

# THE BRIDGE

A monthly newsletter connecting CSUN public health students, faculty, alumni, and communities



Photo by [Olivia Barkwill](#), 2023

## A Message From the Editors

Hello Alumni, Students, Faculty, and Community Partners-

By the time you read this, we will be nearing the end of the fall semester. Classes and final exams are over and faculty members are wrapping up grades.

We are beginning to think ahead to our spring issues and we would like your input and ideas! Please tell us your thoughts, suggestions, and proposals for content for future issues. Click on the icon below.

The Bridge will be on winter break and will return in the spring semester. Our first issue of 2024 will be published in February. Until then, Happy Holidays! Wishing you health and wellness in the New Year!

*The Bridge Team*

**Contribute to a future issue!**



## Newsletter Highlights

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Wellness Series

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Department and  
Program Updates

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APHA 2023

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This is Public Health

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January Calendar

# Winter Wellness



It wouldn't be the holidays if we didn't send you away with something sweet. Dive into a list of our favorite Winter Wellness activities and hopefully it will inspire some of your own!

## Dr. Carla Valdez

Reading is one of my favorite downtime activities and did you know it's good for our health? Research suggests that reading fiction enhances connectivity in the brain and improves brain function. Reading (of any kind) has also been shown to be an effective way to manage stress. If you are not sure where to start, check out our 2nd annual winter break reading list (page 3) with recommendations from our public health faculty. Cozy up, open a book, see where it takes you, and notice how you feel when you make time to read for fun!

## Amanda Van Dyke

Ease into the holidays with one of my favorite feel-good activities, yoga! Whether I am tired or in need of a pick-me-up, practicing some mindful movement does the trick. Not only does yoga help with managing stress, it also promotes physical well-being. Check out my favorite YouTube channel "Yoga With Adrienne," for a single session or a month-long yoga challenge. Take the time this holiday season to expand on your Winter Wellness rituals and try something new!

## Priscilla Villalobos-Ayala

Listening to music is my favorite downtime activity because I believe it allows one to escape the loudness of the outside world. Whether one listens to music while lying down, carrying out another activity, or dancing as one feels the rhythm of the music, music can elevate one's mood. In other moments, music can heal us from possible stresses, anxieties, worries, pain, or other difficult times since its happy or sad lyrics and sounds can open a window for us to let out our emotions. I encourage you to take the time to listen to your favorite tunes to experience such benefits. Check out page 4 for our recommended playlists for a variety of activities.

## Saman Rad

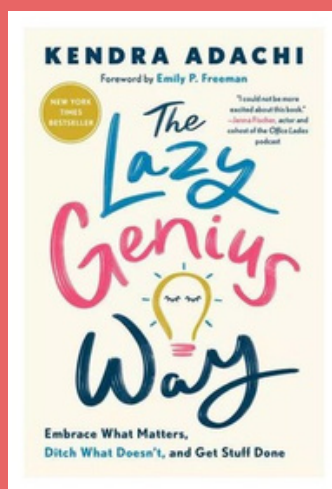
My favorite way to slow down during the holidays, and even year-round is to journal. Journaling can be done in many different ways and can help raise self-awareness. There is no wrong or right way to journal, making it a freeing experience. Putting pen to paper can allow you to take a step back from the fast-paced holiday season and self-reflect. To get started and learn more about journaling techniques click here.

*Happy  
holidays*



**FIND THESE TITLES AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY, ON AUDIBLE, OR AT BOOK RETAILERS! CLICK ON THE BOOK FOR THE DESCRIPTION.**

