

Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

Weekly Newsletter

JUNE 8-12, 2026



UMass Chan
MEDICAL SCHOOL

CONGRATULATIONS

Eric Mick, ScD - Associate Professor, Biostatistics and Health Services Research, retires August 1, 2026.



We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Eric Mick on his retirement from UMass Chan Medical School after 15 years of dedicated service as an Associate Professor, first in the Division of Epidemiology, then in the Division of Biostatistics and Health Services Research.

Eric has been a valued member of the community, and his dedication, professionalism, and commitment have made a meaningful impact during his tenure. His work and collaboration have been appreciated by colleagues across the organization, and he has helped support the mission and goals of the institution in important ways.

While we are sad to see him go, we are grateful for the time we've had the opportunity to work alongside him and wish him continued success in all future endeavors.

With sincere gratitude, we thank you, Eric, for 15 remarkable years, and wish you all the very best in the years ahead.

WELCOME

Kelsey Gallaway is a rising Junior at Clark University majoring in Health, Science, and Society and minoring in biology. She is also a part of Clark's varsity field hockey team. This summer she will be an undergraduate intern with the Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences. Throughout her internship, she will assist with research on digital and behavioral health, focusing specifically on diabetes self-management.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, June 8. 11:00-11:30 AM

Live Webinar: OAI CORE Knowledgebase

Title: The Lifetime Leisure Physical Activity Questionnaire in the Osteoarthritis Initiative

Presenter: Dr. Grace Lo, Associate Professor, Baylor College of Medicine

Description: This presentation will review how the questionnaire was administered in the OAI and how it has been used thus far. We will also review some strategies of analyses that should be avoided when using this data.

[Register here](#)

For questions, contact the OAI CORE Team at oaiknowledgebase@umassmed.edu.



Monday, June 8, 12:00-1:00 PM, Zoom

Title: Insights from the Accountable Health Communities Model – Final Evaluation Report

Co-hosts: Social Interventions Research and Evaluation Network ([SIREN](#)) and the [Camden Coalition](#)

Description: Join us for a webinar about the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services [Accountable Health Communities Model Final Evaluation Report](#) (published February 2026)! The event will include a brief report overview and a moderated discussion with AHC implementation site leaders from Colorado, New Jersey, and Oklahoma exploring their experiences with model implementation, impacts, and sustainability.

To register, click [here](#).

Tuesday, June 9, 12:30-5:15 PM, Paul J. DiMare Center, UMass Chan Medical School

Health Education Academy for Leadership and Learning (HEALL) Education Day

Education Day brings people together who are trying to get better at their work as educators—whether that's improving teaching in practical, evidence-based ways, exploring a path into scholarship, or just figuring out what comes next. Through engaging plenary content on the *sciences of learning*, interactive workshops, and collaborative conversations, you'll have opportunities to explore how learning really works—and how to apply those insights across your teaching, leadership, and career development.

What makes it meaningful is the combination: time to connect with colleagues doing similar work, space to share real challenges—like integrating new tools or technologies—and the chance to leave with something you can actually use.

If nothing else, it's a good way to reconnect with colleagues, pick up a few practical ideas, and remember that improving education is a shared experience.

Schedule:

12:30–1:00 PM: Socialize & Welcoming Remarks

1:00–2:00 PM: Plenary Session, presented by **David Alan Hirsh, MD, FACP**, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education, Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School

2:00–4:00 PM: Workshops

4:15–5:15 PM: Community Scholarship Engagement & Reception

Click [here](#) to register



NEW DATE: Friday, June 26, 11:30 AM - 3:30 PM

55 Illinois Street, Worcester, MA

Yes We Care Food Pantry

The PQHS Diversity Action Committee invites you to volunteer at the Belmont A.M.E. Zion Church

You are welcome to use the staff benefit of being paid while you volunteer. For the direct link to sign up, click [here](#)

To donate to the food pantry, click [here](#).

