

# CDC/CSTE FELLOWS

## The Future of Applied Epidemiology

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# CLASS OF 2009



**CSTE**

**APPLIED EPIDEMIOLOGY  
FELLOWSHIP**

**A two-year fellowship program that provides hands-on training in the field of applied epidemiology at a state or local health agency under the guidance of experienced mentors.**

# CSTE Fellowship

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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 the two-year Fellowship program to give recent graduates from schools of public health preparation and advanced training for successful careers as state or local epidemiologists.

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 eligible for this two-year Fellowship.

Fellows are matched to a state or a local health agency based on their interests and available host site positions.

**Program Areas Include:**

Infectious Disease  
Injury  
Chronic Disease  
Environmental Health  
Substance Abuse  
Maternal and Child Health  
Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

Under the guidance of two experienced mentors, Fellows achieve competencies related to:

Epidemiologic Methods  
Communication  
Public Health Practice, Policy, and Legal Issues

Fellows demonstrate acquired core competencies by participating in prescribed activities.

## ***Stella Beckman, MPH***

**Program Area:** Occupational Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology & Biostatistics, University of California, Berkeley

**Host Site:** California Department of Public Health

**Primary Mentor:** Robert Harrison, MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Dennis Shusterman, MD, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the Fellowship because of its focus on mentorship, career development, and continuing education. I feel that the program offers a unique opportunity to transition into a career in epidemiology with expert guidance, while learning essential skills for the field. By working with two highly qualified mentors, I will learn from their experience and expertise while I apply my academic background and new skills to real-world public health research and practice. The Fellowship will enable me to contribute to occupational and environmental health research while I increase my understanding of core competencies in applied epidemiology and define my own goals, interests, and plans for the future.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completing the Fellowship, I hope to continue working as an epidemiologist in occupational health at the state or local level. I plan to pursue a doctoral degree in epidemiology in the future and I would also like to share my experience by teaching and mentoring future public health professionals.

## ***Dana Burshell, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Johns Hopkins University

**Host Site:** Virginia Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Diane Woolard, PhD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Mary Beth White-Comstock, RN, CIC



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

This fellowship seems to be the perfect bridge between my graduate school experience and my future professional life. Not only does the fellowship afford me the opportunity to apply my newly acquired quantitative skills to local needs, but it also provides an avenue for me to combine my interests in infectious disease and community health. I look forward to working in multiple areas spanning the diversity of epidemiology from surveillance to evaluation. Through a strong collaboration with local players and the CDC, I hope we can ultimately empower the community to create sustainable, effective programs to address healthcare-associated infections.

### **Future plans after the Fellowship:**

I feel confident that this experience will lead me to my next job with both strong quantitative and programmatic experiences as well as a realistic and practical application of epidemiology. As I continue strengthening myself as an applied epidemiologist, I anticipate that the evolving combination of my strengths, interests, and public health needs will help direct me either towards a PhD or continued work at the local or state level.

## ***Jessica Cunningham, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Oregon Health & Science University

**Host Site:** California Department of Public Health

**Primary Mentor:** James Watt, MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Tambi Shaw, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The Fellowship builds on the knowledge I gained in graduate school and promotes practical skill development in a supportive environment. Between the mentorship model and competency-based approach, I was drawn to the Fellowship for its potential to expand my abilities and accelerate my effectiveness as an applied epidemiologist more rapidly than entering into the workforce directly. The Fellowship provides an excellent opportunity to explore the role of the epidemiologist in public health practice, specifically the impact of data in driving action through programs and policy.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completing the Fellowship, I plan to work as an applied epidemiologist in a state or local health department, focusing on reducing health inequities in vulnerable populations. After gaining more professional experience, I may pursue a doctoral degree.

