grunt work depends on what you make of it. There is always something more to learn.
6. Milk the fact that you are a student.
7. Hitch the wagon to be a star.
8. Get in the information loop.
9. Ask to attend meetings and events. You will learn how things really get done.
10. Don't burn any bridges.

Editor's note: List cited from Bradley Richardson's JobSmarts Guide to Industries & Careers.
