

Department of Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

Weekly Newsletter

AUGUST 10 - 14, 2026



UMass Chan
MEDICAL SCHOOL

WELCOME INCOMING STUDENTS



Huy Do is mentored by Hoa L. Nguyen, PhD. He received his Master's training in Epidemiology through a collaboration between UMass Chan Medical School and Hanoi Medical University. He has a strong background in quantitative research methods, with research interests in AI-based prenatal screening, substance use epidemiology, nutritional epidemiology, and cancer epidemiology.



Lin Li is a PhD student in the Population Health Sciences program at UMass Chan Medical School. She earned her Master of Public Health from Brown University with a concentration in Epidemiology. Her research interests focus on the development and application of statistical methods for clinical and population health research, with an emphasis on longitudinal data analysis and observational studies. She is mentored by Jonggyu Baek and is working with the Osteoarthritis Initiative Team (Jeff Driban, ShaoHsien Liu, Tim McAlindon, and Kate Lapane).



Ishan Shah is mentored by Rosemarie Martin, PhD. He completed his MPH at Brown University's School of Public Health after earning a BS in Human Biology, Health, and Society from Cornell University. His research focuses on the implementation of evidence-based behavioral health services, with interests in substance use disorders, peer recovery support, health informatics, behavioral health policy, and population health.



Mason Taylor is mentored by Maira A. Castañeda-Avila, MS, PhD. He earned his BS in Public Health and his MPH in Epidemiology from the University of Massachusetts Lowell. His research interests include cancer epidemiology, rural health disparities, healthcare access, and the social and structural factors that contribute to differences in health outcomes. He aims to use large population-based datasets to identify disparities and inform more equitable healthcare practices and policies.



Kaitlyn (Kaity) Ward is mentored by Kate Lapane, PhD. She completed her MPH and BS in epidemiology at Brigham Young University. While completing her MPH she worked with the United States Department of Health as an infectious disease clinical epidemiologist at Naval Hospitals and Marine Medical Clinics. Her research interests revolve around infectious diseases — specifically pneumonia and tuberculosis — pharmacoepidemiology, chronic diseases, and global health.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Greetings from the New England Addiction Technology Transfer Center Team!

Summer is fast approaching, and we have an exciting lineup of trainings ahead. Take a look and save the dates on your calendar, and register now. We look forward to learning with you this summer!

Tuesday, August 11, 2026, 12:00-1:30 PM

Understanding Gambling-Related Harms Among College Students: Trends, Risks, and Support Strategies

This 90-minute webinar goes beyond the basics to examine the unique vulnerabilities of college students and the evolving culture of gambling on campus. Participants will learn how to identify early warning signs, understand the broader impact

on student well-being, and explore practical strategies for engaging students in conversations about gambling. The session will also highlight actionable approaches for strengthening campus response, including early intervention, referral pathways, and connections to care. The goal of this training is to increase understanding of gambling-related harms among college students and enhance the ability to identify, prevent, and respond within campus and student-facing settings.

[Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

Tuesday, September 1, 12-1:30 PM

Gambling & Youth: Understanding the Why, Spotting the Signs, and Having Better Conversations

Sports betting apps, instant deposits, and 24/7 access have changed the game for today's college students. What was once occasional or social is now fast, frequent, and often difficult to detect – leaving many students vulnerable to gambling-related harm before it's recognized. As access expands and normalization grows, the line between "just for fun" and real harm is becoming increasingly blurred. This 90-minute webinar goes beyond the basics to examine the unique vulnerabilities of college students and the evolving culture of gambling on campus.

[Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

Wednesday, September 16, 12:00 - 1:30 PM

Synthetic Cannabinoids and Hemp-Derived Intoxicants: A Discussion of Policy & Public Health

This webinar will provide participants with an overview of the federal and state regulatory landscape governing hemp-derived cannabinoids, including emerging efforts to address regulatory loopholes and recent legislative actions. Participants will explore the pharmacology and health effects of synthetic cannabinoids and hemp-derived THC products, review current public health surveillance data and poison center trends, and examine the short- and long-term medical and psychiatric consequences associated with use, including intoxication, overdose, and psychosis.

[Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

Please feel free to share this with anyone who may be interested. We hope to see you there!

The New England ATTC Team

Population and Quantitative Health Sciences

UMass Chan Medical School

NewEnglandATTC@umassmed.edu

[New England ATTC - Addiction Technology Transfer Center \(ATTC\) Network](#)

[New England ATTC | LinkedIn](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 12:30 – 5:30 PM

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

Location: Paul J. DiMare Center, N1-1200 - N1-1500

Education Day offers an ongoing opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation, connect with like-minded colleagues, plan collaborations, and celebrate our educational activities and scholarship. This annual event serves to highlight the academic scholarly work that happens here, complementing your daily teaching, lab or clinical responsibilities, and curriculum development.

