CDC/CSTE FELLOWS
The Future of Applied Epidemiology

CLASS
OF 2013

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.
The CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship was created in 2003 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), the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), and the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH), established the two-year Fellowship program to give recent graduates from schools of public health rigorous preparation and advanced training for successful careers as state or local applied epidemiologists.

**Training and Host Health Agency**
Closely designed after the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) program and using a mentorship model, the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship offers a unique opportunity for graduates to acquire and develop epidemiologic skills during a high quality, on-the-job training program in public health practice. Host health agencies have demonstrated capacity to provide an Applied Epidemiology Fellow with technical training, research opportunities, and practical experience in the application of epidemiologic methods at the state and local level.

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

**Program Areas Include:**
- Chronic Diseases
- Environmental Health
- Infectious Diseases
- Injury
- Maternal and Child Health
- Occupational Health
- Oral Health
- Substance Abuse

**Eligibility**
Applicants are required to have the following:

- An MPH, MSPH, MS in epidemiology, or an equivalent degree or advanced degree in a health related field (i.e. PhD in epidemiology, biostatistics, or other public health field; an MD degree; or a DVM degree).
- Completed at least three advanced graduate-level epidemiology courses and one graduate level biostatistics course.
- Desire to pursue a long-term career at the state or local level.
- United States citizenship.

**Application Process**
All applications that meet minimum requirements are formally evaluated by a review committee. The review committee includes representatives from CDC staff, ASPPH affiliates, and persons with past or current experience working as an epidemiologist in a state or local health department. Criteria for evaluating the applications comprise the following:

- Academic achievement
- Writing skills
- Letters of Recommendation / transcripts
- Work/research experience
- Career goals
- Analytic skills
Anna Kruse Austin, MPH

Subject Area: Injury
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Chronic Disease Epidemiology, Yale School of Public Health
Host Site: North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health
Primary Mentor: Kevin Ryan, MD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Scott Proescholdbell, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: The CSTE Fellowship is the ideal bridge from graduate studies in public health to a career as an applied epidemiologist. Overall, the Fellowship will provide me with hands-on training in epidemiological and surveillance methods that will supplement and enhance what I have learned through my graduate studies and experiences. Additionally, under the mentorship model, I believe I will thrive and gain invaluable knowledge and skills that will further my career and prepare me for work in numerous settings.

Future plans after the Fellowship: I hope to pursue a career in applied epidemiology, either focusing on injury prevention or maternal and child health, at the state level.

Cara Bergo, MPH

Program Area: Maternal and Child Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Emory University
Host Site: Louisiana Office of Public Health
Primary Mentor: Lyn Kieltyka, PhD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Raoult Ratard, MD, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: As I approached graduation from the Rollins School of Public Health, I looked for an opportunity to apply the epidemiology skills I learned in my degree program to a community in need at the state level. The CSTE Fellowship provides an invaluable combination of high level mentorship and hands-on experience to help me build my foundation for my future as a public health professional. As a Fellow, I am able to pursue my interest in maternal and child health while also gaining experience in other concentrations such as chronic and infectious disease epidemiology. The CSTE Fellowship is an excellent foundation for my public health career because it provides continued education as well as practical knowledge of a state health department.

Future plans after the Fellowship: Following completion of the CSTE Fellowship, I hope to pursue a PhD in epidemiology with a focus in maternal and child health to further my education and continue my work in public health.
**Jasmine Carver, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, Global Health, Yale School of Public Health  
**Host Site:** County of Marin Health and Human Services  
**Primary Mentor:** Matthew Willis, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Rochelle Ereman, MS, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I pursued the CDC/CSTE Fellowship to continue my epidemiology training while contributing to a local public health department. With its set of core competencies, the program facilitates gaining experience in diverse aspects of applied epidemiology. My accomplished mentors will further enhance the valuable education that the Fellowship provides. Placement in a county health department will allow me to work across several divisions and broaden my perspective of public health action. In addition to preparing myself to be an effective public health professional, I hope to be an asset to the department throughout the duration of the Fellowship.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** After the Fellowship, I hope to work as an epidemiologist focusing on the health of disadvantaged populations in a domestic or global health institution.

