College of Public Health

2017–2018 Scholarship Recognition Luncheon

August 21, 2017
It is my pleasure to congratulate all of the 2017-2018 scholarship recipients.

We applaud your dedication and hard work. You bring honor and recognition to the College of Public Health and The University of Oklahoma. Congratulations from the entire faculty and staff! You are exemplary role models and we are proud of you!

Gary E. Raskob, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Public Health
Regents’ Professor of Epidemiology and Medicine
AZIMI FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Jacob Bartels

Jacob Bartels is a doctoral student in the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health. He is extremely honored to receive the inaugural Azimi Family Scholarship. Mr. Bartels is focusing his attention on his research, which is the application of an innovative chemical assay to assess the oxidative potential of various industrial aerosol exposures in the occupational environment. He plans on utilizing his research and educational experience to increase his practical knowledge in an industrial field before attaining his ultimate career goal of becoming a professor.

The scholarship was established in 2017 by Mehdi Azimi, Ph.D, 1981 alumnus of the College of Public Health. Dr. Azimi has been involved in the consultation practice of development, implementation and administration of public and environmental health and risk management through promotion and prevention since 1978 for private companies, government agencies, health care facilities, hospitals and prison systems nationally and internationally. Dr. Azimi, who now owns his own risk management company and has a strong passion for environmental health, wishes to give back and support future public health professionals.
EDWARD N. BRANDT JR. SCHOLARSHIP

Elizabeth Forsythe

Elizabeth earned a BA in Classics from the University of Oklahoma and is currently a third year student in the College of Medicine. After completing post-baccalaureate work in 2015, Elizabeth spent four months leading women’s health workshops in rural Peru. She continues to volunteer regularly at the Lighthouse women’s free clinic in south OKC. She spent much of 2016 coordinating a study with Dr. David Kem regarding autoimmune mechanisms for diseases including Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome and Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome.

Elizabeth is passionate about women’s health and preventive medicine, and looks forward to putting those passions into practice as a physician when she graduates in 2019. When she isn’t at the hospital, Elizabeth loves to sing and play the fiddle.

Melissa Q. Doan

Melissa, a second year medical student, is both humbled and honored to receive the Edward N. Brandt, Jr. Scholarship. Studying biology and medical humanities, Melissa graduated Summa cum Laude from the University of Oklahoma in 2016. Having a deep connection to her community, she has a passion for non-profit work, especially Camp Kesem. Serving in several leadership positions throughout her time at OU, she continues to promote Camp Kesem’s mission as an advisory board member and camp adviser. In her free time, Melissa enjoys reading, hiking with her rescue dog, and trying out the many brunch spots around the city.

The scholarship was established in 2004 to honor Edward N. Brandt Jr., MD (1933-2007). Dr. Brandt was Professor Emeritus at OU College of Public Health and College of Medicine, and an avid Sooners fan. He served as Dean of Graduate Studies and College of Medicine at University of Texas Medical Branch, the Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs at University of Texas System and as President at University of Maryland at Baltimore. He also served as Executive Dean for OU College of Medicine. Dr. Brandt was appointed by President Ronald Reagan as Assistant Secretary of Health, Department of Health and Human Services. He was recognized by many as the godfather of women’s health, increasing the national awareness of women’s health and health care. He was an elected member of Institutes of Medicine and Fellowship in the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
Ashiq Zaman

Ashiq earned his B.S. degree in Chemistry and Biochemistry from the University of Oklahoma prior to graduating with his M.D. from the OU College of Medicine in 2012. He spent four years in Houston training in internal medicine and neurology. Since returning to Oklahoma to pursue his MHA, Ashiq has taken on the role of Health Editor of the Oklahoma-based news and commentary website, NonDoc.com. In this capacity, he has written about public health and health policy, and has collaborated with healthcare leaders and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Dr. Zaman is currently an administrative resident at Mercy Hospital, where his interests and activities include quality and process improvement, lean transformation, and patient safety.

