

Yale SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

YEAR IN REVIEW

GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH & INNOVATIVE EDUCATION

2022 »

As I reflect on the past year at the Yale School of Public Health, the resounding theme has been *transformative change*.

Solidifying our presence as a CEPH-accredited school of public health since 1946, university leadership announced early in the year that Yale is committed to transitioning YSPH into a self-supporting, independent professional school. Having also been newly reaccredited for another seven years, and with a search for the next dean of the school underway, change is all around us.

While we have been focusing on preparations for this next historic era, the school's students, faculty, and staff have continued to be exemplars of collaborative innovation and impact. I hope you will enjoy learning about some of their extraordinary achievements, from the [NIEHS Superfund Research Center](#) that will investigate links between water contamination and cancer to an \$18 million [PCORI](#) community-based project on the management of postpartum hypertension among women of color across three states, as well as the launch of a new [Community Impact Lab](#) to train an inclusive public health workforce and the creation of the [Activist in Residence program](#) to advance social justice in public health.

I wish you and yours health, happiness, and peace throughout the holiday season and in the New Year!



Melinda Pettigrew, PhD '99
Interim Dean, Yale School of Public Health



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INDEPENDENCE »

In a historic moment last February, Yale University leaders announced that the Yale School of Public Health will be transitioning to a self-supporting, fully independent professional school. The announcement ushers in an exciting new era for YSPH, which has traditionally operated as a department within the Yale School of Medicine. The transition includes a major investment in school facilities to meet “current and future teaching, research, and practice needs.”

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INVESTMENT »

In support of the Yale School of Public Health’s forthcoming transition to an independent professional school, Yale University officials in 2022 pledged \$150 million of endowment to the development of future leaders in public health. The investment includes a one-time \$100 million contribution to YSPH’s endowment and a \$50 million challenge. For every gift committed to a YSPH-endowed fund through June 30, 2026, the university will transfer an identical dollar amount directly into the school’s endowment.

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LEADERSHIP »

Yale School of Public Health Dean Dr. Sten H. Vermund stepped down from his leadership post in 2022 after completing a 5-year term. Vermund’s tenure was marked by historic growth in endowment funds, a new office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, and a major expansion of public health practice initiatives. YSPH Deputy Dean Melinda Pettigrew is serving as interim dean until a new dean is selected next year.

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TOP RESEARCH »

In 2022, YSPH scientists helped Connecticut leaders manage COVID-19 by using anonymous mobile device location data to accurately predict potential outbreaks in state municipalities. Scientists with YSPH's Humanitarian Research Lab documented potential war crimes in Ukraine. Other researcher teams found an association between fracking and childhood cancer, identified a possible new testing method for tuberculosis, and discovered a link between very hot weather and heart attack risk for people taking certain medications.

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G'MON GET HAPPY »

The Yale School of Public Health's new Humanity, Arts, and Public Health Practice at Yale (HAPPY) Initiative sponsored its first major event in 2022 with an evening of music, sketches, and informative presentations focusing on the health benefits of sleep. The evening, appropriately entitled "Wake Up to Yale School of Public Health's HAPPY Initiative," took place at the iconic Joe's Pub at the Public Theater in New York before a capacity crowd.

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ACTIVIST IN RESIDENCE »

A new activist-in-residence program launched at the Yale School of Public Health in 2022. The program, part of the school's U.S. Health Justice Concentration, seeks to provide students an opportunity to engage in social justice issues with some of the top social activists in the world. Veteran activist, attorney, and political strategist Angelo Pinto is the program's first activist in residence.

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ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE »

The Yale School of Public Health is working closely with community leaders to address gun violence in its home community of New Haven. The school and the Yale School of Medicine partnered with the Urban League of Southern Connecticut, nonprofit organizations, and local government agencies in 2022 in launching an infusion of community interventions intended to mitigate systemic racism and reduce gun violence in the shoreline city.

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DARE TO DREAM »

Thirty Black teenage girls from New Jersey took a special tour of Yale in 2022 thanks to the [Dreamer Girls Project](#) founded by Yale School of Public Health Assistant Professor Ijeoma Opara. The program seeks to provide young Black girls with mentors, career guidance, personal support, and information to help them take control of their health, including mental and sexual health. A highlight of the trip for Opara? Hearing one of the girls whisper to a friend, “I want to go to Yale now.”

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MAJOR GRANTS »

Our scientists and scholars were awarded numerous major grants to support their research efforts in 2022. Among them was a \$18 million grant from the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) to address [maternal health inequities](#); a \$7 million grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences for the creation of a [Superfund Research Training Center](#) for the investigation of water contaminants; and a \$7 million grant from the National Cancer Institute to investigate healthy interventions for [ovarian cancer patients](#).

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FULLY ACCREDITED »

The Yale School of Public Health was granted a full seven-year accreditation – the maximum allowed – by the Council on Education for Public Health or CEPH in 2022. The decision extends the school’s accreditation until 2029. Dean Sten H. Vermund called the full accreditation a “true vote of confidence in faculty achievement.”

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COMMUNITY IMPACT »

The Office of Public Health Practice (OPHP) launched a new Community Impact Lab in 2022 as part of its mission to educate and train an inclusive public health workforce equipped to address today’s complex public health challenges. The lab will support students and community partners by providing public health practice placements and training. Part of its mission is to help students develop innovative practice solutions that are human-centered and co-designed in partnership with the community.

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WE’VE GROWN! »

In preparing material for the Yale School of Public Health’s reaccreditation assessment, school leaders were able to put into perspective just how much our school has grown in recent years. The number of students has jumped 105% over the past six years from 393 to 807. Faculty has increased by 23% from 125 to 154 and our alumni community rose from approximately 5,300 people to nearly 6,500.

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