

FELLOW SPOTLIGHT

Katherine Manganaro

(Pronouns: She/Her)



LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTION HOST SITE
Plumas County



EDUCATION
UC Los Angeles
BS Human Biology, Global Health



HOMETOWN
Saint Joseph, MO

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

When I first moved to California to go to UCLA, my plan was to study some sort of biological science and go on to medical school. As I journeyed further into my coursework, the field of public health started coming up quite frequently. The more I learned about it, the more I realized that my passions and goals align very closely with public health work. This led me to learn about the CA-PHC Pathways Program around the time I graduated. Being a novice in the field, I wasn't sure what to do next. I recognized CA-PHC as an amazing opportunity to get tangible experience in various areas of public health and to meet some amazing people along the way, so I applied, and the rest is history!

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON?

My role at my LHJ has changed throughout my time here. In addition to smaller projects such as writing the 20,000 Lives Quarterly Newsletter, I was originally on our COVID response team, working closely with school administration and nurses as the Plumas County School Specialist. Because COVID cases in our county have dropped and we've identified other areas of need within our LHJ, I'm taking a step back from my COVID-related duties and focusing more on harm reduction.

The other main project I've been working on since starting is creating an operations manual for the Health Access Vending Network (HAVEN) Project. The HAVEN Project is a network of vending machines placed across the county that contain various preventative healthcare products such as HIV test kits, sterile syringes, and condoms, to name a few. Participation is completely anonymous and free. The goal of the operations manual is to provide other organizations interested in implementing a similar program with information and resources that could be of use. I recently finished the document which is free and open to be widely distributed. Since then, I've taken on a larger role in the harm reduction program and am involved in community outreach, grant management, and leading meetings.

WHAT COMES AFTER CA-PHC?

The wide range of projects I've been able to take on and general focuses of public health I've learned about throughout the duration of this program thus far have taught me that there's so much more out there for me to learn. Because of this, it seems like there will be some form of higher education in my future. Beyond that, I'd like to continue doing harm reduction work in some capacity. Otherwise, only time will tell!