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**Shawna Feinman, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Environmental Health - Waterborne  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Environmental Health, Emory University  
**Host Site:** Indiana State Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Jennifer House, DVM, MPH, DACVPM  
**Secondary Mentor:** Angela Cierzniewski, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** The Fellowship provides an unparalleled opportunity to apply skills and knowledge gained during my MPH coursework to actual state projects. Under the guidance of outstanding mentors, I will develop experience in current areas of interest while building essential analytical and communication skills. During the Fellowship, I will pursue opportunities to collaborate and network with professionals, peers, and leading colleagues because the program encourages professional development. As such, the Fellowship is an excellent bridge from academia to a public health career.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** After the CSTE Fellowship, I plan to continue to work in domestic water at the local, state, or federal level.
Amanda Feldpausch, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Global Epidemiology, Emory University
Host Site: Georgia Department of Public Health, Acute Disease Epidemiology Section
Primary Mentor: Cherie Drenzek, DVM, MS
Secondary Mentor: Julie Gabel, DVM, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: The CSTE Fellowship is an amazing opportunity to grow within the field of applied epidemiology and gain a broad range of unique skills and experiences within a host agency. The core competencies achieved within the two year assignment will be integral to my future as a successful epidemiologist. Additionally, I value the opportunity to serve a specific community at the state/local level. As a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, I become invested in communities that I work with and the CSTE Fellowship provides a compelling opportunity to commit my skills and focus to the people in a community I call “home.”

Future plans after the Fellowship: At the end of my Fellowship, I hope to stay in Georgia at the state or local level, continuing projects and building upon the work done during my time as a CSTE Fellow.

Jena Fellenzer, MPH
Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, SUNY Upstate Medical University
Host Site: Oregon Public Health Division
Primary Mentor: Ken Rosenberg, MD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Bruce Gutelius, MD, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose the CSTE Fellowship because I believe it is the next step to best help me reach my career goals. The Fellowship will build on my experiences and skills gained through my time as a graduate student by enhancing my knowledge in data collection and data analysis. I also believe the Fellowship will provide me with an array of new experiences in working full time in a local or state health agency. The opportunity to work in a local or state health care setting in a field for which I already hold familiarity and passion will be invaluable to my future career goals of working with under-served populations as an epidemiologist in the field of maternal and child health.

Future plans after the Fellowship: This Fellowship is a springboard to becoming a level two epidemiologist for the ultimate goal of working my way to a senior epidemiologist position at a local or state health department.
**Lauren Finn, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Drexel University  
**Host Site:** Philadelphia Department of Public Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Ami Patel, PhD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Dana Perella, MSPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it offers a unique opportunity to gain experience in a wide range of epidemiologic methods, including outbreak investigations, surveillance techniques, and program evaluation, while also receiving invaluable mentoring from individuals already well-established in the field. The Fellowship thus serves as the ideal bridge from graduate school into a career in infectious disease epidemiology at a state or local health department. I believe that the opportunities afforded by the CSTE Fellowship will give me the skills and experience that I need to pursue a successful career in public health.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** Following completion of the Fellowship, I hope to pursue a career in infectious disease epidemiology at the state or local level.

