

CDC/CSTE FELLOWS

CLASS OF 2005



**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 preparation for advanced training in 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)

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 demonstrate acquired core competencies by participating in prescribed activities.



Jeffrey Bethel

Place of Birth: La Jolla, CA

Highest Degree Obtained: PhD, Epidemiology, University of California, Davis

Placement: CDC Division of Global Migration & Quarantine, San Diego Quarantine Station and San Diego County Office of Public Health

Subject Area: Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Stephen Waterman, MD, MPH;
Secondary: Michele Ginsberg, MD

Future plans after the fellowship: After the fellowship, I plan to work as an infectious disease epidemiologist for a local, state or federal public health agency. Specifically, I would like to work for an agency with an emphasis in border health and/or immigrant health.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship offered me an excellent opportunity to enhance my applied epidemiological skills needed for a successful career in public health. Specifically, this fellowship will build upon my doctorate in epidemiology by providing me firsthand experience in public health policy and practice ranging from surveillance system design and assessment to outbreak investigation. Also, I am uniquely positioned at the CDC Division of Global Migration & Quarantine, San Diego Quarantine Station and the San Diego County Border Health Department to gain valuable insight into cross-border collaboration with Mexico regarding the investigation of emerging infections and bioterrorism preparedness. The CSTE fellowship is an ideal match for my interests and goals.



Margaret H. Blabey

Place of Birth: Tokyo, Japan (hometown is Alexandria, VA)

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, International Health and Development, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine

Placement: Alaska Division of Public Health

Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Bradford Gessner, MD, MPH;
Secondary: Janine Schoellhorn, MS, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: I hope to continue to do epidemiological research at the state, national, or international level, with the primary goal of providing high quality information to programs that work to reduce health disparities. I am also considering pursuing a doctoral level degree, either in epidemiology or a closely related field.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CSTE fellowship provided me with the perfect opportunity to gain some initial experience in the field of applied epidemiology, which was exactly what I was looking for as I searched for a job after earning my degree. As a fellow, I have the ability to get involved in a variety of projects within the Maternal and Child Health umbrella, without the restrictions that come from being funded for one particular project. The mentor model also ensures that experienced epidemiologists are available to provide advice and guidance whenever needed. Finally, I was impressed with the list of core competencies and the emphasis on achieving as wide a range of skills as possible during two years.

**Catherine M. Brown****Place of Birth:** Manhasset, NY**Highest Degree Obtained:** DVM, University of Minnesota; MSc, Wild Animal Health, Royal Veterinary College, University of London; MPH, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Boston University**Placement:** NY State Department of Health,**Subject Area:** Infectious Disease Epidemiology**Mentors:** Primary: Millicent Eidson, MA, DVM, DACVPM

Secondary: Barbara Wallace, MD, MSPH Secondary: Perry Smith, MD

Future plans after the fellowship: My goal after the Fellowship is to continue working in the public health field at either the State or the Federal level. It is essential to me that I be in a position that enables me to combine my epidemiologic training and veterinary expertise.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: In many respects, the veterinary field remains under-recognized for the substantial contribution it can make to the practice of public health. It is often difficult for established veterinary professionals to find opportunities to become involved. As a veterinarian with more than a decade of experience in clinical practice, most of it with wildlife, I was looking for a way to utilize the professional skills I already possessed while simultaneously gaining work experience in the public health field. The CSTE Fellowship represented a unique way to obtain hands-on, practical training with experienced mentors in a position where my clinical knowledge and experience would be respected by and useful to the agency I was placed with.

**Ashley C. Chin****Place of Birth:** Tuscaloosa, AL**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Post Certified PhD Candidate, Epidemiology, Tulane University**Placement:** Louisiana Office of Public Health**Subject Area:** Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology**Mentors:** Primary: Tri Tran, MD, MPH;

Secondary: Joan Wightkin, DrPH

Future plans after the fellowship: After completing this fellowship I plan to establish a career as a senior maternal and child health epidemiologist with a local or state office of public health. I would also like to obtain a faculty position at a school of public health. These two venues will allow me to serve as an applied epidemiologist as well as impact future MCH epidemiologists. Finally, I plan to become involved in the creation of public health policy, through committee membership, research or as an expert consultant in maternal and child health issues.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE fellowship because it will allow me to take what I have learned in the classroom and use it in an applied setting. This fellowship will complement my academic work by giving me an opportunity to obtain hands on training in surveillance, survey design and implementation, program design, evaluation, and translation of research findings into public health policy.



