



# MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY

# FALL 2018

The Majorie K. Unterberg School of Nursing and Health Studies

**Department of Health and Physical Education**

## Chair's Welcome

This is an exciting time for students and faculty in the Health and PE Department. Our Health and PE programs are flourishing, and students are involved in important research projects, service learning courses, and internships. Our students are going on to amazing careers (MD, PA, PT, OT, AT, SLP, Public Health, Nursing, Teaching, and many more). I encourage you to visit our Health and PE website ([monmouth.edu/health-and-physical-education](http://monmouth.edu/health-and-physical-education)) to learn more about our faculty, students (Alumni Stories & Current Student Stories), and Career Resources. – Dr. Chris Hirschler, Chair Health & PE



On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Monmouth University and the Department of Health and PE hosted the NJ Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) Annual Program. The keynote address was given by Melissa Opp, Deputy Director, National Commission of Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC). Specialist Professor **Kiameesha Evans** helped to bring this event to campus, and Monmouth faculty and students participated in poster presentations. Health and PE students, now graduates **Leiry Pualino ('18)** (bottom right) and **Vianey Rosas ('18)** (top right) presented their poster **"Beauty and Suffering in Guatemala: College Students' Critical Reflections"** about their experience with Dr. Hirschler and classmates' efforts to provide health and physical education to women and children in a domestic violence shelter during Spring Break 2017. Dr. **Jeremy Lackman** presented a poster titled, **"Health Education at EARTH University in Costa Rica"**.



To learn more about and join NJ SOPHE visit <http://njsophe.org/>



**NJSOPHE**  
New Jersey Society for Public Health Education

## GET FRUVED!

Specialist Professor Kiameesha Evans and Dr. Chris Hirschler secured a \$3,000 FRUVED Grant from the University of Tennessee and the USDA to support an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption among college students while also focusing on stress management and increasing physical activity. Evans, Hirschler, and two Health and PE students, now graduates, **Hope Avalone ('18)** and **Jessica Ayoubi ('18)**, collaborated with the Counseling & Psychological Services department for their December 12<sup>th</sup> De-Stress Fest. Part of the grant was used to purchase 800 ounces of fresh juice ("Immunity Booster", "Carrot Ginger", and "Green Juice") from Gourmet Dining.



# “Poco a Poco”: The Significance of Little Actions

Submitted by Elaine Banting (BS, Health Studies '18)



This spring break I traveled to Guatemala for nine days as part of the Guatemala Public Health course. I attended the trip with classmates, Dr. Chris Hirschler, Chair and Associate Professor of the Health Studies and Physical Education Department, and alum Leiry Paulino, who helped translate Spanish and brought donations. Guatemala Public Health, HE-376, includes training in class on a number of public health topics to prepare students before the trip, as well as creating a health lesson to teach at Nuevos Horizontes, a domestic violence shelter in Quetzaltenango, through articles, films, and discussion. During my short stay, our class travelled to many different cities. Through this experience I learned a big lesson about how I view myself and how little actions can create big outcomes.

Our first stop was in Chichicastenango, where we visited the city cemetery that had the most colorful headstones, but was littered with trash. We filled up garbage bags and cleaned the area as a sign of respect for those laid to rest. There was so much trash around the headstones, that I thought we would never make a dent; but the results were very clear. We each had a small job, but with all of us working together, now those who visit can admire this beautiful area.

Our next city was Quetzaltenango, also called “Xela” by the Mayan population, where we spent four days volunteering in different areas of the city. We visited different families and assisted in building bunk beds, volunteered at a dental clinic and donated much needed basic supplies, such as soap, toilet paper and bottled water to a local public hospital.

We provided Nuevos Horizontes a punching bag to practice self-defense as well as music and art supplies. The women at the shelter were thrilled to have more resources available. One woman com-

mented that she was “very grateful for being able to talk about feelings during one of the music activities as well as learning how to protect [one’s self]”. Additionally, we were able to purchase and set up water filters for five different families, which will provide 10 years of clean water. The community leader explained to us that we were planting small seeds that will grow into something big. Our efforts, though small, will create a big change in the people we help.

Our last stop before returning home was the Pacaya volcano, which consisted of a very steep hike. This was the most emotional part of my trip personally and led me to reflect a lot on myself and how I viewed different aspects of the trip. Looking at myself before the hike, I saw a 250-pound girl who just quit smoking, had no confidence in myself and marked myself as a failure for the hike. Shortly into hiking, the other students were already ahead of me as well as other hikers passing by me, and I was wheezing from the pain in my lungs. I remember breaking down into tears on a steep, stony path that was overlooking a field with a small hut, telling myself, Dr. Hirschler, and Leiry that I wasn’t going to make it. Leiry comforted me, and Dr. Hirschler was by my side and hiked with me at my pace. He told me “poco a poco”, which means little by little. Little by little, we made it to the end of the hike, where I saw the most beautiful and breath-taking view that I can’t even put into words. I cried for 15 minutes just taking it all in. Little by little, I accomplished a huge victory. I really have Dr. Hirschler to thank for helping me achieve this. Dr. Hirschler said, “Our time in Guatemala was transformative on many levels. However, for me, the highlight was Elaine ascending Pacaya Volcano. I was honored to walk, literally arm-in-arm, with her to the top. The euphoria Elaine experienced as a result of her perseverance caused me to think this accomplishment will spur many other victories in her life.”



“Poco a Poco”, our actions, though small, can make huge changes in ourselves and the people we meet.

