

# Health Impact

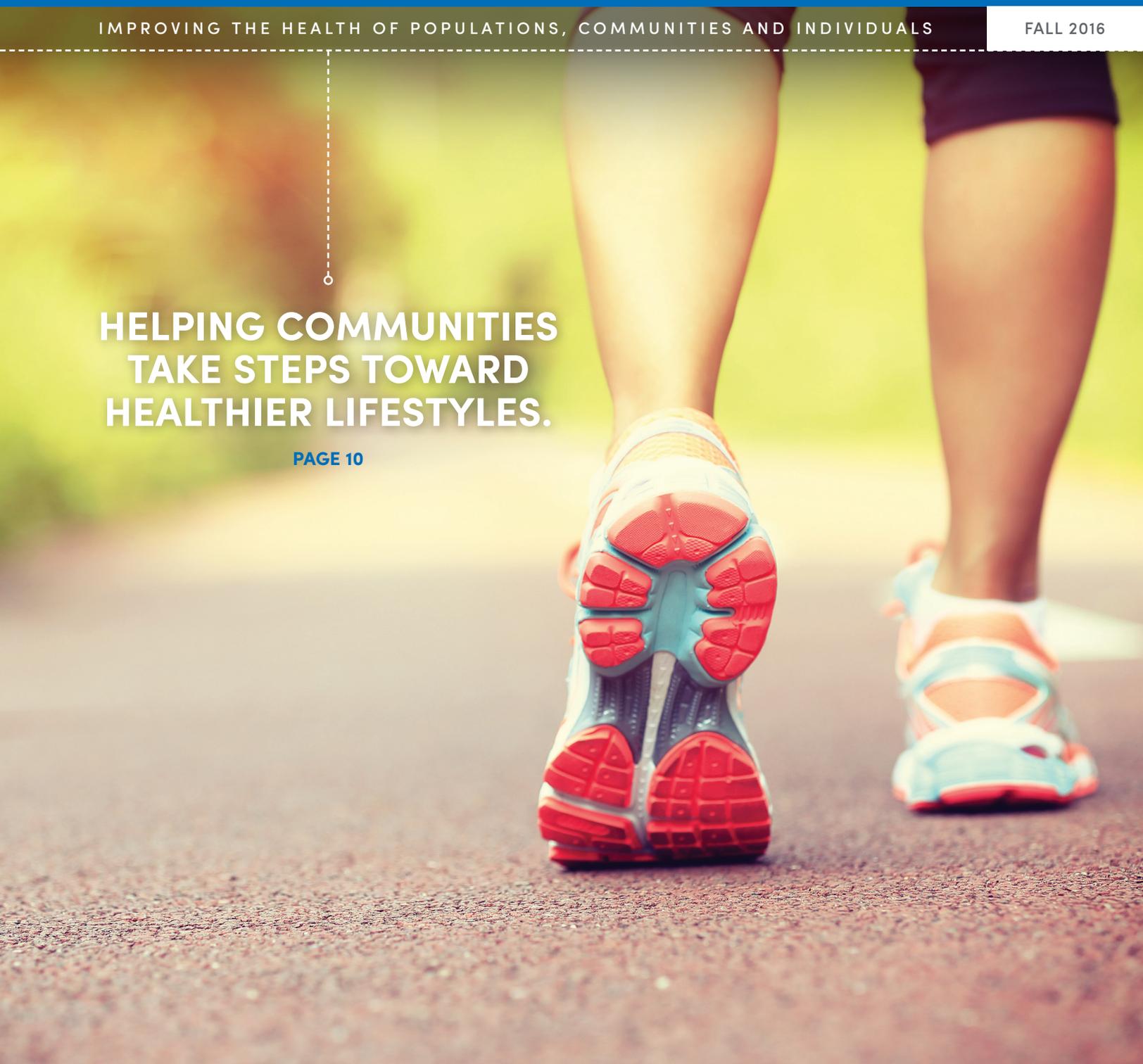
SPHHP.BUFFALO.EDU

IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF POPULATIONS, COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS

FALL 2016

HELPING COMMUNITIES  
TAKE STEPS TOWARD  
HEALTHIER LIFESTYLES.

PAGE 10



# University Embraces Our New Brand

You may have noticed the new look of our school's Health Impact Magazine? The change is part of the University at Buffalo's new overarching branding initiative; a process that included in-depth research to comprehensively answer, "Who and what is the University at Buffalo?" We found our brand is made up of key attributes. Across the campus and in many places you will begin to see "Here is how..." as a way to tell our story.



The University at Buffalo is tenacious, ambitious and inclusive. We have global perspective and we're big thinkers and doers. With the launch of our identity and brand strategy, we are able to tell our story to the world in a more compelling and cohesive way.

As New York State's most comprehensive public research university, we offer major opportunities for success in life, as well as learning. Our integration of disciplines, culture of inclusion of people and ideas, and commitment to big thinking helps to transform our students and lead to major discoveries and solutions for our communities and the world.

In the coming months, our school will unveil a rebranded website, bringing visitors dynamic information delivered in a way to experience all the amazing things we're doing right here in Buffalo.

We cannot do all we do to educate our students, provide opportunities for discovery and continue to improve the health of populations, communities and individuals locally and globally without your support. In this and future issues of Health Impact, you will learn first-hand "Here is how" we are doing this.

Until next time, have a wonderful autumn!

Jean Wactawski-Wende  
Dean, UB School of Public Health and Health Professions



Susan E. Bennett (at left) receiving her award.