Erica Cofield

Place of Birth: San Diego, CA

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Drexel University

Placement: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Bill Letson, MD, MS, FAAP;
Secondary: Sue Ricketts, PhD, MA

Future plans after the fellowship: I have a strong interest in health disparities as well as health issues that affect children. Therefore, I would like to pursue a PhD in Epidemiology -particularly in the fields of chronic disease or infectious disease- with the intent of investigating environmental, behavioral, and social factors that affect the health of minorities and children. I would also like to focus on disease surveillance activities and other research opportunities, with the possibility of conducting these activities in a public or private research institute.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose this fellowship because I felt it was important to put all of what I learned in my MPH program to practical use in the real world. State and local health agencies are at the forefront of protecting the health of the public. This fellowship allows me to see firsthand what is going on in the field of public health and what the health department's role is in improving the public's health. This fellowship ultimately allows me to expand my knowledge, in epidemiological methods, communication, and public health practice, core competencies that are crucial as a public health professional.



Marina Counter

Place of Birth: Sunset Beach, CA

Degrees: MPH, Epidemiology/Biostatistics, Oregon Health and Science University, MS Clinical Psychology, Eastern Washington University

Placement: CDC Seattle Quarantine Station, Division of Global Migration and Quarantine and Washington State Department of Health

Subject Area: Infectious Diseases, Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Peter Houck, MD;
Secondary: Steven Helgersen, MD, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: After the fellowship, I hope to be a 'shoe leather' epidemiologist at either the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine or at a local health department. Infectious diseases, emergency response and statistical analysis are the areas of epidemiology that I find most fascinating.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I applied for the CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it offered a unique opportunity to acquire a foundation of core skills through a broad range of practical experiences. To be able to work in an unusual public health setting such as a CDC quarantine station under the guidance of experienced mentors is a rare privilege. This two year fellowship will create a bridge between my academic knowledge and the practice of epidemiology. I cannot imagine a better way to gain the skills and experiences necessary for a career as a public health epidemiologist.



Christina Felsen

Place of Birth: Rochester, NY

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Tulane University

Placement: CDC Miami Quarantine Station and Miami-Dade County Health Department

Subject Area: Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Kiren Mitruka MD, MPH;
Secondary: Anthony Solages, MD

Future plans after the fellowship: My future goals involve seeking a career in infectious disease field epidemiology, at the state or federal level. Although there are many interests within this field I would like to pursue, I am eager to seek employment that deals with vector-borne diseases and/or zoonoses. Additionally, I am also interested in seeking placement at one of the newly established quarantine stations after the completion of my fellowship.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE fellowship program to allow myself the opportunity to explore the varied aspects of infectious disease epidemiology in a fast-paced and interesting real world setting. Due to the many different components that are necessary to complete the fellowship requirements, I am hoping to gain useful experience in many different areas of applied epidemiology in an effort to narrow my future career goals.



David Goodman

Place of Birth: Durham, NC

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

Placement: Florida Department of Health

Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Bill Sappenfield, MD, MPH;
Secondary: Annette Phelps, ARNP, MSN

Future plans after the fellowship: I plan to continue on with a career in public health epidemiology at the state level. It is my hope that in the future, my work will build bridges between private and public entities, including universities and nonprofits, boosting and sustaining the impact of this work. In addition, I am eager for the day when I will be able to mentor budding public health epidemiologists.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE fellowship because it offers a great opportunity to learn how to effectively operate in the US public health system, situated between the local and national level, and under the guidance of experienced mentors. The focus on applied epidemiology and public health practice is very appealing to me, and I know this training will translate into successes in my future work. Finally, I am excited about the large diversity of experiences that CSTE emphasizes for their fellows, not only allowing me to focus on maternal and child health, but also to explore other areas where the state agency may need support.



Kathryn J. Hughes

Place of Birth: Plymouth, MA

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Chronic Disease Epidemiology, Yale School of Public Health

Placement: Washington State Department of Health

Subject Area: Chronic Disease Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Juliet VanEenwyk, PhD, MS;
Secondary: Amira El-Bastawissi, PhD, MBCHB

Future plans after the fellowship: In the long term, I plan to continue to work at the state level as an epidemiologist with a focus on chronic diseases, particularly cancer. I also plan to return to graduate school for a PhD in Epidemiology.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: One of my attractions to the CSTE fellowship program was its offering of practical, hands-on experience in epidemiology. The structure of the program, such that a series of competencies are fulfilled under the supervision of two experienced mentors, was also very appealing as it promotes high quality training. Additionally, I was drawn to aspects of working at the state level such as the collaborative nature of projects and the emphasis on using data to drive decision-making. At the WA State Department of Health, I will be able to combine my perspectives as an epidemiologist with those of professionals from a wide range of disciplines to translate scientific findings into programs and policies that will directly benefit the health of the public.



