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), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) and the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH), support the two-year Fellowship program to give recent graduates 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:
- Behavioral Health
- 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 four 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 CSTE 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
Nianest Alers Barreto, MPH

Subject Area: Infectious Diseases  
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston  
Host Site: Hawaii State Department of Health  
Primary Mentor: Sarah Park, MD, MPH  
Secondary Mentor: Melissa Viray, MD

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: As a recent graduate, I did not feel confident in my epidemiology skills, not because I did not receive a great education, but because employers were looking for real world experience. Even though I had developed great skills throughout my MPH training, I was missing real on-the-job epidemiology training, and I realized I needed a bridge from my graduate studies to a career as an applied epidemiologist. That was the reason I chose the CDC/CSTE Fellowship, because of its potential to act as that bridge with its mentorship model, hands-on experience, and professional development opportunities. In addition, the fact that I was born and raised in Puerto Rico, made me attracted to the possibility of relocating to Hawaii and learning more about public health's dynamic in an island setting. This fellowship will prepare me to make valuable contributions to the field of public health, and will provide a great foundation for my future career.

Future plans after the fellowship: After the fellowship, I hope to work at a state level health department and pursue a career as an infectious disease epidemiologist, focusing on disaster epidemiology projects.

Katharyn Baca, MA, MPH

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

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: After pursuing an academic career in epidemiology, I set a career goal in applied epidemiology in the maternal and child health field. I applied for this fellowship because it is one of the best opportunities available for training in applied epidemiology. It will provide me with hands-on training that will supplement and enhance my academic and career experiences. The fellowship will also give me an opportunity to contribute to a vast range of projects in maternal and child health under the excellent guidance of my mentors. I believe the skills, training, and relationships I build through this experience will further my career and prepare me for work in numerous settings in applied epidemiology.

Future plans after the fellowship: After completing the fellowship, I plan to continue working in maternal and child health epidemiology at the regional or state level.
**Michael Balke, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases – HAI  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Pittsburgh  
**Host Site:** Michigan Department of Health and Human Services  
**Primary Mentor:** Jennie Finks, DVM, MVPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** James Collins, MPH, RS  

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** I chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it offers a unique and exceptional way to transition from the classroom to the professional public health setting. The fellowship establishes an environment ideal for professional development through the competency-based structure and mentorship from two highly experienced epidemiologists. During the fellowship I will continue to refine and strengthen the epidemiologic knowledge and skillsets I gained during graduate school and develop new skillsets in emergency preparedness and other public health competencies. The hands-on training and experience I gain from working on real public health concerns in the state of Michigan will be invaluable and prepare me for a long and successful career as a leader in applied public health.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** After successfully completing the fellowship, I plan to pursue a career in applied public health at the local, state, or federal level. Eventually I may pursue a doctorate degree in epidemiology.

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**Alexandra Boland, MPH**

**Program Area:** Environmental Health – Waterborne  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Minnesota  
**Host Site:** Indiana State Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Jen Brown, DVM, MPH, DACVPM  
**Secondary Mentor:** Shawn Richards  

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** I chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship since it provides fellows with a level of resources and training that is not commonly available to first year epidemiologists. The mentorship provided by the fellowship, in addition to the core competencies, provides a supportive learning environment through which I will gain valuable experience in a variety of public health practices. I believe that these experiences will serve as lessons that will be a foundation for the rest of my career as an epidemiologist and help enable me to make meaningful contributions to the public health field.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** After completing the fellowship, I plan to continue working as an applied epidemiologist at the county, state, or federal level.
Jonathan Bressler, MPH
Subject Area: Environmental Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Global Epidemiology, Emory University
Host Site: Alaska Department of Health and Human Services
Primary Mentor: Ali Hamade, PhD
Secondary Mentor: Paul Anderson, MD, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship will give me a hands-on experience as an epidemiologist that I cannot get anywhere else. I relish the opportunity to work on Alaska’s unique health issues—from the needs of tribal and rural communities to state-wide issues of environmental concern—and to experience everything the state has to offer. I look forward to learning from my mentors and contributing my knowledge and skills. I have learned much about public health through my graduate studies and work experience, and I have absorbed the lessons of community investment as a former Peace Corps volunteer. In the fellowship, I will rely on this background to bolster my work, and I will advance my skills in epidemiology through the core competencies with the goal of improving health and quality of life for Alaska’s residents.

