

Easy as 1-2-3: Finding a Public Health Internship

By Tom Mackie

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Public health internships offer an opportunity to explore your interests, build skills and expand your knowledge base. The internship allows you to apply what you are learning in the classroom to the complex realities of the real world. Here are three steps to help you find a public health internship.

1. Identify the factors most important in your internship search

The Work Take a look at the diversity of public health opportunities, and then narrow these down to those areas you think are the best fit given your interests, skills, and talents.

The Money Identify the income that you need to earn during your internship.

The Location Identify the degree to which is it important for you to be in a certain location, such as close to home, accessible to public transport or in the city/town where you ultimately want to work.

Time Consider how much time you have to dedicate to the internship placement.

Other internship variables that might be of interest to you include workplace diversity, organizational mission or the specific client population served. Write these criteria down and note their relative importance before moving to the next step.

2. Conduct an internship search that is an equal portion of proactive and reactive

Proactive Search Contact potential internship sites. Rely heavily on professional and social networking. Speak with faculty, colleagues, family friends and former co-workers about your search. Create a powerful elevator speech, or 2-minute talk, that clearly articulates your passion for your field of interest. Take advantage of APHA's student resources, and of the alumni and professional networks available through your school (e.g., alumni groups on Linked-in).

Reactive Search Respond to posted internship opportunities. Use your school's career services office and online databases.

With a concerted effort you will find an internship that is a first step toward a fulfilling career

3. Once you identify internship opportunities, research the agency on-line and consult your networks. Once you understand the internship site, prepare a clear, concise resume and cover letter with the help of your career services office. Also, find out if this office offers mock interviews, which are a great way to get feedback to improve your professional presentation.



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Lessons Learned in Africa

By Erin Browne, MPH
Tufts University

I graduated in 2006 with a Master of Public Health from Tufts University. I knew I wanted to do HIV work, and I knew I wanted to spend time in Africa. After graduating, I felt I finally had the knowledge to make a difference. And as much as I would like to believe I did, the knowledge I gained was far greater than anything I gave back.



I first worked in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, doing HIV education at a small school. It quickly became clear that I did not know my audience. It was hard to explain how the virus works in the body when there was no understanding of the immune system, or even of the female reproductive system. I had not incorporated the most important aspect of health communication: know your audience and work with them to construct a message.

After a couple of months I moved to Nairobi, Kenya. Nairobi is much more westernized than Dar Es Salaam, but the poverty there is overwhelming. I worked in a small clinic on the edge of the slums; mostly I was an extra set of hands. The medical staff not only treated disease, but also did its best at prevention; there just weren't enough resources for both. Although I was able to do things like help write a proposal for funding to start an HIV testing center, I was at a great loss when it came to knowing which prevention tactics to teach.

My work in Africa was a humbling experience that enabled me to apply the concepts I learned during my MPH studies. One of the most important things I learned from the experience was how critical it is to effect change on multiple levels: personal, communal, societal, institutional and governmental. While working to prevent HIV, I realized that people were more concerned with daily necessities, like food and clean water. People do not have the luxury of worrying about condom use if they cannot eat. To see real change you first have to battle poverty. To battle poverty you must enlist the help of the government. Enlisting the help of the government means battling corruption. This was my greatest lesson: to do public health work in third-world countries public health workers must fight poverty!

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My Health, My Choice!



By Helena Chapman, MPH
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In July 2009, four medical students at the Iberoamerican University in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, celebrated the third annual *Health Day!* by designing and delivering an interactive health seminar to 36 adolescents enrolled in the university summer program “Veranitos 2009.” Presenters educated students about two acute disease epidemics that occurred in the late Spring and Summer months: Rotavirus and Influenza.

Focusing on preventive healthcare, teaching methods included a disease orientation, including mode of transmission, clinical presentation and available treatment, but focused primarily on prevention and control methods toward improved hygiene. Following these formal seminars, presenters divided the adolescents into same-gender groups for more tailored discussions on selected themes or related health topics.

This program complemented previous *Health Day!* seminars and activities, such as basic first aid (2007) and healthy choices for a quality lifestyle (2008), emphasizing that youth are leaders within their families and communities. Teaching healthy habits and healthy life skills may positively influence their personal development and confidence in their ability to prevent disease and promote health and wellbeing.