## ***Kaitlin Emrich, MPH***

**Program Area:** Environmental Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Iowa

**Host Site:** Iowa Department of Public Health

**Primary Mentor:** Ann Garvey, DVM, MPH, MA

**Secondary Mentor:** Carmily Stone, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the Fellowship because I am interested in having a career in public health practice. The mentorship opportunity will provide a unique and valuable experience and assist in the transition from academia to a career as an epidemiologist. I will be able to increase my understanding of public health practices and develop a strong skill set in epidemiology by fulfilling the core competencies. I am particularly interested in this Fellowship because it allows me to work on projects in my two interest areas, epidemiology and environmental health.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completing the Fellowship, I hope to use my experience and training to pursue work in epidemiology at a local or state public health agency.

## ***Catherine Foley, MPH, MA***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, University of Michigan

**Host Site:** Arizona Department of Health Services

**Primary Mentor:** Cara Christ, MD

**Secondary Mentor:** Shoana Anderson, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it provides a unique educational experience by bridging the gap between graduate school training and the professional world. It is an excellent opportunity for me to apply, and build upon, the epidemiologic skills I have learned thus far, under the guidance of two experienced mentors. In addition, the Fellowship allows me to gain exposure to a plethora of diverse topics and activities while also providing structure through a set of core epidemiologic competencies. This format will ensure I gain the essential skills I need for a successful career as an epidemiologist.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

Following the Fellowship, I would like to continue to work as an infectious disease epidemiologist in a public health agency. Also, I would like to eventually pursue a DrPH degree.

## ***Beth Anne Frost, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, University of Florida

**Host Site:** Tennessee Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Marion Kainer, MD, MPH, FRACP

**Secondary Mentor:** Tim Jones, MD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

This fellowship allows for a smooth and graceful transition from graduate school to a professional setting. Under the supervision of accomplished, nurturing mentors, it requires me to apply the skill sets and analytical tools learned in the classroom while exploring a variety of topics within epidemiology. This fellowship will allow me to refine my career interests while developing necessary training and a knowledge base to succeed in my future endeavors as an epidemiologist. Most importantly this opportunity will provide me with the skills to aid in the improvement of community health. It is truly a unique and rewarding opportunity for up and coming epidemiologists.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

Ultimately, I plan to obtain a PhD in epidemiology and hope to become a leader within the field of infectious disease epidemiology. I expect the experiences obtained during the fellowship will provide direction for the next step of my career.

## ***Gregory Giambrone, MS***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MS, University at Albany

**Host Site:** New York State Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Millicent Eidson, MA, DVM, DACVPM

**Secondary Mentor:** Shelley Zansky, PhD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The fellowship is an exceptional opportunity to combine the skills that I have learned in class with real life hands-on epidemiology. It allows those that are new to the public health profession the ability to be involved in a variety of opportunities that may be unavailable to them in an entry level position, as well as the privilege to be mentored by two highly trained public health professionals. This allows fellows the flexibility to learn and grow with an educational experience. I feel that by completing the established competencies for the program, I will enhance my ability to be an adaptable, well-rounded and highly trained epidemiologist.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** Once I have completed the fellowship I plan to pursue my PhD in Epidemiology while working as an infectious disease epidemiologist at the local or state level.

## ***Heidi Westermann Gortakowski, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Yale University

**Host Site:** New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

**Primary Mentor:** Colin Shepard, MD

**Secondary Mentor:** Alan Neaigus, PhD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

After completing my MPH I felt informed on and capable of epidemiologic research and field work however, with little experience outside the academic setting, I felt the CSTE fellowship provided a logical stepping stone toward my career in state and local health. The opportunity to work with experienced professionals who are as passionate about public health as I am cannot be undervalued. The mentoring and applied learning that are essential to the fellowship drew me to this position because I feel that non-fellowship, entry-level positions might not offer as much flexibility and encouragement for on the job learning. Additionally, the fellowship affords the opportunity to work within one location while networking and benefiting from the national exposure and experience of CSTE and the CDC. Finally, in addition to learning from and working with my mentors, I look forward to being part of the next generation of health professionals with my peer fellows who each bring to the fellowship different experience and skills. Working on important public health issues, HIV principle among them, right out of graduate school with some of the brightest, most devoted minds across the country was an opportunity I could not pass up.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

As I plan to work in a state or local health department on basic and applied epidemiology and surveillance, my relationship with CSTE and the CDC are unlikely to end soon.



