

Series from PBS & KET tells the story of public health

KY HEALTH NEWS

"Public health saved your life today and you don't even know it." That's the catchphrase of a PBS series that began on KET Tuesday night, about the history of public health and how it has extended Americans' life expectancy by 25 years in the last century with vaccinations, clean water, prenatal care,

school lunches, restaurant inspections, workplace safety, and other measures that usually don't have high visibility but have become a key element of modern life. That increased life expectancy "is the most impressive thing that we have ever done as a species," says Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, distinguished professor of practice at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore and the main narrator of the four-part series, called "The Invisible Shield."

In recent decades, many Americans have taken public health for granted and have shifted from the idea that they should cooperate for health as members of a society to the notion that health decisions are a matter of choice for individuals

and families. Experts say that resistance to vaccination, as well as obesity, drug overdoses and suicides, has led to U.S. life expectancy declining for the first time in a century, even before the pandemic, to the point that it is about four years less than other advanced countries. They also point to the fact that public health isn't a priority for government funding unless there is an emergency, like the Covid-19 pandemic, which plays a major role in the first episode. Public health "is underfunded, underval-

ued and misunderstood putting our health at risk," the series website says. The site has a discussion guide, which says "The work of public health is made visible by public health emergencies (pandemics, outbreaks, etc.), when society depends on the expertise of people who previously were working in the background. This docuseries also highlights the role of public health professionals as the first line of defense during public health crises through their use of outbreak science, health patterns, and forecasting

data. It surfaces the challenges in educating the public about the public health system. It hopes to encourage viewers to learn more about the various roles and jobs that exist in public health and to be a part of the invisible shield in the future." The next episode of the series will premiere on KET at 10 p.m. Tuesday, April 9, but can be seen now on the KET website. For information on other episodes, see the series page on KET's website. Episodes can also be watched on the PBS website.



Race – Lace up for Limb Loss

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She knows that the mission of Camp No Limits includes educating and empowering campers to discover and develop a happy, healthy lifestyle. As an amputee, Henderson has also been educating people with whom she comes in contact. "Before my accident I didn't know anyone who had what my students call a 'robot leg,'" Henderson laughed. "The majority of children in Green County have not been exposed to that either." She said that she was really honest with students when school began about three months after her accident. She said she told them that they were going to have to

help her learn to walk again. Henderson, who has been teaching for 22 years, including 19 in a kindergarten classroom, said, "You know how kids are. They just roll with it and don't think anything about it." She told the story of her class taking a field trip when she was still in a wheelchair and none of her students had ever seen a wheelchair being raised on the bus lift and they thought it was really cool that they were allowed to ride in the bus with her after watching that happen. Henderson has been promoting this event around Green County and the surrounding area. She also is part of a Facebook group called Amputees of Kentucky and she has invited all

of the members of that group to come and walk in the event. Because she has been teaching even after her accident, she is hoping that some of her students will participate in either the run or walk race at Dragon Stadium. She also knows that the track team does not have an event that day and she hopes that several of the athletes will show up to help with the event but also to participate. Medals will be presented to the top three female runners and the top three male runners in the 9:00 a.m. race. No medals will be given in the one-mile walk because she knows that several participants may cross the finish line at the same time.

February reports released

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This sector had 1,500 more positions in February 2024 compared to February 2023. This sector includes repairs and maintenance, personal care services and religious organizations. Employment in the government sector increased by 100 jobs from January 2024 to February 2024. The number of jobs rose by 100 in federal government; increased by 200 in state government; and fell by 200 in local government. The total number of government jobs rose by 7,700 positions or 2.5% compared to February 2023. The number of jobs in the state's mining and logging sector was unchanged from January to February. This sector had 100 more jobs in February 2024 compared to February 2023. Employment in Kentucky's information services sector fell by 100 jobs from January to February. The industries in this sector include traditional publishing as well as software publishing; motion pictures and broadcasting; and telecommunications. The number of jobs in this sector was down 300 from one year ago. Kentucky's financial activities sector decreased by 200 positions from January 2024 to February 2024 and was down 1,900 jobs from February 2023. The jobs losses were evenly split be-

tween the finance and insurance subsector and the real estate, rental and leasing subsector, with each losing 100 jobs in February. The leisure and hospitality sector fell by 200 positions from January 2024 to February 2024, representing a loss of 0.1%. This sector reported 300 more jobs in February than one year ago. The accommodations and food services subsector was up by 100 jobs in February. The arts, entertainment and recreation subsector lost 300 jobs from January to February. Civilian labor force statistics include non-military workers and unemployed Kentuckians who are actively seeking work. They do not include unemployed Kentuckians who have not looked for employment within the past four weeks. Kentucky's statewide unemployment rate and employment levels are seasonally adjusted. Employment statistics undergo sharp fluctuations due to seasonal events, such as weather changes, harvests, holidays, and school openings and closings. Seasonal adjustments eliminate these influences and make it easier to observe statistical trends. However, due to the small sample size, county unemployment rates are not seasonally adjusted. Visit the Kentucky Center for Statistics website to learn more

about Kentucky labor market information.



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