

TPHA Newsletter



Texas Public Health Association
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From our TPHA president, Dr. Raouf Arafat: (Updated message originally published in March, 2021)

TPHA Annual Education Conference 2021: *Shining a Light on Public Health*

Once again, TPHA leadership thanks you for your tireless commitment to public health during this unprecedented global pandemic. We know these have been trying times and that no matter what capacity or role you work in under the umbrella of Public Health, your community's health and well-being has been and will continue to be your focus, passion, and priority.

TPHA is the official professional organization for those engaged or interested in public health services. Our TPHA AEC provides an optimal venue for health professionals representing diverse service areas to meet and share ideas in an effort to maintain high standards of quality in all aspects of public health. At a time when it's more important than ever for the public health community to share the latest science, ideas that have worked, and lessons learned. As you may recall, our 2021 Annual Education Conference (AEC) was moved to a virtual format. After months of planning, registration is open and we are just a few weeks away from the event scheduled for May 17-19! Continuing education credit for multiple disciplines will be provided for this event. If you have not registered please do so today!

We have many excellent speakers and topics for this event. Oral presentations and posters will cover various public health topics including original research, program implementation and evaluation, community assessments, public health methods, theories, and issues relating to health promotion and disease prevention, the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccination efforts, public health nursing, outbreak investigations, disaster preparedness and response, epidemiology, biostatistics, environmental health, social determinants of health and social justice, population health, health administration, public health partnerships, public health accreditation, school health, vision health, oral health, aging, community health, planning, and health policies that affect individuals, groups, communities, and populations at any age or stage in life. Basically, something for almost everyone!

We encourage you to attend so you can hear from influential leaders who are making an impact on the health of the community, make connections with hundreds of public health professionals in Texas, get involved with member sections, and learn from other unique activities and events. We will make the event a statewide opportunity for discussion, allowing our public health community to share best practices, and network.

Below are some highlights of the conference agenda:

DAY ONE, May 17, 2021

9:00 am-11:30 am Health Authority Workshop 2021

- *Understanding and Enforcing Public Health Law*
- *Public Health Case Studies*
- *COVID-19 in Texas*

12:00 pm-12:45 pm Local Health Official Meeting

1:00 pm-3:30 pm Opening Session Plenary 1 to include the State of the State Address as well as a panel discussion on Immunizations.

1:00 pm Opening of Exhibits and Posters

DAY TWO, May 18, 2021

9:00 am-10:00 am Video Mobile Workshop “Bike Tour of the Salado Creek Greenway”
Breakout Sessions 1-16 that will cover: Epidemiology, Health Education, Administration & Management, Public Health Nursing, Oral Health, Aging, Environmental and Consumer Health, Vision Care and other Public Health issues.

DAY THREE, May 19, 2021

Breakout Sessions 17-24 will continue discussion on different public health topics. The closing session will feature a panel discussing the response to the Covid-19 pandemic in their areas of responsibility, challenges, successes, [their respective areas of leadership](#), and how they were able to cope with the stress and pressure.

We will close by having the internal Presentation of Awards and Recognitions by TPHA President Dr. Raouf Arafat for: Host Recognition, Immediate Past President, TPHA Outstanding Service Award, President’s Award and Thinking Progressively for Health Award. We will close the session with the Transfer of Gavel and Introduction of Lisette Osborne, TPHA President 2021-2022.

Looking forward to “seeing” you at the conference. Please stay safe. [PLEASE CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!](#)



The poster features a central graphic of the state of Texas in orange and yellow, with the text "SHINING A LIGHT ON PUBLIC HEALTH" in large, bold, blue letters. Below this, it says "VIRTUAL TPHA AEC 2021". The main text at the bottom reads "REGISTRATION NOW OPEN" in large white letters, followed by "May 17-19, 2021" in blue, and "(HCPH-Hosted/Sponsored)" in smaller white text. At the bottom, there are four logos: the University of Texas at Houston logo, Harris County Public Health logo, the Texas Health and Human Services logo, and the Texas Department of State Health Services logo. A small orange star is positioned below the logos.

From our TPHA Executive Director, Terri Pali:

Welcome to our Newest TPHA Members!

We are so thankful you chose TPHA as your professional association! Please take a couple of minutes to browse our website and see what we have to offer you. We offer this newsletter as a method of networking with your fellow TPHA members. We have a quarterly peer-reviewed, indexed journal for professional development, and many public health-oriented groups we align with.

