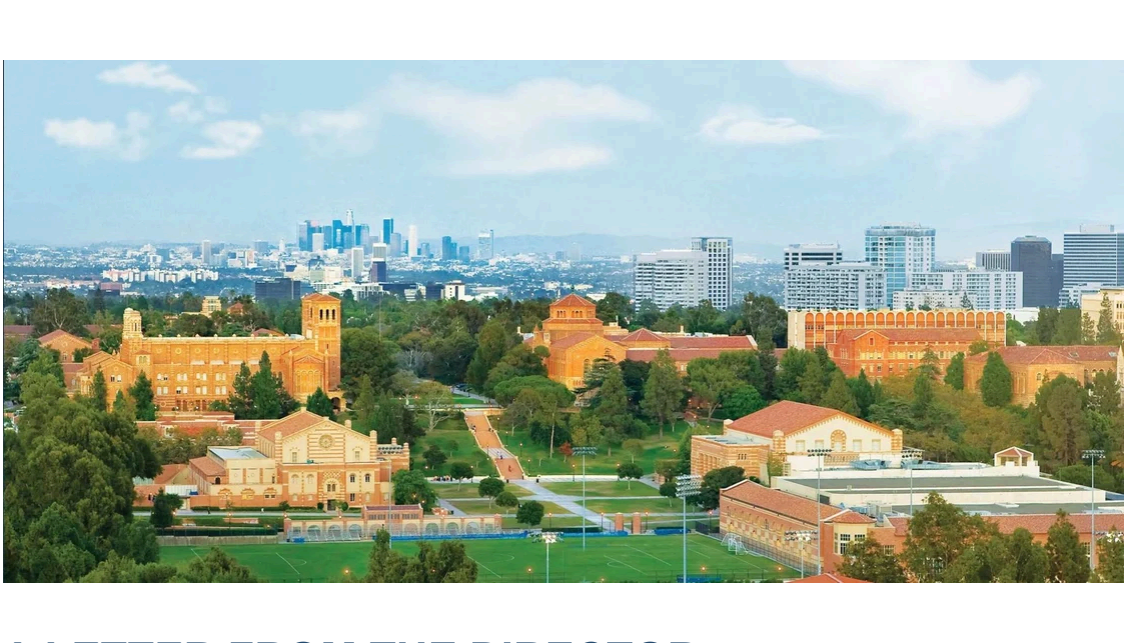
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UCLA Fielding School of Public Health
Executive Programs in Health Policy & Management

Quarterly Update – Spring 2026

The latest news about ExecHPM students, faculty, and alumni.



A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we inch closer to commencement, I am energized by the remarkable momentum within our Executive Programs in Health Policy and Management. This quarter's newsletter is a celebration of the innovation, scholarship, and community that define the EMPH and MHA programs.

We look forward to seeing many of you next week, May 18th, for the annual HPMAA Leaders of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow Dinner. This is always a highlight of the year, where we will honor our graduating class, announce the EMPH Sinaiko Business Plan Award winners, and recognize our scholarship recipients. We will also celebrate the induction of our newest members into the Delta Omega and Upsilon Phi Delta honorary societies. Please note the venue-change to the Bel-Air Bay Club.

Don't miss our faculty spotlight on Tom Gordon, who teaches Leadership in the final quarter of EMPH program. Students benefit from his 22 years of invaluable experience as Executive Vice President of Cedars-Sinai Health System. He created a culture of family at Cedars, and he brings this very same energy into the classroom.

This newsletter also highlights the careers of graduates Monique Trinh, MHA, Aneliese Castro, JD, MPH, and Natalie Yragui, MPH. Plus, don't miss our Q&As with Zach Ambroziak and TJ Alba on their MHA capstone projects. Impressive work!

We also look back at the inspiring visit from UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk in January, who shared his profound global health journey with our EMPH students.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to recognize our Winter Quarter 2026 MHA Graduates who completed their degrees on March 20th, and at the same time welcome our 16 new Spring Quarter MHA candidates who began their journey on March 30th: Hadeel Ali (MHA Spring Quarter Scholarship Recipient), Jonathan Beccera, Tina Bender, Denis Bueno, Arpine Chakryan, Steven Garcia, Kevin Gerlach, Kehlin Hayes, Martin Hernandez, Megan Minniti, Melissa Nieves, Elaisa Ramirez, Adrian Salazar, Bao Trinh, Rhonda Weaver, and Nicole Zermeno.

You'll find all this plus this quarter's career updates on our illustrious EMPH and MHA alumni.

I'm looking forward to celebrating our 2026 graduates at our ExecHPM Grad Luncheon and UCLA Commencement on June 12th.

All my best,



Kyle Sullivan, MSW
Executive Director, Executive Programs in HPM

IMPORTANT DATES

Info Sessions
Please spread the word about our upcoming online Info Sessions. It's a great opportunity for interested applicants to learn about our programs in a live Q&A webinar that covers program curriculum, admissions requirements, and application materials.

EMPH Info Session:
June 3, 12:30pm PT
REGISTER

MHA Info Session:
June 29, 12pm PT
REGISTER

EMPH Fall 2026 Cohort Application Review:
June 1, 2026

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis from September through July, or until the cohort is full.

Start your application on the UCLA Grad Portal.