## ***Katherine J. Harmon, MPH***

**Program Area:** Chronic Disease and Injury

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Environmental, Occupational Health, and Epidemiology, Saint Louis University

**Host Site:** North Carolina Division of Public Health

**Primary Mentor:** Sara L. Huston, PhD

**Secondary Mentor:** Scott Proescholdbell, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I pursued a position in the Fellowship program for a variety reasons, primarily of which was its sterling reputation as a launching pad for budding epidemiologists. Although my graduate program provided me with a thorough understanding of the theoretical constructs underlying the practice of public health, my education was missing some of the more applied concepts which only “on the job” training can provide. The Fellowship will complement my prior education by pairing me with two experienced, erudite mentors in the burgeoning field of chronic disease epidemiology. At the conclusion of my experience, I expect to be fully capable of excelling as an epidemiologist at the local, state, or federal level.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

I would like to continue to work in the public sector at either the local, state, or national level. Despite the prevalence of such chronic diseases as heart disease and stroke, chronic disease epidemiology has not received the recognition of infectious disease epidemiology. I would like to participate in the expansion of this field to combat the anticipated rise of chronic conditions that will accompany our aging population.

## ***Danielle Lea Henderson, MPH***

**Program Area:** Substance Abuse

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Texas A&M Health Science Center

**Host Site:** New Mexico Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Tierney Murphy, MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Jim Roeber, MSPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The CDC/CSTE fellowship will enhance my understanding of epidemiology by providing structure and assistance as I apply the analytical skills acquired in graduate school to a variety of projects aimed at reducing the burden of substance abuse. Focusing on the fellowship’s core competencies during the two-year period will equip me with the skills necessary to continue my career as an epidemiologist and work effectively in a variety of settings, understanding how complex contextual factors may influence population health and the distribution of disease.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completing the fellowship, I plan to focus on mental health services, substance abuse epidemiology and suicide prevention. My goal is to obtain a PhD in Epidemiology and ultimately to serve as a senior-level investigator for a governmental public health agency.

## ***Dyanne Herrera, MPH***

**Program Area:** Maternal and Child Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Florida

**Host Site:** CDC at the U.S.- Mexico Border Health Commission, U.S. Section, El Paso, TX

**Primary Mentor:** Jill McDonald, PhD

**Secondary Mentor:** Allison Banicki, PhD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I see the Fellowship as the ideal gateway from graduate school to working in the public health sector. It is a chance to leap from the classroom and begin applying my degree while exploring the field and its diverse experiences. The Fellowship works with health departments from the local level up and offers the opportunity to see how the different levels are integrated. Further, the opportunity to work with experienced and highly successful mentors means that the guidance I receive will be outstanding. I look forward to the next two years as a great time of personal growth and development.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completing the fellowship I plan to continue working in maternal and child health epidemiology at the state or federal level and also pursue a doctorate degree in epidemiology or international health.

## ***Jennifer Irving, MPH***

**Program Area:** Maternal and Child Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, University of Minnesota

**Host Site:** Northern Plains Tribal Epidemiology Center, Rapid City, South Dakota

**Primary Mentor:** Adeola Jaiyeola, MD, MHSc

**Secondary Mentor:** Susan Manning, MD, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CSTE fellowship because I thought it was a great opportunity for me to acquire skills I will need to serve American Indian tribes and communities as an Epidemiologist. I think the fellowship will provide the practical experience to advance my public health skill level to a more advanced applied epidemiology level. There is a great need for epidemiology in tribal communities and I thought I could help provide services if I had the opportunity to learn from more experienced epidemiologists. This fellowship experience will help me serve tribal communities more proficiently and in a greater epidemiologic capacity.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After the Fellowship, I would like to continue working as a maternal and child health epidemiologist in one of the Tribal Epidemiology Centers. Also, I would like to complete my PhD in Epidemiology.



