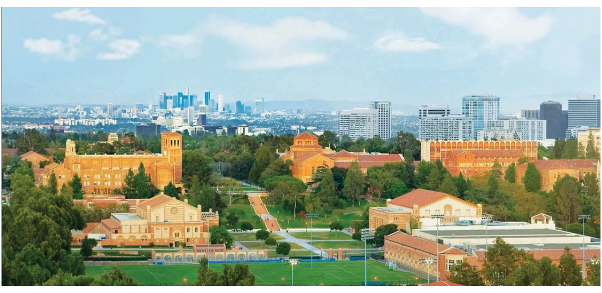
UCLA Fielding School of Public Health
Executive Programs in
Health Policy & Management

Quarterly Update – Summer 2025

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



A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

On June 13th, I had the great honor of witnessing the Executive HPM Class of 2025 walk across the stage at Royce Hall as they were conferred their MPH and MHA degrees. The number of hours dedicated to studying, research, and pursuing their passion for public health all culminated in this beautiful moment, celebrated not only by our students, but their families, friends, colleagues, faculty, and staff. Congratulations, Class of 2025! The world needs your leadership now more than ever.

It's been a big year for UCLA. Julio Frenk was inaugurated as our 7th chancellor on June 5th. The first Latino to be appointed as UCLA Chancellor, Dr. Frenk holds an academic appointment as distinguished professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management within the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. This is very exciting news for all of us, and we can't wait to see the developments that will surely result from this appointment in our department.

Even closer to home, I am thrilled to say that Dr. Isomi Miake-Lye is the new Faculty Director of the EMPH Program. An Adjunct Assistant Professor for over six years in the department, she teaches the "Practices of Evaluation in Health Services: Theory and Methodology" course (with Dr. Becky Yano) both in the EMPH Program and the day MPH Program. In the past year, Isomi served as the EMPH Faculty Advisor and has been conducting a thorough evaluation of the program, interviewing and surveying students, alumni, and faculty. Stay tuned for new initiatives.

The HPMAA "Leaders of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow" Annual Awards Dinner on May 20th was a wonderful night spent in celebration of our community. Dustin Corcoran, MBA, Chief Executive Officer of the California Medical Association, was honored as the Leader of Today Awardee, and our very own Dr. Leah Vriesman was selected as the 2025 Ira Alpert Service Awardee.

Congratulations to all the ExecHPM scholarship and award recipients, including those joining the honors societies of Delta Omega and Upsilon Phi Delta. A special shout-out to the winners of the 2025 EMPH Sinaiko Business Plan Award, Alvin Wong and Alan Rozet; the Ann G. Quealy EMPH Award Winner, Lisa Edwards; and the MHA Outstanding Student Award Winners, Uma Chandavarkar and Casimir Kwiatkowski. I am so proud of all of you.

I encourage you to follow us on social media as we'll be announcing our EMPH fall cohort very soon as well as our newly admitted MHA students. (You can find all our channels on Linktree.) And you'll hear from us again in October with our Fall Quarterly Update.

I hope everyone has a wonderful summer.

All my best,

Kyle Sullivan, MSW
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.

MHA Info Session:

Thursday, October 16, 2025, 12:00pm PT
REGISTER

EMPH Application Review:

We will accept applications through Thursday, July 31, 2025.

Review the EMPH Admissions Requirements.

Start or complete your EMPH application on the UCLA Grad Portal.

EMPH Fall Quarter:

Classes begin Friday, August 22, 2025

MHA Summer Quarter:

Classes began Monday, June 30, 2025

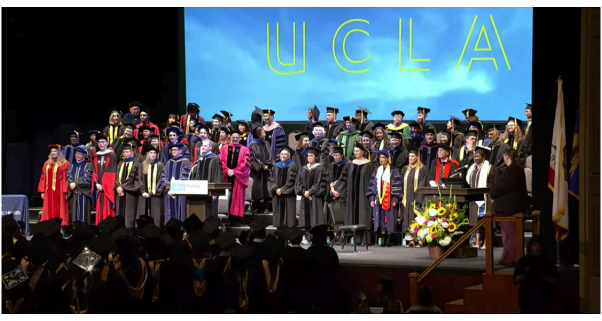
MHA Summer Quarter Immersion:

Thursday, August 7 – Saturday, August 9, 2025

MHA Fall Quarter:

Application Deadline is Thursday, July 31, 2025. APPLY NOW

Classes begin Monday, September 22, 2025



Congratulations, Class of 2025!

