



Department of Population Health Sciences
Public Health Program

**Bachelor of Science in Public Health
Master of Public Health
Graduate Recognition**

2024



**Public Health Program
Commencement Ceremony Program**

**May 8, 2024, 6 pm
Moss Arts Center**

The National Anthem

Welcome

Dr. M. Daniel Givens, Dean
Dr. Laura Hungerford, Department Head

Commencement Speaker

Karen Shelton, MD
State Health Commissioner

BSPH Student Speaker

Emily Galean

BSPH Special Recognition

Phi Kappa Phi - Senior Medallion Recipients
Phi Beta Kappa
Outstanding Senior
Delta Omega

MPH Student Speaker

Olatere Aljala

MPH Special Recognition

Ryan Aday Award
Delta Omega

**Awarding of Bachelor of Science in Public Health and
Master of Public Health Degrees**

Dr. Kerry Redican, BSPH Program Director
Dr. Nicole Holt, MPH Program Director
Dr. M. Daniel Givens, Dean

Closing Remarks

Dr. M. Daniel Givens, Dean

Commencement Speaker

Dr. Karen Shelton

**State Health Commissioner
Virginia Department of Health**

Dr. Shelton was named state health commissioner effective May 1, 2023 by Governor Glenn Youngkin. Dr. Shelton brings to the position a wealth of experience in public health operations and policy, health care management, and in caring for patients in the public health and private health care sectors.

Dr. Shelton, a board-certified obstetrician and gynecologist, treated patients in Bristol for nearly 20 years before turning her focus to public health. Dr. Shelton first joined the Virginia Department of Health in 2016 to lead the Mount Rogers Health District, which encompasses six county health departments and two city health departments in Southwestern Virginia. As health district director, she led the health district during the opioid overdose crisis and through the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, the health district led community testing and vaccination efforts, working closely with community leaders and healthcare providers.

Dr. Shelton's honors include being recognized as 2021 Bristolian of the Year by the Bristol Herald Courier newspaper for her work in managing the response to the pandemic. The United Way of Southwest Virginia also noted her work on the pandemic in awarding her its Woman of Distinction Award in 2022.

She is excited to rejoin the Virginia Department of Health and looks forward to working with agency staff and the Youngkin administration in improving the health of all Virginians, enhancing maternal and children's health, and addressing the dual crises of behavioral health and fentanyl poisoning that affects communities across Virginia.

Dr. Shelton received her undergraduate education at Wake Forest University, and her Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Virginia School of Medicine. She completed her obstetrics and gynecology residency at Eastern Virginia Medical School. Dr. Shelton is married and has two adult children and enjoys hiking.



Student Speakers

Public Health student speakers are chosen by their fellow students through a nomination process.

BSPH Class of 2024 Student Speaker

Emily Galean

Emily Galean has been an incredibly active public health major. In addition to her outstanding academic performance Emily has worked as a data intern at the Broad Street Institute in Falls Church, a Care Operations intern for Shiftmed in McLean, and as a rotational intern for the The Health Management Academy in Arlington. She has also volunteered for Warm Hearth Village helping residents in their assisted living activities. Emily has also worked with faculty from public health and engineering on multiple projects bring implemented in Malawi, Africa. Emily's work has reflected a passion for public health and her fellow students have acknowledged this by choosing her to be the Student Graduation Speaker.

MPH Class of 2024 Student Speaker

Olalere Ajala

Olalere Ajala was born in Lagos, Nigeria, and is the third of four children. He completed his undergraduate study in Nigeria, where he earned a Doctor of Medicine degree and practiced for a few years before enrolling in his Master of Public Health program. He is passionate about health promotion and disease prevention, and he feels that public health gives much-needed balance to the health sector by emphasizing the One Health approach to health and wellness.