Our strength is our membership and the diversity among our members. Member diversity spans race/ethnicity, levels of experience, and disciplines of expertise. Again, welcome and please contact Terri at txpha@aol.com with any questions or comments.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Section</u>
Sylvia Ayieko	Social Work	Mary Martin	Unaffiliated
Tim Barr	ECH ¹	Elena Martinez	Health Education
Ashika Brinkley	CHW ²	Sandra Martinez	ADMIN ⁴
James Castillo	Unaffiliated	Stephanie McGowan	Health Education
Tanya Chacon-Magana	CHW ²	Musharaf Mohiuddin	Student
William Cork	Student	Sharon Munroe	ECH ¹
Samantha Driscoll	Student	Nidhi Naik	Epidemiology
Ngole Ejedepang-Koge	Vital Statistics	Jane Oderberg	Social Work
Alex Estrada	Epidemiology	Jamala Okoh	Aging ⁵
Jasmine Farrish	PHN ³	Delilah Perez	PHN ³
Zachary Ferguson	Epidemiology	Ashley Poettgen	Student
Cecile Gervais	Student	Melinda Powers	CHW ²
David Gonzales	ADMIN ⁴	Carla Prieto	Health Education
Ariana Gonzales	ADMIN ⁴	Barbie Robinson	Aging ⁵
Amanda Hall	Epidemiology	Gregory Roth	CHW ²
Elizabeth Hans	Student	Radie Said	ADMIN ⁴
Patrice Hatchett	CHW ²	Yazmin Santos	Epidemiology
Denise Hernandez	CHW ²	Lisa Simmons	Epidemiology
Lauri Hix	Student	Janice Smith	Unaffiliated
Joli Holmes	Unaffiliated	Kayla Stovall	Aging ⁵
William Hudson	Aging ⁵	Zeldra Vawters	Health Education
Tara Hutson	Student	Robert Williams	ADMIN ⁴
Michael Johannesmeyer	Student	TimMarie Williams	Aging ⁵
Chandani Kothari	Health Education	Jana Winberg	ECH ¹
Maira Loera	CHW ²	Junda Woo	Unaffiliated
Nancy Marshall	Epidemiology		

1. Environmental and Consumer Health, 2. Community Health Worker, 3. Public health Nursing, 4. Administration Management, 5. Aging and Public Health



News from TPHA Boards, Committees and Sections

TPHA Board News

TPHA Editorial Board Report

Submitted by Catherine Cooksley, Editor, and Mathias Forrester, TPHA Editorial Board Chair

We wish to take this opportunity to offer our sincere gratitude to our editorial board members for the hours of meticulous reviewing, coordination, and expansive expertise they contribute to maintaining the high quality of our quarterly Texas Public Health Journal. Please take a minute or two to visit the journal pages of the TPHA website to get to know these exceptional individuals. Thank you to our TPHA Editorial Board:

Mathias B. Forrester, BS, Chair, Natalie Archer, MPH, PhD, Kimberly Fulda, DrPH, Carol Galeener, MPH, PhD E. Susan Amirian, PhD, MSPH, Shane Nives Isaiah Fernando, Ph.D., M.S., FRSPH, Nahid J. Rianon, MBBS, DrPH Wei-Chen (Miso) Lee, Rafia Rasu. PhD. Learn more about our TPHA Editorial Board members, our journal operations, the TPHA publications, and guidelines for authors at <https://www.texaspha.org/page/Journal>.

We look forward to receiving your submissions soon!



TPHA Committee Reports

Policy and Advocacy Committee

Letters to Texas Legislators

As part of our advocacy efforts a database of contact information for our current Texas legislators was compiled. This database was used for our Association's letter writing campaign in which we reached out to 182 Texas legislators. Two separate letters were sent. The first was sent with links to our TPHA 2020 Resolution on the Texas Public Health System and the Winter, 2021 issue of the Texas Public Health Journal. The second letter was sent with links to our TPHA 2021 Texas Public Health Infrastructure Position Paper and our Spring, 2021 Texas Public Health Journal.

Below are the letters that were sent and links to the [Public Health System Resolution TxPHA 2020](#), and our [TPHA Governing Council Position Paper](#). The legislative sessions in Texas occur only once every two years. Before the 2021 session wraps up, please contact your legislators and promote the advancement of public health in Texas!

