

History in the Making:

A selected timeline of our School's work in overturning health disparities

1930s

1936

Dr. Milton Rosenau becomes director of the new Division of Public Health at the UNC School of Medicine, intent upon developing the practical aspects of public health and addressing the health needs of all people.

1940s

1940

The Division of Public Health separates from the UNC School of Medicine and becomes the UNC School of Public Health, with Rosenau as dean.

1942

Dean Rosenau invites Yale-educated Dr. Lucy Morgan to teach and develop a curriculum in public health education at the UNC School of Public Health. Twenty-five students enroll in spring 1943.



1945–46: First Health Education class at N.C. College for Negroes

1945

Morgan designs and teaches a collaborative public health education program—led by UNC faculty—at the North Carolina College for Negroes (later N.C. Central University), UNC and in her own home. Her ground-breaking (and rules-breaking) training for public health workers becomes a national model for effective health care delivery and public health education. Her efforts may have been the first, if unsanctioned, instances of integration in the classroom at UNC.

1950s

1950

Eleanor Roosevelt speaks to a public health education class on the UNC campus at the invitation of Dr. Lucy Morgan.



Indian Reservation in the U.S. Southwest, circa 1950s

1955

The School's Department of Health Education contracts with the U.S. Public Health Service to create a health education training program focused on the needs of American Indians.

1959

Dr. John Cassel, a South African expatriate who left his country because of its apartheid policies, becomes the first chair of the School's new Department of Epidemiology.

1960s

1960–62

UNC Epidemiology Professor Dr. Sidney Kark (a South African expatriate whose research includes studies of syphilis in African populations) and UNC Epidemiology Professor Dr. John Cassel launch the Evans County (Georgia) Cardiovascular and Cerebrovascular Epidemiologic Study to find out why Black male sharecroppers have lower rates of heart attacks than middle-class white males in that county. The study is the first to confirm the importance of physical activity in promoting cardiovascular health and was, for some time, the only cardiovascular disease cohort study with a substantial enrollment of Black participants.

Throughout this decade, School faculty and students are involved in sit-ins and marches advocating desegregation and civil rights. African-American and international students grow in number, and their presence serves as a catalyst for change.

Timeline compiled by Linda Kastleman



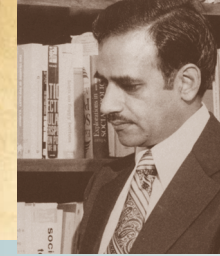
Dr. Edward V. Ellis



Dr. Guy Steuart

This decade is characterized by an exponential increase in the number of minority faculty and students at the School. Two departments are chaired by minorities.

1970s



Dr. Sagar Jain



Dr. Bernard Greenberg



Dr. John W. Hatch

1964

William A. Darity (June) and Edward V. Ellis (August) become the first African-Americans to receive doctoral degrees (in health education) from the UNC School of Public Health and the UNC Graduate School.

1968

South African native Dr. Guy Steuart joins the UNC School of Public Health as chair of the Department of Health Education (later called the Department of Health Behavior and Health Education). In his work with colleagues in South Africa, Steuart developed the Action-Oriented Community Diagnosis methodology, which uses an interdisciplinary approach to gain a nuanced understanding of the dynamics, resources and problems of communities and how they affect the living conditions and health of individuals who live in them. This methodology is now taught at the UNC School of Public Health and is often used in working with poor or vulnerable communities (see page 57).

1971

After Black students express concern, Dr. Fred Mayes, the School's third dean, appoints William T. "Bill" Small to the position of coordinator of minority affairs at the School with a charge to increase the School's minority student enrollment. Within the next year, the number of minority students increases from 20 to 49.

1971

The Black Student Caucus of the UNC School of Public Health is organized.

1971–86

Dr. Sagar Jain, born in India and educated in the United States, becomes chair of the Department of Health Administration (later to become the Department of Health Policy and Administration).

