

December Mentor Connection

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Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists

December 2019 Mentor Connection

Happy Holidays and welcome to the Mentor Connection. We hope you had a chance to get to know your mentor/mentee a bit better through your introductions and the self-assessment activity. If you have not already completed this task, please be sure to complete and discuss this exercise before the end of the month.

As we close out 2019 and begin to think over some resolutions for the new year, consider adding a goal that meaningfully contributes to your professional development.

Upcoming Tasks

Please complete each task individually and set up a time to discuss it together. You can set separate internal deadlines for each task or have a longer conversation about both at once. Click each link to view and download – specific instructions are included within each document.

- Goal setting exercise (Due at the end of January).
- GPS•R exercise (Due at the end of February).
- While there is no sponsored travel for the Mentorship program, CSTE is able to offer travel funding to support a limited number of travelers to attend pre-conference workshops and the 2020 CSTE Annual Conference. Further details will be determined once all requests for funding have been submitted. **To apply for this travel funding, please complete the form at https://cste.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_afX2PLXlyZiMtg1 no later than January 8, 2020.**
- **Please indicate on the form which conference workshop you would like to attend.** Please note that a request does not guarantee receipt of funding. Official travel letters will be sent to the recipients of the travel sponsorship on February 5, 2020.

Basecamp

We will be using Basecamp as a tool to communicate as a program, but also within mentor and mentee groups. We hope this will be a way for mentors to share tips and resources on mentoring

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your own resources under the "Articles to Share" folder.

- If you have not yet joined the Basecamp group, you can do so [here](#). Please reach out to Alyaa Altabbaa at aaltabbaa@cste.org if you are unable to join the group.
- Please check out the message board feature on Basecamp. We encourage you all to start your own discussion thread on a professional development topic that interests you.
- Feel free to add to the "Articles to Share" folder.

Suggested Discussion Topics

Mentors and mentees should be communicating regularly, at least once a month throughout the program. These meetings can happen via video or phone call, email, or instant messenger- whatever works for you! We encourage you to participate in at least one video/Skype meeting so you can "meet" each other face-to-face. We will be providing some general discussion topics in each monthly Mentor Connection that can help guide your conversations.

See the list below for some ideas on how to kick off your mentoring relationship!

- Discuss self-assessment and goal setting exercise results
- Other suggestions for discussion include:
 - Networking
 - Balancing hard skills (technical skills, database management, writing, facilitating/presenting) vs. soft skills (problem-solving, working in teams)
 - Resume/CV development
 - Transitioning between positions within your agency

What Are You Reading?

What are you reading? We'd like to know, so tell us how you're expanding your mind these days, either personally or professionally (i.e., fiction or non-fiction, fantasy, graphic novels, etc.) and we'll share them in each Mentor Connection. Submit authors and titles with a brief summary and critique to Alyaa Altabbaa at aaltabbaa@cste.org, and we'll take it from there.

This month's recommendation is "[The Atlas of Disease: Mapping deadly epidemics and contagion from the plague to Zika Virus](#)" by **Sandra Hempel**.

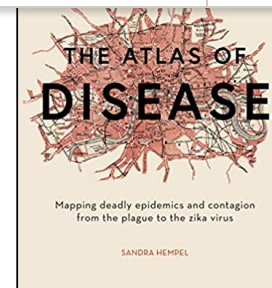
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of the disease, to the tale of its discovery and its place in history.

But what is vital in all of this is how the disease spreads and develops. In *The Atlas of Disease*, author Sandra Hemple reveals how maps have uncovered insightful information about the history of disease, from the 17th century plague maps that revealed the radical idea that diseases might be carried and spread by humans, to cholera maps in the 1800s showing the disease was carried by water, right up to the AIDs epidemic in the 1980s and the recent Ebola outbreak.



Crucially, *The Atlas of Disease* will also explore how cartographic techniques have been used to combat epidemics by revealing previously hidden patterns. These discoveries have changed the course of history, affected human evolution, stimulated advances in medicine and shaped the course of countless lives.”

Note: While CSTE recommends these books for casual reading, the themes and ideas contained are those of the author, and CSTE does not necessarily endorse or promote them as part of the organizational mission/vision.

Get Inspired!

What inspires you? We will use this section to share motivational and thought-provoking content relevant to public health, professional growth, or other topics that you find meaningful to your work. Submit your favorite online articles, videos, podcast episodes or series, etc. to Alyaa Altabbaa at aaltabbaa@cste.org to be featured in the next Mentor Connection.

This month we would like to highlight these two articles:

- Heading Home for the Holidays? Check out this article on tips and tricks on [“How to Talk to Your Family about Public Health.”](#)
- Need some last minute gift ideas? Check out this [list](#) for some good public health reads to gift to others or yourself.

CSTE Membership Benefits and Involvement

Some mentors and mentees are not members of CSTE. Now is a great time to [become a member or renew your membership](#). Support from member dues adds value to the services and

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As one member puts it:

"I think people should join CSTE to understand that we are part of a broader movement of professionals who are working to improve public health in America. It's easy to feel siloed and frustrated, but being part of a larger movement emphasizes the fact that we can, and are, making a difference."

Mentors and mentees may want to explore involvement with the following groups:

- [Workforce Subcommittee](#)
- [Epi Methods](#)
- Early Career Professionals Workgroup

Some of the benefits of membership include:

- Professional development opportunities, networking events, and resources for workforce development.
- Registration discount for CSTE Annual Conference.
- Access to the Journal of Public Health Management and Practice.
- Involvement in CSTE subcommittees.
- Opportunities to author position statements that help drive public health policy.
- Eligibility to serve on national advisory committees.

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