EMPH Fall Quarter 2026:
Classes begin Friday, August 28, 2026

UCLA Fielding School 2026 Commencement:
June 12, 2026, 5:30pm
LEARN MORE

MHA Summer Quarter 2026 Immersion:
Thursday, August 6 – Saturday, August 8, 2026

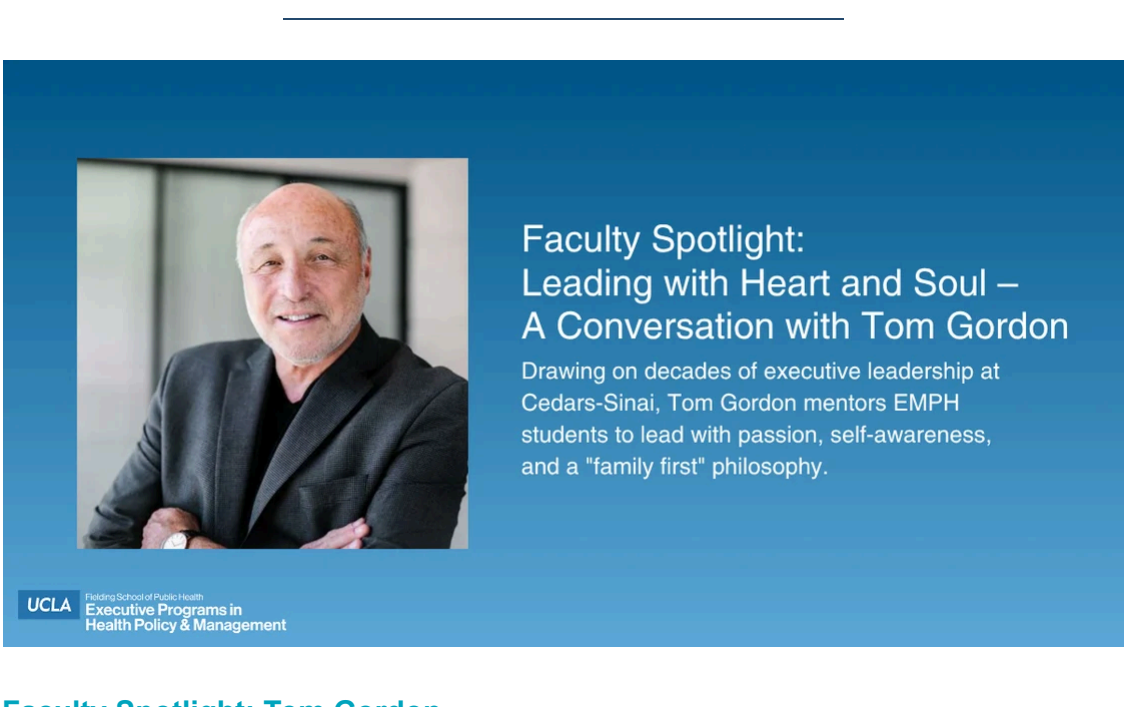
Reminder: MHA Immersion I and II are required courses in the curriculum. You must enroll in the course to participate.

MHA Summer Quarter 2026:
Application Deadline is May 18, 2026. APPLY NOW

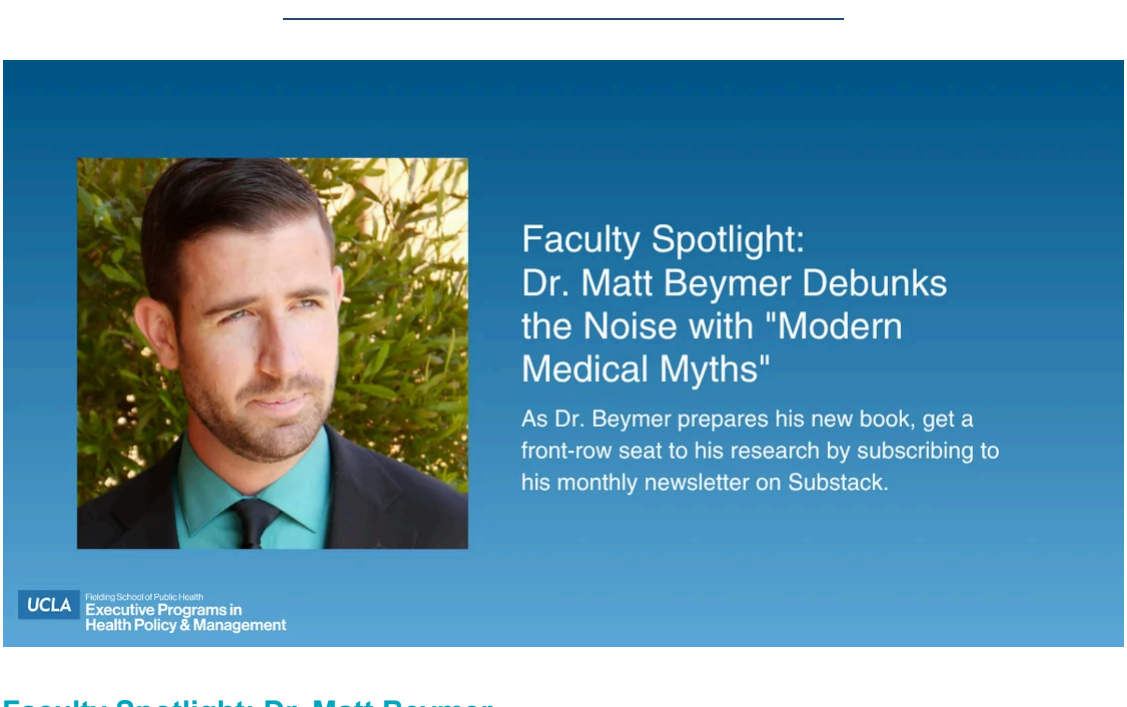
MHA Instruction begins Monday, June 29, 2026

