

Report of the President to the Governing Council



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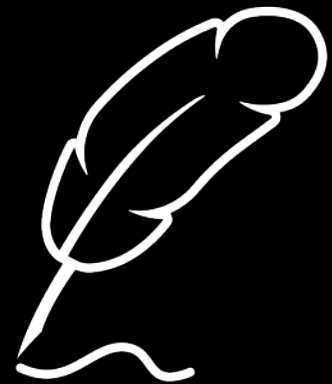
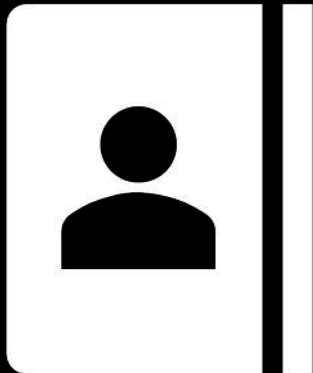
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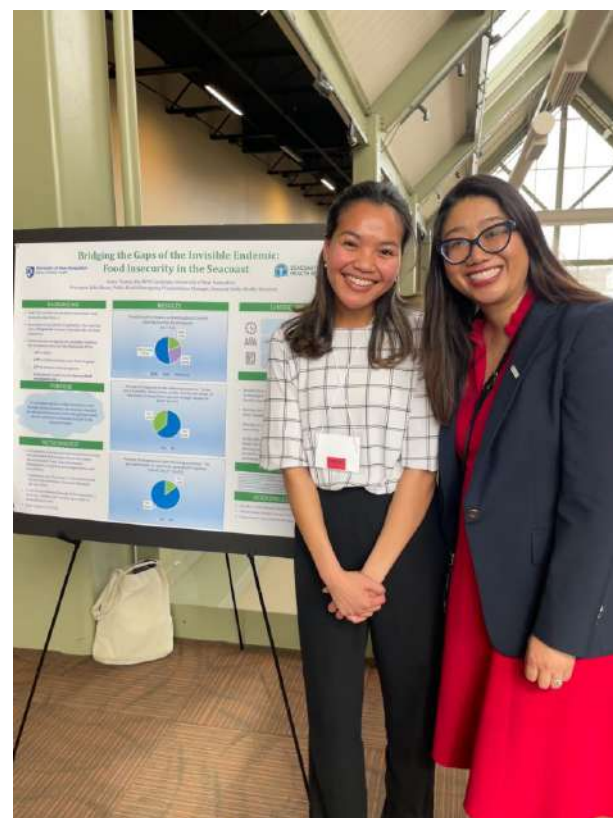
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Adventures In Presidenting















