It’s a Family Thing

A husband and wife, a mother and daughter, and twin sisters all have something in common. They will have an MPH degree from the EVMS/ODU Graduate Program in Public Health.

Tim Whiting was a 2013 MPH graduate. His wife will be a 2015 MPH graduate. When asked why she wanted to pursue an MPH degree through the EVMS/ODU Master of Public Health Program, here is what she said.

“Prior to pursuing my current career, I spent many years working with individuals to improve their health, both as a nurse and as a personal trainer. Although both professions were very rewarding, I began to wonder how I could make a difference on a broader scale. It was at that time that I became interested in public health. I chose EVMS for my MPH after watching my husband, Tim Whiting, complete the program. Not only did he enjoy his classes, his professors, and the school itself, but I personally enjoyed our conversations when he would tell me about his courses. I was already working as a public health educator, but did not have an MPH degree. To hear him discuss “big picture” concepts that I could see directly relating to the work I was doing spurred my interest in learning more.

While I initially followed Tim’s path and selected the health policy and management track, I changed my focus to environmental health after my first exposure to the topic. I have always been interested in the environment, and learning about the complex interactions between human activities, the environment, and health was fascinating to me. Considering I had trouble selecting an elective because they all looked interesting, I would say I made the right decision! Moving forward, I would like to put the knowledge I gain in this program to use by better understanding the impact climate change has on human health and working to mitigate those impacts.”

There is another family that will have two people with an MPH degree from the EVMS/ODU Master in Public Health Program. When Patricia Resto was asked how she knew it was time for her to go back to school she
replied, "My daughter, Marissa Resto, recently graduated from EVMS with a Master’s in Public Health-Environmental Health Track. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from VCU in 2012. When she told me she was satisfied with her education and ready for the work force, I knew it was my turn to go back to school."

Patricia Resto graduated from VCU/MCV with a B.S. in Pharmacy. She is a clinical pharmacist for Walgreens and has been employed with them for over fifteen years. Why were you interested in a Master of Public Health? "My profession is constantly changing, and it is so important to stay up to-date and to be part of a healthcare team. I am a firm believer that all health care professionals should have a Master of Public Health. After much praying and consulting with my supervisors, I took a leap of faith, and I am proud to say I am in my first year at EVMS pursuing a Master of Public Health-Health Promotion."

What were the deciding factors that brought you to the EVMS/ODU Program? "The decision to apply to EVMS was not difficult to say the least. I know firsthand that EVMS is a great school both academically and in the community."

How is your daughter doing since graduation from the MPH Program? "Marissa has acquired the didactic skills she needs to perform at an utmost level. She just started a position at Keller America and is raising my beautiful granddaughter Jeissa."

Twin sisters are also completing the Program. Chelsea Saia went through the program and graduated with her MPH in 2014 and now her twin is in the MPH Program and will graduate spring of 2015. When asked about why Amanda Saia chose the EVMS/ODU Graduate Program in Public Health and what kind of influence her sister had on her, here is what she said.

"My twin sister Chelsea and I have always shared many common interests, including our choice to pursue the MPH degree from EVMS. After graduating together from Virginia Tech, both with Bachelors of Science in Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise, Chelsea knew that a career in epidemiology was exactly what she wanted to do. She was set up to start the MPH program that fall. On the other hand, I always knew I wanted to work in the health care field but was convinced that a career in physical therapy was the right decision for me. After graduation, I got a job at a physical therapy office, eager to get experience before applying for a Doctorate in Physical Therapy program; however, I quickly realized that physical therapy was not the career for me, so I began researching the public health program at EVMS that my twin was excelling at.

My sister has been a major influence in my decision to pursue a career in public health, and more specifically in epidemiology. I was unsure about which track to choose and she was the one that convinced me to switch from the health promotion track to epidemiology. Perhaps knowing me better than I knew myself, she made me confident in my decision to switch. I am thankful to have had my sister there for me to ask questions, to express frustrations, and to just tell me “I know how you feel”. Having that support system has been beneficial to me in this program, and I am certain I made the right decision to pursue a career in public health. The ever-present sibling rivalry has also provided that little extra motivation to get good grades; what’s a little healthy competition between sisters, right?

Chelsea started her job at The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center in Portsmouth as an epidemiologist in a fellowship program this summer, and I hope to find a job in the epidemiology field as well- maybe just somewhere different from her. My twin sister and I are very different, yet so similar, and both hope to have successful careers in the public health field."
Emmanuel Adomako is in his first semester as an MPH student in the Health Management track. He was honored as junior sailor of the quarter for Admiral J. T. Boone branch health clinic, junior sailor of the quarter for Directorate of primary care and branch health clinics (Naval Medical Center Portsmouth) and overall junior sailor of the quarter for Naval Medical Center Portsmouth.

Congratulations on your accomplishments!

Don’t Forget about the EVMS School of Health Professions Open House
October 25, 2014 from 9am until 1pm
Lester Hall, 651 Colley Avenue
Norfolk, VA 23507

Visit www.evms.edu/shp-open-house for the detailed schedule.

Publications and Presentations

Marianna Szklo-Coxe published the following:

Jeff Johnson presented the following:

Dana Bradshaw and James Spain, MPH 2012 presented the following:
Interested in the MPH Program?

EVMS and ODU have partnered to develop an interdisciplinary program that trains students in bettering public health and preventing disease and disability around the world. Take a look at what an MPH degree from EVMS/ODU can offer you...

Health Promotion: Provides students with an understanding of public health sciences along with skills in the expanding field of healthcare promotion in private organizations, as well as local, district and state health departments.

Epidemiology: Provides students with a well-structured curriculum of experiential learning analyzing the cause, pattern, and control of disease and conditions that affect populations.

Health Management and Policy: Provides students with knowledge and field experience in both public and private healthcare sector organizations. Students have the opportunity to engage with faculty research and in community service through academic courses or in student/program sponsored volunteer efforts.

Global Environmental Health: This track familiarizes students with a broad range of 21st century issues at the local, national, and international levels. Global Environmental Health graduates work in government, the uniformed services, not-for-profit organizations, the private sector and international organizations.

MD/MPH: A five year dual degree program for students admitted in the EVMS MD Program. The MPH degree supplements the MD students' medical education with skills involving the health of populations.

To see the detailed curriculum and information regarding tuition and the application process, please visit us online at www.evms.edu/mph or call us at 757-446-6120.

Follow us on Facebook for public health job postings, scholarship information, events and up to date program information.