Education Day features plenary speakers who address topics such as the influence of Academies, conducting educational scholarly projects, and innovative trends in Health Sciences education. The event brings together key institutional leaders and educators who shape the future of Health Sciences education at UMass Chan and beyond. It also provides a forum for presenting and discussing novel educational initiatives underway at UMass Chan, enhancing our school's reputation and fostering collaboration within our educational community.

- 12:30-12:45 pm, Welcome Remarks
- 12:45-1:45 pm, Plenary (details coming soon)
- 1:55-4:00 pm Workshops
- 4:10-5:30 pm, Collaborative and Conversations (includes reception)

Click [here](#) to register.

Sunday, September 27, 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

2026 UMass Cancer Walk

Polar Park, 100 Madison Street, Worcester

Join Us for the Cancer Walk!

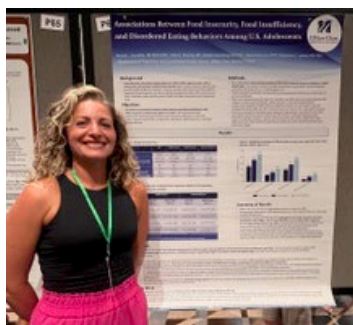
We're putting together a team for this year's cancer walk, and everyone is welcome to join! It's a great opportunity to support cancer research, honor those affected by cancer, and connect with colleagues outside of work. If you're interested in participating, please use the team invitation link below. We'd love to have you with us!

To register, click [here](#).



2024 PQHS Team

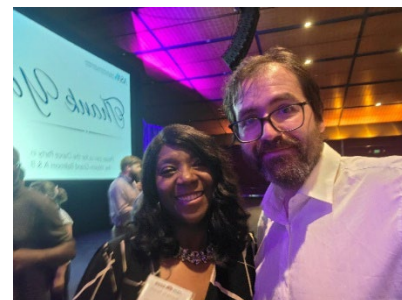
RECENT PRESENTATIONS



PQHS PhD candidate and Registered Dietitian **Jessica Caouette** recently presented her research about food insecurity and disordered eating behaviors in adolescents at the **2026 Society of Nutrition and Behavior conference in Washington, DC**. This work found that nearly 30% of U.S. adolescents reported at least one disordered eating behavior, and food insecurity was associated with higher risk of both overall and specific DEBs, and the more severe form of food insecurity, food insufficiency, was associated with an increased risk of compensatory and avoidant restrictive food intake (ARFID) disorder behaviors.

August 1-6 - 2026 Joint Statistical Meetings, Boston, MA

Joshua Rubmut, MS, PhD gave a presentation titled "RAQ-Streams: Real-time Substance Use Episode Detection with Quantization-Aware Training."



Sharina Person and Joshua Rubmut
at the President's Address

We are proud to announce that **Sharina Person, PhD** has been elected a Fellow of the American Statistical Association (ASA), the world's largest community of statisticians and data scientists. This prestigious honor recognizes her exceptional contributions to statistical sciences and her commitment to advancing the field. The ASA Fellow designation has been a significant recognition in the statistical community for nearly a century. Each year, the ASA Committee on Fellows may elect up to one-third of one percent of the association's membership as fellows. Nominees must demonstrate an established reputation and have made outstanding contributions to statistical science in research, education, industry, government, or service to the ASA and the broader profession. Being recognized as an ASA Fellow speaks to her dedication and expertise in the field of statistics, and we are incredibly proud of her achievements.



Jeron Allison (pointing to Sharina's name), Sharina Person,
Arlene Ash, and Robert Layne

DIVERSITY DIGEST

2026
AUGUST

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	31 *Fast in Honor of Holy Mother of Jesus (from 1-14 Aug.) *Lammas *Lughnasadh	1
2	3	4	5	6 Transfiguration of the Lord	7 Battle of Boyacá Day	8
9 *International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples *National Day of Singapore	10 Ecuadorian Independence Day	11 Mountain Day	12	13 Obon (13-15 Aug.)	14	15 *Assump. Virgin Mary *Dormition of Theotokos *Ferragosto *Indian Indep. Day *Korean Natl. Liberation Day
16	17 Marcus Garvey Day	18	19 World Humanitarian Day	20	21 Ninoy Aquino Day	22
23 International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition	24	25	26 *Women's Equality Day *Mawlid Al-Nabi	27 Hungry Ghost Festival	28 Raksha Bandhan	29 Beheading of St. John the Baptist
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

