



**2021-2022**

# **Student Field Placements and Collaborative Projects**

Student hands-on projects in public health organizations around the region.



**Northwest Center**  
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE



## Fatima Ahmed

University of Washington

### *Strengthening Washington Poison Center and School-based Health Provider Relationship Regarding Adolescent Intentional Suicide and Self-harm*

**Partners:** Washington Poison Center

Fatima conducted a needs analysis of school-based health providers and Washington Poison Center staff to strengthen their capabilities and management of adolescent intentional suicide and self-harm. The project has the potential to promote equity by building community awareness and connecting schools from various areas to Poison Center resources to tackle intentional exposures among young students around Washington state.



## Shana Attar

University of Washington

### *Examining the Cultural Sensitivity of a New Pictorial Screening Tool for Identifying Toddlers at Risk for Autism*

**Partners:** Mother Africa

Shana's project identified the cultural efficacy of a new autism screening tool for providers working with toddlers in multicultural settings. Preliminary results from the feedback survey indicate ease of use, feasibility, and acceptability. Results also included recommendations for improving cultural sensitivity in two of the eleven target behaviors, visual representation of caregivers and activities, and for the wording of select target behaviors.



## Brittany Bevis

University of Washington

### *Reducing Food Insecurity Among Community Health Center Patients*

**Partners:** Sea Mar Community Health Center, Public Health-Seattle & King County

Brittany conducted a mixed method evaluation of the Sea Mar White Center Community Health Center's food insecurity screening pilot program in partnership with Public Health-Seattle & King County. The study draws attention to the pervasiveness of food insecurity as a public health issue. The recommendations can inform improvements in screening workflow for the White Center clinic and possibly other Sea Mar clinics.



## **Madeline "Addy" Borges**

University of Washington

### ***Medication to Treat Opioid Use Disorder in Washington State Jails***

**Partners: Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs**

Addy conducted a quantitative analysis of medication to treat opioid use disorder (MOUD) care provided and the barriers encountered in all 58 jails in Washington state. Findings indicate varying levels of MOUD care across jails. The challenges faced are also varied, including cost, policies, and the legal system. The study resulted in a profile of jail-based MOUD services for the Washington State Healthcare Authority and the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to guide funding for jail-based MOUD programs.



## **Nicole Casanova**

University of Washington

### ***Mitigating Sexual Violence Risk Among Students Through Teacher Professional Development***

**Partners: Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Foundation for Youth Resiliency and Engagement**

Nicole's project resulted in the development of a training guide aimed at strengthening middle school teachers' capabilities in sexual violence prevention in their school communities. She helped develop a 40-page teacher training guide that identifies competencies and skills for the prevention of sexual violence in schools. Potentially, the guide will promote teacher awareness on this issue, increase "upstander" behaviors that promote intervening, and model positive behaviors to students.



## **Taquesha Dean**

University of Washington

### ***A Youth-Led Black Mental Health and Healing Justice Peer-Support Program: Recommendations for Program Design and Implementation***

**Partners: CoLab for Community & Behavioral Health Policy, Black Emotional & Mental Health Collective**

Taquesha co-developed program recommendations for the Black Mental Health and Healing Justice Peer Support program's black youth, aged 17-24. The design process was informed by healing justice and trauma-informed principles with the goal of promoting awareness, capacity, and relationship building among youth.



## Lilly Deerwater

University of Washington

### *Providing Free Tax Preparation Through Health Centers in King County: A Feasibility Assessment*

**Partners:** Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility

Lilly's project explored the possibility of integrating free tax preparation services into health centers in King County serving low-income patients who may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit and for free tax preparation. Project findings indicate there is potential for these types of medical-financial partnerships in King County. The stakeholder group of health care leaders, tax preparation services providers, and potential clients identified the essential elements of a successful partnership.



## Amy Hunter Ervin

University of Washington

### *Improving Produce Prescription Processes*

**Partners:** Washington State Department of Health Fruit & Vegetable Incentives Program

Amy conducted a needs analysis of the Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program with the goal of improving program access statewide and increasing the availability of culturally appropriate foods. The project shines a spotlight on the program's ability to improve health outcomes, reduce food insecurity, and potentially reduce long-term health care costs. Project results included the development of an equity-centered application process designed to direct program resources where they are needed most, a partnership with another agency nutrition program, and a plan for transitioning to an electronic benefit mechanism that better meets the program's needs.



## Mariah Farris

University of Washington

### *Identifying Barriers to Behavioral Health Access in Pierce and King County Schools*

**Partners:** Puget Sound Educational Service District

Mariah conducted a gap analysis of school districts in King and Pierce County to identify barriers to accessing behavioral health services and the strategies school districts can employ to improve student access. Eight key mutually reinforcing themes and barriers to accessing behavioral health services were identified. One key finding was that shortages of mental health providers exacerbated other barriers. The Educational Service District will benefit from the repository of community-based organizations providing services to communities of color developed from this project.





## Victoria Gersch

University of Washington

### *Incorporating Health Equity Work into Strategic Planning*

**Partners: Community Health Plan of Washington**

Victoria analyzed the major health disparities impacting Washington's underserved populations. The project included a demographic analysis of the Community Health Plan members across the state, which was disseminated to stakeholders through various communication media, and a report summarizing the major disparities experienced by various demographic groups across a spectrum of eight health equity priority measures. The study provided vital information about membership, existing disparities, and how to work together to address them.



