Dear Colleagues,

As we enter the second half of the academic year, we are excited to share the accomplishments of the Public Health/Preventive Medicine Residency (PH/PMR) Program's trainees and faculty members. Our first-year residents have started work on projects in areas including disease investigations, survey development and emergency preparedness. Our second-year residents are continuing their work in a variety of disciplines, including environmental health, trauma-informed care and food insecurity. We have recently made changes to our Residency Advisory Committee (RAC) and thank all of you who continue to support the program and mentor the residents. One member of our RAC is Dr. Teddy Nagel, a graduate from our program who was recently promoted to serve in a leadership role as the Chief of Emergency Services at New York City (NYC) Health + Hospitals (H+H)/North Central Bronx. We are so proud of Teddy and his accomplishments! You can read more about his journey in preventive medicine in this month's Alumni Spotlight.

As 2020 unfolds, we have a new set of goals for our program, which include the development of new learning opportunities for residents. We are currently developing new rotations with Mount Sinai Beth Israel and H+H, among others. Stay tuned for more updates in 2020!

Sincerely,

Anita Geevarughese, MD, MPH
Collaboration and Scholarly Work

On Nov. 25, 2019, PH/PMR faculty member Dr. Bill Jordan once again led the annual Introduction to Public Health session for first-year medical students at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Joining him to facilitate small group sessions were program director Dr. Anita Geevarughese, and program graduates Dr. Liz Chuang, Dr. Teddy Nagel and Dr. Krishika Graham. This year’s session again used a dialogue and debate format to discuss the use of policy options for the opioid epidemic.

Second-year resident Dr. Rebecca Florsheim presented her poster “Reduction in PM$_{2.5}$-Associated Health Care Costs as an Incentive for Healthcare Sector Advocacy for Climate Policy” at Research to Action: The Science of Drawdown conference, the first international conference on climate solutions, held on Sept. 16-18, 2019, at Pennsylvania State University.

Second-year resident Dr. Emma Ruderman was a co-author on “Spatiotemporal Cluster of Suicidal Ideation and Behavior—New York City, 2018,” which was presented at the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists Annual Conference, held Jun. 4, 2019, in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Residency Advisory Committee (RAC)

In 2019, the RAC was restructured to a voluntary committee of experts in public health and preventive medicine who provide mentorship, career guidance and networking opportunities for residents. The committee first met on Dec. 6, 2019. They shared their unique backgrounds with residents and offered ideas for potential project and career opportunities.
**Dr. Valerie Vassor** completed her BA at Swarthmore College, her MD and MA at the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University and her primary care residency at Yale University. She recently served as a Yale/Stanford Johnson & Johnson Global Health Scholar in Tugela Ferry, South Africa, where she provided hospital- and home-based clinical care. Valerie’s interests include health equity, violence prevention and reduction, nutrition and obesity medicine. At the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Health Department), Valerie has assisted in an investigation of Lyme disease cases in Staten Island residents who presented without an erythema migrans rash to better understand exposures and potential travel history in this group. Valerie is currently working in the Employee Smoking Cessation Assistance Program (ESCAPE) and beginning work with the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response (OEPR) to investigate crisis standards of care plans among NYC health care facilities. She completed a health informatics rotation with the Primary Care Information Project (PCIP) in December 2019.

**Dr. Irfan Azam** completed his BS at Stony Brook University, his MD at State University of New York Downstate College of Medicine and his internal medicine and primary care residencies at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. He was recently a clinical instructor at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia. While at the Health Department, Irfan also assisted in the investigation of environmental exposures of Lyme disease cases in Staten Island. He is the American Cancer Society Cancer Prevention and Control track resident and is working with the Health Department’s Cancer Prevention and Control group on a survey for the general public on opinions about colorectal cancer (CRC) screening options and potential barriers to screening, in preparation for updated NYC guidelines on CRC screening.

**Dr. Yetunde (Abi) Pinheiro** completed her BS at New York University, her MD, PhD, and MSH at Johns Hopkins University and her MPA at Columbia University. She trained in a family medicine residency program at the Institute for Family Health/Mount Sinai Hospital. Abi also completed postdoctoral fellowships in Ghana and Namibia and has worked in the United States, Africa, Asia and Europe. Most recently, she was a public health research consultant focusing on gender and health. Abi’s interests center on a multidisciplinary approach to improving the health of vulnerable populations. At the Health Department, Abi is working with the Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention to investigate the association between sugary drink consumption and nonalcoholic fatty liver disease. Abi has also been working with the Office of School Health, providing care in various school health clinics around NYC. Abi completed an Informatics rotation with PCIP in November and is working with the World Trade Center Health Registry Program to investigate potential associations between 9/11 exposure and menopause among registry participants.
**SECOND-YEAR RESIDENT UPDATES**

**Dr. Emma Ruderman** is finishing her third semester at City University of New York (CUNY) with a concentration in Epidemiology and Biostatistics. At the Health Department, Emma has been working with the Bureau of Maternal, Infant and Reproductive Health and their San Francisco-based partners, Trauma Transformed, to create a trauma- and resilience-informed care training curriculum, as part of the Bureau's effort to address racial disparities in maternal morbidity and mortality in NYC. Trainings will begin in hospitals in their QI network in 2020. Emma completed an analytic project with the NYC H+H Office of Population Health, evaluating the relationship of A1c control metrics with clinic policies and workflows for diabetes. She is also working with this group to update the 2020 Adult Medicine Preventive Care Guidelines, based on national preventive care and screening guidelines released since 2018. Emma is working with the Bureau of Equitable Health Systems on data analysis for a QI project aimed at improving the environment for blood pressure measurement at 100 primary care practices in NYC. Emma is interested in primary care QI and systems reform, with specific interests in social determinants of health and health disparities, care of vulnerable populations and mental health care. Emma also attended the 2019 Institute for Healthcare Improvement's National Forum on Quality Improvement in Health Care.

