



Hebrew University-Hadassah

Braun School of Public Health & Community Medicine

International MPH Alumni Newsletter

December 2018



This issue features:

- Greetings from Prof. Ronit Calderon-Margalit, IMPH Director..... 2
- Message from Dr. Maureen Malowany, IMPH Alumni Academic Coordinator.....3
- Message from Ms. Reut Kramer, IMPH Alumni Communications Coordinator..... 4
- Graduation 2018.....5-6
- Highlighting an Alumnus– Dr. Norbert Rakiro (Kenya | IMPH 2005)..... 7
- School News.....8
 - Shulamit Amir Z"l.....9
- Alumni News..... 10-11
- Meet the New Class..... 12

Season's Greetings!

Greetings from Prof. Ronit Calderon-Margalit, IMPH Director

Dear IMPH alumni,

I have the honor to be the new director of the IMPH program. For those who do not know me – my name is Ronit Calderon-Margalit and I am a public health physician by training. Like you, I had the privilege to study for my MPH degree at the Braun School. My thesis supervisor was the late Prof. Jeremy Kark who passed away this spring and who we all miss. For the last 15 years I have been a faculty member here at the School, where my research agenda includes mostly reproductive epidemiology, epidemiology of kidney diseases, and assessment of quality of care. I am teaching mostly in the Israeli program, but I am also responsible for the Mother and Child Health (MCH) course in the international program.

This academic year has started successfully with 22 students from 17 countries, including Botswana, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Malawi and Myanmar. The students are now immersed in their very busy studies and enjoy the extracurricular and social activities, including tours in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv and professional site tours. I was pleased to host the class in my home for Shabbat Dinner and we celebrated Hannukah together. We also celebrated Mario's 80th birthday. We wish Mario many more years filled with health and happiness.

Looking forward, registration for the 2019-2020 IMPH program is now open. As in previous years, we need your help to ensure that the scholarships are awarded to the most suitable candidates. Please help us to identify potential IMPH students, and assist them in the application process.

And just around the corner – the conference in Ghana – hope to see those of you who live in Western Africa there!

Finally – I wish you all happy holidays, and a happy 2019.

Warm regards,

Ronit



Shabbat Dinner at Prof. Calderon-Margalit's House

Message from Dr. Maureen Malowany, IMPH Alumni Academic Coordinator

Dear Alumni,

We welcome another IMPH cohort to our alumni family! Over the past few months we have welcomed a number of alumni who travelled to Jerusalem for a TB Consultancy Training Workshop or the course on Logistic Regression.

Our alumni activities continue, particularly with regard to Pears Seed Grant applications. We are very pleased to announce two new funded projects. Dr. Wen Peng (IMPH 2016) will undertake her project titled: “An investigation on the nutritional status and dietary pattern among children and adults in Tibetan urbanized settled communities in suburban of Golmud City of Qinghai Province”. Vincent Magombo (IMPH 2015), following his presentation to the IMPH Alumni Conference in Tanzania last year on the theme of adolescent sexual and reproductive health, has developed a project titled: “Provision of reusable sanitary pads and school dropout among adolescent girls in rural Malawi”. We encourage you to apply for this funding opportunity to strengthen your research skills and experience. Unfortunately, we have had no recent applications for mentorship funding support. If you are mentoring a recent graduate in a research project, you may be eligible. Please do let me know if this is of interest to you.

We are currently planning for the IMPH Alumni West Africa Regional Conference, Ghana. The Ghana Conference on the theme of “Investing in the Future: Strengthening Health Systems” is open to all alumni working in this area who would like to present to the Conference. We can provide partial travel funding and full support for accommodation at the Conference (Cape Coast, Ghana – 25-28 February 2019). We would be very happy to hear about health system challenges and strategies to meet these (task-shifting, for example) from alumni outside of the West Africa region. You have been sent a link to Conference registration via the huji platform. If you have not received that email, please email me for further information.

I hope this finds you and your families in very good health!

Regards,

Maureen

IMPH Alumni Academic Coordinator



Dr. Maureen Malowany with Dr. Naomi Assegied Teshome (Ethiopia | IMPH 2018)

Message from Reut Kramer, IMPH Alumni Communications Coordinator

Dear Alumni,

This is again this time of the year when we have to say goodbye to a graduating class after a wonderful year together. We have now 22 new graduates, adding to the total of 888 International MPH Alumni from 101 countries. We welcome the graduates to our warm Alumni family, and wish them good luck and success as they take the first steps in their post-MPH careers back in their home countries, or elsewhere.