Letter 1

The Texas Public Health Association (TPHA) is the only non-profit, state-wide association whose mission is improving the health and safety of Texas through leadership, education, training, collaboration, mentoring and advocacy. Our membership is comprised of public health professionals, from a wide range of disciplines dedicated to the practice of science-based, proven techniques that protect the health and safety of Texans.

As an affiliate of the American Public Health Association and the premier promoter of state-wide health through education, the Texas Public Health Association (TPHA) hopes to provide salient information to you, our elected decision-makers, to ensure our Texas public health system has an informed legislature that will ensure appropriate resources for a strong public health infrastructure.

As you may know, the agency in Texas charged with protecting the health of Texans, the Texas Department of State Health Services, has been tasked, along with other state agencies, to submit a biennial budget with a 5% reduction from the current biennium budget – this at a time when the need for a well-resourced state health department to better manage the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other public health concerns, could not be more essential to Texans! During this unprecedented time, in the midst of a global pandemic, it is imperative that critical infrastructure be in place to support infectious disease testing, surveillance, laboratory capacity and support to local health departments throughout the state. To keep up with the public health demands in our state we need resources to increase at the rate the population of our state increases. If a pandemic has taught us anything it is that we require more, not less, public health resources.

Texas has the second largest economy in the United States, is the fifth leading state in technology (net technology employment of nearly 1 million persons), 14 medical schools and over 20 accredited Master of Public Health programs. Texas has the resources. Please ensure that those resources are appropriately channeled into our Texas public health system. It is this sort of educated insight that can help Texas become a national leader among public health systems. With an educated, insightful and supportive legislature, Texas can boast being the most robust and responsive public health system in the country.

TPHA and the public health professionals throughout our great state join the [Texas Public Health Coalition](#) and implore you and your colleagues to look at the data and support an enhanced state-wide public health infrastructure. It is only with this sort of foundation that we will be able to quickly and comprehensively respond to events such as the current pandemic and the public health emergencies of the future.

Our members stand ready and willing to provide any information or data you may need to secure the resources needed for a strong Texas public health system. Attached to this note is the latest copy of our Texas Public Health Journal, and a copy of the TPHA 2020 Resolution supporting our Texas public health system. Please contact us through our executive director, Terri Pali, at txpha@aol.com. You may also learn more about who we are and what we do from our website at <http://www.texaspha.org>.

Sincerely,

Raouf Arafat, MD, MPH

Texas Public Health Association President, 2020-2021

[Copy of Public Health System Resolution TxPHA 2020](#)

[Copy of Texas Public Health Journal Volume 73, Issue 1](#)

Letter 2

The members of the Texas Public Health Association (TPHA) know you are as concerned about the health of Texans as we are. Public Health professionals across Texas celebrated National Health Public Health Week (NPHW) during the week of April 5 through April 11, 2021. Our Association celebrated by publishing an issue of our quarterly peer-reviewed Texas Public Health Journal that was dedicated to Public Health professionals in Texas. Two articles highlighted our efforts to advocate for improvements in our Texas public health infrastructure that will improve the health of all Texans.

Accompanying this letter is a copy of this celebratory issue of the Texas Public Health Journal. For your convenience, as you join us in our quest to convince your colleagues of the necessary improvements needed to bolster our Texas public health infrastructure, we are also providing a separate document that details the official position of the Governing Council of the TPHA.

Please join the public health professionals of Texas as we continue to work hard to ensure the best health for Texans.

Sincerely,
Raouf Arafat, MD, MPH
Texas Public Health Association President, 2020-2021

[TPHA Governing Council Position Paper](#)
[Texas Public Health Journal Volume 73, Issue 2](#)

Membership Recruitment, Engagement & Development Committee

The TPHA Membership Recruitment, Engagement and Development Committee hosted a Virtual Student Symposium on March 25th and had over 100 students register for the event.

For copies of the slides presented during the symposium click [here](#).

If you would like to view the Symposium recording go to:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/PBcP0-5n5cUcLaSO0zg4YDgT0EX13N3vfPLOXw2s5rVexi9I-linFHW6w7XGuO7t.jfbAzWy14yjRVPnx> Enter the Access Passcode: *jBp=.s9



THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Top 5 reasons to join and be involved with a professional organization.

- BROADEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE**
Professional organizations typically offer continuing education courses, seminars and/or lectures to keep themselves and their members up to date on the latest research and trends. Staying informed will help you in your field of public health!
- BUILD A BETTER RESUME**
Listing your association membership on your resume shows that you are dedicated to staying connected to your profession.