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**Stephanie Gretsch, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Environmental Health - Waterborne  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Emory University  
**Host Site:** Minnesota Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Kirk Smith, DVM, MS, PhD  
**Secondary Mentor:** Trisha Robinson, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I was interested in the CSTE Fellowship because of the opportunity it presented to gain hands-on public health experience in an environment supportive of my professional development. The Fellowship has enough structure to ensure I will have the chance to apply the wide range of epidemiological skills I learned while completing my MPH, while at the same time, has the flexibility to allow me to pursue projects tailored to my interests. The experience I gain while completing the Fellowship along with the guidance of experienced mentors will provide me with a solid foundation to begin my career in public health.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** Upon completion of the Fellowship, I hope to continue to work in water, sanitation, and hygiene epidemiology at the state or federal level.
Latoya Hill, MPH
Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology and Maternal and Child Health, University of South Florida
Host Site: Virginia Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Derek Chapman, PhD
Secondary Mentor: Christopher Hill, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose the CSTE Fellowship because it provides practical epidemiologic training in an environment favorable for the advancement of my professional and personal development. It is the perfect opportunity to bridge the gap between theory and public health practice by applying the concepts and skills that I learned in the classroom to real world situations. Also, the core competencies and the guidance of experienced mentors are valuable resources to support me in exploring my professional goals, while giving me a chance to work at a state health department. Being a Fellow will allow me to build my confidence as a skilled epidemiologist and prepare me for my future goal of becoming a state MCH Epidemiologist.

Future plans after the Fellowship: Beyond the Fellowship, I intend to work at a public health agency using epidemiological data to improve the health and well-being of women and children. I will also pursue a doctoral degree in epidemiology to extend my advancement through continued studies, research, and relationship building with school-based and community organizations.

Sam Horwich-Scholefield, MPH
Program Area: Infectious Diseases – HAI
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, CUNY School of Public Health
Host Site: California State Department of Public Health
Primary Mentor: Kavita Trivedi, MD
Secondary Mentor: Neely Kazerouni, DrPH, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I applied to the CSTE Fellowship because it is one of the best opportunities available for recently graduated epidemiologists intent on practicing at the state or municipal level. I believe the program’s focus on the core concepts of epidemiological methods, communication, and public health practice is essential to developing a strong foundation in the field. By working alongside public health professionals with years of experience, the CDC/CSTE program will help prepare me to contribute meaningfully to local or state public health departments.

Future plans after the Fellowship: At the conclusion of the Fellowship, I intend to pursue a career in infectious disease epidemiology at the local, state, or regional levels.
Hannah Jary, MPH
Subject Area: Substance Abuse
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, General Epidemiology, University of Michigan
Host Site: Michigan Department of Community Health
Primary Mentor: Dave Wade, PhD
Secondary Mentor: Sarah Lyon-Calvo, MA, MS

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: This Fellowship provides the ideal transition between graduate school and the workforce by offering on-the-job training at a state health department and fostering my professional development. The emphasis on mentorship with experienced epidemiologists and the development of a wide range of skills provide optimal preparation for my career in governmental epidemiology. These unique features of the CSTE Fellowship will ultimately help me become a more confident, experienced and successful epidemiologist.

Future plans after the Fellowship: After the Fellowship, I plan to continue my career as an epidemiologist at the local, state, or federal level.

Sarah Koske, DVM
Subject Area: Environmental Health – Waterborne
Highest Degree Obtained: Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin - Madison
Host Site: Wisconsin Division of Public Health
Primary Mentor: Rachel Klos, DVM, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Henry Anderson, MD

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose this Fellowship in order to increase the breadth and depth of my public health training under the guidance of a mentor and facilitate the transition from the classroom to career epidemiologist.

Future plans after the Fellowship: After completion, I plan to continue my career as an infectious disease epidemiologist in human or animal health.
**Natalie Kratz, MPH**  
**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Boston University  
**Host Site:** New Jersey Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Barbara Montana, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Christina Tan, MD, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I chose the CSTE Fellowship because it is well suited for the transition from the classroom to real-world application of epidemiology at the state level. The mentorship enables me to develop as an epidemiologist under the guidance of two highly skilled and experienced public health professionals. The Fellowship focuses on continued learning and development while making valuable contributions to state public health interests, which are desirable qualities as I begin my career in public health.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** After completion of the Fellowship, I plan to continue working in infectious disease epidemiology at the state level or pursue a doctorate.