**Prof. Lauren  
Walter**



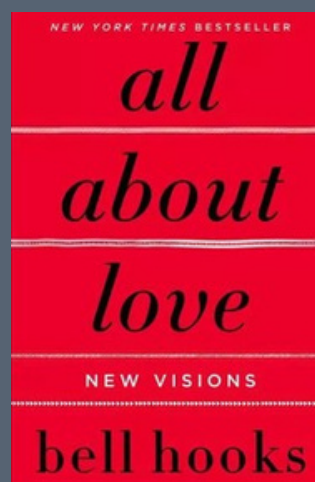
**LESSONS  
in  
CHEMISTRY**



**Bonnie Garmus**

**Dr. Stephanie  
Benjamin**

**Dr. Kacie  
Blackman**



# WINTER BREAK

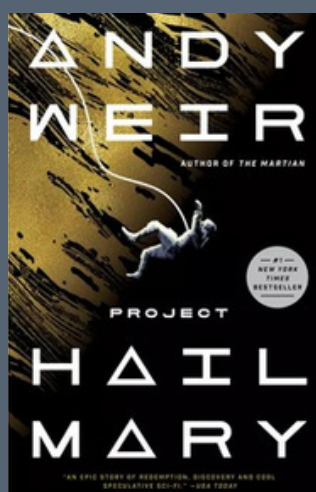
## READING LIST



*Suggested by Public Health Faculty*

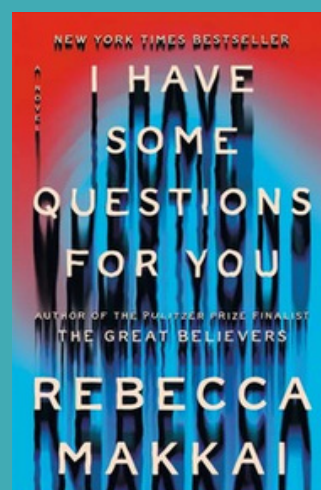


**Prof. Tanya Wicks**

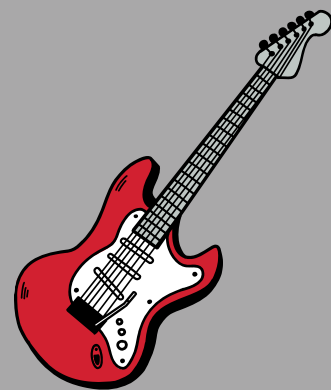


**Prof. Ashleigh  
Larson**

**Dr. Carla Valdez**







**WHY READING IS GOOD FOR MENTAL HEALTH?**

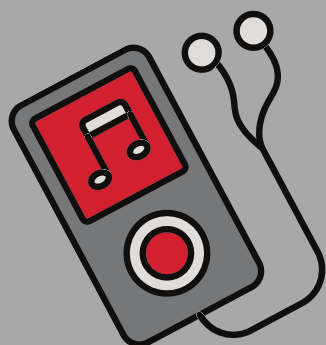


# RECOMMENDED PLAYLISTS

## BY THE BRIDGE TEAM



-  **Dance Party**  
Recommended by Priscilla Villalobos-Ayala
-  **Doing Chores**  
Recommended by Saman Rad
-  **Wellbeing Instrumentals**  
By Amanda Van Dyke
-  **New Wave Dinner Party**  
By Dr. Carla Valdez



Click the “Play” Buttons for  
Each Playlist





## NEWS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCIENCES

— HAPPY —  
*Retirement*

Dr. Brian Malec with Faculty from the Department of Health Sciences

*The Department  
of Health  
Sciences  
Celebrates the  
Retirement of  
Dr. Brian Malec*

It is both an honor and a bittersweet moment as we celebrate the retirement of someone who has dedicated an impressive 33 years of his life to the pursuit of knowledge, shaping the minds of generations, and contributing significantly to the Health Sciences Department and CSUN.

When Dr. Malec first came to CSUN over three decades ago, little did we know the profound impact he would have on the Department. Over the years, Dr. Malec has become the leader of teaching Healthcare Economics and Health Information Technology at CSUN, he has also been wholly dedicated and committed to the Health Administration program and Health Sciences Department.

Beyond the classroom, Dr. Malec has also been the Department Chair, a book author and editor, is currently the Chair of the Board of AUPHA, and a mentor to many, offering wisdom, encouragement, and support. His open-door policy, warm smile, and genuine interest in the well-being of his faculty and students have ensured our department and programs remain successful to this day.

On behalf of the Health Sciences Department, I want to express our deepest gratitude to Dr. Malec for his 33 years of dedicated service. Congratulations on a well-deserved retirement.

*Dr. Bethany Rainisch*  
Chair, Department of Health Sciences



Dr. Brian Malec with Dean Mechelle Best (HHD)

# PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM UPDATES

Many thanks to all members of the CSUN public health community for a productive fall semester. The faculty and I look forward to welcoming students back to campus for the spring 2024 semester on January 20, 2024.

Until then, I hope this holiday season is filled with joy and cheer. I want to extend my warmest wishes to our students, faculty, alumni, and community partners for health and happiness in 2024!

*-Dr. Stephanie Benjamin*  
Public Health Program Director

## Fall 2023 Internship Reception

The Health Sciences department celebrated the Fall 2023 Health Administration and Public Health internship students with a reception and QR code poster session on December 8th. Internship students shared their field experience and achievements with fellow students enrolled in the Introduction to Internship course, networked with community partners and faculty, and celebrated their upcoming Fall 2023 graduation.



