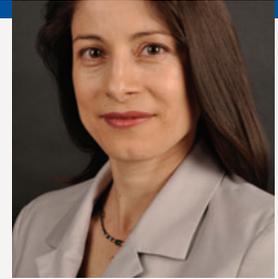


World Health Organization consultant says she owes her unique career trajectory to DePaul



Residence:

Near Geneva, Switzerland

Occupation:

Esparza is an associate professor at Webster University Geneva and a consultant for the World Health Organization (WHO). She teaches at the undergraduate and graduate levels in psychology and counseling. She also conducts research on risk factors for mental health problems in international populations and drafts research-based reports for WHO.

Education:

In 1993, Esparza graduated from Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, N.H. In 1997, she graduated from Pomona College in Claremont, Calif., with a major in psychology and a minor in women's studies. She earned her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in clinical psychology from DePaul.

Vital stats:

Esparza previously worked as national political coordinator for a nongovernmental organization where she gained key knowledge of national governments and their political and economic systems. Thereafter, as a program specialist, she gained firsthand experience of public health care by implementing and coordinating HIV/AIDS research and treatment programs in juvenile detention centers. While at DePaul, Esparza had a summer internship in Geneva in WHO's Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse, gaining further skills in public health. She moved to the Geneva area in 2007 and began working as a consultant for WHO. Because of the demographic shifts taking place worldwide, WHO is currently informing member countries on the policy implications of caring for their growing aging populations. To this end, as part of one of her latest projects, she analyzed a set of health indicators (years lived with disability and years of life lost prematurely) among older adults, which served as the basis for providing policy recommendations to WHO member countries this year.

What I like most about my job is:

"At the individual level, through my teaching, what I like best is the ability to influence the hearts and minds of young students interested in understanding human behavior, and at the global level, through WHO, I like to be able to influence the hearts and minds of government leaders interested in caring for their citizens. Lastly, through WHO, as a co-editor of a recently published book ("Public Health Aspects of Diagnosis and Classification of Mental and Behavioral Disorders"), I am able to make a difference on how we, in the field of public mental health, will define a new classification of mental and behavioral disorders to be used by professionals across the world."

The biggest challenge I face in my job is:

"Balancing the multiple professional and personal responsibilities involved in the structured time of teaching, the more unstructured time of conducting empirical investigations, and my leisure time of enjoying the beautiful surroundings of Geneva with my 2-year-old daughter, Arianna."

My DePaul College of Science and Health experience helped me by:

"I owe my unique career trajectory to DePaul University. DePaul was pivotal in my ability to merge research and policy. Through a grant awarded to my mentor, Kathryn E. Grant, by the William T. Grant Foundation, I was able to apply for a summer internship and learn about global public mental health policy at WHO, where research is used as a basis for making policy decisions by governments around the world. The William T. Grant Foundation's generous award paved the way for a wonderful and supportive mentoring relationship with Kathy, which, in turn, helped me craft a career in academia and global health policy."

The words I live by are:

"Keep a green bough in your heart, and the singing bird will come."