Health Professional Students Called to Address Social Justice
by Betty Coffman, Health Communications Specialist, Office of Communication and Marketing

Health care professionals often are aware of larger social issues facing their patients in disadvantaged communities but feel powerless as individual practitioners to change these health disparities. The University of Louisville’s new Health and Social Justice Scholars Program is accepting applicants who will be trained to work with other professionals in communities to bring about changes to benefit underserved and disadvantaged populations.

Students in the UofL schools of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing and Public Health and Information Sciences who are dedicated to social justice are encouraged to apply for the program, where they will learn techniques for working interprofessionally and with community members to improve the overall health of the populations through community engagement and scholarly activities. The students will work with faculty mentors to combat issues such as youth violence, public water safety and depression in adolescents in West Louisville and other disadvantaged communities.

“As a pediatrician, I know that a physician can’t do it alone,” said V. Faye Jones, MD, PhD, MSPH, assistant vice president for health affairs – diversity initiatives at UofL. “You have to have different perspectives and different skills to move that needle. We cannot work in silos; we have to work as a team to accomplish the goal of health equity.”

One second-year student from each of the four schools in the UofL Health Sciences Center will be selected for the first cohort of scholars for the 2016-2017 academic year. The Health and Social Justice Scholars will conduct interprofessional, community-based research along with a faculty mentor, participate in community service projects and attend monthly discussions. In addition, the scholars will receive annual financial support of $10,000 toward their education programs. Scholars are expected to continue in the program for three years.

“We want students who are dedicated to community engagement and who are passionate about making a difference,” said Jones, who oversees the program. “Eventually, these professionals will be leaders in advocating for policy changes to improve the overall health of the community.”

Applicants for the program must be entering their second year of a doctoral program in the school of Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing or Public Health and Information Sciences. Applications will be accepted through May 31. For additional information and to apply, visit the Health and Social Justice Scholars web page, or contact the UofL Health Sciences Center Office of Diversity and Inclusion at 502-852-7159 or hscodi@louisville.edu.
Dental School Grads Return Home to Serve Rural Kentucky

by Julie Heflin, Coordinator, Office of Communication and Marketing

As girls growing up in rural Kentucky, it was an easy decision for Emily Knight and Jerrica Norvell to return to the communities they loved to work as health care professionals. Receiving money to make that happen sweetened the pot.

The 2015 DMD-graduates of the University of Louisville Dental School have chosen to join practices where the help is most needed – rural Kentucky.

Both new dentists are benefiting from a loan forgiveness program in exchange for underserved areas, the Appalachian Dental Loan Forgiveness Program supported up to five dental school graduates of either the University of Louisville or University of Kentucky with $100,000 each for a two-year commitment to practice in the eastern region of the state.

“Kentucky is fortunate that the funder, the Appalachian Regional Commission, values the importance of a competent healthcare workforce with this project,” said Julie Watts McKee, DMD, state dental director for the Kentucky Department for Public Health. “This opportunity places two well-trained UofL general dentists in areas of Appalachian Kentucky where there are too few dentists.

A native of Liberty, Ky., Norvell says the loan forgiveness program has given her the chance to serve the people of Williamsburg, Kentucky – both in treating immediate dental needs and teaching patients about the importance of routine dental care as a pathway to prevention.

“It was my dream as a little girl to become a dentist, and now I am living this dream in my own community,” Norvell said.

Knight and Norvell recently received their first installment of $50,000, and will receive an additional $50,000 when they complete their two-year commitment of practice in the Appalachian region.

Both plan to stay in the region for many years, and hope to eventually own their own practices.

“I truly love what I do and love the area where I’m working,” Knight said. “Helping those who need it the most is the most rewarding aspect of my profession.”
School of Medicine

U of L Clinic Staff Reaches Out to Owensboro Refugee Population

by Elizabeth Barnes and Steven Gootee, Global Health Initiative

Every year, Kentucky resettles thousands of refugees. While most of those new arrivals are directed to Louisville and become clients of Kentucky Refugee Ministries or Catholic Charities, several hundred are resettled in Lexington, Bowling Green, and Owensboro. These smaller cities also have thriving, diverse refugee populations.