2024 BS IN PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Saara Ahmed

Cum laude

Alexandra Angelo

Dyana Anjaneya

Emma Rose Atkinson

Makenzie Kay Barker

Kaylyn Elizabeth Beaupre

Arushi Bejoy

Cum laude

Lauren Michelle Beyerl

Cum laude

Colin Nathaniel Carnley

Alyssa Rain Carroll

Faith Hyeryun Chi

Magna cum laude

Brianna Ellen Cox

Cum laude

Kirsten Paige Crawford

Summa cum laude

Victoria Margaret D'Ercole

UPHA@VT Communications Officer

2024 BS IN PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Octavia Valencia Dormu

UPHA@VT President

Gehrig William Ebel

Hadeel Hatim Elhag

Grace Elisabeth Ellett

*Magna cum laude
Delta Omega inductee*

Maryem Fawzy Elnady

Cum laude

Vineela Eppe

BSPH Student Ambassador

Azeneth Flores

Mackenzie Kylee Frew

Cum laude

Kaid Philip Fuhrman

Emily Alejandra Galean

Cum laude

Nicki May Gau

*Summa cum laude
Delta Omega inductee*

Elizabeth Glazunov

Phi Kappa Phi Medallion-December 2023

Michael Joseph Gonzalez

2024 BS IN PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Saniya Angelique Greenhow

Cum laude

Jordan H. Greenspon

Summa cum laude

Ekaterina Guidry

Melat Haimanot

Cum laude

Mi-Ju Hannah Han

Magna cum laude

Sophia Draecy Hand

Summa cum laude

Director's Award

Zaid Haq

Cum laude

Ava Callie Hassebrock

Allison Henry

Summa cum laude

Delta Omega inductee

Allison Marie Hickey

Summa cum laude

UPHA@VT Outreach Officer

Delta Omega inductee

Redican Leadership Award

Briana Rachel House

Cum laude

2024 BS IN PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Dakota James Howard

Hanna Lucille Howell

Summa cum laude
Delta Omega inductee

Patrick Dewayne Hunter, Jr.

Farah Maryam Iqbal

Magna cum laude

Brittany Barbara James

Cum laude
Redican Leadership Award

Georgia Katherin Kalinchak

Jason Karas

Magna cum laude

Caroline Robinson Keller

Alexandra Anne Pat Kennedy

Grace Elizabeth Kennedy

Summa cum laude
Phi Kappa Phi Medallion-May 2024
Delta Omega inductee

Aalia Yusuf Khan

Magna cum laude

Faith Chi Kim

Ritisha Thaggahalli Kiran

2024 BS IN PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Hunter Ryan Koele

Magna cum laude

Daniel Antonio Lebron, Jr.