We had the honor of conferring Master of Public Health (MPH) and Master of

Healthcare Administration (MHA) degrees to our brilliant Class of 2025 students on June 13th.

If you were not able to attend the commencement ceremony or would like to view it again, a recording is available on the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health YouTube channel.

EMPH CLASS OF 2025

Ray Lawrence Chandler, MPH
Lisa Kay Edwards, MPH
Nicole Stephanie Morales, MPH
Dayanara Elizabeth Nieto Flores, MPH
Eunice Ninet, MPH
Elías Rodríguez, MPH
Alan Rozet, MPH
Vanessa Nicole Villafuerte, MPH
Daisy Wang, MPH
Alvin Jay Wong, MPH

MHA CLASS OF 2025

Kelli DeJohn, MHA
Brandy Duong, MHA
Shayok Dutta, MHA
Srihitha Gaddam, MD, MHA
Lisa Gerstenberger-Heil, MHA
Armand Gomez, MHA
Anusha Gunaratne, MHA
Anabel Guzman, MHA
Maria Carmen Hernandez, MHA
Alyssa Huang, MHA
Karisa Kanachki, MHA
Gagan Kaur, MHA
Zahirah Kasim, MHA
Prossy Kiwanuka, MHA
Aarudhra Kolli, MHA
Casimir Kwiatkowski, MHA

Austin Lesher, MHA
Trang Lieu, MHA
Lea Macias, MD, MHA
Mark J.D.P. Martinez, MHA
Kaylah Medina, MHA
Araksya Minasyan, MHA
Ani Mkrtoumian, MHA
Danielle Montes, MHA
Marcel Mungaray, MHA
Alexandra Murphy, MHA
Lily Nguyen, MHA
Trysten Nguyen, MHA
Saumya Nigam, MHA
Itzel Olivas Varela, MHA
James Papier, MHA
Brianna Patterson, MHA

Amie Phan, MHA
Christopher Pogar, MHA
Alexis Poole, MHA
Jane Presto, MHA
Celeste Quiroz, MHA
Luis Rueda, MHA
Gene Salgado, MHA
Phebe Sihn, MHA
Nathaniel Smith, MHA
Rita Smith, MHA
Leng Tang-Ritchie, MHA
Shantel Velasquez, MHA
Joshua Wachenheimer, MHA
Lisa Yachetti, MHA
Sama Zafar, MHA
Dominic Zavala, MHA

Sanad Abdelrahman, MHA
Oscar Acosta, MHA
Debbie Aguilera, MHA
Alice Anaya, MHA
Jennifer Arnold, MHA
Fady Bekheet, MHA
Lindsey Borrego, MHA
James Brittain, MHA
Breanna Castanon, MHA
Abigail Ceja-Cerezo, MHA
Uma Chandavarkar, MD, MHA
Somnath Chivukula, MHA
Hannah Churchill, MHA
Amanda Coronado, MHA
Julissa Cuison, MHA
Deepti Datta, MHA
Kelli DeJohn, MHA
Brandy Duong, MHA
Shayok Dutta, MHA

Austin Lesher, MHA
Trang Lieu, MHA
Lea Macias, MHA
Mark Martinez, MHA
Kaylah Medina, MHA
Araksya Minasyan, MHA
Ani Mkrtoumian, MHA
Danielle Montes, MHA
Marcel Mungaray, MHA
Alexandra Murphy, MHA
Lily Nguyen, MHA
Trysten Nguyen, MHA
Saumya Nigam, MHA
Itzel Olivas Varela, MHA
James Papier, MHA
Brianna Patterson, MHA
Amie Phan, MHA
Christopher Pogar, MHA
Alexis Poole, MHA

Srihitha Gaddam, MHA
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Armand Gomez, MHA
Anusha Gunaratne, MHA
Anabel Guzman, MHA
Maria Carmen Hernandez, MHA
Alyssa Huang, MHA
Karisa Kanachki, MHA
Gagan Kaur, MHA
Zahirah Kasim, MHA
Prossy Kiwanuka, MHA
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Rita Smith, MHA
Leng Tang-Ritchie, MHA
Shantel Velasquez, MHA
Joshua Wachenheimer, MHA
Lisa Yachetti, MHA
Sama Zafar, MHA
Dominic Zavala, MHA

class of 2025

Leaders of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow Annual Gala

For the past three decades the HPMAA has been honoring a "Leader of Today" as well as the FSPH Health Policy and Management graduating class, the "Leaders of Tomorrow," during an annual dinner widely attended by healthcare professionals from throughout the U.S. This year the event was held on May 20, 2025.