The scholarship was established in 2016 by Dr. Dale W. Bratzler to provide support to students pursuing an MPH or MHA degree in the area of Health Administration and Policy. Dr. Bratzler, who serves in leadership at OU Physicians, has a strong commitment to helping OU students succeed and meet their professional goals and careers. Dr. Bratzler, Professor and Associate Dean in the College of Public Health, is also an alumnus, earning his MPH in 1996.
Jenn Dilley

Jenn, a second year Master of Public Health student in Epidemiology, is honored to receive recognition and support from the Burns-Schaiff Scholarship in Public Health for the 2017-2018 academic year. Jenn works as a Graduate Research Assistant for Project C.H.A.T. (Combatting Heavy Advertisement of Tobacco) and is passionate about creating a higher quality of life at a population level, especially in Oklahoma. Jenn enjoys yoga, cooking, and DIY house projects with her husband, Ty. Jenn and Ty are excited to welcome their first child in September.

The scholarship was established in 2016 to honor Drs. Tim and Robyn (Burns) Schaiff. Robyn is a critical care pharmacotherapy specialist and works as a cardiovascular senior medical director at Pfizer. Tim is a PhD molecular biologist currently working for a start-up company developing point-of-care assays. The Schaiffs met while undergraduates at the University of Kansas. They both received their doctoral degrees from the University of Iowa and currently reside in the greater St. Louis area. The preference for this scholarship is to support practicum experience or research in the area of tobacco dependence cessation and/or tobacco prevention.
Ozair Naqvi

Ozair is currently pursuing a Master of Science degree in epidemiology. Ozair is interested in outbreak investigation, notably of emerging and zoonotic diseases. Ozair has had the opportunity to contribute to community health in Oklahoma on the local level, with Consumer Protection at the Oklahoma City-County Health Department, and at the state level working on case investigations with Acute Disease Services at the Oklahoma State Department of Health. During the past academic year, Ozair worked as a graduate research assistant on regional Zika and West Nile Virus preparedness workshops for Oklahoma. Following the completion of his master’s degree, Ozair plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Epidemiology. In his free time, Ozair enjoys traveling the world learning new cultures, volunteering in his community, and exploring the great outdoors.

The scholarship was established in 2004 to honor the Calvey Family. The members of Calvey Family are supporters of the next generation of Public Health Professionals. Harry J. Calvey (deceased) was active in the oil and gas industry in Oklahoma for many years. Kevin Calvey, JD, serves in the Oklahoma legislature. Mike Calvey runs a successful venture firm. Cathy Calvey Chandler is a full-time mother and Occupational Therapist. Beth Calvey Bohanon, DDS, practices in Oklahoma City. Mary Jane Calvey runs an Environmental Consulting firm, Real World Management Solutions, and serves on the Board of Advisors for the OU College of Public Health.
RONALD L. COLEMAN SCHOLARSHIP

Kathleen (Kae) Aithinne

Kae earned both a Bachelor’s degree in Biology from University of Central Oklahoma and a Master’s degree in Industrial Hygiene and Environmental Health Sciences from OUHSC. She completed a competitive internship at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in 2016. This is her first year in the Occupational and Environmental Health doctoral program and she is focused on occupational and environmental exposure to bio aerosols. Kae is married and has one daughter. It is with their love and support that she continues her academic endeavors.

The scholarship was established in 2009 to honor Ronald L. Coleman, PhD (1934-2008). Dr. Coleman served OU for 37 years, 15 years as Chair of the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health. He was an environmental toxicologist and his area of research focused on biochemical effects of carbon black, metals and petroleum products. He was recognized with several campus-wide awards for his commitment to students and outstanding teaching. He was a lifelong learner who was never limited by “the box” and believed success comes from persistence and hard work. He was widely published, including book chapters, national presentations and prestigious scholarly journals. He was a modest man, who didn’t take himself too seriously and who valued personal integrity above all else. He was devoted to his faith, family, community and service.
Taylor Reeves

Taylor Reeves graduated with a BS degree in Chemistry with a dual minor in Math and Biology from Southeastern Oklahoma State University. Taylor is currently in his 2nd year of a Master’s degree in Industrial Hygiene. Over the summer, Taylor worked as a Graduate Research Assistant for Dr. Phillips’ project. Taylor is pleased to accept the ConocoPhillips OEH Scholarship and all that it represents. After graduation, Taylor plans to pursue a career in the oil industry.

