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College of Health and Human Services

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College of Health and Human Services



June 2017

[Public health summit seeks urgent action against opioid crisis](#)

Opioid addiction is killing people in West Michigan just like every region of this country, say experts who participated in a June 6 public health summit. "Addressing the Opioid Crisis in Michigan" was the topic of the summit held at WMU's regional location in Grand Rapids.

[Ph.D. student presents immunization exemption data to CDC](#)

Duduzile Phindile Mashinini, M.S., a doctoral student in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D. program, presented her research to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding her research focused on immunization exemptions.



[Professors receive grant to improve health professionals' skills for serving Native American communities](#)

Three CHHS professors recently received grant funding from the CDC and the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research to develop curricula to train graduate-level health professionals in culturally appropriate ways to address diabetes and tobacco use among Native Americans.



[Professor's art on display in second floor CHHS gallery](#)

Dr. Sue Caulfield, professor in the School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs, has several heliographic prints on display in the second floor art gallery at the College of Health and Human Services.

[Psychology practicum making strides at Senior Day Services](#)

For the past year, the psychology department has offered student practica at WMU Senior Day Services. **Jon Baker, Ph.D.** and doctoral student, **Brian MacNeill** spent the spring semester training psychology students to work with older adults with cognitive impairments while providing support for individuals in the program.

HHS on Social Media



Kaila Graham has received a master's level Thurgood Marshall Fellowship at Western Michigan University. Enrolled in the Master of Public Health program, Graham will begin her studies in September.

From the [MPH program](#) on [Facebook](#)

In other news

Here are some other WMU news articles you might be interested in:

- [CommUniverCity weekend will feature inauguration of WMU president](#)
- [Arts and sciences college announces three appointments](#)
- [WMU to confer 1,200 degrees during summer commencement](#)

CHHS on Facebook and Instagram

The College of Health and Human Services is on [Facebook](#) AND [Instagram](#)! Please take a moment to "like" and "follow" us to stay informed on what's going on throughout the college.



Ph.D. student presents to CDC regarding immunization exemptions

Dudzile Phindile Mashinini, M.S., a doctoral student in [Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D. program](#), presented her research to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding her research focused on immunization exemptions.



Phindi Mashinini

She presented virtually, using Skype, at the CDC Assessment Branch Meeting, in front of members of the Program Operations Branch, Immunization Service Division (ISD) and to ISD leadership.

Mashinini's research looks at philosophical immunization exemption rates among kindergartners to measure the effect of Michigan's 2015 nonmedical immunization exemption rule change. Using immunization exemption data from 1,993 schools, the study explored factors associated with such exemptions among kindergartners as a result of Michigan's 2015 administrative rule change for parents.

The study showed that Michigan's 2015 administrative rule change for nonmedical immunization exemptions was effective in decreasing philosophical immunization exemption rates overall at the kindergarten level in Michigan.

"However, even after the policy's implementation," said Mashinini, "high philosophical exemption rates in Michigan are still associated with private schools, schools in rural areas, and schools with low free and reduced school lunch rates (meaning high socioeconomic status schools)."

From the results of the study, Mashinini recommended to health officials that they implement targeted vaccine intervention campaigns in these areas to further reduce nonmedical immunization exemptions.

"It's impressive for a student to present to this group at the CDC," said **Dr. Kieran Fogarty**, director of the Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Ph.D. Program and Mashinini's doctoral advisor. "Phindi has done excellent research in this area and she really did a great job with her presentation."

Mashinini continues her research in this area as she prepares for her dissertation. She plans to finish her Ph.D. by spring 2018.

WMU-Grand Rapids Program Receives Grant for Case Study Addressing Cultural Competency in Public Health Care Collaboration with Native Americans

by Tyler Lecceadone
June 9, 2017 | Extended University Programs News

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich.—Western Michigan University's Grand Rapids regional location recently received grant funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research to develop curricula aimed at improving cultural competency for health professions students. The grant awards nearly \$14,700 for the project, which focuses on addressing diabetes and tobacco use among Native Americans.

An interprofessional partnership within the WMU College of Health and Human Services, the grant was proposed by Dr. Shannon McMorrow assistant professor for the WMU-Grand Rapids Master of Public Health program, along with Dr. Dee Sherwood and Dr. Vivian Valdmanis, program coordinators of the WMU-Grand Rapids Master of Social Work programs and Master of Public Health programs, respectively. Together, the faculty members aim to utilize the funding to design an effective case study that will be distributed nationwide by the two funding organizations.

"Our approach is based on evidence-based practices for sustainable and equitable community health promotion," said McMorrow, principle investigator for the grant project. "This is an important issue within the Native American communities and we are pleased that the CDC and Association for Prevention Teaching and Research have chosen us to develop the needed curriculum."

The project, titled "Enhancing the Circle of Health: Culturally Competent Public Health-Health Care Collaboration to Address Type 2 Diabetes and Tobacco Reduction in Native American Communities," began May 1. The case study will engage graduate students on how to communicate with Native Americans in a culturally appropriate manner about health matters. It also includes collaboration with the Western Regional Area Health Education Center, other health partners and local Native American community members.

“It is essential that we educate future health professionals, including public health and social work students to be culturally competent. In doing so, we must actively work together to dismantle long held stereotypes and stigmatization of Native American communities,” said Sherwood. “Our over-arching goal is to make sure that Native voices are included in the development of the curriculum.”

Sherwood has an extensive track record of collaboration with Native American communities in Michigan, and Valdmanis contributes experience in economic evaluation of programs of disenfranchised populations, including Native Americans.

Professor's art on display in second floor art gallery

By Joel Krauss | College of Health and Human Services News | June 2017

Dr. Sue Caulfield, professor in the School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs, has several works on display in the second floor art gallery at the College of Health and Human Services.

The pieces on display in the gallery are heliographic prints, where plants and other objects are positioned on fabric painted with special paint and then exposed to sunlight.

"My work is best expressed as a love of imagery on fabric," said Caulfield. "What a joy to transform my work with whatever happens to be in bloom."

Dr. Caulfield has displayed art in the building before. In fact, one of her pieces is permanently installed on the first floor of the building, outside the entrance to room 1035.

When she's not teaching courses in the School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs, Dr. Caulfield also acts as coordinator of strategic planning and assessment for the college.



Dr. Sue Caulfield in action



Psychology practicum making strides at WMU Senior Day Services

For the past year, Psychology faculty and graduate students have partnered with WMU Senior Day Services to provide a practicum site for its students. **Jon Baker, Ph.D.** and doctoral student, **Brian MacNeill** have spent much of the semester training psychology students to work with older adults with cognitive impairments while providing supports for individuals attending the program and staff training.

During the spring semester, the team supported participants with challenging behaviors by reducing inappropriate behavior and increasing appropriate behavior, allowing them to remain in the program. Their intervention is critical in ensuring program enrollment and avoiding dismissal.

In addition to working with participants, the team also hosted and trained undergraduate psychology students to provide clinical services for older adults with disabilities. For



Baker (L) and MacNeill (R)

many, this is their first experience working with adults with disabilities.

MacNeill also worked individually with participants diagnosed with aphasia on language rehabilitation by capitalizing on consumer strengths to address their deficits.

This summer the team will be piloting a comprehensive training and supervision program that focuses on the development of clinical skills for undergraduate and graduate students seeking the credentials for Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst and Board Certified Behavior Analyst. The team will also be developing caregiver training and assisting with the implementation and evaluation of the Mind Aerobics™ curriculum.