We would also like to welcome the new International MPH class of 2018/2019. We hope that their studies here will be successful, and their time here in Israel to be as great as possible!

We were thrilled to meet our Alumni who visited Israel in the past few months for the TB Mentorship and the Applied Logistic Regression course. We encourage you to take part in our activities, whenever possible, and of course, come visit us when you are in Israel.

We are constantly working on improving our contact with our IMPH Alumni. This past few months we have established several regional WhatsApp groups, after the West Africa and the East Africa WhatsApp groups were proven to be very successful. We have added WhatsApp groups for North America; India & Nepal; Central America, South America & Caribbean; Oceania. We have opened a WeChat group for our Alumni in East and South-East Asia. We are currently working on our group for Europe. All Alumni from and working in these regions are welcome to join the groups. Contact me for more information! This is a great opportunity to thank the Alumni who are assisting us in administrating these groups.

[Registration for the 2019/2020 IMPH Program is now open!](#) We hope that our Alumni will take a significant role, once again, in recommending our program to your colleagues.

Season's greetings,

Reut

IMPH Alumni Communications Coordinator



Reut Kramer with Dr. Karry Jose Felix (Haiti | IMPH 2018)

Graduation 2018

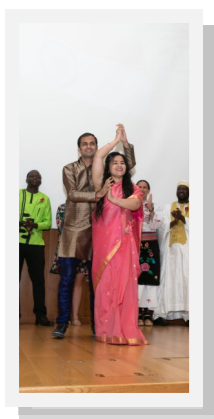
On September 5th, 2018, we celebrated our 43rd Graduation Ceremony.

The 2017/2018 graduating class consisted of 22 graduates from 22 different countries. Most attended the ceremony in their national costumes, as graduates traditionally do in the International MPH Graduation Ceremonies. With this graduating class, we now have 888 alumni from 101 different countries.

The ceremony opened with greetings from Prof. Oron Shagrir, Vice President for Internationalization, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Prof. David Lichtstein, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Prof. Yoram Weiss, Director, Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital; H.E. Ambassador Gil Haskel, Head of MASHAV, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Following greetings and the graduates' song: "You and I will change the World," we had the privilege of hearing our Keynote Speaker, Dr. Norbert Rakiro (Kenya, IMPH 2005), Senior Public Health Consultant and Christian minister, who is also a passionate advocate for healthy lives and strong resilient health systems, engaged with governments, civil society and donors in

Africa. He gave meaningful and relevant advice to the graduating class as they return to their home countries, perhaps start a new phase in their careers, with the IMPH toolbox at their disposal.



The graduates followed with the traditional Graduation Dance which combines all the traditional dances from their countries. After the graduates' exciting performance, the audience was treated to a delightful farewell movie

Prof. Ronit Kark, daughter of Prof. Jeremy Kark z"l, presented the Jeremy D. Kark Legacy Prize for Academic Excellence to Dr. Luz Angela Torres Lopez of Colombia. Luz also represented the 2018 International MPH graduating class in thanking the IMPH faculty and administrative staff, as well as our generous donors for their support. We were privileged to have Lady Daniela Pears and her daughter Tania, with Ms. Debra Pears attend this year's graduation events.



Prof. Ora Paltiel, Director, Braun School of Public Health and Community Medicine, gave her closing remarks which concluded this significant event. A reception was held after the ceremony in honor of our graduates.



Highlighting an Alumnus: Dr. Norbert Rakiro (Kenya | IMPH 2005)

A Senior Public Health Consultant and active Christian pastor, currently serving as the Public Health Principal, Africa, QuintilesIMS. Dr. Rakiro is a passionate advocate for healthy lives and strong health systems, bringing to this commitment many years of experience and understanding of the multidisciplinary nature of public health at the community, national, regional and global levels. He has co-founded a



Kenya-based NGO, The Henry Martin Foundation, whose health care programs aim to improve health through public health campaigns, mobile medical and dental care programs and the establishment of health facilities and collaborations in health delivery. Over the past 10 years, Dr. Rakiro has been engaged with government, civil society and private donors as a consultant to build public health capacity and professional networks. His work aims to develop sustainable and responsive public-private partnerships which include government, training institutions, professional associations and regulatory bodies and diverse public health professional cadres.

