



## Sophia Teshome: Working to Improve Public Health in Ethiopia

Sophia Teshome's mother is a former nurse who does community work. Her father is a "global health hero" who helped rid polio from Ethiopia. It was only natural their passion for healthier populations would rub off on Sophia, a Seattle native drawn to her ancestral homeland. Her MPH degree in hand, Teshome is working in Addis Ababa with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to improve that country's health. [Find out how Teshome got her job and what it's like to live and work in Ethiopia.](#)

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## Pioneering the Sacred



**DNA Lecture Explores Intersection of Law, Genetics**

Can you patent a gene? Is genetically engineered fish

food or animal? And what does it all mean to indigenous peoples? These were some of the provocative questions posed by Rebecca Tsosie (above left), a nationally known law professor and Native American who engaged UW public health and law students with the 2nd annual DNA Day Lecture, "Pioneering the Sacred: Indigenous Peoples and the Genome Commons." The lecture was made possible with support from Carlyn Steiner (above right) and from her father's advised fund, the Carl G. Koch Endowed Fund to support the UW Law School. [Read more.](#)

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**The Power of Public Health ▶**

SPH students talk about the impact of public health. [Watch the Video.](#)

## Making a Difference

Can Twitter Lessen Obesity?



How does Twitter affect obesity? This is one of the studies funded by five pilot grants (up to \$40,000 each) awarded by SPH

to help meet the six emerging challenges of [the](#)

**Alumnus of the Year**

[school's strategic plan](#). The grants are to: understand the impact of social networks on obesity among different demographic groups (Ali Shojaie); examine the relationship between perceived discrimination and chronic stress among Latina and white women (India Ornelas and Shirley Beresford); evaluate strategies to promote meaningful discussion of climate change among diverse groups (Rich Fenske); improve malaria diagnosis and treatment in Mozambique (Kenneth Sherr); and increase the rate of circumcision in Uganda to reduce HIV risk (Joseph Babigumira).

## Blueprint for a Healthier, Safer Community



Residents of a north Seattle neighborhood now have new ideas on how to make their community safer and healthier. A group of eight second-year Community-Oriented Public Health Practice students, advised by Jack Thompson, conducted more than 150 conversations with people in the Little Brook neighborhood during a month-long survey commissioned by Lake City Greenways. The [61-page report](#) makes recommendations on how to reduce crime and fear, improve traffic safety, and increase public/private investment and social cohesion.

## Lowering Lead Levels in Vietnam



Recycling lead from used car batteries is an important revenue source for poor communities in Vietnam. Researchers from DEOHS, in collaboration with the Vietnamese National Institute of Occupational and Environmental Health, have found that children in these battery-recycling villages have high blood lead levels. Research Industrial Hygienist Gerry Croteau and Associate Professors Catherine Karr and William Daniell tested surface lead levels in Dong Mai village with Vietnamese colleague Nam, pictured. The results will help researchers develop a lead remediation plan for the village. Funding for the work comes from Daniell's Rohm and Haas Professorship in Public Health Sciences.

## Alumni Updates

**Josephine Oke, MPH 2012**, Health Services, is working with a tribal organization in rural Alaska, as Program Manager for Public Health Nursing program - Northwest Arctic Borough District. She "continues to enjoy all areas" of her job.

**Lillian Benjamin, MPH 2008**, Global Health, is a Foreign Service Officer for USAID in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**Ayse Tezcan, MPH 2006**, Health Services, is a third year PhD student in Epidemiology. Her area of interest



Michael Phillips, MD, MA, MPH (1985, Epidemiology), has been chosen as the SPH Distinguished Alumnus of 2013 in recognition of his significant work around suicide prevention in China. He will receive his award here in October and will also give a UW Walker Ames lecture.

## Magnuson Scholar



SPH's new Magnuson Scholar Cynthia Curl investigates how pesticides affect our health. [Learn more.](#)

## Annual Report



[Health Matters: 2012 SPH Annual Report](#)  
Learn how our School is developing the next generation of public health leaders in our Annual Report, now in online magazine format.

## Alumni Awards



Help us select our 2014 Distinguished Alumnus!

Nominations are now open. [Learn more.](#)

is Molecular Epidemiology, and she has started her dissertation topic on Autism and epigenetic role of arsenic. Her son recently became a Husky as well!

**Douglas Johns, MS 2000 and PhD 2005,** Environmental and Occupational Health, has joined Centers for Disease Control & Prevention/ The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) as the deputy director in the NIOSH Division of Respiratory Disease Studies in Morgantown, WV.

**Polly Newcomb, MPH 1982 and PhD 1985,** Epidemiology, was honored with the 2013 Distinguished Achievement Award from the American Society of Preventive Oncology.

**Nancy Flournoy, PhD 1982,** Biostatistics, was appointed Distinguished Curators' Professor at the University of Missouri.

**Rogelio Riojas, MHA 1977,** Health Services, has been selected to receive the University of Washington's 2013 Charles E. Odegaard Award. The award honors an individual whose leadership in the community exemplifies the former UW president's work on behalf of diversity.

[See more Alumni Updates.](#)

*Please update us! Send your news to [sphalum@uw.edu](mailto:sphalum@uw.edu).*

## Upcoming Events

**May 1**  
SOPHAS Webinar:  
Repayment Strategies for  
Public Health Graduates

**May 8**  
Town Hall Lecture  
Paul Anastas: Designing a  
Sustainable Tomorrow

**May 30**  
DEOHS Annual  
Student Research Day

**June 14**  
SPH Graduation  
Undergraduate & Graduate  
Ceremonies  
*Tickets required*

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