

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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NAME: Somera, Lilnabeth

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (agency login): LSOMERA

POSITION TITLE: Professor of Communication

EDUCATION/TRAINING *(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable.)*

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
La Consolacion College	BA	1976	English
University of the Philippines	MA	1981	Speech Communication
Michigan State University	PHD	1990	Communication

A. PERSONAL STATEMENT

My background in health communication and the lessons learned in the two previous U54 pilot projects for which I served as project leader in Guam, Health Information Needs and Trends in the Pacific (HINTSP) and HIPPY (Health Information Patterns Among Pacific Youth) are key qualifications that will contribute to my effective participation in the Cervical Cancer pilot project and the Community Outreach Core (COC) in the UOG-UH partnership. My research in intergenerational communication, as well as the role of social media in these interactions, provides a complementary perspective given the focus on the ethnic and generational groups in our multi-ethnic region. My involvement in the two pilot projects in the last U54 grant and the current U54 project has given me a valuable opportunity to come full circle with my dissertation research which focused on social support provision in community health networks. After a two-year stint in administration a few years ago, I came back to faculty status and renewed my research agenda in health communication. My mother's death from a brain tumor in 2011 also made me more committed than ever to make a contribution to the research on health disparities and cancer. My leadership in the HINTSP and HIPPY pilot projects has helped inform the design of the Cervical Cancer pilot project as well as the COC. In particular, we were able to demonstrate that respondent-driving sampling (RDS) is a viable methodology for collecting data in our hard-to-reach populations. We were also able to identify barriers to research participation, cultural factors that impact on health information processes, and perceptions of different kinds of health and cancer information sources.

In the current U54 cycle, I am the co-Lead for the Community Outreach Core (COC) and co-Principal Investigator for the Cervical Cancer Screening pilot project.

Manuscripts from the HINTSP and HIPPY projects are currently in preparation for publication, and the findings have been presented in several conferences, including:

1. Badowski, G, **Somera, LP (presenter)**, Simsiman, B, Lee, H-R, Lee, et al. (2016). "Cancer Risk Knowledge, Attitudes and Behaviors among Chuukese Youth in Guam." World Cancer Congress, Paris, France, Oct. 31-Nov. 3, 2016.
2. Lee, H-R., Lee, H-E, Cassell, K., Hagiwara, M, **Somera, LP**, and Badowski, G. "Communication Ecology, Culture, and Cancer Risk Behaviors among Micronesian Youth in Hawaii." World Cancer Congress, Paris, France, Oct. 31-Nov. 3, 2016.
3. **Somera LP**, Lee H-R, et al. "Sources of Health and Cancer Information Patterns." Invited presentation, session proposed by International Cancer Information Services Group, United States; World Cancer Congress, Melbourne, Australia, December 3-5, 2014.
4. **Somera LP**, Badowski G, et al. "Health information data about Pacific Islanders in Guam: Using the respondent-driven sampling (RDS) method as a viable alternative for data collection." HINTS Users Meeting, Bethesda, MD; January 8-9, 2014.

5. Lee H-R, **Somera LP**, Badowski G, et al. "Health Information Needs and Trends in the Pacific: Guam and Hawaii." International Cancer Education Conference; Seattle, WA, September 19-21, 2013.

B. POSITIONS AND HONORS

Positions and Employment

1984 - 1990	Research and Teaching Assistant, Michigan State University
1991 - 1995	Assistant Professor, University of Houston-Victoria
1995 - 1999	Associate Professor, De La Salle University, Manila
1999 – 2016	Associate Professor, Communication, University of Guam
2007 – 2009	Associate Dean (Acting), College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences, University of Guam
2016 -	Professor, Communication, University of Guam