Future plans after the fellowship: After the successful completion of the fellowship, I plan to continue my career working on health issues with an environmental focus, concentrating on disadvantaged communities both at home and abroad.

Jordan Dieckman, DVM, MPH
Subject Area: Environmental Health – Waterborne
Highest Degree Obtained: Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin - Madison
Host Site: Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Primary Mentor: Rachel Klos, DVM, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Henry Anderson, MD

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I applied for this fellowship because I wanted to use the epidemiological skills I learned during my MPH and DVM degree programs in real life situations. I appreciated that the fellowship offered an opportunity to have these experiences under the guidance and mentorship of seasoned epidemiologists. The fellowship’s focus on building the public health work force at the state level also appealed to me. The skills gained by completing the core competencies of this fellowship will be invaluable for me going forward in my career in public health.

Future plans after the fellowship: After completing this fellowship, I hope to continue in a career as an epidemiologist in environmental health or infectious diseases.
Karen Diepstra, MPH
Program Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, University of California Berkeley
Host Site: Virginia Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Anne Rhodes, PhD
Secondary Mentor: Lauren Yerkes, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CSTE fellowship provides an excellent opportunity to sharpen and build upon the data analysis and communication skills acquired during the MPH program, while contributing to state health department surveillance and projects. I was drawn to the structure of the CSTE fellowship, which provides invaluable mentorship from experienced epidemiologists in my field of interest. I believe this fellowship will prepare me for a career in applied epidemiology and HIV surveillance, and allow me to make a positive contribution to the health of Virginia residents.

Future plans after the fellowship: I hope to continue working in HIV surveillance and research at the state level.

Gabriela Domínguez Escutia, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases – Quarantine
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Oregon State University
Host Site: CDC San Diego Quarantine Station, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency
Primary Mentor: Alfonso Rodriguez-Lainz, PhD, VMD, MPVM
Secondary Mentor: Eric McDonald, MD, MPH, FACE

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship to expand and continue my training in epidemiology. My career goal involves working as an epidemiologist to help bridge the gap in the area of infectious diseases health disparities between non-minority and minority populations. I perceive the fellowship as a great opportunity to continue working on this path as it offers hands on experience in important aspects of epidemiology. During my participation in this fellowship, I hope to expand my practical experience in the application of epidemiological methods, public health prevention programs, and design surveillance systems to assess health problems. As a fellow, my career goal towards making contributions to improving the health status of vulnerable populations in our country will be closer since it will allow me to meaningfully interact with highly trained and experienced mentors in the area of infectious diseases.

Future plans after the fellowship: Upon completing my fellowship, I plan to continue working in applied epidemiology at a state or federal level. I also plan to obtain a doctoral degree in epidemiology in the near future.
Virgie S. Fields, MS  
**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases – HAI  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MS, Epidemiology, Harvard University  
**Host Site:** Arkansas Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Dirk Haselow, MD, PhD, MS  
**Secondary Mentor:** Stewart Matthews, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** I chose the CSTE Fellowship because it provides the perfect opportunity to transition from an academic setting to a professional setting. Under the guidance of experienced public health professionals, I will gain invaluable hands-on experience in the field of applied epidemiology. The fellowship grants me a rare opportunity to explore a wide variety of interesting topics within epidemiology, from surveillance and outbreak investigations to bioterrorism and emergency preparedness. By fulfilling the core competencies, I will further develop my epidemiological skillset while building a solid foundation to begin my career in public health.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** After completing the fellowship, I plan to pursue a career within a state or local health department as an infectious disease epidemiologist. In addition, I intend to continue my education by completing a doctoral program in epidemiology.

Chelsea Foo, MPH  
**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases – HAI  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, General Epidemiology, University of Michigan  
**Host Site:** Los Angeles County Department of Public Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Dawn Terashita, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Benjamin Schwartz, MD

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** I chose the CSTE fellowship because it offers an unparalleled opportunity for practical training in applied epidemiology and will advance skills obtained in my graduate coursework. The mentorship of a seasoned epidemiologist is invaluable to furthering my understanding of the field. The most appealing aspect of the CSTE fellowship is that it fosters the opportunity for continued learning, while simultaneously allowing me to be part of a team that makes significant contributions to my community with its efforts to improve public health.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** Upon completion of the fellowship, I plan to continue working at the state or local level in infectious disease epidemiology.
Anna Frick, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases – HAI
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Hospital and Molecular Epidemiology, University of Michigan
Host Site: Alaska Department of Health and Human Services
Primary Mentor: Michael Cooper, MD
Secondary Mentor: Louisa Castrodale, MD

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE fellowship because it offered a great opportunity to work at the state level gaining valuable experience at an early stage in my career. Particularly, hospital-acquired infections are an increasingly important area I’m excited to work in. The professional development opportunities offered are also excellent.