Cody Cheyne

Cody, a second-year MS student in the Environmental Health/IH program, is honored to receive the ConocoPhillips OEH Scholarship. Cody would like to thank the OEH faculty members for their unwavering dedication to progression of education in the field of Environmental Health. He would also like to thank Pamela and Ronald Cheyne, as they have always been the supportive, nurturing parents that children and young adults so often need. Last, but certainly not least, he would like to thank his wife, Rachel Cheyne; the endless love, unwavering support and unmatched patience provided over the years has been the cornerstone holding everything together.
Tyler Davis

Tyler Davis is a fourth-year JD/MHA candidate, who is working on his Juris Doctor from the University of Oklahoma College of Law, and a Master’s in Health Administration from the College of Public Health. Tyler has participated as a leader in the American College of Healthcare Executives Student Affiliate Chapter and the College of Public Health Student Association. Tyler has completed internships at St. Anthony Hospital and the United States Department of Justice, each with a focus in health law and health administration. Tyler looks forward to a career in the health industry and is honored to accept the COPH Advisory Board Scholarship.
**ROY B. DEAL JR. SCHOLARSHIP**

**Lance Ford**

Lance, a second-year MS student in Biostatistics, is honored to receive the Roy B. Deal Jr. Scholarship for the 2017-2018 academic year. During his time at OUHSC, Lance has worked in the Research Design and Analysis Center where he contributed to research projects in the departments of Neurology, Rehabilitation Sciences, and Geriatric Medicine. Lance assisted in the data analysis for coated-platelet trends over time, vibration treatment interventions, and a mental-health program assessment. Lance plans to continue collaboration with researchers across campus to help reduce health disparities among his fellow Oklahomans.

The scholarship was established in 2001 to honor Roy B. Deal, Jr., PhD (1919-2012). Dr. Deal earned BA ('47), MA ('48) and PhD ('53), all from the University of Oklahoma. He served as general foreman with Boeing over the "experimental" shop on the first B-29, followed by a year in the U.S. Navy teaching radar technologies. He was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Mathematics at OSU, including a year of study and research at University of Paris (Sorbonne). He was also a Professor in the Department of Biostatistics & Epidemiology at OUHSC (1967). Dr. Deal traveled the globe, with sabbaticals at Universities of Dublin, Manchester, London, Stockholm, Athens, and Pahlavia (Iran). He retired from OUHSC in 1985 with a distinguished career and awards too numerous to mention.
DAVID J. FALCONE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Allison Jech

After graduating with a Bachelor’s degree in Finance from the University of Oklahoma, Allison Jech is now a second-year MHA candidate and is honored to receive the David J. Falcone Scholarship. In the summer of 2017, Allison interned at the Oklahoma City VA. There, she conducted LEAN projects within the Emergency Department which focused on decreasing wait times and increasing access for veterans. She also coordinated and implemented the Nurse First program, phlebotomy, and the addition of X-Ray within the ED. Currently, Allison is working on a space utilization program within the VA.

The scholarship was established in 2001 to honor David J. Falcone, PhD (1944-1996). Dr. Falcone earned his BA and PhD from Duke University, and his MA from Arizona State University. He was regarded nationally and internationally for his expertise in gerontology and long-term care. He was a faculty member at Duke University and served as Associate Editor for the Journal of Health, Policy, Politics & Law. Dr. Falcone was recruited to OU in 1992 to serve as Chair and Professor in the Department of Health Administration and Policy, and as Associate Director for the Oklahoma Center on Aging. He was recognized as a role model who intellectually stimulated and inspired students, earning the OUHSC Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award (1996). He was a major participant in Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grants on long-term care and Oklahoma Rural Research and Demonstration Center.
**Lindsay Denson**

Lindsay, a doctoral student in epidemiology, is honored to be the 2017-2018 Rosetta Fisher Scholarship recipient. Lindsay obtained a BS in diagnostic medical sonography followed by an MS in epidemiology. She is currently the epidemiologist for the Oklahoma Birth Defects Registry at the Oklahoma State Department of Health. This position is perfect for Lindsay in that she is able to combine her knowledge and skills from both epidemiology and obstetrical sonography. This position has provided numerous opportunities including the opportunity to represent Oklahoma at the CDC’s Zika Pregnancy & Birth Defects Task Force meeting in April 2017. During her time at OUHSC, Lindsay has published five manuscripts, four of which she is the primary author. Lindsay’s overarching career goal is to continue to focus on improving the lives of women and children in Oklahoma through education and research.

