Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health

For more than four decades, the Heilbrunn Department of Population and Family Health has developed pioneering evidence-based public health programs to serve global communities facing multiple inequities.

Our faculty and students work in locations throughout the United States and around the world, from Columbia University’s Upper Manhattan neighborhood to 30 countries worldwide, examining the legal, policy, and human rights dimensions of health. Combining rigorous academic training and research with on-the-ground public health programs, we are working toward a future in which equitable health care for all is not just an ideal but a reality.

DEGREES OFFERED

MPH
Our innovative skills-based Master of Public Health program fosters an interdisciplinary understanding of public health, equipping graduates with insights to answer questions about the political, socioeconomic, biological, and environmental influences on population and family health and preparing them to meet current and emerging public health challenges.

MS
Our one-year Master of Science program offers learning to professionals and others seeking to acquire technical skills.

DrPH
Our innovative doctoral program combines formal on-site classes, field-based research, and remote learning to produce graduates with the skills, knowledge, and drive to take leadership roles in global health and humanitarian response.

VISION

We find answers to global health questions to improve health systems and health outcomes for populations in low-income, unstable, or inequitable environments worldwide.

MISSION

We combine interdisciplinary scientific and technological approaches with a justice framework to understand factors undermining health and wellbeing, and provide evidence to shift policy and practice. Combining knowledge of law and global governance on public health at the local level, with complex health systems analysis and implementation science, we seek to prevent or address public health threats globally. We emphasize sexual and reproductive health, wellbeing of migrant populations, the health of children facing adversity, environmental justice, and human rights. We train public health leaders using a curriculum designed to foster global partnerships.

CONTACT

msphpopfam@cumc.columbia.edu
Our faculty are experts in reproductive and sexual health; humanitarian assistance and forced migration; child, adolescent, family, and men’s health; global health; human rights advocacy; and demography and population sciences, among other topic areas. Our faculty are led by Terry McGovern, JD, an internationally recognized human rights attorney and founder and former Executive Director of the HIV Law Project. She has worked on a wide variety of global and domestic health justice initiatives, including with such organizations as the Ford Foundation, UNICEF, the Lancet, USAID, and Amnesty International.

Select projects and research

- **The Averting Maternal Death and Disability Program** improves access to emergency obstetric care in more than 50 countries around the world by promoting the training and systems changes needed to make childbirth safer.
- **The Child Protection in Crisis Network** fosters collaborative action by humanitarian agencies, local institutions, and academic partners to strengthen child care and protection in crisis settings.
- **Columbia University Head Start** provides education and support to hundreds of families each year in northern Manhattan.
- **Global Doctors for Choice** helps mobilize physicians to advocate for high quality reproductive health services around the world.
- **Synchronized Immunization Notifications (SINC)** identifies the impact of immunization reminders.
- **The Incarceration and Public Health Action Network** provides HIV/STI screening and referral services at community-based organizations serving justice-involved youth.
- **The Reproductive Health Access, Information, and Services in Emergencies (RAISE) Initiative** works to ensure that emergency and humanitarian response programs address reproductive health.

- **The Young Men’s Health Initiative** provides education and outreach to thousands of young men in New York City each year.
- **The Center for Advancing Research on Comprehensive Health Systems (ARCheS)** supports health systems research collaboration with health workers and policymakers.
- **The Child Health Initiative for Learning and Development (CHILD)** supports improved early childhood health and development in populations facing adversity and stressful environmental conditions.
- **The Rakai Youth Project** studies trends in HIV prevention and prevalence in Uganda.
- **The Systems Improvement at District Hospitals and Regional Training of Emergency Care (sidHARTe)** partners with local actors in Ghana and Rwanda to expand access to emergency care in rural areas.
- **The Program on Forced Migration and Health** researches complex emergencies, post-emergency recovery, and development contexts, in collaboration with governments, international agencies and community-based organizations.

**Employment rate six months after graduation**

- 93%
- 20% Hospital Healthcare
- 19% Nonprofit (NGO)
- 22% Government
- 23% Nonprofit (Domestic)
- 2% Software/Technology
- 3% Research Organization
- 3% Consulting
- 8% University

**PARTIAL LIST OF CAREER PLACEMENTS**

- Action Against Hunger, International Public Health Nutrition Fellow
- AIDS Project Los Angeles, Capacity Building Advisor
- Bloomberg Philanthropies, Public Health Team
- City of Seattle, Strategic Advisor
- Clinton Health Access Initiative, Southeast Asia Regional Associate, Malaria Case Management
- Johns Hopkins, Research Program Coordinator
- Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Health Education Specialist
- NYC Department of Education, Office of School Wellness Programs, Physical Education Program Manager
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Associate Director of Strategic Initiatives and Training for the Consortium of Abortion Providers
- PwC, Senior Associate Consultant
- Save the Children, Project Manager of the Family Planning and Post Abortion Care Project
- The Pew Charitable Trusts, Senior Associate, Pew Dental Campaign
- USAID, USAID Foreign Service Officer
- World Health Organization (WHO), Consultant Researcher