## Commitment to Multiple Sclerosis Care Recognized with Lifetime Achievement Award

Susan E. Bennett, EdD, clinical professor of rehabilitation science, has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Consortium of Multiple Sclerosis Centers (CMSC). The award—presented at the organization's annual meeting in National Harbor, Maryland—recognizes an individual whose decades-long commitment has driven significant advances in the care of people with MS. Not only is this award a testament to Susan's remarkable accomplishments, but according to June Halper, CEO of CMSC, it is the first time that an individual from the rehabilitation field has received this award.



## Remembering Our Late Friend, Valued Colleague and Influential Leader

May 20, 1947 – April 11, 2016

Paul T. Wietig, EdD, dedicated his life to education. He was an enormous asset to the University at Buffalo's mission of interprofessional education. He worked diligently to break down the "silos" that prevent health care professionals from functioning as members of a team and was recognized for his ability to get disparate professionals to work jointly. As a result, our faculty, students and graduates are better prepared to teach, learn, and serve. While there are many fond memories of his time with SPHHP, above all was a lasting impression he made with his continuous effort to help others. He was a dear colleague, mentor and friend to the school, and is deeply missed. To make a gift to the Paul T. Wietig Memorial Fund in honor of his memory, visit [bit.ly/PaulWietig](http://bit.ly/PaulWietig).



Photo courtesy of UB Athletics.

### Leading the Charge

Congratulations to Blair Johnson, PhD, for winning the Honorary Coach's Award presented during a men's Basketball game last season! Johnson is an assistant professor in the Department of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences.

Above: Donald Reed, senior associate athletic director for athletic and academic performance, SPHHP faculty member Blair Johnson, and former UB basketball player Jason Bird.

### SPHHP Dean Joins SUNY Distinguished Professor ranks

Jean Wactawski-Wende, PhD, has been appointed to the rank of State University of New York (SUNY) Distinguished Professor. Wactawski-Wende is one of nine to most recently receive this distinction and becomes one of 359 faculty members across the SUNY system to receive the Distinguished Professor rank, the highest standing for SUNY faculty. "I am honored to be chosen. UB has provided me so many opportunities and a rich environment to explore my research over many years. I am very thankful for that," says Wactawski-Wende. "This award is not mine alone. It also recognizes the many faculty, staff, students and collaborators whom I have had the opportunity to work with over the years, and who make this work possible." For more information, visit [sphhp.buffalo.edu](http://sphhp.buffalo.edu).



SPHHP OT students at the AOTA student conclave.

### Celebrating the Gift of Education

A group of occupational therapy students attended the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Conference this past academic year. The students' conference travel was supported and made possible by the Dr. Susan Nochajski Memorial fund. To donate to the Dr. Susan Nochajski Memorial fund, visit [giving.buffalo.edu/give-to/public-health-and-health-professions](http://giving.buffalo.edu/give-to/public-health-and-health-professions).



**RICHARD N. SCHMIDT**  
July 16, 1916 – Jan. 30, 2016

## The Early-Adopter



Richard N. Schmidt, a professor emeritus in the Department of Biostatistics and member of the university community for 65 years, died Jan. 30, 2016 in Cumberland, Maine. He was 99.

Schmidt is widely recognized for introducing UB to the world of computers and computer studies during the late 1950's and early 1960's. At the time, there was little interest in the vast machines whose computational power now makes modern statistics, as well as biostatistics, possible.

"I gave the first lecture at UB on computers on Dec. 26, 1956—the day after Christmas—at a special faculty meeting," said Schimdt. "I lectured for an hour or more and afterward my friends said, 'You're crazy.'"

The first two computers UB purchased in 1962 were an IBM 1600 and IBM 1401, he said. The machines were housed in Sherman Hall. He said individuals or classes could sign up in two-hour blocks to use the computers, but since the machines were in high demand, that made for some odd hours.

"Two o'clock in the morning you would come to use the machine," said Schmidt. "The doors were locked... [but] the fellow before you would leave the window unlatched. So you would climb through the window." Often, he laughed wryly, "[The machine] would be jammed."

Schmidt also co-authored two books on computers and business with a colleague from Remington Rand.

In 1963 and 1965, they wrote books called "Electronic Business Data Processing" and "Introduction to Computer Science and Data Processing." The latter contained 10 examples of programs in different languages in the introduction alone. Schmidt learned about 50 in his career.

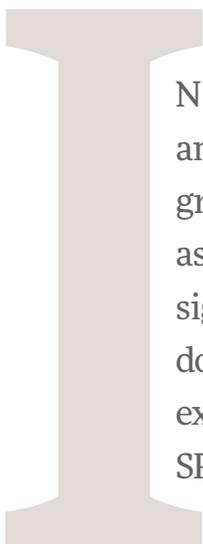
He dedicated his career to the University at Buffalo and retired in 1985 but continued to walk from his home in Eggertsville to his office in Farber Hall on the South Campus at least twice a week for more than 20 years.

In 2006, a fund was established in his honor and to recognize the vital role he played in ensuring the ongoing success of the department and its students. The award is given annually to the student(s) that exemplifies academic excellence, as reflected by PhD qualifying exam scores and classroom performance in core courses of the PhD curriculum.

For information on how to support this fund in Richard Schmidt's memory visit [sphhp.buffalo.edu/home/scholarships/schmidt](http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/home/scholarships/schmidt) or email [glenn@buffalo.edu](mailto:glenn@buffalo.edu).