ENHANCE YOUR NETWORK

Making connections is critical to public health and provides countless opportunities to connect on a local and potentially on the national level or similar interests/fields aimed to reach your professional goals.

STRENGTHEN YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Professional associations give you ample opportunities to develop leadership skills. This can be done through serving on ad hoc committees, on a section chair, just through learning from other leaders.

FIND OR BECOME A MENTOR

Finding a mentor or a budding professional can be challenging. Tapping into the power of knowledge, experience, leadership through your professional association can be a great place to start! You may even have the opportunity to mentor others as you grow in your career.

STILL ON THE FENCE? FINAL THOUGHTS!

Public health fields are often deemed exciting long-term, especially during a recession. Following a hectic academic year, changing perspectives, and deadlines may prevent you from exploring desired opportunities until you have found time to dedicate to this vital task. When you're a part of a professional organization, you have access to an established support system of experienced colleagues who are willing and motivated to support you to help and in your profession!

Ready to take charge of your career? Join the Texas Public Health Association today!
<https://www.texaspha.org/page/TPHAMembership>



Friendly reminder to VOTE: Please check your email for a Survey Monkey link to your 2021 Texas Public Health Association Ballot DEADLINE, Monday, May 10th at Midnight!

From our TPHA Members

Ashley Rodriguez, CCHW, CCHWI, Community Health Worker Section

Texas Association of Promotores & Community Health Workers (TAPCHW) 2nd Annual Virtual Conference "CHWs Moving Forward: Reset & Refocus" September 27th & 28th with 4 sessions per day at 10 am, 12pm, 2pm, & 4pm CST.

The first kick-off session will feature DSHS & NACHW's Executive Director, Denise Smith. Some other CE topics already on the agenda are: CHW Community Engagement for Emergency Preparedness & COVID-Facts and Measured Outcomes-Resource Gathering.

Registration coming soon, visit: www.tapchw.org/conference



Jason McBride, Health Education Section

Health Literacy Texas, a new statewide organization, is excited to announce our inaugural conference, "Let's Move the Needle on Health Literacy in Texas". The one-day virtual conference will take place on June 24, 2021, from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. with speakers from across the state discussing topics ranging from rural telemedicine to the role of community health workers as conduits of health literacy and a legislative update. The purpose of this is to introduce Health Literacy Texas, discuss health literacy best practices and lessons learned, and connect professionals across Texas working on health literacy.

Register now at <https://www.eventleaf.com/healthliteracytexas>. To find out more about Health Literacy Texas visit our website <https://www.healthliteracytx.org/> or email HealthLitTx@gmail.com.



Jen Collins, Public Health Nursing Section

Do you work with youth/young adults in foster care or who have left foster care and need help with basic needs, utilities, groceries, rent, child care, car insurance, educational assistance, funding to get a driver's license?

You will want to know about the Supporting Foster Youth and Families through the Pandemic Act that was enacted as Division X of P.L. 116-260, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021.

Contact PAL coordinators to find out more about these

resources: https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/txyouth/Contacts/default.asp?tab=1open#pal_contact

Also contact BCFS: <https://discoverbcfs.net/texasety/>



Dalia Nessim, MD, MPH, FACOEM, Environmental and Consumer Health Section

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) commemorates its 50th anniversary this year. The Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences Department at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler, joins NIOSH in celebrating this important event and milestone. During the past five decades, NIOSH was instrumental in providing support for training generations of occupational health specialists, including physicians, industrial hygienists, and safety professionals, among many others. Here at Tyler, the occupational medicine residency program has been supported by a NIOSH Training Project Grant (TPG). The focus of this TPG is to engage the residents in rural occupational health considerations, including service delivery, as well as research. Many of our graduates stay in Texas to practice, with several serving in rural, underserved areas.

Let's pause to reflect on the last 50 years of occupational safety and health research and look forward to the future. <https://go.usa.gov/xsM78>.



