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Welcome, Vols!

Whether you've been at the University of Tennessee for several semesters, or are just starting your career as a Vol, welcome to the Department of Public Health's Memos newsletter! Memos exists to inform public health students of the department's many events and updates. Throughout the year, we will highlight students, faculty, programs, events, opportunities, and more! Here's to an exciting fall semester!

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Public Health Memos

Fall 2022, Volume I



Meet the Editor:

Hello everyone! My name is McKenzie Granata, and I am so excited to be your new editor! I am a first-year PhD student in the Epi concentration and while I am originally from Columbus, Ohio, I call West Virginia home.

Prior to attending UTK, I received my BS degrees in Biology and Public Health, and my MS in Biomedical Science from Marshall University. Outside of my studies, I enjoy hiking, biking, running, and pretty much anything that gets me outdoors!

I would love to hear your ideas for Memos, so please reach out to me!
Go Vols!



Introducing the New PhD Program Director, Dr. Jennifer Jabson Tree!

A brief introduction:

Originally from Oregon, Dr. Jabson Tree arrived in Knoxville in 2013, by way of Boston, to begin as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Health. Dr. Jabson Tree loves to travel, cook, dance, exercise, stand up paddle board, and host gatherings. Her research focuses on health equity for marginalized populations which involves the development and implementation of innovative, multilevel, prevention interventions that extend beyond exclusive focus on the individual, to a focus on healthcare systems, communities, and the contextual systems within which individuals exist.

She is currently involved in several exciting projects including studying and addressing structural racism and its negative impact on BIPOC health in federally qualified health systems, LGBTQ+ caregivers experiences with covid19 and quality of life, and a process evaluation of LGBTQ+ student experiences with intimate partner violence prevention programming on college campuses.



To what do you credit your success?

Dr. Jabson Tree credits her achievements to strong and extensive mentoring provided by preeminent scholars in the field of public health and health equity. She believes that high quality advising, and mentoring is essential to student growth and achievement in graduate school.

She applies this passion to Directing the PhD Program, her research, and her teaching. In her research lab (affectionately named JabsLabs by a previous cohort of doctoral students) she creates a multi-level training environment in which she provides students/trainees direct, personalized, weekly, one-on-one and group, supervision, and mentoring. In addition, as student skills become advanced, they provide one another peer-mentoring to accomplish research tasks and practice where students learn how to give and receive supervision and mentoring.

Tell us more about your research!

Dr. Jabson Tree's research, teaching, and mentoring approaches are framed by social justice (the bedrock of public health) and pedagogy of engagement. This means that in her courses and research endeavors involve teaching and training students using highly engaged, student-centered approaches, about the ways that social structures—economic stability, neighborhood and built environment, education, social and community context, and access to healthcare—cause and influence health and disease. She considers and evaluates how racism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, sexism, and cis-sexism unjustly produce and shape social determinants of health that fundamentally shape and influence health and disease.

Advice for students:

One piece of advice Dr. Jabson Tree has for graduate students is to engage deeply with the substantive course content AND pursuing enriching activities that fill you up outside the classroom. After all, she said, "work life balance" is a myth. It is never 50-50. Rather, it's all 'life' and the tension between work and other aspects of our existence constantly vacillates and is always changing. But to keep pushing ahead, we have to fill ourselves up.

Introducing our New APEx Coordinator, Peyton Prothero!

“Hi everyone! My name is Peyton Prothero, and I am the Applied Practice Experience (APEx) Coordinator here at the Department of Public Health. I graduated from this department in May 2022 with my MPH in Community Health Education. I am also a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES). I grew up near Seattle, WA, and completed my undergraduate degree in Public Health at Oregon State University.”

“Before graduate school, I worked as a health education coordinator at Washington State University where I facilitated programs on a variety of health topics to undergraduate students and oversaw a volunteer peer education program which solidified my passion for public health, education, and working with college students. I moved to Knoxville in 2020 with my partner, despite having never visited the South, and quickly fell in love with East Tennessee. When I’m not working, you can usually find me hanging out at a food truck park, drinking bubble tea, watching documentaries, or enjoying all the great parks and waterways we have in and around Knoxville.”



Introducing our New Faculty Member, Dr. Brittany Shelton!

Brittany A. Shelton, DrPH, MPH (she/her/hers) is a health disparities researcher who earned her MPH (2014) in health policy and DrPH (2022) in health policy and organization from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). While at UAB, Dr. Shelton began her research career studying chronic diseases, particularly end-stage organ disease and the need for transplantation. As a health disparities researcher, her work has examined access to both kidney and liver transplantation for people with HIV and for African American and Black individuals. Dr. Shelton’s HIV research has subsequently informed national policy, specifically the HOPE Act which permits organ donation from people with HIV for the first time in United States history.