# Renovating and Invigorating the Student Experience



IN ANY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, the utilization of space and technology are extremely important to students' ability to grow, learn, and connect throughout their time on campus. After asking and listening to our students' requests, the school made significant updates using funding from the UB fund from generous donors' annual gifts, in an effort to positively enhance the student experience. A variety of renovations were made this year to SPHHP's main building on South Campus, Kimball Tower including:

- Opening a new room with a digital display to help foster group learning and facilitate collaboration on projects
- Providing a new mixed-use room for group meetings and/or quiet learning sessions
- A café with microwave and bar height tables was opened to provide a dedicated location for enjoying meals
- The lobby and first floor of Kimball Tower was repainted and upgraded furniture was added
- New power outlets with USB ports were installed, providing convenient access to power, for charging portable devices
- The basement was reopened to provide students an additional space to meet, eat, socialize and exercise

\*Similar space upgrades are underway in Farber hall.



1ST FLOOR KIMBALL TOWER



**Making additional improvements to our student spaces is important to us.**

Are you interested in donating towards further renovations? Give to the School of Public Health and Health Professions UB Fund by visiting [bit.ly/SPHHP-UBfund](http://bit.ly/SPHHP-UBfund).



# COMMENCEMENT

## A TIME FOR RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION

**THE 14TH ANNUAL** University at Buffalo School of Public Health and Health Professions commencement ceremony took place on May 14, 2016 at the University at Buffalo Center for the Arts.

A total of 286 public health and health professions students received degrees, 213 students were recognized for outstanding academic achievement by maintaining greater than a 3.6 departmental grade point average and 110 students received scholarships throughout their time in the school.

To view more photos from commencement, visit [sphhp.buffalo.edu/home/commencement/photos](http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/home/commencement/photos).





# 2016



## FEATURED SPEAKERS

### Inspiration to Fight Inequality

The 2016 featured commencement speaker was Buffalo native, Helene D. Gayle, MD, MPH, chief executive officer of the McKinsey Social Initiative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing complex global and social challenges.

At the beginning of Gayle's address to the 2016 SPHHP graduates she stated, "It's hard not to be moved by the incredible and awesome sense of new beginnings. As a pediatrician and public health physician, I'm especially inspired to be speaking at a graduation where each graduate intends to leave for a career that involves improving the health for individuals, communities, nations and our world."



HELENE D. GAYLE

As an internationally recognized expert on health, global development and humanitarian issues, Gayle expressed to graduates how they could make a difference in the world moving forward, especially as it relates to health inequalities.