The Leader of Today is Dustin Corcoran, MBA, Chief Officer of the California Medical Association. And our own Dr. Leah Vriesman was honored with the Ira Alpert Service Award.

Those joining the honors societies of Delta Omega and Upsilon Phi Delta were also recognized, along with award recipients. Congratulations to you all.

2025 HONOR SOCIETY MEMBERS

Delta Omega is the national scholastic honorary society established to recognize scholarship devotion to public health principles and outstanding service in public health. Recipients are carefully chosen each year based on academic standing and real or potential qualities of leadership in public health.

Congratulations to our 2025 Delta Omega Awardees:

- **EMPH** – Lisa Edwards and Alvin Wong
- **MHA** – Jennifer Arnold, Uma Chandavarkar, Srihitha Gaddam, Casimir Kwiatkowski, Mark Jonifer De Peralta Martinez, Ani Mkrtoumian, Alexandra Murphy, Amie Phan, and Alexis Poole

Upsilon Phi Delta is the National Honor Society for Health Care Management recognized by health administration professionals and academic institutions. Recipients are carefully chosen each year based on academic standing and overall achievement in the management field.

Congratulations to our 2025 Upsilon Phi Delta Awardees:

- **EMPH** – Eunice Ninet, Alan Rozet, and Daisy Wang
- **MHA** – Fady Bekheet, Lindsey Borrego, James Brittain, Amanda Coronado, Brandy Duong, Anabel Guzman, Austin Lesher, Moses James Papier, Leng Tang-Ritchie, and Dominic Zavala

2025 AWARD RECIPIENTS

EMPH Sinaiko Business Plan Award:
Alan Rozet and Alvin Wong

Congratulations to Alan Rozet and Alvin Wong, this year's winners of the EMPH Sinaiko Business Plan Competition. Their innovative idea to launch OD Zero, smart vending machines for overdose prevention, placed them as the 2025 winning team.

Focused on harm reduction, accessibility, convenience, and community collaboration, OD Zero's mission is to save lives and and reduce overdose fatalities by providing free, 24/7 overdose reversal kits via vending machines in hotels and motels. Their vision? A future with preventable overdose deaths, reduced stigma, and a safer, healthier community.

Three courses in the second year of the EMPH Program (Healthcare Financial Management, Healthcare Marketing, and Healthcare Strategy) specifically prepare students for this milestone project, the culmination of their graduate school studies.

As they develop their business plans, each student group is assigned alumni mentors, all of whom are past winners of the EMPH Sinaiko Business Plan Award.

Ann G. Quealy Memorial Fellowship Endowment Award:
Lisa Edwards

One EMPH recipient is carefully chosen each year by their cohort peers for the Ann G. Quealy Memorial Fellowship Endowment Award based on overall achievement, concern for others, humor, and a desire to reach their highest potential in life while bringing out the best in others.

Congratulations to Lisa Edwards, our 2025 awardee. Thank you for your positive contributions to the culture of the HPM Department and the EMPH Program.

Lee Thomassen Healthcare Finance Fellowship:
Eunice Ninet

The Lee Thomassen Healthcare Finance Fellowship provides financial support in the amount of $1,000 towards tuition for a promising second year EMPH student based on academic achievement in their first year, showing exceptional promise in accounting and finance. Congratulations to Eunice Ninet, this year's recipient.

EMPH Levin-Gordon Scholarship:
Alan Rozet

The Levin-Gordon Executive MPH Scholarship provides a scholarship in the amount of $2,500 towards tuition for a promising second year student in the EMPH Program, based on academic achievement. Awardees are selected in consultation with program faculty for exceptional work, leadership, and demeanor during their first year in the program. Congratulations to Alan Rozet.

