

For Your Health

With an increasing number of people being placed into managed care facilities, more money being spent on pharmaceuticals and a large number of citizens without health insurance, the health care industry has been a topic of concern in recent years. UMBC is producing graduates in health policy to deal directly with such issues.

UMBC's Policy Sciences Graduate Program draws students from countries as far as South Africa and Romania to pursue advanced degrees in health policy. In addition to the health policy track, students may choose from a variety of concentrations including public management, evaluation and analytic methods, urban policy and social policy. Graduates are hired by federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health, the Health Care Financing Administration and the Centers for Disease Control. Others work as administrators in hospitals and nursing homes.

One such student, **Jamie Chriquie**, Ph.D. policy sciences '00, is now the vice president of the Center for Alcohol and Drug Policy at the MayaTech Corporation in Silver Spring, Md. Chriquie also works on federal, state and local levels as the deputy director for the Legislative Policy Analysis program. "UMBC provided me with a tremendous amount of tools and resources to move ahead in my company," says Chriquie. "I would not have either of my current job titles without going through this program."

The majority of students who return to gain their master's or Ph.D. in policy sciences already have full-time jobs in the industry. "The schedule of classes was very accommodating and did not discriminate between full- and part-time students," says Chriquie. "The faculty were always available and there was a nice interplay between my real work experience and the content of the classes."

While taking classes, many students are able to do research for the Center for Health Program Development and Mental Hygiene (CHPDM) at UMBC. In cooperation with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, UMBC founded the center in 1994 in order to develop, manage and evaluate innovative health care programs that can reduce costs while maintaining or improving the quality of care. The center also provides opportunities for faculty and graduate student employment.

"What helped me most was the interdisciplinary nature of the program," says Chriquie. "Economics and sociology in particular were subjects I knew little about, but through the program I was able to understand the principles and how the disciplines are associated with public policy action. I had nothing but a positive experience."

For more information on UMBC's Policy Sciences Graduate Program visit www.umbc.edu/posi.