The Health Administration Student Association (HASA) helped to coordinate and host this successful event for almost 100 participants.

HSCI Faculty at the reception (from left): Dr. Christopher Rogers, Prof. Cathy Rusch, Dr. Stephan Chung, Prof. Tanya Wicks, Dr. Stephanie Benjamin



Students and preceptors mingle and share experiences.

## WINTER BREAK *advising*

Students...if you need academic advising over break, please contact our HSCI advisors!

*Josefina Gudino*

Office: JD 2554

Email: [Josefina.gudino@csun.edu](mailto:Josefina.gudino@csun.edu) or [hsci.advising@csun.edu](mailto:hsci.advising@csun.edu)

*Moises Hernandez*

Office: JD 2550

Email: [Moises.hernandez@csun.edu](mailto:Moises.hernandez@csun.edu) or [hsci.advising@csun.edu](mailto:hsci.advising@csun.edu)



# PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM UPDATES

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SCIENCES

## FOODPAK AND HOLIDAY LUNCHEON



On December 12th, Department of Health Sciences Faculty, and Staff gathered to celebrate the holiday season, mark the end of a busy and productive fall semester, and enjoy time with colleagues. Also, at this event, the team assembled 40 Food Pak boxes to benefit the Children's Hunger Fund.

It was a wonderful afternoon filled with the joy of the season and the spirit of giving and camaraderie.

*Many thanks to all who donated food items, packed boxes, and attended the luncheon!*

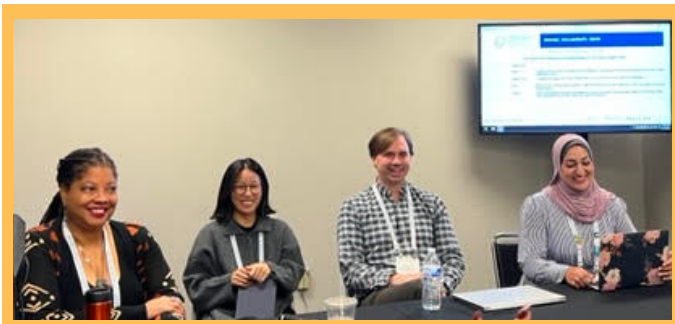




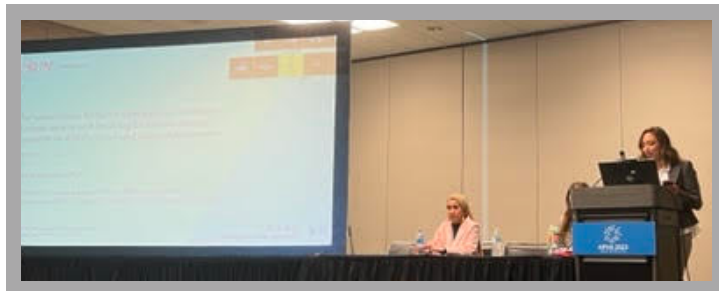
## PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM UPDATES

# CSUN Public Health at APHA 2023!

APHA champions the health of all people and all communities. They strengthen the public health profession and speak out for public health issues and policies backed by science. They are the only organization that combines a 150-year perspective, a broad-based member community and the ability to influence federal policy to improve the public's health. APHA held their Annual Meeting and Expo on November 12-15 in Atlanta filled with engagement, professional development, and collaboration. Attendees included CSUN students, graduates, and faculty along with other individuals in the public health world.



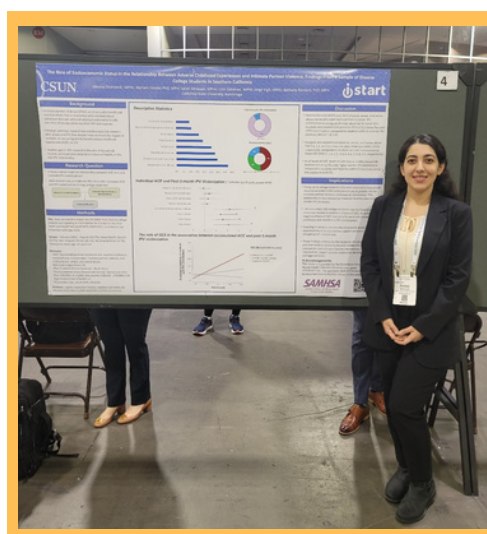
From left: Lydia Lysing (MPH student) and panelists from other institutions.