August 9 - Honoring the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

August 9 marks the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, a time to recognize the rich cultures, histories, languages, and contributions of Indigenous peoples around the world while reflecting on the persistent inequities many Indigenous communities continue to face. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), nearly 477 million Indigenous people live in more than 90 countries, representing over 6% of the global population. Indigenous peoples often have a life expectancy up to 20 years shorter than non-Indigenous populations and experience disproportionately higher rates of chronic disease, maternal and infant mortality, and barriers to accessing quality healthcare. The WHO attributes these inequities to the lasting impacts of colonization, discrimination, and structural inequities that shape the social determinants of health.

As members of the PQHS community, we are encouraged to reflect on how our research, education, and service can help advance health equity through respectful, community-engaged partnerships that recognize Indigenous strengths, leadership, and knowledge.

August 11 - Mountain Day

Let's join Japan in celebrating Mountain Day! In 2016, Japan established August 11 as a national public holiday to encourage people to enjoy the beautiful mountains of Japan.

While traveling to Mount Fuji on August 11 might be a challenge, we can celebrate here by hiking our own Mount Wachusett, or exploring the woods that are right in our own backyard. Here are some ideas:

[Wachusett Mountain State Reservation](#)

[Greater Worcester Land Trust](#)

[Nature trails in Worcester](#)

MassAudubon's [Broad Meadow Brook](#) and [Wachusett Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary](#)
[Trustees of the Reservation](#) properties throughout the State

August 19 - World Humanitarian Day

World Humanitarian Day is a time to honor those who step into crises to help others. It is dedicated to recognizing humanitarian personnel and those who have died working for humanitarian causes. The United Nations encourages all to call on States & parties to armed conflict to:

- Respect and protect civilians, humanitarian personnel and medical personnel.
- Allow and facilitate safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access, in accordance with international humanitarian law.
- Prevent arbitrary arrest and detention, and release humanitarian workers who are unlawfully detained.
- Conduct prompt, impartial and effective investigations into alleged violations and ensure accountability in accordance with international law.
- Support survivors and the families of humanitarian workers who have been killed or injured.
- Strengthen practical measures that help keep humanitarian personnel safe, including appropriate equipment and technology, security training, and mental health and psychosocial support.

August 26 - Women's Equality Day, observed each year on August 26, commemorates the certification of the 19th Amendment in 1920, which established women's constitutional right to vote in the United States. The amendment followed decades of activism and was ratified after Tennessee became the 36th state needed for approval.



On August 26, 1970, Betty Friedan and the National Organization for Women organized the Women's Strike for Equality, bringing more than 100,000 women into demonstrations across the country. Protesters called for equal opportunities in employment and education, accessible childcare, and an end to gender discrimination.

The following year, Representative Bella Abzug introduced legislation to establish August 26 as Women's Equality Day. Congress later formally designated the observance in 1973, creating an annual opportunity to honor the achievements of women's rights activists while acknowledging that the pursuit of full equality continues.

The day is most meaningful when it combines reflection with action: honoring the progress made while acknowledging that gender equality - particularly for women of color and other historically marginalized groups - still requires ongoing work.

Ways to observe:

- Learn about the history of women's suffrage and the activists who fought for voting rights.
- Confirm your voter registration and make a plan to participate in upcoming elections.
- Support a women-owned business, nonprofit, or community organization.
- Recognize a woman, mentor, colleague, or ally who has made a meaningful contribution to your life or community.
- Share educational resources or a thoughtful message on social media using #WomensEqualityDay.
- Organize a discussion, book group, film screening, or workplace activity focused on women's rights and gender equity.
- Commit to one action that extends beyond August 26, such as mentoring, volunteering, donating, or advocating for fair opportunities.

UMass Chan Farmers' Market



Every Tuesday through October 27
(No market on Sept.15)
10 AM - 1 PM

Two Locations:

- Market Vendors will be set up in the Albert Sherman Center, MPR - East, First Floor.
- Food Trucks and Food Vendors will set up outside on the Medical School Building Terrace.

[Click here](#) for more details and to view the list of attending food trucks and vendors



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| ✚ Labor Day – Monday, September 7 th | ✚ Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 26 th |
| ✚ Indigenous Peoples' Day – Monday, October 12 th | ✚ Day After Thanksgiving – Friday, November 27 th |
| ✚ Veterans Day – Wednesday, November 11 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.