**Bonnie Lam, MPH**  
**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Florida  
**Host Site:** Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
**Primary Mentor:** Stephen Sears, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Amy Robbins, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I chose to pursue the CSTE Fellowship because it offered a unique opportunity to secure the competencies required of a successful epidemiologist, through practice in a supportive environment of accomplished mentors. I was also drawn to the prospect of on-the-ground work that builds upon my current training, while being a contributing member of my host site and the greater epidemiologic workforce. I see that the CSTE Fellowship fuels an enduring passion for public health and epidemiology, evidenced by the achievements of the program’s alumni; I look forward to joining this network and developing the skills to be a future leader in this field.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** After the Fellowship, my goal is to pursue a career at the state or local level in infectious disease epidemiology. Eventually, I also hope to further my knowledge and training through an epidemiology doctoral program.
Simona G. Lang, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Emory University
Host Site: Connecticut Department of Public Health
Primary Mentor: Mark Lobato, MD
Secondary Mentor: Lynn Sosa, MD

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I selected this Fellowship because it offers an ideal entryway from academia into the practice of applied epidemiology at the state level, not only through competency-based training but also by fostering professional development through skilled mentorship. My professional public health experience thus far had been primarily focused in the nonprofit and research spheres, so I believed it was important to pursue an opportunity that facilitated my transition to the state/local context and allowed me to gain hands-on experience with diverse public health practice, including outbreak investigation, surveillance, and program evaluation. I am looking forward to collaborating with the infectious disease team on TB and STD projects in Connecticut and improving the health of residents in the state and beyond.

Future plans after the Fellowship: I view my participation in the Fellowship as a first step in a long-term career in state-level public health. After the Fellowship, I hope to continue working as an infectious disease epidemiologist in a state health department and to cultivate partnerships for the improvement of public health and elimination of health disparities in the communities I serve.

Kerry Morrison, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Johns Hopkins University
Host Site: Virginia Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Diane Woolard, PhD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Angela Myrick-West, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose this Fellowship because it is an ideal transition from academia to the professional world of public health and offers several unique opportunities that I would not have received elsewhere. Chief among them is the opportunity to gain hands-on experience across a wide range of the roles and responsibilities of an epidemiologist by working to address real, complex public health issues in a mentoring environment that fosters both professional and personal development. This Fellowship will also train me in important aspects of epidemiology, such as surveillance and outbreak investigation, which will be essential if I am to have a successful career. I am also drawn to being an active participant in emergency preparedness and response efforts. I believe that through this Fellowship I will gain invaluable experience in a diverse set of competencies that will prepare me for a lifetime of public health service as an epidemiologist.

Future plans after the Fellowship: I plan to continue working in disease surveillance and investigation at the state or local level.
Sierra Mullen, MPH

Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Tulane University
Host Site: Ohio Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Elizabeth Conrey, PhD, RD
Secondary Mentor: Amy Davis, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose the CSTE Fellowship because it offers a unique learning environment to strengthen the epidemiological skills acquired throughout my graduate program within an applied public health setting. I was immediately attracted to the Fellowship’s strong mentorship component, professional development opportunities, and the commitment to building successful careers of future public health leaders through the completion of the Fellowship’s core competencies. This Fellowship will be invaluable as I experience firsthand “data to action” and the function of an epidemiologist at the state and local level with the support and guidance from highly skilled mentors and departmental staff.

Future plans after the Fellowship: After the Fellowship, I plan to continue working as an epidemiologist at the state level and, after some time, pursue my PhD.

Meaghan Munn, MPH

Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Virginia Commonwealth University
Host Site: Seattle & King County Public Health
Primary Mentor: Jeff Duchin, MD
Secondary Mentor: Meagan Kay, DVM, MPVM

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose the CSTE Fellowship because it offers a unique opportunity to transition from the academic foundation in public health established in my graduate studies to my career in applied epidemiology. The competency-based Fellowship will ensure that I develop all the skills required as a public health professional under the guidance of experienced mentors. I am excited to be a part of the CSTE program as well as a local health department and believe that through this Fellowship, I will be prepared to meet future public health challenges as an epidemiologist.