Play For Health

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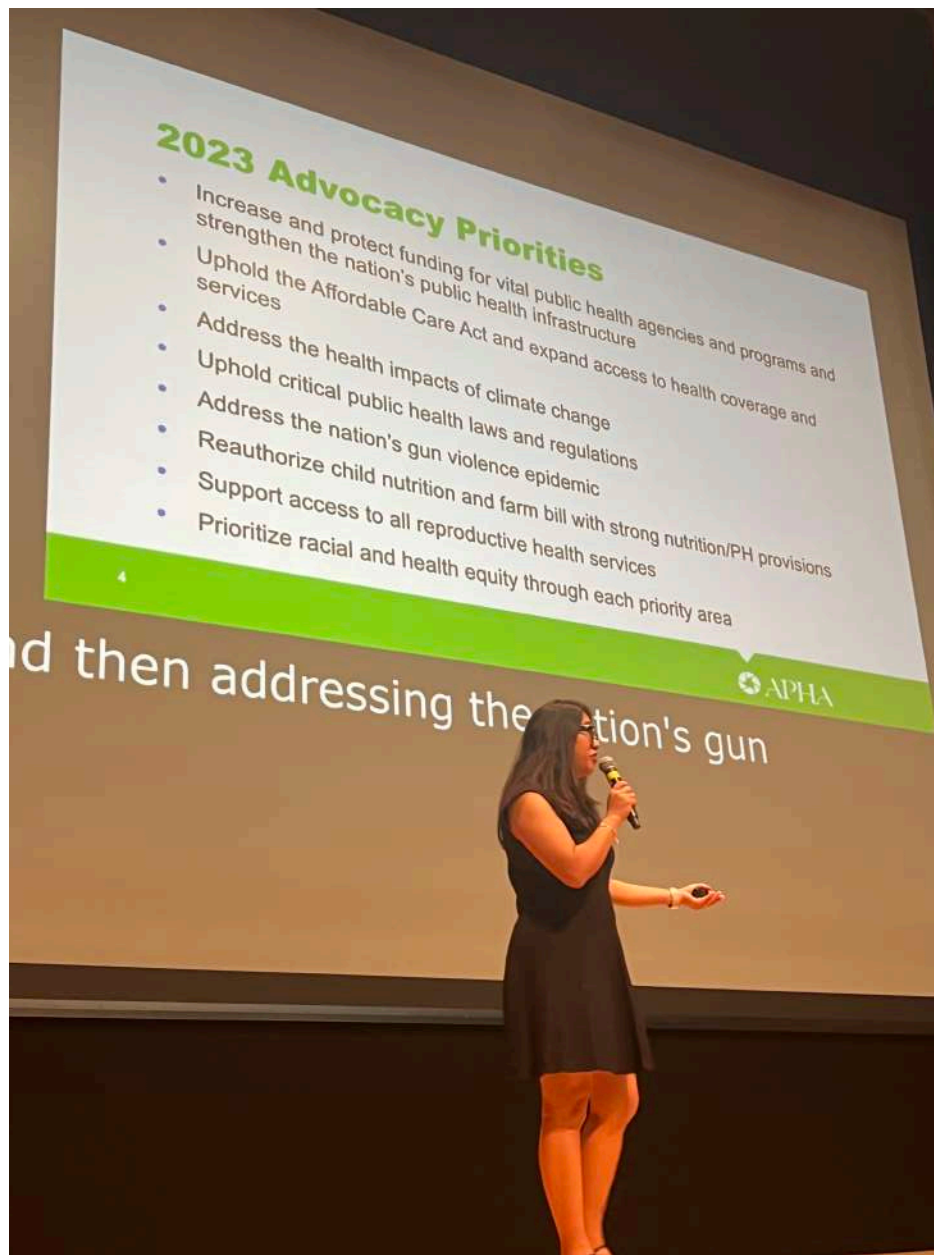












VITAL SIGNS

Perspectives of the president of APHA

Culture, belonging and public health: National Public Health Week and me

I WAS MOST DEFINITELY not a "cool kid" growing up. I had few friends. And I wasn't athletic, so team sports weren't an option. But honestly, as the oldest of two daughters of Asian immigrants who worked multiple jobs, there wasn't time for anyone to take me to any after-school activities.

My afternoons and evenings were spent mostly alone, reading in my room, and later, watching over my younger sister and young cousins. For a long time, I didn't feel like I belonged anywhere.

For most people, growing up is not easy. I vividly remember being told to have to show my parents a less than perfect "A" grade. Then later, the shame, fear and gut-wrenching anxiety of letting them know that I did not want to go to medical school.

Putting a smile on my face to hide my emotions became second nature. I could code-switch with a blink of an eye. Forget about therapy; it was an unspoken rule that mental health was not to be spoken about. I share this because it's a part of my culture and upbringing, but also to let you know that you are not alone.

I'm grateful to say that over the years, despite the model minority myth and barriers to treatment and services that many Asians still face today, I was fortunate to have received guidance, support and therapy from many people and groups and that has made all the difference in my physical and mental health. While I am still by no means an athlete, I've been able to find welcoming places and friends to move with. Meeting regularly with a therapist who is aware of my culture and upbringing and how it affects me helps me immensely with my depression and anxiety. I finally feel like I have a community that I belong

to, and that even though I'm not a cool kid, I can be loved and appreciated for who I am.

Again, I share this because it's a part of my culture, my upbringing, my health and my very being. This April, we celebrate National Public Health Week's "Centering and Celebrating Cultures in Public Health."

As we continue to do the good work of public health, let's not forget how culture and values affect the health and well-being of those we serve. By celebrating the cultural connections and welcome everyone. And in doing so, we can make the world a healthier, more just and safer place for all.

Finally, here's what I'm up to:

- **Play:** I just learned to play a fast-paced card game, *7ix*, with my family. It's a lot of fun, but be aware, it can get loud!
- **Read:** "James Patterson" by James Patterson. Now, I think I want to write my own memoir, if only to remember all of my adventures in "presiding."
- **Vote:** Learning up to vote in my local May town elections and also hopeful to get out the vote for my own candidacy as I run for election for library trustee. Remember, local elections matter!

