

## this issue

### Special Congratulations

to Dr. Julie St. John! p.1-2

### CCHD Welcomes a New Affiliated Faculty

Member p.2

### CCHD Welcomes New Practicum Student p.2

### Local Cancer Survivors Benefit from New Self- Management Program p.3

### Call for Applications Released for 2013 Health Summit p.3

### CCHD Staff Member Interviewed by Local Media Outlet p.4



Photo: The St. John family for Easter 2013

## Special Congratulations to Dr. Julie St. John!

With Julie St. John's recent graduation and receipt of the Doctor of Public Health degree, the Center would like to extend a special congratulation to her and to highlight the success of one of our first graduate assistants (GA).

Julie first came to the School of Rural Public Health (SRPH) in August 2002 as a master's student. Her interests, goals, and work experiences have continuously drawn her to the world of public health. Prior to coming to SRPH, Julie received a Master of Arts in cross-cultural communications (Missiology) from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (2001) and a Bachelor of Arts in biology from Baylor University (1999). Additionally, while at SRPH, she completed a summer public health internship with the Pan American Health Organization in the Dominican Republic. She graduated with a Master of Public Health in epidemiology from SRPH in December 2003—

where she worked with CCHD as a GA from September 2002 through December 2003. She continued working with CCHD as a program coordinator in South Texas on a number of projects beginning in January 2004 and, in January 2006, became the South Texas Regional Director for CCHD. Julie's scope of work has included grant-writing, health status assessments, strategic and operational planning, continuums of care; program evaluation, facilitating community partnerships, managing and participating in research projects, *promotora* (community health worker) trainings, and program development in South Texas and other parts of the state. In 2009, Julie became a Texas Department of State Health Services certified *Promotora*/Community Health Worker Instructor, and she has worked with, supervised, and trained CHWs/*Promotores* for the past 11 years. Currently, she is also the Principal Investigator on "ÉPICO: Education to Promote Improved

Continued on page 2...



The Center for Community Health Development is a member of the Prevention Research Centers Program.

This newsletter was supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 1U48 DP001924 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The findings and conclusions in this newsletter are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Cancer Outcomes,” which is funded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas. Her professional goals include working with diverse populations to improve health status and quality of life through using a community health development and partnership approach with community health workers.

Having grown up in the Rio Grande Valley, Julie feels a special bond to underserved populations and, over the years, had a desire to continue studying about health promotion, health disparities and community health development. Her particular interests include community health development and social determinants of health—particularly in cross-cultural settings, which was nurtured by her work with CCHD in developing community partnerships through utilizing *promotores* who work together to address particular health issues facing their communities in light of social and cultural needs, values, and practices. As a result, in the fall of 2009, Julie began her doctorate in public health at the University of Texas School of Public Health, Brownsville regional campus. Julie completed her degree program in May 2013, which included defending her dissertation, utilizing the EPICO project, entitled: “Psychosocial determinants of *Promotores* and selected outcomes for a cancer education intervention implemented in South Texas *colonias*.” Having completed her dissertation, Julie wants to continue to work with community health development and health promotion in multi-cultural and underserved populations—focusing on community based participatory research and community health workers.

Julie is married to Mathew St. John, and they currently have seven sons: Brady (17), Christopher (15), Kyle (11), Josiah (6 ½), Joah (5), Malachi (4), and Thad (2). Julie and Mathew are expecting child number eight in August 2013.

## CCHD Welcomes New Affiliated Faculty Member



Scott Robinson, Ph.D., currently serves as Associate Professor at The Texas A&M Bush School of Government and Public Service, however, he will soon be a faculty member at The University of Oklahoma. This out of state relationship with Dr. Robinson may present new opportunities in addition to increasing the Center's presence nationally. Dr. Robinson's research focuses on the

management and politics of public agencies and the dynamics of public policy, with particular attention to emergency management and administrative networking. He has examined interorganizational network relationships related to disaster management and has contributed to design changes of the most recent Brazos Valley Interorganizational Network survey. Dr. Robinson's work has been published in many journals and he currently serves on the editorial board of the *Policy Studies Journal*. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Scott Robinson!

## CCHD Welcomes New Practicum Student



Originally from the mountainous region of Nepal, Mr. Subash Thapa has been in United States for almost seven years pursuing his higher education. After getting his undergraduate degree in biology from the University of Texas at Arlington, he joined the Texas A&M School of Rural Public Health in the fall of 2012 for graduate studies in epidemiology. Mr. Thapa has passion for epidemiology, particularly infectious

disease epidemiology, which dates back to his days as a health assistant student in Nepal. He believes that an uphill challenge still exists in preventing infectious diseases and associated mortalities, especially in many developing and underdeveloped nations and that is where he plans to devote his effort and knowledge upon graduation. Apart from studies, Mr. Thapa likes to keep up with cricket and world news.

