2021 Public Health Practice Awardees

STUDENT PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE AWARDS

Excellence in Baltimore Public Health Practice

*Sara Lupolt*
Project Title: Safe Urban Harvests Project
Partner Organizations: Baltimore Office of Sustainability, Farm Alliance of Baltimore, UMD Extension – Baltimore City, Parks and People Foundation, and the USDA-ARS
JHSPH Degree Program: PhD, Environmental Health and Engineering

Sara worked on the Safe Urban Harvests study, a study designed to answer community questions about the safety of growing and consuming food grown in Baltimore City. In partnership with the Baltimore Office of Sustainability, the Farm Alliance of Baltimore, the UMD Extension – Baltimore City, the Parks and People Foundation, and the USDA-ARS, we surveyed and tested soil, water and produce samples from 104 urban farms and gardens for heavy metals. The good news is it is safe for urban growers to practice urban agriculture in Baltimore! Our findings informed best practices resources and revisions to Baltimore’s soil safety policy.

Check out her award-winning presentation [here](#).

Excellence in U.S. Public Health Practice

*Roopa Kalyanaraman Marcello, MPH*
Project Title: New York City Health + Hospitals’ Healthy Beverage Initiative
Partner Organization: New York City Health + Hospitals
JHSPH Degree Program: Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)

New York City Health + Hospitals (NYC H+H) is the largest public healthcare system in the nation, serving more than 1 million people each year. While NYC has been a leader in reducing the availability of sugary drinks – a risk factor for weight gain and cardiometabolic disease – NYC H+H, until recently, sold them in cafeterias and gift shops. Roopa developed and was instrumental in launching NYC H+H’s [Healthy Beverage Initiative](#), which eliminated sugary drinks from the entire system. She is evaluating the implementation and impact of the initiative for her dissertation to help inform similar initiatives at other health systems across the nation.

Check out her award-winning presentation [here](#).
Rachael Molitor
Project Title: Community Health Worker Certification – Implementing Specialty Certifications
Partner Organization: Maryland Department of Health, Office of Population Health Improvement
JHSPH Degree Program: Master's of Public Health (MPH)

Currently, only three states offer specialty certifications for Community Health Workers (CHWs). Investing in a CHW specialty certification will better equip CHWs to provide disease specific resources and aid community members in overcoming barriers to care and disease prevention and management.

Rachael worked with the CHW Program to develop a strategic plan to implement the first CHW specialty certification in Maryland in Chronic Disease Management: Diabetes. She researched the national status of CHW specialty certifications, held six “Expert Stakeholder Group” meetings to obtain feedback, and helped draft regulations to establish CHW specialty certifications. Maryland’s CHW specialty certification policy can serve as a model for other states and uplift the CHW profession in specific disease areas.

Check out her award-winning presentation here.

Excellence in International Public Health Practice

Roshan Khatri
Project Title: Storytelling as A Public Health Intervention in Trafficking
Partner Organization: Headwaters Relief Organization
JHSPH Degree Program: Doctor of Public Health (DrPH), Environmental Health – Health Security track

Storytelling can be used as a socio-cultural tool to assist children in articulating their thoughts, understanding their feelings and helping them make sense of this world. It can also help explain difficult topics and teach new skills and healthy behaviors to the children.

Together Again, a story of a little girl, a victim of trafficking, was created to help girls and women of Nepal fight trafficking.

This book has a preventative focus. It educates about human trafficking and supports cultural change against ostracizing the victims of trafficking. This led to the creation of a network that focuses on trafficking prevention.

Check out his award-winning presentation here.
Bolanle Akinyele, MD
Project Title: Feasibility of CPR Training For Secondary School Students in Southwest, Nigeria
Partner Organization: Revolving Hearts Foundation
JHSPH Degree Program: Master’s of Public Health (MPH)

The Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Peer Educator’s Program (CPEP)- a train-the-trainer model, was designed and implemented in Ibadan, Nigeria to raise awareness about cardiac arrest, teach secondary school students how to perform CPR, and train them to be CPR ambassadors. The pilot program’s goal was to evaluate the feasibility of adapting the ‘AHA CPR in Schools’ training to the local context in Southwest Nigeria. It was conducted by the Revolving Hearts Foundation, Atlanta in collaboration with Issachar Generation (a local NGO). The inaugural CPEP taught 45 students from 4 schools and engaged over 2000 students to advance bystander CPR in Nigeria.

Check out her award-winning presentation [here](#).

