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**Jr COSTEP 2008**  
**Colorado State University**  
**Santa Fe District Office**  
**Albuquerque Area**  
**Indian Health Service**



I am second bachelor student majoring in Environment Health at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. I am a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe in Fort Yates, North Dakota. I am Indian Health Service Health Professions Scholarship recipient, and I will be graduating in December. I plan on working with the Indian Health Service after I graduate. I look forward to working upon improving the overall health and livelihood of the American Indians & Alaska Natives. I was very excited to get offered the opportunity to work in the Santa Fe District Office, not only because of the beautiful scenery and the great weather but to experience a different Native American culture than the one I grew up with in South Dakota. I experienced the pueblo culture first hand working with the community members throughout my internship experience.



During my internship, I was exposed to many areas of Public Health and had the opportunity to learn a lot of hands-on experience too. My first day, I meet my preceptor Jeff Dickson, Katie Noonan, Anthony Candelaria, and the Albuquerque Area's COSTEP Elizabeth Cookson and we traveled to Jicarilla Apache Nation in Dulce, NM to do a rabies clinic. This rabies clinic was going to be largest for the whole Albuquerque Area. The town of Dulce, NM is located just south of the Colorado

border and it is surrounded by mountains and gorgeous forests. Throughout the summer I participated in several rabies clinics in the northern district of New Mexico. The Santa Fe district office provides services to the pueblos: Cochiti, Nambe, Pojoaque, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Santa Domingo, Taos, Picuris, Ohkay Owingeh (San Juan Pueblo), and the Jicarilla Apache Nation.

The beginning of my internship I would go along with Katie Noonan and Anthony Candelaria, our Environmental Health Technician to conduct surveys of tribal restaurants, senior centers kitchens, convenience stores, and travel centers. I also conducted several food vendor surveys at the local fests and celebrations and at a local tribal restaurant. After my food inspection survey I wrote a summary report



using the WebEHRS reporting system and made recommendations for improvements based on the FDA Food Code. I also assisted in an epidemiological investigation of food-borne illnesses at a local restaurant. I also assisted of environmental mold assessment at house in a pueblo community. I also assisted the DEHS staff and engineers in conducting sanitary survey of community water systems, solid waste disposal systems. I also prepared a Food handler's traing presentation for tribal members in the Northern District.

The majority of my internship was spent on major projects of developing Asthma Assessment Tools and researching environmental health indicators for the prevalence of Asthma. The research expanded from other government agencies like the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the local Environmental Health Epidemiology Bereau of the New Mexico Department of Health. I developed Indoor & Outdoor Assessment Tools to track and reduce the causes of environmental health triggers for Asthma for the pubelos communities. I developed an educational powerpoint and brochure about the prevalence of Asthma in New Mexico. I also worked on a databse which included community specific information such as community liason contact information, fax numbers, addresses, and email addresses, titled the Community Alert Network (CAN). The CAN will assist in the dissemination of information and communication with community partners.

I would strongly encourage anyone who is in need of an internship to apply for a COSTEP. You get to experience a broad spectrum of environmental health issues and experience something new everyday. The experience really challenges you personally and professionally and gives you a chance to develop your problem solving skills. This experience really gives you a glimpse into what public health is really about, by making a difference in people's lives. I would like to extend thanks to Jeff Dickison, my preceptor, and to all of the staff at the Santa Fe District Office for giving the best advice, insight, and experience ever.