The School of Public Health: At A Glance

| **900+ Enrollment**  
In 2020 | The School of Public Health currently holds an enrollment of 73% minority students, 81% female students and 4% international students. |
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| **1,300 Alumni**  
Since 2006 | The School of Public has graduated more than 1,300 alumni since 2006. The top employer for SPH graduates is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). |
| **$16.7M Sponsored Funding**  
Utilizing collaborative and innovative research, public health faculty are in cities every day addressing challenges such as coronaviruses & HIV/AIDS, violence, tobacco and drug use, obesity, health disparities, and environmental threats. |
| **15 Years of Growth**  
Since 2006 | Today we are a nationally accredited school of public health with six stand-alone and dual-degree programs, 900+ students and 125 faculty and staff. |
About Our Programs

The School of Public Health (SPH) provides high-quality and relevant teaching, research and service needed to advance public health practice in a changing world. By investigating the contemporary problems that challenge diverse urban communities, the SPH is preparing the next generation of public health professionals to make a difference through leadership, scholarship and practice in Georgia communities and around the globe. The SPH is one of the most diverse schools of public health in the nation—we have several international students, and over half of all of our students are minorities. The School enrolls the highest percentage of Black/African American public health bachelor’s and master’s students among the 60+ ASPPH member schools and programs of public health who report this data. Since 2006, the School has been home to more than 85 Fulbright Scholars. The SPH seeks to be a leading public health research institution dedicated to understanding and solving contemporary health problems, serving as the destination of choice for students seeking an affordable and meaningful public health education.

"With the M.P.H. degree, I see myself conducting research and using that information to inform clinicians and other public health specialists about how to proceed. The recent Coronavirus pandemic is a perfect example of the work I would like to do. Epidemiologists are also playing an important role in identifying outbreaks, tracking the point of origin, and determining transmissibility and lethality, among other things."

~ Tiana Banks, M.P.H. Candidate
Bachelor of Science in Public Health

The Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) program was launched at the Georgia State University School of Public Health in Fall 2016. The program informs students about the barriers facing efforts to promote healthier cities and urban communities, exposes students to contemporary global health challenges and equips graduates with a unique set of public health skills to address the complex challenges of societies across the globe. Through their coursework, BSPH students begin to transition from undergraduate students to public health professionals prepared to competently enter the workforce or pursue graduate education.

Student Organizations

**Public Health Club:** Brings together students interested in advancing public health through promoting health advocacy and student involvement through leadership, research, community service and health promotion to encourage better health across Georgia State and within our communities.

**GlobeMed:** This organization strengthens the movement for global health equity by empowering students and local/global communities to work together to improve the health of people living in poverty.

**MeTa Series:** Started in Fall 2017 as the School of Public Health “Meet and Talk Series” and shortened to the “MeTa” series. The goal of the series is to create an informal academic platform, environment and forum for students and faculty to interact and create a sense of community.

School of Public Health students and faculty gather at a MeTa series event 2019.
Master of Public Health Program

The Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) program began enrolling students in 2005, received its initial program-level accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) in 2007 and has now grown to encompass six concentrations. With over 200 students enrolled, it is the largest graduate program in the SPH. Students in the MPH program hone their skills through research opportunities with faculty members and practicum experiences. These hands-on experiences help students focus their thesis topics and provide invaluable training that will prepare them for their future careers in public health.

Doctor of Public Health Program

The Doctor of Public Health (Dr.P.H.) program was launched at the Georgia State School of Public Health in Fall 2018. In contrast to the existing Ph.D. program, the Dr.P.H. program is an applied public health doctorate program designed to prepare the next generation of public health leaders to advance public health and health equity. To date the program has enrolled three cohorts totaling 34 students, 11-12 students per cohort. Students bring 3-15+ years of applied public health experience representing a diverse spectrum of public health expertise. Students are currently working in a range of roles at the Centers for Disease Prevention and the Georgia Department of Public Health, as well as local public health, healthcare, academic institutions and affiliated centers. By design, the program recruits a diverse cohort of students that represent a breadth of public health practice, lived experience and perspectives.

Dr.P.H. cohorts gather for a photo with Dr. Harry J. Heiman, Dr.P.H. program director, and Dr. Rodney Lyn, Dean of the School of Public Health, during Fall 2019 Orientation.
Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program in Public Health was approved by the Georgia Board of Regents in March 2011. The four year program consists of four concentrations: Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Behavior, Health Services and Policy Research and Environmental Health. Since its inaugural year nine years ago, the program has enrolled 109 students from diverse backgrounds. Over the past nine years, 41 of our Ph.D. students have graduated and moved into a variety of employment positions including academic positions (e.g., assistant professors at Georgia State, Spelman and University of Georgia), post-doctoral fellowships (e.g., ORISE fellows at the CDC), government public health positions including several in the Epidemic Intelligence Service and the FDA, and private research companies.