**Megan Kish**

After obtaining a BS degree in Social Work from the Ohio State University, Megan is now pursuing her MPH in Health Promotion Sciences. For two years, Megan worked with a non-profit organization in Columbus, Ohio that aimed to create healthy communities through food education, access, and advocacy. Megan’s desire is to contribute to research that aims to protect the physical and mental health of children. She is thankful for every person who has given his or her time and energy to shape her into the professional she will soon be.
Quyen Duong

Quyen is a fifth year PhD student studying biostatistics. She grew up in Minnesota where she earned a Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics at St. Olaf College and a MS in statistics at St. Cloud State University. Quyen was awarded the Hudson Fellowship earlier this year. She is working on her dissertation to develop models to predict infants at risk for severe intra ventricular hemorrhage using cerebral tissue oxygenation index measures from the near infrared headbands. Quyen is very grateful to receive the James N. George Scholarship.

The scholarship was established in 2011 to honor James N. George, MD. Dr. George is a George Lynn Cross Professor in the Department of Medicine (2005-present). He earned his medical degree from Ohio State University in 1962 and trained in internal medicine and hematology at Vanderbilt University, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, and the University of Rochester. He was faculty at the University of Texas in San Antonio, Chief of OU Hematology-Oncology Section, and Director of Hematology-Oncology Fellowship Program. Dr. George’s current focus include thrombocytopenia: describing the demographics, clinical course, and outcomes of patients with immune thrombocytopenia, drug-induced thrombocytopenia, and thrombotic thrombocytopenia purpura. He is active in American Society of Hematology (ASH); having served as President in 2005.
EDMUND H. GLEASON SCHOLARSHIP

Meredith McGuire

Meredith graduated with a BS degree in biology/Pre-Medicine from the University of Oklahoma, and is now a second-year MPH student in Epidemiology. Last year, Meredith was a GRA for Dr. Sydney Martinez on the Cherokee Nation Cancer Research grant. She also works in the surgery department at Norman Regional Healthplex, and as a scribe for Dr. James Bond at Oklahoma Sports & Orthopedics Institute in Norman. Meredith hopes to attend Medical School next year, and incorporate her Master’s degree in her future studies. Meredith enjoys OU football and spending time with her friends and family.

The scholarship was established in 1998 to honor CMDR Edmund H. Gleason (1915-1986). CMDR Gleason received OU’s first public health degree in 1949 (then housed in the College of Arts and Sciences) using the GI bill (BS Public Health & Sanitation). His first job following graduation was senior city-county sanitarian in Lawton, enforcing public health and state ordinances on food safety and overseeing implementation of a state-of-the-art sanitary landfill which was subsequently used as a model for others. He participated in The Passage to Freedom (1954), a naval operation that evacuated over one million Vietnamese refugees from Haiphong south to Saigon. He received Vietnamese Presidential Unit Citation and Secretary of Navy Commendation for his efforts. CMDR Gleason received an MPH in Sanitary Science in 1958 from UC-Berkeley. He had a distinguished military career as a public health officer in the U.S. Navy, with over 30 years of service.
HENLEY FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Taylor Hayes

Taylor graduated from Texas Christian University in May with a Bachelor’s degree in Biology. She is currently a first year student in the Master of Health Administration program. Taylor enjoys traveling, spending time with her friends and family, and playing with her dog, Tillie. Taylor is honored to receive the Henley Family Scholarship and is excited to continue her education here at OU. Taylor’s goal is to work in administration at a cancer institute upon completion of the program.