Dr. Rakiro is also a disaster response expert and served with the Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT) of the International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). He continues this work as Technical Advisor for the East and Horn of Africa regional public health programs for the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). His office provides strategic and operations support to 14 countries.

In his home country, Kenya, Dr. Rakiro holds posts as Technical Director for USAID'S flagship Maternal and Child Health Integrated Program (MCHIP) and NGO 'FUNZOKenya', IntraHealth Inter- national. With FUNZO Kenya, Dr. Rakiro leads on program design for health worker education and training, including professional licensure and ongoing professional development.

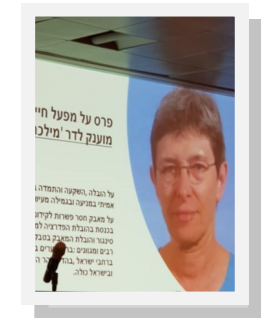
Dr. Rakiro is currently the Public Health and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Specialist for The Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria for their programs in Kenya, Somalia and Eritrea.

School News

Braun School Faculty member, Dr. Shai Carmi, has recently published a groundbreaking and fascinating study in Science Magazine: "Identity inference of genomic data using long-range familial searches". Click the following link to see him presenting this study on the [Science Magazine Facebook page](#). We have also broadcasted Shai's recent seminar on the [IMPH Facebook page](#).



Congratulations to Dr. Milka Donchin, Braun School Faculty, upon receiving an award from the Israeli Medical Association for Smoking Cessation and Prevention for her life's work in this area!



Congratulations to Prof. Yehuda Neumark, Director, Braun School and Dr. Maureen Malowany, Braun School Faculty, for receiving the Hebrew University Rector's Award for Excellence in Teaching for 2018! Well deserved indeed!



Happy 80th birthday to Dr. Mario Baras, our legendary teacher for statistics! We surprised Mario with a birthday celebration, including his family, after his class on Thursday, 22nd November. We presented Mario with a booklet of greetings from the IMPH students and Alumni.



We regret to inform our IMPH family that Ms. Shulamit Amir, former International MPH Alumni Communications Coordinator, has recently passed away. For many years, Shulamit had shared her unique life story with our students, since she was part of the Kindertransport in World War II. Shulamit's family has kindly agreed to share parts of her memoir with us:

"... To this day it is almost impossible for me to think about the actual day of my departure, 11th May. The station platform was full of parents and young children, who were crying and clinging to mothers trying to coax them onto the train. The youngest children were only two, and I was one of the oldest (two weeks after my twelfth birthday). What the children did not know, but the parents did, was that they would most likely never see each other again. Parents were sending their children to safety, literally "Into the arms of strangers" (the name of the excellent film made a few years ago about 10,000 Jewish children saved by Britain), but had to be brave enough not to let the children feel their anguish. My mother was a person who could keep her emotions under control, and she was very matter of fact. She was deathly white but did not cry, as most others did when the train moved out, and neither did I. There were around 120 children on our train, with 6 grown-ups. We, the older children, were each given little ones to take care of. I had two boys aged two, almost babies, for the whole 3-day trip. Obviously they didn't know what was going on [...]. We traveled through Bohemia, then Germany where strangely enough German women threw sweets and chocolate through the windows to us. Perhaps they didn't know that we were all Jewish children. [...] We crossed the English Channel and after another train ride, arrived at our destination – a huge waiting room at a London railway station (Liverpool Street Station). We crowded into the hall which was gloomy and badly lit, and most of the little ones were crying. A name would be called out and a frightened child came forward slowly. And then one or two grownups appeared and tried to persuade the child to go with them. They couldn't talk to the child, couldn't explain anything, promise or cheer them up: the children spoke only Czech and some, like myself, German, and the good British people who had offered a home to these refugees certainly didn't know a word of Czech. [...] There were only a few of us left and I was becoming a bit apprehensive, not knowing whether my father knew where to find me, but at last my name was called and we fell into each other's arms.

Whenever I think back about the Kindertransport trip I come up with the same strong impressions. First and foremost, the bravery of my mother, who sent me away to safety. Secondly, the goodness and kindness of the British people who took in and cared for 10,000 Jewish children. And thirdly, although 75 years have passed, this experience has left definite and permanent marks. One simple example is that to this day I find it hard to part from people who are dear to me, even when I know it is not for long."



