



Wednesday, October 21, 2009

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Certified Public Health Professionals

10/21/2009

Eight CDC employees are among the members of a charter class Certified in Public Health (CPH) by the National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE). The new class and the resulting certification are intended to take the public health workforce to the next level of professionalism.

Certifications were recently awarded to Andre D. Berro, Sharon E. Granade, Camara Phyllis Jones, Candace Kirksey, Carl Lawson, Lehida Melendez-Morales, Helen Chin and Vince Radke.



Andre Berro is passionate about public health. He loves to travel and read.

"I think it will take a few years for awareness of the certification to become widespread and accepted," said Granade, a health scientist working in CCID. "Nevertheless, I think having the certification demonstrates my commitment to the field of public health. I'm glad I got the certification."

The NBPHE inaugural CPH exam was administered to more than 700 qualifying professionals in the United States and in international locations on multiple dates during August 2008. After the tests were processed, the results were posted on line.

"This allowed busy professionals like us to register for the testing date that was most convenient," Berro said. "The certificate that I received in the mail included recognition of me as a member of the charter class."

The seven are among the 7,000 CDC employees who are eligible to sit for the voluntary credentialing exam.

"All graduates from public health schools and programs accredited by the Council on Education of Public Health (CEPH) are eligible," said Jones, research director on social determinants of health and equity in the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Promotion. And CDC employees are lucky that we can use our Individual Learning Account (ILA) funds to register and prepare for the Certified in Public Health exam. Contact your supervisor for more information."

Registration will open this fall for the exam in August 2010. Additional information is available on the [NBPHE website](#).

In addition to her charter class status, Jones is an inaugural member of the National Board of Public Health Examiners. She serves on the audit, bylaws, diversity, maintenance of certification, and testing committees. Incorporated in 2005, the charge to the NBPHE is to develop, prepare, administer and evaluate certification examinations for graduates from schools and programs of public health accredited by the Council on Education of Public Health (CEPH), which is comprised of representatives from the Association for Prevention Teaching and Research (APTR), the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers (ASTHO), and the National Association of City and County Health Officers (NACCHO), as well as the American Public Health Association and the Association of Schools of Public Health.

CDC staffers learned of the certification process through a variety of ways, both internal and external.

"I first learned about Certified in Public Health (CPH) in the spring of 2007 from the American Public Health Association (APHA). They had an article about CPH in their official newspaper called, *The Nation's Health*," Radke said. "It wasn't until



Sharon Granade decided to pursue her CPH after being told that there is a move toward credentialed public health professionals.



Camara Phyllis Jones is an inaugural member of the National Board of Public Health Examiners.



Carl Lawson when he served as aide de camp for USPHS Admirals at the 2009 USPHS symposium in Atlanta.

November 2007 that I heard from CDC about the National Board of Public Health Examiners Public (NBPHE), Public Health Certification exam.”

Those receiving certification work in diverse areas of public health and have varying years of experience. Radke works as a sanitarian in the National Center for Environmental Health. Berro is a public health advisor in Epi-Quarantine on the QBHSBS Preparedness Team and is stationed in San Francisco. Lawson is a public health analyst working in the Quarantine and Border Health Services Branch of the Division of Global Migration & Quarantine. Kirksey is an ORISE fellow working as a continuing education consultant in the Office of Workforce and Career Development. Jones has worked in public health for more than 20 years. Granade just recently got her MPH from the University of South Florida, where she was told to expect a move toward credentialed public health professionals.

“Much of the material was still fresh on my brain. I reviewed all of my school textbooks and study notes,” Granade said. “For additional information, I referred to recommended reference books and the Internet.”

“The CPH may well become a credential that employers will expect those in the field of public health to possess,” Lawson said. “From a career standpoint, obtaining the CPH demonstrates early adoption of potential new standards, willingness to add to one’s credentials and education, and I believe this will be taken into account when being considered for promotions.”

Participants in the certification process said registration and preparation for the examination was relatively easy.

“In addition to studying for the exam on some evenings and weekends prior to the exam, I believe my many years of experience and previous knowledge in public health helped in taking the exam,” Radke said. “I used a half day of annual leave in order to take the exam.”

They were able to draw on their educational backgrounds and work experience, but all give kudos to NBPHE.

“There was friendly and helpful staff to call if you had questions or needed assistance with the registration process,” Granade said. “The NBPHE offered study guides for purchase, which included a practice exam and a list of topics to study.”

This *Inside Story* by Rhonda K. Smith.

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Lehida Melendez-Morales works as an epidemiologist project officer in the Behavioral Surveillance Team of the Division of HIV and AIDS Prevention.



Vince Radke, on the islands of the Federated States of Micronesia, assessing damage to water supplies after a major storm.



Candace Kirksey, a CME review coordinator in the OWCD said, “Earning the CPH credential means that I am a competent public health professional.”

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