



Weekly Newsletter January 27-31, 2025

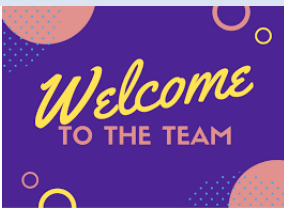
PQHS NEWS

PQHS SHOUTOUT



**Congratulations** to [Kurt Hager, PhD](#) on his promotion to Assistant Professor. Dr. Hager proved to have a record of scholarly activity, service to the department, the TH Chan School of Medicine and the community. We congratulate Dr. Hager and express our sincere appreciation for his support of the Medical School.

WELCOME TO PQHS



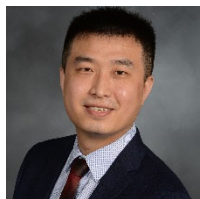
**Welcome to PQHS!** We are excited to announce that **Tanya McCallum, Kathleen Whalen and Jenna Fuld** will be joining PQHS reporting to Rosemarie starting on January 27<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to the contributions and expertise they will bring to the team!

**Tonya McCallum** (Tavares) has 15+ years of experience in addiction science research. She holds a BA (Psychology) from the University of RI and an MS (Behavioral and Social Sciences) from Brown University. Since 2018, she has worked to address the opioid and stimulant crises with the Opioid Response Network. Her work spans pharmacotherapy treatments for alcohol use and smoking cessation, genetic factors in addiction, and culturally adapted treatments. Her research also focuses on evidence-based practices, reducing the research-to-practice gap, coping and resilience, acculturative stress, and addressing disparities, especially those with criminal legal involvement. She enjoys making memories, big and small, with her husband and their two daughters.

**Kathy Whalen** has worked in the addictions field as a Technology Transfer Specialist for the Opioid Response Network since 2019. She received her BSN in 1981 from SUNY Downstate Medical Center College of Nursing. Prior to her work with the Opioid Response Network, worked as a pediatric nurse for 15 years. Kathy's primary area interest is adolescent and transitional age substance use and integrated care. Kathy enjoys a good cup of coffee and traveling with her husband and their four daughters.

**Jenna Fuld** has worked in the addictions and behavioral health field for nearly a decade. She received her BA in Psychology from Roger Williams University in 2014. Prior to her role as a Technology Transfer Specialist for the Opioid Response Network, Jenna's had worked in inpatient care and managed an addiction medicine fellowship. Jenna's primary areas of interest include novel treatment approaches for opioid use disorder and dismantling addiction related stigma. Jenna enjoys traveling and experiencing new cuisine.

UPCOMING EVENTS



**Research Methods Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 5th, 10:00-11:00 AM**

**Title:** LLM for Clinical Evidence Retrieval and Summarization

**Presenter:** Yifan Peng, Ph.D., FACMI, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Population Health Sciences at Weill Cornell Medicine

**Description:** In medicine, our understanding of diseases, treatments, and preventive measures is perpetually advancing. Despite this, the existing framework of evidence-based medicine (EBM) faces formidable challenges from information overload, as no clinician can catch up with the explosive publication paces and lacks a robust mechanism for the continuous integration of new evidence. The advent of Generative AI, exemplified by large language models (LLMs) signifies a potentially transformative development in the methodologies employed to collect, appraise, disseminate, and interact with clinical evidence. In this talk, I will discuss our research on addressing the "lost-in-the-middle" issue in evidence retrieval and the fine-tuning of LLMs for effective medical evidence summarization.

**Bio:** Dr. Peng's main research interests include BioNLP and medical image analysis. He has published in major AI and healthcare informatics venues, including ACL, NAACL, CVPR, and MICCAI, as well as medical venues, including Nature Medicine, Nucleic Acids Research, npj Digital Medicine, and JAMIA. His research has been funded by federal agencies, including NIH and NSF and industries such as Amazon and Google. He received the AMIA New Investigator Award in 2023. He was elected as a fellow of the American College of Medical Informatics (ACMI) in 2024. To join the meeting click [here](#).



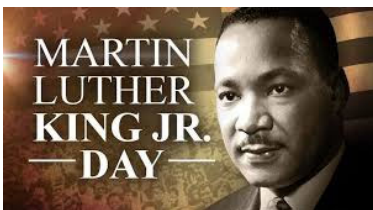
**Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 4:00-5:00PM** – via Zoom

**AI and Community-Engaged Research** - Hear researcher and community perspectives on artificial intelligence and community-engaged research. What are the most pressing challenges and concerns and how can health equity be addressed?

