

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT MARY TELLO-POOL



Seasons' Greetings to all!

It is hard to believe another year has so quickly come to an end. We should all be very proud of the efforts we put forth in 2016 advocating for the health and safety of the residents of our great state. As we move forward to 2017, it is important that we remember we must continue to be the voice that speaks for the health and safety of our people.

The new year brings a new Governor's administration and a new legislative session. As public health advocates, it is important that we inform and educate our new leaders on all critical public health issues and public health priorities. We welcome your participation with our legislative efforts and are happy to provide resources for effective communication with your representatives.

The new year also provides us with opportunities to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe and healthy. With the cold and flu season upon us, we must remember to prevent the spread of germs. We must also remember to protect ourselves by getting vaccinated, getting exams & screenings, managing our stress, practicing preparedness, limiting alcohol intake, remaining smoke-free, using seat belts, eating healthy, and remaining active.

Let's all do our part in 2017 to work towards becoming the Healthiest Nation!

May your New Year be filled with good health, much joy, and many blessings!

Mary Tello-Pool, NDPHA President

SWANSON RECEIVES AWARD FROM AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Grand Forks Public Health



Left: Georges C. Benjamin, MD, APHA Executive Director & Debbie Swanson

About North Dakota Public Health Association

The mission of NDPHA is to improve, promote and protect health for residents of North Dakota through leadership in policy, partnerships and best practices.

For more information visit www.ndpha.org

Debbie Swanson was the recipient of the American Public Health Association's Advocate of the Year Award at the association's annual meeting in Denver on November 1, 2016. Swanson, who is also the director of the Grand Forks Public Health Department, has represented North Dakota Public Health Association on the APHA Governing Council since 2006 and recently finished two terms on the APHA Action Board. She was honored for her work to educate policy makers on issues related to public health.

About APHA

The American Public Health Association champions the health of all people and all communities. We strengthen the profession of public health, promote best practices and share the latest public health research and information. We are the only organization that influences federal policy, has a 140 plus year perspective and brings together members from all fields of public health.

For more information visit www.apha.org.

NDPHA MEMBER APPOINTED TO ND LEGISLATURE

Gretchen Dobervich was appointed to the North Dakota House of Representatives in November. She will complete the term previously held by Kim Wallman. Dobervich will represent Fargo's District 11. She works as the Policy Project Manager for the American Indian Public Health Resource Center at NDSU.



NORTH DAKOTA DINNER AT THE 2016 APHA'S ANNUAL MEETING

Left: Karen & Ray Goldsteen



Right: Mark Strand & Robert Wilborn



Debbie Swanson, NDPHA Acting Policy and Advocacy Committee Chair, organized a dinner to connect students and public health professionals at the Osteria Marco restaurant on October 31, 2016. About 20 people gathered to network and visit. The event was graciously sponsored by the University of North Dakota, Master of Public Health Program and North Dakota State University, Department of Public Health.



North Dakota had an impressive amount of presenters at APHA with 9 presentations, including the NDPHA roundtable presentation titled: Urban Indian Health Needs Assessment: Disparities in Methodology and Outcomes in Fargo, ND.

NPDHA MEMBER HALEY THORSON RECEIVES UND 2016 YOUNG ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

By Sarah Kotelnicki

HALEY THORSON, '05

"I was a statistic in high school," says Haley (Swanson) Thorson, '05.

She's right. She's actually a 2 percenter. She's one of the only 2% of teenage moms who graduate college before the age 30. She credits her strong support network and encouragement from her family with the fundamental element of her professional success: her nursing degree from UND. Just two weeks after graduating from East Grand Forks Senior High School, Thorson welcomed her first child, Bailey. Against the odds, but with the complete support and encouragement of her family, she went on to attend UND that fall and graduated with her nursing degree just four years later.

Thorson, now 34, has racked up a laundry list of accolades in her professional field: 2008 Mike Maidenberg Emerging Leader Award Nominee, 2011 Charles E Kupchella Preventive Medicine and Wellness Award and 2012 North Dakota Public Health Association Public Health Worker of the Year.

Most notably however, Thorson was instrumental in Grand Forks' effort to pass a no smoking ordinance for all workplaces including restaurants and bars. As a nurse in public health, Thorson's role required policy work, research and assessment, and an understanding of the lawmaking process. Starting her career with Grand Forks Public Health at age 24, she possessed knowledge, poise and leadership that can be rare for someone so young. Given that professional maturity, she quickly found herself in a leadership role helping Grand Forks become the second city in North Dakota to become tobacco-free.

"As a nurse in the hospital, you complete an intervention to achieve an outcome," said Thorson of her time leading the smoke-free effort. "In that setting, the outcome is usually assessed in a short time frame. In public health you can work on an intervention for years before you see an outcome. The day the tobacco-free ordinance passed (in 2010), was like 'Wow, I just impacted an intervention that will impact thousands of people and not just for right now, at this moment, but forever.'"

