

Hoglund to Lead Food Scarcity Research in Lackey, VA

Hoglund is focusing on ways to organize, plan, and build food security to achieve the vision of health and wellness

By Angelica Walker

Your zip code should not determine your life expectancy. Unfortunately, basic needs like the ease of access to healthy and affordable food vary significantly between communities. Leslie Hoglund, clinical assistant professor in the School of Community and Environmental Health, was selected for the 2021 Culture of Health Leaders program with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). She's the fourth Virginian to be accepted to this prestigious program since it began in 2012.

The program is a leadership development opportunity for people who want to use their influence to advance health and equity. Hoglund's goal is to revolutionize how community and government resources establish and redesign food security within communities. "This program will make me into a stronger and more effective leader by challenging assumptions,



Leslie Hoglund

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gaining new resources and information, and learning about leading change management in scales of communities, states, and nations."

During this three-year program, Hoglund will test a theoretical model for assessing communities with historical trauma, oppression, and low life expectancy to eliminate food apartheid and improve health outcomes. This year, she plans to conduct a household survey in Lackey, VA, a food desert in York County, and adjacent neighborhoods. The study will include:

- Food attitudes and behaviors;
- Shopping preferences;
- COVID-19 impact on food access;
- Community needs;
- Chronic diseases and health status

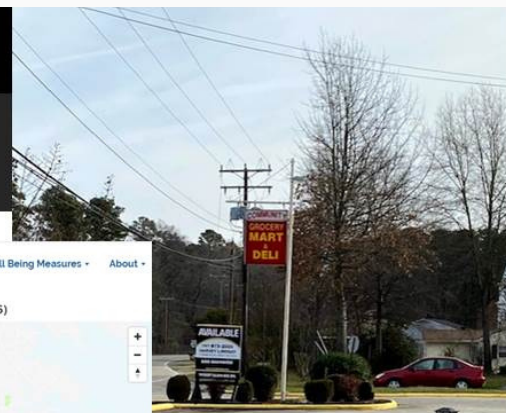
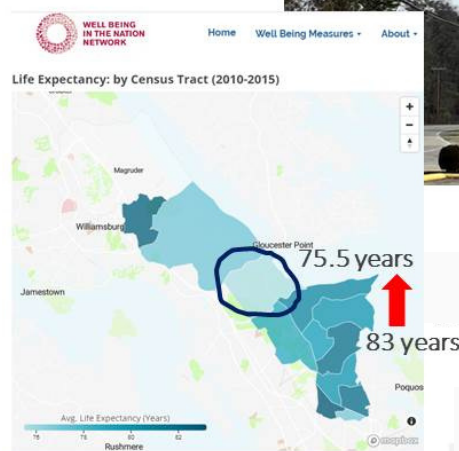
The household survey is modeled after the CASPER process, an emergency preparedness rapid assessment to enable a secure community.

"I have spent most of 2020 developing relationships and building connections with stakeholders in the Lackey community. I've learned who the champions are, what has been tried, and where opportunities for collaboration exist," said Hoglund. "I have also done a deep research dive into the historical timeline of the area to explain how 155 years of concentrated poverty, segregation, displacement, and trauma have perpetuated a USDA food desert designation, low life expectancy, and high chronic disease prevalence."

Hoglund's plan to disrupt Lackey's landscape won't be her first time acting as a change agent in a

A Culture of Health in Lackey, VA

Confronting Historical Injustice & Chronic Discrimination:
To Design a Food Secure Community



A map of Lackey, VA and the surrounding area. Lackey has an eight year life expectancy difference in comparison to areas that are only a few miles away.

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community. In 2012, she started the Lynchburg Area Food Council in Lynchburg, VA. The council is a forum for food system issues, an advocate for coordination between sectors, a clearinghouse to develop and evaluate policy affecting health and nutrition, and the catalyst to launch and support programs as they address food access, insecurity, quality, and systems. The council also initiates and sponsors multiple projects that combine to build a healthy community and bring economic vitality to neighborhoods, especially those identified as food deserts.

