Chemung County Health Department Internship Program

The Chemung County Health Department (CCHD) is a local county public health department based in Elmira, New York. Our mission is to *Promote and respond to our community's health needs, Demonstrate teamwork through open communication, support, respect and accountability and Provide efficient, courteous, professional service fairly and consistently.* We have extensive collaborative relationships with other community based organizations that support public health issues. CCHD will offer interns experience on a variety of public health related issues. The Chemung County Health Department serves more than 88,000 citizens by preventing disease, protecting the environment, and promoting healthy lifestyles with a vision of healthy people living in healthy communities.

**Internship and volunteer opportunities at the Chemung County Health Department**

Public Health has exciting internship and volunteer opportunities available for undergraduate and graduate students. These positions, all within the Chemung County Health Dept., will complement education with experience to help prepare candidates for the professional public health world awaiting them upon graduation. Opportunities range from HIV education or prevention, emergency preparedness, tobacco control, women’s health, environmental health, health policy, health communications, or community health in the field. These are just a few of the topics we handle day to day. The following information provides details on some ways students can get involved.

**Chemung County Undergraduate/Graduate Internships:**

An intern is defined as someone who wishes to receive community service or academic credit upon completion of their hours. Students wishing to earn community service or academic credit in exchange for their time MUST do so through the system set up at their school. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure all the proper steps have been taken to earn service or educational credits.

**Overview of responsibilities and tasks that may be available:**

Expectations may include, but not be limited to a variety of projects and tasks that promote and support the work of the CCHD and improve community health such as:

- Implementing and delivering health education programs
- Drafting health-related materials, such as brochures, social media content, and displays
- Collecting data to analyze needs and evaluate programs
- Assist with health education events/workshops/trainings
- Community outreach and education projects
- Work with our partners on various health improvement projects
- Advocacy at local and state levels

CCHD interns will be encouraged to align their activities with their personal and professional interests when possible. They will be expected to document progress as they pursue learning objectives and provide a final written report of their experience.

During the internship, the Public Health Intern will gain experience promoting, maintaining, and improving individual and community health by assisting individuals and communities in adopting healthy policies and/or behaviors. The intern may assist in collecting and analyzing data to identify community needs prior to planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programs designed to encourage healthy lifestyles, policies and environments.

In most instances, the intern will report directly to the Public Health Program Coordinator. The intern will set a flexible schedule within the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday, with occasional evening and weekend hours possible for Health Dept. events.

**Skills Preferred** – Excellent time management, organizational, interpersonal, computer, written & verbal communication skills are preferred
Goals of CCHD internships might include:

- Establish, implement, and evaluate learning goals and objectives;
- Integrate academic coursework and theory with community-based practice;
- Expand on their understanding of the role of health-related agencies in the community setting;
- Analyze the role of public/community health professionals in relation to agency activities;
- Analyze the role of public/community health professionals in relation to the health of the community;
- Gain an understanding of the organization, administration, program activities, and problems of public/community health agencies;
- Improve skills and professional development through on-the-job training;
- Participate in, and assume responsibilities for planning, implementing, administering, and/or evaluating some specific part of the agency's program(s);
- Identify individual and community level needs for health promotion and disease prevention;
- Identify principles of community health that are needed for the development of effective health promotion and disease prevention strategies;
- Apply statistics and research methods to accurately describe the distribution of, and examine the determinants of population health;
- Apply statistics and research methods to community health program evaluations;
- Describe how to plan, implement and administer short- and long-term community health interventions;
- Communicate and disseminate the results of community health program evaluations;
- Describe how to advocate for effective community health initiatives at the local, state and federal levels;
- Identify strategies that effectively incorporate cultural competence within health promotion and community health initiatives;
- Demonstrate competency in planning, preparing and delivering effective community health presentations.

