

# MPH Alumni Focus

A newsletter for Master of Public Health alumni at the University of Tennessee



Jeannine Fort  
MPH '07

## An invitation to get out of your comfort zone, grow, be enriched

By: Julie Grubaugh

**I**ssues of equity and inclusion permeate our professional and personal lives.

I recently saw our alumna, Jeannine Fort, MPH '07, give a compelling talk to more than 200 local public health employees.

Jeannine has been an advocate for our Spanish speaking neighbors for more than twenty years. She is a certified healthcare interpreter, working at the Knox County Health Department.

I'd like to share a couple of points from her talk that I hope will challenge and inspire you.

- **We see from where we stand.** Meaning, we each have different perspectives and make assumptions based on our own reality.
- **Practice cultural humility.** We do not know all there is to know about other cultures. Cultural humility is lifelong learning, self-reflection, openness. It is avoiding assumptions, embracing similarities and differences, being enriched.

**An invitation.** How will you get out of your comfort zone and connect with someone who may look different? How will you be more welcoming?

Want to converse about health equity? Message [Jeannine](#) on LinkedIn



### Connecting you with the UTK MPH Program!

The MPH Alumni Focus Newsletter keeps alumni informed about news and opportunities. The newsletter is issued every fall and spring. As graduates of the program, your continued involvement and support strengthens the foundation and traditions for MPH graduates to follow.

Send your success stories, requests for MPH interns, jobs postings for alumni, or other news to Julie Grubaugh.

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### Volunteer Spirit

Special thanks to **Freddy Gray**, **Michael Hatcher**, and **Kandi Pitchford** for volunteering as mock interviewers for 20 MPH students at our annual *Getting the Job You Want* event.

### New job?

**Tell us about it!**



# Outstanding Preceptor Recognition

Congratulations to alumni **Karen Pershing** and **Stephanie Strutner** for being named Outstanding Preceptors this year. Both are leaders in substance abuse prevention. Erin Patrick, rabies wildlife biologist, is also being recognized.

The recognition ceremony occurs at the beginning of the 509 Seminar class during National PH Week.

To be eligible for the award, preceptors must have engaged at least three MPH interns in challenging and beneficial experiences.

Also considered is their personal role modeling of professionalism, guidance of growth and development for the student intern and overall quality of the internship provided.

## Karen Pershing, '06

Metro Drug Coalition, Executive Director

“Karen is a rock star preceptor. She let me come to every meeting, hear nearly every conversation, and always asked for my opinion. She knew what I was interested in and created opportunities for me to do work I was excited about.” - former intern

“Despite her extremely busy schedule, she always had time for me. Karen created a safe, professional and creative environment.” - former intern



[Read about Karen here](#)

## Stephanie Strutner, '06

Allies for Substance Abuse and Prevention, Executive Director

“A force to be reckoned with, she is what MPH graduates strive to be - determined, hard working, motivated, and most importantly - making a difference.” - former intern

“As an intern, I was exposed to many aspects of PH from outreach to administration. She made sure my experience was well-rounded and hands on.” -former intern



[Read about Stephanie here](#)

# Are You ?

Join Our LinkedIn Group Now

Click [here](#) to join

200 members

Help us reach  
**200 members!**

## Alums Helping Alums

### Fun Fact

> **1/3** of  
Outstanding  
Preceptors are **alumni**

**Kudos to [Tracy Spencer](#)** for sharing her company's competitive internship with student [Austin Brewer](#) who was selected.

**Kudos to [Greg Nichols](#)** for hiring recent graduate [Jamie Glover](#).