

# News



## K-STATE'S MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING PARTICIPANTS

### Media Relations

9 Anderson Hall  
Manhattan, KS 66506-0117  
785-532-6415  
Fax: 785-532-6418  
E-mail: [media@k-state.edu](mailto:media@k-state.edu)  
[k-state.edu/media](http://k-state.edu/media)

Source: Michael Cates, 785-532-2117, [cates@k-state.edu](mailto:cates@k-state.edu)

News release prepared by Joe Montgomery, 785-532-4193, [jmontgom@vet.k-state.edu](mailto:jmontgom@vet.k-state.edu)

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MANHATTAN - Kansas State University's master of public health program has honored four individuals for excellence in public health as part of National Public Health Week, April 6-12.

"The strength of our program lies in the breadth and depth of knowledge, skills, research and public health practice among our faculty, graduates and students, and our success hinges on their work," said Michael Cates, director of K-State's master of public health program. "It is a pleasure to recognize these four for their outstanding public health contributions and accomplishments to our program, our university, our state, and beyond."

Honorees include:

**Virginia Barnard**, Manhattan, outstanding graduate of the master of public health program. Barnard received her bachelor's degree in 2001 and master's in public health, with an emphasis in public health nutrition, in 2006 from K-State. While in the master of public health program, she served two years as its first program assistant to the director, helping to develop many of the marketing resources, internal forms and information for students. Barnard works for the Riley County Extension Service as an agent responsible for programs in health, nutrition and food safety.

**Carol Ann Holcomb**, professor emeritus of human nutrition at K-State, Manhattan, outstanding master of public health faculty member. Holcomb is the founding director of the master of public health program, helping to build it from scratch. She assembled faculty and prospective students, established governance, developed curricula, marketed the program and more. Holcomb was a faculty member at K-State's College of Human Ecology for 29 years. She earned a master's degree in public health and health promotion and a doctorate in public health and epidemiology, both from Oregon State University. She also completed postdoctoral training in nutritional epidemiology at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health and Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health and Hygiene.

**Ethel Taylor**, Manhattan, is the 2009 outstanding master of public health student. Taylor will earn her master's in public health, with an emphasis in infectious diseases/zoonoses, from K-State in May. She earned a doctor of veterinary medicine degree from Texas A&M University. She has been serving a

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research fellowship with the Midwest Research Center of Excellence, studying zoonotic infectious diseases. At K-State, she helps teach epidemiology to first-year veterinary medicine students.

Taylor's research focuses on enteric disease epidemiology, primarily the distribution and genotypic/phenotypic characteristics of *E. coli* 0157:H7 from human cases and cattle. She has co-authored one published peerreviewed paper, and is currently finalizing two first-authored manuscripts. She was honored by the Association for Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine for her research poster presentation at the 2008 Conference of Research Workers in Animal Diseases. Recently, Taylor was selected for the highly competitive Epidemic Intelligence Service Program at the CDC, where she will begin her work after she graduates.

**Mindi Russell**, Washinaton, D.C., outstanding graduate of the master of public health program. Russell earned two master's degrees from K-State, one in food science in 2006 and the second in public health, with an emphasis in food safety and biosecurity, in 2008. She was awarded an Emerging Infectious Diseases Advanced Laboratory Training Fellowship, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and the Association of Public Health Laboratories, and worked in the bioterrorism and emerging pathogens unit of the North Carolina Department of Public Health in Raleigh. After completing her training, she joined the Food and Drug Administration as a food microbiologist in its Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. Russell recently appeared on national TV for her work in the microbiology laboratory. She is originally from Arkansas Citv.

K-State's master of public health program was approved by the Kansas Board of Regents in January 2003 and admitted its first students in fall 2003. Since then, the program has had 24 graduates. Currently, 26 students are enrolled in the program, which offers an integrated multidisciplinary expertise with more than 50 primary and support faculty from eight departments in four colleges, as well as two support units. The mission of the program is to provide education, research and service across multiple disciplines of public health, impacting human, animal, and community health locally, regionally and globally.

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