



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

To the class of incoming SBS students – welcome to the Department and to the School! To our returning students, staff & faculty – I trust you had a refreshing break.

We have an exciting event to launch the Fall semester. On September 10-11, our department is hosting the Inaugural Forum on Global Health Equity at the Martin Conference Center (<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/social-and-behavioral-sciences/inaugural-forum-on-population-health-equity-3/>).

With generous funding from the Aetna Foundation, we have put together an exciting program of international speakers who will cover topics ranging from the impact of macro-economic shocks on health (David Stuckler from Cambridge University), the influence of neighborhood environments (Billie Giles-Corti from University of Melbourne), housing and health (Philippa Howden Chapman from University of Otago), race, racism and health (David Williams from SBS), and much more. There will be a poster session featuring students/postdocs who were selected from a nationwide competition. Attendance is free but you must register because there are only 500 seats and we are approaching maximum capacity – thanks to the tireless efforts of two SBS students Circe Le Compte and Yenee Soh (together with Alberta Zoummar from SBS) who worked behind the scenes to promote the event. See you there!

Ichiro



Dr. Kawachi invites you to the Inaugural Forum on Population Health Equity: <https://youtu.be/O9TAb4PtPfk>

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Upcoming events

Wed, 9/9 — Lobby Day at MA State House

Thurs 9/10—Fri 9/11
Forum on Population Health Equity

Fri 9/11– Fall1/Fall semester add/drop/change deadline

Tues 9/29, 12:30—
SBS Birthday Celebration Kresge 708

Thurs 10/15, 12:30pm—
Understanding hard to maintain behaviour change: Applications to public health, Kresge G1

Fri 10/23—Fall1 term ends

Student Spotlight



Cindy Lin, SM '16

The field practicum is designed to enable two-year masters students to function in public sector and community health settings through a supervised field placement. Second-year masters student, Cindy Lin shares her experiences working as a field intern with the FXB Center for Health and Human Rights in India.

Tell us about your summer practicum.

This summer, I worked as a field intern with FXB India Suraksha, a partner of Harvard's FXB Center for Health and Human Rights. My project was to determine whether the FXBVillage program, a holistic three-year rural community development model, could be adapted to and successful in an urban slum. I spent a total of two months in India—three weeks in New Delhi (and a neighboring slum) learning about the urban slum context and six weeks in Villupuram, Tamil Nadu, evaluating the impact and sustainability of two existing rural FXBVillage sites, with a particular focus on empowerment of women.

Had you ever traveled to India? Tell us about the area you worked in and its community?

This was my first trip to India—and I feel lucky to have experienced so many different regions and

cultures in two short months. The majority of my time in India was spent in a rural village, Mathur Panchayat, in Villupuram, Tamil Nadu. I lived and worked in the village, on a plot of land that the NGO owned and transformed into the campus where two groups of FXBVillage beneficiaries ran their income generating activities (making coir ropes and raising chickens).

The village residents all belong to the Dalit community, a group of people regarded as “untouchable” and who have been marginalized and largely neglected by the rest of society. The men work as daily wage earners, working in construction or agriculture; however, many of the jobs are seasonal so the men are often without work. Most of



the women do not work, but some participate in NREGA, a government-sponsored program that offers 100 days of work for minimum earnings. Due to lack of awareness and accessibility, the overall health status and health-seeking behavior in the villages is very low. I found this incredibly troubling, especially after learning that JIPMER Hospital, one of the best government-run systems, is nearby but difficult to reach.

What skills did you gain through the practicum experience?

The lessons, knowledge, and skills—both professional and personal—I'm taking away from this experience are truly countless. The hands-on nature of my practicum allowed me to apply M&E methodology, test community development theories,

and learn the realities of program design and implementation. Above all, I gained valuable qualitative evaluation skills—particularly in data interpretation and analysis. Perhaps more importantly, this experience also helped me develop the practical skills necessary for fieldwork, like how to manage cultural and language barriers, gain the trust of the local community, and adapt to resource-limited settings.



In what ways were you able to apply the qualitative or quantitative skills developed during your first year at Harvard Chan?