Future plans after the fellowship: I hope to continue to work in governmental public health.

Geoff Granseth, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases – HAI
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, University of Iowa
Host Site: Arizona Department of Health Services
Primary Mentor: Joli Weiss, PhD, MS
Secondary Mentor: Eugene Livar, MD

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I choose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it presents the perfect opportunity for achieving my career goals. It provides the real life training that will allow me to build on my graduate education and become a skilled epidemiologist at the state level. By having the opportunity to learn from experienced mentors, I can develop expertise in my program area while also getting exposure to a wide range of epidemiologic activities that take place in a state health department.

Future plans after the fellowship: After completing the fellowship, I plan to pursue a career as an infectious disease epidemiologist at the state or local level.
**Naomi Greene, MPH**  
**Program Area:** Behavioral Health  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology and Biostatistics, CUNY School of Public Health at Hunter College  
**Host Site:** New Mexico Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Laura Tomedi, PhD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Jessica Reno, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE Fellowship:** I applied for the CSTE fellowship because it provides the opportunity to apply data science to improve the public’s health and emphasizes mentorship. The program affords a unique opportunity to work on a variety of projects to help answer important public health questions, evaluate current systems, and support the needs of the community. Furthermore, not only can my mentors deliver feedback on my work, but they can also impact wisdom that will enhance my professional development. Undoubtedly, I will carry with me what I learn in the program throughout my public health career.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** I plan to pursue a doctorate in epidemiology before continuing my career as an epidemiologist at the state level. I believe pursing an advanced degree will further prepare me to meet public health challenges in the 21st century.

**Haylea Hannah, MSPH**  
**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MSPH, Epidemiology, Emory University  
**Host Site:** Marin County Department of Health and Human Services  
**Primary Mentor:** Matt Willis, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Rochelle Ereman, MS, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** This fellowship primarily interested me because it allows fellows to be connected to public health interventions “where the rubber meets the road.” The core competencies provide the framework for exposure to all facets of the skills required of an epidemiologist at the state or local level, from surveillance to program evaluation. I hope to make a meaningful contribution to the community served by the local health department through addressing health disparities and contributing to the evidence-base that informs community policy and programs.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** Upon completing the fellowship, I intend to work in an applied epidemiology setting specifically focusing on the intersection between socio-contextual determinants of health and infectious diseases. In the future, I also hope to continue my epidemiologic training through pursuing a doctoral degree.
Mefruz Haque, MPH

**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases – HAI  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Maryland  
**Host Site:** Virginia Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Mary Beth White-Comstock, DNP, RN, CIC  
**Secondary Mentor:** Andrea Alvarez, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** I chose to pursue the CSTE fellowship because of the unique and distinguished experience it provides in connecting local and national efforts in the field of epidemiology. Furthermore, the fellowship offers opportunities to gain experience in a wide range of epidemiologic methods, making it ideal for recent graduates like myself. For me the CSTE fellowship is the perfect way to bridge the gap between public health theory and practice, whilst giving me a chance to reach my potential as an epidemiologist.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** Upon completing the fellowship, I hope to continue to work as an epidemiologist at a local, state or national level. I also hope to further my knowledge in the field by pursuing a doctorate in either infectious disease or environmental epidemiology.

Dana Higgins, MPH

**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, George Washington University  
**Host Site:** Philadelphia Department of Public Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Kendra Viner, PhD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Caroline Johnson, MD

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** I chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it was the ideal bridge from my academic studies to a career in public health. The fellowship provides the opportunity to further develop my epidemiology skillset while allowing me the freedom to explore a variety of disciplines across fields. Under the guidance of my talented and experienced mentors, I will have the chance to grow both personally and professionally in hopes of becoming a successful contributor to the field of public health.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** After the fellowship, I plan to pursue a long-term career in public health at the local or state level. Eventually, I also hope to further enhance my training through an epidemiology doctoral program.
Zachary S. Holmquist, MPH
Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Maternal and Child Health, Epidemiology Emphasis, University of Minnesota
Host Site: Washington State Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Katherine Hutchinson, PhD, MSPH
Secondary Mentor: Riley Peters, PhD

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: As a Maternal and Child Health MPH, the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship appealed to me because it provides a rigorous and structured environment in which to learn and apply epidemiologic practices to the MCH field. The program offers the opportunity to support vulnerable communities while simultaneously learning the best field practices and standards from seasoned epidemiologists, public health practitioners, and allied community members and professionals. The fellowship’s requirements for fellows provide a framework for professional development, and recruit the resources necessary to fully immerse yourself in the experience. In all, the fellowship is such an exciting opportunity because it will give me a better understanding of the field of MCH epidemiology at the state level, and will help guide the next steps of my career.