FACULTY

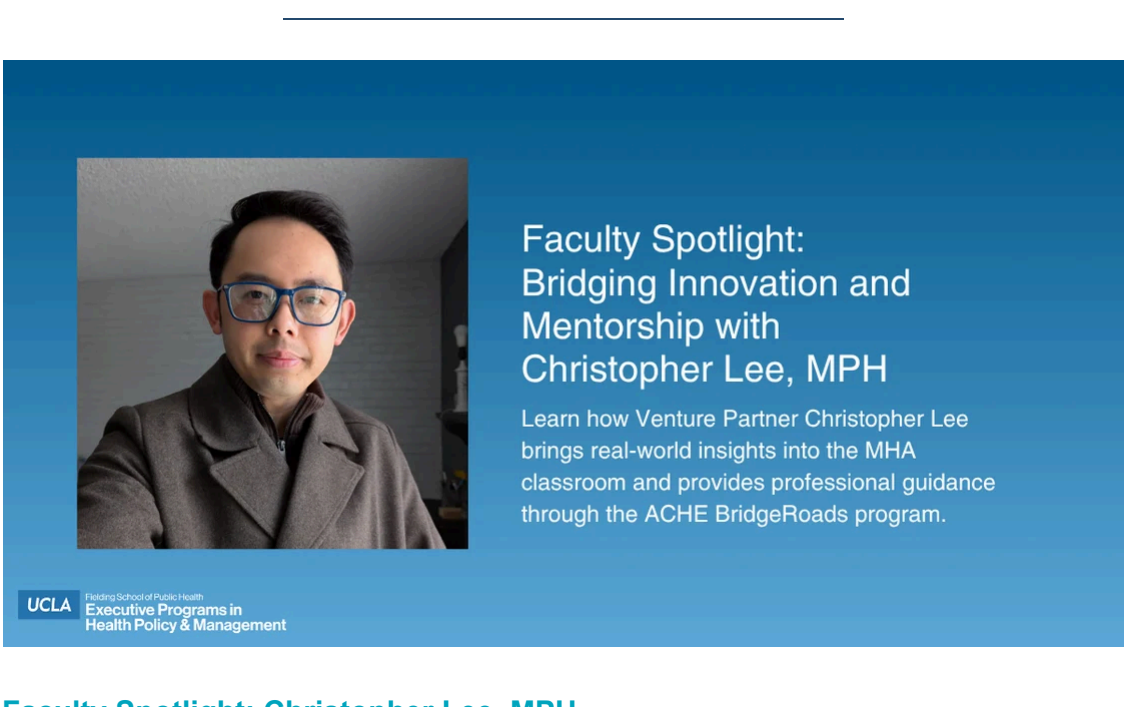
Executive HPM draws on the distinguished faculty, programs, and academics of the nationally renowned UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. Courses are taught by leading practitioners and researchers in the field of public health, health policy, and healthcare management, as well as faculty from UCLA's other graduate schools and management-related fields. Their expertise spans clinical practice, applied research, policy analysis, entrepreneurship, and consultation at the local, national, and international level.



Faculty Spotlight: Tom Gordon



Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Matt Beymer



Faculty Spotlight: Christopher Lee, MPH



Faculty Spotlight: Alicia Macklin, JD, MPH

EMPH - SPRING QUARTER 2026

EMPH First Year
Mike Galper, MPH, CPA: Healthcare Financial Accounting (HPM 403)
Isomi Miake-Lye, PhD: Practices of Evaluation in Health Services – Theory and Methodology (HPM M422)
Matt Beymer, PhD: Principles of Epidemiology (EPI 201)

EMPH Second Year
Alicia Mackin, JD, MPH: Legal Environment of Health Services Management (HPM 437)
Tom Gordon: Leadership Capstone Seminar (HPM 232)
Matt Beymer, PhD: Principles of Epidemiology (EPI 201)

MHA – SPRING QUARTER 2026

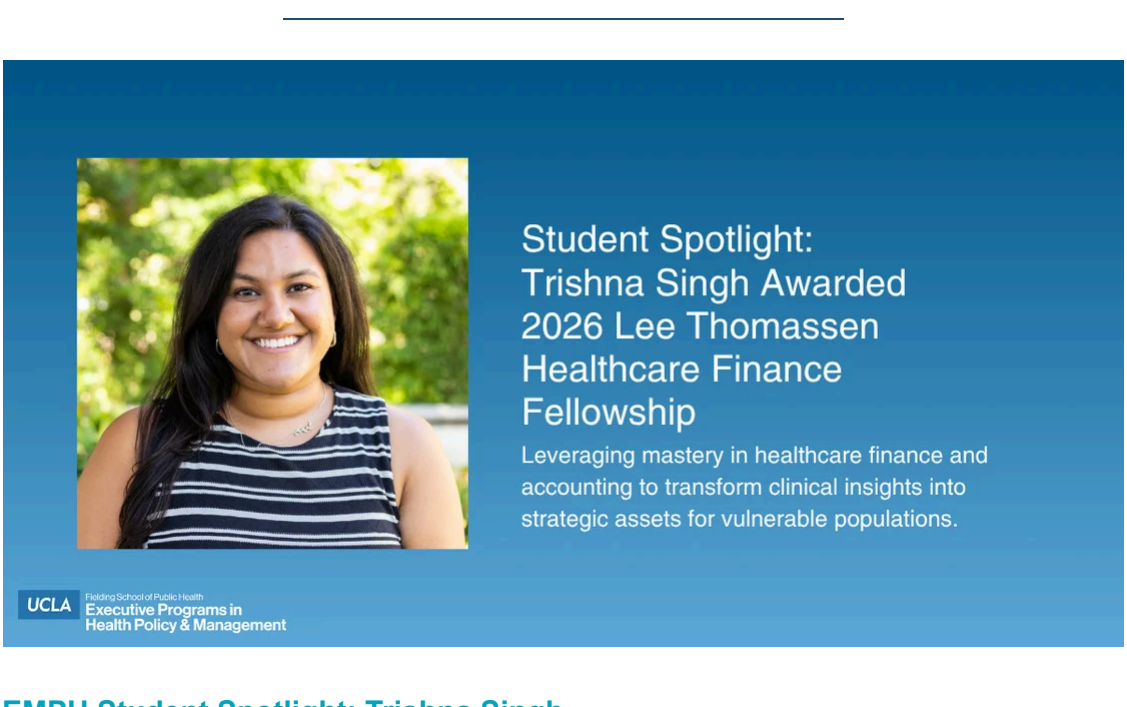
Shira Shafir, PhD, MPH: Fundamentals of Public Health (PUBHLT 201)
Dhruv Khurana, PhD: Microeconomic Theory in the Health Sector (HLTADM 411)
Sangeeta Ahluwalia, PhD: Healthcare Organization & Financing (HLTADM 401)
Martin Lee, PhD: Statistics for Health Management Decision-Making (HLTH 412)
Laura Erskine, PhD, MBA: Management & Organizational Behavior in Health Systems (HLTADM 402) and Capstone Project (HLTADM 400)
Sandra Pothoff, PhD: Healthcare Operations Management (HLTADM 413)
Jean Balgrosky, PhD: Healthcare Information Systems & Technology (HLTADM 403)
Mike Galper, MPH, CPA: Healthcare Financial Accounting (HLTADM 414)
Linda Horner, MBA: Healthcare Strategy (HLTADM 404)
April Kelly, Ed.D., RN, MAOM/MHA: Healthcare Financial Management (HLTADM 415)
Lindsay Williams, PhD, RN: Leadership & Ethics (HLTADM 405)
Brandy Bryant, DrPH, MPH: Quality Improvement & Performance Excellence (HLTADM 416)
Hannah Reischl, MPH: Data Analytics & Visualization (HLTADM 417)
Christopher Lee, MPH: Healthcare Innovation (HLTADM 407)
Brenda Freshman, PhD: Human Resources Management (HLTADM 408)