**Dr. Rebecca Florsheim** is continuing coursework at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, where she is leading a research project describing patterns of toxin accumulation in the human body. At the Health Department, Rebecca completed a project with OEPR assessing hospital fidelity to planned evacuation protocols. She used data visualization skills to create reports for 55 partner hospitals and better inform future evacuation planning. Rebecca completed a project with the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Use, Prevention, Care and Treatment (BADUPCT) exploring the potential for mobile buprenorphine treatment services in NYC. She worked with mobile health providers to investigate ways to optimize treatment services and created a summary of policy recommendations for BADUPCT leadership. Rebecca worked with the Bureau of Environmental Surveillance and Policy (BESP) on a project describing economic benefits of reduced air pollution. She presented a poster of this work in September at the Research to Action: The Science of Drawdown conference at Pennsylvania State University and is now developing a manuscript. She is working with BESP to assess secondary benefits of Local Law 55, which requires landlords of multiple dwelling units to annually inspect for mold and pests if prompted by a report of a child in the home with moderate or severe asthma. The assessment will use a household survey to evaluate improvements in general or mental health of all individuals, or asthma symptoms in adults, residing in the home.

**Dr. Scherly Leon** is completing her fall coursework in the Community Health track at CUNY, including courses in Community Health Interventions and Population Health Informatics. Scherly serves as the Resident Member of the Health Department's Institutional Review Board, where she continues to learn about the review process for research proposals at the agency. She further completed a Health Informatics rotation with PCIP, where she learned use of Tableau and SQL. Scherly also completed a project with H+H reviewing medically tailored meal services for patients with chronic disease and assisted the Center for Health Equity (now known as the Center for Health Equity and Community Wellness) in their work exploring value-based payment models for services offered by community health workers and community-based organizations in chronic disease prevention. Scherly is currently working in the Health Department's Tuberculosis Chest Clinics and is beginning work with the Bureau of Epidemiology Services on an analysis of food insecurity in NYC, using Community Health Survey data.
**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: TEDDY NAGEL**

**What brought you to the Health Department?**

I was introduced to emergency medicine at a NYC public emergency department (ED), where I was amazed at the unfettered access to all kinds of people, often at a critical time in their lives. As I learned during residency, the ED plays a central role in health care access for the most vulnerable in our society, whether for injury, illness or unmet social needs. Finishing residency, I wanted a deeper understanding of how health care, especially emergency medicine, could be contextualized within the health of the whole city; the residency program at the Health Department was an excellent fit for just these reasons.

**Can you tell us about some highlights during your residency?**

I really cherished my time at the Chelsea Sexual Health Clinic, especially since I was simultaneously working on a *City Health Information* on primary care for men who have sex with men. I also traveled to EDs around the city to carry out in-depth interviews with providers about opioid prescribing guidelines. My coursework at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health included social epidemiology, urbanism and a really fascinating architecture class. With Dr. Don Weiss, I looked back at 10 years of ED management of fatal invasive meningococcal disease. Finally, I cannot forget walking through the Electric Daisy Carnival dance music festival doing surveillance with Dr. Hillary Kunins.

**What are you up to now?**

I have recently become the Chief of Emergency Services at NYC Health + Hospitals/North Central Bronx, a safety-net hospital. In this capacity, I support our public hospital mission and work to align our ED with the population health needs of our community. Since 2015, we have been a registered Opioid Overdose Prevention Program, distributing naloxone to patients. We are developing innovative ways of addressing social determinants of health in our ED population, for example conducting enrollment for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program from our waiting room. I also teach in the Health Advocacy Master’s program at Sarah Lawrence College. My husband and I live on a little farm in Garrison, NY.

**Any wisdom for future PH/PMR residents?**

It is definitely important to develop robust epidemiology and biostatistics skills during the program, but I would also recommend that residents get inspired and find things in public health about which they feel really passionate. During these two years, you have singular access to so many special opportunities that can inform your future work.
FACULTY UPDATES

Please join us in congratulating program and faculty leadership who received Distinguished Service Awards for Managerial Leadership in 2019!

Dr. Anita Geevarughese | Managerial Leadership Award

Anita joined the Division at a time when residents were being transitioned from consultants to employees. She completed this transition with limited administrative support, bringing together several bureaus throughout the Agency. Anita also reconstructed the Fellowship in Public Health Practice to increase focus on teaching in graduate medical education administration; improved the structure of residency seminars; developed new elective options and clinical opportunities for residents; and won grant funding through the American Cancer Society Physician Training Award.

Dr. Achala Talati | Managerial Leadership Award

Achal became Acting Director of Tobacco Control Policy and Programs at a crucial time. Leading an understaffed team in this role for a full year, she worked to have 10 new tobacco and hookah laws passed in 2017; supported the NYC Housing Authority's smoke-free housing initiative; partnered with the Department of Education on e-cigarette education; and contributed expertise to cannabis policy discussions. Achala has since been promoted to Director.

JOIN OUR TEAM!

We are currently recruiting for our Fellow in Public Health Practice position. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Please contact healthrp@health.nyc.gov for questions, and visit nyc.gov/health and search for residency for more information.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE RESIDENCY PROGRAM

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