Malanie Janae Lee

Maggie Lin

Si Hyung Lyou

Summa cum laude

Alishba Aaryan Malik

Summa cum laude

BSPH Student Ambassador

Phi Beta Kappa

Delta Omega inductee

Ut Prosim Service Award

Alexandria Martarella

Aryan Narain Mathur

Magna cum laude

Kayla Mathilde Mbanzendore

Cum laude

UPHA@VT Vice President

Madison Landers Medoff

Magna cum laude

Kaylee Mitchell

Shubana Begum Mohammad

Cum laude

2024 BS IN PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Eleanor Grace Monnig

Summa cum laude

Brendan Miguel Morales

Magna cum laude

Collin Andrew Myburgh

Brooke Elizabeth Nazar

Cum laude

Kalen Hoang Khiem Nguyen

Harumi Esther Noda Andrade

Magna cum laude

Bridget Mary Noonan

Cum laude

Gage Price Phillips

Magna cum laude

John Zachary Plageman

Izaiah Campbell Pritt

Ut Prosim Service Award

Jenna Rose Reilly

Cum laude

Kelly Ribeiro

BSPH Student Ambassador

Delta Omega inductee

2024 BS IN PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Samantha Juliet Rodriguez

Brooke Aubrey Rogers

Summa cum laude

Phi Beta Kappa

Redican Leadership Award

Noelle Alexandra Ruesch

Summa cum laude

Gwenael Adriana Saunier

Cum laude

Riyan Heminkumar Shah

Magna cum laude

Aisha Naz Sheikh

Magna cum laude

Delta Omega inductee

Terryonna Mar'kisha Smith

Cum laude

Leah M. Solomon

Grant Gerard Soltes

Kaelin Brooke Strickland

Abigail Christine Sullivan

Summa cum laude

Reagan Alexis Tuck

Cum laude

2024 BS IN PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Benjamin Charles Vastola

Jackson Adam Walsh

Cum laude

Outstanding Senior Award

Danielle Kasyn Wentz

Cum laude

Abrielle Simone White

Laurel Rayne Whyte

Margaret Wirth

Katherine Yearout

Jessica Yim

Summa cum laude

Delta Omega inductee

Matthew Phillip Young

Amira Mustafa Younis

Noah Zawadzki

2024 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Olalere Ajala

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Well Water Quality and Associated Health Outcomes in Appalachian Virginia
Delta Omega inductee
PHA@VT Service Certificate

Mousa Alhafi

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Well Water Quality and Associated Health Outcomes in Appalachian Virginia

Sarah Kate Brownmiller

Accelerated MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: Connecting the VT Community through the Community Resiliency Model

Dana Carhart

MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: Developing an Employee Wellness Program for Roanoke City School Teachers
MPH Student Ambassador
Delta Omega inductee

Cynthia Cutler

MPH - infectious disease and community health promotion & equity concentrations

ILE title: Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 and Rabies Virus in Synanthropic Bats
PHA@VT Treasurer
Delta Omega inductee

Jon Dance

Accelerated MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: Connecting the VT Community through the Community Resiliency Model
PHA@VT Vice President
MPH Student Ambassador

2024 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Grace DiGirolamo

Accelerated MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Recent Immigration and Imported Communicable Diseases in the New River Health District

MPH Student Ambassador

Samantha Edwards

MPH - infectious disease & community health promotion & equity concentrations

ILE title: Providing Support and Theory-based Products for Establishing the OD Spike Response System in Martinsville and Henry County, VA

MPH Student Ambassador

PHA@VT Events Committee

Olivia Evans

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: One Health Antimicrobial Stewardship education for veterinary and human health communities in Virginia.

Shannon Freedman

Accelerated MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: Recent Immigration and Imported Communicable Diseases in the New River Health District

Jennifer Gallagher

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: One Health Antimicrobial Stewardship education for veterinary and human health communities in Virginia.

Doria Gilberg

DVM, MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Rabies Initiative in Hua Hin, Thailand

2024 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Ashley Gordon

Accelerated MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Hormone-Based Birth Control Impacts on Genital Herpes

Meagan Graham

MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: Providing Support and Theory-based Products for Establishing the OD Spike Response System in Martinsville and Henry County, VA

Dollie Gravley

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Enhancing Immune Health Through Yoga Practices
Delta Omega inductee

Mia Grzywinski

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Cyclospora - Evaluation of Current Knowns and Unknowns to Identify Future Directions for Research and Public Health Action
PHA@VT President
Delta Omega inductee
Ryan Aday Memorial Award

Kathryn Hardin

DVM, MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Infection control surveillance in a veterinary teaching hospital
Delta Omega inductee

Hayley Horvath

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Petersburg Healthy Options Partnerships Impact

2024 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Alexia Inzana

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Healthy Hokie Horses: Preventing Infectious Disease in VT Equines

Dayana Jeizan

Accelerated MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: Connecting the VT Community through the Community Resiliency Model
Delta Omega inductee

Caroline Jones

MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: Developing an Employee Wellness Program for Roanoke City School Teachers

Mols Kwitny

MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: LGBTQ+ Health Training for Medical Field
Delta Omega inductee
Ryan Aday Memorial Award
Diversity Committee

McKenzie Kyger

DVM, MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Rabies Initiative in Hua Hin, Thailand

Fatimat Lateef

Accelerated MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Well Water Quality and Associated Health Outcomes in Appalachian Virginia

2024 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Anne Leap

Accelerated MPH - infectious disease & community health promotion & equity concentrations

ILE title: SARS-CoV-2 Viral Concentration in Animals and Potential Spillovers in Human Populations

PHA@VT Service Certificate

GPSS Senator

Rylee Matheson

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Cyclospora - Evaluation of Current Knowns and Unknowns to Identify Future Directions for Research and Public Health Action