Future plans after the fellowship: After the fellowship, I intend to continue working in the field of Maternal and Child Health at the state or local level, with a particular focus on perinatal morbidity and mortality surveillance. I may also pursue a doctoral degree in epidemiology to enhance my public health practice.

Kelly E. Kline, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, Yale School of Public Health
Host Site: Pennsylvania Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Perrianne Lurie, MD, MPH, FACPM
Secondary Mentor: Andre Weltman, MD, MSc

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship aligns perfectly with my long-term career goal of practicing infectious disease epidemiology in the public sector. This fellowship will expand my public health skill set and allow me to work on a diverse range of projects under the guidance and expertise of my mentors and colleagues. Additionally, CSTE will bolster my professional development by allowing me to attend conferences, workshops, and training programs that offer invaluable opportunities for continued education, sharing public health strategies and techniques, and networking. I believe this fellowship will provide me with an excellent foundation for my public health career.

Future plans after the fellowship: After the fellowship, I plan to continue working in applied infectious disease epidemiology at the state or federal level.
Natalie Linton, MPH
Program Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Oregon State University
Host Site: Washington State Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Scott Lindquist, MD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Chas DeBolt, MPH, RN

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The fellowship is an amazing opportunity to gain experience in a wide range of topics through projects, while working at the local, state, or tribal level under the guidance of experienced mentors. Fellows also have the chance to participate in at least one outbreak investigation and emergency preparedness topic. The amount of experience that can be gained in just two years is one of the main reasons I chose to become a CSTE fellow.

Future plans after the fellowship: I plan to continue working as an epidemiologist to prevent and control disease and promote health.

Noelisa Montero, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases – HAI
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, New York Medical College
Host Site: Connecticut Department of Public Health
Primary Mentor: Mark Lobato, MD
Secondary Mentor: Lynn Sosa, MD and Richard Melchreit, MD

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I selected the CSTE fellowship because it provides the tremendous opportunity to expand my knowledge and experience, which is necessary to become a practicing public health professional. During the fellowship, I will have the opportunity to collect first-hand data to understand the etiology of public health concerns while thinking of possible prevention and intervention strategies. The CSTE fellowship is an excellent foundation that will lead me to become a contributing member of the scientific community, and to be part of the development of healthy neighborhoods.

Future Plans after the fellowship: After completing the fellowship, I plan to continue to work as an epidemiologist focusing on infectious diseases at a local or state health department.
Emily Morian-Lozano, MPH, MSW
Subject Area: Maternal and Child Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology/Biostatistics, Washington University in St. Louis
Host Site: Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
Primary Mentor: Erika Lichter, ScD
Secondary Mentor: Sara Huston, PhD

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE fellowship because it provides me with the unique opportunity to both practice the skills I gained in graduate school as well as further my understanding of how epidemiology is applied at the state and local level. I will be able to learn from experts in the field, and to see the impact of my work in the local community. With my background in public health and social work, this fellowship will allow me to utilize skills and knowledge from both fields and to apply them to pertinent public health issues. It will give me the chance to merge these two perspectives, integrating pieces of the increasingly connected fields of social work and public health.

Future plans after the fellowship: I plan to continue working in maternal and child health epidemiology at the tribal, local, or state level.

Gianna Peralta, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology/Biostatistics, University of California, Berkeley
Host Site: Georgia Department of Public Health
Primary Mentor: Cherie Drenzek, DVM, MS
Secondary Mentor: Laura Edison, DVM, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CSTE fellowship provides “green” epidemiologists with the opportunity to gain experience in the field of public health under the guidance of two highly skilled mentors. This fellowship was the ideal transition from my MPH program to public health as it will allow me to practice and enhance my skills and knowledge while working in a real-world setting. I know that this fellowship will be instrumental in my professional development as an epidemiologist, leader in public health, and will also allow me to contribute positively to my host site and the quality of life for others.