The passage of the tobacco-free ordinance didn't end the work as Thorson has since studied assessments on air quality, the correlation between the tobacco-free ordinance and reduced heart attack admissions to the ER, and the economic impact on retailers. "Our slogan was 'Good for business. Good for health.' As a community member myself, I'm particularly proud that we lived up to both elements of that slogan. We found a way to make improvements to the physical health of our community members and the economic health of our community. That's pretty cool," said Thorson.

While Thorson oozes passion for her work, she also has a sweet humility. To hear the awe in her voice when speaking of the lives impacted is inspiring. She is understandably proud that a small town girl with more responsibility than others her age, was a factor in such a monumental health policy movement. That humility is evident when she speaks of her Young Alumni Achievement Award. "Starting out a young single mother from a small town and all of a sudden, ten years later, your alma mater calls and says we want to give you this award that we give to astronauts and NFL stars, it's just surreal," laughed



Top: Haley Thorson, Grand Forks Public Health, NPDHA Member

Thorson. "It just sends a message that anyone can do it." Thorson is certainly deserving of the Young Alumni Achievement Award and will accept her award as inspiration for future generations – including her children Bailey (16), Avynn (9), and Hayes (4).

NDPHA MEMBER KAREN EHRENS - EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH AWARD

2016 Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo



Karen Ehrens works by contract with the North Dakota Department of Health. She serves as the Coordinator of Healthy North Dakota, a prevention initiative to support North Dakotans to improve physical, mental, and emotional health for all by building innovative statewide partnerships. Part of this work includes identifying and filling gaps in prevention networks. Another aspect of this work includes facilitating integration among prevention groups, or to put it more simply, helping to connect work across silos. Karen has made a commitment to advance health equity and raise awareness about health inequities in North Dakota.

Another part of Karen's work is coordinating the Creating a Hunger Free North Dakota Coalition. This coalition works to raise awareness about food insecurity and hunger in the state, connect organizations to work together when possible and learn from one another, and reduce duplication of effort. Creating a Hunger Free North Dakota Coalition is looking upstream to reduce root causes of hunger, which include inadequate resources and education. A new venture for Karen in 2016 is running for the North Dakota

legislature as a candidate for the House of Representatives in District 32 in Bismarck.

Karen was born in Minot, North Dakota, and graduated with a degree in food and nutrition from North Dakota State University. She completed her internship in dietetics at the Veterans Administration Medical Center, San Diego. She also completed an internship in the office of then U.S. Representative Byron Dorgan's office in Washington, D.C. prior to beginning her dietetic practice.

Karen started her dietetic career working in a hospital, and observed that patients were often too sick to absorb the nutrition education she provided. With strong feelings and experience that preventing disease was more effective than trying to treat it once in place, Karen moved on to work in the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction Child Nutrition Programs in the mid-1990's, when early nutrition standards were offered to improve school meals. She presented a testimony on behalf of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (Academy) before the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee in 2009 in a hearing titled, Beyond Federal School Meals Programs: Reforming Nutrition for Kids in Schools. This was in the time leading up to the development and passage of the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act.

Karen appreciates learning from the vast experience of members and leaders in the PHCNPG. She has volunteered in her state Academy affiliate, and served as the state

legislative coordinator. One issue which Karen worked persistently on was the recognition for mothers to breastfeed anywhere in public. North Dakota was one of fewer than 10 states without this legislation in place, and it took attempts over four legislative sessions to pass.

Karen chaired the Academy Legislative and Public Policy Committee (LPPC) in 2014, and was a member of the committee from 2011-2015. During her time on the committee, the LPPC guided establishment of Academy priorities for the 2012 Farm Bill, while Karen was chair of the Farm Bill work group. The establishment of these priorities allowed the Academy to join with other nutrition and anti-hunger groups in advocating for priorities, including nutrition safety net programs, maintaining funding for SNAP nutrition education, funding for nutrition research support for fruit and vegetable farming and nutrition programs, and supporting sustainable farm practices and policies for beginning farmers.

In her free time, Karen likes walking with her dog and family in all seasons. She enjoys spending time together with her daughter, who is just starting college. Together with her husband Duane, a chef at St. Alexius Medical Center, the couple teaches cooking classes including "Mediterranean on the Prairie," and various farmers market classes and cooking demonstrations. Karen finds peace and a change of focus when she works in flower and vegetable gardens in her own yard, and in community gardens across Bismarck.

INVITING NOMINATIONS 2017 NDPHA AWARDS

Nomination Committee Chair, Sue Kahler

Is there someone who you work with or know who has gone above and beyond in the world of public health? Someone you think deserves some recognition for all they do? You may have complimented them on their efforts, but think about this quote from Florence Nightingale: "I think one's feelings waste themselves in words; they ought all to be distilled into actions which bring results." So bring some action to your feelings and nominate them for one of the following NDPHA awards:

Public Health Worker of the Year, which honors a current member of NDPHA for outstanding public health contributions or achievements in the past year;

Public Health Team of the Year, which honors a team that has worked collaboratively on a unique, creative, or simply outstanding public health effort, program, or goal in the past year – (At least one team member must be a current NDPHA member.);

Outstanding Service Award, which honors an individual, either lay or professional, for outstanding work or achievement over their lifetime in the field of public health.