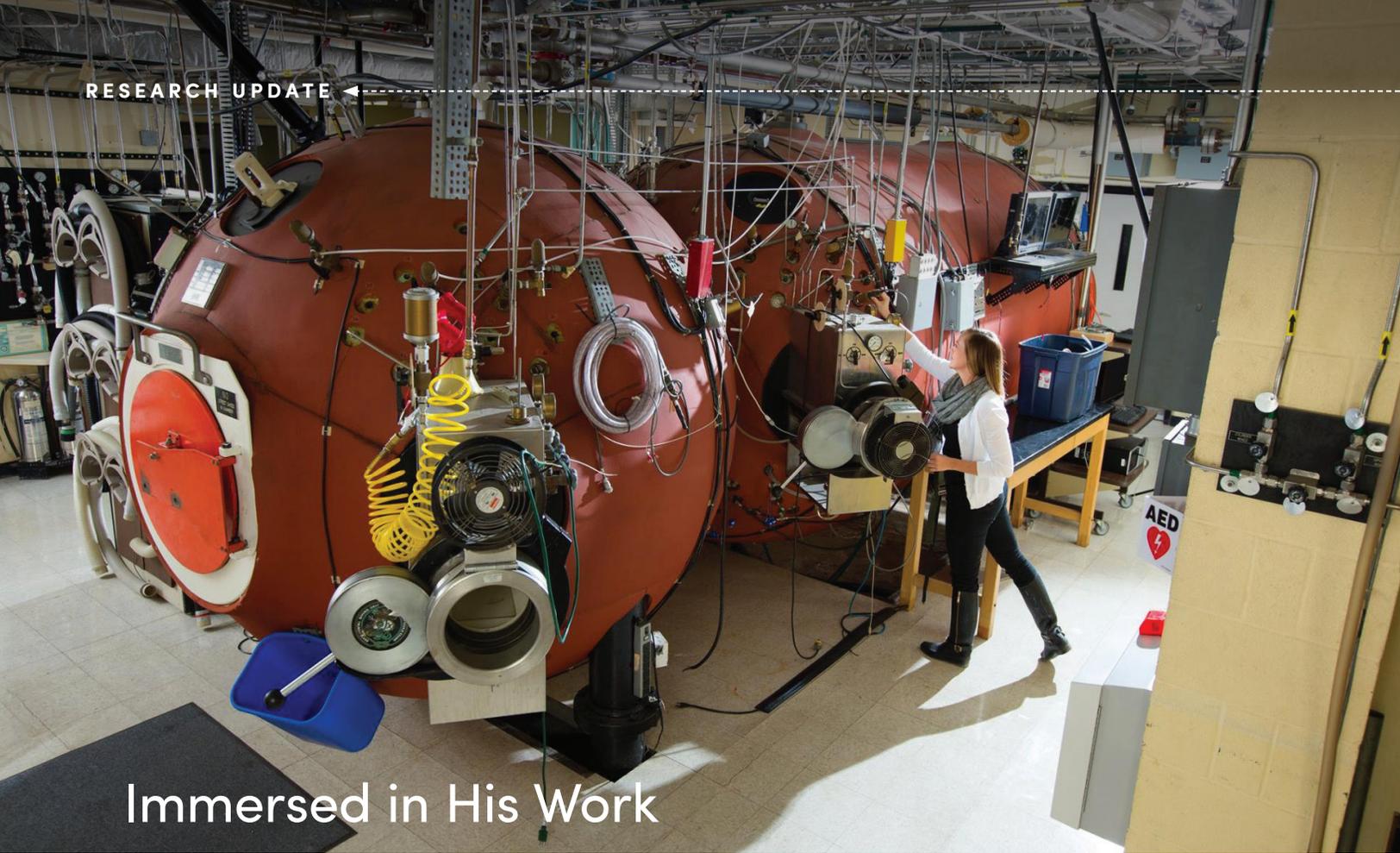
LESLIE G. FORD

"Given the link between health and broad inequality, by confronting these statistics, by dedicating yourself to giving all people the opportunity to live the lives they want, you can be champions to fight for justice, fairness, and equity around the world."

Both Gayle and Leslie G. Ford, MD '74, BS '69, received honorary degrees during this year's College of Arts and Sciences commencement ceremonies. Ford is one of the most influential

clinical scientists in the U.S. in the area of cancer prevention research, having a profound impact on the health of women and men around the world.

To listen to Helene D. Gayle's speech in its entirety and to view the complete SPHHP ceremony, visit [sphhp.buffalo.edu/home/commencement](http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/home/commencement).



## Immersed in His Work



**Dave Hostler, PhD**, chair and professor, **Department of Exercise and Nutrition Science**, received a \$259,964 grant from the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research to study diver physiology both during and after water immersion activities that are commonplace amongst U.S. Navy personnel. With the study also comes an upgrade to the nearly three-decades-old hyperbaric chamber housed in Sherman Annex on UB's South Campus.

"The University at Buffalo has a long history of performing research for Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) and the Office of Navy Research," said Hostler. "We also have one of the only labs that can study divers at depth in a hyperbaric chamber than can be flooded and temperature controlled to simulate nearly any diving environment on the planet."

This will be the first study to look at the 24-hour recovery period following a typical Navy mission that transitions from the water to the land. Hostler notes that the results of this study will help provide Navy protocols to insure divers are properly hydrated to prolong endurance activity and make missions safer for divers. He adds that the results may influence the Navy's position or timeline to develop and deploy in-water, re-hydration systems if rehydration during immersion is discovered to be ineffective.

Unique to UB, the hyperbaric chamber has the ability to fill one end with water, allowing researchers to conduct experiments at the pressure equivalent of up to 5,600 feet of seawater, a depth that isn't survivable by humans. It can also be used for altitude experiments up to 120,000 feet.



### National Recognition for Leading Research in Women's Health

The Women's Health Initiative (WHI) was presented with the American Association for Cancer (AACR) Research's 10th annual Team Science Award at the annual meeting in New Orleans. WHI was recognized for, "its collective efforts that have broadened our understanding of the effects of hormone therapy and nutrition on cancer." Jean Wactawski-Wende, WHI principal investigator at UB and dean of SPHHP, said she was honored to receive this important award on behalf of WHI. "The study has helped to inform women about factors that increase risks for cancer and identify factors that can help prevent cancer in older women. This award recognizes the work of many individuals, including the women who participated in this landmark study."

# Experts Making a Difference



**Jo Freudenheim, PhD**, UB Distinguished Professor and chair of the **Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health**, was co-author of a study published in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, a journal of the American Association for Cancer Research. The study examined the link between women who report to have periodontal disease and the risk for breast cancer, and allowed researchers involved to build a greater understanding of how much the interaction between the microbiome affects health both in terms of acute infections and chronic disease.



**Lili Tian, PhD**, associate chair and graduate director in the **Department of Biostatistics**, is serving as a grant review panelist for a Department of Defense (DoD) Award Program. In this role, Tian is tasked with reviewing applications for the Comprehensive Universal Prevention/Health Promotion Interventions Award. The intent of the award is to support research focused on the development, adaptation, efficiency or optimization, and testing of comprehensive universal prevention/health promotion interventions and systems-level approaches for use within a military context.



**Robert Furlani, MS**, training director for the **Master of Public Health** program, was recently elected to serve on the board of directors for two organizations – the Western New York Public Health Alliance (WNYPHA) and the New York State Public Health Association (NYSPPHA). The WNYPHA was founded in 2004 and represents eight Western New York counties including Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming. The NYSPPHA is an affiliate of the American Public Health Association (APHA) and serves as a statewide organization for members from all disciplines in the public health spectrum. Prior to joining the School of Public Health and Health Professions, he served as an assistant regional director for the New York State Department of Health and has over 30 years of public health and health administration experience in numerous program areas.



