



Call for Graduate Research Papers

PENNSYLVANIA STATE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2009-2010 Public Health Research Paper Competition

Submission Deadline: By May 31, 2010

The Pennsylvania Department of Health is accepting applications for its annual graduate research paper competition in the field of community health improvement.

Background

The State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)* is a coordinated, continuous and integrated plan that links public health, community health and individual health to benefit the health and well-being of Pennsylvanians. SHIP is an initiative whereby the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH) directly assists community-based partnerships in addressing the health-related needs of the public at a local level.

The intent of SHIP is to allow PADOH and communities greater flexibility in working together to develop creative solutions to local health problems. SHIP emphasizes the prevention of disease and disability, the coordination of resources, interagency cooperation and improved government responsiveness to community health planning priorities. The three main components of SHIP are:

- A health improvement plan that places emphasis on improving the health status of populations through planning that addresses the root causes of disease, death and disability.
- A plan that places emphasis on engaging with organized community health improvement partnerships to coordinate resources and address local health improvement issues and priorities.
- A commitment to increasing access to relevant data and information necessary for communities to assess local health status and to develop local health improvement priorities.

*The State Health Improvement Plan can be found in its entirety at www.health.state.pa.us/ship or by contacting the Bureau of Health Planning at ra-ship@state.pa.us.

The SHIP Public Health Research Paper Competition recognizes and draws attention to the outstanding graduate-level student research that is being conducted on community health improvement topics.

Topics of particular interest include, but are not limited to:

- Addressing health improvement planning with a community focus
- Increasing the understanding of health improvement
- Increasing innovations in community health improvement practices
- Improving access to primary care, such as
 - Health care in rural communities
 - Dental care services
 - Mental health services
- Identifying meaningful solutions for eliminating the root causes of health disparities in Pennsylvania's residents
- Addressing cultural diversity in the healthcare workforce

For questions about SHIP and the research competition, contact the SHIP Coordinator, Bureau of Health Planning, at (717) 772-5298 or ra-ship@state.pa.us.

Eligibility

- Individual students as well as interdisciplinary student teams are eligible to apply.
- Each applicant or applicant team member must be a graduate student enrolled in a degree-granting program located in Pennsylvania, or must have completed his/her studies no more than one year before the time of the submission in a degree-granting program located in Pennsylvania. Medical students are not eligible to apply once they have concluded their degree-granting program and begun their residency.
- Graduate-level students in community health-related fields, such as, but not limited to, public health, epidemiology, medicine, dentistry, nursing, sociology, social work, behavioral and mental health, health education, health administration and allied health are encouraged to participate.
- The work presented in the paper must show direct linkages to the current State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) or community health improvement. These linkages can be in the form of a usable model, tool, method, etc.
- The work presented in the paper must be the work of the student(s), although faculty advising is permitted.
- Papers that have been published are not eligible for submission.
- Papers previously submitted to the competition will not be accepted.
- The first place winner is expected to present an overview of the winning paper at a fall award presentation at a venue to be announced.

Recognition

FIRST PLACE:

1. \$1,750 cash prize and professional recognition
2. Presentation of an overview of the winning research paper at the award venue.*
3. Acknowledgement held at the college or university of attendance, as well as a press release submitted to the local newspaper of the Pennsylvania facility of higher education and the student's hometown.
4. Acknowledgement of the award and a synopsis of the paper in a state-wide and/or regional health-related newsletter.
5. Abstract of the winning paper and photo (if taken) displayed on the PADOH's Website.

SECOND and THIRD PLACE:

1. Award Certificates
2. A press release submitted to the college or university of attendance, local newspaper of the Pennsylvania facility of higher education and the student's hometown.
3. Abstracts displayed on the PADOH's Website.

Review Criteria

The awardees will be selected competitively through a review process conducted by the SHIP Public Health Research Paper Competition Task Force. Papers must receive a minimum of 100 points out of a possible 150 points in order to qualify for an award. Submissions conforming to customary research protocols will be judged on the following criteria.