Future plans after the fellowship: I hope that my experience as a fellow will establish a strong foundation for a career in public health. Upon completion of the fellowship I plan to continue working in infectious disease epidemiology at the state or local level. Additionally, I plan to pursue a doctorate in epidemiology.
**Colleen Roberts, MPH**  
**Subject Area:** Infectious Diseases – HAI  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Kentucky  
**Host Site:** South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control  
**Primary Mentor:** Dana Giurgiutiu, PhD, MPH  

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** I chose the CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship because it offers the perfect transition from graduate school to the public health workforce. The opportunity for on-the-job training while also receiving mentorship from experienced epidemiologists is a truly unique experience. Through the fellowship I will be able to develop and hone a wide range of epidemiologic skills, such as conducting outbreak investigations, surveillance activities and disease prevention activities. I am confident the CSTE fellowship will equip me with what I need to pursue a successful career as an epidemiologist and public health professional.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** After completing the fellowship, I plan to continue working in infectious disease epidemiology at the state or federal level. Eventually, I hope to further my training by pursuing a doctoral degree in epidemiology with the ultimate goal of working as a senior or state epidemiologist at a state health department.

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**Allison Rosenthal, MPH**  
**Subject Area:** Behavioral Health  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Community Health Sciences, University of Illinois at Chicago  
**Host Site:** Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment  
**Primary Mentor:** Barbara Gabella, MSPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Tista Ghosh, M.D., MPH  

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** After completing my graduate program, I wanted to find a pathway to career in the public sector, where I would continue to cultivate my analytical, communication, and leadership skills. I was so thrilled to find out that the CSTE fellowship was designed with this end in mind, and that I would have the opportunity to practice applied epidemiology while working in a public health department. The resources and support from the CSTE staff and on-site mentors are also invaluable assets for emerging professionals. I know that this experience will give me the skills to better serve my constituents.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** I aim to continue my work in the public sector and focus on improving population health either at the state or local level.
Mark Rosenthal, MSPH
Program Area: Infectious Diseases – Food Safety
Highest Degree Obtained: MSPH, Epidemiology, Emory University
Host Site: Georgia Department of Public Health
Primary Mentor: Melissa Tobin-D'Angelo, MD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Hope Dishman, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE fellowship because it gives me the best opportunity to apply the epidemiologic knowledge I gained in school while working at a state health department. The fellowship will give me invaluable experience working in public health at the state level, and the opportunity to pursue a broad range of projects and experiences at my host agency, something other positions do not offer. Additionally, the fellowship provides me with the ability to learn from experienced public health professionals. The fellowship will leave me in an excellent position to continue building my career in public health after the program ends.

Future plans after the fellowship: At the end of the fellowship, I hope to continue working in applied public health and building a career at the state or local level.

Kathleen Ross, MPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Drexel University
Host Site: New Jersey Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Barbara Montana, MD, MPH, FACP
Secondary Mentor: Lisa McHugh, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: My past experiences working at the local health department in Philadelphia have sparked my desire to work at the local or state level long-term. My education has given me the knowledge I need to work in public health and the CSTE fellowship will give me the hands-on experience. I believe the CSTE Fellowship is the stepping stone I need to prepare me to conduct daily epidemiological activities and research on issues that affect the community I live in. I am looking forward to the opportunity to work with a skilled mentor who can share with me their expertise in applied epidemiology. This fellowship will provide me with the right training and skills to be a strong leader and vital epidemiologist at any local or state health department.

Future plans after the fellowship: After completing the CSTE fellowship, I hope to continue working in an infectious disease setting at a local or state health department.
**Tamara Rushovich, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Behavioral Health  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, General Epidemiology, University of Michigan  
**Host Site:** Chicago Department of Public Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Kirsti Bocskay, PhD, MPhil, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Nikhil G. Prachand, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** After graduation, I knew I wanted to work in applied epidemiology. I wanted to work in a community to address the root causes of health problems, to reduce health disparities, and to influence positive change. I was most interested in this fellowship because not only would it allow me to do important work, but it also provided mentoring, support, and structure. Because my MPH program was only two years long, there was so much more that I wanted to learn. I was drawn to the CSTE fellowship because it would allow me to apply my skills while encouraging me to continue to learn and develop. I liked the fact that there was an emphasis on meeting a set of core competencies. This structure will help me to ensure that I gain important skills in a wide variety of areas. Additionally, the strong mentoring and supervision provided will allow me to learn from an experienced professional. I know I have a lot to contribute, and I feel that the support and structure of the fellowship will allow me to contribute in the best way possible.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** After my two years as a CSTE fellow, I hope to continue a career as an epidemiologist in local public health with a focus in mental health.

