

Stephen C. McCaffrey, JD
President
Chief Executive Officer



MHA in Allen County
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MHA of Vanderburgh County
MHA of Vigo County
MHA of Wabash County
MHA of Warrick County
MHA of Wayne County
MHA of Wells County
MHA of White County

Kristina Horn Sheeler, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Communication Studies
IUPUI
Cavanaugh Hall 309
425 University Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Dr. Horn Sheeler:

It is a pleasure to write in support of your proposed Ph.D. in Health Communication program to be housed in the Department of Communication Studies at the IU School of Liberal Arts on the IUPUI Campus. Mental Health America of Indiana shares your commitment to provide leadership training for the next generation of healthcare and education professionals who will ensure a future workforce who can provide services to enhance the well-being of patients, specifically those with mental illness and addiction disorders in our state.

As a mental health advocacy organization, we strive to work for the mental health of all citizens and for victory over mental illness and addictive disorders through public education, advocacy and public health reform. We strongly believe that this program aligns with our efforts.

We fully endorse your program proposal and commit to continuing our agency relationship for the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen C. McCaffrey".

Stephen C. McCaffrey, JD
President and Chief Executive Officer
Mental Health America of Indiana



United Way
of Central Indiana

*Addressing today's needs.
Reducing tomorrow's.®*

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September 28, 2011

Dr. Kristy Sheeler
Associate Professor and Department Chair
IUPUI Department of Communication Studies
Cavanaugh Hall 309A
425 University Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46202-5148

Dear Dr. Sheeler:

It is with great pleasure that United Way of Central Indiana (UWCI) endorses your department's proposal to establish a degree program in Health Communication on the campus of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) to be administered by the Department of Communication Studies in the IU School of Liberal Arts. UWCI agrees that increased capacity for clear and effective communication within the healthcare delivery system is a critical need. Communication breakdowns between providers and patients, among providers, and between academics and health practitioners can and do result in poor treatment compliance, lack of continuity in providing care, and failure to effectively translate research into best clinical practices.

The increased research capacity represented by successful PhD candidates from the new degree program will help our state and nation to better understand and address the dynamics of health communication including how they are manifested in interpersonal relationships and in cross-cultural interactions. In addition, research conducted by the program's graduates will help build knowledge about how illnesses and treatment regimens are affected by communication and will identify specific communication skills that need to be taught to and practiced by health care providers.

At UWCI we understand the importance of good communication in the delivery of human services that help individuals and families improve the quality of their lives. We also understand that persons must frequently navigate between the health and human services systems to obtain needed resources. Therefore, we are very interested in supporting academic endeavors that will build interdisciplinary competencies, such as communication skills, that will result in improved health and well-being.

Best wishes for a successful proposal to establish this important PhD program. I look forward to learning about the proposal's outcome and would welcome dialogue about future collaborative opportunities.

Sincerely,

Ellen K. Annala
President & CEO



October 11, 2011

Kristina Horn Sheeler, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Communication Studies
IUPUI
Cavanaugh Hall 309
425 University Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Dr. Sheeler:

The Indiana Minority Health Coalition (IMHC), Inc. is pleased to write this letter in support of the creation of a Ph.D. program in Health Communication at Indiana University – Purdue University at Indianapolis. IMHC recognizes that health communication is essential to ensure that Hoosiers fully comprehend the health content used in media, are able to self-manage illness as appropriate, adhere to treatment protocols, and reach their optimal level of health and wellness.

Indiana, as many other states, has experienced a significant increase in the number of individuals that have limited English proficiency (LEP) that have migrated to the state seeking refuge from political turmoil or pursuing opportunities for personal and professional growth and stability. These individuals enter our nation and state barely able to read at a second grade level in their own language, so simply developing health content presented at a second grade level in English and translating it into another language is not sufficient. Rather, further research is warranted to explore other communicative means that is culturally and linguistically appropriate to meeting the needs of those that are LEP. A Ph.D. program in Health Communication could contribute to the discovery of answers.

Also, IMHC has been on a journey to lead the state in reaching health parity among racial and ethnic minority populations. Despite overall improvements in the health and well-being of Americans in general, there is still a widening gap in health disparities experienced between minorities and non-minorities. We believe that literacy is a critical component that contributes to these disparities. This literacy not only refers to health, but it also includes technology and general education. There still remains a digital divide in Indiana, as is in many other parts of the nation, whereby minorities lag significantly behind in their ability to access, proficiently use, and benefit from the evolving technological capacities. Likewise, some communities such as those served by Indianapolis Public Schools have graduation rates of less than 60% for Black students compared to 84.1% for the State of Indiana 2010. Yet, the health communication employed by

many practitioners relies heavily on technology that cannot be accessed and its users poorly prepared to understand. Further research is needed to explore what can be done in health communication to bridge the digital divide, rely less on technology for disparate populations, and identify evidenced based practices to reach minority populations with easy, simple and clear health content and channels of communication.

