

# Cal State Fullerton®

Fall 2024

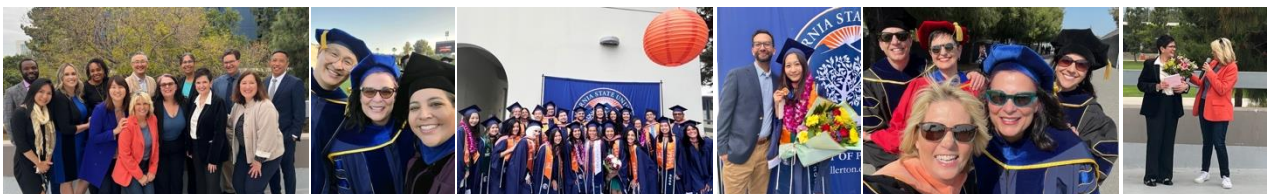
Dear Public Health Friends:

Welcome to a new academic year at CSUF!

Last year was an exciting year—our campus and department have been undergoing much change. We are happy to welcome **President Ronald Rochon** to our campus and **Dean Celestina Barbosa-Leiker** to the College of Health and Human Development. We also welcome new faculty member, **Jason Smith**, who brings expertise in Public Health and Climate Law to our department. In our shared department offices, we welcome a new Kinesiology Department Coordinator, **Alan Garduno**, along with a new cohort of student assistants. In addition, we hired two full-time staff who are supporting faculty grants, **Theresa Do**, Program Coordinator for the NAARE Program and **Kristal Ly**, Program Manager for the PATH Academy.

I am excited to announce another big change within our department. We have revised our Master of Public Health (MPH) program so that it better meets the needs of our students, the workforce and our accrediting body. Beginning Fall 2025, all MPH students will complete the first year Titan MPH experience, an innovative and applied suite of courses that integrates the Council on Education for Public Health foundational competencies. This singular curriculum includes coursework in evidence-based approaches to public health, public health and health care systems, planning and management to promote health, policy in public health, communications and systems thinking. During their second-year, students will receive in-depth training in one of 3 concentrations: community health promotion, epidemiology, and environmental and occupational health and safety. I am so proud of our faculty who have worked so diligently over the past two years to design a program that transforms the way we teach and learn public health. It is exciting and energizing to think in new ways, and we cannot wait to implement the changes. The priority application deadline for our next cohort of MPH students is **December 15th**. We are hosting a Zoom Information Session on **October 24, 2024**. Email [mphinfo@fullerton.edu](mailto:mphinfo@fullerton.edu) to register.

We celebrate our faculty who have received tenure and promotions! **Dr. Phillip Gedalanga** and **Dr. Bo Young Park** were promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, and **Dr. Maria Koleilat** was promoted to full professor. **Dr. Danny Kim** was selected as the Safety Professional of the Year award by the Orange County chapter of American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP), and **Dr. Tabashir Nobari** received the Outstanding Teaching Award for the College of Health and Human Development. Finally, our MPH alum, **Victoria van Twist**, received the Jeffrey L. Fortuna Outstanding Lecturer Award. We congratulate these outstanding colleagues!



Likewise, we celebrate our students and their recent awards. **Bethany Nguyen** received the Outstanding Public Health Undergraduate Award. **Megan Gray** received the Iran Navaie Community Service Scholarship. **Citlaly Corrales** received the C. Jessie Jones Lifespan Wellness Fellowship. **Jorge Rodriguez** received the Outstanding Public Health Graduate Student Award. **Diana Aguilar Cruz** received the Walter R. Duhn Public Health Community Engagement Graduate Scholarship. **Ashley Meneses** received the Marie Kalmantis Memorial Graduate Scholarship. **Eric Hang** received the Kathryn T. McCarty Scholarship. **Anais Ortiz** received the Public Health Department Service Award. And **Lynette de Los Angeles** was selected as our commencement speaker. Finally, three of our public health students, **Erik Lopez, Danielle Mecano, and Jared Luis-Ortiz**, were selected to participate in the NIH-funded Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Training Program (MHRT; **PI Dr. Marcelo Tolmasky**). Our MHRT Scholars spent 10 weeks in a summer research training program in Chiang Mai Thailand with our colleagues at the Department of Community Medicine at Chiang Mai University, where they designed and implemented research on particulate matter (PM) 2.5 and public health. We are proud of our students!

Our faculty continue to be research active. In the last academic year, Public Health faculty brought in **\$4,962,458 across 12 new and continuing awards**. Current training grants that support our students include:

- MSTEM-STAR: Medicine + STEM Training in Aging Research (PI, **Dr. Jennifer Piazza**)
- NAARE: Neurocognitive Aging & Analytics Research Education (PI, **Dr. Archana McEligot**)
- PATH Academy: Professions Advancing and Transforming Health (PI, **Dr. Alice Lee**)

**MSTEM STAR** prepares students to pursue advanced degrees in MSTEM aging fields through a multidimensional aging science program, including structured research experiences, aging-science curriculum, and support and engagement activities. **NAARE** accelerates student success through cultivating deep interest in biomedical fields and fostering an engaged, supportive community. **PATH Academy** trains and supports students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, in their pursuit of health-related careers, entailing multiple student programs, many of which include mentorship and partnerships with community organizations. Each of these programs provides opportunities and value to our students.

Our college has a long history of valuing service to our local community. This past year, our Public Health students provided a total of 51,120 hours of internship service to our local communities, providing a value of **\$817,920** (a low estimate calculated at minimum wage).

It was truly an honor to serve as Distinguished Faculty Marshal at our Commencement in May. What an absolute joy to return from sabbatical and share “the best day of the year” with our students, faculty, and staff! I remain more grateful that I can express to work with the colleagues and students here at CSUF.

Wishing you a productive and rewarding year!

All the best of health,

*Michele Wood*

Professor and Chair  
CSUF Department of Public Health