**STAFF PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE AWARDS**

**Excellence in Baltimore Public Health Practice**

Morgan Prioleau
Project Title: Youth Engagement and Mentorship
Partner Organization: HeartSmiles
JHSPH Affiliation: Program Administrator at the Johns Hopkins Center for Adolescent Health (CAH)

Morgan Prioleau plays a key role in engaging and mentoring young people through her role in HeartSmiles and CAH. Morgan is one of the adult mentors to the vibrant, productive group of young people, which meets twice monthly and advises CAH on all aspects of HeartSmiles work.

In partnership with Joni Holifield, Founder and President of HeartSmiles, Morgan helps organize and run a variety of HeartSmiles programs for Baltimore youth, including Winning Wednesdays, Thriving Thursdays, Focus Fridays, Success Sessions, and YouthWorks summer programs. The programs create a safe space for young people to share struggles and successes, learn leadership skills, and get guidance from caring adult mentors.
Excellence in U.S. Public Health Practice

**Ruth Maiorana**

Project Title: Advancing Excellence in Maryland Local Public Health Practice  
Partner Organization: Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO)  
JHSPH Affiliation: Executive Director, MACHO

As Executive Director of the Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO), Ruth Maiorana has greatly improved the ability of local health departments to deliver public health services to Maryland’s citizens. She represents Maryland’s interests with the National Association of County and City Health Officials and fosters and coordinates collaborations between local health departments, state governmental agencies, and community partners. These partnerships have led to progress on a series of both long-standing and emerging public health issues. Ruth’s work has been especially impactful in helping local health departments navigate and respond to the ongoing challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

FACULTY PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE AWARDS

Excellence in Baltimore Public Health Practice

**Lois Privor-Dumm, MBA**

Project Title: Vaccine Access and Acceptance Lives in Unity, Education (VALUE) Baltimore  
Partner Organization: Baltimore City Health Department  
JHSPH Affiliation: Senior Research Associate, International Health

Lois Privor-Dumm worked with Baltimore City Health Department and a variety of faith and community-based partners to help increase adult immunization rates in the city. Her work included listening to underserved communities, building health literacy and co-creating strategies to address needs and concerns around flu and COVID-19 vaccination. The inclusive approach putting community at the center helped establish trusted sites for vaccination at churches, synagogues and mosques and increase access to vaccines. Working with partners, she established a program of vaccine peer ambassadors as trusted messengers to deliver vaccine education and facilitate access to vaccination and other services.
Excellence in International Public Health Practice

Chizoba Barbara Wonodi, MD, MPH, Dr.PH
Partner Organization: WHO Country Office
JHSPH Affiliation: Associate Scientist, International Health

Dr. Wonodi supports global and local efforts to strengthen immunization programs and combat the COVID-19 pandemic. She leads high-impact research collaborations with multi-disciplinary teams across multiple institutions. She supported the Nigerian Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) synthesize evidence and make recommendations for COVID-19 vaccine introduction in the country. Her work on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in Nigeria is shaping the government’s risk communication strategy to build vaccine trust and acceptance. Through the USAID-funded MOMENTUM Global and Leadership Project, she collaborates with the WHO to advance learning on health systems disruptions and resilience, by producing case studies to help immunization managers build back better from COVID-19.
2021 COVID-19 Impact Awards

Excellence in Baltimore COVID-19 Public Health Practice

Chris Beyrer, MD, MPH, Leonard Rubenstein, JD, Lauren Dayton, Gabriel B. Eber, JD, MPH, Carolyn Sufrin, Joyell Arscott, Henri Garrison-Desany, and Rachel Strodel

Project Title: Protecting People Who Are or Have Been Incarcerated From COVID-19
Partner Organization: From Prison Cells to PhD

In partnership with community organizations in Baltimore, we have worked on behalf of people who are at high risk of COVID-19 because of their incarceration. Our group began its work through successful efforts to persuade Governor Hogan to release individuals at highest risk of COVID-19 from prison, despite his early resistance to doing so. We also succeeded in bringing COVID-19 testing into correctional facilities. Following that, the team has collaborated with partners to assess the degree to which the state is providing housing, medical and other supports individuals released from confinement during the pandemic need.
The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented, global crisis and contact tracing was one of the most important public health interventions to slow SARS-CoV-2 virus transmission. In response, Johns Hopkins University launched a free, massive open online course on contact tracing for COVID-19, including the science of SARS-CoV-2, how contact tracing is done, and the ethical considerations for isolation and quarantine. More than 1.2 million students have enrolled since May 2020, and health departments in every state of the USA leverage this training. The training materials have been adapted and used by programs across the globe.