Share how you're doing by using these hashtags on social media: #Play4Health, #Read4Health, and #Vote4Health.

With love and thanks,

Chris Chanyosukit

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April 3-9 event recognizes role of cultures, community in health National Public Health Week celebrated this month

PUBLIC HEALTH is everywhere—in clean water, safe roads and effective vaccines. It is also within cultures and communities, which influence lifelong health and well-being.

National Public Health Week, organized annually by APHA, is a chance to celebrate and engage Americans around public health. This year's theme, "Centering and Celebrating Cultures in Health," highlights the diversity and uniqueness of communities and their resilience in the face of threats to their health.

"Our communities and cultures have so much impact on our health," Lindsey Wahowiak, APHA director of Affiliate Affairs, told *The Nation's Health*. "This year, we celebrate all the ways cultures aid health and how public health can help uplift them."

The annual event, April 3-9, will bring together health workers, advocates, scholars and community members to partner and raise awareness of public health's importance and function in society.

Every day of NPHW will feature a health topic that organizers are building activities and outreach around. Monday will focus on community; Tuesday, violence prevention; Wednesday, reproductive and sexual health; Thursday, mental health; Friday, rural health; Saturday, accessibility; and Sunday, nutrition and food. Fact pages on each of the topics are available on the NPHW website.

Hundreds of NPHW events are held across the U.S. every year. In Grand Forks, North Dakota, Grand Forks Public Health is working with its mayor to present a NPHW proclamation to the City Council and organize a public health champion award ceremony.

Sarah Olegard, RN, who coordinates NPHW at the health agency.

"We have many local public health



Photo by @saraholegarn, courtesy @nphw

Locally organized NPHW events include fitness walks, speaker panels, information booths, networking events and awards.

Challenge, which helps motivate people to become and stay active, continues through April 9. Participants join teams, track activities and can win prizes. The annual event is especially popular this year, with twice as many participants as 2022.

For challenge participant Ash Phillips, PhD, of Accord, New York, having fitness walks increases motivation to stay active and engaged.

"They are truly amazing people, and on days when I want to do nothing, I think about how that means one of them has to do more," Phillips told *The Nation's Health*. "We really all feel responsible to each other, but in a positive way."

The NPHW website offers step-by-step event planning tips, sample promotional language—including a NPHW proclamation—and 48 social media shareables. The tools are available in both English and Spanish.

For more information and to add an event to the calendar, visit www.nphw.org.

—Mark Barka



Play, Read, and Vote for Health

As American Public Health Association president, I've traveled across the nation to visit state public health associations and educational institutions—such as Boise State University, Idaho State University, and the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston—and connect with community leaders and students to share my three steps of playing, reading, and voting for a healthier nation.

PLAY

I call on all of us, particularly those who have worked tirelessly in public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, to take a moment each day to play. This is crucial to our mental and physical health and will allow us to continue to do the much-needed good work. Although busy with our work, families, and communities, don't forget to take some time for yourself to reflect, recharge, relax, and find moments of joy.

These can be solo or shared experiences such as taking a walk, doing a puzzle, knitting, or playing a board or online game. My family is big into card and board games! Every day I'm thankful for the opportunity to walk my dogs, Oswald and Dolly, at least a few times a day. Perhaps the greatest lesson that I've learned from them is to be sure to take time outside and "smell the roses." They stop a lot to smell pretty much everything, but it's made a world of difference in my life.

READ

With so much misinformation, disinformation, and censorship and so many book-banning efforts, I want us to get back to more reading, as this is critical for combating misinformation. This reading can be active. We can collaborate and partner with other organizations to share our ideas for healthier communities through op-eds and letters to the editors in local news outlets; local journalism is important and a great community connector. Plus, reading can be fun and a good way to "play" for health too. You can often find me listening to an audiobook while out for a walk with my dogs, when I'm not reading APH of course. And sometimes, of course, I'm listening to APH podcasts, too (shameless plug!)

VOTE

It's critical that all eligible voters vote, especially in local and state elections. Every day our local

and state governments make important decisions that affect our community health. I believe that to truly make impactful change in the public health and well-being of communities across our nation, participation in local elections is key.