Right now, Hoglund is focusing on herself as a leader in the program. "We've completed a 360 evaluation, have peer and individual coaching sessions each month, are reading a few leadership books, and generally working toward more productive and collaborative conversations to advance toward the idealized outcomes."

Data collection will begin in April through phone and virtual options. With warmer weather approaching, Hoglund plans to walk through Lackey neighborhoods and interview residents on porches and sidewalks. The latter part of 2021 will be for data analysis and reporting. 2022 will focus on consensus-building on designing a food-secure community. In 2023, Hoglund will begin plan implementation and will have \$35,000 to put into the community.

Hoglund added, "I would love to see a world where healthy food access, affordability, proximity, and availability are not dependent on geography, demographics, or the economy.

There must be a mechanism and movement to stop the infiltration of predatory dollar stores as a quick fix for food-insecure communities. Equity in community nutrition and food sources is a priority."

If Hoglund's vision during the program is successful, she would like to take it to scale and grow food secure communities all over Virginia. Follow Hoglund's journey and community impact on the Food Secure Community website at <https://foodsecure.community/>.



Hoglund planting onions.

Monarch Molecular: ODU's Secret Weapon for Combatting COVID-19

Wear a mask, keep your distance, and get tested

By Angelica Walker

After experiencing the pandemic for over a year, many people are returning to work and school. At ODU, reopening the campus for in-person interaction means prioritizing safety and offering on-campus testing for COVID-19. In summer 2020, faculty, staff, and students formed a committee to create Monarch Molecular, the on-campus testing laboratory.

The project was a huge undertaking. At the beginning of the process, there was a shortage of tests and an inability to conduct tests, analyze results, and deliver results promptly. "We collaborated with ODU's Student Health Services. They helped us to take the lab from nothing to moderate complexity, to high complexity," said Harold Riethman, professor & chair of ODU's School of Medical Diagnostic & Translational Sciences. An important goal for the laboratory was to receive a Certified Laboratory

Improvement Amendments (CLIA) certification. CLIA regulates laboratory testing and requires clinical laboratories to be certified by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) before accepting human samples for diagnostic testing. An on-campus CLIA-certified lab is a huge accomplishment for ODU. The facility abides by the highest quality standards to ensure accurate, reliable, and timely patient test results.

This project was a huge priority and undertaking that required a significant investment and collaboration across colleges. The university invested heavily in this effort with funding from the CARES Act, providing financial resources for creating the lab and obtaining the supplies and technology needed. ODU established the molecular testing lab in the Innovation Research Park I (IRP1) building on Monarch Way. Screening and specimen collection occur mainly in the Jim Jarrett Athletic Administration Annex. "To create a state-of-the-art CLIA-certified lab in IRP1, the area required renovations. It also needed a set-up and validation process for the testing

equipment. We worked with Morris Foster, the vice president for research, Bonnie Van Lunen, dean of the College of Health Sciences, and many others who organized processes for sample collection, contact tracing, and quarantine procedures for those who tested positive" said Riethman.

Monarch Molecular hired staff to manage day-to-day functions and operations. The testing facility hired graduate assistants from the College of Health Sciences to work the front-end, assembling testing kits and obtaining samples from the university population. "Several students are using sterile technique to assemble at least 1,000 kits per week," said Riethman. The testing facility also hired molecular technologists to test samples and read results. Other graduate assistants, athletic training students, and athletic training faculty assist with specimen collection and secure transport of specimens to the lab. A large group of staff and student volunteers help with testing, contact tracing, and isolation services.