1972–82

Dr. Bernard Greenberg, founder and chair of the Department of Biostatistics from 1949-72, becomes dean. To increase minority enrollment, as much as half the scholarship assistance offered during some years of his tenure is reserved for minority students. Greenberg also encouraged the School's departmental chairs to actively recruit minority faculty, an endorsement that resulted in significant increases in African-American faculty at the School.

1974

John W. Hatch, an African-American, receives his Doctor of Public Health from UNC and joins the faculty of the School's Department of Health Behavior and Health Education. He later becomes Kenan Professor of Health Behavior and Health Education. His work and the department's emphasis on community organizing results in projects aimed at improving the health of minorities.



Dr. Joseph Edozien

1980s



Dr. Jo Anne Earp

1990s



Dr. William Roper



Dr. Paul Godley

1975-86

Dr. Joseph Edozien, of Nigeria, serves as chair of the Department of Nutrition.

1976

The Black Caucus becomes the School's Minority Student Caucus.

1977

The School's Minority Student Caucus organizes the first annual Minority Health Conference. The conference has been held every year since then, with the exception of 1989 and 1990 (see pages 43 and above).

1985

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services releases its task force report on Black and minority health. The School gets federal research funding to study critical minority health issues, including:

- A continuation of the Evans County study on cardiovascular health and exercise;
- A study of blood pressure among Blacks in Edgecombe County;
- Smoking cessation research, conducted in collaboration between School faculty and the Black-owned N.C. Mutual Life Insurance Co.; and
- A Minority Cancer Control Research Program, which includes the New Hanover Breast Cancer Screening Program (forerunner of the N.C. Breast Cancer Screening Program, directed by Dr. Jo Anne Earp from 1992 to 2002—see page 31) and studies of fiber intake by Blacks.

1991

Victor J. Schoenbach, a 1979 Department of Epidemiology graduate and faculty member, works with William T. Small, Jr., to restart the Annual Minority Health Conference after a two-year hiatus. He is later made principal investigator of the School's Minority Health Project, continuing the Project's Annual Videoconference and initiating broadcasts from the Annual Minority Health Conference.

1994

The School's Minority Health Project is started.

1994

The UNC School of Public Health and the UNC Kenan-Flagler School of Business together obtain funding for the Emerging Leaders in Public Health program, which identifies minority public health leaders and helps them develop ways to manage resources and communicate effectively about health crises within their communities.

1997

With funding from GlaxoSmithKline, federal agencies and others, Dean William Roper launches The Program on Ethnicity, Culture and Health Outcomes (ECHO) (see www.echo.unc.edu).

1997

Dr. Paul Godley, adjunct associate professor of epidemiology and biostatistics at the School, and Dr. Daniel Howard of Shaw University, receive a five-year National Institutes of Health grant to create the Carolina-Shaw Partnership for the Elimination of Health Disparities (see page 42).

2000



Dr. Barbara K. Rimer



Dr. Jessie Satia

and beyond...

2005

Dr. Barbara K. Rimer is named dean and makes overcoming health disparities a primary goal in her leadership of the School.

2006

Dean Rimer appoints Dr. Jessie Satia, assistant professor of epidemiology and nutrition, as special assistant to the dean for diversity, with a focus on increasing the number of diverse faculty members. School's mission statement is revised to include focus on health disparities.

2006

UNC School of Public Health is selected as one of only 12 schools to participate in the Engaged Institutions Initiative, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The initiative supports the sustained efforts of institutions of higher education working in partnership with communities to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities.

2006

The Department of Maternal and Child Health receives a federal grant enabling the launch of a new doctoral training program in applied epidemiology aimed at addressing health inequities.

2006

The School's Collaborative Studies Coordinating Center receives \$22 million federal contract to coordinate a nationwide health study of Hispanics in the United States. The Hispanic Community Health Study will examine the impact of acculturation—adapting to life in a new environment and culture—on the health of the U.S. Hispanic population.