Other Experience and Professional Memberships

1991 -	Member, International Communication Association
2001 -	Member, American Association of University Women, Guam Branch
2008 -	Member, Pacific Asian Communication Association
2009 - 2014	Board Member, Guam Humanities Council
2010 - 2011	Secretary, Guam Humanities Council
2011 -	Advisor, Lambda Pi Eta, Communication Honor Society (UOG Alpha Beta Eta Chapter)
2015 -	Reviewer, Journal of Asian Pacific Communication
2016 -	Reviewer, Journal of Health Communication; Build EXITO research proposals

Honors

1997	Ninoy Aquino Professorial Chair, Communication Arts, De La Salle University
2004	Sasakawa Fellowship (National Faculty Development Institute), San Diego State University

C. Contribution to Science

1. Research on health information processes constantly points out the dearth of information on underserved populations, such as those in the Pacific area. National surveys (such as HINTS, Health Information National Trends) often do not include data from this area. Categories which lump all "Non-Hispanic Asians/Pacific Islanders" into one group do not account for disparate cultural factors that can significantly impact health information processes among people in these populations. My work in this area has provided information that can be used to make more informed communication interventions directed at these populations which are largely underrepresented and in which health disparities have been observed.

Somera, LP, Lee, H-R, Badowski, G. and Cassel, K (2016). Health Information Seeking, Source Trust, and Culture: A Comparative Analysis of Health Information Trends and Needs Between Guam and the United States. *Journal of Health Communication Vol. 21:4*.

2. In addition, my work in intergenerational communication and social media provides some insight into factors that could impact on strategic decisions in health and cancer communication in this region, particularly the choice of communication channels and the development of culturally appropriate messages for different cultural groups.
 - a. Giles H, Noels KA, Williams A, Ota H, Lim TS, et al. Intergenerational communication across cultures: young people's perceptions of conversations with family elders, non-family elders and same-age peers. *J Cross Cult Gerontol.* 2003 Mar;18(1):1-32. PubMed PMID: [14617956](#).
 - b. Ota H, Giles H. Somera L. Beliefs about intra- and intergenerational communication in Japan, the Philippines, and the United States: Implications for older adults' subjective well-being. *Communication Studies.* 2007;58:173-188.
 - a. Somera L, Dalisay F, and Forbes A. Online Intergenerational Communication of Young Adults in the United States, Australia, and Guam: Perceptions and Engagement. Annual Conference of the International Communication Association. London, UK; June 2013.

- c. Somera L. Using social Networks to build business connections: Engagement and Interactivity on Guam's restaurants' Facebook pages. *Entrepreneurial Executive*. 2014;1919:183-195.

Complete List of Published Work in My Bibliography:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/myncbi/lilnabeth.somera.1/bibliography/47665481/public/?sort=date&direction=ascending>

D. RESEARCH SUPPORT

Ongoing Research Support

NIH/NCI U54-CA-143727

(Underwood - PI)

09/01/2009 – 8/31/2015

University of Guam/Cancer Research Center of Hawaii Partnership (2 of 2)

Project Title: *Health Information Seeking Patterns among Pacific Youth (HIPPY)*

The goal of this project is to document the communication ecology among Micronesian youth in Guam and Hawaii, their basic cancer-relevant knowledge, attitudes and behaviors, as well as the process through which they make health decisions.

Role: Co-Investigator

NIH/NCI U54-CA-143727

(Underwood - PI)

09/01/2009 – 8/31/2015

University of Guam/Cancer Research Center of Hawaii Partnership (2 of 2)

Project Title: *Health Information Trends and Needs in the Pacific: A Test of the Respondent-Driven Sampling Method*

The goal of this project is to gain knowledge about the cancer-information-seeking behaviors as well as basic cancer-relevant knowledge, attitude, and behaviors in Guam's general population, in order to better inform cancer prevention and control program efforts. The project also tests the efficacy of the respondent-driven sampling method (RDS, Heckathorn, 1997) in generating valid population estimates, with the goal of identifying a cost-efficient non-probability sampling strategy that can generate reasonable population estimates for minority and hard-to-reach populations.

Role: Co-Leader

Completed Research Support

None within the past 3 years.