## ***Erin H. Jones, MSPH***

**Program Area:** Environmental Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MSPH, Microbiology and Emerging Infectious Diseases, George Washington University

**Host Site:** Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

**Primary Mentor:** Clifford Mitchell, MS, MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Katherine Feldman, DVM, MPH, DACVPM



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The fellowship will allow me to hone the epidemiology and public health concepts I learned from my graduate program and to gain a perspective of public health activities at the state level. Even though the majority of my activities will be focused in Environmental Health, the core competencies required by the fellowship will ensure that I participate in activities that span a variety of the areas of public health.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

Upon completion of the fellowship, I plan to use the breadth of knowledge and experience of state level public health that I gained during the fellowship to continue to improve the public's health through a career in applied epidemiology.

## ***Miles Kirby, MS***

**Program Area:** Environmental Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MS, University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Host Site:** Wisconsin Department of Health Services

**Primary Mentor:** Henry Anderson, MD

**Secondary Mentor:** Marni Bekkedal, PhD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CSTE fellowship in order to learn first-hand what environmental health looks like at the state level, having mostly international experience up to this point. I'm particularly drawn to the emphasis the fellowship puts on developing mentor relationships, the context in which I learn best. I am also interested in how academic researchers and public health practitioners can influence and help each other, and I'm looking forward to maintaining ties with the local university during the fellowship.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

I hope to go on for a PhD in epidemiology at some point, although I may choose to work at the state or local level for a couple years before doing so. I believe that we all have a responsibility to help others in whatever way we can and it is my hope to make that my lifelong vocation, thinking globally and acting locally.

## ***Carrie Klumb, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Environmental Health, University of Minnesota

**Host Site:** Minnesota Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Joni Scheffel DVM, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Kirk Smith DVM, MS, PhD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The fellowship offers me a great opportunity to take the skills I've learned in the classroom and from working as a student at the Minnesota Department of Health and apply them to public health issues occurring at the state level. The ability to learn from two experienced mentors is part of what attracted me to the fellowship. Completion of the required competencies will prepare me to be a highly functional member of a health department following the fellowship. The structure of the fellowship will also give me the ability to cross-train and work on a variety of projects that I would not have the opportunity to work on in an entry-level position. I am confident that upon completion of the fellowship I will have a well-rounded set of skills that will help me be a successful epidemiologist.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

Upon completion of the fellowship, I hope to work as an infectious disease epidemiologist at either the state or local level. I would also like to pursue a doctorate in epidemiology after gaining more work experience.

## ***Kara Livingston, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, Yale University

**Host Site:** New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene

**Primary Mentor:** Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc

**Secondary Mentor:** Christopher M. Zimmerman, MD, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

This fellowship will provide me with an opportunity to expand my academic study and research experience into first-hand, public health practice. I look forward to pursuing work in a specific area of interest while also having the opportunity to build core competency skills and become involved in broader aspects of a city health department's work. I am confident that my experience as a fellow will help me to develop into a more effective leader in the field of epidemiology and public health.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

I plan to pursue a career in epidemiology, combining research with public health practice, at the state or federal level. I also hope to further my education by pursuing doctoral-level study in epidemiology.

## ***Kristen Metzger, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, University of Michigan

**Host Site:** Chicago Department of Public Health

**Primary Mentor:** Susan Gerber, MD

**Secondary Mentor:** Stephanie Black, MD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CDC/CSTE fellowship because it offers a unique and comprehensive experience in public health practice that will provide me with a broad epidemiologic skill set. Unlike most entry level epidemiology positions, the fellowship will allow me to participate in a variety of activities, from bioterrorism preparedness to outbreak investigation. The core competencies of the program will ensure that I am prepared to enter the workforce as an experienced epidemiologist who can make immediate contributions to the field. Additionally, my specific fellowship assignment will allow me to focus on healthcare-associated infection, an increasingly important issue that leads to significant morbidity, mortality and financial burden.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completing the CDC/CSTE fellowship I would like to secure a position working as an epidemiologist at the local, state or national level. I hope to become an expert in a field of epidemiology that is both interesting and intellectually challenging. Ideally, I see myself in a position that incorporates both epidemiology and laboratory science because the integration between these fields gives novel insight into explaining and solving public health problems.