Public Health Scholarship Program (PHSP) Recipients:
EMPH – Ray Chandler, Nicole Morales, and Dayanara Nieto-Flores
MHA – Jane Garrison Presto

MHA Outstanding Student Awardees:
Uma Chandavarkar and Casimir Kwiatkowski

The MHA Outstanding Student Award is carefully chosen each year by faculty, based on overall academic achievement. Congratulations to Uma Chandavarkar and Casimir Kwiatkowski, our 2025 awardees. Thank you for your positive contributions to the MHA Program.

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.

Dr. Isomi Miake-Lye Appointed New EMPH Faculty Director

A Letter from Professor and Endowed Chair Dr. Ninez Ponce

I am thrilled to announce that Dr. Isomi Miake-Lye will be taking on a new role in the EMPH Program as Faculty Director, beginning July 2025.

Dr. Miake-Lye received her PhD in Health Policy and Management at UCLA Fielding School of Public Health in 2016. An Adjunct Assistant Professor in the EMPH Program for over six years, Dr. Miake-Lye teaches the "Practices of Evaluation in Health Services: Theory and Methodology" course with Dr. Becky Yano. While serving as the faculty advisor for current EMPH students this past year, Dr. Miake-Lye has been conducting a thorough evaluation of the EMPH Program, the cornerstone of the Health Policy & Management Department, focusing on next steps and the future direction of the program started by Dr. Paul Torrens thirty years ago.

Dr. Miake-Lye has devoted the last 17 years as a researcher at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. She has expertise in evidence synthesis, mixed methods research, implementation science, and organizational behavior. Her research focuses on how the organization of health systems affects the use of evidence and evidence-based practices. She is the Co-Director of the VA Evidence Synthesis Program in West Los Angeles and the Assistant Director of Communications at the Veterans Affairs Health Services Research & Development (VA HSR&D) Center for the Study of Healthcare Innovation, Implementation and Policy. Dr. Miake-Lye holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies, Peace and Conflict Studies from USC.

I would like to recognize the incredible work of Kyle Sullivan, Director of the Executive Programs in Health Policy and Management, and especially thank her for serving as the Interim EMPH Director for the past two years. Her collaboration and insight helped direct the EMPH Transition Committee to identify the program's next leader. During Kyle's time as EMPH Interim Director, her focus on recruitment efforts and alumni re-engagement played a key role in revitalizing the program and boosting enrollment. Her leadership is greatly appreciated and the value she brings to the program cannot be understated. Her relationships with the alumni, faculty, and industry stakeholders are integral to the success of this executive-style program. Kyle will continue to work closely with Dr. Miake-Lye as part of the leadership team for the program.

I'd also like to thank the alumni and faculty members who were part of the program review last year.

I'm excited about the direction of the EMPH Program and look forward to UCLA carrying on the tradition of building the next generation of healthcare leaders with Dr. Isomi Miake-Lye at the helm.

Sincerely,

Ninez A. Ponce, PhD, MPP
Professor and Fred & Pamela Wasserman Endowed Chair
Department of Health Policy and Management
UCLA Fielding School of Public Health

Dr. Dhruv Khurana is Senior Principal Investigator (PI) on TGD Paper

Dr. Dhruv Khurana's co-authored paper, "Developing Health Care Provider Knowledge, Confidence, and Cultural Sensitivity through Resident Transgender Training: A Controlled Educational Study," in which he is the Senior Principal

Investigator (PI), has been published in the *International Journal for Equity in Health*.

The study demonstrates the effectiveness of a curriculum focused on transgender and gender-diverse (TGD) health in improving residents' knowledge and confidence. Further research is needed on the durability of these effects and the curriculum's impact on awareness of barriers to care.

Implementing such curricula at other institutions could reinforce educational programs in medical schools to improve provider competence and address the healthcare needs of TGD individuals.

Dr. Khurana holds a Ph.D. in Economics, specializing in Health Economics and Econometrics, and an M.A. in Economics, with a concentration in Behavioral and Neuroeconomics, both from Claremont Graduate University and an M.S. in Finance from the London School of Economics. Dr. Khurana teaches "Microeconomic Theory of Health Sector" in both the EMPH and MHA Programs.

Huang, K., Yang, A.J., Skoretz, L. et al. Developing health care provider knowledge, confidence, and cultural sensitivity through resident transgender training: a controlled educational study. Int J Equity Health 24, 202 (2025). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-025-02555-7

Linda Magara Horner to Teach Healthcare Financial Management in the EMPH Program

Linda Magara Horner, MBA, brings extensive experience in healthcare strategy and finance to the classroom as an instructor in both the MHA and EMPH programs. This fall she will teach "Healthcare Financial Management" to second-year EMPH students, in addition to teaching "Healthcare Strategy" in the MHA program.