We need to focus on engaging and informing local voters to elect candidates who prioritize public health. Our elected officials need to understand how they play a critical public health role in the laws that they enact. We need them to understand that affordable and safe housing is public health, that access to safe and reliable transportation is public health, and that we don't have a moment to waste on addressing climate change.

Research shows that the majority of our nation supports addressing climate change, the right to abortion, and stronger gun control. Research also shows that many of our state and federal elected officials do not hold these majority views, nor do they govern as most of the nation wants. With this glaring disconnect, I believe that if all eligible voters voted, it would make a world of difference toward making this a healthier and more inclusive world. Again, local elections matter.

With each affiliate visit (to Alaska, New Hampshire, and many places in between), I am heartened to hear the many ways that public health practitioners are sharing their health information with their policymakers and are doing their level best to inform elected officials of the importance of public health for their constituents.

I've thrived to meet Adis Bussell, an at-large councilwoman representing Columbia, South Carolina, and to hear her speak at the South Carolina Public Health Association's annual conference about how she brings her education and background in public health to her policymaking. How incredible would it be if every policymaker at every level of government had a grounding in public health?

Perhaps as you read this, you will consider running for office, too! Maybe I need to revise my call to action? "Play, read, and vote (and possibly run) for health."

Finally, as I head into being immediate past president, know that my call to play, read, and vote for health does not end here. It's only just beginning. We need to stay fierce and focused on our mission to create a healthier, more inclusive, and kinder world. Bring this call to play, read, and vote for health to every corner of our precious planet—we don't have a moment to lose. **APHA**

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15 Years Ago

Indigenous Ways of Knowing: Research and Community

According to an Alaska Native saying, "Researchers are like mosquitoes; they suck your blood and leave." This saying reflects the fact that an extensive body of health-related research has been conducted about indigenous populations around the world, but appears to have had little impact on their overall well-being. . . . Historically, research conducted on indigenous people has been inappropriate because it has often served to advance the "politics of colonial control." . . . Research sponsors who value participatory research—and, in particular, community-based participatory research—must understand that the Western-style empiricism to which they are accustomed may not be the research method of choice in indigenous communities. Research sponsors will need to view as valid . . . participatory research that uses alternative ways of knowing as a foundation.

From APHA, January 2008, pp. 22, 24

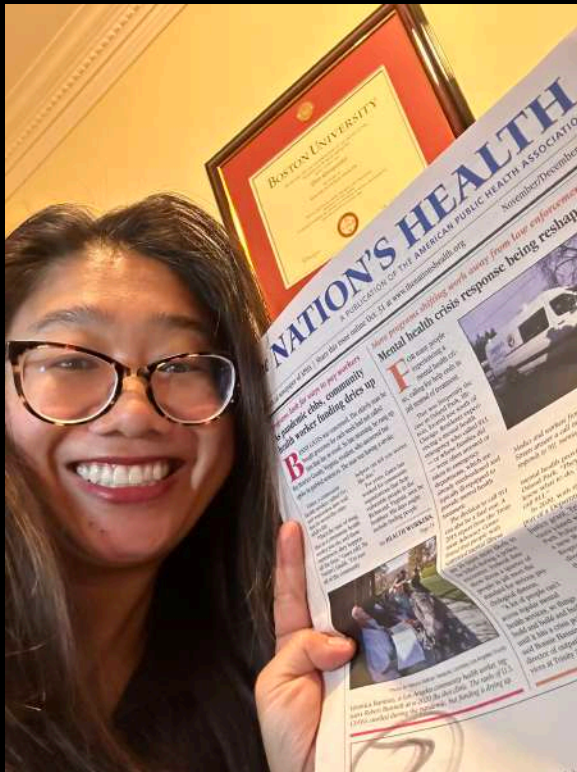
32 Years Ago

Tuskegee Syphilis Study Implications for HIV/AIDS Education

During his 1990 testimony before the National Commission on AIDS, Mark Smith, MD, from the School of Medicine at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, described the African American community as "already alienated from the healthcare system and the government and . . . somewhat cynical about the motives of those who arrive in their communities to help them." . . . One culturally sensitive response would be for public health professionals to discuss the fear of genocide evolved by the AIDS epidemic. They must be willing to listen respectfully to community fears, share the facts of the Tuskegee study when it arises as a justification of those fears, and admit to the limitations of science when they do not have all the answers. This approach may help public health authorities to regain the credibility and the public trust they need.

From APHA, November 1991, pp. 149B, 150D

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