During their program of study, two of our students, Krishna Kiran Kota and Argita Salindri, received prestigious Fogarty Global Health fellowships. During his fellowship year in India, Dr. Kota collaborated with researchers at the National AIDS Research Institute. He conducted a mixed-methods study to examine the syndemic effect of mental health issues, substance use and violence victimization on increased HIV risk behaviors in transgender women/hijra and men who have sex with men. Currently Dr. Kota is continuing his research as a postdoctoral fellow for HIV prevention in communities of color at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. During her fellowship year, Ms. Salindri (currently in her fourth year - Epidemiology) was hosted by the National Center for Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (NCTLD) in Tbilisi, in the country of Georgia. She was involved in several tuberculosis (TB) projects, including analyzing Georgia’s TB surveillance data, as well as assisting and maintaining the day-to-day operation of an NIH-funded study aiming to assess pulmonary impairments after successful TB treatment.

One notable graduate of our program (class of 2016) is Dr. NaTaki Osborne Jelks, currently an assistant professor of environmental health at Spelman College whose research and passion focuses on working toward environmental justice. In 2018, the Atlanta Regional Commission, with the Trust for Public Land, the City of Atlanta and Cobb County, commissioned a study to reimagine a 100-mile stretch of the Chattahoochee, from Buford Dam to Chattahoochee Bend State Park. The two-year project, led in part by Dr. Jelks, organized and conducted dozens of meetings for stakeholders and working groups, as well as a series of public forums and “river rambles” that engaged the public through outings on the water. The initiative worked with black environmental leaders and organizations including the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, the South River Watershed Alliance and the Environmental Community Action, to address the racial disparities that historically have been entrenched by environmental governance in Atlanta. Dr. Jelks was recognized by the Obama Administration as a Champion of Change as part of the Next Generation of Environmental Conservationists.
Departments of School of Public Health

The department of Health Policy and Behavioral Sciences (HPBS) was established in 2017 and is chaired by Dr. Shannon Self-Brown. It houses the Health Policy & Management and Health Promotion & Behavior concentrations. The department has 15 tenure track faculty and 16 clinical/research faculty. It offers concentration-specific programs for both the Master of Public Health and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

Outstanding SPH accomplishments from 2020 include:

- HPBS faculty total grant dollars exceeded $14M.
- Notable funders include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Health Resources & Services Administration, National Cancer Institute (NCI), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, US Department of Defense and US Department of Education.
- HPBS faculty published 70+ articles in peer-reviewed journals.
- HPBS faculty led the development of three new summer study abroad programs in Brazil, Ghana and Indonesia.
- Two HPBS faculty received university-level awards: Dr. Daniel Whitaker was named a Georgia State Distinguished University Professor and Dr. Ashli Owen-Smith was recognized for Outstanding Faculty Achievement.
- Two HPBS faculty received SPH-level awards: Dr. Jidong Huang was recognized for the Excellence in Research Award and Dr. Carlos Pavao was recognized for the Excellence in Mentorship Award.
- An HPBS graduate student received an SPH-level award: Elizabeth Perry was recognized for the Diane Caves Memorial Award.

The Department of Population Health Sciences (PHS) was established in 2017 and is chaired by Dr. Katherine Masyn. It houses the Environmental Health, Environmental Epidemiology, Biostatistics & Epidemiology concentrations. The department has 15 tenure track faculty and eight clinical/research faculty. It offers concentration-specific programs for both the Master of Public Health and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

Outstanding PHS accomplishments from 2020 include:

- PHS faculty total grant dollars were $2.6M.
- PHS faculty added numerous intellectual contributions through 94 journal articles.
- Faculty member Dr. Christine Stauber creatively converted her summer 2020 study abroad course to an online format. The course provided an overview of Brazil’s health systems and population health issues while introducing students to various aspects of Brazilian culture, including music, religion and the arts.
- Faculty member Dr. Heather Bradley received funding from CDC to create a consortium of 50+ experts in the area of improving the health of people who inject drugs (PWID). Through a series of expert consultations, this consortium will work to consolidate data on changes in HIV and Hepatitis C risk among PWID that are attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., changes in syringe services program availability). Pending continued CDC funding, estimates generated from these data will inform mathematical modeling aiming to quantify excess infectious disease risk among PWID as a result of the pandemic.
Numerous HPBS and PHS faculty members have provided their expertise to the media during the COVID-19 pandemic. Local and national media outlets include the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, CNN, Georgia Public Broadcasting and The New York Times.