**Speakers include:** **Rosa Aleman, BA**, Digital Communications and Content Strategist at American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, and a founding member and former co-chair of the Harvard Catalyst's Community Coalition for Equity in Research and **Matthew DeCamp, MD, PhD**, Associate Professor in the Center for Bioethics and Humanities and Division of General Internal Medicine, at the University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus.


Click [here](#) to Register.


#### DAC EVENTS




**Join Us for a Day of Service in Honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.!**

The PQHS Diversity Action Committee (DAC) invites all department members to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy of service by volunteering together at the [Yes We Care Food Pantry](#).

 **Date:** Friday, January 31st

 **Time:** 11:30 AM – 3:30 PM

 **Location:** Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church, 55 Illinois Street, Worcester, MA

As part of the UMass Chan Volunteer Initiative, your service hours will be counted as **Paid Time Off (PTO)**. To participate, please:

1 **Register** using this form [here](#).

2 **On the volunteer date, open the email and confirm that you volunteered or did not volunteer.** The email will come from Microsoft Power Automate on behalf of the UMass Chan Government Relations.


2 **Record your time** as "VSL" in PeopleSoft after the event. OR, if you report your time with PQHS, let the administrative staff know that you used 4 hours of PTO on that date.

If you have any questions, please contact [Amy Borg](#) for assistance. Let's come together to make a difference in our community and embody Dr. King's spirit of service.

We look forward to serving with you!

— **The PQHS Diversity Action Committee (DAC)**

*If you are unable to make the event, but still want to contribute you can...*

 Make a food donation, please bring non-perishables to the office of Amy Borg (AS8-2064), or place the food in a box that is located in the center of floors 7 and 8, near the stairwell UMass Chan Medical School notice board.

 Make a monetary donation to Yes We Care Food Pantry, visit the donation page on the website:

<https://www.yeswecarema.org/donate.html>

## UMASS EVENTS

# LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

Join the UMass Chan and UMass Memorial Health community for a family friendly Lunar New Year celebration featuring a screening of *Over the Moon* and family friendly activities.

**Thursday, January 30, 2025, 5:30-7:30PM** - Albert Sherman Center Multipurpose room (next to Albert Sherman cafeteria)

**Lunar New Year Celebration** - All UMass Chan & UMMH students, faculty, staff, caregivers, and their families are invited to join the Diversity and Inclusion Office for a joyous Lunar New Year celebration. In addition to the *Over the Moon* animation film, we have Asian appetizers, treats, and fun activities planned for the whole family, ensuring a memorable Lunar New Year experience for everyone.

As part of the festivities, kids attending the event will receive a special new year's gift. Let's celebrate the Year of the Snake in community, fostering connections, creating lasting memories, and ushering in good fortune for the year ahead.

Click [here](#) to Register.

## UMASS CHAN REMINDER

### Holiday Calendar for UMass Chan Medical School

#### Remaining Holiday Schedule for 2025:

- Presidents Day – Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup>
- Patriots' Day – Monday, April 21<sup>st</sup>
- Memorial Day – Monday, May 26<sup>th</sup>
- Juneteenth National Independence Day – Thursday, June 19<sup>th</sup>
- Independence Day – Friday, July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Labor Day – Monday, September 1<sup>st</sup>
- Indigenous Peoples' Day – Monday, October 13<sup>th</sup>
- Veterans Day – Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>
- Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 27<sup>th</sup>
- Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 28<sup>th</sup>
- Christmas Eve – Wednesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>
- Christmas Day – Thursday, December 25<sup>th</sup>



*PQHS Weekly will be sent to all members of PQHS on Monday mornings. The intent is to provide a snapshot of what is going on that week in PQHS and to share our faculty and staff activities with the department. We depend on you to provide the items we need to share. Please send suggestions of events, faculty invited seminars & talks, honors, student thesis presentations, and news – new babies born! – to Kellie ([kellie.armstrong@umassmed.edu](mailto:kellie.armstrong@umassmed.edu)) & Sarah ([sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu](mailto:sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu)) by Friday each week.*