**Meghan Smith, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Environmental Health  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, Columbia University  
**Host Site:** Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
**Primary Mentor:** Clifford Mitchell, MS, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Adebola Akinyemi, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** After graduating with my MPH, having had a number of experiences in academic settings, I was seeking a chance to practice epidemiology in a more applied setting. I hope that through this fellowship I will get a better sense of how science is translated to action in a health department environment. I am also attracted to the mentorship structure and excited to continue learning through the competency based model.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** I hope to pursue a career that bridges public health research and practice and possibly to obtain a doctoral degree with a focus on social epidemiology.
Inderbir Sohi, MSPH
Subject Area: Infectious Diseases – HAI
Highest Degree Obtained: MSPH, Epidemiology, University of South Carolina
Host Site: New York State Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Emily Lutterloh, MD, MPH
Secondary Mentor: Elizabeth Dufort, MD, FAAP

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CSTE fellowship is an impressive opportunity to develop my applied epidemiology skills in a professional setting and contribute to important health projects. It is a great transition from graduate school and my current work, into a role where I will receive hands-on training in epidemiological surveillance, outbreak investigations and other public health activities. The mentorship model provides a supportive learning environment with individuals who are experts in the field and passionate about epidemiology. The valuable experience that I will acquire through the fellowship’s core competency-driven approach will help build a strong foundation for my path to becoming a skilled epidemiologist.

Future plans after the fellowship: My future plans are to pursue a career in infectious disease epidemiology at the local, state or federal level.

Kelly Squires, MPH
Subject Area: Environmental Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Global Environmental Health, Emory University
Host Site: North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Primary Mentor: Mina Shehee, PhD
Secondary Mentor: Annie Hirsch, MPH

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: My interest in the CSTE Applied Epidemiology fellowship began early in my internship at the Waterborne Disease Prevention Branch (WDPB) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There, I immediately became interested in both the challenges and accomplishments associated with outbreak investigations. I quickly learned that while the CDC provided invaluable assistance, most of these investigations were conducted by local and state agencies; I knew I wanted to be a part of that. During my time at CDC and Emory University I also learned that I placed high value on quality surveillance data. Surveillance is the basis for innumerable scientific studies and policy decisions, and good surveillance data is essential for good public health action. I chose CSTE because it allows me to pursue my greatest passions within the field of environmental epidemiology and provides me with a training experience unlike any other.

Future plans after the fellowship: My career goals include working with surveillance data and outbreak investigations at the local or state level. I would like to incorporate GIS tools, such as disease mapping and spatial analysis, into my future work as well. I am particularly interested in waterborne diseases and other water-related health problems.
Elizabeth Thomas, MPH
Program Area: Injury – Drug Overdose
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Epidemiology, Tulane University
Host Site: Tennessee Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Tim Jones, MD
Secondary Mentors: Lucy Thairu, PhD

Why I chose CSTE: I chose to participate in the CSTE fellowship because I did not want my learning experience to end. I loved what I studied in my graduate career and wanted to continue learning and growing as an epidemiologist, and I wanted to do that through the guidance and opportunities this fellowship offers. Through this mentorship, I hope to gain more confidence in my own skills and to be able to take that confidence with me throughout my public health career. I am very excited to participate in the growing field of injury and drug overdose epidemiology!

Future plans after this fellowship: Once this fellowship ends I plan to pursue additional projects related to injury and drug overdose epidemiology, ideally at the tribal or state level.

Nate Wright, MPH
Subject Area: Behavioral Health
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Maternal and Child Health & Epidemiology, University of Minnesota
Host Site: Minnesota Department of Health
Primary Mentor: Ruth Lynfield, MD
Secondary Mentor: Jon Roesler, PhD, MS

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: The CSTE fellowship was the correct choice as it allowed me to contribute meaningful work to the field of public health, while also continuing to learn and grow as a professional through the mentor relationship and fulfillment of core competencies. Through the various projects that will be completed during my fellowship, I will also gain incredible depth and breadth of experiences to further my professional development. From discussions with current and former fellows, the CSTE fellowship had a profound impact on their career trajectories by providing much more than two years of experiences within the fellowship timeline. By participating in the CSTE fellowship, I hope to better prepare myself for working in the field of applied epidemiology and gain valuable experiences from mentors who are passionate and leaders in the field of public health.

