



Peter J. Costa, MPH, MCHES

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Peter Costa is Director of the Health Advancement & Prevention Strategies Office at Lehigh University which exists to support student success by examining and addressing preventable health issues that affect academic performance. Peter received his Master of Public Health degree from East Stroudsburg University in 2005 with a concentration in Community Health Education and he is a Master Certified Health Education Specialist. He started his public health career at the Bethlehem Health Bureau in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania where he worked as a Community Health Specialist under a Public Health Preparedness & Response Grant. From there Peter accepted a position with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health. In this role, as both an Epidemiologist and Public Health Educator, he directed statewide educational and training efforts on environmental emergency response; developed syndromic surveillance and response protocols; and led community-based health promotion and exposure prevention awareness programs for environmental hazards having the potential to harm public health. Prior to accepting his role at Lehigh in October 2012, Peter served as the Director of Education, Outreach and Communications for the non-profit 501 (c)(3), Global Alliance for Rabies Control. In this role he directed the development, implementation and evaluation of international health communication, education and prevention outreach activities including management and global coordination of the largest rabies awareness campaign, World Rabies Day, held in 150 countries. Now at Lehigh University, Peter is tasked with developing and implementing a high-level strategic plan that fully coordinates all prevention-related efforts and supports Lehigh's core competencies for student learning and personal development. The creation of Peter's office and position represents a paradigm shift in the way Lehigh addresses student health through prevention and a shift from individual- to population-level prevention; and from direct health education to program, policy and coalition development. This approach brings Lehigh University into greater alignment with best practices among institutions of higher education and demonstrates Lehigh's strong commitment to being a national leader in prevention.