EXECUTIVE MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (EMPH) PROGRAM

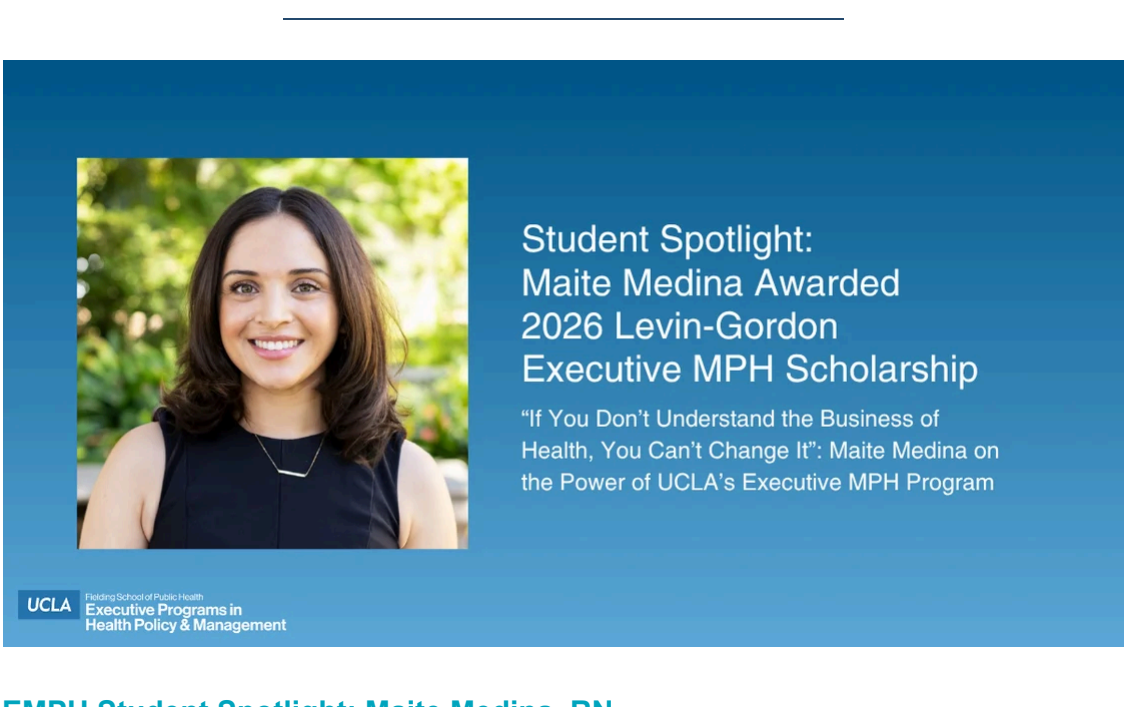
EMPH Program Director: Dr. Isomi Miake-Lye

UCLA Fielding School of Public Health's Executive MPH (EMPH) is a two-year graduate degree program. Students attend classes twice a month on Friday and Saturday, in person on the UCLA campus. Tailored for professionals invested in their careers, the EMPH program provides students the opportunity to work full-time while pursuing a rigorous graduate program.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are conferred a fully accredited Master of Public Health (MPH) degree with an emphasis in Health Policy and Management.



EMPH Student Spotlight: Trishna Singh



EMPH Student Spotlight: Maite Medina, RN



Students Pitch Innovative Healthcare Solutions in Annual EMPH Business Plan Competition



UCLA Chancellor Julio Frenk Shares Global Health Journey With EMPH Students

MASTER OF HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION (MHA)