Different resettlement agencies have different access to resources to offer their clients. As the number of refugees entering the U.S. has swelled, the International Center of Kentucky in Owensboro developed a backlog of newly arriving refugees needing their initial health assessment. This is a healthcare visit that is provided for all resettling refugees and serves as a bridge to a primary care provider and identifies health issues that are present and may pose a concern to the refugee or their new community. In late 2015 Dr. James Litsey, Director of the IC-O, reached out to the Kentucky Office of Refugees to explore options for helping provide health screenings to refugees in need. KOR Refugee Health Coordinator Allison Pauly contacted the University of Louisville Division of Infectious Diseases Global Health Program team, a long-time collaborative partner in providing health services to the Kentucky refugee population. The Global Health staff routinely provides health screenings to Louisville-area refugees at the 550 Clinic, and travels to both Louisville resettlement agencies every other week to offer a vaccine clinic for clients. Under the direction of UofL’s Dr. Ruth Carrico, the team made plans to travel across the state to bring the same high-quality care to refugees in Owensboro.

In the cold early hours of Saturday, January 16, the Global Health team packed up all the medical equipment and supplies necessary for health screenings and made the two-hour drive to Owensboro. Because Louisville has seen the same unprecedented influx of refugees experienced in Owensboro, U of L staff offered to travel on a weekend rather than close the 550 Clinic on a weekday and lose possible refugee screening time slots. Thirteen Global Health Program staff, including a physician, nurse practitioners, medical assistants, and a phlebotomist with a fully-operational mobile laboratory, undertook the trip. This would be the first day of a two-visit commitment - refugee health assessments require two separate appointments for each patient, spaced at least several days apart so that blood and urine samples can be collected, tested, and the results used to provide follow-up care.

When they arrived at the International Center, the team assessed members of four refugee families - one Somali, two Burmese, and one

Medical Assistant Vanisa Bandushubwenge gives exam to child refugee
Nepal. Twenty-three total patients were assessed, including seven adults and sixteen children. For the initial visit, UofL staff members assessed each patient, took vital signs, recorded patient demographic information and medical histories, and collected urine and blood samples for lab work before driving two hours back to Louisville.

The Global Health team returned to Owensboro to complete second visits two weeks later, on Saturday January 30th, again traveling to Owensboro to finish the second step of the health assessment process. The staff met with refugees to again take vital signs, gather any additional medical information clients can provide, perform a physical exam, explain their lab results, and make additional referrals indicated by findings from the labs/physical exams. A number of existing health issues were identified and connections made with local healthcare providers and facilities. The Global Health mobile clinic was deemed a complete success by the refugees, Dr. Litsey, the Kentucky Office for Refugees, and the UL Global Health Program team. Following dinner at the Moonlite Bar-B-Q Inn in Owensboro, the team returned home to get ready for another clinic on Monday. This experience was collaboration at its best and demonstrated the need and the opportunity to work with partners across the state in order to address shared needs and interests. The team looks forward to the next opportunity!
The unseen workers who help ensure thrilling thoroughbred races at Churchill Downs now have better mental health support for the emotional problems their itinerant jobs often compound. Recently, the Kentucky Racing Health Services Center – an award-winning, nonprofit clinic run by University of Louisville School of Nursing faculty – began offering mental health services to grooms, hotwalkers, exercise riders and other backside racetrack workers.

Catherine Batscha, DNP, MSN, UofL School of Nursing assistant professor and psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner, provides counseling at the clinic to workers with anxiety and depression. A majority of the patients are from Latin America and speak limited English. Most also consistently travel across the United States throughout the year to work at other racetracks.

“It’s a hard life,” Batscha said. “When you look at the track, a lot of the people who work there have families that are far away. They miss their children. Some have been sexually abused, raped or have grown up in families with alcoholism and substance abuse.”

Previously, the clinic had to send patients to other facilities in the community for mental health treatment, which often took months for an appointment.

“If you’re in the middle of a crisis, you don’t want to wait the eight weeks it’s going to take to find a provider,” Batscha said. “If they have someone who needs to be seen today, I can see them today.”

Providing mental health treatment in-house has made it easier to coordinate care with other nurse practitioners at the clinic, which offers comprehensive services including physicals and women’s annual exams, treatment of minor illnesses and maintenance treatment for conditions such as diabetes, asthma and hypertension.

Founded 11 years ago, the clinic is a joint venture between UofL and the Kentucky Racing Health and Welfare Fund to provide free or low-cost health care to backside track workers and their families. Nursing students see patients under the supervision of faculty members. Students from the Latin American and Latino Studies program also gain experience by serving as translators.

Because most of her patients are transient, Batscha gives them ways to manage anxiety on the road. Batscha created a SoundCloud relaxation audio in Spanish that patients can access through their smartphones. The audio walks users through progressive muscle relaxation techniques, useful for people who need help getting to sleep or calming their bodies and minds.

The clinic has eliminated barriers to care for the backside workers. Maria Rinosa, a hotwalker at Churchill Downs and a native of Guatemala, sought mental health treatment for depression at the clinic after the death of her 1-year-old son due to a viral infection.

