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Inspiration + Motivation

“Success comes from knowing
that you did your best to
become the best that you are
capable of becoming”
John Wooden

“You can’t always be the
strongest or the most talented
or the most gifted person in
the room, but you can be the
most competitive”
Pat Summitt

“Everything negative-
pressures, challenges- are all
an opportunity for me to rise”
Kobe Bryant

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Public Health Memos

Spring 2025, Volume II



March Madness!

We are thoroughly convinced that the
phrase “March Madness” was created by
a public health student to describe the
business of the spring semester.

Don’t believe us?

Just take a look at all that is going on the
Department of Public Health this month!

Rhythm and Resilience!

AN EVENING WITH NASHVILLE RECORDING ARTIST **SHELLY FAIRCHILD**

A Q&A SESSION AND ACOUSTIC PERFORMANCE

TUESDAY, MARCH 25
6:30 – 8:00 PM
STUDENT UNION 362B
FREE TO ATTEND!
IN PERSON & VIRTUAL
ATTENDANCE OPTIONS



Born in Mississippi, Shelly's musical upbringing brought her to Nashville, TN, where she started writing and recording at 19 years old. She has toured with Martina McBride, Keith Urban, Tim McGraw, and many more. As a songwriter, Shelly has over 100 television placements as well as having her songs recorded by multiple artists including Little Big Town, Tanya Tucker, and Ty Herndon, to name a few. Shelly is also a regular guest at The Grand Ole Opry.

After music row made it clear that "Queer" was not welcome during her time on a major label, Shelly dug in her heels and not only made a name for herself but has consistently created safe and inclusive spaces in Music City for artists of the Queer and the Queer Affirming community.



**REGISTER TO ATTEND
& SUBMIT QUESTIONS
FOR SHELLY!**



SEATING IS LIMITED!



[Register here!](#)

Professional Development Events!



Handshake Workshop

Katie Kuka

MAR 12
11 AM - 12 PM
EST



Career Deep Dive: Public Health Consulting

Courtney Kelsey

MAR 28
12-1 PM
EST



Resume Writing Workshop

Elliot Hood

APR 9
3-4 PM
EST

All events are held virtually on Zoom and are open to students!

[Register here!](#)

Alumni Panel!

ALUMNI PANEL

LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS AND CAREER
STRATEGIES FROM A VARIETY OF
PERSPECTIVES AND DISCIPLINES

MARCH 6, 7:15 PM-8:30 PM

<https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/89968790616>

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PROGRAM MANAGER
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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

NICOLETTE ROSA
PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER
NEW YORK CITY HEALTH AND HOSPITALS



[Link!](https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/89968790616)

Interested in Presenting at TPHA?

Abstracts are now **OPEN** for TPHA's 2025 Annual Conference!
TPHA will be held September 17-19 in Murfreesboro, TN
Deadline to submit is March 31st!

Interested in submitting an abstract to TPHA?

[Click here!](#)



We are Now Accepting Oral and Poster Proposals for TPHA's 2025 Annual Conference

September 17-19, 2025

Embassy Suites by Hilton, Murfreesboro, TN

Interested in Presenting at APHA?



Abstracts are now **OPEN** for APHA's Annual Conference!
 The conference will be held November 2-5, 2025, in Washington D.C.
 Interested in submitting an abstract?

[Click here!](#)



APEX in Action!

Ellen Oakes, a second-year MPH student in the Health Policy and Management concentration, invites YOU to participate in her survey assessing vaccine hesitancy on campus!

This survey is part of Ellen's APEX with The Global Immunization Action Network Team (GIANT). Housed under the California Hepatitis C Task Force, GIANT works to improve global public health outcomes by combating vaccine hesitancy through communication and education. GIANT work with the WHO and other international organizations to combat the "infodemic" and provide scientific evidence regarding vaccines. Ellen is conducting this survey on UTK's campus in an effort to address potential barriers to vaccination and to improve resources on campus.

Interested in participating?

Scan the QR code or follow the link below!



[Link!](#)

Public Health at UT Grand Challenges Summit!



The COURAGE Youth Team. L to R: Leul Negussie, MPH candidate, Laurie Meschke, Su Chen Tan, MPH candidate, and Rebeca Nieves, PhD public health student. Absent: Mindy Grimm, ICARE executive director.

At the UT Grand Challenges Summit in February 2025, the COURAGE Youth Team, led by Dr. Laurie Meschke, presented on an ecological approach to youth substance use prevention. The socioecological model encourages looking beyond the individual (i.e., youth) to activate relationships and systems to help prevent addiction. Five activities, including youth programming, student health council, teacher in-service, caregiver workshops, and Hispanic outreach, illustrated the four objectives:

- The *critical period of early adolescence* for addiction prevention
- The importance of an *ecological approach* to addiction prevention
 - The role of *youth development* in addiction prevention

• The value of *community engagement* in developing resources to promote youth development

The Grand Challenges Summit provided an excellent opportunity to network and learn alongside colleagues from across the UT system. Overall, the program addressed our state's most pressing challenges: overcoming addiction, advancing K-12 education, and strengthening rural communities. We take great pride in being part of a land-grant university dedicated to serving communities throughout Tennessee!

Faculty + Student Spotlight!

Dr. Laurie Meschke and Tyler Melton



L to R: Enilda Romero-Hall of UTK, Lisa Ragan of TDMHSAS, Chris Sneed of UT Extension, Laurie Meschke of UTK, and Tyler Melton of UTHSC & Public Health PhD student

In November 2024, an interdisciplinary team led by Public Health was selected as one of three semi-finalists in the Grand Challenges competition with a focus on addiction. To decrease stigma associated with addiction treatment and recovery, the team focused on three actions:

- 1) Increase certified PRS professionals by developing 2 hybrid trainings (certified peer recovery support (CPRS) and certified young adult peer support specialist (CYAPSS)) -- most content will be delivered digitally on demand and the remainder will be a synchronous Zoom session.
- 2) Increase employment for women in recovery by assessing Extension's Skill Up applicants to determine how Skill Up can best support people in all stages of recovery.
- 3) To reduce addiction-related stigma of pharmacists to increase the distribution of medication for opioid use disorder and Naloxone distribution and improve communication with people in recovery, a pharmacy mentoring program will be delivered statewide.

These proposed efforts would have been accomplished through collaborations between UT and the external partners. The team continues to pursue other sources of funding to make these actions a reality for the state of Tennessee.