MHA Program Director: Dr. Laura Erskine

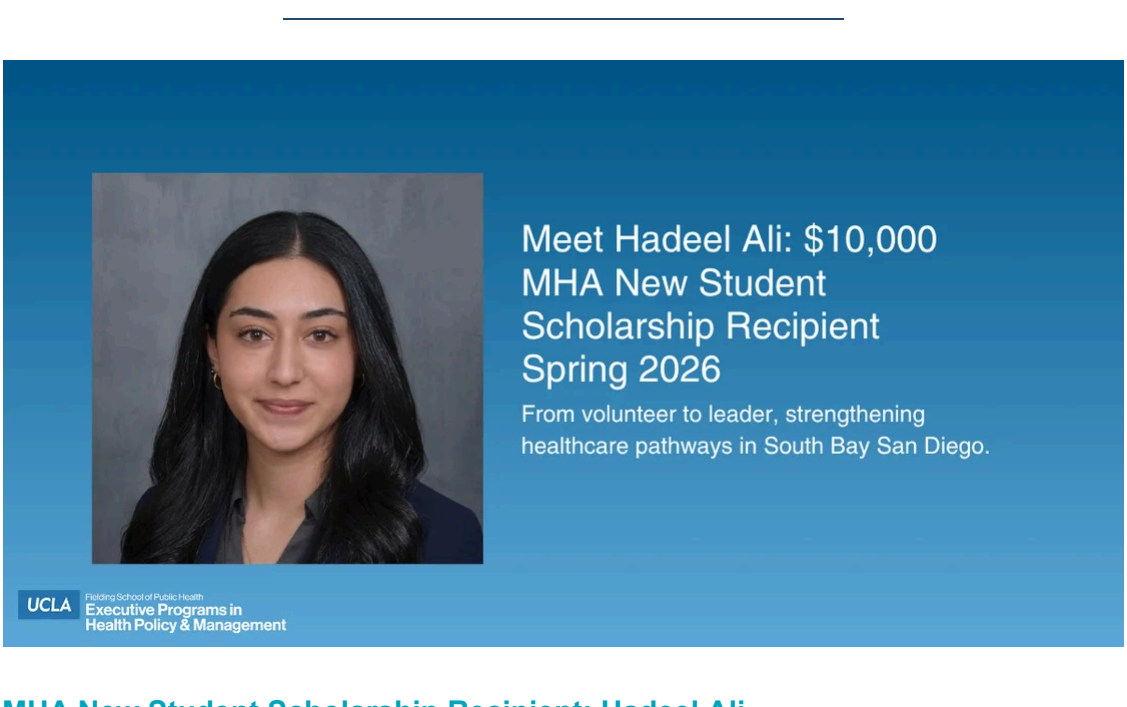
UCLA's online MHA is a flexible graduate degree program. Graduates are conferred a fully accredited Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) degree. Featuring two on-campus immersions and a capstone project, this flexible program offers most course content asynchronously, with the freedom to adjust the number of courses taken each quarter.

Congratulations, MHA Winter Quarter 2026 Graduates
The following students completed their coursework on March 20, 2026, for their MHA degrees: Lindsey Berman, Shaunessy Burton, Anam Charania, Jasmene Del Aguila, Marina Ghuneem, Anjelika Grate, Sophia (Ka Yan) Leung, Fleurdeline (Ruby) Mercado, Abraham Payan, Summer Sanchez, and Lindsey Senger.

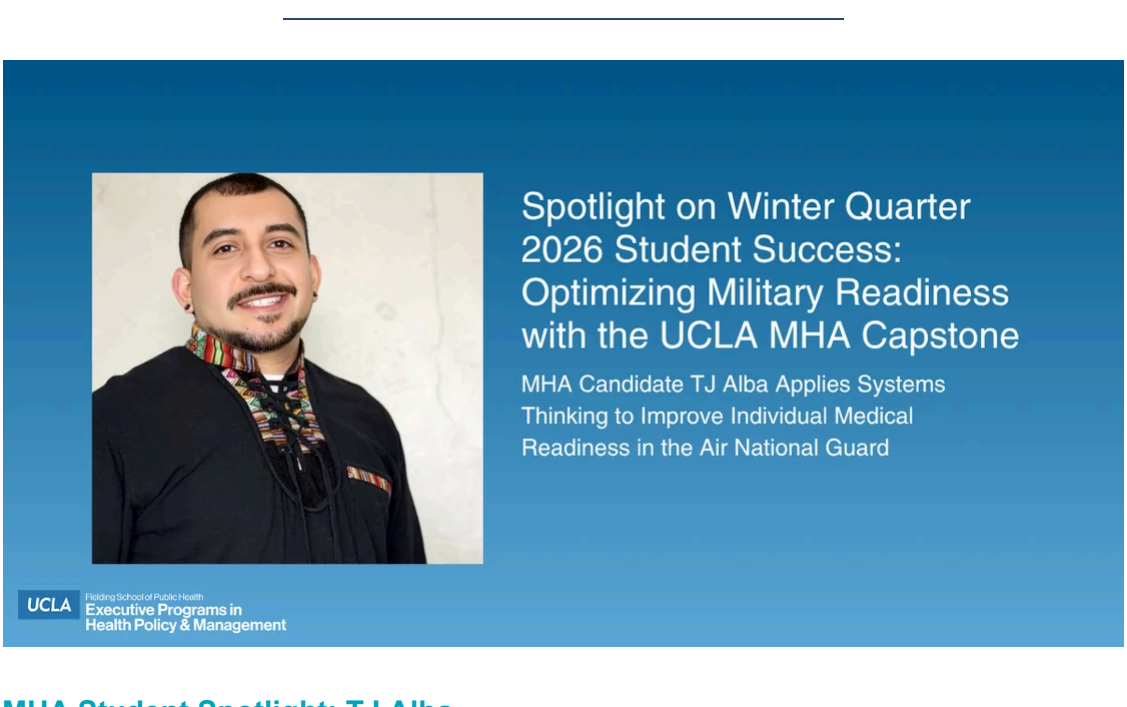
Congratulations and we look forward to celebrating with you at UCLA Commencement in June.

Welcome, New Spring Quarter 2026 MHA Candidates
One of the highlights of UCLA's online MHA Program is that students can begin their graduate studies any quarter throughout the year. Congratulations to the following MHA candidates who were recently admitted into the program and began classes this Spring Quarter on March 30, 2026: Hadeel Ali, Jonathan Beccera, Tina Bender, Denis Bueno, Arpine Chakryan, Steven Garcia, Kevin Gerlach, Kehlin Hayes, Martin Hernandez, Megan Minniti, Melissa Nieves, Elaisa Ramirez, Adrian Salazar, Bao Trinh, Rhonda Weaver, and Nicole Zermeno.