How to Become a Committee Chair for Student Assembly!

By Cameron Culver, UT School of Medicine

The purpose of the Nominations Committee is to ensure that the APHA Student Assembly (APHA-SA) continues to operate under responsible and strong leadership in order to maintain the integrity and health of the organization. The Nominations Committee solicits, receives, and reviews applications for APHA-SA Committee Chair positions and makes recommendations to the APHA-SA Executive Board for these positions. The Nominations Committee works in conjunction with the Website Sub-Committee to keep the APHA-SA membership informed about election news and encouraging their involvement. In addition, the Nominations Committee also provides information about and promotes APHA-SA members for leadership and award opportunities.

Currently, the Nominations Committee is completing a review of applications for the Chair/Co-Chair positions of Advancement, Section Liaison, Diversity, Membership, Mentoring, Opportunities and Website Committees, and although the deadline for these Committees has passed, please keep an eye out for additional committee chair positions opening in the future. These typically are announced in the Opportunities email sent out by the Student Assembly, with accompanying instructions on how to apply.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about how to get involved, please contact Nominations@aphastudents.org.



**The Student
Assembly is
recruiting for
12 positions.
We want
YOU!**

Can FIU Become the First Smoke-Free Campus in Florida?

By Muni Rubens, Florida International University, Miami

Florida International University (FIU) at Miami could become the first four-year college in Florida to completely ban smoking. According to the American Lung Association, 172 U.S. colleges and universities banned tobacco. In the state of Florida, Edison State Junior College has declared a complete ban and three other universities have been credited for a partial ban on smoking.

Florida International University Task Force (UTF), a committee set-up to improve campus health, started the smoke-free campaign this fall and is working on implementing anti-smoking measures. The campaign includes distribution of educational materials, awareness through media and educational programs for students, faculty and staff, as well as smoking cessation counseling and treatment. These programs will be implemented in partnership with various student organizations, the Robert Stempel College of Public Health, University Health Services and the College of Medicine.

The Task Force plans to announce the campus smoke-free policy by early next year. Temporary designated smoking areas will allow for the gradual ban and give smokers time for treatment and rehabilitation. According to UTF, if everything goes as scheduled, the whole-campus smoke-free policy will be announced on May 3, 2010, the first day of the summer semester.

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Fellowships in Tobacco Control Research

Academic Background Required: Doctorate/Equivalent Degree

The purpose of the fellowship is to attract individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds in medical, biological, social, behavioral, and policy sciences to develop a new generation of academic leaders in tobacco control. Upon completion of training, fellows will be well-positioned to be active participants in crucial policy debates about the future development and implementation of tobacco control interventions.

The fellowship supports **two-years of postdoctoral training** in tobacco related research. Postdoctoral fellows will have exposure to diverse training including both didactic coursework and individualized mentoring to build a personalized research program. Fellows have come from an array of disciplines, including medicine, public health, nursing, economics, political science, law, sociology, psychology, and cell biology.

We offer individual mentorship with UCSF faculty along with courses in tobacco specific topics, health policy, cancer control and prevention, grant and scientific writing skills, career development, interdisciplinary research, and biostatistics.

Postdoctoral trainees will receive an annual salary commensurate with their experience, approximately \$37,000-\$51,000, according to the NIH stipend scale. Applicants may learn more about the Center, the fellowship program, and review the list of UCSF faculty and their research interests at our website, tobacco.ucsf.edu.

Applications are due January 27, 2010, for fellowships beginning July 1, 2010.

Please direct requests for information and applications to:

Fellowship Assistant
Phone: 415-476-0140
Fax: 415-514-9345
Tobacco.fellowship@ucsf.edu

About Our Organization!

The American Public Health Association Student Assembly is the nation's largest student-led organization dedicated to furthering the development of the next generation of professionals in public health and health-related disciplines. APHA-SA represents and serves students by connecting people who are interested in working together on public health and student-related issues.

NEWS & VIEWS

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Check us out on the web!
[www.apha.org/membergroups/
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American Public Health Association
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