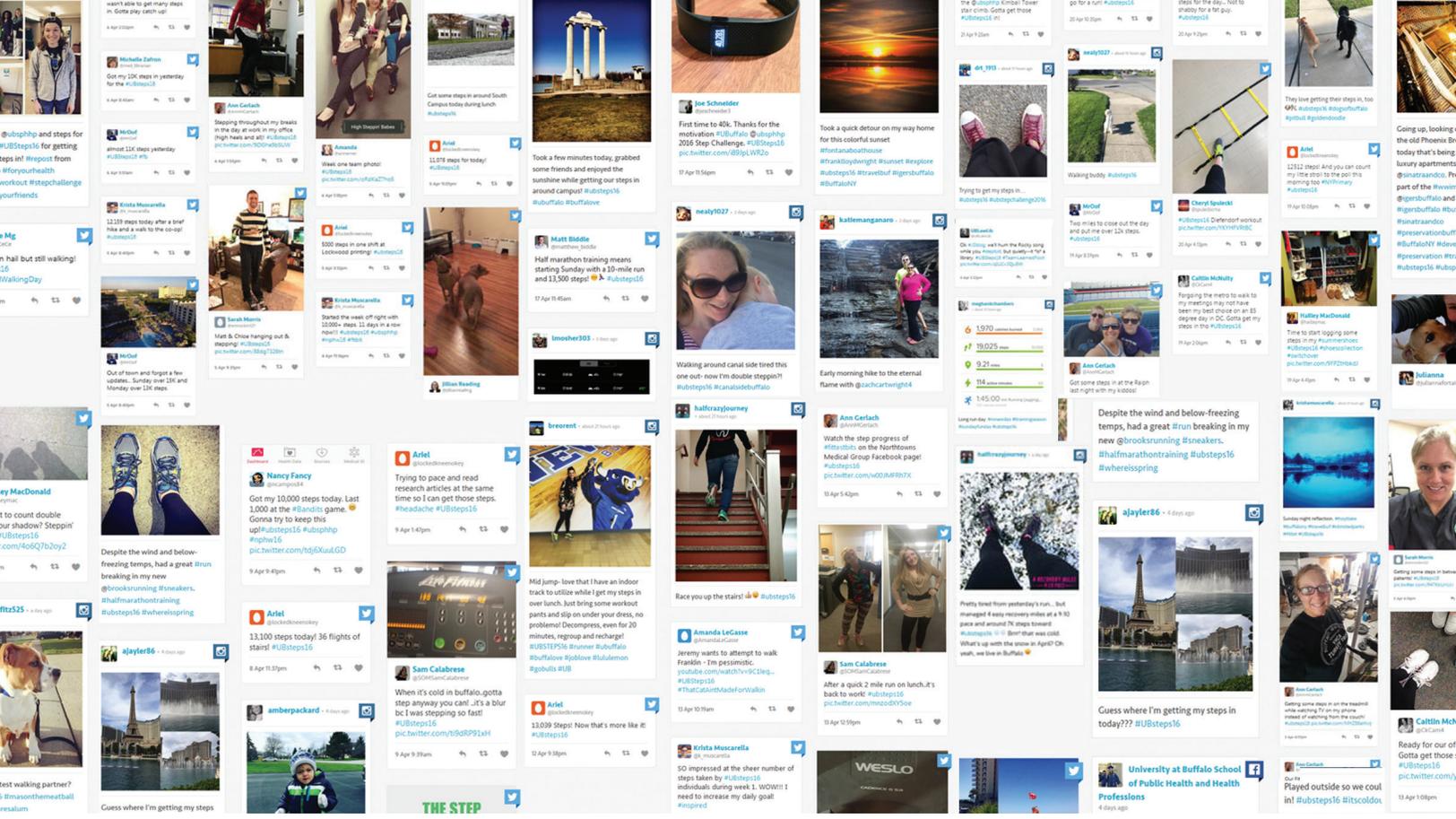
**Marc Kiviniemi, PhD**, associate professor in the **Department of Community Health and Health Behavior** and director of undergraduate public health initiatives, was accepted to the inaugural year-long Leadership Institute for mid-career professionals in the Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM). SBM is a multidisciplinary group of over 200 researchers and clinicians focused on health promotion, prevention, obesity, and chronic disease. As part of the small cohort of participants, Kiviniemi will be provided leadership literature, receive a learning coach and participate in teleconferences with an institute mentor. Kiviniemi will also present a leadership project during the 2017 SBM Annual Meeting in San Diego, California.



**Michael LaMonte, PhD, MPH**, research associate professor and co-director of the MPH epidemiology concentration in the **Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health**, was selected to serve on a national committee for the American Heart Association (AHA). The appointment is to the national program committee of the AHA Council of Epidemiology and Preventions, with the committee serving jointly to the Epidemiology and Prevention Council as well as the Lifestyle and Cardiometabolic Health Council. Serving in this role, LaMonte will work with leaders in the areas of cardiovascular epidemiology and lifestyle, and metabolic health to plan the council's scientific program for 2017.



**Kirk Personius, PhD**, clinical associate professor of rehabilitation science and director of the physical therapy program, and fellow researchers from Johns Hopkins University have shown in mice that glutamate plays a vital role in controlling how muscles and nerves are wired together during development. For decades, scientists thought acetylcholine was the only neurotransmitter responsible for controlling how muscles and nerves are wired together during development. Their findings, reported in the *Journal of Neuroscience* show that glutamate, the most common neurotransmitter in the brain, is also necessary.



# National Public Health Week Celebrated

COMMUNITY TAKES 193 MILLION STEPS



**THIS YEAR,** SPHHP celebrated National Public Health Week (NPHW) with a series of events throughout the first week of April, continuing throughout the month. In total, over 30 events took place as part of the celebration, which included numerous speakers, educational seminars, interactive activities, thought-provoking discussions, informative presentations and self-care activities.

New for 2016 was the inaugural Step Challenge. The program aimed to unite the University at Buffalo and Western New York community through a fun program that promoted healthy activity while increasing individual efforts towards living health lifestyles. Over 1,100 participants submitted their weekly step counts throughout the month of April with the collective goal of taking 16 million steps. By competition's end, 193 million steps were taken, far exceeding expectations and goals. The efforts of participants also played a major contributing role in the American Public Health Association's (APHA) one billion step challenge which took place during the spring.