With a strong background in corporate strategy and impact investing, Professor Horner integrates real-world insights into her teaching. Currently a Partner at Uplifting Capital, her professional roles inform her applied, finance-focused approach to healthcare education.

Linda holds an MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College, where she attended as a Toigo Foundation, Consortium for Graduate School Management, and Dartmouth Global Health Fellow. She also has a BS in Business Administration, Accounting from The Master's University, Summa Cum Laude. Linda holds certifications in human-centered strategy from IDEOU, impact measurement from the University of Oxford, and impact investing from the CFA Institute (UK). Outside of work, she is a leadership coach in the Tuck School of Business' Personal Leadership Program, serves as Vice Chair of the Board for Action in Africa, and on the Advisory Board of the National Black MBA Association – Los Angeles Chapter.

Hannah Reischl Named Executive Director of The Women's Center of Southeastern Michigan

Congratulations to Professor Hannah Reischl, MPH, on her new position as the Executive Director of the Women's Center of Southeastern Michigan. A proven leader in women's health and community-focused care, Hannah brings 15 years of experience advancing health equity and empowering women and families across generations.

Her previous experience includes driving strategic implementation of priority initiatives within the Quality Department and across University of Michigan Health, driving development of investment strategies as a Sr. Business Process Consultant within Kaiser Permanente's National Office of Transformation, managing Federally Qualified Health Clinics (FQHCs) operations, Community Mental Health, Medicaid health plans, and strategy design and implementation efforts for care delivery systems.

Hannah received her MPH in Health Policy and Management from the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health and currently teaches "Data Analytics and Visualization" in the MHA Program.

EXECUTIVE MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH (EMPH) PROGRAM

UCLA'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.

For their capstone project, all students conduct an applied consulting project which they start in the summer following the first academic year in the program.

During Winter Quarter in the second year of the program, students complete a comprehensive business plan project that draws on the program's core business classes in marketing, finance, and strategy.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are conferred a fully accredited Master of Public Health (MPH) degree in health policy and management.

Fall Quarter begins on August 22nd. We look forward to welcoming our new cohort to campus for Orientation and seeing our Year 2 students return to campus after a summer of working on their consulting projects.

Recognizing Julie Carafelli's 20 Years of Dedicated Service

Please join us in recognizing Julie Carafelli, MPH (EMPH '21), Associate Director of the Executive Programs in Health Policy and Management, for her 20 years of dedicated service at UCLA.

“Julie Carafelli has been an invaluable asset to UCLA for two decades, with the last eight years dedicated to the Executive Programs office,” said Kyle Sullivan, Executive Director of the Executive Programs in Health Policy and Management.

“As my indispensable right-hand, she has consistently provided exceptional behind-the-scenes operational support for our two-degree programs and was a driving administrative force behind our non-degree initiatives, including the re-launch of our partnership with COPE Health Solutions. Her meticulous research and unwavering commitment to university guidelines have been crucial, ensuring the smooth operation of our programs, most notably her significant contributions to the launch of the online MHA program three years ago. Thank you, Julie, for all you do! We most literally could not do it without you.”

Julie was awarded her choice of a gift from a special collection created for UCLA by Tiffany & Company.

MASTER OF HEALTHCARE ADMINISTRATION (MHA)

UCLA's online MHA is a flexible graduate degree program. Graduates are conferred a fully accredited Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) degree in health policy and management. 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.

Welcome New MHA Candidates

One of the highlights of UCLA's online MHA Program is the flexibility. 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 Summer Quarter. We look forward to welcoming you to campus at an upcoming Immersion.

Joan Mwilitya
Jonathan Campbell
Ana B. Paine
Kareem Blackwood
Robin Bareng, MD
Bosco Do
Lexus Landero
Ta'nia Felizola
Anna Thom
Christopher Maguire-Adams, DMD
Gabriel Quinn

Bosco Do Awarded MHA Incoming Student Scholarship

Each quarter, the MHA Program awards a $10,000 scholarship to an incoming student, based on merit as well as need. Once students are notified that they've been admitted into the program, they are eligible to apply for the scholarship.

