

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



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Embracing opportunities for growth

In 2011, Jan M. Eberth, Ph.D., embraced an opportunity to complete a year-long postdoctoral fellowship in the Cancer Prevention Research Training Program at MD Anderson. Coming fresh out of her Doctor of Philosophy program in epidemiology at The University of Texas School of Public Health, she was excited to expand her expertise in health services and epidemiology research under the instruction of Shine Chang, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Epidemiology.

“My time at MD Anderson as a postdoctoral fellow was critical to my success in multiple ways, including building my network of colleagues, developing my publication and grant-writing skills, and frankly, growing my confidence as a scientist and leader,” Eberth says. “To this day, Dr. Chang remains a source of encouragement to me as I have navigated the transition into greater leadership roles in academic spaces and research grants.”

Today, Eberth serves as a professor in and chair of the Department of Health Management and Policy at Drexel University’s Dornsife School of Public Health in Philadelphia. Much of her work is focused on fostering the success of the Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society (ComPASS) program, a first-of-its-kind national effort to advance community-led health equity structural intervention research. As multiple principal investigator, she provides oversight for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the ComPASS Coordination Center funded from the National Institutes of Health Common Fund.

Eberth says she was inspired to pursue public health during her undergraduate training, when her interest in the subject was piqued by an epidemiology professor’s unconventional lecture style, which included writing and performing songs in class about epidemiologic measures of association such as the odds and risk ratio.

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“It was the most unique lecture style of any course I ever experienced, to this day,” she says. “Later, I learned he was an actor in many local plays, which explained his comfort and confidence behind the lectern!”

Eberth received her Bachelor of Science in Health Science from Clemson University in 2004 before making her way to Texas, where she received her Master of Science in Public Health from the Texas A&M Health Science Center in 2006 and a Doctor of Philosophy in Epidemiology from The University of Texas School of Public Health at Houston in 2010.

Eberth encourages current trainees to step outside their comfort zone and make the most of their time at MD Anderson.

“Network outside your division and department. The folks at MD Anderson are some of the most well-respected scientists in their fields. Use that network to its fullest and develop a robust co-authorship record,” Eberth says.

In her free time, Eberth can be found taking neighborhood walks, enjoying evenings out with her friends and family, or catching up on a favorite TV series.

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