Lizbeth Becerra, MPH (CSUN alumna) presenting at the Annual Meeting.



CSUN students, alumni, staff, and faculty celebrating at APHA.



Abnous Shahverdi (MPH student) at her poster presentation.



**APHA 2023**  
ANNUAL MEETING & EXPO  
ATLANTA | NOV. 12 – 15  
**CREATING THE HEALTHIEST NATION**  
OVERCOMING SOCIAL & ETHICAL CHALLENGES

# Presentation and Poster Sessions

MPH Student (S), CSUN Public Health Alumni (A), Public Health Faculty (F), HSCI CSUN staff (C)

01

## Familial Incarceration and Adolescent Development: The Promise of Fostering Developmental Assets Among Vulnerable Youth

Lydia Lising (S), Mikaela Rojas (S), Mariana Garcia Martinez (A), Christopher Rogers, PhD, MPH (F), Eric Shanazari (S) and Myriam Forster, PhD, MPH (F)

02

## The Relationship Between Familial Incarceration and Perceived Discrimination Among Adolescents: The Promise of Developmental Assets

Lydia Lising (S), Mikaela Rojas (S), Mariana Garcia Martinez (A), Christopher Rogers, PhD, MPH (F), Kim Rogers (C), Stephanie Benjamin, PhD, MPH (F) and Myriam Forster, PhD, MPH (F)

03

## Informed Consent: Strategies Used Among Southeast Asian Americans

Patchareeya Kwan, PhD, MPH (F), Mayra Zamora, BS, Shenazar Esmundo, MPH, CHES (A), Melina Rodriguez, BS, Melanie Sabado-Liwag, PhD, MPH, Chancee Martorell, MA, Kimmy Maniquis, MA, Mary Anne Foo, MPH, Susan Sngiem, MSW, Cynthia Robles, MPH, Katrina Silos, BS, Danielle Erika Co, MPH (A) and Daryl Doan

04

## The Association Between Familial Incarceration, External Assets and Bullying Behaviors Among a Sample of Diverse Rural and Urban Adolescents.

Lizbeth Becerra, MPH (A), Stephanie Donis, MPHc (S), Maria Guevara Galicia, MPHc (S), Eric Shanazari, MPHc (S), Timothy Grigsby, Ph.D. and Myriam Forster, PhD, MPH (F)

# Presentation and Poster Sessions, cont.

05

## Social and Economic Impacts of COVID-19 on Southeast Asian

Americans: Preliminary Results of a Radx Community-Based Study  
Patchareeya Kwan, PhD, MPH (F), Melina Rodriguez, BS, Shenazar Esmundo, MPH, CHES (A), Mayra Zamora, BS, Chancee Martorell, MA, Kimmy Maniquis, MA, Mary Anne Foo, MPH, Susan Sngiem, MSW, Richie Chu, BA, Brenda Romero, BS, Deither Dave Atienza, Natsumi Matsue, Noemi De Jesus, BS, Nathan Kwan, James Pike, BA, MBA, Jake Ryann Sumibcay, DrPH, MPH, Ndifreke Etim, PhD and Melanie Sabado-Liwag, PhD, MPH

06

## Web-App Substance Use Prevention Among College Students: Increasing Knowledge and Correcting Norm Misperceptions

Linn Dahlman, MPhil (C), Bethany Rainisch, PhD, MPH (F), Abnous Shahverdi, MPHc. (S), Sarah Alhassan, MPHc. (S), Jorge Vigil, MPHc. (S) and Myriam Forster, PhD, MPH (F)

07

## The Role of Socioeconomic Status in the Relationship Between Adverse Childhood Experiences and Intimate Partner Violence; Findings From a Sample of Diverse College Students in Southern California

Abnous Shahverdi, MPHc. (S), Sarah Alhassan, MPHc. (S), Myriam Forster, PhD, MPH (F), Linn Dahlman, MPhil (C), Jorge Vigil, MPHc. (S) and Bethany Rainisch, PhD, MPH (F)

08

## The Relationship Between Familial Incarceration and Adolescent Academic Achievement and Feeling Safe at School: The Promise of Developmental Assets

Mariana Garcia Martinez (A), Lydia Lising (S), Mikaela Rojas (S), Maria Guevara Galicia, MPHc (S), Sabikun Nahar Satil (A), Kim Rogers (C) and Myriam Forster, PhD, MPH (F)

