

June 01, 2020 | By Judy Piercey and Scott LaFee

## Cheryl Anderson Named Founding Dean of School of Public Health at UC San Diego

### The Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science was established in 2019

Dr. Cheryl Anderson, professor and interim chair of the Department of Family Medicine and Public Health in the School of Medicine at the *University of California San Diego*, has been named founding dean of The Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science. The school was established at UC San Diego in 2019 with a \$25 million lead gift from the Dr. Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Family Foundation with an emphasis on research and education designed to prevent disease, prolong life and promote health through organized community efforts.

“Dr. Anderson is perfectly positioned to lead our new school of public health and human longevity science,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “Her distinguished career in teaching, epidemiological research and higher education administration have forged an innovative, unified approach to public health. She shares the unique vision of Dr. Herbert and Nicole Wertheim to positively impact the well-being of individuals by implementing solutions to reduce or eliminate disparities in disadvantaged or underserved communities and improving the overall health of our communities.”



*Dr. Cheryl Anderson has been named founding dean of The Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science. Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications.*

The new school is designed to define a new future focused on prevention of disease and injury and promotion of health and well-being. With a diverse, established, cross-disciplinary faculty representing every aspect of UC San Diego’s overall mission to educate, conduct research and provide clinical care, Anderson and colleagues will work with communities and populations to identify root causes of morbidity and mortality and implement large-scale solutions.

Anderson is a trained epidemiologist, whose research has long focused on connections between nutrition and chronic diseases, and the use of clinical trials and interventions to prevent risk factors for common maladies such as heart disease, chronic kidney disease, diet-related cancers and obesity.

“My career in public health and prevention has offered me the privilege of working with brilliant mentors and scientists, and the opportunity to earn the public’s trust in creating public health policies that have global impact,” Anderson said.

“I am excited to lead this ambitious effort to engage the entire university in our quest for optimal health for all citizens. This school will galvanize our wealth of expertise in public health science, deepen our understanding of the needs of San Diego and the other populations we serve, and catalyze genuine partnerships with local and global communities and public health practice agencies.

“That’s the essence of public health. In times like these, in global emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic, the importance and relevance of public health are most apparent and can most dramatically and effectively improve and save lives,” she continued.

Anderson joined UC San Diego School of Medicine as an associate professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Public Health in 2012 after tenures at Johns Hopkins University, the University of Pennsylvania and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

She holds doctoral and master’s degrees from the University of Washington, and a Master of Public Health degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In addition to serving as professor and interim chair in the Department of Family and Public Health at the UC San Diego School of Medicine, she also directs the UC San Diego Center of Excellence in Health Promotion and Equity.

Anderson is a fellow of the American Heart Association (AHA), chair of the AHA’s Council on Epidemiology and Prevention, immediate past chair of the AHA’s nutrition committee, and Director of the UC San Diego Center of Excellence in Health Promotion and Equity. She has published more than 170 scholarly papers and has served as principal investigator or co-investigator on dozens of studies. Indicators of her success as an academician include her appointment to the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans advisory committee, appointment to the Food and Nutrition Board of the Institute of Medicine, and her election to the National Academy of Medicine in 2016.

The Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science was established last year by the University of California Board of Regents. The school features curricula leading to degrees in Bachelor of Science in Public Health, Master of Public Health, Master of Science in Biostatistics, Master's degree in the Leadership of Healthcare Organizations, Doctor of Philosophy in Biostatistics, and Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health (executed jointly with San Diego State University).

As the inaugural dean of the new Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science, Anderson will be responsible for launching the new school and overseeing its management, academic planning, budget, personnel, resource allocation and programs. She will play a major role in the planning and development of the academic curriculum and research portfolio. Given the interdisciplinary nature of education and research at UC San Diego, she will explore opportunities to catalyze interactions among programs and foster a culture of learning across the continuum of biomedical research and education. This includes partnership with the School of Medicine and Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Jacobs School of Engineering, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Rady School of Management and other campus partners.

It is the third professional UC San Diego school in health sciences, joining UC San Diego School of Medicine (1968) and Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (2000).

"It was a pleasure working with numerous university administrators and faculty over several years to found the school," said Dr. Wertheim, noted optometrist, scientist and philanthropist. "Dr. Anderson is a terrific choice as founding dean and I look forward to working with her to prevent illness and increasing human longevity.

"We need to better understand what promotes health and then find effective means to implement and communicate our knowledge and discoveries. This school will be a world-leader in promoting preventive health care, thus creating a better world. Prevention is the best medicine."

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