Shulamit Amir Z"l with her children.

Alumni News

TB consultancy training course of the Ministry of Health of Israel, WHO and the Hebrew University-Hadassah Braun School of Public Health took place in August 2018. Both Alumni and (at that time) students attended this mentorship. This training program was organized by Dr. Daniel Chemtob, Director, Tuberculosis and AIDS Department, Ministry of Health, Israel; National TB Program Manager, and Director of the TB Training Program, who is also a lecturer in The Braun School.

We had the pleasure of welcoming back Dr. Evelyn Kimani (Kenya | IMPH 2013); Mr. Ulo Benson (Kenya | IMPH 2003); Dr. Andrew Method (Tanzania | IMPH2015); Dr. Emmanuel Ogum (Nigeria | IMPH 2017); Dr. Lucas Esuh Esong (Cameroon | IMPH 2014); Dr. Mohamed Boie Jalloh (Sierra Leone | IMPH 2017); Dr. Joseph Akuamoah (Ghana | IMPH 1996); Dr. Angela Benson (Liberia | IMPH 1990); Dr. Moses Barima Djimatey (Ghana | IMPH 2011).

This is a great opportunity to thank Pears Foundation again for generous support, which allowed our Alumni to attend this important training.



In October we gladly welcomed four of our Alumni to the Applied Logistic Regression course by Prof. Stanley Lemeshow, which was very successful:

Prof. Mark Guimaraes (Brazil | IMPH 1980)

Dr. Philip Bassey (Nigeria | IMPH 1999)

Dr. Luchuo Engelbert (Cameroon | IMPH 2013)

Dr. Obichi Obiajunwa (Nigeria | IMPH 2015)

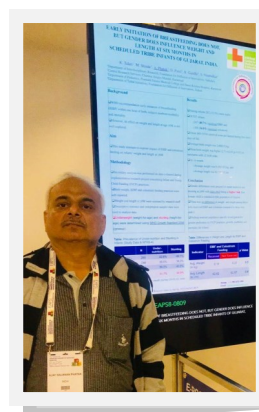


Congratulations to our Alumna Dr. Andrea Wershof Schwartz (Canada | IMPH 2009), instructor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Staff Physician at the VA Boston Healthcare System and Educator in the VA's New England Geriatrics Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC) in Massachusetts, upon receiving the AGS 2018 Outstanding Junior Clinician Educator of the Year Award! What a great accomplishment!

Jane Osindo (Kenya | IMPH 2016), currently working at APHRC Nairobi, attended the 2018 HIV Research for Prevention (HIVR4P) conference held in Madrid, Spain 21-25 October. She presented a poster titled: *"What About the Boys?" Community Perceptions of Girl-centered Programming in Nairobi Informal Settlements: Experiences from DREAMS Implementation* in a poster discussion session themed 'PrEP: Doing it right at Delivery'. She also spoke to her poster on *'Empowerment among Adolescent Girls and Young Women in Korogocho and Viwandani Slums in Nairobi: Perceptions and Implications for the "E" in DREAMS'*.



IMPH alumni Shri Ajay Phatak (India | IMPH 2008) and Shri Kandarp Talati (India | IMPH 2017) had 9 scientific abstracts selected for presentation at the 7th Congress of the European Academy of Pediatric Societies at Paris, France during October 30 - November 3, 2018. They were co-authors on all of these abstracts related to tribal health, which is being pursued in Dahod district of Gujarat, India. The research domains included neonatal transport, community child health, digital health initiatives and adolescent health. Ajay co-authored 13 abstracts out of total 17 selected for presentation from his India-based institution. He visited Paris to present 7 e-posters including an e-poster discussion.



Congratulations to Long Bui (Vietnam | IMPH 2017) as his article "Use of Geographically Weighted Poisson Regression to examine the effect of distance on Tuberculosis incidence: A case study in Nam Dinh, Vietnam" was recently published in *Plos One*. This study was conducted under the supervision of Dr. Daniel Chemtob and Dr. Hagai Levine of the Braun School Faculty.



Dr. Mindaugas Raila (Lithuania | IMPH 1997) visited the school during his visit to Israel in October. It was lovely to see Mindauga and catch up!



Meet the International Class of 2018/2019!



Registration for the International MPH Course 2019/2020 is now open!

<https://medicine.ekmd.huji.ac.il/schools/publichealth/En/IMPH/Pages/default.aspx>