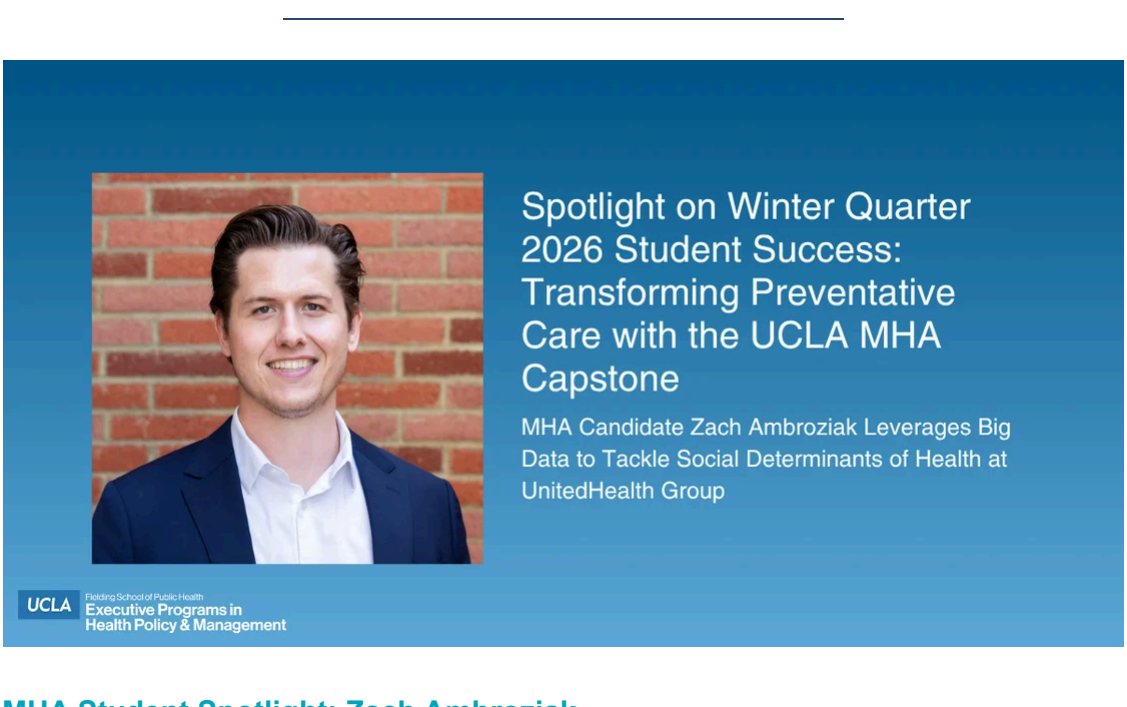
We look forward to welcoming you to campus at an upcoming Immersion.