Dr. Karen Nielsen, Assistant Professor of Biostatistics in the Department of Population Health Sciences, contributed to the design of a campus surveillance plan for COVID-19 by developing a tool for identifying the target number of weekly tests needed for surveillance testing. This tool was designed with the dual goals of estimating prevalence and detecting cases for rapid response and allowed for the specification of assumptions such as community prevalence. The surveillance plan was implemented in Fall 2020 when students returned to campus, and she has continued to monitor aggregate results and consult with the campus COVID-19 response team. For her technical and analytic contributions to the campus surveillance plan, Dr. Nielsen was recognized as a "Hall of Fame Champion" by the Georgia State University Provost’s Office.

Dr. Heather Bradley served as co-investigator on COVIDVu, an NIH-funded Emory-led national SARS-CoV-2 serosurvey measuring population-level antibody prevalence and risk factors. COVIDVu just completed baseline data collection and first results paper is currently under review at the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM). She trained and supervised six Georgia State MPH students to conduct qualitative interviews with people who chose not to participate in the COVIDVu study in order to understand barriers to participation, particularly among racial and ethnic minority populations. Three of the students used this experience as their MPH practicum and all were paid for their work over nearly seven months.

Dr. Bradley also received a $1.3 million grant from NIH RADx-UP initiative to conduct a two-year study in Atlanta to understand motivations and barriers to participating in COVID-19 related research.
Mark Chaffin Center for Healthy Development

The Mark Chaffin Center for Healthy Development (MCCHD) is committed to promoting the health, safety and well-being of children, adults and families through research, service, education, training and advocacy. The Center emphasizes bringing scientific innovation into the everyday lives of people and their communities through translational and implementation research.

Primary research domains include child maltreatment prevention and treatment, promoting health and well-being across the life span for individuals with disabilities and the development and implementation of evidence-based intervention practices for parents, caregivers, educators and social service providers that promote the social-emotional development, safety, health and well-being of infants, children and adolescents, through the MCCHD’s three units: The Center for Leadership in Disability, the National SafeCare Training and Research Center, and Prevent Child Abuse Georgia.

- In FY 2020, the MCCHD received notices of award for a total of 29 projects, exceeding $7.5M in sponsored funding, exceeding all prior fiscal year performance records.
- The MCCHD hosted three professional conferences, two prominent lectures, produced 66 presentations and 109 publications. Furthermore, MCCHD provided interdisciplinary research, service training and mentoring for 79 graduate students through funded graduate research assistantships and fellowships, practicum and volunteer training experiences.

Screenshot taken while adapting the SafeCare Parent-Child Interaction Module in 2020 for Congolese refugees in Clarkston, Georgia.
National SafeCare Training and Research Center

The National SafeCare Training and Research Center (NSTRC) was established in 2007 with funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and is housed in the Mark Chaffin Center for Healthy Development. The goal of the NSTRC is the nationwide implementation of the SafeCare model, an evidence-based home visitation program that has been shown to reduce child maltreatment among families with a history of maltreatment or with risk factors for maltreatment. The center is engaged in research efforts to improve the training, implementation and translation of the SafeCare model. Additionally, the NSTRC is cultivating collaboration with communities, child welfare administrators and policymakers to increase support and resources for evidence-based practice and the prevention of maltreatment on a local, national and international scale.

Prevent Child Abuse Georgia: 2020 Overview

Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) Georgia is a state chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America and is housed in the School of Public Health at Georgia State University’s Mark Chaffin Center for Healthy Development (since January 2012). PCA Georgia provides statewide direction to build safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments to prevent child abuse and neglect and has over 20 local councils located throughout the state who advocate and implement prevention practices in their communities. PCA Georgia is applying intentional equity and a racial justice lens to our work. A child’s race, ethnicity, gender, family income or neighborhood should not predict their future success and well-being.

Child Abuse Prevention Month - April

As the statewide leader of the Child Abuse Prevention month initiative in Georgia (April 2020), PCA Georgia provided community resource guides, media toolkits and distributed more than 18,000 Prevent Child Abuse America pinwheels, emblematic of the national PCA campaign for happy, healthy childhoods throughout the state. 2020 focused on virtual events and awareness activities. PCA Georgia hosted a virtual screening of Resilience and a panel discussion in April with over 240 participants.
A mandated reporter hybrid training was designed in partnership with ProSolutions to enable interactive training to occur without being in-person together.

Mandated Reporter Training of the Trainer: Increased the number of trainers statewide by delivering a one-day comprehensive training program for professionals who have a need to train others on the responsibilities of a mandated reporter.

Dear Parent: Discussing Discipline: A new training program that equips parent-educators with communication skills and resources to discuss corporal punishment with families. The training was created with national experts and local professionals to focus on parenting norms in the Southeast and address corporal punishment without shame or blame.