Contact Amy Borg with any questions, amy.borg@umassmed.edu.



Wednesday, June 17, 10:00 – 11:00 AM, Zoom

Research Methods Meeting



Presenter: Michael Ferguson, Post Doc

Title: Learning Interpretable Clinical Models With Symbolic Regression

Abstract: Many of the machine learning models currently being developed and deployed in medicine are “black-box”, meaning that they cannot realistically be understood or interpreted by humans. These models are highly accurate, but this lack of interpretability limits integration into the clinical decision-making process and raises concerns for patient safety. In opposition to this trend is symbolic regression, a machine learning technique that dynamically learns human readable mathematical models. Symbolic regression has demonstrated impressive results in the physical sciences and has recently begun seeing use in medicine. In this talk, we will provide an overview of how symbolic regression works, its strengths and weaknesses, and the model building process.

Bio: Michael Ferguson is a 2nd year postdoctoral fellow and trainee in the T32 CODER program in the Department of Medicine. He received a BS in Mathematics from Brown University in 2017 and a doctorate in Mathematics from The CUNY Graduate Center in 2022. His research focus is the development of machine learning models for use in healthcare, with a particular emphasis on model interpretability.

Click [here](#) to join.

RESOURCE REMINDER

Connect with the Chair and Vice Chair

Jeroan Allison and Sharina Person invite you to schedule a 30-minute confidential meeting with them. These sessions are an opportunity for you to discuss any topic of your choice in confidence. Whether you have ideas to share, concerns to address, or simply want to connect, this is your chance to speak directly with leadership in a private setting.

If you would like to schedule a meeting with PQHS leadership, please use the scheduling link to reserve your time.

[Sign up here](#) They look forward to connecting with you.

DIVERSITY DIGEST

June is dedicated to celebrating [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer \(LGBTQ\) Pride](#). The month honors the [Stonewall Uprising](#) in Manhattan in 1969, which is seen as a turning point for the Gay Liberation Movement in the United States. There are several events going on in Worcester to celebrate. [Check them out!](#)

UMASS BENEFIT REMINDERS

Use Your Excess Vacation Leave by June 27, 2026

As we get closer to fiscal year end, we want to remind you of the maximum accruals outlined in the [UMass Chan Holiday, and Personal and Vacation Time Policy](#) so you can plan accordingly.

As of the last full pay period of the fiscal year, the maximum number of vacation hours employees may carry over into the next fiscal year is 240. During the fiscal year, employees are allowed to accrue hours over



240. Hours over this accrual limit are automatically re-set in the payroll system to the accrual maximum. This year, **the relevant pay period ends Saturday, June 27, 2026**. You are encouraged to use any vacation balances that exceed the 240-hour maximum before that date. To avoid the loss of accrued vacation hours, review the following recommendations:

- Take all vacation over 240 hours before Saturday, June 27, 2026. Keep in mind that the vacation accrual for the pay period ending on that date that will not appear on your paycheck.
- Any hours over the cap will automatically be reset to 240 and will appear on your paycheck **on Friday, July 3, 2026**.
- If you are approaching 240 hours of accrued vacation time, talk with your manager about planning time off before June 27 and make sure it is approved by them.
- Ensure your vacation time has been entered into the Time Reporting system **by June 27, 2026**.



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| ✚ Juneteenth National Independence Day – Friday, June 19 th | ✚ Veterans Day – Wednesday, November 11 th |
| ✚ Independence Day – Friday, July 3 rd (observed) | ✚ Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 26 th |
| ✚ Labor Day – Monday, September 7 th | ✚ Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 27 th |
| ✚ Indigenous Peoples' Day – Monday, October 12 th | ✚ Christmas Eve – Thursday, December 24 th |
| | ✚ Christmas Day – Friday, December 25 th |

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 Judi (judi.saber@umassmed.edu) & Sarah (sarah.yeboah@umassmed.edu) by Friday each week.