## ***Maria Ness, MPH***

**Program Area:** Maternal and Child Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, University of Sydney, Australia

**Host Site:** Oregon Department of Human Services

**Primary Mentor:** Kenneth Rosenberg, MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Katherine Bradley, PhD, RN



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

As I was educated in Australia, I felt that the Fellowship would provide me with an opportunity to gain a thorough understanding of the US public health system, particularly at the state level. The core competencies of the Fellowship will ensure that I am exposed to a diverse range of experiences, which will help me to become a well-rounded epidemiologist. Being guided through the program by two highly qualified and experienced mentors is an opportunity unparalleled in other entry-level positions.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

I plan to work as a maternal and child health epidemiologist at a state health department, where I feel there is scope for significantly affecting population health, while still allowing for efforts to be tailored to unique communities. I have a particular interest in the maternal and child health of Native communities, which I hope to positively impact through my work at the state level. I hope to eventually augment the knowledge and skills that I bring to my work with a doctoral degree in epidemiology.

## ***Reena Oza-Frank, PhD, RD***

**Program Area:** Maternal and Child Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** PhD, Emory University

**Host Site:** Ohio Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Elizabeth Conrey, PhD, RD

**Secondary Mentor:** Rosemary Duffy, DDS, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship allows me the opportunity to combine my education and experiences and apply them to the many aspects of epidemiological practice. I look forward to learning how to apply my research training to the development, implementation, and evaluation of programs and policies that will improve public health. At the same time, the Fellowship gives me the opportunity to extend my background in chronic disease to maternal and child health. Lastly, through the competency-based model, the Fellowship will prepare me to be a skilled member of the public health workforce.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

My career goals include playing a direct role in improving public health as an epidemiologist in a public health agency. I hope to continue applying my background in nutrition, epidemiology, and public health with maternal and child health and chronic disease. I also hope to integrate research and teaching into my future public health career.

## ***Aimee Palumbo, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology,  
George Washington University

**Host Site:** Pennsylvania Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Ann Loveless, MD, MS

**Secondary Mentor:** Veronica Urdaneta, MD, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CSTE fellowship because it was the perfect opportunity to translate the skills I learned in graduate school into a hands-on learning experience at the state or local level. With this opportunity I will have the chance to conduct research, work in the field, and also gain leadership experience under the guidance of two experienced mentors. I hope that this experience will give me a better understanding of the many aspects of public health while helping me narrow my interests for my own career in epidemiology.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After the fellowship I hope to continue with a career at the state or local health department, eventually pursuing a PhD in epidemiology.

## ***Samantha Pitts, MD, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MD, University of California, San Francisco

**Host Site:** New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services

**Primary Mentor:** Christina Tan, MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Corey Robertson, MD, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The CSTE fellowship provides me with the opportunity to gain experience in the practice of epidemiology, to develop relationships with public health professionals at local, state, and federal levels, and to explore areas of interest. The fellowship gives me a rather unique opportunity to focus on my professional development while contributing to projects within the state health department.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

While my fellowship experience will inform my future career decisions, I anticipate that I will continue to work in epidemiology at the state or federal level.

## ***Emily Schiefelbein, MPH***

**Program Area:** Maternal and Child Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Michigan

**Host Site:** Texas Department of State Health Services

**Primary Mentor:** Gita G. Mirchandani, PhD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Kayan L. Lewis, PhD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose a CSTE fellowship because I feel it is the perfect way to transition from an academic environment to the professional field of public health. With the guidance of my mentors, I will learn how to apply the knowledge I acquired during school and develop new skills that are essential to working in a local or state health department. In addition to my work in MCH, I will also have the opportunity to explore several other areas of public health through completion of the core competencies. I look forward to working on projects that will have an impact on public health programs and policy in Texas. I believe this fellowship will prepare me to be a valuable contributor to the field of public health.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After the fellowship, I would like to secure a position in a public health organization at a city, state, or national level. I hope to make contributions to the area of Reproductive and Women's Health.

