Another year, another amazing cohort…

As Director, I keep being caught off-guard when I realize June is upon us and the cohorts are switching on me again. And all those around me have heard me say that after 8 years of doing this, I’ve come to realize that every cohort has a personality in their own right. The EMPH Class of ‘19 sure will be missed because they really knew how to make their weekends home, warm, and definitely pretty loud! I expect bonds for life with this group – with continued laughing and the ability to celebrate at every gathering. We have just graduated 24 outstanding healthcare leaders into a field that desperately needs their humor, enthusiasm, and passion to keep Southern California health services accessible, high-quality, and compassionate.

And with their commencement, we transition the first year cohort to the enviable “Year 2” moniker, when the foundations of year one courses have been mastered and they head into summer field projects to try their hands with their new knowledge and skills among their growing mature networks of contacts. The talent of this group shines, and I look forward to witnessing the impact of their projects during the fall presentations on Friday nights.

And finally, we will soon welcome our next cohort on August 23rd, the EMPH Class of ‘21 (see? time is flying!) after a short 2-month summer. We are building another fantastic group of leaders to carry the responsibilities and the fresh ideas to address our industry’s toughest challenges and it’s most important members, the patients. We are always interested in you looking around your networks of work and fun to refer the best and brightest our way.

Best wishes for an enjoyable summer.

Leah J. Vriesman, PhD,
MHA, MBA Director &
Associate Professor
A group of 13 EMPH year 2 students and 8 day students attended the 72nd World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland this May again, witnessing the chaos, complexity, and politicking of setting the World Health Organization’s annual health policy and budget for the upcoming year. Our students were embedded with 4 non-governmental organizations this year: Alliance for Health Promotion, the International Association of Hospice and Palliative Care, Health Technology Assessment International, and COHRED. It’s a once-in-a-lifetime experience for our future leaders in healthcare!
Congratulations to our EMPH Class of 2019 - Our most recent EMPH alumnae!
(From top left) Row 1: John Anthony Madrigal, David Crawley Delgado, Curt Zimmer, Mark Jackson, Kyle Wright, Kelechi Abanobi Row 2: Stephanie Wally, Udari Perera, Yael Kessler, Maritza Johnson, Neeraj Wadhwa, Leon Cristobal Row 3: Erlinda Laska, Smriti Kirubanandan, Jackie Ong, Harleen Gill, Rebecca Pan Row 4: Lilia Devora, Shamta Chabra, Monica Velasco, Angelica Lewis, Soeun Kim (not pictured: Denise Johnson, Hans Milian)
Congratulations to the 2019 Sinaiko Business Plan Awardees:
John Anthony Madrigal, Stephanie Wally, and Harleen Gill;
SHIELD

Congratulations to the 2019 Ann Quealy Awardee:
Leon Cristobal
Faculty Transitions
After a long-time commitment to the EMPH Program, Jeanne Flores, MPH (HPM234: Management Theory & Organizational Behavior) has made the decision to retire and spend more time with her family on the weekends. Thanks for being both an alum and a committed faculty member, Jeanne. We are fortunate to have Laura Erskine, PhD, agreeing to teach this course as she does in the day program, lending consistency between the MPH degree programs.

With this change, Dr. Erskine (pictured above in red) will be turning over her HPM232: Leadership duties to Tom Gordon (pictured above, right) full time, rather than being co-faculty in that course. Leadership is in continued good hands with Tom!
John Tanouye (EMPH ’12) (pictured below, left), Regional Telehealth at Kaiser Permanente, will be teaching a new class HPM249: E-Health & Telemedicine. The students in the day program loved this course and we asked that he teach it for the EMPH program this coming year. Welcome [back], John!

We also had a successful year with Jonathan Freedman (pictured above, right), VP at Health Management Associates, joining our faculty to teach HPM280: National Health Policy and he will be returning this Winter 2020!

And while Pattie Cuen, MBA is increasingly busy as Cedars-Sinai Health System’s CMO, we have asked Julie Elginer (pictured above center), DrPH to be faculty of HPM 445: Healthcare Marketing. Dr. Elginer also teaches this course for the MPH day program.

Finally, with a sad heart and happy memories, our office, our faculty, and our current and past students mourned the untimely passing of Lee Thomassen (EMPH ’12) in January 2019. Lee’s passion for UCLA and the EMPH program blessed us with his being our faculty member for HPM436: Healthcare Financial Management for 5 years. After a wonderful memorial to him with family, friends, colleagues, and alumni here at UCLA, we established the Lee Thomassen UCLA Healthcare Finance Fellowship with the gifts given in his memory. This fund is always open for donations, and supports an incoming Year 2 student showing exceptional promise in accounting and financial healthcare skills. Lara Khouri, MBA, Chief Strategy Officer at CHLA and experienced finance instructor at Columbia and UCLA, will be teaching this course Fall 2019.