Similarly, her research examining disparities in liver transplantation and in pediatric transplantation have resulted in modifications to the liver and kidney organ allocation systems. She intends to continue her health disparities work by examining knowledge of and barriers to organ donation among LGBTQ+ young adults and by assessing access to the kidney transplant waitlist for people with HIV. Dr. Shelton has extensive experience with big data and enjoys employing econometric methods such as cost-effectiveness, interrupted time series, regression discontinuity, and fixed effects analyses. She is excited to collaborate with more qualitatively-minded individuals.

In her free time, she enjoys reading both fiction and non-fiction, attending Lady Vols sporting events with her partner, cuddling her two cats and two dogs, and spending as much time outdoors as possible.



Get Involved with UTK's Public Health Student Association

Who we are:

The Public Health Student Association (PHSA) is a voluntary student organization for students enrolled in public health programs at the University of Tennessee. The PHSA allows public health students, both new and seasoned, to develop leadership skills, enjoy time together, and develop health-promoting initiatives for the university community and beyond.

Membership:

Membership dues are \$20.00 this semester. We ask that membership dues are sent to Treasurer Bonnie Valerio by **15 September 2022**. We encourage you to join the PHSA as this will help increase the events we can put on during the academic year.

Merchandise:

We have several options for merchandise this semester. Please have orders in by **15 September 2022**. We expect to place a second order in January of 2023.

Public Health Student Association 2022 Fall Events Calendar:

- **Month of September 2022**
 - 15th= Monthly meeting
(<https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/92793545280>)
at 5pm EST in HPR 232
 - 17th= Paddle boarding/kayaking
 - 22nd= Open house/meet and mentor
- **Month of October 2022**
 - 20th= Monthly meeting at 5pm EST in HPR 232
 - 22nd= Hike @ Ijams- feel free to bring pets/partners/families/spouses or just a friend
 - 26th= Pumpkin Painting Fundraiser
 - TBD online MPH/Distance Learning Social

2022 Executive Board:

President	Catherine Warner	cwarne14@vols.utk.edu
Vice President	Will Martinez	wmarti27@vols.utk.edu
Secretary	Meredith Horton	mhorto15@vols.utk.edu
Treasurer	Bonnie Valerio	bvalerio@utmck.edu
Philanthropist	Eritrea Negussie	enegussi@vols.utk.edu
Undergrad Student Rep	Elsa Hendrick	ehendri7@vols.utk.edu

Student Spotlight!

Karyn Smith, DVM

Meet our Spotlight Student!

Karyn Smith, DVM graduated from North Carolina State University with her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 2006 and has been a small animal veterinarian for 16 years. Prior to her veterinary career, she completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and served as a Registered Nurse for 13 years, 4 of which were with the US Navy.

Karyn is currently a first year Distance Education MPH student living in Wilmington, NC with her husband, two dogs, and one cat. In her free time, she loves to travel, swim, and spend time with family. Karyn is also a big proponent of One Health and plans to find (or create!) a unique professional opportunity to combine her experiences in human health and animal health.

Check it out!

“This past spring, while taking Epidemiology (PUBH 540) with Dr. Perion, I had the opportunity to create an infographic addressing a public health issue/concern. Since my focus is Veterinary Public Health, I chose dog bite prevention as the topic. I have noticed throughout my veterinary practice that adults are always told to supervise children with dogs, but no one teaches them about dog body language and what to look for if a dog is trying to tell you to leave it alone. In designing the infographic, I directed one page towards children and one page towards parents and included some pictures of warning-type behavior in dogs.”

“I decided to share the infographic with my state veterinary association so that other veterinarians could use it if they chose to do so. (It seemed silly to just leave it on my flash drive.) The Executive Director of the association decided to hand it out at the state fair in October, where we have an education-focused booth.”



Resources for Vols!

- Need help with writing for a course, thesis, or dissertation? Schedule an appointment with the **Judith Anderson Herbert Writing Center**.
- Looking for a space dedicated to graduate students? **Graduate Commons (Hodges Library, 131)** is a great place to meet, study, and get access to technology. Study rooms are available on a first come basis.
- Needing individual, group, or couples counseling? **The Student Counseling Center (SCC)** is a great resource! They offer in-person and telehealth options. To make your first appointment, call 865-974-2196.
- Check out **TRECS** for free Group Fitness Classes! TRECS also offers trips, clinics, and gear rental through UTOP. Check out the adventure trip calendar to see what events are coming up!