MHA New Student Scholarship Recipient: Hadeel Ali



MHA Student Spotlight: TJ Alba



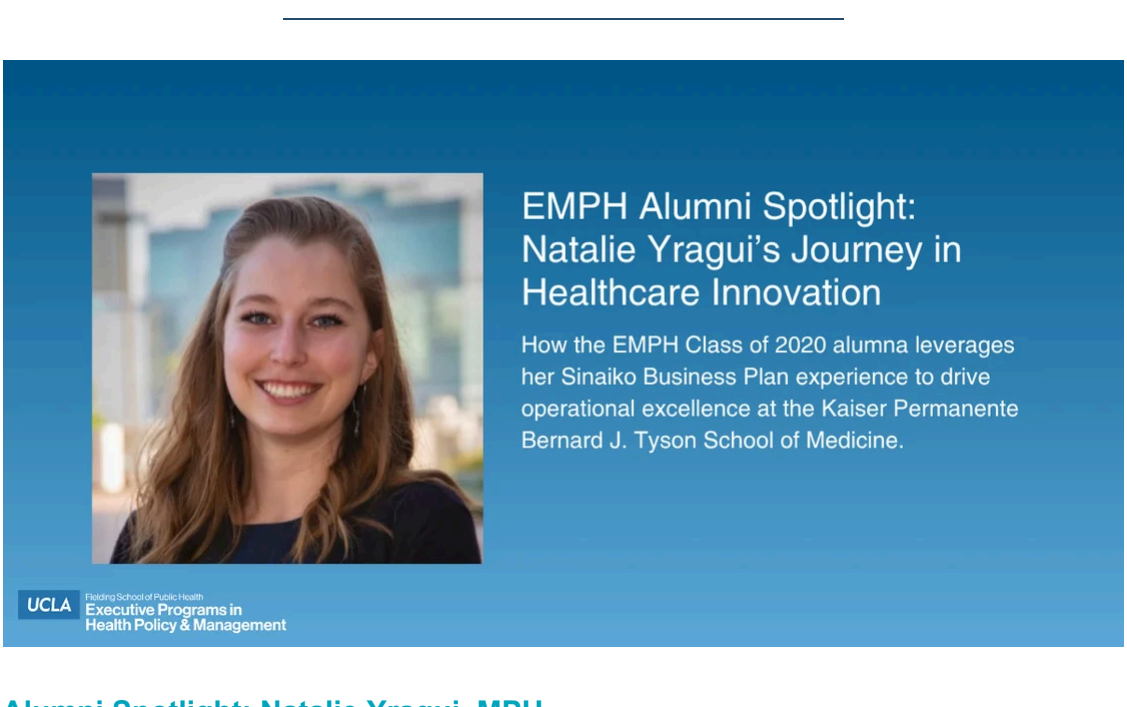
MHA Student Spotlight: Zach Ambroziak



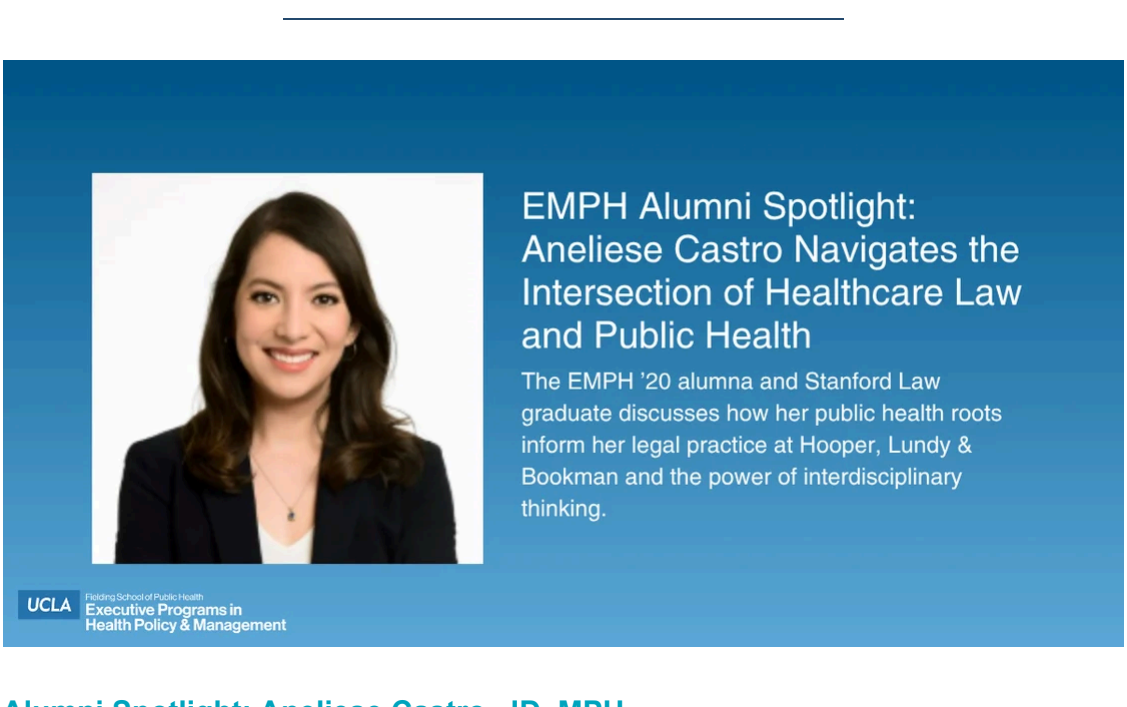
Winter Quarter 2026 MHA Immersion Recap

ALUMNI UPDATES

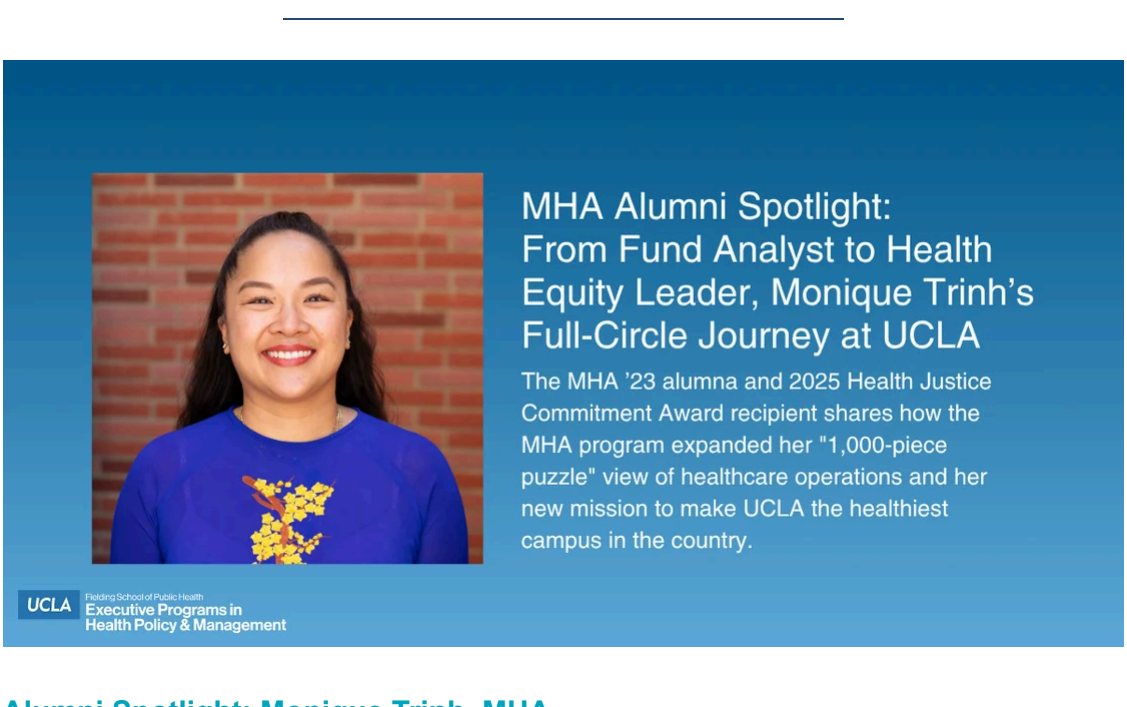
The UCLA Fielding School of Public Health Executive Programs in Health Policy and Management Alumni Network includes over 700 professionals committed to making a difference in the field of public health. Nothing brings us more joy than sharing your important work with our community. Please notify us of your career updates for an opportunity to be featured. Just send us an email at execphm@ucla.edu or feel free to DM or tag us on LinkedIn.



