

SUMMER 2018

**WE HAVE A NEW NAME!**

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

# SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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**CONGRATULATIONS  
CLASS OF 2018!**



[HTTP://CAMPAIGN.SDSU.EDU/PUBLICHEALTH](http://campaign.sdsu.edu/publichealth)

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## The Future of Public Health

On Tuesday, March 20, we hosted a panel discussing the “Future of Public Health” as part of the 2018 Spring Speaker Series. The keynote given by Dr. Laura Magaña, President and CEO of ASPPH, addressed the public health challenges and opportunities nationally. Among her key messages were the importance of public health advocacy; staying alert to emerging issues (e.g. gun violence, drugs, suicide); and minding the health disparities among and within countries.

Other presenters and panelist included: Mr. Nick Macchione, Director of the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency; Dean Ayman El-Mohandes, CUNY School of Public Health; Dean Perry Halkitis, Rutgers School of Public Health; Dean Dean Smith, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center School of Public Health; Dr. Brad Pollock, Director, University of California, Davis MPH Program; and Dr. Hala Madanat, Director, San Diego State University, School of Public Health.



The panel touched on topics such as childhood obesity, health expenditures, and social determinants of health. Advocacy was discussed as a key element in addressing the public health issues brought up. “This a call to action...public health people need to be face-to-face with the community,” said Dean Halkitis. “We are advocates for the health of this nation and we need to take the public health ethic and mission out to our communities and across the board,” added Dean El-Mohandes. “You cannot do public health without advocacy,” said Dr. Madanat. “I believe that the future [of public health] is what we do today...we need to start with a vision,” said Dr. Magaña.

“How do we as public health professionals get a seat at the table that enables us to address these non-traditional public health problems that were brought up?” was the last question asked for the evening. Mr. Nick Machione shared his response and ended the event on an inspiring note saying, “it’s not getting a seat at the table...its setting up the table...setting up a table of conversation...it's getting involved...a public that’s engaged, is a public that is educated and aware and has the voice...[public health] is a social movement.”

For a complete recording, visit <https://publichealth.sdsu.edu/blog/2018/03/01/speaker-series2018/> and for full 2018 Spring Speaker Series event recordings.

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## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



Eunha Hoh, PhD, MSES  
Professor-Environmental Health

*Dr. Eunha Hoh’s research interests focus on the investigation of diverse environmental pollutants in the environment and their impact on human health. Her current research projects focus on ocean and human health and environmental exposure to tobacco smoke residue (third hand smoke) and tobacco product waste. Dr. Hoh developed a non-targeted analytical approach for detection of a broad range of organic chemicals in fish oil and marine mammal blubber samples using novel instrumentation.*



Susan M. Kiene, PhD, MPH  
Professor-Global Health  
Epidemiology and Biostatistics

*Dr. Kiene focuses on HIV prevention, maternal and child health, and mHealth. With strong collaborations with faculty at the Makerere University School of Public Health and public health facilities in rural Uganda as well as with researchers at the Human Sciences Research Council in Cape Town, Dr. Kiene’s develops and tests sustainable community-based public health interventions implemented at individual, group, and community levels. One of her current research projects is based in Uganda, testing an intervention to improve linkage to HIV care and treatment for people with new HIV diagnoses. She was this year’s recipient of the SDSU President’s Leadership Fund Faculty Excellence Award.*

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS



Passionate about public health Vanessa wanted to be part of that effort to enact change within the healthcare system and improve quality of care, while also reducing cost and expanding access to care for populations. After researching many universities Vanessa chose SDSU GSPH because not only did the program align with her career path, but she was also impressed with its faculty and alumni milestones. In her first year at SDSU she has had the opportunity of learning from an intelligent group of professors, who have not only expanded her level of knowledge but have provided her with the skills to be chosen as a qualified intern at the Institute of Public Health.

— *Vanessa Lewis, 1st Year*  
*MPH, Health Management and Policy*



Shalimar Boulos is a second-year MSW/MPH student. Passionate about sexual freedom and advocacy, Shalimar was searching for a way to make a difference in the sexual health realm. She found the MSW/MPH program through a wayward e-mail and knew it was the program for her. Shalimar strives to use her administrative powers for advocacy good, and to shine a light on marginalized populations within the sexual health realm. She utilizes outreach and information as a way to improve health outcomes and safety for these populations.