The scholarship was established in 2013 by E. Scott, Susie, Regan, and Shannon Henley to support students who are pursuing an MPH or MHA degree in the Department of Health Administration and Policy. Mr. E. Scott Henley, alumnus of the Department of Health Administration and Policy, earned his Ph.D in 1981 from the College of Public Health. He is the President of Henley Associates, Inc. and serves a member of the COPH Advisory Board.
Kaitlin McGrew

Kaitlin McGrew is a doctoral student in the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology with a background in nursing. She is interested in the use of public health strategies to prevent and reduce harm from Hepatitis C and substance use disorders. She has been a team member on several projects working toward elimination of Hepatitis C in the Cherokee Nation.

This year, Kaitlin was honored to be selected as a Hudson Fellow in Public Health. She has served as a teaching assistant, Secretary of the BSE Student Association, and Vice President of the OUHSC Running Club. Kaitlin is grateful to receive the Hudson Family Scholarship for the 2017-18 academic year.

The scholarship was established in 2013 to assist students preparing for a community-based health practice. Priority is given to students who pursue a degree in the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology. Leslie and Clifford Hudson are both graduates of the University of Oklahoma and have a long history of supporting the academic mission of the institution. Dr. Hudson received her MPH in 1986 and Ph.D. in Epidemiology in 1990. In the past, she served as an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology and is currently a member of the COPH Advisory Board. The HUDSONS are involved in a variety of philanthropic activities in the state and nationally. Mr. Hudson is the Chairman, President and CEO of Sonic Corporation.
BRENT HURD SCHOLARSHIP

Brenna Wallach

Brenna Wallach is honored to receive the Brent Hurd Scholarship for the 2017-2018 academic year. Brenna received her bachelor’s degree in economics from OU and is now a second-year MHA candidate. During the summer of 2017, Brenna was a Carl Albert Executive Fellow at the Oklahoma Healthcare Authority in the Project and Planning Management Office. She will continue working part-time at the Oklahoma Healthcare Authority during the school year. Brenna’s research interests include maternal and child health, quality improvement and assurance, and reducing waste through agency/organizational collaboration.

The scholarship was established in 2008 to honor Brent Hurd (1973-2005). Mr. Hurd earned his BA in Economics from University of Rochester. He was a member of Chi Phi Phi fraternity. He hosted a popular campus radio show and was a great DJ with extensive knowledge of music. He married his college sweetheart, Denise Brien, in 1998. Mr. Hurd was a natural athlete who loved to travel and hike. He was working as a research assistant at the Oklahoma State Department of Health and in the final year of earning a master’s degree in health administration when his life was cut short.
JOHNSON FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Marcio Luis S. Bezerra

Marcio is a third year PhD student in the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health. He was born and raised in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He graduated with distinction from the Brazilian Army Military Academy with a Bachelor’s in Military Science – Artillery, in 1993. He also graduated with a degree in Physical Education (2001), and Theology (2013). His will to learn helped him get two specialization degrees in the Physical Education field and the MS in Public Health (OEH) while being a career Brazilian Army Officer.

Marcio is studying metal exposures from metal fabrication processes and the ways to prevent health problems in exposed workers. He will soon retire from the Army after 23 years of service to his country. He plans to become a professor in the near future. Marcio is honored and grateful to be the first Johnson Family Scholarship recipient. He would like to thank his wife and two sons for their unconditional love and support, and also thank the OEH faculty and staff for their support in his academic endeavor.

The scholarship was established in 2016 by Dr. and Mrs. David L. Johnson and their family, to provide scholarships to students pursuing studies in the area of Occupational and Environmental Health. Dr. and Mrs. Johnson are both long-time employees of the University with a commitment to helping OU students succeed and meet their professional goals and careers. Dr. Johnson, Chair of the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health and Associate Dean in the College of Public Health, has been with the University since 1991, and Mrs. Patsy Johnson, Senior Administrative Manager in the College of Allied Health Department of Nutritional Sciences, has been with the University since 1993.
ROBERT W. KETNER SCHOLARSHIP

Sameer Vali Gopalani

As a first-year doctoral student in Epidemiology, Sameer is honored to receive the Robert W. Ketner Scholarship. Prior to commencing his studies, Sameer worked for over four years as an epidemiologist in local (Cole County, Missouri), national (Government of the Federated States of Micronesia), regional (Pacific Community), and international (World Health Organization) health agencies to strengthen surveillance and response systems. At the College of Public Health, Sameer plans to work on research questions to identify and better understand factors associated with human papillomavirus vaccination among adolescents and vaccine-eligible adults.