Without the clinic, Rinosa said she would have limited health care options.

“I don’t know where else I would go,” Rinosa said. “Without medical insurance, the cost is really expensive and the little we earn doesn’t stretch that far.”

Despite their hardships, the workers are incredibly dedicated to their jobs and take pride in their work, Batscha said.

“Everyone is up at 3 in the morning with their horses on the track,” Batscha said. “It’s just humbling to work with folks who have been through so much. They’re still on their feet and working to do a good job and make a difference for Kentucky.”

The Kentucky Racing Health Services Center is located at 422 Heywood Ave. For more information, go to http://louisville.edu/nursing/programs-centers/kentucky-racing-health-services-center
A Taste of Local Produce in a Food Desert: The Gray Street Farmers’ Market Opens

by Julie Heflin, Coordinator, Office of Communication and Marketing

Fresh fruits and vegetables, pasture-raised meat and eggs, honey, jams, baked items, and herbs are just a few of the Gray Street Farmers Market foods available to the community beginning May 19. The farmers’ market serves those who work at the Health Sciences Center campus, hospitals, and other area businesses as well as residents who live in the surrounding neighborhoods of Phoenix Hill, Smoketown, Shelby Park and Liberty Green.

“Public health is about creating conditions under which people can be healthy, and that is why we organize this weekly event,” said Craig Blakely, Ph.D., M.P.H., dean, University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences. “Farmers markets are great ways to bring fresh, healthy foods into our neighborhoods. Because our market accepts debit cards, SNAP benefits and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Vouchers, it is affordable and accessible to everyone.”

“We’re delighted the Gray Street Farmers market is returning to downtown Louisville for the eighth year. The fact that the farmers market is located between the UofL School of Public Health and Information Sciences and the Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness is helping to deliver our shared message of nutritious eating to the broader community,” said Joann Schulte, D.O., M.P.H., director, Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness.

Open each Thursday through October 26, from 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., the market includes 11 vendors from throughout Kentucky and Indiana. The market welcomes two new farmers and will host a rotating group of lunch vendors and food trucks, with three options each week, in addition to the Asian-inspired offerings from Green Farm. The market also has established a new partnership with the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service’s Nutrition Education Program, and will co-sponsor meal-sampling events on June 9, July 14, and August 11.

Located on the 400 block of E. Gray Street, between South Preston and South Jackson streets, the Gray Street Farmers Market is coordinated by the UofL School of Public Health and Information Sciences and the Metro Department of Health and Wellness. Parking is available on Chestnut, Preston or Jackson streets as well as the Chestnut Street garage.

For more information about the Gray Street Farmers’ Market, please visit their website at http://louisville.edu/sphis/gsfm

Strawberries at the Gray Street Farmers’ Market
Post-Bac Students Make a Difference with Help from Chef Darnell Ferguson
by John Dickens, Student, Post-Bac Pre-Med Program

It is often said that no act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. While that may be regarded as a cliché sentiment, it is easy to find plenty of real-world examples where people in need can be deeply impacted by common acts of service. Students in UofL’s Post-Baccalaureate Pre-Medical Program are given the opportunity to participate in such acts on a regular basis through volunteer projects inherent to the program’s goal of educating Kentucky’s future physician-leaders.

In working to diversify the healthcare workforce and create well-rounded medical school applicants, a core feature of the program are the opportunities afforded to students to give back to the Louisville community through service projects. One such project which has made a lasting impact on those who participate is the program’s relationship with the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana. Founded in 1984, the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana provides a home away from home for families of children receiving healthcare at local medical facilities by providing 36 private guest rooms for families of children, free laundry facilities, recreational activities, and meals either donated or prepared by community volunteers.

Several weekends each semester, post-bac students are invited to visit the Ronald McDonald House to prepare and serve a home-cooked meal to out-of-town families staying in the facility. On a recent visit, students were led by local chef and business owner Darnell Ferguson who treated the families to a meal of home-made chicken fried rice with sweet and sour glaze. Ferguson, widely known as “Super Chef”, is someone who understands the importance of giving back and helping those in need. Overcoming a history of homelessness and incarceration, Ferguson has harnessed his ambition and passion for cooking to transform himself into an important member of the Louisville community and has achieved great success with his restaurant “Super Chefs.” Although the original restaurant location was destroyed in a fire in January 2016, Ferguson has continued to remain positive and engaged in the culinary scene through the APRON charity and has even appeared with famed chef Emeril Lagasse on the Rachel Ray Show. Now in the process of rebuilding and despite his extremely busy schedule, Ferguson still makes it a point to lend his culinary gifts to those in need when he can.