Prizes were awarded to the individual that took the most steps, to the team that took the highest average number of steps, and a participation prize was awarded to a random participant who entered their step counts each week. An iPad Mini was awarded as the grand prize, a team trophy was awarded to the winning team and a fitbit was awarded to the participation prize winner.

Congratulations once again to our 2016 Step Challenge individual (Eugenia Riollana) and teams winner (RIA High Steppin' Babes from UB's Research Institute on Addictions) for taking home the grand prizes.

**Over the course of the 2016 Step Challenge, participants showed their enthusiasm and involvement by using the hashtag #ubsteps16 on social media resulting in hundreds of mentions and showcasing how people were coming together to promote healthy living.**

Plans are already underway for the 2017 Step Challenge with hopes of drawing even more participation. For the latest updates and to get involved, be sure to visit the Step Challenge website at [sphhp.buffalo.edu/nphw](http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/nphw).

**OTHER HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION INCLUDED:**



**UB Distinguished Speaker Series**

SPHHP was also honored to co-sponsor the UB Distinguished Speakers Series with Roswell Park Cancer Institute and Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences on April 6.

The speaker was Dr. Mukherjee, a cancer physician, researcher and Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author of "The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer."



**Third Annual WNY Refugee Health Summit**

Sponsored by the University at Buffalo's Office of Global Health Initiatives and the Community for Global Health Equity, the summit brought together stakeholders from the resettlement and

refugee communities to examine barriers, and to explore solutions to providing culturally engaged health care to refugees.



**Sixth Annual Glenn E. Gresham Visiting Professor Lecture**

Sponsored by the Department of Rehabilitation Science, the lecture featured Steven Z. George, PT, PhD, director of the Doctor of Physical Therapy

Program at the University of Florida.



**Tenth Annual Saxon Graham Lecture**

Linda Van Horn, PhD, RD, professor in the Division of Nutrition in the Department of Preventive Medicine and associate dean for faculty development at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of

Medicine, presented her lecture titled, "Diet Data and Disease: Truth or Consequence."



**Kimball Tower Climb**

Participants walked up and down the two staircases in the 11-story Kimball Tower on UB's South Campus. The climb, hosted by University at Buffalo's Dietetic Internship program, took place every Thursday in April.



**"Fed Up: It's Time to Get Real about Food."**

Over 30 students, faculty, and community members attended this film review and panel discussion. The event was hosted by the Community Health and Health Behavior Graduate Student Association.



**Public Health Seminars**

The Master of Public Health program hosted four public health seminars in April as part of the celebrations. Presentations included, "So Your Teenager is Vaping E-Cigarettes," "Public Health Stories from the Field," "Clinical Trials in Public Health" and "HIV Surveillance Program."

**GLEN GRESHAM, MD**, chair and professor emeritus, rehabilitation medicine, died in Sanibel, Florida, on Feb. 24, 2016. The Glen E. Gresham, MD Visiting Professorship in Rehabilitation was established in his honor. For more information on how to support this fund, please contact Mary Glenn at [glenn@buffalo.edu](mailto:glenn@buffalo.edu) or call 716-829-4773.



Picture above: **1** Siddhartha Mukherjee addresses the crowd at UB Alumni Arena for the Distinguished Speaker Series. **2** The Refugee Health Summit educated practitioners in a variety of ways including poster presentations at UB's Educational Opportunity Center in downtown Buffalo. **3** Steven Z. George presented, "An Update on OPT-IN (the Orthopedic Physical Therapy Investigator Network): Putting it Together and Early Results" on April 15. **4** Jo Freudenheim, Linda Van Horn and Jean Wactawski-Wende at the Saxon Graham Lecture on April 29. **5** Kimball Tower Climb participants ready to begin the ascent on April 21. **6** The film "focuses on the causes of obesity in the U.S., presenting evidence showing that the large quantities of sugar in processed foods are an overlooked root of the problem, and points to the lobbying power of "Big Sugar" in blocking attempts to enact policies to address the issue." **7** Dan Stapleton, public health director, Niagara County Department of Health leading a seminar entitled, "Public Health Stories From the Field" on April 11.



Holly Cohen, BS '97, speaks at TED2016 – Dream, February 15–19, 2016, Vancouver Convention Center, Vancouver, Canada. Photo credit: Bret Hartman / TED

See the article  
in the summer  
At Buffalo  
Magazine on  
page 38!



## Empowering Ability

HOLLY COHEN GIVES PEOPLE THE TOOLS TO MAKE EVERYDAY ITEMS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

By Angelo Ragaza

**QUICK:** Name a gadget or appliance you use constantly and would be lost without. Chances are, you can't limit yourself to just one. There are those that have practically become appendages: cellphone, tablet, remote. Then there are those—microwave, coffee machine, vacuum cleaner—whose convenience we take for granted.

But for the more than one in five people in the U.S. with a disability, using or enjoying such items is not a given. More than 15 million adults have conditions that give them difficulty with everyday activities like housework, answering the phone and preparing meals. And millions of children don't have the range of motion or motor skills required to do something as simple as turn on a toy.

"Some companies sell toys that come adapted for children with disabilities," says occupational therapist Holly Cohen (BS '97), "but they're extremely expensive." Adapted toys, she says, can cost up to four times the usual price.

Cohen and her business partner, John Schimmel, a web developer with experience in electronics, decided to do something about the situation. Both had considerable experience using assistive technology to help people with disabilities go about their lives—for example, adapting a computer mouse for a particular patient's use. They wanted to empower patients, and their caregivers, with the tools and information to hack into existing devices themselves. "We wanted to teach people to create their own solutions," Cohen says.