The awards will be presented at the Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health, which will be held June 13-15, 2015 at the Holiday Inn, Minot, North Dakota. Click on this link for [Nomination Form](#).

Deadline for submission of award nominations is noon on Tuesday, January 17th, 2017 to Susan Kahler at skahler@bismarcknd.gov.

Have you been inspired by a coworker or staff's dedication to public health from this past year?



'BREATHE ND' DIRECTOR SAYS SHE WAS 'TAKEN BY SURPRISE' BY PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE THE AGENCY

By Dave Thompson - Reprinted from [Prairie Public News](#)

A proposal in former Gov. Jack Dalrymple's executive budget would eliminate the North Dakota Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control Policy agency -- also known as "Breathe ND." It would move the functions into the state Health Department. "To totally eliminate an agency that has seen such incredible results in almost cutting youth smoking in half took us by surprise," said agency director Jeanne Prom.

The agency was created in 2008 after North Dakota voters passed an initiated measure. It is funded by the master tobacco lawsuit settlement. "We're sustainable on those funds," Prom said in an interview. "We only focus on tobacco use prevention and a comprehensive approach -- policies that change social norms around tobacco. And that's what's known to be effective. It's science based -- and we've seen the results."

Prom said youth smoking rates in North Dakota have dropped to 11.7 percent. That compares with 22.4 percent in 2008. She said her agency focuses on tobacco prevention -- while the state Health Department focuses on cessation.

"It's really aided greatly by a strong and rigorous prevention program that we have been able to offer," Prom said.

Prom said North Dakota is one of a few states that is able to fund its tobacco prevention and cessation programs at levels recommended by the Centers for Disease Control. She said she hopes to convince the Legislature to keep the agency in-tact.



Welcome to the NDPHA! We are pleased that you have chosen to join our organization.

Austin Blazer

Derek Johnson

Brady Christinson

Paula Kaledzi

Jodi Hajicek

Megha Mudireddy

Farhan Hassan

Annie Nickum

Jessica Horace

Jamal Omar



Tobacco's Toll in North Dakota

- ✿ Adults who die each year due to their own smoking: 1000
- ✿ Kids under 18 who become new daily smokers each year: 300
- ✿ Annual healthcare costs caused by smoking: \$326 million
- ✿ Yearly tax burden from smoking-caused government expenditures: \$795 per household
- ✿ Smoking-caused productivity losses: \$232.6 million each year
- ✿ Annual tobacco industry marketing expenditures in North Dakota: \$34.1 million

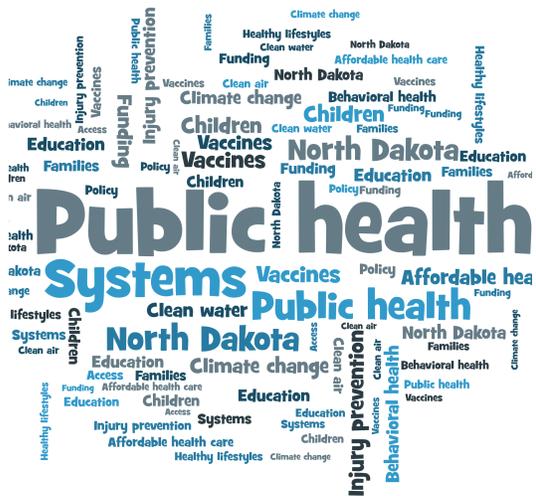
Source: Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids



PUBLIC HEALTH DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

SAVE THE DATE

FEBRUARY 08, 2017
ND STATE CAPITOL
BISMARCK, ND



For more information contact: Debbie Swanson at dswanson@grandforksgov.com

North Dakota Public Health Day at the Legislature

Student Poster Showcase

The North Dakota Public Health Association and North Dakota Department of Health would like to highlight the work students do to advance public health in North Dakota. Students who have completed MPH projects and internships with state or local public health departments in North Dakota are invited to submit abstracts highlighting their work. Abstracts will be judged. Selected abstracts will be presented to legislators and the public on Public Health Day held at the state capital February 8, 2017.

Abstracts should:

- Be no longer than **450 words**, and include sections for introduction, methods, results, and discussion.
- Highlight **work done with a local or state public health agency** and MPH student in the **last three years**.
- Be submitted on **submission form** to Tracy Miller and Jill Baber **via email at tkmiller@nd.gov and jbaber@nd.gov** with **“Student Poster Contest”** in the subject line. by **January 24th, 2017**.

Students should work with their project mentors to create their abstract. Selected abstracts will be invited to create a poster to present at Public Health Day 2017 at the North Dakota state capital building. Students will need to attend Public Health Day, and be available to present their poster. Posters should be available for viewing from 9:00am to 3:00pm, with students available to present their posters from 11:30am to 1:30pm. Students will need to provide their own transportation to the Capitol, and will be responsible for the printing of their poster.

For questions, contact Jill Baber at jbaber@nd.gov or 701.328.3341.