

CAAS MPH NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2022

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1



Table of Contents

A Letter from the Director
1-2

Faculty Spotlight
3

New Staff Member
4

Welcome New Students
5

Public Health Nutrition in the News
6-7

Upcoming Events
8

Social Media
9



College of Agriculture & Applied Sciences
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A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

OCTOBER 2022
VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

Hello,

I hope you're all finding time to enjoy this beautiful fall weather. It's always an exciting time of year for our program as we welcome new students and celebrate the new career opportunities of our recent graduates. This fall we also celebrate that our program is now considered an applicant for accreditation by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)! Over the next few years, we will work diligently to align our curriculum and program requirements with CEPH criteria and competencies. Through this process, we will seek valuable input from our students and stakeholders to help ensure that our graduates are entering the workforce with the skills and expertise that meet the diverse and ever-changing needs of public health organizations across the country and worldwide. We hope to engage with each of you during this process. Your insights will be invaluable as we move forward with accreditation.

We are incredibly pleased to have our largest incoming cohort of MPH students for the 2022-2023 academic year! We have 23 students who started the CAAS MPH program this fall with several more planning to start in spring of 2023. With increased growth of students, comes an increased need for faculty and staff.

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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We are thrilled to have welcomed Dr. Abiodun Atoloye and Megan Tassinari to our team of faculty and staff this fall! You can read more about each of them in this issue of the MPH newsletter. We are also excited to share some of our program highlights and current events in this issue. Thank you all for taking the time to read our newsletter. If you have any questions about the CAAS MPH program, please feel free to reach out to me anytime.

Take care,

Mateja R. Savoie Roskos PhD, MPH, RD, FAND
Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Student Services
MPH Program Director; Associate Professor
College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

OCTOBER 2022
VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1



Abiodun Atoloye, Ph.D., cPHN

Abiodun is an Assistant Professor of Nutrition at Utah State University. She will be teaching NDFS 6550, Public Health Policy and Advocacy, beginning in Spring 2023.

Her public health interests include environment-related diet disparities, food safety, food security, and racial equity promotion in food systems.

Her research seeks to mitigate food insecurity and dietary-related/nutrition disparities as a lever for improving health outcomes by identifying effective approaches that will bring together diverse stakeholders, including residents to improve food access, nutrition- and health-related outcomes among members of low-resource individuals and underserved populations. Her current research addresses equitable food access through two areas: 1) enabling food access and security in a changing community food system and 2) mitigating food borne illness and malnutrition risk by working to understand factors that conflict with optimal food safety practices among mothers of under-five children.

Abiodun's advice to current MPH students:
"You are in the big picture of healthcare. With patience and diligence in your study, you can do important things that would bring changes throughout the world."



NEW STAFF MEMBER

OCTOBER 2022
VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

Megan Tassinari, MPH

Megan Tassinari is the new MPH Program Assistant for the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences. She will be assisting with program coordination, accreditation, program evaluation, recruitment, and any other projects she can be involved in.



Megan was born and raised near Sacramento, California, but is partial to the high desert, snow, and Logan Canyon. She loves camping, hiking, floating rivers, and snowshoeing.

She moved to Logan, Utah in August of 2016 to start her B.S. in Health Education and Promotion at Utah State University, graduating in May of 2020. She then went on to complete her Master of Public Health in Health Education and Promotion at USU in August 2022, and is ecstatic to continue being part of the Aggie family! Megan spent two years teaching undergraduate courses during her MPH and has a love of working in higher education. She is passionate about public health, accessibility of education, and health literacy. She can't wait to get involved with this program!

Megan can be found in room 207 of the Nutrition and Food Sciences building, and can also be reached by email at megan.s.tassinari@gmail.com or by phone at 916-521-0907. She would love to hear from you if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas for the program.

WELCOME NEW STUDENTS!

OCTOBER 2022
VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

Welcome to our new students! Each year we welcome a diverse cohort of students with various educational and professional backgrounds. This year the MPH program accepted the largest cohort of 16 new nutrition students and 7 veterinary public health students, including:

Public Health Nutrition

- Kayla Lane
- Kess Stocker
- Madi Gunter
- Charmaine Larson
- Amria Farnsworth
- Kenny Searle
- Madalyn Creer
- Mikaela Blake
- And many others!

Veterinary Public Health

- Taylor McElreath
- Ariel Nelson, DVM
- And many others!



PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION IN THE NEWS

OCTOBER 2022

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

For the first time in over fifty years, the White House held a Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health on September 28th, 2022. The only other national food and nutrition conference occurred in 1969 and resulted in the National School Lunch Program, the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), as well as requirements for standardized food labels. The goal of this year's conference was to catalyze strong collaboration between the public and private sectors to help reduce food insecurity and diet-related diseases like diabetes, obesity, and hypertension. Let us hope this year's conference is as fruitful as the one held in 1969.

The Conference on Food, Nutrition, and Health introduced a national strategy to end hunger and increase healthy eating and physical activity by 2030. The national strategy has five pillars including 1) Improve food access and affordability, 2) Integrate nutrition and health, 3) Empower consumers to make and have access to healthy choices, 4) Support physical activity for all, and 5) Enhance nutrition and food security research. The strategy aims to address the effect that hunger, diet, and physical activity have on the health of our nation, recognizing the disproportionate burden of food insecurity and diet related diseases on many ethnic and racial minorities.



PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION IN THE NEWS

OCTOBER 2022

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

While many of the steps outlined in the strategy, including expanding nutrition assistance programs and new healthcare programs, would require unlikely bipartisan support, many public-private partnerships are already working to meet the goals. Stakeholders from more than 100 organizations from the private sector, philanthropy, academia, research, advocacy, and healthcare have committed over \$8 billion to improve the health of nation. These partnerships are developing multi-sector strategies that will address both the root causes and symptoms of hunger and diet-related diseases.

As the late Congressman John Lewis (D-Ga.) once stated, “The hungry cannot wait. Talk is fine. Discussion is fine. But we must respond.” This is a pivotal and exciting time to work in the field of public health nutrition. It is time to get to work. For more information on the conference, including access to the recorded sessions visit this [link](#).



Casey Coombs, MS, RD, CD
Prof Practice Asst Professor
Nutrition, Dietetics and Food Sciences

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 2022
VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1



See info on this event [here](#).



See info on this event [here](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA

OCTOBER 2022

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 1

Be the first to hear about everything public health related by following our social media handles! This is a great way to stay up to date on program changes, accreditation updates, public health events, job openings, project/internship opportunities, and more!



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