## Local Cancer Survivors Benefit from New Self-Management Program

In addition to expanded treatment options in our community, there is a definite need for enhanced support services for cancer patients and their families. Even when cured, cancer survivors may face significant changes in their lives due to lasting side effects of radiation or chemotherapy treatments. Coming to terms with a “new normal” is something all cancer survivors must face, and a new community program is designed to do just that.

*Cancer Thriving and Surviving* is a chronic disease self-management program (delivered in a group setting by certified trainers from CTxCARES at the School of Rural Public Health. The program has been recently completed by 15 Brazos Valley residents. While most participants had been cancer survivors for years, in some instances *Cancer Thriving and Surviving* represented the first opportunity to discuss the late-effects of cancer with others who could personally relate to what they were experiencing.

In addition to the support cancer survivors received from each other, course leaders Janet Helduser and Cindy Quinn taught evidence-based self-management skills to the group. Though the course was only six weeks in length, Janet and Cindy received an overwhelming response that participants were already feeling better in their communicating about cancer, solving daily problems, and creating action plans to help prioritize what is most important in their lives. For more information on other local cancer prevention and control activities, see the CTxCARES website (<http://www.ctxcares.com/>).



## Call for Applications Released for Poster Presentation and Competition at the 2013 Health Summit



The Center for Community Health Development (CCHD) and the Brazos Valley Health Partnership will host “A Snapshot of our Communities: The 2013 RHP 17 Regional Health Summit” from 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m on Thursday, September 12 at the College Station Hilton.

In addition to releasing the findings of the RHP 17 Regional Health Assessment, we would like to highlight how the results from the 2002, 2006, and 2010 Brazos Valley Health Assessments have been used as the basis for improving health across the Brazos Valley. To showcase these efforts, we are holding a Poster Presentation and Competition to present local and regional projects and initiatives developed in response to the findings from previous health assessments.

The poster presentation theme, “A Community Perspective of Health,” invites you to present how you used the results of any of the previous health assessments to successfully make an impact on community health. The Call for Applications and Poster Presentation Applications are available at [www.cchd.us](http://www.cchd.us). **All applications are due by 5 pm on July 18, 2013.** If you would like more information about the Poster Presentation and Competition, please email [wrgarney@srph.tamhsc.edu](mailto:wrgarney@srph.tamhsc.edu).





1266 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843-1266

Phone: (979) 458-0937 | Fax (979) 862-8371  
E-mail: cchd@srph.tamhsc.edu

## CCHD Executive Committee

Principal Investigator  
**Kenneth R. McLeroy, Ph.D.**

Co-Principal Investigator  
**James N. Burdine, Dr.P.H.**

Director  
**Monica L. Wendel, Dr.P.H., M.A.**

Deputy Director and Brazos Valley  
Regional Director  
**Angie Alaniz, B.A.**

Budget Manager  
**Tiffany Bond**

Center Coordinator  
**Catherine Catanach, B.A.**

Director of Special Projects  
**Kelly Drake, M.P.H.**

Brazos Valley Regional Manager  
**Whitney Garney, M.P.H.**

Project Specialist  
**Katharine Nimmons, M.P.H.**

South Texas Regional Director  
**Julie St. John, M.P.H., M.A.**

Director of Communication & Training  
**Christopher Beaudoin, Ph.D.**

Co-Directors of Evaluation  
**Corliss Outley, Ph.D., M.S.**  
**Heather Clark, M.S.P.H.**

Director, TxHAN, TxBNOPREN and  
Principal Investigator, Core  
Project-Rural Food Environment  
**Joseph R. Sharkey, Ph.D., M.P.H.,  
R.D.**

Director, CTxCARES, Falls Prevention  
and FETA  
**Marcia Ory, Ph.D., M.P.H.**

Director, Southwest Rural Health  
Research Center  
**Jane Bolin, Ph.D., J.D., R.N.**

Director, Transdisciplinary Center for  
Health Equity Research  
**E. Lisako J. McKyer, Ph.D, M.P.H.**

Non-Profit Org  
US Postage Paid  
Permit #215  
College Station,  
TX 77842



## CCHD Staff Member Interviewed by Local Media Outlet



Ms. Whitney Garney, the Brazos Valley Regional Manager at CCHD, was recently interviewed by the local television station, ABC 40 KRHD, regarding the recently published manuscript, "Increasing Access to Care for Brazos Valley, Texas: A Rural Community of Solution," written by Ms. Garney, Ms. Kelly Drake, Dr. Monica Wendel, Dr. Kenneth McLeroy, Ms. Heather Clark and Hon. Byron Ryder. The

interview highlighted the development of a regional community of solution, the Brazos Valley Health Partnership, and more localized communities of solutions—the County Health Resource Commissions in Burleson, Grimes, Leon, and Madison Counties—as well as their achievements related to increasing access to care within the Brazos Valley.