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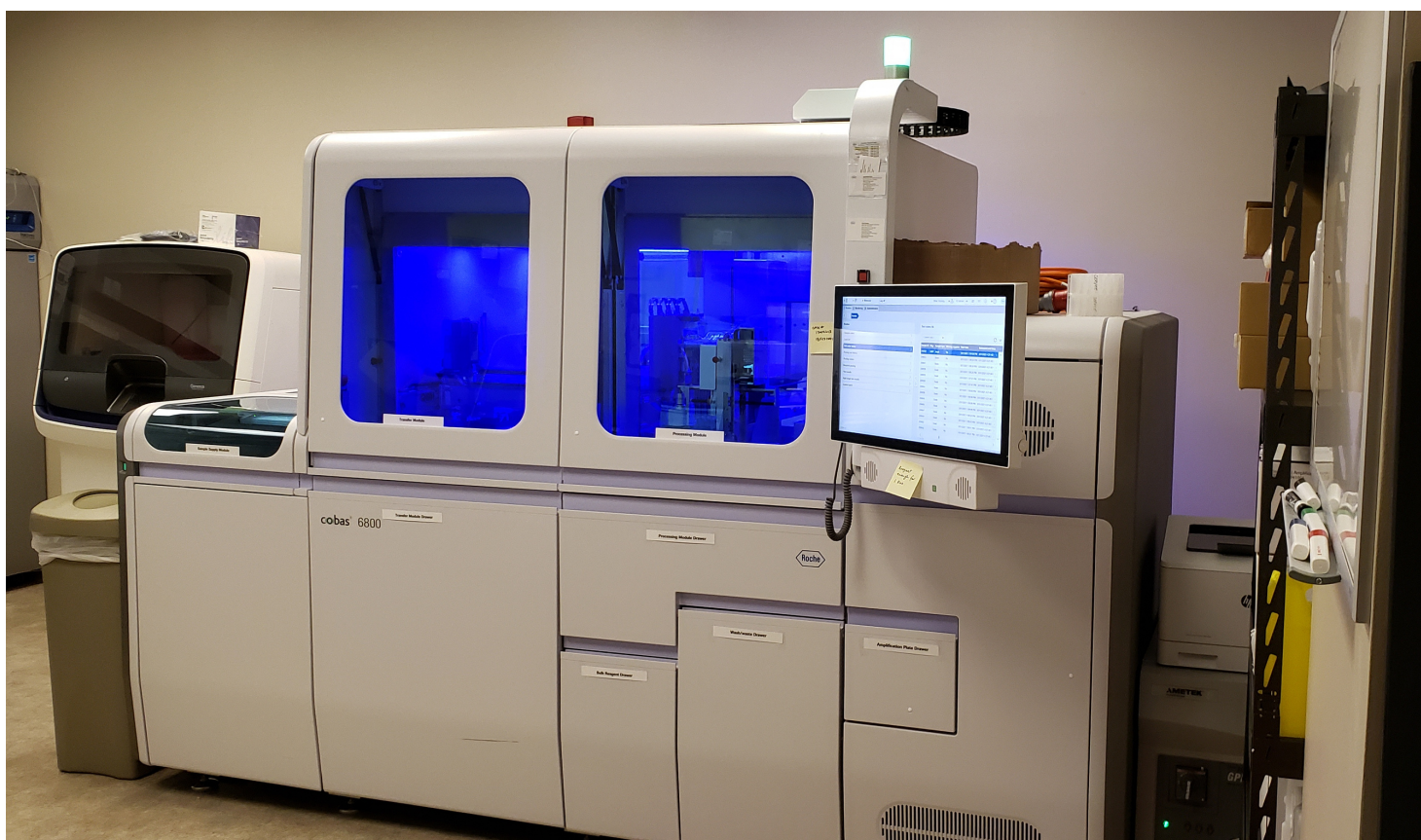
In fall 2020, Monarch Molecular opened at full capacity to meet the high demand for quick, convenient, and accurate testing analyses. "It was critical to detect infections right away so we could contain them," stated Riethman. The lab performs Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing, a molecular diagnostic test that is highly sensitive and accurate. "95-98% of the test results have a rapid turnaround time, less than five to six hours."

The lab is available to analyze samples from anyone associated with the campus, especially those likely to have in-person interaction like students, faculty, staff, and many on-campus vendors like caterers.

Riethman thanked everyone involved in the process. "It was a total team effort! The creation of the facility and the testing efforts wouldn't have been possible without ODU's Information

Technology Services, Student Health Services, Campus Safety, and Risk Management, to name a few." Critical faculty who contributed to the project from the College of Health Sciences include:

- Robert Bruno and Patrick Sachs, associate professors in the School of Medical Diagnostic & Translational Sciences, were instrumental in designing the lab from start to finish.



Testing equipment in Monarch Molecular.

