New Voices in Public Health: A Dialogue with Millennials

American Public Health Association Annual Meeting
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#NewVoices
Generational Trends Influencing Millennials as Public Health Practitioners & Messengers

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#NewVoices
Workforce – by Generation (2017)

- Millennials: 35%
- Gen Xers: 33%
- Boomers: 25%
- Post-Millennials: 5%
- Silents: 2%

Adapted from Fry, Pew Research Center (2018).
Who are Millennials?

• Born between 1981 and 1996 (currently ages 22-37)  
  (Fry, Pew Research Center, 2018)

• Most diverse generation – 44% identify as minorities  
  (Frey, Brookings Institution, 2018)

• Most educated generation  
  (Fry, Igielnik, & Patten, Pew Research Center, 2018)
“Millennials are a generation that is used to problems being identified in near-real time, campaigns or institutional responses being developed quickly, actions taken – and then groups dissolving and moving on to the next issue.”

(Ipsos Mori, 2017)
Asset

Millennial Trend #1: Cause-driven
“Cause not loyalty drives engagement.” (Millennial Impact Report 2016)

Challenge

Millennial Trend #2: Identity-focused
→ Preference for “virtue signaling” over communicating and connecting.
(See Enli & Thumin, 2012; Bartholomew, 2015)
Public Health Practice:

1.0 – Scientific Advancement

2.0 – Standardization, Professionalization

3.0 – Chief Health Strategist

Public Health Law:

PH Authority (Police Powers)

Public Health Laws (Change Conditions & Defaults)

5 Essential PH Law Services (Transdisciplinary & SDOH)

Public Health Why:

Public Service

Strategic Approach

Cause (→ the PH Advantage)

Millennials are prepared and committed to working here.

#NewVoices
References


Gunn Sara Enli and Nancy Thumin, Socializing and Self-Representation online: Exploring Facebook, 6 Observatorio Journal 087-105 (2012).
SA: Benefits to APHA

- Relationship marketing and recruitment strategy
  - Increase the number of student members of APHA

- Encouraging leadership in the Association at the student level to foster leadership in the profession at the professional level
- A large percentage of APHA student benefits

- Programs & initiatives such as the student meeting, newsletters, fact sheets, action alerts, etc.
Selected Public Health Fellowships

- Public Health Associate Program (PHAP)
- CDC Evaluation Fellowship Program
- ORISE Fellowships
- ASPPH/CDC Public Health Fellowship Program
- CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship Program
- Epidemic Intelligence Service
- Presidential Management Fellowship
- Public Health Informatics Fellowship
- Prevention Effectiveness Fellowship
My Personal Mentoring Journey

- Annual Meeting 2014 PHEHP Social with Dr. Jeff Hallam
  - Introduced to Dr. Carlos Rodriguez-Diaz
- Feb 2015 Reconnection
  - Developed individual investigation
- August 2015-2016
  - Maintained a mentoring relationship throughout the year and completed MPH Practicum in Puerto Rico
- September 2016
  - Dr. Rodriguez-Diaz referred me to UPenn for a research coordinator position
- Present
  - Collaborating on publication efforts on several projects as a mentee and also a mentor
What does mentoring look like to Millennials

- A recent survey conducted by the Student Assembly found:
  - 54% of respondents would participate in an APHA-SA mentoring program as a mentee.
  - 53% of respondents would participate in an APHA-SA mentoring program as a peer mentor.
  - 56% of respondents say that networking is more important to them compared to 43% who reported that mentoring is more important.

- Mentoring is a two way street (aka. Reverse Mentoring)
  - “Reverse mentoring can close that gap for business leaders in understanding millennials” (Oliver, 2018)
    - Oliver (2018) also reported that having a junior member mentor senior staff, can help junior staff members feel like they can speak up and not be intimidated.
Next Steps for Mentoring Millennials

- Networking leads to mentoring relationships
  - Help millennials find their way and we will be forever grateful.

- Mentoring is a two-way street!
  - Mentoring Millennials leads to higher retention rates and improved performance.
References

The Millennial Gap

Getting more young people in Governmental Public Health

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Growth of MPH degree

- 300% from ‘92 to ‘16
- 5th fastest growing degree of the top 500
- Contributed to “do good” appeal
PERCENTAGE OF THE WORKFORCE AGE 22-37 YEARS

- LHD: 24%
- SHA-CO: 23%
- GENERAL WORKFORCE: 35%
What can Millennials Contribute to Public Health?

- Passionate about public health
- Passionate about doing good in communities
- Technology and social media natives
- Share cause outside walls of health department

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How?

- Creativity and stretch opportunities
- Renovating hiring processes and job descriptions
- Market your jobs to schools

- Academic health departments
- Mentoring
- Succession planning

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Q & A
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