Webinars
PCA Georgia worked with the Department of Education and others to produce a series of webinars to help educators recognize and report child maltreatment in virtual environments with over 1,000 participants (April – Sept 2020).

Webinars Offered
- Count Georgia In: Supporting the 2020 Census
- Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month
- Protecting Children Amidst Crisis: A Mandated Reporter’s Role
- Protecting Children in a New Normal
- Poverty Perspectives
- Schools on Deck: Preparing for the Return to School

Training Programs
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Prevent Child Abuse Georgia’s Biannual meeting of our local PCA Councils in 2019. These are located throughout the state and dedicated to providing an additional layer of prevention programming to the organizations’ services.
The Center for Leadership in Disability (CLD) is now in its 13th year serving as a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD). CLD has a mission of translating research into community practices that contribute to independent, self-determined, inclusive and productive lives for people with disabilities and their families. The Center seeks to bridge the academic and disability communities, develop and sustain mutually respectful partnerships and build a legacy of programs supporting our mission.

A few selected accomplishments include:

- More than 250 long-term trainees have completed our Georgia Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (GaLEND) Program. They are now serving as university professors, senior-level managers in service systems, leaders in self-and-family advocacy organizations, clinicians, public health professionals and informed citizens.
- Tens of thousands of lives have been impacted through highly regarded continuing education and community service offerings that have inspired testimonials from self-advocates, parents, teachers and providers who found new hope, promise and commitment to their roles and relationships.
- Hundreds of new options were created for individuals with challenging behavior, students with disabilities who wish to experience the college and those who want to participate in the governance of the organizations that are supposed to serve them.

2017 AUCD Leadership Academy (which was the inaugural group), hosted by the Center for Leadership in Disability. The group visited the National Center for Civil and Human Rights.
Prevention Research Center

The Prevention Research Center (PRC) at Georgia State University (in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) is headquartered on the Clarkston Campus at Perimeter College. The PRC works with community organizations, state and local government, residents and other partners in Clarkston to address social determinants of adverse health outcomes through a sustainable community-academic partnership focused on migrant health. The PRC is focused on developing, implementing, evaluating and disseminating culturally and linguistically appropriate interventions. The Center addresses the disparities and determinants of health for migrants, refugees and other community members and disseminates this work to the community, state and national levels.

Decision-making at the PRC is a collaborative process including both community organizations and Georgia State University. The efforts listed below were carried out by cross-sector teams including community members, community service providers and Georgia State faculty and staff.

(left to right) Georgia State students Mohammed Alo, Mohammed Tamer, CAB members Watema Emmanuel and Heval Kelli Emmanuel and Co-Director of Community Engagement Mary Helen O’Connor prepping hand sanitizer bottles produced by a local distillery in 2020.

Refugee community volunteers, Nawroz and Randa Youseff and Georgia State grad Jose Mejia assemble PPE kits for distribution in Clarkston, Georgia in 2020.
Interventions

COVID PPE Health Kit Distribution to Clarkston Apartment Complexes:
- 13,000 masks and hand sanitizer to 5,800 apartment units with health education/testing location materials with Clarkston Community COVID Task Force, members of the PRC CAB.
- COVID-19 information cards and lawn signs developed by ALRC and provided by PRC.
- “Answers to Coronavirus Questions” print and electronic booklet: 750 printed booklets translated in seven languages.
- Translations for 10 medicines for three chronic conditions into four languages for the Grace Village pharmacy.
- Made and distributed 2,500 reusable cloth masks to childcare centers and clinics.

Other Resources

- Student and volunteer efforts for mask/PPE distribution.
- Community engagement through regular social media updates—Facebook, Twitter, Instagram (new content creation and sharing of community partner events and information). Dissemination was largely focused on COVID prevention, educational messages and prevention information. Testing availability and details were shared regularly.
- Regular updates to our PRC website (COVID), the repertoire for translated resources, services, information, recordings, etc.
Urban Focus, Global Reach

As you can see throughout this report, your investment in the School of Public Health will prepare the next generation of leaders to examine contemporary public health problems that challenge urban communities locally and globally. Despite the School’s success in such a short period of time, there remain many philanthropic needs. Generous funding from donors like you will help ensure the School’s vision of being a leader in public health research while maintaining an affordable and meaningful education for students. Gifts for student scholarships, research support and field immersions (study abroad trips and internships) will prepare our students to become the leaders of tomorrow and be better equipped to handle the public health challenges of the future.

For more information on how you might further your impact at the School of Public Health, please contact Brian Greer (jgreer9@gsu.edu).

Thank YOU for your commitment #THESTATEWAY!

Urban Life Building, home of the School of Public Health on Georgia State University’s downtown Atlanta campus.