



CA Public Health Corps
TRAINING & PATHWAYS PROGRAM

Monthly Fellow Spotlights
MAY 2022

What is the California Public Health Corps (CA-PHC)?

The COVID-19 pandemic illustrated the **need for a well-trained & versatile public health workforce**. To respond, the California Department of Public Health, University of California, Los Angeles, & University of California, San Francisco partnered to develop & launch the CA-PHC Training & Pathways Program in summer 2021.

The CA-PHC is a **paid training & job placement program for early-career public health professionals** to gain experience working at local health jurisdiction host sites.

CA-PHC fellows & host site preceptors receive ongoing support from the program team comprised of public health professionals from the three partner agencies.



our mission

Create a workforce pathway for early-career public health professionals from diverse backgrounds & disproportionately affected communities to conduct communicable disease prevention & control, community engagement, & emergency response activities at local health jurisdiction host sites

Ensure a well-trained public health workforce across California that can effectively & efficiently respond to public health issues to ensure the health & safety of the population

FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

Shane Gausepohl (Pronouns: He/Him)



LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTION HOST SITE
Del Norte County



Education
High School Diploma



HOMETOWN
Crescent City, CA

WHY JOIN THE CA PUBLIC HEALTH CORPS (CA-PHC)?

I was born in Crescent City, CA in Del Norte County. It is the northern-most coastal county in California. Before public health, I worked at the local county library from January 2008 to February 2020. I left my job at the library to pursue an opportunity in social media management.

In March of 2021, I found an opportunity to work at my local health department. In my new position I helped set up COVID-19 pop up vaccination sites in my county. This was my job for a few months. In June of 2020, my supervisor told me about the CA-PHC Pathways program. I felt the program would allow me to explore public health beyond COVID-19. So, I applied!

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON?

In the beginning I was working on COVID-19 case investigation/contact tracing. I have since started working more with sexually transmitted infections (STI) and other communicable diseases. My role is to make sure cases have lab reports/confidential morbidity reports (CMR) attached to the correct incident records. I will be helping with case investigation in the future. I also have been helping with HIV surveillance as support staff.

Something that I have enjoyed being a part of is the Sculpting Class for youth ages 14-25. Art has helped me regulate my mental health during the pandemic. I am happy to be able to help others learn to enhance their mental wellbeing. We have had a total of 8 sessions for the class with an average of between 2-3 youth at a time. With summer around the corner, my goal is to see this expand.

The most recent project I am working on is planning for the Summer Health Fair which is happening on July 23, 2022. We have been having weekly planning meetings with community partners. The pieces are coming together for the event, and we hope that the community has a good time. The experience has taught me a lot about community engagement.

WHAT COMES AFTER CA-PHC?

I would like to pursue a career within public health that deals with education. Something I am particularly interested in is education around destigmatizing STIs. The stigma around having STIs can cause a lot of harm mentally and socially. It is something that we need to improve.

FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

Christian Simental (Pronouns: He/Him)



LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTION HOST SITE
El Dorado County



Education
**Associates Degree in progress,
Lake Tahoe Community College**



HOMETOWN
South Lake Tahoe, CA

WHY JOIN THE CA PUBLIC HEALTH CORPS (CA-PHC)?

Before entering this program, I was working at my LHJ as an Administrative Assistant & COVID-19 Response Lead. When the opportunity with this program arose, after the original fellow left El Dorado County, I had the incredible opportunity to apply. I chose this program because I wanted to explore what else public health had to offer since my prior experience had been limited to COVID-19. Being a fellow, I knew there would be the opportunity to explore and grow professionally. I am now in my fifth month being part of this wonderful program and already have been able to gain further experience and great knowledge in public health.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON?

Currently, I am still heavily involved in the COVID-19 response at my LHJ. I remain the Lead in the COVID-19 Response and the Local COVID Liaison for Testing, Schools and State Disease Investigation Units. With the pandemic response, I have had the opportunity to wear many hats which has allowed me to show my potential and grow professionally. Most recently, I have been a part of the Vaccine Workgroup, planning future outreach for COVID-19 and flu clinics. My LHJ has been great, allowing me to express my creative side by designing graphics for clinic signage, vaccine flyers, COVID-19 county web page and spreadsheets.

With the emergence of monkeypox, my LHJ has also given me the opportunity to write our county's protocol and processes, so we are prepared when we encounter our first case. I am also reviewing other communicable disease protocols to provide input, make suggestions and participate in the process. El Dorado County has been amazing with allowing me to get involved in many projects and continue to explore more aspects of public health.

WHAT COMES AFTER CA-PHC?

My plan after the CA-PHC Pathways program is to continue to work in public health as a Disease Investigator. I really enjoy working for El Dorado County Public Health and hope to stay with the team! I am currently working on finalizing my AA degree at Lake Tahoe Community College and hope to be able to transfer to a CSU or UC college. My goal is to pursue a Bachelors in Public Health and continue with a Masters.

Once I finish my education, I am hoping to pursue a higher position in Public Health, allowing me to continue to work for my community and support their well-being. It has always been so rewarding to be able to serve my community!