Alumni Spotlight: Natalie Yragui, MPH



Alumni Spotlight: Aneliese Castro, JD, MPH



Alumni Spotlight: Monique Trinh, MHA

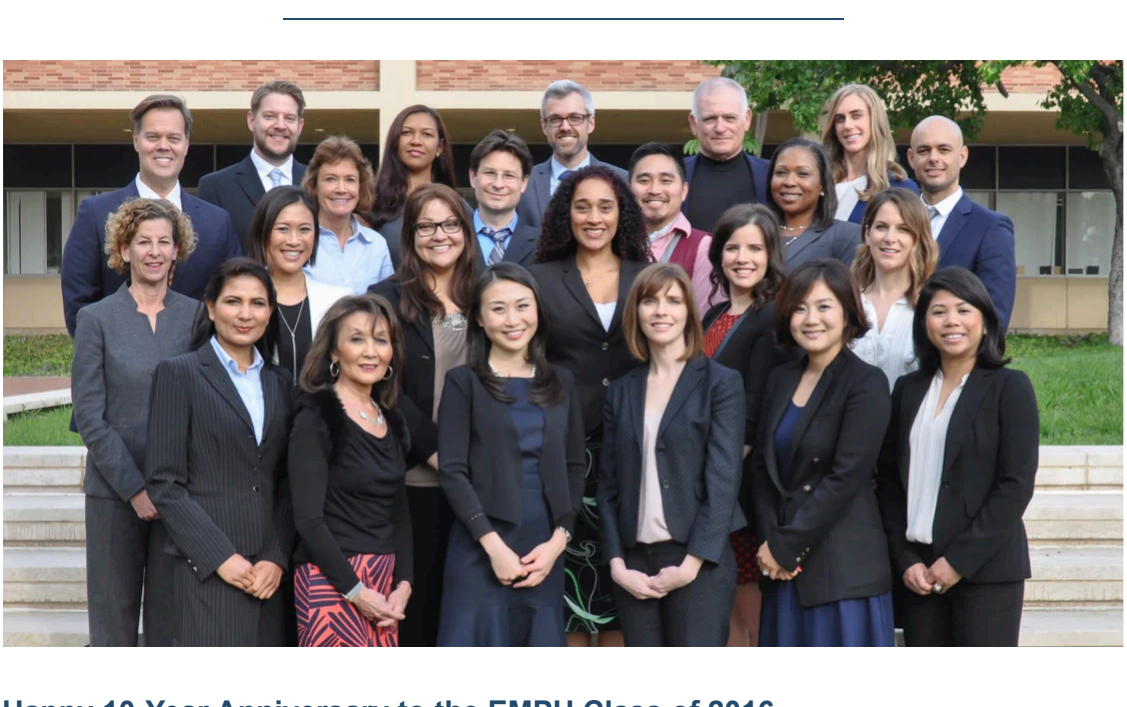
EMPH Alumni Career Updates

Kelly Benshoof, MPH (EMPH '16) is now an Executive Coach for Los Angeles County Justice, Care and Opportunities Department's (LAJCOD) Capacity Building Initiative.
Shawn Blackwell, MPH, PMP, CSSBB (EMPH '11) is now an Adjunct Professor at Radford University College of Graduate Studies in Roanoke, Virginia.
D'Artagnan DeBow, MD, MBA (EMPH Candidate) is a now a Tele-Critical Care Physician at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
Nicollette Doomany (EMPH Candidate) is now a Project Manager at Avicenna Next, Inc.
Mikele Epperly, PhD, MPH (EMPH '03) spoke on the "The Future of Value-Based Brain Healthcare" on January 21st at The Brain House, alongside the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland, January 19-22, 2026.
Sarah Hakakha (EMPH Candidate) started a new position as Patient Navigator at Pinnacle California.
Yael Kessler, MPH (EMPH '19) is now a Consultant with Sheba Impact at ARC.
Vasco Deon Kidd, DHSc, MS, PA-C (EMPH '08) is now Executive Director, Chief of Advanced Practice at Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA).
Katherine La Spada, MPH (EMPH '17) has been promoted to Senior Manager of Network Operations at Blue Shield of California. In this role, she now leads the Network Transitions team and supports the broader Network Operations strategy.
Lusi Mkhitaryan, MPH, REHS (EMPH '12) is now Assistant Director at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH), Environmental Health Division.
Allison Nackel, MPH (EMPH '18) is now a Community Health Worker at Los Angeles County Department of Health Services.
Blake Owens (EMPH Candidate) has been promoted to Deputy Director at Aurrera Health.
Andy Short (EMPH Candidate) is now the Associate Director of Volunteer Services at The Phoenix.
Sara Traw, MPH, RHIA (EMPH '12) is now the National Sales Manager at American Specialty Health.
Alvin Wong, MPH (EMPH '25) has been promoted to Project Manager at Cedars-Sinai.

MHA Alumni Career Updates

Nelson Goins (MHA Candidate) is now a Campaign Manager for various political committees.
Kiani Jackson (MHA Candidate) is now a Program Manager at Pair Team.
Mina Jasovic O., MHA, IBCLC, LSSHP, BFA, PPD (MHA 2023) announced that her manuscript, "Establishing a Clinical Ladder for International Board-Certified Lactation Consultants®," has been officially accepted for publication in Clinical Lactation.
Casimir Kwiatkowski, MHA, RN (MHA '24) has started a new position as Patient Flow Consultant at GE HealthCare.
Subashini Maloney, MHA (MHA '25) has a new role as Regional Executive Director at Serenity Pointe Care.
Marcel Mungaray III, MHA (MHA '25) is now a Senior Neuroscience Sales Specialist at Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine.
Chris Pogar, MHA (MHA '24) has started a new position as Executive Director at Civitas Senior Living.
Yoko Tanaka (MHA Candidate) has become a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE).
Paloma Tirado (MHA Candidate) is now a Health Educator, Parent Coach at Northeast Valley Health Corporation.
Monique Trinh, MHA (MHA '23) is now the Operations & Finance Manager at Semel Healthy Campus Initiative Center at UCLA.

Please notify us of your professional updates for an opportunity to be featured. Email us at execphm@ucla.edu or tag us on LinkedIn.



Happy 10-Year Anniversary to the EMPH Class of 2016
Tom Armentrout-Wiswall, Bridget Bohannon, Ailene Bu, Lucy De Leon, Kayitz Finley, Susan Fredericks, Andrew Hallum, Ariel Huhn, Jean Y. Kang, Oariona Lowe, Alicia Macklin, Boyd D. Martin, III, Niki Miller, Punita Oswal, Daniel N. Ovadia, Rupesh Ranjan, Eric Schwimmer, Kristin Senac, Nia Sengupta, Alicia Shewmaker, Kelly Benshoof, Victoria Tang, and Chetera Watson



The University of California is the best public university in the 2026 *U.S. News & World Report* Best Colleges rankings. **UCLA** is in the top 10 for best schools of public health and also ranked in the top 10 for best health policy and management programs.

The world-renowned **UCLA Fielding School of Public Health** harnesses the resources and expertise of a top-ranked U.S. public university to develop proactive leaders who will shape the future of healthcare.

Housed within the Fielding School, the Executive Programs Office in the Health Policy and Management Department offers two executive degree programs designed for working professionals: **Executive Master of Public Health (EMPH)** and **Online Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA)**.

Follow us on social to stay engaged with UCLA's Executive Programs in Health Policy and Management and our community.

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