We are pleased to announce that the Summer 2025 MHA Incoming Student Scholarship awardee is Bosco Do. With over a decade of experience in project management, software development, quality assurance (QA), and data analytics, Bosco holds a Master of Science Degree in Systems Engineering from the University of Texas.

Welcome to the MHA program, Bosco, and congratulations!

MHA Candidate Dr. Dana Adyani-Fard Launches Dental Care Product

MHA Candidate Dr. Dana Adyani-Fard has launched Blessand, an innovative gum care product featured in June on television show *Die Höhle der Löwen* (translated as "The Lion's Den"), which is Germany's *Shark Tank*.

Dr. Dana Adyani-Fard, co-founder and managing director of Blissandmore in Düsseldorf, presented her own Blessand Intensive Serum No. 7 on the June 23, 2025, broadcast. The serum is intended as a supplement to the evening dental care routine and is said to support the treatment of bleeding gums, inflammation, periodontitis, and mouth ulcers.

"The idea for the product grew directly out of my clinical experience," said Dr. Adyani-Fard. "Many of my patients were looking for an all-natural solution to support their oral care routines. Not as a replacement for treatment, but as a complement to what they were already doing, particularly in preventive care. Whether they were wearing aligners, mouth guards, or other oral appliances, they wanted something that would fit into their routines and support the gum and periodontal structures, especially overnight."

BLESSAND
INTENSIV-SERUM
Nº 7

A combination of active ingredients including chamomile, green tea, lotus, and mint extracts, as well as propolis and hyaluronic acid, is designed to soothe gums and strengthen their protective barrier. The serum can be applied to the gums after brushing or inserted into a mouth guard and worn overnight.

The serum is available on the Blissand website and in retail stores, currently at DM Drogeriemarkt, Rossmann, and Netto.

Congratulations, Dr. Dana!

MHA Spring Quarter 2025 Immersion Recap

UCLA's MHA program is primarily an online program, with two immersive experiences built into the curriculum. Offered each quarter, MHA Immersion 1 and 2 brings students to campus twice during their studies for an invigorating schedule of professional development sessions, team-building exercises, and networking. Spring Immersion was held April 23-26, and Summer Quarter Immersion is scheduled for August 7-9, 2025.

Hospital Tours

Students visited Venice Family Clinic, one of the largest federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) in the United States, and internationally renowned hospital Cedars-Sinai where they met with UCLA grads for a tour and presentation.

MHA Director Dr. Laura Erskine worked with Immersion 2 students. Using a case study to prepare them for their consulting projects, they presented their team solutions in a mini case competition. Dr. Erskine also led Immersion 1 in a *StrengthsFinder* workshop, providing action-oriented insights to help students reach their full potential.

"The StrengthsFinder workshop was truly amazing," said one of the MHA students. "Research indicates that 85% of job success is attributed to well-developed soft skills (social/behavioral characteristics) and interpersonal skills, while only 15% is attributed to technical skills and knowledge. This data demonstrates the importance of social strengths in better preparing us for the positions we pursue and the roles we seek in our professional journey. Many thanks to Dr. Erskine for offering this wonderful opportunity for us to learn."

The Lego Challenge
Goal, Roles, and How to Play
Goal
Roles
Your Teams
TEAM 4

Team-Building Activity

Led by ExecHPM Program Coordinator Sarah Tran, MHA students worked in teams to build a structure out of Legos, through careful communication and leadership. Analyst, Developer, and Builder roles contributed to the success of the timed project.

MHA students were grouped into teams and each person on the team was assigned a different role. The "Analyst" in each team was shown a simple structure built with Legos. Their role was to describe the structure to their team's "Developer" who in turn was instructed to communicate those details to the "Builder," the only person on the team permitted to touch the Legos and build the final model. The goal? Recreate the structure shown to the "Analyst." The team who creates a structure that most closely resembles the diagram, wins.

The critical roles of communication and collaboration become very clear in this team-building exercise. One student shared, "Lego building was a great way to use strategic thinking and work together with our cohort, which was nice to experience since it is a fully online program."

Reminder: MHA Immersion 1 and 2 are required courses in the curriculum. Students must enroll in the course in order to participate.

MHASA Announcements

The MHASA Board has four positions currently open:
VP of Academic Excellence
Co-VP of Professional Development
Co-VP of Finance

Click here to apply and contact mhasa@g.ucla.edu with inquiries.