Future plans after the Fellowship: I plan on continuing to work in applied epidemiology at the local or state level, focusing on infectious diseases. I would eventually like to pursue a PhD in epidemiology to enhance my contributions to the public health field.
Kenya Murray, MPH, CPH

Program Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, University of Georgia
Host Site: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Primary Mentor: Marci Layton, MD
Secondary Mentor: Vasudha Reddy, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose the CSTE Fellowship because it will bridge the gap between the knowledge that I have gained in an academic setting and actually applying these skills in a real life, public health practice setting. The structure of the Fellowship, including core competencies and a mentorship model, are ideal for me as a new public health professional because they will enable me to evaluate my performance alongside an established standard while receiving guidance under skilled epidemiologists experienced at the state and/or local level. I consider the CSTE Fellowship to be a matchless opportunity, as many entry-level positions that offer enriching professional development while working are few in number. This Fellowship represents a crucial step in my endeavor to respond to current and emerging threats of disease and health-related events. As I contribute to the strengthening of the epidemiologic workforce by undertaking the CSTE Fellowship program, I look forward to working alongside skilled professionals in the field, being mentored by individuals with high level of expertise, and building relationships with the next generation of public health professionals.

Future plans after the Fellowship: Upon completion of the Fellowship, I am confident that I will have a sufficient amount of real-world experience to continue to make significant contributions to the field of public health. It is my desire to work in a setting where the findings of my work will create implications for public health policy. At some point, I plan to further my education by earning a PhD in epidemiology.

Leigh Nelson, MPH

Subject Area: Environmental Health – Waterborne
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, General Epidemiology, University of Michigan
Host Site: Ohio Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Mary DiOrio, MD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Mary Clifton, MA

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose to apply for the CSTE Fellowship because it gives me the opportunity to serve a large number of people as well as continually challenge and motivate me to improve my own epidemiological skill set. I want to hit the ground running with what I’ve learned, and this Fellowship makes that goal reality. Additionally, the Fellowship follows a mentorship model, which will allow me to work closely with highly trained epidemiologists. I personally believe the CSTE Fellowship is the only Fellowship of its kind that adequately prepares Fellows for placement at the state or local level.

Future plans after the Fellowship: Upon completion of the Fellowship, I hope to procure a position as an epidemiologist at the state or local level.
Hanna Oltean, MPH  
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases  
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, International Health Epidemiology, University of Michigan  
Host Site: Washington State Department of Health  
Primary Mentor: Kathy Lofy, MD  
Secondary Mentor: Chas DeBolt RN, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: As a recent MPH graduate, I am interested in applying my methodological training to public health practice and applied epidemiology. The mentored structure of CSTE allows both independent and creative work alongside applicable job training and competency development. Through training in surveillance, outbreak investigation, data analysis, and emergency response, I will be prepared to step into a local or state-level position, confident in my applied epidemiology skill set. With the opportunity for mentorship by current leaders in public health, CSTE provides an invaluable training program that promises the rigor and excellence required for future leaders.

Future plans after the Fellowship: Following the Fellowship, I plan to remain in applied epidemiology and public health practice in Washington State and hope to pursue my PhD. in epidemiology while continuing my work.

Alyssa Parr, MPH  
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases - HAI  
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Emory University  
Host Site: Virginia Department of Health  
Primary Mentor: Margaret Tipple, MD  
Secondary Mentor: Andrea Alvarez, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I wanted to participate in the CSTE Fellowship because it provides a full immersion experience where I can apply and refine the epidemiology skills I learned in the classroom while at the same time make meaningful change on a local level. The competency-based learning structure and interaction with exceptional mentors ensures that I will learn the skills and techniques necessary for becoming a highly qualified applied epidemiologist. Additionally, after briefly working at the federal and clinical levels, I am very interested in experiencing public health at the state level, since the challenges at the state level are very unique and at times unpredictable. My hope is to build upon my past experiences and eventually attain a decent understanding of public health across the spectrum of health institutions.