## Laura Grage

University of Alaska Anchorage

### *Exploring the Relationship Between Pandemic News-Media Coverage and COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Alaska*

**Partners: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Alaska  
Public Health Information Response Team**

News-media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic was an important source of information for people to learn about COVID-19 vaccines. Laura completed a content analysis of news-media coverage to determine any relationship between the quantity and content of coverage with vaccine uptake in Alaska. Project findings indicate that most media articles on this issue were written at grade levels much higher than the recommended level of the average reader. Laura's project reiterates the importance of health communication in disease prevention.



## Elizabeth "Zoe" Herrera

Oregon State University

### *The Public Health Burden of STIs Among Young Adults, Lane County, Oregon*

**Partners: Lane County Department of Public Health**

Zoe conducted a project-based internship aimed at investigating the trends and identifying risk factors for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in Lane County, Oregon. In this community, sixty percent of STI diagnosis occurs among people under 25, which constitutes ten percent of the total population. Zoe's project supports future analysis of STI data to inform program interventions in schools and pediatric offices, with the ultimate goal of improving sexual health education for young adults.



## Andrea Hill

Boise State University

### *City of Cascade and Valley County Age-Friendliness Assessment*

**Partners:** Cascade Medical Center

Andrea's community assessment explored the capacity of older adults from Cascade, Idaho, and surrounding areas to live independently as they age. Project findings indicate that while most residents in the area desire to "age in place" and not move from their current residences as they age, the elements that support aging in place are complicated. More information is needed about availability and access to health care, centralized community information sources, and home repair and modification services to further assist residents with their living preferences.



## Shannon Murphy

University of Washington

### *Assessing the Assets, Needs, and Resources that Influence Children's Health and Well-Being in Rural Idaho and Montana*

**Partners:** Seattle Children's Hospital Community Health & Benefit Team

Rural Montana and Idaho residents face significant barriers in accessing specialized pediatric and emergency health care as Seattle Children's Hospital is the closest site for these services. Shannon analyzed Seattle Children's 2022 Pediatric Community Health Assessment data to determine the health needs and resources that influence the well-being of children under 19 in rural Montana and Idaho. Project results indicate that lack of cultural competency and humility in the health care setting potentially create additional barriers for pediatric patients from disadvantaged or vulnerable populations.



## David Perlmutter

University of Washington

### *Perspectives of First Responders Regarding Implementation of Supervised Consumption Spaces to Prevent Fatal Opioid Overdose*

**Partners:** Research with Expert Advisors on Drug Use

David's project assessed the perspectives of first responders regarding the implementation of supervised consumption spaces (SCS) as an intervention to prevent fatal opioid overdose. Three main themes emerged from the study indicating that support for the SCS model may depend on the perceptions among stakeholders that the program is achieving intended outcomes. Findings from the project indicate the possibility of developing collaborations between emergency services and supervised consumption site staff.



## Kerry Plunkett

Oregon Health and Science University – Portland State University School of Public Health

### *Exploring the Contexts and Patterns of Veteran Firearm Injuries and Existing Interventions Among US Veterans*

**Partners:** VA Portland Health Care System, Center to Improve Veteran Involvement in Care

Rural-residing veterans are at an increased risk of firearm injuries compared to urban-residing residents and the general population. Kerry conducted a systematic review of the literature on firearm prevention to identify evidence-based practices for interventions in health care settings. The literature review concluded that interventions from health care providers were most successful when a firearm safe storage device is also provided and used.



## Dylan Pugh

University of Washington

### *Collecting Qualitative Data About LGBTQ Students' Experience with a Curriculum that Addresses Sexual Violence*

**Partners:** Northwest Center for Public Health Practice

LGBTQ+ youth report higher rates of sexual violence than their heterosexual and cisgender peers. School environments are important contexts for providing sexual violence prevention efforts and the perspectives of LGBTQ+ students must be centered in these prevention efforts. Dylan conducted a qualitative assessment to gain insight into LGBTQ+ students' perspectives on the protective factors for sexual victimization and perpetration in K-12 schools. The project findings underscore the need for changes in the physical and social environment of schools to improve school climate and provide increased support for LGBTQ+ youth.



## Yaniv Rait

University of Washington

### *Caseworker Perspectives on Homelessness in King County*

**Partners:** University of Washington Department of Health Systems and Population Health

Homelessness is a public health emergency in the city of Seattle. The role of caseworkers in addressing this issue is pivotal because they work closely with the homeless population and with numerous social services. Yaniv's project focused on gaining insight into the perspectives of caseworkers about the barriers they face when working in the system and provide recommendations for improvements. Project findings indicate the need for additional resources for caseworkers, a streamlined system to reduce redundancies, and the replication of successes in other municipalities.



**Keenan Toya**

University of Washington

*Seattle Children’s Hospital for Pediatric Health Data Collection and Co- Authorship of the 2022 Pediatric Community Health Assessment of the Washington, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WAMI) Region*

**Partners: Seattle Children’s Hospital**

Keenan conducted an analysis of the 2022 Pediatric Community Health Assessment of Region 10, which includes Washington, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho, to gain insight into what pediatric health looks like in the immediate period after the COVID-19 pandemic. This analysis will help Seattle Children’s Hospital identify patterns, trends, and differences in pediatric health outcomes for more informed decision making and future planning.



These projects are supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number UB6HP31690. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author(s) and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](https://www.hrsa.gov).

The Northwest Center for Public Health Practice is housed within the University of Washington School of Public Health. It is one of ten regional Public Health Training Centers funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration.

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