This project gave me the chance to apply many of the skills I learned during my first year. By working in the field, I witnessed firsthand the importance of community engagement, as well as the challenges, emphasized in the "Program Planning: Design and Evaluation" class. I put into practice interviewing and qualitative analysis skills. And being fully immersed in a traditional environment dominated by the caste system allowed many concepts related to social cohesion, among other social determinants, discussed in Society and Health to materialize. What I found most helpful working with both quantitative and qualitative data to measure program impact, which allowed me to determine not only immediate program outcomes, but also individual and community-level perceptions.

Was collaboration central to your field practicum?

Collaboration, on many levels, was incredibly important. On an individual level, I had to work (and live) with my fellow intern, a recent HGSE graduate, for two months. Additionally, I worked very closely with the local NGO staff in the village on a daily basis as well—they were integral in helping us engage with the community to conduct research and collect data. Most importantly, though, was the collaboration with the village members—particularly the women. Living next to their place of work played the biggest factor in building that relationship; my co-intern and I would sit and talk (or, rather, gesture) with the women everyday and had to open ourselves completely to their way of life and culture in order for them to do the same. It was an incredibly powerful learning experience and growth opportunity for me.

What's next for you? How will the practicum inform your final year at Harvard Chan?

I hoped the practicum would shed light on whether a field-based career was for me. Having confirmed this desire, I come off this experience feeling incredibly motivated and eager to build on the program design and implementation skills I gained. The project also emphasized the importance of combining theory with practice while still in school, so you can apply the concepts and methods as you learn about them--so I hope to find more of those opportunities this year. Even though I was able to practice various evaluation methods, I still hope to learn more structured ways of assessing interventions. I also hope to take more classes that focus on issues of health equity in a community development context to better understand various social and economic barriers to long-term behavior change and health.



Community-Building at Landmark: Ester Villalonga-Olives and Claudia Trudel-Fitzgerald



On May 12th, Landmark-based SBS students, researchers and staff met for a research-friendly activity with Dr. Subu Subramanian. Two fellows presented their current work, which stimulated thoughtful comments and questions.

We also repeated this rewarding activity with Dr. Laura Kubzansky on July 14th. We will resume our activities towards the end of September with a social get-together. Claudia and Ester will keep you posted soon with further details!

Tips for Incoming Students

We'd like to offer some helpful tips to our incoming doctoral, SM1 and HSB-MPH students. We hope you find them useful!

- The 6th and 7th floor student study rooms (611 and 723) are available to all SBS students.
- We have a book exchange located at the 6th floor mailboxes. Feel free to swap a book!
- Discounted food and no-tax available at Sebastian's for students using Crimson Cash. Be sure to tell cashier you are student!
- Free entrance available to the Museum of Fine Arts, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Institute of Contemporary Art (among others) with your student ID. Other arts-related discounts can be found at <http://www.ofa.fas.harvard.edu/>
- M2 shuttle bus to Cambridge. Departs Longwood at Vanderbilt Hall. Shuttle bus schedule can be found at <http://www.masco.org/directions/m2-cambridge-harvard-shuttle>
- Countway Library offers classes in Searching with PubMed and EndNote Essentials. To learn more and register visit: <https://www.countway.harvard.edu/classes-events>
- SBS offers conference travel awards. To learn more and apply visit: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/social-and-behavioral-sciences/conference-travel-awards/>
- Additional Micro-lab space is available to SBS students over at Landmark. If you are interested please email Elizabeth Solomon: esolomon@hsph.harvard.edu

Arrivals

Dr. Ron Borland joined SBS as a Visiting Professor. He is currently the Nigel Gray Distinguished Fellow in Cancer Prevention at Cancer Council Victoria, and a Professorial Fellow in both the School of Population Health and Department of Information Systems at the University of Melbourne, Australia. Dr. Borland will collaborate with Dr. Vaughan Rees in the Center for Global Tobacco Control.

Kyung Hee Choi joins us as a visiting scientist. She will be working in partnership with Ichiro Kawachi.

Adolfo Cuevas joins us as a new postdoc on the Cancer Prevention Fellowship. Adolfo will be working with David Williams and Cassandra Okechukwu.

Eric Kim began a postdoc appointment in May and has been working with Laura Kubzansky.

Racquel Kelly Kohler joins us as a new postdoc on the Cancer Prevention Fellowship. Kelly will be working with Vish Viswanath.

Emily Sparer joins us from the Environmental Health Department as a new postdoc on the Cancer Prevention Fellowship. Emily will be working with Glorian Sorensen.