PHA@VT Service Certificate

Emily McGinness

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 and Rabies Virus in Synanthropic Bats

PHA@VT Service Certificate

Mandana Naderi

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Hormone-Based Birth Control Impacts on Genital Herpes

Uka Onwuka

MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

Capstone title: Assessing Demographic Disparities: Insights from Virginia's Sewershed Surveillance Initiative

Dakota Palacio

DVM, MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Veterinary First Response & Fire/Disaster Preparedness with Blacksburg Fire Department and VMCV

2024 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Sydney Petersen

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Enhancing Immune Health Through Yoga Practices

Quinn Richards

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Healthy Hokie Horses: Preventing Infectious Disease in VT Equines
Delta Omega inductee
Diversity Committee

Asia Richardson

MPH - public health education concentration and infectious disease concentrations

ILE title: Hormone-Based Birth Control Impacts on Genital Herpes
PHA@VT Service Certificate

Natalie Scheuer

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 and Rabies Virus in Synanthropic Bats
PHA@VT Service Certificate
MPH Student Ambassador

Jared Sperrazza

MPH - infectious disease concentration

Capstone title: The Impact and Severity of Drug Usage Among Roanoke Youth

Ryan Stanley

MPH - infectious disease & community health promotion & equity concentrations

ILE title: LGBTQ+ Health Training for Medical Field
PHA@VT Events Committee

2024 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Madeleine Starr

Accelerated MPH - community health promotion & equity concentration

ILE title: Connecting the VT Community through the Community Resiliency Model

Hadja Sylla

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Well Water Quality and Associated Health Outcomes in Appalachian Virginia

Jeremy Thomas

Accelerated MPH - infectious disease & community health promotion & equity concentrations

ILE title: SARS-CoV-2 Viral Concentration in Animals and Potential Spillovers in Human Populations

Julia Utting

DVM, MPH - infectious disease concentration

Capstone title: Animal Emergency Response and Education

Delta Omega inductee

PHA@VT

MPH Student Ambassador

Stephanie Valencic

Accelerated MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Hormone-Based Birth Control Impacts on Genital Herpes

PHA@VT Events

Kayla Vaught

Accelerated MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Recent Immigration and Imported Communicable Diseases in the New River Health District

2024 MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH GRADUATES

Gwen White

Accelerated MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: Petersburg Healthy Options Partnerships Impact

Amanda Wolfe

MPH - infectious disease concentration

ILE title: One Health Antimicrobial Stewardship education for veterinary and human health communities in Virginia.

PHA@VT Secretary

MPH Final Presentations

About the Integrative Learning Experience

The Integrative Learning Experience (ILE) is a culminating experience required to complete the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree. The ILE requires students to synthesize the knowledge and skills acquired through their coursework and practical experiences through a team-based public health professional experience.

Students spend the semester working in a team of MPH students on a project that benefits an external stakeholder organization/agency or a faculty research lab. Along with their external stakeholder mentor, the team of MPH students is guided by the ILE course instructor.

The ILE places significant emphasis on teamwork, mentorship, and leadership development. ILE projects result in team and individual written products.

The ILE allows students to further develop knowledge and skills in foundational public health areas as well as in their chosen MPH concentration.

About Capstone

The Capstone is a culminating experience option to complete the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree. For the Capstone, students integrate and apply the skills and competencies they have acquired in the classroom and in their practicum to a public health problem that approximates a professional practice experience.

Students spend the semester working with their public health faculty advisor to develop their Capstone academic paper and presentation.

The Capstone project allows students to further develop knowledge and skills in foundational public health areas as well as in their chosen MPH concentration.

Special Recognition

Director's Award

The BSPH Director's Award recipient is determined by the Director of the Undergraduate Public Health program in conjunction with the BSPH faculty to recognize a deserving senior.

BSPH Outstanding Senior Award

The Outstanding Senior Sash is awarded to the Outstanding Undergraduate Senior in the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine. The Outstanding Senior is selected based on their academic achievement, service, leadership, engagement with the University and community. The recipient wears the Outstanding Senior Sash at commencement.