Possible Internship Areas:

Interns may select from activities such as:

**Policy & Advocacy**

Research health improvement related system and policy changes. Work closely with local businesses, organizations, and legislators to assess readiness for policy change, determine process to achieve policy change, advocate and encourage policy change and adoption. Update advocacy and educational materials, and fact sheets to support policy change. Record and report progress at monthly Healthy Priority Partnership meetings. Assist in the development of plans for any community, business or legislative activities that help implement policy change and raise awareness of CCHD activities. Assist with the development and preparation of testimony for various community, business or legislative meetings. Assist with direct outreach and communication to targeted audience by mailings, emails and phone calls to promote our advocacy. Assist with planning implementation or follow-up to community, business and/or legislative forums and meetings. Utilize CCHD website, social media, and local media outlets to update and inform residents and community partners on important public health advocacy issues.

**Program Planning & Communications**

Develop CCHD informational and educational literature and hand-outs for professional or lay audiences. Network with existing CCHD partners and collaborative organizations and identify new organizations whose missions and objectives complement that of CCHD and with whom new partnerships should be pursued to achieve objectives. Represent CCHD and offer health education input at coalition meetings. Assist with public relations, including development of press releases and promotional materials. Assist with direct outreach and communication to Chemung County residents, leaders, and partner organizations. Conduct needs assessments to identify community concerns and assets. Determine how to address needs through the coordination of community resources. Utilize and update CCHD website and facebook content in support of health department activities.
Research
Assist in identifying possible funding sources to support CCHD initiatives. Assist in gathering and organizing data, statistics, and background materials for CCHD grants, cooperative agreements, and special topics. Research and report on CCHD priority topic areas as identified in the scope of work. Attend and report on local meetings to gather information as needed. Conduct focus groups or surveys to inform and/or support CCHD projects.

Other
Deliver direct program support to CCHD staff, projects, and activities as needed. Assist in coordination of coalition meetings including developing agendas, researching meeting topics, taking minutes. Perform data entry for various projects, ranging from minutes to survey data, mailing, answering inquiries, etc. Analyze and develop program materials in support of CCHD activities.

Sample Intern Projects
- Development and delivery of community based health education topics such as diabetes prevention, wellness, proper nutrition, weight management, heart health, lead prevention, tobacco cessation, and immunizations.
- Assist with the development and implementation of special projects as needed.
- Work to conduct health education programs and outreach at local schools.
- Work with partner agencies to conduct research.
- Survey members at all levels as part of an internal review process towards quality improvement.
- Assist in the development of web based materials for targeted audiences.
- Assist with the coordination and promotion of events.
- Assist with identifying grant opportunities, grant writing and proposal development.

Intern benefits may include (depending on projects):
Opportunity to attend and learn from health related community coalitions; interact and network with leaders and members in the local community; gain valuable work experience in a professional office setting, with potential for letters of recommendation; interact with public health leaders in Chemung County and learn how a local public health department operates and is managed. Student will interact with staff and contribute to the organization including learning how local health programs are planned, managed, and evaluated; how coalitions are developed and nurtured; how advocacy efforts are planned and implemented and other experiences pertinent to advanced competencies of public health professionals and working in a business environment.

Qualifications and Prior Experience
Qualified applicants should be a pursuing a bachelor's or a graduate degree in public health, health education, community health, health promotion, preventive medicine, or a related discipline, and completed two or more years of coursework with a 3.0 GPA or above desired, but not required. Coursework in health education, behavioral theory, multicultural communications, program planning, advocacy and policy/environmental approaches to improving health and other health education competencies is preferred. Other candidates will be considered on a case by case basis.

The ideal candidate will be able to work with minimal supervision; have excellent oral, written, and interpersonal communication skills; attention to detail; reliable and prompt; able to commit to the agreed upon schedule; able to deal tactfully with a variety of personalities; and able to work in a team environment.

Required: Microsoft Office programs including Word, Excel, and Publisher desired. Student should be highly motivated and a self-starter needing a minimum of supervision. Office location is 103 Washington St. Elmira, NY 14901.

Housing CCHD is not able to provide housing for interns.

Stipend
No stipends are currently available.