09

## Social and Economic Impacts of COVID-19 on Southeast Asian

Americans: Preliminary Results of a Radx Community-Based Study  
Patchareeya Kwan, PhD, MPH (F), Melina Rodriguez, BS, Shenazar Esmundo, MPH, CHES (A), Mayra Zamora, BS, Chancee Martorell, MA, Kimmy Maniquis, MA, Mary Anne Foo, MPH, Susan Sngiem, MSW, Richie Chu, BA, Brenda Romero, BS, Deither Dave Atienza, Natsumi Matsue, Noemi De Jesus, BS, Nathan Kwan, James Pike, BA, MBA, Jake Ryann Sumibcay, DrPH, MPH, Ndifreke Etim, PhD and Melanie Sabado-Liwag, PhD, MPH



# STUDENT EXPERIENCES

## Mikaela Rojas

Second-year MPH student, Mikaela Rojas, recently presented for the first time at the 2023 APHA Annual Meeting and Expo as a research intern.

She facilitated “A Roundtable on the Behavioral Health Needs and Interventions for Children, Youth, and Young Adults”



*How did you prepare for the 2023 APHA conference?*

I received a lot of encouragement from my mentor, Dr. Myriam Forster. She pushed me throughout the semester to practice as often as I could and in front of a variety of different audiences, including peers, faculty, and family. Although my nerves persisted until the time of the presentation, the audience’s enthusiasm and curiosity quickly overshadowed them and increased the confidence I had to present on this important topic.

*What did you learn from this experience?*

The biggest lesson I walked away with is to “believe in yourself.” It’s easier said than done but I knew this conference was the space and place for me to put that phrase into action.

*Read more about Mikaela’s presentation topic [here](#)!*



## Eric Shanazari

Third-year MPH student, Eric Shanazari, attended the 2023 APHA Annual Meeting and Expo.

*In what ways did you engage with other public health students? What did you gain from that experience?*

During the conference, I was able to meet with CSUN alumni who had graduated a while ago and get their perspective on things. It was interesting to hear about how some perceptions I have of certain public health jobs seemed to be pretty accurate, which helped confirm to me what I’d like to do (and avoid doing) after graduation. I was also able to speak with some PhD students, even some from USC, who were involved in some pretty amazing research, and that really strengthened my resolve to apply to a PhD program.

*Learn more about the SHARE project [here](#)!*

# THIS IS PUBLIC HEALTH

The Bridge will share recommended readings, podcasts, and job/internship opportunities every month. Click the underlined hyperlinks below to learn more.

## Listen to This

How Phone Calls Can Combat Loneliness

Better off Podcast: Can we end Chronic Homelessness?

Dealing with Holiday Stress

Structural Racism and Public Health:  
How to Talk to Policymakers and  
Community Members

## Community Events

Visit the Encino Farmer's Market open every Sunday from 8 AM to 1 PM

Anxiety: A Conscious, Cognitive Approach

Join this intimate discussion on January 26, 2024 with Psychologist, Dr. Uguru focused on understanding anxiety from a conscious, cognitive perspective

## Student Trainings

Lewis Scholars Imhotep Project

Morehouse College offers a unique opportunity for undergraduate junior, senior, and recent graduates to engage in innovative research and gain valuable experience in public health. The application deadline is January 31, 2024

## Relevant Readings

Two New RSV products to Protect Infants

How Music Can Be Mental Health Care

Harvard's recommendations on  
How to Beat and Prevent Burnout

APHA's top 10 news stories of the year

## Volunteer & Internship Opportunities

Minds Matter is looking for passionate volunteers to help provide low-income students with the resources and guidance to gain admission, enroll, and succeed at four-year colleges.

Sexual + Reproductive Health Intern –  
Syphilis Prevention

Future Public Health Leaders Program

University of Michigan's residential summer program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Application is now open.



UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
WHERE MATADORS BELONG

# USU Transportation Assistance Program

**Apply online starting Monday, Dec. 18!**

The University Student Union (USU) Board of Directors (BOD) wants to help ease the cost of commuting to campus this semester!

**CSUN Spring 2024 Parking Pass**  
(325 Available)

Apply now to get the assistance you need this semester with the University Student Union... Where Matadors Belong!

**Eligibility Requirements:**

- Open to all majors
- Open to both undergraduate and graduate students
- Undocumented, DACA and international students are eligible
- Applicants must be enrolled in a minimum of three (3) units







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## Festival of Sleep Day 2024



## Virtual Graduate School Fair



## Spring 2024 Classes Begin



## Prioritizing Well-Being Among School & District Staff, Educators & Administrators Webinar



## GOT A STORY TO SHARE?

**SIGN UP** 