BSPH Ut Prosim Service Award

The Ut Prosim Service Award recognize students for their service in the BSPH program, the PHS department, the University and community. Recipients wear blue cords at commencement.

Leadership Award

The Leadership Award recognize students for their leadership in the BSPH program, the PHS department, the University and community. Recipients wear blue cords at commencement.

Phi Beta Kappa Mu of Virginia Chapter Inductees

Phi Beta Kappa is the nation's oldest and most widely known honor society. The Virginia Tech Mu of Virginia Chapter invites for induction the most outstanding arts and sciences students.

Phi Kappa Phi- Senior Medallion

The Phi Kappa Phi Medallion is awarded by The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. The Phi Kappa Phi Medallion is awarded at commencement time to the top graduate from each college who earned the highest grade point average. The recipient wears the Phi Kappa Phi Medallion at commencement.

Special Recognitions

BSPH Peer Mentoring Program

The BSPH Peer Mentoring Program is a student-led program designed to foster the academic, social, and professional growth of public health undergraduate students. Exemplary upper level public health students serve as peer mentors for first-year students. The program Student Coordinator and mentors wear salmon cords at commencement.

BSPH & MPH Student Ambassadors

Student Ambassadors are selected yearly by current students, faculty, staff, and alumni of the Public Health Program. The Student Ambassadors support and represent the program, and serve as a liaison to admitted, current, and prospective students. Student Ambassadors wear salmon cords at commencement.

PHA@VT and UPHA@VT Executive Board

The program's student organization, the Public Health Association at Virginia Tech, PHA@VT at the graduate level and UPHA@VT at the undergraduate level, was formed in accordance with the University motto, *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) to teach others, gain experience, and improve public health across campus and the community at large. Graduating PHA@VT and UPHA@VT Executive Board members are recognized for their leadership in the organization. Additionally, graduating members that have met PHA@VT service requirements are recognized by the program for their commitment to service across campus and beyond. All Executive Board members and members who have met their service requirements wear red cords at commencement.

Graduate and Professional Student Senate - MPH Senators

Working to improve campus life, scholarly development, and community for all graduate students at Virginia Tech, the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) serves as the liaison between graduate students and University Administration. Each year, MPH students serve as GPSS MPH Senators to represent the MPH student body at the university level and to inform their peers of GPSS proceedings, including legislations and programs.

Special Recognition

Delta Omega Delta Mu Chapter Inductees

Delta Omega is the honorary society for studies in public health. Founded in 1924, the Delta Mu Chapter at Virginia Tech was chartered in March 2017.

Membership in Delta Omega honors the dedication of individuals to high quality public health scholarship, as well as to the protection and advancement of the health of all people. Selection is based on academic excellence and demonstrated qualities of leadership in public health for students and faculty, and for alumni, on accomplishments that serve as a model for future graduates. Inductees wear the Delta Omega sash at commencement.

In addition to 10 MPH and 10 BSPH students graduating this spring, the Delta Mu chapter is inducting program faculty member, Nick Ruktanonchai; MPH alumni, Steven Black and Jessica Agnew; honorary member, Dr. Karen Shelton.

Ryan Aday Memorial Award

Ryan Aday was an excellent and highly motivated student who completed his MS Ed in Health Promotion at Virginia Tech. Shortly after graduation, he was diagnosed with cancer and succumbed to the disease. In his honor, Dr. and Mrs. David Aday created the Ryan Aday Memorial Award. Each spring, the MPH Program selects a graduating student from each concentration that has displayed excellence in academics and public health service as an award recipient.

CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF

2024

You are no stranger to difficult roads. Nevertheless, you have walked this part of your journey with strength and character. No matter the challenges or obstacles ahead, we know you will meet them with the grace and persistence we have seen you exemplify during your time at Virginia Tech. Know that everyone in the Public Health Program and the Department of Population Health Sciences is proud of you and wish you all the best.

Please keep in touch.
Once a Hokie, always a Hokie!



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VIRGINIA TECH™

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PublicHealthVT

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commencement social media posts.

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