Future plans after the fellowship: Following the completion of the CSTE fellowship, I plan to continue working at state or local health departments and also hope to pursue a PhD in epidemiology.
**Fan Xiong, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Injury – Drug Overdose  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology with a Certificate in Disaster Management, University of Georgia  
**Host Site:** Kansas Department of Health and Environment  
**Primary Mentor:** Ericka Welsh, PhD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentors:** Ghazala Perveen, MBBS, PhD, MPH and Dan Dao, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** During my MPH studies, I discovered the CSTE fellowship through a professional development workgroup at the University of Georgia. After discussing the program further with the CSTE and former fellows, I realized this is the best program to gain experience in applied epidemiology at the state level. There are no other training programs where I would have the opportunities offered through the fellowship while promoting public health. I knew this fellowship would give me the foundation to contribute in public health and be an important asset at a state health agency. For these reasons, I chose the CSTE fellowship.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** I am confident that I will have the skills and tools to continue working as an applied epidemiologist at the state level. I hope to begin my journey as an epidemiologist and pursue any further training that will help me to prevent diseases, deaths, and injuries.

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**Alice Yang, MPH**

**Subject Area:** Maternal and Child Health  
**Highest Degree Obtained:** MPH, Epidemiology, University of Georgia  
**Host Site:** Hawaii Department of Health  
**Primary Mentor:** Donald Hayes, MD, MPH  
**Secondary Mentor:** Catherine Sorensen, DrPH, MPH

**Why you chose the CSTE fellowship:** Of all the post-grad opportunities available to MPH students, the CSTE fellowship remains one of the most respected programs for practicing applied epidemiology. In addition, the moment I read the description for the maternal and child health fellowship in Hawaii, I was hooked. I've always wanted to work in infant and child health, and the projects the family health division planned to pursue reminded me of major projects I worked on in graduate school. It was the perfect chance to extend what I learned to the real world. And at the end of the day, what was really decisive for me was simply a gut feeling, a premonition, that the CSTE fellowship would allow me to learn so much while providing an opportunity to both assist and exercise my own innovation on really great projects. To top it all off, I've spent most of my life in Georgia, and the CSTE fellowship would bring me to exhilarating new environments with unforgettable memories.

**Future plans after the fellowship:** At some point in the future, I would like to pursue a Doctor of Public Health. Whether that goal comes before or after working some more, I cannot say for sure right now. Either way I see it, I have a lot to look forward to after the fellowship. I believe there are equally valuable, if different, opportunities available in state health departments, federal agencies, and academia. On a broad level, I know I want to work within the world of preventable chronic diseases, specifically studying how to better identify and change poor health behaviors that negatively impact infant and child health. Cheers to exciting futures and sweet discoveries!
Amanda Zabala, MPH  
Subject Area: Environmental Health – Waterborne  
Highest Degree Obtained: MPH, Maternal & Child Health, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
Host Site: Ohio Department of Health  
Primary Mentor: Andrew Wapner, DO, MPH, FACOP, FAAP  
Secondary Mentor: Mary Clifton, RS, MA

Why you chose the CSTE fellowship: I chose the CSTE Fellowship because it offers me the opportunity to sharpen my epidemiologic skills with hands-on experience in a supportive atmosphere. I was drawn to the Fellowship’s promise of professional development, the multitude of different projects in which I could become involved, as well as its strong mentorship component. I firmly believe that the competencies gained over the course of this Fellowship will allow for a burgeoning public health professional like me to adequately ensure population health.

Future plans after the fellowship: Upon completion of the Fellowship, I plan to pursue a career investigating the means in which environmental factors and other determinants influence the health of vulnerable populations.
Katie Hutchinson, PhD, MSPH, *Class IV, Maternal and Child Health*

The CSTE fellowship has been invaluable to my career. The broad scope of the fellowship, the competency requirements, and exposure to national level expertise and resources gave me the foundation and breadth of knowledge in MCH Epi that has been essential to my current position as the MCH Epidemiology Unit Supervisor for the Washington State Department of Health. As I transition to being a mentor, I really appreciate having been a fellow - it has helped to develop a fellowship experience tailored to the fellow’s growth and development. I have been fortunate in the support I have received throughout my career and am excited to be able to give back. Fellowships like CSTE are essential to building a strong and committed applied epi workforce, particularly in MCH.