## Milestones ~ Faculty

### Professor Kiameesha Evans (Specialist Professor, Health and Physical Education)

Prior to her arrival to Monmouth University in Fall 2016, Kiameesha spent more than 15 years in the non-profit sector, developing partnerships and educational programs in maternal/child health, HIV/AIDS, chronic disease, and environmental and social justice. She obtained the Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES) certification in 2011. Her dissertation research, nearing its conclusion, explores the social, cultural, and economic factors that influence parental decision making related to HPV vaccination among adolescent black males.



### Dr. Sasha Canan (Assistant Professor, Health and Physical Education)

Published an article titled, "Navigating Sexualization as a Sexuality Professional: Insights from Sexuality Educators in the American Journal of Sex Education. At the 2017 Annual American Public Health Association Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, Canan gave four presentations: "Sexual Satisfaction and Sexual Behavior Discrepancies in a National Sample of Heterosexual, Bisexual, and Lesbian Women in the US," "Exploring Experiences of Sexual Risk Taking, Sexual Assault and Consent in the MSM Community," "Contextual Experiences of Sexual Violence in Lesbian, Bisexual, and Heterosexual Adult U.S. Women," and "Rates of Sexual Violence and Familial Support in Lesbian, Bisexual and Heterosexual Adult Women in the US." Canan also directs the new "Sexuality Education & Attitudes Lab" (SEAL) where she currently is working with two undergraduate research assistants (pictured right): Cassidy Kaznowski (Psychology Major) and Jazzmyn Newman (Health Studies Major).



**Dr. Andrea Hope (Associate Professor, Health Studies)** is currently involved with a research team of nursing faculty at Rutgers University and the Fitness Director at the Metuchen (NJ) YMCA. Last spring, the team's pilot study was approved and sought to "explore the feasibility and acceptability of an enacted support intervention called the Health Advocacy for an Active Lifestyle program (HAAL)." HAAL enables the interdisciplinary wellness team and offers support for cancer survivors through different technological means at the YMCA. Dr. Hope has been involved in pre-recruitment activities, recruitment, eligibility, consent and implementation of the intervention at the YMCA in Metuchen. She

also received a 2018 summer faculty fellowship to continue her involvement in the HAAL project and looks forward to presenting research findings at future conferences and in journals.

Optimizing Wellness: Health Advocacy for an Active Lifestyle in Cancer Survivors (HAAL). Research Team: Musanti, R., Chao, Y. Y., Hope, A., Thomas, H & Norrell, J. (2016-present).

### Dr. Jeremy Lackman (Assistant Professor, Health and Physical Education)

Published with Chepyator-Thomson, J.R. (2017). "Reflective Voices: Understanding University Students' Experiences of Urban High School Physical Education." *Physical Educator*, 74(4): 672-700. He also presented the following: Wanderlust: Finding yourself while traveling (Monmouth Leadership Exploration and Diversity Symposium, 2018), HPETE Club: Best Practices (NJASPERD Annual Convention, 2018), Teaching Health Education in Costa Rica (NJ Society for Public Health Education (NJSOPHE), 2017) and Community Health in Costa Rica: Teaching Social Change (13th Annual Teach-In, A Call to Action: Community Members as Change Agents, 2017).



# Scholarship Week 2018

Every year during Scholarship Week, the Schools of Education, Social Work, and Nursing and Health Studies host the largest event on campus, the Interprofessional Exhibition. This year there were over 120 posters and 140 student presenters on April 19th in Anacon. In addition to poster presentations, Stuart Faunce (Health and Physical Education Teacher Education) and April Bacunawa (MSN, Nursing) represented the School of Nursing and Health Studies in a panel discussion of how different disciplines would approach the issue of suicide prevention to start the event. The event, organized by Dr. Jaime Myers (Health and Physical Education) and Dean John Henning (Education), provides an opportunity to highlight student scholarship across the board, from clinical reflections to research project findings. This year's event once again buzzed with enthusiasm and excitement.



## Welcome Dr. Greg Lonning!

Dr. Lonning, Academic Advisor, was a faculty member and Director of the Lifetime Wellness program at Luther College for 14 years. Prior to Luther he taught in the Exercise and Sports Science Department and was the Head Wrestling coach at the University of Wisconsin La-Crosse. As a Health Studies Advisor, most of Greg's day is spent meeting with HEPE majors. One of Greg's favorite parts of being a Health Studies Advisor is seeing students get excited about their major and the opportunities their degree will provide. During his leisure time he enjoys bike riding and spending time with his kids outside.



## Eta Sigma Gamma

Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG), the national health education honorary, was led by President Kristen Kennett, Vice-President Alexandra Hartman, and faculty advisor Dr. Myers last academic year. With over 30 active members, ESG strives to get the college campus involved by promoting service and health education within the surrounding community. ESG started the fall semester off by encouraging students to attend the Autism Speaks Walk located in Long Branch. Over the course of the year, students have also participated in numerous blood drives, as well as donation drives to collect materials for Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. In addition, each year ESG adopts two underprivileged families within the community through the program Operation Sleighbells. This past holiday season, current and prospective members of ESG came together to acquire everything the families had wished for, as well as raised over \$360 for Shop Rite gift cards. In February, ESG hosted a CPR/First Aid Certification course with over a dozen students attendees.



The final large philanthropic activity of the year was Relay for Life, with a strong showing from members and HEPE faculty in the OceanFirst Bank Center. ESG culminated the year inducting 30 new members on April 13th and graduating 28 seniors with green and gold honor cords at commencement. Anthony Cabrera, Justin Badamo, and Nikki Hoff will be serving in leadership roles during the 2018/2019 school year.