## ***Kristin M.S. Shaw, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology,  
University of Minnesota

**Host Site:** Minnesota Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Ruth Lynfield, MD

**Secondary Mentor:** Jane Harper, BSN, MS, CIC

**Tertiary Mentor:** Richard Danila, PhD, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CSTE fellowship because it is an incredible opportunity to gain essential, first-hand experience in applied epidemiology. The fellowship's core competencies will allow me to hone the epidemiologic, policy and communication skills that I will need to launch a successful career in public health. I was drawn to the mentorship model of the CSTE fellowship because it offers fellows the opportunity to work closely with highly knowledgeable and experienced leaders in public health. Most importantly, as a fellow I will gain valuable skills working within and among organizations to improve the health of individuals and their communities.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After the conclusion of my fellowship, I plan to continue working as an epidemiologist at the state or local level. In the future, I may pursue a doctorate in Epidemiology or a related field. With the experience I gain as a CSTE Fellow, I hope to contribute creative and effective solutions to public health issues as a practicing infectious disease epidemiologist.

## ***Rebecca Shor, MPH***

**Program Area:** Maternal and Child Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology/  
Biostatistics and International Health, Boston University

**Host Site:** Hawaii Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Don Hayes, MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Loretta Fuddy, ACSW, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

Having worked in the private/nonprofit/academic sector for the previous eight years, I chose the CSTE fellowship to return to my epidemiologic roots, to hone my data analysis skills, and to understand the internal mechanics of state health functions. I am particularly interested in using data to drive intervention and policy change. Working at the state-level will give me a better understanding of how to navigate the divide between data for research and data for action. I also chose the CSTE fellowship in order to gain experience with CDC collaborators and my peers in the field of applied epidemiology.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

Upon completion of this fellowship, I would like to work on issues related to maternal and child health on a global scale. This could be working for the federal government as a field epidemiologist or for another global health organization, such as the WHO. Eventually, with lessons learned from international maternal and child health, I would like to return to the state-level.



## ***Vanessa L. Short, PhD, MPH***

**Program Area:** Maternal and Child Health

**Highest Degree Obtained:** PhD, University of Pittsburgh

**Host Site:** Pennsylvania Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Ronald Tringali, PhD, RN

**Secondary Mentor:** Gene Weinberg, DrPH, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

While applying for post-doctorate positions, I was looking for a program which would complement my previous trainings and experiences and foster my research career in applied epidemiology. The hands-on, real-world setting of the fellowship greatly appealed to me. The support and guidance from two experienced mentors is invaluable, while the opportunity to work on numerous projects, in various subject areas keeps the experience stimulating.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completing the fellowship, I plan on starting a career as a reproductive health or maternal and child health epidemiologist at a federal or state public health entity.

## ***Monica Kukuli Sovero, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- Quarantine

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, University of California, Los Angeles

**Host Site:** CDC Quarantine and San Diego County Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Steve Waterman MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Michele Ginsberg, MD



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CSTE fellowship program because it offered a unique opportunity to get a well rounded start to my career as an epidemiologist. I was looking for a training program because I wanted to get exposed to a broad range of ways that epidemiology is applied in the public sector. I also liked how the fellowship was structured, with required competencies that will allow me to gain practical experience in applied epidemiology. I know that the breadth of practical experience and opportunities that I will gain as a CSTE fellow will help shape my career as an epidemiologist.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

I would either like to continue working as an epidemiologist in the public sector or pursue my doctoral degree in epidemiology.

## ***Nicole Spencer, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, University at Albany

**Host Site:** New York State Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Joshua K. Schaffzin, MD, PhD

**Secondary Mentor:** Rachel L. Stricof, MPH, CIC



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it will allow me to gain hands on experience in epidemiology that will supplement the skills I have learned in the classroom. The fellowship can offer me a unique experience and provide me with various learning opportunities that might not be possible in an entry level position. The fellowship combines a balance of both research and field epidemiology and will prepare me for a future career in public health. I am eager to participate in this program and am confident that I will gain a great deal of knowledge and experience.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

In the future I plan to utilize the skills I develop during this fellowship by working with infectious diseases at a state or local health department, and eventually plan to earn my doctoral degree in epidemiology.