Future plans after the Fellowship: I plan to pursue a career working with healthcare-associated infections and patient safety/quality at the state or local level. I am especially interested in using epidemiology as a tool for healthcare quality improvement.
Marc Pitasi, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Emory University
Host Site: Kentucky Department for Public Health
Primary Mentor: Robert Brawley, MD, MPH, FSHEA
Secondary Mentor: Douglas Thoroughman, PhD, MS

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: The CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship represents an exceptional opportunity to apply my academic training to public health challenges in a practical, real-world context. The Fellowship’s rigorous, competency-based approach ensures that I will learn the skills that will make me a valuable asset to any public health agency, while the degree of flexibility offered by my placement allows me to align my work to my specific interests. The opportunity to work closely with accomplished and respected leaders in the field provides a high level of mentorship that will be invaluable to my professional development.

Future plans after the Fellowship: After the Fellowship, I plan to continue pursuing a career in epidemiology in the public sector at either the local, state, or federal level.

Jenna Sanderson, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Yale School of Public Health
Host Site: New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Bureau of Tuberculosis Control
Primary Mentor: Shama Desai Ahuja, PhD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Lisa Trieu, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: My introduction to the public health field occurred in a local health department while volunteering in a response effort to the 2009 H1N1 pandemic. This experience sparked my interest in epidemiology and the work of health departments; an interest that I developed and strengthened further throughout my graduate education. I choose the CSTE Fellowship because it provided an ideal opportunity to pursue this passion while learning critical skills under excellent mentorship.

Future plans after the Fellowship: My long-term career goal involves acquiring a PhD in epidemiology and working in an applied public health setting.
**Samantha Saunders, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Minnesota – Twin Cities  
**Host Site:** Minnesota Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Joni Scheftel, DVM, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Kirk Smith, DVM, MS, PhD  

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I chose to apply for the CSTE Fellowship because I knew that it would provide me with a unique experience to apply my epidemiologic knowledge in practical, real-world setting through training and an experienced mentorship model. This Fellowship will allow me to engage with a variety of experienced public health professionals in order to develop the necessary skills for my future career in infectious disease epidemiology. I’m excited to work with such a dedicated and passionate team at the Minnesota Department of Health on projects that will have a strong impact on how infectious diseases can be prevented in the state of Minnesota. I specifically wanted to work in an energetic field that combined my interests of infectious disease epidemiology and occupational health and safety, and I believe that this Fellowship will prepare me to make valuable contributions in both of these fields in the future.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** After the completion of my Fellowship, I hope to continue working as an infectious disease epidemiologist at the state or local level. Additionally, in the future, I plan to pursue a doctorate in environmental and occupational epidemiology, so as to have a better understanding of the infectious disease burden in certain occupations and how to protect the health and safety of these workers.

**Jessica Silvaggio, MPH**  

**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases – HAI  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Global Epidemiology, Emory University  
**Host Site:** Department of Public Health, Los Angeles County  
**Primary Mentor:** Dawn Terashita, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Laurene Mascola, MD, MPH  

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I applied to the CSTE Fellowship because it was the ideal next step for me after finishing my graduate training. CSTE provides an unparalleled opportunity to gain applied epidemiology experience at a state or local health department with a competency-based approach. Further, the Fellowship would allow me to be mentored by two experts in the field I am interested in pursuing as a career: infectious disease epidemiology. After completion of the Fellowship, I am confident I will have the skills and experience necessary to work at the state or local level.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:**  
After the close of the Fellowship, I plan to work at a state or local health department. After gaining more applied infectious disease epidemiology experience, I would like to pursue a DrPH.
**Maayan Simckes, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Injury  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Saint Louis University  
**Host Site:** Multnomah County Health Department  
**Primary Mentor:** Amy D. Sullivan, PhD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Robert H. Johnson, MD

