

## Director Insights

Each year on the third Thursday of November, the Great American Smokeout (GASO) is observed. GASO celebrates the commitment to making a tobacco quit attempt because it represents the self-determination to promote health and well-being.

But this year, our reflections have turned a bit more sobering: over recent months, the CDC's Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) was eliminated. For decades, OSH served as the lead and cornerstone federal agency for coordinating tobacco-control and prevention efforts. OSH started as the Clearinghouse for Smoking and Health after the 1964 Surgeon General's Report. OSH was known for supporting the state quitlines, running the "Tips From Former Smokers" campaign, addressing the importance of tobacco-free policies, supporting youth-prevention programs, and monitoring tobacco use through data collection. Its closure represents a retreat from proven, evidence-based public health strategies.

For seven years, I served as a lead health scientist in the Epidemiology Branch in OSH, tasked with leading national tobacco surveillance. My job was to coordinate data collection, collaborate with state tobacco control managers, and write and publish Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports, documenting trends in tobacco use nationally in the November "GASO" issue. Our surveillance team was the first to report the increases in e-cigarette use in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> OSH was a well-oiled machine.

Without OSH, there will be a loss of critical resources, a setback in progress, impacts to health equity, and a major blow to the tobacco prevention and control infrastructure. Nonetheless, the public health workforce still knows the charge – support tobacco cessation, advocate for leadership, educate and advocate for programs and policies, and elevate equity. And of course, conduct sound data collection and reporting.

The Great American Smokeout is a message of hope. My insights: tobacco control and prevention efforts may be difficult without the strong federal infrastructure we once had – but we can still do it. The Department of Public Health at Wingate University is committed to advocating for systemic change and protecting the health of our community from the harms of tobacco use. In April 2025, we worked to secure funding and create and implement signage on our campus. That is just one example. We have much work to do, and it begins with preparing and training a strong public health workforce.



## Public Health Club

The purpose of the Wingate University Public Health Club is to unite students who are passionate about public health by fostering an environment of advocacy and improvement of well-being on campus and in the surrounding community. Some of the ways the club members show their dedication to these purposes are by sponsoring the club events and meetings listed below:

- Club End of Semester Celebration
  - Join us on December 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm in Burris 202 to cord our graduating seniors and celebrate the end of the semester with a holiday movie
- Phil Bazemore Senior Center Volunteer Opportunity
  - Join us on Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 pm to make a craft with members of the Phil Bazemore Active Adult Center

**To stay in the know about club events:  
Follow our instagram @wupublichealth**

# Public Health Awareness

Monthly Public Health awareness initiatives are specific observances that typically last a few days or for a month with the goal of promoting awareness for particular health issues, diseases, and health behaviors. Public Health awareness during November includes a range of topics observed nationally or globally. Among them are Diabetes Awareness, Lung Cancer Awareness, COPD Awareness, November, the Great American Smokeout and National Healthy Skin Month.

**Diabetes Awareness:** Promotes understanding, prevention, and management of diabetes to support healthier lifestyles and reduce complications.

**Lung Cancer Awareness:** Raises awareness about the risks, symptoms, and importance of early detection in fighting lung cancer.

**COPD Awareness:** Highlights the impact of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and encourages early diagnosis, treatment, and smoking cessation.

**November:** Focuses on men's health by encouraging conversations and fundraising for prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and mental health.

**Great American Smokeout:** Encourages smokers to take the first step toward quitting tobacco by going smoke-free for one day and exploring resources for long-term cessation.

**National Healthy Skin Month:** Emphasizes the importance of skin care, sun safety, and early detection of skin conditions for overall wellness.

## Public Health In The News

North Carolina's new standing orders expand access to COVID-19 vaccination by allowing pharmacies and other authorized providers to immunize adults at higher risk—such as those 65 and older or those with qualifying medical conditions—without requiring a prior physician visit. This policy reduces key barriers to care, streamlining vaccination for populations that benefit most from timely protection. By empowering pharmacists to assess eligibility and administer vaccines directly, the state strengthens its public health infrastructure and improves community-level disease prevention.

Read More At:

<https://www.northcarolinahealthnews.org/2025/11/01/telehealth-initiative-launches-in-four-rural-school-districts/>

### Questions?

For any department questions, you can contact Dr. Dubé via email at [s.dube@wingate.edu](mailto:s.dube@wingate.edu).

For any Public Health Club or department events questions, you can contact Reagan Love at [re.love338@wingate.edu](mailto:re.love338@wingate.edu)

## Student Spotlight

### Jesus Sanchez-Gloria

Jesús Sánchez-Gloria, a December 2025 graduate of Wingate's MPH program, is a dedicated public health professional already contributing to meaningful change. A proud Wingate alumni, Jesús earned his B.S. in Public Health and helped establish the Wingate University Public Health Club, serving as its first president.

Currently, Jesús works as a Cancer Program Development Specialist with Atrium Health, where he supports cancer prevention initiatives and program development. He chose Wingate's MPH program for its flexible online format and its concentration in Health Education and Promotion, which aligns closely with his career goals.

Jesús describes public health as creating conditions where everyone can live healthier, longer lives. He shares that the most impactful part of the MPH program has been learning how interconnected every area of public health is—and how essential evidence, empathy, and systems thinking are in addressing community needs.

After graduation, Jesús plans to continue growing in his role, gain additional public health experience, and take time to travel. He credits the Public Health Department's supportive faculty and thoughtfully designed curriculum for strengthening his confidence and deepening his passion for community health.



*Thank you for reading! As always "Be a difference maker in your community".*