



2024-2025

Student Field Placements and Collaborative Projects

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



Northwest Center
FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE



Riley Achtemeier

University of Washington

Developing and Validating a Trust Assessment Scale for Public Health Authorities to Use During an Extreme Heat Emergency

Partner: Washington State Department of Health

Riley's project consisted of a literature review, conducting focus groups, and adapting a survey to measure public trust in public health authorities and the acceptance of extreme heat event guidelines. The results from this project can help public health authorities assess which populations to target for outreach for public trust and to improve guidelines for extreme heat events.



Safa Al-Dulaimi

Oregon Health and Science University

Tobacco Prevention and Education

Partner: Clackamas County Public Health

Safa's work supported the Secondhand Smoke Assessment Project at Clackamas County Public Health through evaluating secondhand smoke exposure in multi-unit housing and advocating for the adoption and enforcement of smoke-free policies. Safa conducted scans at multiple housing sites, reviewed and evaluated existing policies, assisted in the development of educational materials, and identified policy recommendations.



Biruk Araya

University of Washington

Understanding Environmental Reservoirs of Antimicrobial Resistance in Rural Washington State

Partner: Washington State Department of Health

Biruk expanded the Washington Integrated Surveillance for Antimicrobial Resistance database to include environmental data sources from Central Washington. This project helped fill an important gap in Washington State's understanding of how antimicrobial resistance can emerge and spread through the environment.



Lauren Edwards

University of Washington

Evaluating Social Determinants of Health Screening and Follow-Up in 10 United States Pediatric Hospital Clinics

Partner: Seattle Children's Hospital

Lauren's project examined how ten pediatric hospital clinics across the United States are designing and implementing social determinants of health screening protocols. The goal of the project was to identify best practices and inform system-level improvements through a literature review, virtual interviews, and thematic analysis.



Samira Farah

University of Washington

Culturally Adapting Problem Management Plus (PM+) for Somali Mental Health: Integrating Islamic Principles and Trauma Healing Approaches

Partner: Neighborhood House

Samira evaluated the perceived acceptability of Islamic adaptations integrated into the Problem Management Plus (PM+) intervention among Somali Muslim women in King County, Washington. The study demonstrated the acceptability and cultural appropriateness of integrating Islamic practices into evidence-based mental health interventions.



Tessa Fujisaki

University of Washington

Makah Nation Narratives: A Neah Bay High School Public Health Photovoice Project

Partner: UW Riverways

Tessa worked with high school students at Neah Bay High School to introduce them to photovoice and public health topics in their community. The project had students take photos of things in their communities that they wanted to maintain or change. The students then discussed their pictures with their peers and how it connects with their community.



Samantha Garcia Perez

University of Washington

Developing and Implementing Program Evaluation Tools for the Black Infant Health Program

Partner: Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

Samantha's project aimed to evaluate and enhance the Black Infant Health program at the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. Samantha used program surveys and focus groups to ensure the program remains responsive to the needs of Black families and provides insights to inform the program's future redesign.



Shannon Hannaway

University of Washington

Grieving Animal Companions: The Health and Social Impacts of Animal Companion Death on Adults Experiencing Homelessness and Opportunities to Mitigate Adverse Outcomes

Partner: The Center for One Health

Shannon used semi-structured interviews of people experiencing homelessness to explore the human-animal bond as it relates to companion animal end-of-life issues, including coping mechanisms, social supports needed, and pathways to resiliency. The information presented in this study can be used to support integrated care and mitigate adverse health and social outcomes.



Juliana Herrera

University of Alaska - Anchorage

Boys and Girls Club Trauma Informed Readiness Analysis

Partner: Boys and Girls Club Alaska

Juliana's project consisted of a comparative analysis of trauma informed care practices of the Boys and Girls Club Anchorage to other clubs around the United States. This project looked at what other clubs have done with their long-standing trauma-informed programs as well as community resources available to members. Recommendations were shared to continue this process in Alaska.



Ellie Jackson

University of Washington

Addressing Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Youth Substance Use in Rural Washington

Partner: Rural Network

Ellie's work assessed the risk and protective factors of youth substance use in rural Washington to inform community-driven youth substance use prevention efforts. The findings from this project can help rural communities prioritize efforts related to youth substance use prevention and tailor approaches to local contexts.



