

Summer with the Check It Team

Tue, 06/09/2020 - 00:00

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Anna Bluthardt newcomb@tulane.edu

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Hello! My name is Anna Bluthardt, and I am a rising senior studying Public Health at Tulane. This summer I have the remarkable opportunity of working with the Tulane School of Public Health and Dr. Alyssa Lederer on projects surrounding adolescent and reproductive health. The intersection of public health, reproductive rights, and sexual health has always been of interest to me, and I am passionate about exploring how all of these interact within research, study design, and healthcare settings to hopefully fill research gaps, improve health outcomes and understand

barriers to receiving care. My first few weeks of the internship have focused on gaining background knowledge on the *Check It* study and STI prevalence in New Orleans. The *Check It* study focuses on screening young African American men with the goals of preventing chlamydia among women, encouraging sexual education and health, and partner communication. My first project with Dr. Lederer will be focusing on young African American men's reactions to a positive chlamydia diagnosis, and I have started a literature review summary table to collect the current research on the topic. I have harnessed my literature review skills and used Tulane's resources to access databases and scholarly sources. I studied the qualitative interview guide used to interview participants in the study, and the *Check It* survey administered to participants. I will then progress to looking at interview transcriptions with participants in the *Check It* study to gain valuable insight for my research question. I am excited about my work this summer because it promotes the balance of working on a research team as well as independently, engaging with the New Orleans community to identify health needs and striving to eliminate health disparities. As interns during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are also practicing online communication skills with our peers, fellow researchers, and community partners. I am delighted to keep posting about my progress this summer and I look forward to my next update!