

CDC/CSTE FELLOWS

CLASS OF 2004



**CSTE
APPLIED EPIDEMIOLOGY
FELLOWSHIP**

A two-year fellowship program that provides hands-on training in the field of applied epidemiology at state and local health agencies under the guidance of an experienced mentor.

CSTE

The CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship was created to strengthen the workforce in applied epidemiology at state and local health agencies. The Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE), in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH), established this two-year fellowship program to give recent graduates from schools of public health advanced training in preparation for a successful career as a state or local epidemiologist.

Using a mentorship model, The CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship offers an opportunity for graduates to acquire rigorous preparation and to develop applied epidemiologic skills during a high quality, on-the-job-training experience. Recent graduates who are interested in the practice of public health at the state or local levels are encouraged to apply for this two-year fellowship.

Fellows are carefully matched to a state or local health agency based on their career aspirations and available host positions.

Program areas include:

Infectious disease

Chronic disease

Maternal and child health

Injury

Birth defects and developmental disability

Environmental health

Occupational health

Emergency response (bioterrorism) epidemiology

Under the guidance of an experienced mentor, fellows will be expected to achieve competencies related to:

Epidemiologic methods, communication skills, public health practice, policy, and legal issues. Fellows will demonstrate acquired core competencies by participating in prescribed activities.



Meredith Anderson

Place of Birth: Painesville, Ohio

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Health Behavior and Health Education, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Placement: Maine Bureau of Health

Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Richard Aronson, MD, MPH;

Secondary: Katie Meyer, ScD, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: After the fellowship I hope to continue to work in Chronic Disease Epidemiology. Eventually, I would like to pursue a PhD in Social Epidemiology, since I am most interested in the broad, ecological forces that shape individual and community health. I hope to find a position that will allow me to combine epidemiology with more direct community work.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CSTE fellowship interested me primarily because of its applied, practical nature. I wanted to learn how my epidemiology classes translated into "real world" epidemiology. Also, I felt that the fellowship would allow me the opportunity to combine my experience in health behavior and health education with on the job epidemiology training. The structure of the fellowship, with opportunities for mentoring and professional development, was appealing to me as well.



Stephanie M. Borchardt

Place of Birth: Manitowoc, Wisconsin

Highest Degree Obtained: PhD, Epidemiological Science, University of Michigan; MPH, Epidemiology, University of Minnesota

Placement: Illinois Department of Public Health

Subject Area: Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Mark Dworkin, MD, MP, HTM;

Secondary: Craig Conover, MD, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: Following completion of the CSTE/CDC Applied Epidemiology Fellowship Program I intend to establish a career as an epidemiologist at a local or state health agency. Experience attained through this fellowship program will compliment my previous training with practical field study and mentorship.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE/CDC Applied Epidemiology Fellowship program because it cultivates the skills necessary to broadly implement disease prevention measures. Training in epidemiologic investigation, public health surveillance and infectious diseases will facilitate my transition from academic research to a career in epidemiologic practice. This position will allow me to serve the epidemiologic needs of a state health department and in addition, offer assistance to local health agencies.

**Lara Kidoguchi**

Place of Birth: Honolulu, Hawaii

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology,
University of Washington

Placement: Washington State Department of Health,
Communicable Disease Epidemiology

Subject Area: Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Mira Leslie DVM, MPH;

Secondary: Jo Hofmann, MD

Future plans after the fellowship: My post-fellowship objective is to work as an epidemiologist in an environment that emphasizes both investigations of population-based outbreaks of infectious disease and collaborations with more formal research institutions.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: This program offers new epidemiologists a particularly attractive means of gaining practical experience. This fellowship provides hands-on experience in a wide variety of program areas with a designated mentor to guide the process. Further, the fellowship's focus on the application of epidemiologic principles and research practices allows me to utilize my scientific background and develop my investigative skills in my chosen field of interest to an unusual degree for a beginning masters-level practitioner. I expect my experience in this program will strongly influence my future career path, both by shaping my personal objectives and by providing prospective employers and educational programs evidence of my abilities.

**Mariel López**

Place of Birth: Río Piedras, Puerto Rico

Highest Degree Obtained: MS, University of Puerto Rico,
Medical Sciences Campus

Placement: Puerto Rico Department of Health

Subject Area: Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities
Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Juan Alonso-Echanove, MD;

Secondary: Naydmar Perez de Otero, MD, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: Regarding my future plans I have three goals: (1) Obtain a doctoral degree in Epidemiology, (2) To become and perform as an Epidemiologist at the state or local level, working with a multidisciplinary team of scientists in order to contribute to the field of Maternal and Child Health, guiding the public health practice and improving the child health, and (3) At the same time I would like to obtain a faculty position in a University to teach others what I have learned through my academic and professional experiences.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: In order to reach these goals I need the opportunities to develop and further my knowledge and skills in the area of Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology. I am convinced that the CSTE fellowship can offer me with the appropriate knowledge and practical experience to become a leader and support staff that can provide the efficient information that program and policy people use to make their informed decisions.