The scholarship was established in 1999 to honor Robert W. Ketner, PhD (1925-1995). Dr. Ketner earned his BA and PhD from OU, and Masters of Social Work from University of Colorado. He served as psychiatric social worker in Topeka, faculty member in OU School of Social Work, and later in COPH’s Department of Health Promotion Sciences. He was an inspired public health advocate in response to his own life experiences with polio and the stigma that surrounded it. His strongest relationships outside of family were with his students and faculty colleagues. Dr. Ketner was instrumental in keeping the COPH from being closed by the legislature in the early 1970s due to the severe budgetary crisis. He shared a strong bond with his twin brother, William.
ELISA T. LEE SCHOLARSHIP

Munim H. Deen

Munim, a second-year epidemiology doctoral student, is a GRA at the Oklahoma Public Health Training Center. Currently collaborating on online training course development, tribal health and emergency preparedness projects. His basic and translational research experience includes immunogenetics, bacteriology, cancer, and Advance Directives. A former newspaper columnist and laboratory scientist, Munim aspires to a career in public health research, teaching, and administration. As her former student, Munim is truly honored to receive the Elisa T. Lee Scholarship and thanks Dr. Lee for supporting this college's students. He also thanks his family and mentors for their endless counsel, guidance, and support.

The scholarship was established in 2010 to honor Elisa T. Lee, PhD. Dr. Lee is a George Lynn Cross Research Professor Emeritus, Regents’ Professor Emeritus in Biostatistics and Epidemiology, and served as Dean of the College from 1994-2002. She was the Founder and Director of the Center for American Indian Health Research from 1994 to 2017 when she retired. She is devoted to research and training to improve health and reduce health disparities in the American Indian population. Dr. Lee spent over 30 years focusing on research in Native American population, bringing more than $50M in research funds to OU, mostly from the National Institutes of Health (NIH). She has authored over 250 technical papers in a variety of prestigious journals, primarily focused on Indian health and particularly relating to diabetes, cardiovascular disease and eye disease. Her book “Statistical Methods for Survival Data Analysis”, published by John Wiley & Sons, is now in its fourth edition and has been a popular textbook and reference. She served on numerous advisory committees and study sections of many federal and other agencies including the NIH, Food and Drug Administration, Center for Disease Control and Prevention and Institute of Medicine.
Sara Greenlee

Sara is honored to receive the Dan J. Macer Scholarship for the 2017-2018 academic year. Sara earned her B.S. degree in microbiology/cell and molecular biology from Oklahoma State University. However, she is now a Sooner and second-year M.S. student in the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health in industrial hygiene. In the summer of 2017, Sara returned to her home state, Louisiana, and interned at Exxon Mobil’s chemical plant and refinery where she worked on reducing chemical hazards at the complex. In the future, she plans to work as a certified industrial hygienist to help keep workers safe.

Xi (Sophia) Chen

After graduating with a medical degree from China Medical University, Sophia came to the US to further her education. She completed her MS degree in Biostatistics in 2016, and then she continued to pursue a PhD degree in Biostatistics at the University of Oklahoma. Her career goal is to lead public health studies and collaborate with interdisciplinary investigators in medical research. Sophia is very honored and grateful to receive the 2017-2019 Dan J. Macer Scholarship. She wants to thank her family for their endless support and love.
Whitney Dockery Miller

Whitney, a dual OU Law Juris Doctorate and OUHSC Master in Health Administration candidate, is grateful to receive the Dan J. Macer Scholarship. Whitney’s ultimate career goal is to serve as General Counsel for a hospital or serve as a hospital executive. Currently, Whitney is interning for INTEGRIS Health’s legal counsel and as an administrative intern. She is a 2017 Office of Minority Health Youth Health Equity Model of Practice Fellow. Her work experience includes the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Oklahoma, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer and Feld, Office of Minority Health, National Indian Health Board, clerking for a Cleveland County Judge, Legal Aid of Oklahoma, and the U.S. House of Representatives. Whitney is passionate about American Indian and minority health disparities. Whitney and her husband, Brandon, enjoy ranching and spending time with their families.