Kenichi Yokobayashi joins us as visiting scientist. He will be collaborating with Ichiro Kawachi.



Elizabeth Solomon welcomed her second grandchild, Lukaš Rice, on August 10th. He's being held by his proud and very excited big sister, Danika.



Ester Villalonga-Olives, SBS postdoc, and Jamie Hepworth Preto welcomed a daughter, Vera Preto Villalonga (6 lbs 8 oz) on August 5.



Lizzie Barnett, SD '16 and her wife Sarah welcomed their second, son, Finn Jaggard (7 lbs 10 oz), on June 17.



Esther Velásquez, MSW, MPH (SD '16) and Dr. Gustavo Velásquez (MPH '09) welcomed a son, Diego Jason Velásquez, (6.0lb, 19in) on April 1. He arrived a few weeks earlier than expected, and it took some work to convince extended family that the news was not an April Fool's joke!

Departures

Patricia Lambkin left SBS in August to pursue a Senior Grants Manager position in the Dept. of Nutrition.

Chris Potter left SBS in early July to pursue a new position at the Harvard Graduate School of Education as a Senior Grants and Contracts Officer.

Christina Roberto left SBS to pursue an Assistant Professor position at UPenn.

Yoshi Takahashi, a visiting scientist from Japan ended his appointment in August to return to Kyoto University School of Public Health, where he is a Senior Lecturer in Health Informatics.

Awards & Announcements

- **Alfredo Perez-Hidalgo** was honored for his achievements as Director of Administration for SBS at the 2015 Harvard Heroes Ceremony on June 15.
- **Dr. Cassandra Okechukwu's** paper, titled: Supporting employees' work-family needs improves care quality: Evidence from the Work, Family, and Health study, was awarded Best Junior Scholar Paper at the [VI International Conference of Work and Family](#) in Barcelona, Spain and was also nominated as a finalist for the 2015 James G. Zimmer New Investigator Research Award by the Aging and Public Health section of the American Public Health Association. A second paper titled, Changing Work and Work-Family Conflict: Evidence from the Work, Family, and Health Network on which she is a coauthor has been nominated for the Rossbeth Moss Kanter International Award for Excellence.
- **Dr. Reginald Tucker-Seeley** was recently appointed to the Rhode Island Working Group for Healthcare Innovation by Governor Gina Raimondo. The Working Group is a statewide initiative to innovate healthcare by improving patient care and health outcomes, and lowering costs for all Rhode Islanders.
- **Madina Agénor** received a Certificate of Teaching Excellence from the Harvard University Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning for her undergraduate public health course titled "Sexual Health and Reproductive Justice," which she designed and offered in Fall 2014 as part of the Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality program at Harvard University.
- SBS postdoc, **Eric Kim** was named one of the 30 top thinkers under 30 by Pacific Standard. Read about his research in positive psychology and physical health here: <http://goo.gl/Ry2juR> and see the complete list of the 30 top thinkers under 30 here: <http://goo.gl/dNEixv>
- SBS postdoc, **Claudia Trudel-Fitzgerald**, mentored by Laura Kubzansky, was selected as a New Investigator for the Inaugural Forum of Integrative Oncology Research Methods that will be held in Boston in November 2015. Her research project investigates the role of psychological distress and health behaviors in colorectal cancer survival among the Nurses' Health Study (in collaboration with Shelley Tworoger, from HMS).
- The Concentration of **Maternal and Child Health/Children, Youth and Families** (MCH) was successful in two competing renewals this spring. The first was the renewal of the MCH training grant (MC00001 Center of Excellence), and the second, the accompanying grant to provide pre-doctoral support for those studying MCH epidemiology. Together, they will bring in almost \$2million for support of our students and the faculty. Ours is the first training grant ever awarded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. With this renewal, we are going into our 60th year, making us the first of all MCH training grants nation-wide and the oldest training grant in the School.
- SBS doc student, **Alvin Tran** and the Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders have joined forces with Massachusetts Rep. Kay Khan (Newton-D) calling for a ban on the sale of weight-loss and muscle-building dietary supplements to minors. Interested SBS students are welcome to join in on the action at the MA State House for a lobby day and briefing on 9/9/15 and bill hearing on 9/17/15. For info, email Kimberly Yu: mahousebill3471@gmail.com.
- **The Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders** (www.hsph.harvard.edu/striped) is offering two travel scholarships to students interested in participating in the Eating Disorders Coalition Congressional Lobby Day on Capitol Hill on Oct. 28, 2015. Send your CV and one-page statement of interest to Bryn Austin at bryn.austin@childrens.harvard.edu by Friday, Sept. 11, 2015.
- **Circe Le Compte**, SBS doc student has been named co-editor-in-chief of the Harvard Public Health Review (HPRH), with James Yeh.
- **Morgan Shields**, SM '16 was the recipient of the Mind, Brain, Behavior Graduate Student Award, at Harvard University. She also received the Outstanding New Professional Award through, Kent State University Alumni Association. In addition, Morgan was the recipient of the Graduate Research Grant, Psi Chi International Honor Society.