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- Peter Mollica, assistant professor in the School of Medical Diagnostic & Translational Sciences, serves as a technical supervisor for the lab and was heavily involved in the testing process, including setting up instruments, writing protocols, developing procedures, and supervising molecular technologists.

- Barbara Kraj, associate professor in the School of Medical Diagnostic & Translational Sciences and board-certified medical laboratory scientist, advised the team to create a functional lab environment and trained lab technicians.

Monarch Molecular has expandable potential moving forward, even after COVID-19 testing isn't needed regularly. Faculty can use the lab to teach students about clinical diagnostic testing and provide hands-on training. From a research perspective, the lab can develop new diagnostic tests and collaborate with other organizations and labs, especially throughout Hampton Roads. In the community, the lab can provide public services and become an engine to reduce health disparities.

The lab evaluates its processes and needs for improvement regularly. The primary focus continues to be meeting the demand for on-campus testing and completing all tests correctly and accurately.

The campus community can view the COVID-19 dashboard that displays the current campus status at www.odu.edu/emergency/news/2020/2/overall_coronavirus_co/dashboard.



Testing equipment in Monarch Molecular.

COHS Students Test for COVID-19 On Campus

Graduate assistants suit up and join in the effort to keep the campus safe

By Angelica Walker

ODU has been providing and processing COVID-19 tests on-campus since summer 2020. This vast undertaking was successful with the help of the COVID-19 testing committee led by Bonnie Van Lunen, dean of the College and Health Sciences (COHS), and Morris Foster, ODU's vice president for research. Sunghoon Chung, Vanessa Ramirez, Tom Campbell, and Nick Reilly are COHS students in the Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Ph.D. program who work as graduate assistants in the COVID-19 testing facility. The assistants work alongside faculty and laboratory staff, collecting samples that will be tested and analyzed for COVID-19 in Monarch Molecular, ODU's on-campus CLIA-certified laboratory.

This graduate assistantship has allowed these students to gain valuable, hands-on experience as essential workers during the pandemic. Being a part of the committee and working in the testing center is a big commitment. Each graduate assistant joined the effort to keep the campus safe and had the desire to help others. Tom Campbell, a second-year doctoral student, said, "I am a certified athletic trainer, licensed in the state of Virginia, and have always enjoyed helping people. This pandemic has affected a mass number of people and institutions, and I found



COHS graduate students in personal protective equipment. Reilly (top), Campbell (left), Ramirez (middle), and Sunghoon (right)

inspiration in knowing that I could help others protect themselves from COVID-19."

Each student began their assistantship in early-Fall 2020, except Tom, who joined the COVID testing committee efforts in June 2020. Before working in the lab, each student received job training on the daily processes, including swabbing and transporting specimens to be tested. "There have been some bugs to work through and obstacles to overcome in optimizing the process. I think the four of us (COHS graduate students) have reached a point where we can serve as mentors and instructors to anyone who joins the team," stated Nick Reilly, a fourth-year

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doctoral candidate. The lab provides each assistant with personal protective equipment. Their daily attire includes N95 face masks, transparent eye and face shields, plastic gowns resembling surgical scrubs, and lots of latex gloves.

Getting tested for COVID-19 has become a part of the "new normal," especially when returning to an in-person format for work or school. "As the process has become more streamlined, the consensus is that people are receptive and even amicable upon coming in for testing. Some who come in for testing demonstrate occasional wariness but are often relieved upon working with the skilled testers. Individuals leave the testing site viewing the process as not as intimidating as they may have believed," said Nick.

As of late February, the testing center has completed over 30,000 tests since July 2020. Tests are available to students, faculty, and staff and are randomly scheduled based on the list of known individuals on campus. Monarch Molecular instructs the campus community with symptoms or documented exposure to a

positive case to schedule a test via Student Health Services or the online scheduling portal. Results from the on-campus molecular lab are received within hours, allowing the COVID Cares Team to act quickly. The ultimate goal is to continue offering academic programming, keeping students safe in residence halls, and maintaining a safe community as we progress through the academic year.