Joseph Geresi

Joseph “Joey” is honored to be selected as a 2016-18 Macer Scholarship recipient. A Tulsa-native, Joey obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from OU, and he is currently pursuing a JD/MHA dual-degree. He serves as President of the Student Affiliate of ACHE and previously served as Treasurer of COPHSA. He has completed administrative internships with Stillwater Medical Center and the Oklahoma Heart Hospital. He remains involved in various community organizations. Joey would like to thank the family and friends of Dan J. Macer for their generosity.
Mudassir Farooqui

Mudassir Farooqui, a second year MPH student in the Department of Biostatics and Epidemiology, is honored to receive the first OU Giving Scholarship in Public Health for the 2017-2018 academic year. Farooqui’s ambitious goal is to bridge the health disparities among the underserved population. Currently he is working in the area of cancer epidemiology by developing strategies for better diagnosis and survival. He will be graduating in 2018 and plans to work as a certified public health practitioner.
Tracie Rochester RN, BSN, second year MPH student in Health Promotion Sciences is honored to receive the inaugural Diane E. Riggert Scholarship for the 2017-2018 academic year. She has been a public health nurse specializing in maternal and child health for 18 years in the state of Oklahoma. Tracie and her husband Brian have 4 children. She plans to continue her career as a public health nurse working to improve the lives and health of Oklahoma residents.

The scholarship was established in 2016 by Dr. Aaron Boyd and Mrs. Tanja Krous Boyd to honor Tanja’s mother, Diane E. Riggert, RN, BSN, MPH, and to support a Registered Nurse pursuing a Master of Public Health degree. Riggert is a COPH alumnas and registered nurse who later earned her MPH degree. She taught pediatric nursing and upon completion of her MPH from OU, she worked at the Seattle Children’s Hospital, where she was the Manager of Occupational Health Services.
Motahareh (Moti) Amiri

Moti is from Iran, where she previously studied medicine. She and her husband immigrated to the United States in 2014. She is a second-year MPH student in Epidemiology who, for the past year, worked as a Research Assistant at the Sooner SUCCESS program. This opportunity helped her become familiar with community service programs that have a focus on children with special needs. Moti assists with developing methodologies to assess community needs and help families who are raising children with disabilities. Moti’s area of interest is chronic disease prevention and she plans to work as a chronic disease epidemiologist after graduation.

This scholarship was established in 2015 in memory of J.C. Watts, Sr. In 2015, the family of J.C. Watts, Jr. directed the funds be used to recruit and support students who study the health and wellness of diverse populations. J.C. Watts, Jr. is a nationally recognized athlete who played on the OU football team. He was named Orange Bowl MVP in 1980 and 1981 and inducted into the Orange Bowl Hall of Fame in 1992. Watts was the first African American U.S. House of Representative elected from Oklahoma. He served four terms in the U.S Congress and continues his life’s work today as a political consultant and advocate for autonomy in low-income families. Watts also served as president and CEO of Feed the Children. He and his wife, Frankie, reside in Norman.
THE COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH has made it a priority to increase the amount of financial support given to students through scholarships. In 2003, three scholarships were awarded, totaling $4,000. This academic year, 28 scholarships are being awarded, totaling more than $70,000!

Scholarships are established as endowed accounts with minimum balances of at least $25,000. As these principal balances grow through the continued support of alumni and friends, the increase in earnings will allow the annual awards to increase also.

Our goal is to get each scholarship’s principal balance to a $50,000 minimum, generating annual earnings of approximately $2,500. This will allow the financial support to be awarded annually in perpetuity. Moreover, with each scholarship, the individuals for whom these are named will be remembered, and their contributions and life celebrated.

If you are interested in supporting one of these named scholarships or would like information on establishing a new named scholarship, please contact Kyndall Wahkinney, Director of Alumni Affairs and Development, at (405)271-8001 ext. 43414 or kyndall-wahkinney@ouhsc.edu
THANK YOU!

While private giving has always been a primary key to increasing our scholarship offerings for outstanding students who strive to balance work, home and school, it is particularly so in these challenging and uncertain economic times. We’d like to say a special thank you to each of the donors who helped make this year’s scholarship awards possible!