**Emily H. Lu**

Place of Birth: Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Placement: Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Wanda Barfield, MD, MPH;

Secondary: Nancy Wilber, EdD

Future plans after the fellowship: I would like to continue overseeing the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) project for Massachusetts. I am also planning to pursue a doctoral degree in Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology. My eventual career goal is working as a MCH epidemiologist at a state or federal level monitoring maternal, adolescent, and perinatal outcomes and assessing need for programs, evaluating existing programs, and assisting in public health policy development.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I was looking for an opportunity that combines a practical training in the public sector and proficiency in Maternal and Child Health research methods including survey design, data collection and analysis, surveillance system evaluation, and preparing for publication. I planned to gain a better understanding of MCH while also to participate in other activities such as bioterrorism preparedness planning and infectious disease outbreak investigation. I was especially excited about the mentoring aspect of the CSTE fellowship that enables me to achieve my objectives with valuable support and guidance.

**Amy Robbins**

Place of Birth: Niskayuna, New York

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, University at Albany School of Public Health, Albany, NY

Placement: New Mexico Department of Health

Subject Area: Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Michael Landen, MD, MPH;

Secondary: Gary Simpson, PhD, MD, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: After the fellowship I plan on pursuing future work at the state or local level in infectious disease epidemiology. I also intend to pursue a doctorate in public health.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: While pursuing my MPH I became interested in working at a state level and being able to apply the public health and epidemiology principles I was studying to make a community healthier. The fellowship offered me the unique opportunity to apply my knowledge in the public health field and to explore infectious disease epidemiology and surveillance under the guidance of experienced mentors in epidemiology and public health at a state health department.



Janet Tang

Place of Birth: Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, St. Louis University

Placement: National Center for Infectious Diseases,
Atlanta, Georgia

Subject Area: Pandemic Influenza Surveillance

Mentors: Primary: Keiji Fukuda, MD;

Secondary: Lynette Brammer, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: I would like to continue to work with governmental agencies in monitoring infectious disease. My long-term goal would be to combine work experience with a doctoral degree focusing on infectious disease epidemiology.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE fellowship because I was interested in learning how the federal government interacts and works with the state health departments. It also offered me a unique opportunity to obtain practical job experience in infectious epidemiology which included outbreak investigations and pandemic influenza planning. This fellowship allowed me to enhance my understanding of applied epidemiology and allowed me to work outside the classroom as well as actively participate in governmental activities.



Katherine Wheeler

Place of Birth: Monmouth County, New Jersey

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Emory University

Placement: New York City Department of Health and
Mental Hygiene, Department of Environmental and
Occupational Disease Epidemiology

Subject Area: Environmental Health Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: James E. Cone, MD, MPH;

Secondary: Sara Voit, MSPH

Future plans after the fellowship: I will continue to pursue a career as an epidemiologist in the public sector, having gained experience in the practice of epidemiology at the local level in an urban setting. My main interests are environmental epidemiology and cancer epidemiology.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I saw the fellowship as an important opportunity to build on my master's degree by developing skills and experience in the day-to-day responsibilities of an epidemiologist working in a state or local health department. In addition to the many interesting programs offered by the host agencies, I was attracted to the fellowship's aspect of mentorship as well as CSTE's commitment to each fellow's attainment of core competencies in applied epidemiology.

Class I and Class II Fellows are currently undertaking a variety of challenging projects that offer an exceptional learning experience while providing valuable information to their host health departments. Listed below are a just a few examples of fellows' projects:

- Assessing changes in the availability of obstetrical providers performing deliveries
- Preparing the protocol, budget and IRB approval for state The Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)
- Linking data to assess birth defects born to women with diabetes
- Examining the relationship between socioeconomic and demographic factors and type of treatment for colon cancer
- Evaluating the Childhood Lead Poisoning Surveillance System
- Determining the risk of WNV transmission through atypical exposures
- Evaluating a Newborn Blood Spot Screening/Surveillance Program
- Establishing a statewide review process based on the National Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Program to better promote health and well-being
- Conducting a seroprevalence and behavioral study of intravenous drug users
- Creating a cumulative exposure index for workers in the World Trade Center Registry and characterizing their exposures
- Assessing racial disparities in fetal and infant mortality rates using the perinatal periods of risk (PPOR) approach
- Investigating cancer clusters among firefighters
- Participating in active surveillance of food borne illness
- Designing a case-control study to evaluate pertussis vaccine effectiveness and determine if vaccine type is associated with acquisition of pertussis
- Developing a surveillance system for lupus
- Assessing community exposure to hydrogen sulfide and its association with asthma
- Evaluating a congenital syphilis surveillance system
- Creating a surveillance system for *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (pneumococcus) in children < 5 years old
- Drafting a report to outline how indicators can be used to strengthen the state's environmental public health surveillance activities

CSTE

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