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:**  
I was inspired to apply for the CDC/CSTE Fellowship because of its dual focus on providing valuable educational opportunities to Fellows while also serving the public. Rooted in a competency-based design, the Fellowship encourages me to use and strengthen the skills I learned in my public health coursework, to collaborate with experienced mentors, and to participate in a broad array of epidemiological investigations and projects. Moreover, the Fellowship structure ensures that my training contributes to projects and initiatives that help improve the health of the community my host agency serves. Through my work and training as a Fellow, I will gain knowledge and skills that will serve as an excellent foundation for my continued career in public health.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:**  
After completing the Fellowship I plan to further explore epidemiological work opportunities at the state and local level, preparing myself to later pursue a terminal degree in epidemiology.

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**Julie Traylor, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Maternal and Child Health  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Georgia Southern University  
**Host Site:** Tennessee Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Lori Ferranti, PhD, MBA, MSN  
**Secondary Mentor:** Michael Warren, MD, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I chose to apply for the CSTE Fellowship because I felt it would be the perfect transition from the classroom to the professional world. Compared to other programs, what attracted me to this particular one was the emphasis placed on state and local level epidemiology. I believe this is where the forefront of applied epidemiology lies. Another equally important aspect of the program is the mentorship component. It is invaluable to have experienced public health professionals guiding me as I begin my career. Upon completion of this program, I feel that I will be confident in my abilities to work as an applied epidemiologist due to mastering the core competencies defined by this Fellowship.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** After completing this Fellowship, I would like to continue working in the area of maternal and child health at the state level. At some point in my career, I plan to go back to school to earn a doctoral degree.
**Matt Turnure, MPH**

**Program Area:** Maternal and Child Health  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Saint Louis University  
**Host Site:** Hawaii State Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Donald Hayes, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Tonya Lowery St. John, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I chose the CSTE Fellowship because it offers a unique opportunity to transition from academic training to public health practice. The competency-based format ensures that I will develop essential skills of the profession and also be exposed to a number of different topic areas and aspects of practicing epidemiology at the state and local level. The mentorship of two experienced professionals will support me in this process and provide learning and research opportunities which I otherwise would not have access. The ability to relocate and study a uniquely diverse population in Hawaii while also contributing to the practice of epidemiology on a national level is appealing to me as well. With this Fellowship, I hope to grow my understanding of how epidemiology contributes to the overall process of improving the health and quality of life of disadvantaged and vulnerable communities as well as the population as a whole.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** After completing the Fellowship, I plan to continue working in applied epidemiology for public health organizations at the local, state, or federal level. I would like to work in a position where I can make an impact preventing disease and building wellness in communities.

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**Aiden Varan, MPH, CPH**

**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases – Quarantine  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Global Epidemiology, Emory University  
**Host Site:** CDC Quarantine Station San Diego, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency  
**Primary Mentor:** CAPT Steve Waterman, MD MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Eric McDonald, MD, MPH, FACEP

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I applied for the CSTE Fellowship to gain hands-on experience in infectious disease epidemiology at the community level. The quarantine focus area provides a unique opportunity to participate in both federal and local public health activities, including several outbreak investigations. I enjoy the diversity of Fellowship competencies and mentorship from two skilled and experienced leaders in public health. This Fellowship will provide unparalleled foundations for my future career in epidemiology.

**Future plans after the Fellowship:** Upon completing the Fellowship, I intend to pursue doctoral-level study in infectious disease epidemiology.
Lindsay K. Weir, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Hospital and Molecular Epidemiology with a Certificate in Hospital Infection Prevention and Control, University of Michigan
Host Site: Pennsylvania Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Perrianne Lurie, MD, MPH, FACPM
Secondary Mentor: Andre Weltman, MD, M.SC

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: Out of all the post-graduate Fellowship and education opportunities I applied to, the CDC/CSTE Fellowship was the position I desired most. My aspiration to work in public health at the state level stems from my realization that state health departments are at the intersection of local and federal public health systems, which allows them to conduct work that has direct bearing on community health outcomes. The core-competencies of the CSTE Fellowship afford me the opportunity to hone my skills as an infectious disease epidemiologist by providing me the platform to conduct innovative projects on topics that I find most challenging and interesting. In addition, the professional development resources provided by the CSTE allow me to attend conferences, workshops, and training programs that offer invaluable opportunities for networking and expanding my public health skill set. Through this Fellowship, I am confident that I will gain the knowledge and tools necessary to advance my own career in epidemiology, and in doing so, make a true and positive impact on the public’s health and wellbeing.