“I love using my time for other people, it was just a fantastic experience for me,” Ferguson said of the event.
For the post-bac dinner, Ferguson showed the students how to make the dish for approximately 70 people and put them to work with the tasks of preparing the ingredients.

“I really enjoyed the fact that even by doing something simple or small like dicing vegetables or washing dishes, we were able to help people who are dealing with a difficult situation in a very practical way,” said post-bac student Laura Davis.

While these acts may seem like small gestures to the volunteers, for the families at Ronald McDonald House, having community members come to the facility and cook meals for them makes a real difference during their time of need.

Sara Silletto, Director of Development with Ronald McDonald House Charities of Kentuckiana, expressed how grateful the families were to have a hot meal prepared for them: “because of our volunteers, these parents know when they leave the hospital, home is only minutes away from their babies, not miles away. Less than two blocks away, they have their own space for rest and a home-cooked meal waiting for them. Friendly, familiar faces will greet them as they walk through our doors and caring hearts will sit and listen during dinner or over a cup of coffee”.

The students of the post-bac program look forward to continuing to support the Ronald McDonald house and welcome others to join them in their service.

Other members of the University of Louisville community who are interested in sharing in their time to help at the Ronald McDonald House can call 502-371-1442 or email volunteer@rmhc-kentuckiana.org to sign up to sponsor a meal.

Graduate Spotlight

Former Pageant Winner and State Representative Candidate Awarded Highest Honor for Doctoral Students

by Hayley Kappes, Health Communication Specialist, Office of Communication and Marketing

Ashley Miller didn’t take a traditional path in her graduate career. A former pageant winner and state representative candidate, Miller, 32, has been awarded the Guy Stevenson Award for Excellence in Graduate Studies, the highest honor the University of Louisville gives to graduating doctoral students. Miller received her Ph.D. from the UofL School of Nursing at spring commencement Saturday, May 14, at the KFC Yum! Center.

Named after a former dean of the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies, the Guy Stevenson Award is given in the fall and spring semesters to the most outstanding doctoral graduate who excels in scholarship and leadership.

As the recipient, Miller carried the School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies banner at the Doctoral Hooding and Graduation Ceremony and the university-wide Commencement Ceremony on May 14, She also spoke at the Hooding Ceremony.

Miller was raised in Louisville and is co-owner of Athena Health and Wellness, a boutique-style health center for women where she works as a women’s health nurse practitioner.

While working and attending school full-time in 2014, she ran for state representative of the 32nd District in east Louisville, losing to Phil Moffett.

“She ran a campaign for political office while pursuing a Ph.D., which is borderline unheard of,” said Ben Wetherbee, coordinator.
Miller received her B.S.N. from Berea College and her M.S.N. from UofL. She is the first person in her family to graduate from college and supported her education by participating in beauty pageants to take advantage of scholarship programs. Miller won Ms. Kentucky United States in 2013, Miss Black Ohio in 2010 and Miss University of Louisville in 2008. Her success in pageants provided enough scholarship money to pay for her master’s education.

Miller said she was humbled to receive the Guy Stevenson Award. “I think when you’re in the program and you’re working so hard toward a goal, you really don’t pay attention to the stuff around you that you’ve achieved, so it definitely feels amazing for someone to tap you and say we think your work is amazing,” Miller said. “It’s a pillar of hope for other people that you really can achieve anything you want if you work hard enough and stay persistent.”

Upcoming Diversity Events & Announcements

- **Bingham Clinic Research Meeting**  
  *Dr. Monnica Williams presents an overview of her research on OCD, African American mental health, culture, and trauma*  
  Saturday, May 28  
  12:00 –1:00pm  
  Bingham Clinic, Baxter Conference Room  
  More Information [here](#)

- **Metro Louisville Public Health Smoketown Community Conversation**  
  Thursday, June 2  
  6:00—7:00pm  
  Unity Church, 757 S. Brook St.  
  More Information [here](#)

- **Cooking Matters**  
  Thursdays, June 2—July 7  
  11:00am  
  Redeemer Lutheran Church, 3640 River Park Dr.  
  Contact: [Dr. Karen Krigger](#)

- **LGBT Center Safe Zone 1 Training**  
  Friday, June 3  
  12:00—1:30pm  
  Abell Building 110  
  Lunch Provided, [RSVP](#)

- **National HIV Awareness Day**  
  Monday, June 27

- **Community Festival and Health Fair**  
  Saturday, July 30  
  10:00am—3:00pm  
  Redeemer Lutheran Church, 3640 River Park Dr.  
  Contact: [Dr. Karen Krigger](#)