

My timely internship with NBEC

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Roe v Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that made access to reproductive health a constitutional right, was overturned Friday, June 24, 2022.

Before this summer, my knowledge about abortions did not extend beyond the questions of morality and a woman's right to choose. I had no understanding of state and local government efforts to restrict access to abortion, or the fact the fight to strip away birthing peoples' right to reproductive health began long before the Roe v Wade decision was made. While I learned about these specific court decisions and

its effects on my own, working as a summer intern for the president's office of the National Birth Equity Collaborative (NBEC) helped me make it through this summer by providing a learning community of Black, women scholars and professionals with whom I could digest current events with and dream of a better future. Going into this position, I knew that there was a very strong possibility that Roe v Wade would be overturned, but I had no idea what our nation would look like afterward.

As an intern, I was able to bring any and all questions to my co-workers. I was able to hear both real-time responses and continued movements that were initiated because of the Roe decision.

The overturning of Roe v Wade was not at the forefront of my internship experience as it is one of many threats to Black maternal and infant health. However, working for a reproductive justice focused public policy collaborative, showed me the behind-the-scenes conversations, negotiations, and decisions that political representatives and reproductive justice activists make as a community. NBEC's role in this community is to launch a cultural revolution that asserts the foundations of Black feminist theory as basic and mastered knowledge in the Public Health and affiliated communities. Hearing these processes with NBEC's goal in mind, I learned the importance of "smaller" actions like daily accountability, use of precise language, awareness of media tactics, and following through to find an answer to the question "why?". As I continue my academic and professional journey, I will practice these values and push for the cultural revolution I helped establish this summer.