## ***Anna Stachel, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, San Diego State University

**Host Site:** New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

**Primary Mentor:** Sharon Balter, MD, MFA

**Secondary Mentor:** Katherine Bornschlegel, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The Fellowship is a dynamic program that provides a unique opportunity to apply and hone the skills I learned in graduate school and the Peace Corps. The Fellowship promotes the achievement of several competencies including epidemiologic methods, communication, and public health policy and practice under the guidance of two highly qualified mentors which ensures a diverse and successful experience. Ultimately, I believe the Fellowship will provide me with invaluable experiences from which I can draw throughout my future public health career.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completion of the Fellowship I plan to pursue a career in epidemiology either at the state or federal level. Eventually I hope to pursue a PhD in epidemiology.

## ***Kerrie VerLee, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Hospital and Molecular Epidemiology, University of Michigan

**Host Site:** Michigan Department of Community Health

**Primary Mentor:** Melinda Wilkins, DVM, MPH, PhD

**Secondary Mentor:** Eden Wells, MD, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

The CDC/CSTE fellowship provides a valuable transition from the classroom into applied epidemiology in a very experiential way. I chose the fellowship because of the opportunities it provides to gain practical experience, develop professionally, and begin contributing at a state level. Two unique aspects of the program that were most appealing to me were the relationship with two great leaders in the public health field as mentors, along side of the invaluable experience that working at the Michigan Department of Community Health provides for continued service in the practice of public health.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

With the completion of the CDC/CSTE fellowship, I look forward to furthering public health efforts through employment at a local or state health department. I hope to contribute in a communicable disease division, with emphasis in healthcare-associated infections.

## ***Marshall P. Vogt, MPH***

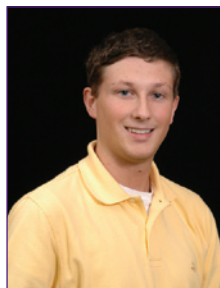
**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, University of Georgia

**Host Site:** Virginia Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** Diane Woolard, PhD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Katie Kurkjian, DVM, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose to pursue the CSTE/CDC Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it provides a way to apply the skills and knowledge I have learned during my formal public health education in a real world public health setting. The Fellowship program will allow me to hone my skills as an epidemiologist, conduct research projects in my areas of interest, and learn from experienced professionals in the field of epidemiology and state public health. I believe the Fellowship is an ideal stepping stone between my formal education and my career as a public health professional.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

Upon completion of the Fellowship, I hope to continue to work in state public health as a surveillance and investigation epidemiologist. I am also interested in pursuing a doctorate in epidemiology at a later point in time.

## ***HaeNa Waechter, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Columbia University

**Host Site:** New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

**Primary Mentor:** Sharon Balter, MD

**Secondary Mentor:** Vasudha Reddy, MPH



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

This fellowship provides me with the unique opportunity to apply the knowledge I have obtained from my graduate degree and apply it in a public health agency. While under the guidance of my mentors I will be able to increase my epidemiological skill set as well as my overall knowledge of public health through the core competencies of the program. The experiences I will have working at a local health department during the fellowship program will be truly invaluable.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After completing this fellowship, I plan on continuing my work in applied epidemiology at a local or state health department.

## ***Conschetta Wright, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- Quarantine

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Virginia Commonwealth University

**Host Site:** CDC Quarantine Station, Texas Department of State Health Services, El Paso, Texas

**Primary Mentor:** Miguel Escobedo, MD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Arthur Alvarado, MPH, RS



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

This fellowship offers the opportunity for me to develop my epidemiologic skills and knowledge in an applied setting. The training that I will receive through this fellowship exceeds the traditional entry level training. The focus on the core competencies of epidemiology and the mentorship model are appealing to me as a budding epidemiologist. The structure of this program complements my future academic and career goals. Through this program, I will learn more about my interest in infectious disease epidemiology and related health inequities.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

I plan to pursue a doctoral degree in epidemiology. Ultimately, I hope to secure an epidemiology position at the state or local level and use community based participatory research to engage communities in eliminating health disparities. I plan to research social and behavioral factors that impact health outcomes in underserved populations.