So they founded DIYAbility, a startup that develops and distributes "hacking kits," and educates people on how they can adapt everyday toys and appliances to work for them.

"All battery-operated toys have little switches inside the toy," Cohen explains. "It's very easy to take a toy apart, find the switch, add a mono jack and once you add that, connect an ability switch or button." (An ability switch is an external device that creates alternate ways to use items like computers and appliances.) "Then the child can activate the toy by hitting this switch or button with their head or their foot."

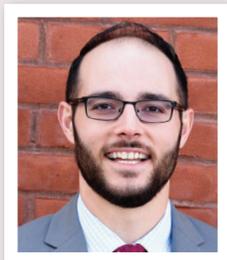
DIYAbility offers a toy-switch hacking kit and a battery-interrupt kit on its website. The company will soon release *Capacita*, a game controller designed for those with a narrow range of motion. "If someone can access a computer with their head or their breath, then they can play video games," Cohen says. "Their laptop or computer is their controller."

They also run toy-hacking workshops, including one near the end of the year called Hacking for the Holidays.

Cohen, who is program manager of assistive technology and driving rehabilitation at New York University's Langone Medical Center, credits her training at UB with sparking her interest in innovation. "I had one sense of what occupational therapy was before I started," she says. Then a classmate (James Lenker, PhD '05, BS '97, now an associate professor at UB) introduced her to UB's Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (also known as the IDeA Center), whose multidisciplinary approach to human-centered design greatly appealed to her creative bent and interest in technology. The experience there, she says, "really opened my eyes to what could be done outside of the traditional roles of OT."

According to Cohen, DIYAbility has no current plans to patent its kits and tools. "They're open-source," she says. She hopes this approach—empowerment through shared information—enables more people to experience what she witnesses every time she sees a child play for the first time with a toy once thought inaccessible.

"Whether it's the first or the 500th child, it's amazing every single time," Cohen says. She has seen people, who've been awakened to their potential through technology, return to school, formulate work goals and help other people with disabilities. "People develop a sense of self-esteem and independence. They start to think, 'What more can I do?'"



JAKE MCPHERSON



MARK GLASGOW

### 30 Under Thirty

Congratulations to Jake McPherson '11 and Mark Glasgow '15 for winning the 30 Under Thirty award from Buffalo Business First! The class of 2016 was narrowed from more than 100 nominations, and the winners were selected by three judges who have been honored in recent years.



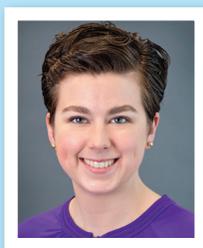
### Occupational Therapy Reunion

The Occupational Therapy Class of 1986 celebrated their 30th reunion this summer in Buffalo. Alumni from all across the country attended to reconnect and celebrate on June 10 and 11.

Would you like to help plan a reunion for your class? Email [hauslerj@buffalo.edu](mailto:hauslerj@buffalo.edu) for more information.

### Alumni Insights

The UB College of Arts and Sciences teamed up with UBSPHHP during National Public Health Week to offer a presentation by alumna Eileen M. Maher, MS '12, RD, CDN. To watch the recorded session on personal wellness and hear her tips and advice on being a healthier you, visit <http://bit.ly/EileenMaher>



EILEEN M. MAHER



### Young Alumni Night at Marcy Casino

Graduates of the last decade gathered on July 27, 2016 for a social outing on the patio of Marcy Casino overlooking Hoyt Lake in Buffalo. Alumni networked and reconnected while enjoying the relaxing beauty of the lake.



To register for alumni events visit [alumni.buffalo.edu/events](http://alumni.buffalo.edu/events)

### STAY CONNECTED!

Visit the UB Alumni Association's UB Connect page and let us know what you've been doing since graduating.

>> [sphhp.buffalo.edu/alumni/connect](http://sphhp.buffalo.edu/alumni/connect)

### #UBSPHHP IN SOCIAL MEDIA



# A Gratifying Experience

**THAT'S HOW** Randy Carter, a former associate chair and professor and now professor emeritus in the Department of Biostatistics, described his recent six-month stay in India as part of his Fullbright-Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence Fellowship.

"It is difficult to assess what impact I had professionally, but I am gratified by the fact that our efforts to have a positive impact were sincerely appreciated by our students, colleagues, and friends in India."

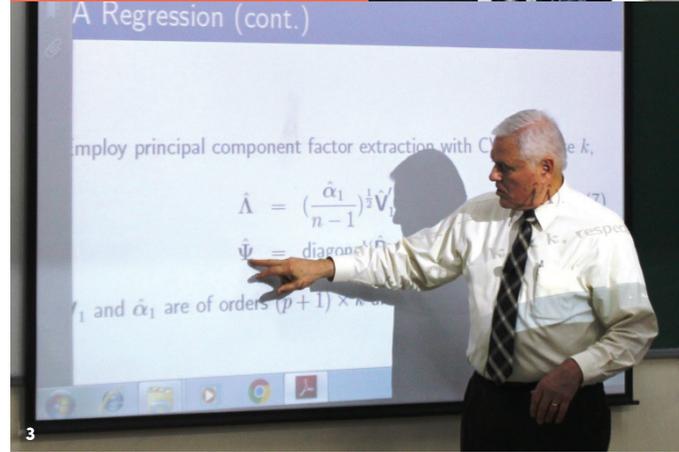
Carter spent his time at the C.R. Rao Advanced Institute of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science (AIMSCS) in Hyderabad, India teaching courses and developing collaborative research opportunities between AIMSCS faculty and the University at Buffalo.