IMHC is a statewide consumer advocacy corporation that seeks to ensure that no racial/ethnic minority child, adolescent or adults suffers from a preventable disease or illness than non-minorities. IMHC has twenty-five (25) community based organizational affiliates and agencies throughout the state that provide a variety of health prevention and intervention services. We have employed a community based participatory research and a culture centered approach models to foster dialogue, cooperation and collaboration with the community and academia in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of research projects. IMHC also have a capacity enhancement and training center that helps organizations in strengthening their infrastructures to develop and employ sustainable and viable programs and services in relation to their specific mission. In addition, IMHC has been a leader in influencing state and local policies using health communication for the preservation, restoration, and advancement of the health and well-being of minority Hoosiers.

IMHC is pleased to not only express our support, but are eager to collaborate. IMHC would like to provide students the opportunity to apply the principles and practices of health communication in the community through internship and volunteers opportunities that may be conducted at either the state or local offices. Also, IMHC would be very interested in providing our expertise in community based participatory research to faculty and staff through joint research ventures.

IMHC believes that the creation of Ph.D. program in Health Communication is needed and will go a long way in filling gaps related health disparities. Therefore, we strongly endorse the creation of the program at IUPUI. Should you have any questions, comments, or concerns, do not hesitate to contact me at n.jewell@imhc.org or via phone at 317-926-4011.

Sincerely,



Nancy Jewell, BA, BS, [MPA](#)
President and CEO



Indiana Public Health Association

P.O. Box 1705, Indianapolis, IN 46206
(317) 221-2392 • Fax (317) 221-3006

October 14, 2011

Kristina Horn Sheeler, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Chair
Department of Communication Studies
IUPUI
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Indianapolis, IN 46202

Dear Dr. Sheeler:

I'm very glad to provide this letter of support on behalf of the Indiana Public Health Association (IPHA) for the proposal from the Department of Communication Studies to create a Ph.D. program in Health Communication. Certainly Indiana's public health practitioners would agree that the need for effective communication accompanies every aspect of our work, from encouraging the public to adopt healthy habits to educating policymakers about essential public health resources and policies.

Ironically, even though almost everything we do includes deliberate communication, public health administrators and practitioners are not all equally confident of their communication skills whether oral or written or in use of media. Therefore, the integration of academic and practitioner related objectives proposed in your program should have significant value to IPHA's constituency who can be expected to learn from your research both what works and how to apply it in their settings.

IPHA will be eager to learn where we might find opportunities to share projects or internships that would support both your students' academic objectives and IPHA's and our public health partners' communication needs. Therefore, we look forward to more discussion with you, your colleagues and students. And we especially look forward to learning that you have been successful in launching this new doctoral program.

Sincerely,

Jerry King
Executive Director

430 N Park Ave, #507
Indianapolis, IN 46202
23 October 2011

Kristina Horn Sheeler, Ph.D.
Associate Professor and Chair
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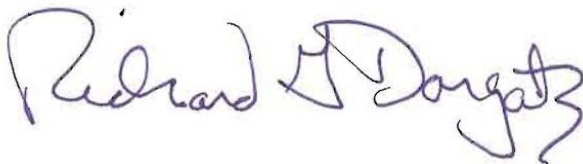
Dear Dr Sheeler,

I'm writing this letter in support of the proposal for a Ph.D. degree program in Health Communication administered by the Department of Communication Studies in the IU School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI Campus. This program is important to meet the growing need for health communication professionals in both the expanding healthcare fields and health/life sciences industries.

I work for a global pharmaceutical and biotechnology company in central Indiana. I believe the multidisciplinary approach of this program is fundamental to developing highly capable professionals who will be well positioned to adapt to the ever changing healthcare environment. Having a health communication program which includes multicultural and ethical issues in both teaching and research will be invaluable in an increasingly complex world. Additionally, graduates of this program will possess the skills to work in diverse and collaborative environments and will be prime candidates for employment.

I also support the establishment of this program to further add to the IUPUI portfolio of cutting edge technology and research. I see only positive impacts such a program can have on our local, state, national, and international communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Richard G. Dargatz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a stylized "D" and "G".

Richard G. Dargatz, MSChE, PE