## ***Roxie Zarate, MPH***

**Program Area:** Infectious Disease- HAI

**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Florida

A & M University

**Host Site:** Washington State Department of Health

**Primary Mentor:** David Birnbaum, PhD, MPH

**Secondary Mentor:** Tony Marfin, MD, MPH, MS



### **Why you chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship:**

I chose the CSTE fellowship because it would be a chance to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to pursue my career goals. It provides a hands-on training program to broaden my experience and perspectives in epidemiology. From the opportunities and the experiences offered, I am confident completing the CSTE fellowship would provide me with a strong foundation for a career as an epidemiologist.

### **Future plans after the fellowship:**

After the completion of the fellowship, I hope to secure an epidemiology position at the state or local level. I would eventually like to return to school in pursuit of my doctorate in epidemiology or public health. My overall career goal is to produce epidemiological information to develop effective, research-driven health policies and education programs.

# CSTE

## Current Fellow Projects

Fellows participate in a variety of projects that offer an exceptional learning experience while providing valuable service to their host health agencies. Listed below are just a few examples of projects that current and former Fellows have led:

- Evaluating the impact of mandatory active surveillance for Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in New Jersey Hospitals
- Evaluating outcomes and risk factors associated with pre-pregnancy BMI and weight gain during pregnancy
- Examining the validity of post-mortem blood alcohol testing for assessing alcohol involvement in fatal motor vehicle crashes
- Investigating the role of children in influenza transmission by designing a study using the Vaccine Safety Data Unit
- Leading an investigation of a multi-state outbreak of Selenosis from consumption of a tainted nutritional supplement
- Serving as the lead epidemiologist on a new MRSA surveillance system that was mandated by the governor in Washington State
- Assessing changes in the availability of obstetrical providers performing deliveries

# CSTE

## Current Fellow Projects

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- Evaluating the surveillance of maternal behaviors prior to and during pregnancy and during the child's early infancy using the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)
- Evaluating the impact of family case management on low birth weight, very low birth weight, and infant mortality
- Serving as the state lead for a multi-state outbreak of Salmonella schwarzengrund associated with dry pet food
- Assessing the circumstances surrounding fatal fall injuries in the elderly
- Evaluating an HIV-exposure and partner notification surveillance system
- Conducting an analysis of exposure patterns after a release of methylmercury
- Evaluating a poison control center to determine if the data can predict carbon monoxide poisonings
- Conducting surveillance of bat exposures at children's camps
- Conducting surveillance of passengers arriving on international flights, goods, and other methods of conveyance to prevent the importation and spread of communicable diseases of public health significance
- Conducting tuberculosis surveillance system for migrants (immigrants, refugees, and asylees)
- Conducting a seroprevalence and behavioral study of intravenous drug users
- Utilizing the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) to determine gambling patterns among youth
- Evaluating a childhood lead poisoning surveillance system
- Examining the relationship between socioeconomic and demographic factors and type of treatment for colon cancer
- Comparing characteristics of hypertensive children from the Child Health Assessment and Monitoring Program (CHAMP) database with the health of adults
- Designing, conducting the analysis for and co-authoring two presentations at the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America - "Evaluating the Sensitivity of the Tennessee Hospital Discharge Database in Detecting Cases of MRSA Bloodstream Infection" and "Higher Rates of Diabetes and Dialysis in Blacks are Major Factors Contributing to Increased Invasive MRSA Risk."
- Creating a Neonatal Herpes Simplex Virus surveillance system
- Epidemiology of falls among older adults in New York City
- Evaluating infrared thermal detection systems as a fever screening tool

**Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists**

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