Rachel Jantz, MPH, *Class XII, Injury – Drug Overdose*

Working in Oklahoma, a state particularly affected by the overdose epidemic, the projects I have been involved with fulfill epidemiologic competencies but also provide real assistance to the state as it works to reduce drug overdose rates. I have given presentations, developed reports, and participated in intra- and inter-agency meetings.

Simona Lang, MPH, *Class XI, Infectious Diseases*

Much of my time was focused on writing reports, beginning protocol development, and finalizing the analytic plan for a national special populations workgroup. I’ve enjoyed balancing epi analysis with these other projects as I expand my skills.

Meghan Munn, MPH, *Class XI, Infectious Diseases*

The momentum in public health is moving toward a digital world that is more connected with increasing demands for medical data from multiple sources to be available for healthcare decision-making and public health surveillance. During my fellowship, I was able to improve my data management and coding skills to meet the informatics challenges that I currently face as an epidemiologist.

Hanna Oltean, MPH, *Class XI, Infectious Diseases*

My experiences were diverse, such as creating a surveillance system to search Washington death records and working in the Emergency Operations Center at CDC during the Ebola activation. I have now entered a long-term position as an epidemiologist in my office; this would not have been possible in the current system prior to the fellowship.

Angela Rohan, PhD, *Class VI, Maternal and Child Health*

The CDC/CSTE Applied Epidemiology Fellowship Program provided me with flexibility and support to identify projects that would help me develop new skills and interests, solidifying my desire to pursue a career as a Maternal and Child Health Epidemiologist at the state level. My mentors were an amazing resource, and the host site environment exposed me to a variety of rich learning opportunities. I am honored to now serve as a mentor in the fellowship program, and I strive to replicate the amazing experience that I had for our fellows. Serving as a mentor is extremely rewarding and continues to lead to exciting collaborative projects I might not otherwise have had the opportunity to pursue.

Laura Tomedi, PhD, MPH, *Class IX, Chronic Diseases*

After my fellowship with the New Mexico Department of Health, I took a position as the Alcohol Epidemiologist, and now I am the primary mentor for a SAMHSA/CSTE fellow. The fellowship was a great opportunity to work on innovative and interesting projects in applied epidemiology. I’m excited to provide similar projects for my fellow.
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:

- Evaluation of Illinois Beach Monitoring Methods and Procedures
- Successive Infections of HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections in suburban Cook County, IL
- Cancer Registry Data by Industry and Occupation
- Epidemiology of Chronic Conditions and Cause-Specific Mortality Among Individuals With HIV Infection in Illinois
- NoroSTAT and NVSN- A Comparison of Norovirus Activity in Central Tennessee
- The Epidemiology of Occupational Injury in NYC
- Association of Persistent Organic Pollutants with Steroid Hormone Levels and Pubertal Onset in California Girls
- NHSN Data Validation
- Lyme Disease Physician Education Campaign and Evaluation
- Harmful Algal Bloom Illness Surveillance in New York State
- Performance Measures for Contraceptive Services
- Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive use in Wisconsin
- Developing a Data-to-Action Plan to Reduce the Burden of Chronic Diseases in Colorado Using Influential Factors of Healthy Living Survey Data
- Development of CRE and MDRO Survey and Surveillance System Plan
- Analysis of Outpatient Prescribing Practices for Antimicrobial Medications In Tennessee
CSTE

Current Fellow Projects

- Survey of Food Safety Knowledge and Practices among District of Columbia Residents
- Life Course Indicators Cluster Analysis
- Varicella Hospitalizations in New York City
- Evaluation of the Oklahoma Prescription Drug Disposal Program
- Chikungunya Long-term Chronic Symptom Follow-up
- Evaluation of Tuberculosis Contact Investigations in Congregate Settings outside the Home from 2010-2014 in New York City
- Select Comorbid Conditions among Persons Living with HIV/AIDS in New York City
- Analyzing Health Disparities and Vaccination Coverage in Pertussis Cases
- Impact of Diabetes Education by TB Nurses and DOT Workers on A1c levels in Diabetic Tuberculosis Patients
- Estimating the Prevalence of Hepatitis C in New York City, 2014
- Evaluating the Initial Impact of the New Jersey WIC Policy Change and Healthy Corner Store Initiative on Fruit and Vegetable Purchases using Cash Value Vouchers
- Immunization-Strengthening Surveillance for Diseases Among Newly Arrived Immigrants and Refugees
- Massachusetts Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant 5-year Needs Assessment
- Healthcare Personnel Influenza Vaccination Study
- Human Health Effects from Flooding and Other Climate Change Related Weather Events
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