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Georgia Southern: Collaborates on New Perspectives on Public Health Workforce

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This peer-reviewed analytical essay provides new perspectives on the public health workforce, using data from the 2017 and 2014 Public Health Workforce Interests and Needs Surveys, the largest nationally representative surveys of the governmental public health workforce in the United States. Dr. Gulzar Shah, at the Georgia Southern University Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, collaborated with 10 leaders in the industry and academia, to coauthor this essay. Five major thematic areas were explored: workforce diversity in a changing demographic environment; challenges of an aging workforce, including impending retirements and the need for succession planning; workers’ salaries and challenges of recruiting new staff; the growth of undergraduate public health education and what this means for the future public health workforce; and workers’ awareness and perceptions of national trends in the field. The authors concluded with implications for policy and practice and a discussion of what needs to be done to build a public health workforce needed for contemporary public health.