— *Shalimar, 2nd Year*  
*Master of Social Work & Master of Public Health*



LIVE WELL  
SAN DIEGO

## GSPH HONORED WITH LIVE WELL SAN DIEGO PUBLIC HEALTH CHAMPION AWARD

San Diego State University's School of Public Health was recognized for its research and partnership with communities and public health systems across San Diego County as a "Live Well San Diego Public Health Champion." The GSPH received the Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Director Award and was accepted on behalf of the school by Dr. Madanat and SDSU President Sally Roush



*"The award is a recognition of our commitment to addressing the community's needs through training underrepresented and first-generation college students, promoting community-based research and translating academic knowledge into practice in partnership with health and social agencies and entire communities."*

- Dr. Madanat

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

## **Melissa Ta, MPH | Emergency Planning Coordinator at San Francisco Department of Public Health**

Melissa Ta graduated from SDSU's MPH Environmental Health program in 2012. Important to her in the selection of her program, was reputation and program design. SDSU GSPH offered five various tracks within public health where she could focus on her interests. The MPH curriculum at SDSU provided Ms. Ta a well-rounded exposure of all public health fields while fine-tuning environmental health topics and also allowing opportunities to invest in various electives. She enjoyed the good balance of lab, research, academia and field work.

Ms. Ta under the Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response Branch of the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) works on emergency planning, logistics support, community volunteer management, and emergency communications. This includes inventory management, alert notifications, equipment maintenance, lead monthly drills, and serve as a liaison to other branches. Additionally her work encompasses training for all various communication and emergency positions staff would be assigned to if a public health emergency were to occur. One of her first projects was assisting the department to become accredited through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). Although her work is primarily within the department, her team also works with other organizations to collaborate on plans and participates in city-wide emergency planned events. In her role at SFDPH, Ms. Ta enjoys being able to work with various colleagues within different branches. Important to her while at SDSU and her advice to current MPH students is the importance of building relationships and getting involved with activities or events because building relationships not only with professors but with colleagues can be beneficial in the professional world. "Gaining that knowledge and skillset from different relationships and perspectives [from colleagues] was rewarding," said Ms. Ta.



## **Dr. Richard F Armenta | Assistant Professor, Kinesiology California State University, San Marcos College of Education, Health and Human Services**



Dr. Richard Armenta graduated from the San Diego State University-UC San Diego Joint Doctoral program in 2015. He obtained an MPH/MA dual degree focused in Epidemiology and Latin American Studies and subsequently obtained his PhD in Epidemiology. Since August 2017, Dr. Armenta has been Assistant Professor at the California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) in the Department of Kinesiology focusing on Health Science/Public Health.

Dr. Armenta's research focuses on addressing health disparities in Hispanic and Native American communities, which includes HIV and Hepatitis C research and looking at the disparities of infection as well as care and care-seeking. Dr. Armenta's most current research involves looking at overweight and obesity among the Hispanic and Native American communities.

In his current role, Dr. Armenta enjoys teaching, mentoring, and working with students knowing he is part of a team of educators that fosters the next generation of public health researchers. Learning from students and their perspectives is and has been a rewarding experience for him. Separate from the professor-student relationship but very related, Dr. Armenta enjoys working with community members and working with different communities to address the issues that communities face. What SDSU instilled in him and what has been valuable to him throughout his education and career has been the ability to look at health issues and problems through a multidisciplinary lens and understanding not only the individual factors that influence health but as well as cultural and environmental factors. His academic career at SDSU and UCSD exposed him to students, researchers, and faculty members that address these issues from multiple different angles and as a result has given him a well-rounded perspective in conducting his own research and working communities. The advice he always gives to students and others is, "be open to new opportunities and to challenging yourself...not only is there an opportunity to learn about others but an opportunity to learn about yourself...challenging and learning about yourself is key to be best prepared to take on that next level in your education and/or career."