Staff Spotlight



On Friday, August 7, nine SBS staff members took part in a meaningful community service activity to unite outside the office and give back to people in need. [Community Servings](http://www.servings.org/), a nonprofit food and nutrition program located in Jamaica Plain, provides services throughout Massachusetts to individuals and families living with critical and chronic illnesses.

Robin Blum, the organizer of the event, and Rubim Rwakabuba had both volunteered at Community Servings with their previous department and found the experience to be both educational and meaningful. “The mission of Community Servings is universally appreciated and the time spent there not only educational but also somewhat therapeutic for participants chopping, cooking, and packaging food. It’s a wonderful way to spend a morning or afternoon, providing an opportunity for our team to also get to know each other outside of the office!”

“It was a great experience to see SBS staff working together for such a novel cause.”

-Alfredo

“It was a nice feeling doing for others who aren’t able to prepare meals for themselves.”

—Elaine

Our team had the opportunity to assemble all varieties of meals – diabetic, renal, dairy free, nut free, vegetarian and the list went on.

When asked what the most meaningful part of the day was, Maria Simoneau offered “I was inspired by the dedication of the staff, interns, trainees and volunteers. All the TLC made it feel like I was preparing meals for my grandmother.”

Elaine Lynch commented, “It was a nice feeling doing for others who aren’t able to prepare meals for themselves.”

Alfredo Perez-Hidalgo recognized the event as “a great experience to see SBS staff working together for such a novel cause.”

To learn more about Community Servings and their volunteer opportunities visit their website: <http://www.servings.org/> If you are interested in joining us for our next community service outing, please let us know! We welcome all SBS students, postdocs, faculty and staff.



Upcoming Events

Featuring an exciting
video message from
Sir Michael Marmot

Inaugural Forum on Population Health Equity

September 10-11 * Martin Conference Center * Boston, MA



Join over 400 students and public health professionals to hear from international leaders in the public health arena address pressing issues on population health equity, from racial inequities and the built environment to macro-economic shocks and housing effects on population health.

Registration is free, but seats are limited! Click here for more information and the agenda:
<http://tinyurl.com/PopHealthEquityForumOnline>

Be sure to follow the Forum on:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PopHealthEquity?ref=hl> | **LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/grp/home?gid=8291737>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/PopHealthEquity> (@PopHealthEquity; #PopHealthEquity)

Birthday Celebrations

Join SBS students, postdocs, faculty and staff on the last Tuesday of each month during the lunch hour for cake and ice cream! Locations alternate between Kresge 708 and Landmark 403Q.

The September celebration will be held on Tuesday, 9/29 in 708.

"Understanding hard to maintain behaviour change: Applications to public health"

Thursday, October 15 from 12:30—1:30pm in Kresge G1.

Ron Borland is a Nigel Gray Distinguished Fellow in Cancer Prevention at Cancer Council Victoria, and a Professorial Fellow in both the School of Population Health and Department of Information Systems at the University of Melbourne, Australia



Save the date for the Chan School's second iteration of the "**Different Lenses, One Vision (dLOV)**" event series, to be held during the entire week of **November 16th**.

Individual events will be announced as we get them confirmed. Please stay connected by way of our website: www.DLOV-HARVARD.com and/or our Facebook event page: <http://tinyurl.com/dLOV-Harvard> All events will be **free** and open to the general public.

Co-sponsored by SBS.

Questions, suggestions, ideas? Email us: sbs@hsph.harvard.edu

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