

Minutes of Meeting
June 6, 2008, 11:30-3:00
NCPHA Student Caucus Leadership Team Meeting
Cardinal Room, DPH
Raleigh, NC

The meeting of the first Student Caucus Leadership Team (SCLT) convened at 11:30am. Lynette Tolson, Executive Director NCPHA, modified the agenda with Introductions followed by State Health Director Dr. Leah Devlin's comments. There were nine representatives from seven schools including three undergraduates programs: UNC-CH (3), UNC-C (1), UNC-G (1), ECU (1), Winston-Salem State (1 under graduate), Salem College (1 under graduate), Davidson College (1 undergraduate).

Dr. Devlin praised the various schools represented and professional training that students are pursuing. She commented on the primary issues facing public health in North Carolina. Aging of the population and browning of the population are two issues with significant impacts on services and infrastructure. She provided an organizational and administrative description of DPH. The successes include expanding technology at the local level, such as electronic emergency room reporting of disease. She urged those present to consider a career in public health at the state and county level.

Suzanne Lea (Student Caucus Liaison to Governing Council) gave background on NCPHA, followed by Jennifer Ersek (SC Chairperson) providing background on development of the Student Caucus. J. Ersek presented the NCPHA Internship job description. Elizabeth Baker (ECU) suggested a separate student application that would include affiliation, major, and future desired employment.

L. Tolson discussed the Student Caucus Leadership Team. She said that those present represent the leadership for the Student Caucus. There was discussion about how to maintain student involvement once a school representative graduates. Elizabeth Baker stated that the ECU Graduate Student Organization By-Laws were changed to include president's responsibility as representative to NCPHA Student Caucus. A faculty liaison was discussed, since faculty remains when students do not. The main issue is the need for a NCPHA contact person for each school. Besides a "contact", a local mentor is needed to help undergraduates learn about public health. One suggestion was to identify a nurse in student health clinic. E. Foegeding (undergraduate, Davidson College) has created a public health major from existing curriculum.

L. Tolson stated that one function of the SCLT should be to begin an advocacy project, which students would research, formulate and promote at the Legislature. One project mentioned at the SC meeting in March 2008 was student (and family) health insurance. Another possibility is for the Legislature is to create a loan forgiveness program such that students would work in a local health department to pay off loans. Alternatively, NC could create a modified Epidemiologic Intelligence Service (EIS). EIS is a CDC-based program to train environmental and health care professionals in applied public health.

Another function of the SCLT is to assist in planning and developing an annual job fair working closely with the NC Association of Local Health Directors.

Chris Rollins, NCPHA Outreach Director, described the 2008 NCPHA Annual Educational Conference, which is being held in New Bern, NC September 24-26 (Wed-Friday). Activities for the Student Caucus at every annual meeting include:

- educational session on topic of interest
- “business” meeting, held to elect officers
- define activities for upcoming year, such as advocacy topic
- participate in poster session

Materials for the poster presentation were distributed. S. Lea urged students to submit a poster. J. Ersek said preparing a poster for the local meeting was excellent preparation for APHA poster session.

There was discussion about financing for students to attend the meeting in New Bern. The main cost seemed to be hotel room. Mileage or registration fee seemed to be less of a concern. Having student activities, such as poster session, business meeting, and educational session on same day reduces cost of hotel room, because only 1 night may be needed. Discounted registration fee is available for poster presenters.

The main activity for the Student Caucus in 2008 is hosting the Candidate Forum which is scheduled for Thursday, September 25 at 1:30. The Candidate Forum is an opportunity to invite candidates running for office in North Carolina to discuss public health and health care issues. The Candidates running for US Senator, Governor, Leut. Gov will be invited to answer questions about public health.

The format will be the following. Dr. Devlin will introduce the Forum, David Crabtree (WRAL-TV) will moderate. Public Health Issues for candidates to research prior to the event will be distributed in advance. Each candidate will have 10 minutes to speak, then the floor is opened for questions. Student will have a separate area of the forum in which to ask about questions specific to students or public health. These questions will be developed at the SCLT July 31 meeting.

During the open discussion at the end of the meeting, several suggestions were made.

- NCPHA representative should meet with students at various school to introduce the organization and help undergraduates know about public health.
- Create Frequently Asked Questions for students on NCPHA website.
- Compile degree program and public health interest on student membership application (which would be newly created) to track audience.
- Develop a multi-year membership option (2 yr instead of 1).

S. Lea presented a tentative agenda for next meeting, which will be July 31, 2008, 7pm at Sheraton in downtown Winston-Salem. These are:

- Develop questions for Candidate Form

- Finalize logistics for Candidate Form
- Organize Student Caucus election of officers at Annual Meeting (day, time, place for meeting).
- Draft list of potential advocacy issues and establish timeline
- Identify small group willing to lead organizing job fair – Feb 2009

ACTION ITEM: Student representative should reply to Chris Rollins (crollins@ncapha.org) if permission is granted to list their name and email as the NCPHA contact person for their school on the NCPHA website.

ACTION ITEM: S. Lea, J. Ersek will work with C. Rollins and L. Tolson regarding details of July 31 meeting in Winston-Salem and provide to group.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.

Submitted by
Suzanne Lea