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CHHS June 2016 ICYMI

CHHS Public Health Graduate to Present at American Public Health Association Conference

The Department of Public Health in the College of Health and Human Services, and the WKU chapter of [the Kentucky Public Health Association](#), would like to extend a huge congratulations to **Gargya Malla**, one of our spring 2016 MPH graduates, for being selected to present a poster at the 2016 Annual Meeting and Expo of the American Public Health Association in Denver, Colorado. The American Public Health Association (APHA) is the foremost professional organization for public health practitioners in the United States, and the APHA annual conference is the largest gathering of public health professionals worldwide. Being selected to present at the annual conference is a noteworthy achievement. The selection process for a poster presentation involves the submission of an abstract that is thoroughly reviewed by community and academic members of the APHA for academic rigor, research quality, and consistency with the conference's theme.

The theme of this year's conference is 'Creating the Healthiest Nation: Ensuring the Right to Health'. Consistent with this theme, Malla's poster compares the strength of association between BMI and cardiovascular disease with the strength of association between BMI and stroke among American adults. After accounting for socio-demographic factors, known associated health behaviors, and comorbidities, Malla found that obesity increased the likelihood of an individual reporting some form of heart disease, as well as increased the likelihood of reporting a stroke. Obese adults were 67% more likely to have been diagnosed with a stroke and 73% more likely to be told they have cardiovascular disease, even after controlling for the impact of smoking habits, alcohol consumption, and physical activity. She will present on October 31st from 12:30pm to 1:30 pm. Malla was mentored by Dr. Colin Farrell.

Gargya Malla has an established history of academic excellence. After receiving bachelors degrees in both medicine and surgery from Andhra Medical College in India, Malla was accepted into Western Kentucky University's Master of Public Health program with a concentration in health education. As a graduate student at WKU, Malla maintained a 4.0 GPA and received awards for Outstanding Academic Achievement from the Department of Public Health as well as for Excellence in Graduate Scholarship from the WKU KPHA chapter. Her research experience includes explorations into such topics as the social and physical consequences of obesity, the social components of PTSD, and the impact of the Affordable Care Act on Kentucky healthcare access. Malla has previously presented her work at many notable venues, including the European Stroke Conference (Venice, Italy, 2016); the National Association of County and City Health Officials Annual Meeting (Phoenix, AZ, 2016); and the Kentucky Public Health Association (KPHA) annual conference (Owensboro, KY, 2015 & 2016).

Gargya Malla will be pursuing a PhD in Epidemiology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham beginning this fall. Her goal is to become a clinical research epidemiologist

focusing on the epidemiology of chronic diseases. Faculty, staff and students of WKU's Department of Public Health are proud of all her achievements and hard work. We are honored to call her one of our alumni.



Public Health Graduate, Gargya Malla

19 WKU KRS Students Participate in 3rd Annual Sport Facility Symposium Study Away

WKU's [School of Kinesiology, Recreation & Sport](#) (KRS) in the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) has partnered with the [Division of Extended Learning and Outreach's](#) (DELO) [Study Away office](#) to offer a summer seminar May 15-22 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Led by KRS faculty Dr. Brad Stinnett and Dr. Evie Oregon, 19 graduate and undergraduate students were afforded an unparalleled behind-the-scenes look at facility planning, design and constructions processes in professional, intercollegiate and interscholastic recreation and sport facilities.



Drs. Evie Oregon and Brad Stinnett

“The 3rd annual study away was phenomenal, and our students were exposed to some state of the art facilities and some great professionals,” said Oregon. “I love this trip because we are not only able to learn a lot about each of our students, but more importantly, they were given a chance to learn more about themselves and all of the great opportunities that are available to them in the world of sport and recreation.”

Throughout the seven days in Charlotte, the students and faculty toured Charlotte Motor Speedway, Bank of America Stadium, Time Warner Cable Arena, Bojangles Coliseum, Charlotte Convention Center, Duke University, UNC-Chapel Hill, UNC-Charlotte and much more.

“Dr. Oregon and I cannot replicate these experiences in the classroom,” stated Stinnett. “As an instructor, this is my favorite course to teach, as I get to watch as students increase their knowledge of venue design and management, enhance their professional network and clarify their career goals.”

Part of the student experience in the course is writing a [blog](#) post to reflect upon their experiences during the trip. Their student reflections provide not only insight into the scope of the course, but also how this type of field experience provides a learning environment that a textbook and lecture format course cannot replace.

“This trip is truly life changing for students, and they’re so appreciative of the opportunity, not to mention how this program proudly represents the school of KRS,” noted Oregon. “That’s why we are looking forward to next summer’s symposium, which will be held in Kansas City.”

Students that participated were Tara Arnold of Frankfort, KY; Laysha Brown of Goodlettsville, TN; Jared Carpenter, Deborah Howard, Taylor McFall, Jacqueline McGill, Cryssi Attig and Joshua Lindsey of Bowling Green, KY; Houston Croney of Hopkinsville, KY; Lance Dozier of Rochester, MN; Anton Calvin of Old Hickory, TN; Tremayne Yocum and Steven Roberts of Louisville, KY; Andre Scott of Antioch, TN; Taylor Brantley of Princeton, KY; Prince Holmes of Indianapolis, IN; Terren Johnson of Evansville, IN; Emily Spink of Brandenburg, KY; and Seth Thompson of Cub Run, KY.



For more information, please contact Dr. Evie Oregon at (270) 745-2080 or evie.oregon@wku.edu.

WKU CHHS School of Nursing Receives \$272,574 AENT Grant Award

Western Kentucky University (WKU) School of Nursing in the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) is pleased to announce that WKU was recently awarded \$272,574 for the Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship (AENT) from the Health Resources and Services Administration ([HRSA](#)) for 2016-2017 academic year. Graduate nursing students at WKU who are preparing to become Family Nurse Practitioners or Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioners will benefit through traineeships that fund tuition, fees, and stipends. Dr. Eve Main, Program Director, said “traineeship funds are vital to our ability to recruit and train nurse practitioners for underserved areas of our region.” This award will impact regional, state and national rural and/or medically underserved areas serviced by WKU School of Nursing students receiving these grant monies. This is the 19th consecutive year HRSA funds have been awarded to WKU School of Nursing through the AENT grant.

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