"I have learned that this pandemic has affected everyone in a different way. When people come in for testing, a smiling face and good patient care go a long way," stated Vanessa Ramirez, a second-year doctoral student. "At the end of the day, everyone is human and we are trying to help each other get through this tough time."

These students have enjoyed the work they've done so far and will continue working in the testing center. They want to do their part in contributing to a safe and healthy campus. Sunghoon Chung, a first-year doctoral student, added, "I have enjoyed this experience with my phenomenal team. I believe this experience will provide me with how to cooperate with other individuals as well as work as a healthcare professional."

The 2021 Day of Giving Was a Success!



On March 16, a record number of donors from the monarch community generously donated \$116,371 on Give2ODU Day. The funds raised will provide support for scholarships, fund equipment needs, and create endowments. Even though the Day of Giving has passed, you can still support COHS students through the Health Sciences Heroes campaign. Make a gift by visiting:

fundit.odu.edu/o/old-dominion-university/i/odu-crowdfunding/s/health-sciences-heroes

Student Awards and Recognition

Alumni Association's Outstanding Scholar Award

At all commencement ceremonies, the student from each college with the highest grade point average and at least 60 completed credit hours is recognized as the Alumni Association's Outstanding College Scholar. Among these, the top graduate also is recognized as the Alumni Association's Outstanding University Scholar.



Sarah Jane Sapiano
Student, School of Nursing

"I am honored to receive this award, and I am very appreciative of the time, energy, and dedication of the School of Nursing faculty. It is clear that they care deeply about the success of each student in the program and about graduating exceptional nurses. I am excited to complete my transition from nursing student to RN and to pursue a career as a labor and delivery nurse!"



Sapiano (far right) with other nursing students.

Faculty Awards and Recognition

University Professor

The University Professor designation recognizes faculty members at the university who are outstanding teachers at the undergraduate level.



Lynn Wiles

Associate Professor, School of Nursing

"I'm beyond thrilled to be recognized for over twenty years of undergraduate teaching in the School of Nursing. I love trying new and novel teaching innovations. Pivoting between the classroom, clinical, simulation, and online teaching keeps me energized. My clinical practice in the Emergency Department keeps me current when teaching clinical-based courses. I also have the opportunity to participate and lead grant teams that explore innovations to improve student success, and many have led to publishing articles and

presenting at conferences. I value the relationships I've developed with students and have enjoyed working beside them in clinical at the hospital and watching them grow as nurses."



Professor Wiles (second from left) with students.

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Provost's Award for Leadership in International Education

The Provost's Award for Leadership in International Education was established in 2001 to recognize Old Dominion faculty members who have provided outstanding leadership in strengthening the university's international mission. The award provides a way to recognize faculty excellence and their contributions to fulfilling the university's goal of becoming the premier international university in Virginia.



Deborah Gray

Clinical Associate Professor, School of Nursing

"I'm honored to receive this award. As an educator, scholar, and clinician, my vision is to address global healthcare crises related to access to care issues primarily affecting the most vulnerable populations. Through my work, in the last few years, I believe I have made an impact while also fostering significant international partnerships and increasing ODU's visibility as a leader on the international stage."



Professor Gray (left) working with WHO in Botswana as Fulbright Scholar (pre-COVID-19).

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Summer Research Fellowship Program Award Winner

The purpose of the Summer Research Fellowship Program (SRFP) is to provide seed money for research and future scholarly effort, primarily for non-tenured tenure track faculty. These awards will result in external grants, journal publications, manuscript publication, or display of artistic work.



Sylvia Shangani

Assistant Professor, School of Community & Environmental Health

"This exciting award provides a foundation for my long-term research goal of advancing research and policy initiatives to reduce health inequities. I do this by applying innovative behavioral and mixed-method techniques to some of the most pressing health problems. Across societies, complex health problems such as HIV, substance use, and mental health conditions disproportionately affect the most disempowered, stigmatized, and excluded populations. These health problems commonly have behavioral underpinnings rooted in patients,

providers, cultures, or structural systems. My research focuses on behavior change and policy support to address these inequities, and this award directly contributes the resources to move this type of research forward."



Shangani (left) preparing for a presentation at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, GA (pre-COVID-19).