Rachel H. Jervis

Place of Birth: Portland, ME

Degrees Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Tufts University School of Medicine

Placement: CDC San Francisco Quarantine Station and California Department of Health Services

Subject Area: Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary Mentor: Anthony A. Marfin, MD, MPH, MS;
Secondary Mentor: Jennifer Flood, MD, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: I plan to use the skills and confidence gained during the fellowship to work as an infectious disease epidemiologist at a state health department, before eventually returning to the academic world to obtain a PhD in Infectious Disease Epidemiology or Social Epidemiology. My long term goal is to work as an epidemiologist at the state or federal level, focusing primarily on infectious disease epidemiology and/or international health.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: My graduate studies in public health provided me with a strong background in public health and epidemiologic skills. However, my studies left little time to experience the day-to-day work of an epidemiologist. I consider the fellowship to be an opportunity to apply my MPH to the "real world" of public health with the support and continuing education inherent of a fellowship. Additionally, upon completion of the fellowship, I will be prepared to work more independently as an epidemiologist at the state or federal level.



Laurin J. Kasehagen

Place of Birth: El Paso, TX

Highest Degree Obtained: PhD, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Case Western Reserve University

Placement: Oregon Department of Human Services

Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Kenneth D. Rosenberg, MD, MPH;
Secondary: James A. Gaudino, MD, MS, MPH, FACPM

Future plans after the fellowship: Upon completion of the CSTE/CDC Applied Epidemiology Fellowship Program, I would like to be an epidemiologist at a state or federal agency and work in a program that combines my interests in maternal-child health and infectious diseases. I would also like to teach applied epidemiology or public health courses as an adjunct in a graduate or undergraduate public health program.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE/CDC Fellowship Program because it offers practical, hands-on experience with mentors who have expertise in the application of epidemiologic methods in a public health setting. I see the program as an opportunity to combine the education and experience that I have in epidemiology, anthropology, and law and to apply this training to public health issues of women and children. The Fellowship Program will also provide me with opportunities to develop new skills, such as the design and evaluation of a surveillance system and communicating epidemiologic findings to the lay public. The training in the core competency areas within a maternal-child health program setting will help round out my interests in infectious diseases in women and children and provide me with an opportunity to transition from research in an academic setting to a career in epidemiologic practice at the state or federal level.



Kristen M. Moore

Place of Birth: Port Jefferson, NY

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services

Placement: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Subject Area: Infectious Disease Epidemiology

Mentors: Primary: Sharon Balter, MD;
Secondary: Heather Hanson, MPH

Future plans after the fellowship: Once I've completed my fellowship training, I plan to continue working in Infectious Disease Epidemiology at the state or regional level. I also plan on continuing my academic career by pursuing a PhD in Epidemiology. My long-term career goal is to monitor infectious diseases and develop approaches to keep communities safe from emerging pathogens.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: There is no better way of learning the field of epidemiology than being immersed in it every day and in every capacity. I chose the CSTE fellowship program because it provided me with a unique opportunity to get hands-on training in epidemiology in one of the most exciting places in the country. Through this fellowship, I am not only able to focus on epidemiology, but also learn from public health professionals through mentoring opportunities.

**Jeffrey L. Pollet****Place of Birth:** Detroit, MI**Highest Degree Obtained:** MD, Pediatrics, Wayne State University/Children's Hospital of Michigan; MPH, International Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health**Placement:** Michigan Department of Community Health**Subject Area:** Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities Epidemiology**Mentors:** Primary: Violanda Grigorescu, MD, MSPH;
Secondary: Corinne Miller, PhD, DDS

Future plans after the fellowship: My goal is to continue to work as an epidemiologist in the area of children's health. I hope to obtain a position that allows me to combine practical research with field work and an opportunity to teach public health courses at the university level.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I am a physician who is making a transition from primary care pediatrics into the field of public health. I am excited to work with my mentor, also a physician, in the area of Maternal and Child Health. Through this fellowship and my mentor's assistance I expect to have an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills that I have acquired during my MPH training and years as a pediatrician.

**Caroline C. Stampfel****Place of Birth:** Astoria, NY**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Environmental Health Science, Yale University**Placement:** Virginia State Department of Health**Subject Area:** Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology**Mentors:** Primary: Derek A. Chapman, PhD;
Secondary: Janice M. Hicks, PhD

Future plans after the fellowship: In the long term I hope to work as a Maternal and Child Health Epidemiologist at the state level. I am also considering a PhD in epidemiology to facilitate my pursuit of further research in this field.

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it provides an excellent opportunity to gain experience in a state health department while I consider pursuing additional education in the field. The fellowship will help me to cultivate the skill set needed for a career in state-level public health while working with a mentor who is experienced in the practical applications of maternal and child health epidemiology.

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 characterize 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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