Danielle Johnson, Health Education Section

The Prevention Resource Center – Region 8 at the San Antonio Council of Alcohol and Drug Awareness will be hosting a Virtual Epidemiological Workgroup on May 27th at 1:30pm, where they will discuss the risk and protective factors in substance use. Click the link below to attend the workgroup. If you have any questions or want to know more about the Prevention Resource Center-Region 8. Contact Danielle Johnson at djohnson@sacada.org

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZwsc-ugriliGdaiuO5Qq1avzOHiomlpUsCY/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGgrz8oEtScuBqFRpw-BY-ga_zziFhHjadclQrKVhFCMwLgLM1qO71yHMjI](https://us02web.zoom.us/join?pwd=98tyKuGgrz8oEtScuBqFRpw-BY-ga_zziFhHjadclQrKVhFCMwLgLM1qO71yHMjI)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88142809832?pwd=L3RlaU4ydkVKU2xCNiZnNzRvMGVRdz09>

Meeting ID: 881 4280 9832

Passcode: 675838

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,88142809832# US (Houston)

+12532158782,,88142809832# US (Tacoma)



Thi Dang, MPH, CHES, CIC, FAPIC, Epidemiology

Please join Texas DSHS and CDC in their collaboration to promote infection control training for frontline workers across all healthcare settings! The State's goal is for 5,000 healthcare workers to complete the CDC training by May 2022.

Quick, easy, and free online training can be found on **CDC's Project Firstline** under [Resources](#). Help promote training to co-workers and healthcare facilities in your jurisdiction and you may qualify for these free (and virtual) DSHS-sponsored Infection Prevention courses:

- Introduction to Infection Prevention Essentials (for newbies) May 20 –21, 2021
- CIC Exam Study Course and Exam Scholarship (for experienced practitioners) June 17-18, 2021

The courses will be repeated in Spring, 2022.

To qualify for the courses, you must watch at least one of the Project Firstline training videos which are less than 10 minutes each and encourage others to do the same.

For more details or questions, please contact www.HAITexas@dshs.texas.gov.



Dr. Sherdeana Owens, Oral Health Section

Dr. Sherdeana Owens, has been busy ensuring her community has the information they need to maintain optimal oral health! She has participated in the following activities:

- Assisted by undergrad student, Steve Perez, Dr. Owens conducted an in-service education session for Nueces County Head Start teachers and parents on 23 April 2021; there were over 170 attendees. The topic was oral health as it relates to overall health, with a special emphasis on perinatal women, infants, and young children. Mr. Perez researched applicable material from the *Smiles For Life* curriculum and the Texas Oral Health Coalition's (TxOHC) *Texas Tooth Steps* program. He also assisted in the presentation of the training. Dr. Owens selected Mr. Perez as her intern this semester; his major project is oral health education for preschool children. Dr. Owens is an Assistant Professor at

Texas A&M University Corpus Christi. She also serves on the Head Start Health Advisory Board and the TxOHC Board of Directors.

- Dr. Owens also participated in a drive through health fair sponsored by the Success by Six Coalition, of which she is a member. The event occurred on 30 Jan 2021 in Corpus Christi, Texas. The health fair was geared towards pregnant women and new mothers. Dr. Owens contributed gift bags from the Texas Oral Health Coalition's Texas Tooth Steps program along with education materials and resources around the topic of good oral health and healthy habits. Approximately 100 cars drove through the event site. Dr. Owens may be reached by emailing Sherdeana.Owens@tamucc.edu.



Thank you to all who submitted their news! We look forward to receiving brief announcements about the work you, our members, are doing and the achievements you have made.

Please feel free to share this newsletter with your colleagues and encourage them to [join us](#) so their important announcements can be shared as well! Check out the newsletter information and tips for posting on our TPHA website at www.texaspha.org/page/journal.

Our next newsletter is due out in late August of 2021. Start gathering the information you want to share with the Texas public health community now. We love hearing what y'all are up to!

Thank you for the public health work you do! Please stay safe and healthy during these challenging times! Contact TPHA and let us know how we can help you keep your communities safe and healthy.


Please share the TPHA Governing Council position with your families, patients, clients, and colleagues. We encourage all Texans to

continue practicing the recommendations for preventing and limiting the transmission of COVID-19. These recommendations include *wearing a mask in public places*, *washing your hands frequently*, *avoiding touching your face*, *disinfecting touched surfaces*, *maintaining a safe distance as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, and *getting the COVID-19 vaccine*!

All those aged 16 and older are now eligible to be vaccinated!

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/immunize/vaccine/> or <https://www.cdc.gov>

Stay Healthy Texas!



Disclaimer: The Editorial Board of the Texas Public Health Association has the right to exclude any materials, including but not limited to those that may jeopardize our non-profit status.