Future plans after Fellowship: After completing this two-year Fellowship, I intend to continue my work as an applied infectious disease epidemiologist at the state level. I am also considering continuing my education so that I might enhance my skills further and become a stronger asset to the public health work force.

Bridget Whitney, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, Yale School of Public Health
Host Site: New York State Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Shelley Zansky, PhD
Secondary Mentor: Millicent Eidson, MA, DVM, DACVPM

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I chose to pursue a CSTE Fellowship because I felt it was the ideal position for a new epidemiologist to gain valuable knowledge and practical experience and transition from an academic to an applied public health setting. My long-term career goals include epidemiology at the state or federal level, which is one of the training aims of the CSTE training program. In addition to the invaluable experiences that come along with the Fellowship, I feel that the continuation of epidemiology education as well as the opportunity to work with two highly skilled mentors will be extremely useful and give me powerful tools to use in future endeavors. I believe this Fellowship will provide me with the experience and education needed to be an asset to any public health department.

Future plans after the Fellowship: After completing the two-year Fellowship I hope to continue pursuing a career in applied infectious disease epidemiology at the state or federal level.
Alyssa Yang, MPH

Program Area: Chronic Disease/Maternal and Child Health

Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Occupational and Environmental Epidemiology, University of Michigan

Host Site: Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Primary Mentor: Mark Wegner, MD, MPH and Sharon Fleischfresser, MD, MPH

Secondary Mentor: Liz Oftedahl, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship: I applied for this Fellowship because it provides a real-world setting to practice applied epidemiology and allows me to further develop the skills I gained from graduate school. Through this Fellowship, I also have the guidance of seasoned veterans and the opportunity to contribute to a vast range of projects. These conditions will allow me to become adept in the core competencies of applied epidemiology, such as the ability to conduct routine surveillance activities, outbreak investigations, and disease prevention activities. Being able to have this experience and to learn from current professionals who are passionate about the field will enable me to better serve my community and to become a valuable asset for public health agencies.

Future plans after the Fellowship: After completing the Fellowship, I plan to continue working in chronic disease and maternal and child health epidemiology at the tribal, local, or state level.
Applied Epidemiology Core Competencies

Fellows will develop a comprehensive set of core skills through competency-based training. These competencies are expected to be fulfilled during the two-year Fellowship:

Epidemiologic methods
• Design a surveillance system to assess health problems
• Evaluate an existing surveillance system
• Design data collection tools to address a health problem
• Collect health data and create databases
• Analyze and characterize epidemiologic data with statistical software
• Interpret data and findings and recommend control measures, prevention programs, or other public health interventions
• Understand types of study design and design an epidemiologic study
• Role in bioterrorism/emergency preparedness and response

Communication
• Write surveillance and field investigation reports
• Present epidemiologic data using graphic software
• Understand the basics of health risk communication and be able to communicate findings to the lay public
• Present research results in a scientific poster, report, or manuscript
• Present data orally using appropriate media

Public Health Practice, Policy, and Legal Issues
• Have a basic understanding of public health law
• Understand the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)
• Distinguish between public health research and public health practice
• Understand policies designed for the protection of human subjects and the role of an Institutional Review Board (IRB)
• Know the essential public health functions
• Understand the roles of local, state, and federal public health agencies
• Appreciate the diversity of epidemiology and how it is used in different program areas
• Effectively negotiate cultural sensitivity issues