

The Center for Community Health Development

Celebrating 10 years of Accomplishments

MARCH 2011



Graduate assistants, Aditya Kashyap, Robert Shaw, Arin Robertson, Tya Arthur, Betsy Chapa, and Pattie Billingsley, before graduation, May 2010.

The Future of Public Health: Our Students

Since the Center for Community Health Development (CCHD) was founded in 2001, a total of 106 students have engaged in field-based training as graduate research assistants, project staff, interns, and practicum students. The graduate assistantships and practicum opportunities provided through CCHD have allowed students to participate in the community development and organizational processes and to gain hands-on experience in conducting community-based participatory research. Not only have our students impacted research, they have also made a difference in the communities in which they worked. One community member described his experience with graduate students by saying, "I have had the opportunity to work with many graduate assistants who helped assess the health needs of the Brazos Valley, implement health resource centers to meet those needs and evaluate the effectiveness of those resource centers. The energy of these graduate students and desire to improve the health status of our rural counties has significantly impacted the success of the Brazos Valley Health Partnership."

The experience and skills gained through working with CCHD have led our students to professional positions in a variety of settings. Several of our students have chosen to further their education through medical or dental school and others have enrolled in public health doctoral programs, while others have gone on to work for physicians, hospitals, state and local health departments, and the military. Some of our students are leading non-profit organizations as executive directors, and others are working for organizations like the Peace Corps, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We have also been fortunate enough to have kept three of our students as full-time staff members.

For more information regarding our student training opportunities, contact the Center for Community Health Development at cchd@srph.tamhsc.edu.

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IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"My educational background and experience from CCHD have shaped me to develop programs in third world countries to build their health programs in rural counties/provinces throughout the Pacific. All in all, the work the Center is doing aligned with the Navy approach for planning and conducting humanitarian civic assistance projects." — *Coleman C. Chandler, Class of 2003, U.S. Navy*



Jay Jezierski, Coleman Chandler, and Sanu Somachandran (2003), the first group of students with CCHD to graduate

"Without having the experience I did at CCHD, I know I would not be where I am today. While at CCHD, I helped coordinate multiple projects that required attention to detail and constant communication with members of my team and the community. With this experience... I have been able to take on many new responsibilities in my job. I felt very prepared to enter the workforce with the skills and opportunities that CCHD provided me." — *Candice Collie, Class of 2008, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center*



Lindsay Shea (2010), Christina Ly (2011), and Sydney Dickerson (2012) assist participants at the 2010 Brazos Valley Health Summit

"CCHD provided me with a solid foundation and marketable skills when looking for a job after graduation. Having the opportunity to work with large datasets and surveys, attend community meetings, and contribute to professional reports complimented the work I did in the classroom and allowed me to compete with more experienced applicants for the same jobs. I am using the knowledge I gained from my experiences at CCHD in my new job where I will be helping plan and implement an extended tobacco policy in Travis County." — *Lindsay Shea, Class of 2010, Travis County Health Department*



Rachel Kostecka (2007) works with a community member to complete her Medication Assistance Program paperwork.

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