Become an MHASA member for exclusive access to student-led podcasts, healthcare leadership panels, and networking opportunities. And follow UCLA MHASA on Linkedin to stay up to date on events.

ALUMNI UPDATES

The UCLA Fielding School of Public Health Executive Programs in HPM Alumni Network includes over 700 graduates 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 professional updates for an opportunity to be featured. Just send us an email at exechpm@ucla.edu or feel free to DM or tag us on LinkedIn.

EMPH

Julie Carafelli, MPH (EMPH '21) has a new role as Associate Director of the Executive Programs in Health Policy and Management at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health.

Brandon Fernandez, MPH (EMPH '20) is now Commissioner at Commission for Behavioral Health.

Sean Karimov, MBA, MPH (EMPH '17) has joined Amazon Web Services (AWS) Finance, Analytics, and Science team as a Business Intelligence Engineer.

Deon Vasco Kidd, DHSc, MPH, PA-C (EMPH '08) served as the 2025 commencement speaker for the Marshall B. Ketchum University Physician Assistant Program.

Kayla Kilani, MPH, RN (EMPH '20) stepped into a new role as Stroke Program Manager at UCLA Health, overseeing stroke operations at Ronald Reagan, Santa Monica, and West Valley hospitals. She will also continue to serve as Nurse Manager for the UCLA Mobile Stroke Unit.

Graciela Medina, MPH, HACP (EMPH '24) obtained a new certification: Leadership U for Humanity Completion from Korn Ferry.

Harita Reddy, MPH (EMPH '12) relocated to Los Angeles from New York and is now the Executive Director of the Anesthesiology Department at Cedars-Sinai.

Grant Tarling, MD, MPH (EMPH '12) has been awarded a Fellowship in the International Society of Travel Medicine (ISTM) at the 19th Conference of the International Society of Travel Medicine in New Orleans.

MHA

Robin Bareng, M.D. (MHA Candidate) is now a Pediatrician in Private Practice after serving as a Pediatrician at the Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton for seven years.

Heidi Bautista (MHA Candidate) is honored as this year's recipient of the Women in Health Administration Scholarship.

Anusha Gunaratne, MHA (MHA '25) was promoted from Program Administrator to Program Manager at Cedars-Sinai.

Aaron Gunewardena (MHA Candidate) has been formally appointed as the Interim Manager for the newly formed Project Management & Technology Office at Kaiser Permanente Care at Home.

Syed Haris Huda, MD (MHA Candidate) has been appointed as a Core Faculty member for the Qatar Board of Medical Specialties (QBMS).

Shawn Jacob (MHA Candidate) is now the Director of Integrated Care at El Camino Health.

Chris Pogar, MHA (MHA '24) has started a new position as Executive Director at Legend Senior Living.

Emily Shearon, MHA, RN (MHA '24) joined UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center as the Clinical Director of Malignant Hematology, Cellular Therapy, and Transplantation.

Monique Trinh, MHA (MHA '23) has been selected as a 2025–2026 Fellow with the UCLA Bedari Kindness Institute as part of the Restorative Practices in Academic Medicine (RPAM) initiative.

THE PAUL TORRENS
HEALTH FORUM
UCLA Fielding School
of Public Health

Volunteer Opportunity

Paul Torrens Health Forum Committee

The Paul Torrens Health Forum Committee is looking for new members to join for the 2025-2026 academic year. Committee members drive content and planning for all Paul Torrens Health Forum sessions.

Key responsibilities:

- Participate in committee planning meeting(s)/call(s).

- Brainstorm topics and potential speakers for sessions.
- Organize or co-organize content (topic/speakers) for one Paul Torrens Health Forum Session every academic year.
- Promote/share programming with your professional networks.
- Attend at least two Health Forum sessions every academic year.

If you are interested in joining the Paul Torrens Health Forum Committee, please send an email to Dr. Laura Erskine, Director of the Center for Healthcare Management at lerskine@ucla.edu. For more information, click here.

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UCLA
GO
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U.S. News & World Report has announced their 2025 best college rankings, and we are proud to say that for the 8th year in a row, UCLA has been named the #1 public university. We are in the top 10 for best schools of public health and also ranked in the top 10 for Health Policy and Management.

The world-renowned **UCLA Fielding School of Public Health** harnesses the resources and expertise of the #1 public university in the U.S. 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.