1. **Connection to SHIP and Community Health (50 points)**
Describe the connection between the research and SHIP/Community Health throughout the paper. Demonstrate how the overall health of a community (individuals, local or state-level) can be improved through the implementation of any part of the research.
2. **Problem Statement (15 points)**
Document the nature of the problem. Describe how the research will lead to improvement in the population studied and establish its relevance to the field of public health.
3. **Background (15 points)**
Provide a concise review of the literature as a basis for this research. Identify the study variables and provide research questions with your expectations or hypothesis.
4. **Methodology (20 points)**
Describe the study design and how the study was conducted. Include information regarding the sample, sampling procedures, measurements, data collection and related information.
5. **Results (20 points)**
Present the empirical findings. Clearly report descriptive and analytic data.
6. **Conclusions/Discussion (20 points)**
Interpret the results. Identify any limitations. Present an integration of the results with SHIP and SHIP related activities, as well as with community health practice, planning or policy. Provide recommendations for future research.
7. **Quality of Presentation (10 points)**
The logical, professional presentation of ideas and grammatical components also will be considered.

**Travel assistance may be available for the first place winner.*

Application Instructions

Applications for the SHIP Public Health Research Paper Competition *must* be submitted electronically in either Microsoft Word or PDF format and *must* include:

- The complete research paper
- A one-page abstract
- A completed application (located on page 6) for **each** student applicant, signed by the student and faculty advisor. Scan the signed signature page(s) and e-mail, or send by fax.

Guidelines for the paper:

- Double-spaced
- 12-point font
- 1 inch margins
- Printed on one side of the paper only
- 10-20 narrative pages preferred, up to 30 pages accepted (excluding references, tables and appendices)
- Follow general standards of American Psychological Association (APA), unless otherwise noted.
- All participants in the research, including the student's faculty advisor and/or other students, must be cited.
- Main body of the paper must include the following sections:
 - Problem Statement
 - Background
 - Research Method
 - Results
 - Conclusion/Discussion

**Submit an electronic copy* of the following:
Research paper, one-page abstract and completed/signed application(s) to:**

**Ellen Krajewski, MPH, CHES
SHIP Research Paper Competition Committee Chair
E-mail: ellenk@ncpaahc.org
Phone: 570-724-9145**

Applications must be received no later than 5 pm E.S.T. on May 31, 2010

NOTE: *Incomplete applications and those received after the deadline will not be considered.*

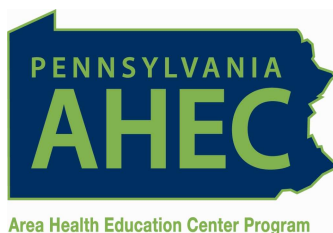
Notification of the results will be sent to all applicants by August 31, 2010.

*** For questions related to submission, please call 570-724-9145.**

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IN ASSOCIATION WITH



AND



The Pennsylvania Department of Health's State Health Improvement Plan 2009-2010 Public Health Research Paper Competition Task Force

D. Bruce Cahilly, *Pennsylvania Health Policy Board*

Lisa Davis, *Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health*

Ellen Krajewski, *Northcentral Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center*

Celeste Stalk-Ortenzio, *Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center Program*

Diana Velott, *Penn State College Of Medicine*

SHIP Coordinator, *Pennsylvania Department of Health*

The Pennsylvania State Health Improvement Plan 2009-2010 Public Health Research Paper Competition Application

**NOTE: One application must be completed for each graduate student.
Signed application(s) must be submitted with the research paper.**

Student Information

Individual student submission Team submission

Name of Lead Student _____

Title of research paper: _____

Name of Student: _____

Address: _____

Permanent Address: _____

Phone: Cell (_____) _____ Home (_____) _____

E-mail Address: _____

Program of student and institution where enrolled: _____

Degree sought and expected graduation date: _____

Name and address of local newspaper if applicant desires recognition: _____

Faculty Verification

Signature verifies: (1) the student status of the applicant; (2) the student was the primary researcher/author of the individual's student submission, or one of the researchers/authors of the team's submission.

Name of faculty advisor to this project: _____

Position: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Signatures:

Faculty Date

Student Date