"I initiated discussions with faculty in the bioinformatics division of the Institute to identify mutually interesting topics for research," said Carter. "I also taught a biostatistics course for fourth semester graduate students which was really rewarding. In addition to his professional objectives, Carter says that the opportunity to experience another culture is one of the most rewarding aspects of receiving a Fullbright Scholarship.

"I learned a great deal about India's culture, educational systems and society in general," said Carter. "I'm just happy to have had the opportunity."



1 While in India, Carter also attended and presented at the International Conference on Operations Management and Research (ICOMAR) in Mysore, India. 2 Carter providing inaugural keynote address during ICOMAR in India. 3 Carter presenting talk on high dimensional factor analysis for predictive modeling.



# Alumni Achievement Awards

**ON MAY 5,** the UB Alumni Association recognized 12 outstanding alumni and friends for their achievements and for bringing distinction to UB. This year's on-campus celebration included dignitaries, alumni, colleagues, family and friends.

Alumni accomplishments significantly benefit our university community and society, advancing the common good and inspiring others with passion and creativity.

Two of SPHPH's finest were among the 12 honored; Frank Cerny and Brian King. Frank Cerny was presented the Community Leadership Award, given in recognition of outstanding accomplishments that make our university community a better place to live and work. Brian King was presented the George Thorn Award, given to UB graduates under the age of 40 in recognition of their outstanding national or international contributions to their career field or academic area. Congratulations!



1 The Alumni Association Achievement Awards ceremony took place after the volunteer leadership summit at UB's Center for the Arts. 2 George Thorn award recipient, Brian King PhD '10, MPH '06, BS '04. 3 UB Alumni Association Board President Mary Garlick Roll, MS '88, BS '84, presenting Frank Cerny his award with UB President, Satish Tripathi.



## Making Public Health Her Personal Mission

Rebecca Hammett is a second year student in the Master of Public Health program with a concentration in environmental health.

**GROWING UP,** Rebecca Hammett always had a love for all things outdoors. As she grew older, she became more interested in understanding how our actions not only impact the environment, but also our health. “I can recall thinking to myself, if I can’t sit in the grass, drink the water, and eat the food that I love so much and feel safe about it, then that’s a problem.”

Now a second year student in the SPHHP Master of Public Health (MPH) program, Rebecca is turning her passion into a personal mission.

“I have always felt strongly that we need to care for the environment and that we need to be aware of how our actions have consequences to our health,” says Rebecca. “I think it’s critically important to ensure the well-being of our environment and the health of individuals and communities in the future.”

While Rebecca has a concentration in environmental health, the program has exposed her to a wide array of disciplines, an element of diversity which is a staple of the MPH program.

In addition to course work, the MPH program also requires students to complete a field training experience, something that Field Training Director Robert Furlani feels is imperative to preparing students to be leaders and practitioners in public health.

“The field training experience is a cornerstone of the MPH program. Students apply knowledge, skills and public health principles acquired through their educational experience at UB to help improve the health of populations, communities and individuals, all while gaining valuable, hands-on training under an agency’s mentorship and guidance.”

This summer, Rebecca completed 120 hours of field training at the Niagara County Department of Health within the Environmental Health Division. During the internship, Rebecca worked closely with department health officials on a wide variety of public health initiatives, educational programs and special projects.

“Every day my internship provided me a new learning experience,” says Rebecca. “I was able to participate in restaurant inspections, water testing and rabies clinics. I helped perform tick dragging to

inspect ticks for infectious diseases, such as Lyme Disease. I also helped promote the healthy neighborhoods program which provides in-home assessments and interventions for indoor air quality, asthma, tobacco cessation, fire safety, lead and other environmental health hazards in at-risk communities.”

While completing her field training experience, Rebecca also began shaping her ideas for another one of the MPH program’s required elements—the integrative project.

“The integrative project is one of the last steps to completing the program,” explains MPH Program Director, Kim Krytus. “After building their skills through the field training experience, students demonstrate their ability to integrate what they’ve learned to a public health issue.”

Rebecca has plans to base her project around lead poisoning prevention, something that she was involved with through her field training experience.

“I worked on a lead prevention educational program for two full weeks. I walked door-to-door to educate community members on the dangers of lead paint and lead poisoning. From there, we arranged appointments for lead testing in paint and made recommendations to landlords and home owners if the paint needed to be refinished.”

In the future, Rebecca is looking forward to continuing down a path in environmental health and ultimately helping educate others about the field.

“The MPH program at UB has given me an overwhelming opportunity for growth in an area that I feel strongly about,” says Rebecca. “But more importantly, I feel it has instilled in me a passion to educate others and see how I can make a difference in our health.”



To learn more about Rebecca and see her field training come to life, visit <http://bit.ly/mphammett>

# Health Impact

The University at Buffalo is a premier research-intensive public university, the largest and most comprehensive campus in the State University of New York system. The School of Public Health and Health Professions is one of 12 schools that make UB New York's leading public center for graduate and professional education and one of five schools that constitute UB's Academic Health Center.

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16-SPH-002

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**Stacey Uriarte**  
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Stacey Uriarte left Jamestown, NY, in 1986 for California, "with youth and good health on my side, and big dreams as my guide." After marrying and raising a family there, Stacey decided to pursue a master's degree in occupational therapy. She chose UB's public health school because it gave her—a non-traditional student—a warm welcome and expert training. A scholarship also helped her complete her degree. She hopes to work in a neurological rehabilitation facility, helping people regain and maintain their health in order to live independently.

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