

Academic Public Health at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa

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It gives me great pleasure to see this inaugural issue of the *Hawai'i Journal of Public Health*. The journal provides another strong link between the public health academic and practice communities in Hawai'i. Over the past few years, several linkages have been made between the Office of Public Health Studies and the Hawai'i Department of Health to better address public health issues. This includes the Science Officer's Program, Hawai'i Health Data Warehouse, the Healthy Hawaii Initiative and several student practical experiences. We look forward to additional academic-practice linkages in the future.

The Office of Public Health Studies (OPHS) is also rapidly growing and maturing. As many of you know, the School of Public Health was closed in 2000 and the Office of Public Health Studies was created in the John A. Burns School of Medicine. Since that time we have been hard at work developing new programs and research areas. Currently, we offer MPH and MS degrees in the areas of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Epidemiology. Earlier this fall, we opened the DrPH program in Community-Based and Translational Research. All of these programs are fully accredited by the Council on Education in Public Health. We are currently working to open a specialization in Health Policy and Management for fall of 2009. The OPHS also offers certificate programs in Maternal and Child Health and Population Studies. These short courses of study can be completed part time in one year.

The OPHS is also developing several new exciting initiatives in the Asia Pacific Region. In 2008, we signed agreements with two Schools of Public Health in China. Our agreements with Fudan and Wuhan Universities provide for student and faculty exchange and joint research projects. This past summer, three students and two faculty members spent a month in Wuhan, China learning with their Chinese colleagues. We are also moving rapidly ahead in our distance education capacity. This fall we offered our first course on Elluminate, a desk top based distance learning software. Students from Atlanta to Calcutta participated in the course. We have recently hired a distance education coordinator and hope to be able to offer complete certificates and eventually entire degree programs on-line to serve our rural Oahu, Neighbor Island, Pacific and Asian students. We have also jumped into the field of undergraduate education. In fall 2008, we offered our first undergraduate class, an honors class with eight students. Current plans are underway to add several new undergraduate courses in the coming years.

We are excited about the reemergence of academic public health in Hawaii and would like to invite you to join us. Please visit our website at www.hawaii.edu/publichealth. If you are alumni please update your contact information there and we will keep you informed about upcoming events. You can also call 956-8577 if you would like to schedule a visit to talk about our programs and opportunities to get involved.

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