Gretchen Kirk

Boise State University

Myths on Adolescent Mental Health

Partner: Communities for Youth

Gretchen's work developed a list of common adolescent mental health myths and explored the prevalence, falseness, and potential for negative public health impact of each top myth. Gretchen identified top adolescent mental health myths with the goal of future research to develop effective evidence-based counter messages to improve mental health outcomes.



Alexis Mahanna

University of Alaska – Anchorage

Doula/Birthworker & Peer Support Training Program Developmental Evaluation

Partner: State of Alaska Department of Health

Alexis' project explored the feasibility of a co-training model for peer support professionals and doulas/birthworkers in Alaska to support birthing parents who use substances. Alexis completed a literature review, analyzed interviews, and provided final recommendations to implement this program with the goal of improving perinatal care in Alaska.



Singobile Shalom Mhlanga

University of Washington

Impact of Language Barriers on Access to Services Among Congolese Immigrants in Washington State

Partner: Porsesh Policy Research Institute

Singobile used a mixed-methods approach to examine how language barriers affect healthcare access among Congolese immigrants in Washington State. The results from this project can inform local and state-level efforts to improve healthcare access for limited English proficient immigrant populations.



Katie Miller

Eastern Washington University

Developing Affordable Affirmative Housing and Building Community for Older LGBTQ+ Adults in Spokane, Washington

Partner: Spokane Regional Health District

Katie conducted key informant interviews to identify and propose community-based interventions that expand access to inclusive, affordable housing and reduce social isolation among LGBTQ+ individuals over fifty. The findings highlight the growing efforts to foster social connection, increase community engagement, and innovative housing solutions for this population.



Kathleen Moloney

University of Washington

Implementation of a Tool to Support Local Public Health Emergency Preparedness in Washington State

Partner: Washington State Department of Health

Kathleen's project aimed to refine and develop an implementation plan for a web-based tool by gathering feedback from public health emergency preparedness planners at local health jurisdictions across Washington State. The findings from this project will contribute to improved disaster risk assessments and preparedness strategies.



Evelyn Newman

University of Washington

An FPHS-Based Evaluation for Pacific County Health & Human Services

Partner: Pacific County Public Health & Human Services

Evelyn's project assessed internal capacity, identified system gaps, and developed strategic recommendations to improve the use of Foundational Public Health Services funding in a rural context. Evelyn used health assessments, staff surveys, and annual reports to conduct the evaluation to identify ways to better align the work with local priorities.



Catherine Ngaingne

Oregon State University

Low-income African Immigrant Women Affected by Breast Cancer

Partner: Pink Lemonade Project

Catherine led a storytelling initiative to explore the breast cancer experiences of African immigrant women to inform culturally responsive care and improve healthcare. The initiative identified next steps to deepen insights, tailor programs, and to foster sustainable outreach in this community.



Adam Pennavarria

Oregon Health and Science University

Soul Box Project

Partner: OHSU Gun Violence Prevention Research Center

Adam's project consisted of creating a survey and analyzing the results to understand the impact of Soul Box installations – a participatory art installation of those affected by gun violence - on the participants' perceptions of grief, trauma, and community solidarity within the context of gun violence.



Hannah Perez

University of Washington

King County BIPOC Mental Health Listening Session Project

Partner: King County Department of Community and Human Services

Hannah assisted King County with holding multiple listening sessions with community-based organizations to gather feedback on the behavioral health needs within their communities and to learn about the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improving supports and programming. The feedback from these listening sessions will contribute to behavioral health materials, education, and resources to support the needs of the local communities.



Jae Williams

University of Washington

Mental Health, Community and Mentorship — Unlocking Insights with Project Girl Mentoring Program

Partner: Project Girl Mentoring Project

Jae's work consisted of creating and evaluating a one-day conference to empower middle and high school aged Black girls and girls of color from the greater Seattle area. This project examined the intersection of Black girlhood, mental health and school, and gathered additional insights from the participants of the conference.



Katie Winter

Oregon State University

Culturally Connected Care: Developing Resources to Raise Community Awareness and Enhance Sustainability for the Integrated Culturally Affirming Perinatal Home-Visiting Initiative

Partner: Washington County Department of Health and Human Services

Katie created a community awareness campaign for the Douly Model program in Washington County, including developing a referral communication toolkit for healthcare providers and compiling a resource guide to connect families with culturally affirming support services. The results of Katie's project can improve the reach and impact of the program and support those most at risk for maternal and infant health disparities.

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