

Sharing my work as a researcher and reproductive rights advocate

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Student VOICES, Student ACTION

Jeffrey Lederer (M.D. '17) is researching in reproductive and sexual health and women's health and justice. She began to work as a physician. This summer, she interned with Dr. Alyssa Lederer in reproductive rights and reproductive health.

This summer, I worked with Dr. Alyssa Lederer on sexual health and reproductive rights advocacy. Specifically, the prevalence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is increasing for the first time in almost a decade. Young people are getting infected at nearly 50%, and sexuality education is crucial to mitigate the transmission and transmission of these conditions. Conducting qualitative analysis, I focused on college students' knowledge of STIs. Dr. Lederer and I developed a survey to measure the understanding of critical sexual health information before and after viewing an educational program. The outcomes of our research will be available from the Tulane pre- and post-test format provided questionnaire data about perceived knowledge levels, open ended responses, and the sexual health information they explicitly learned as a result of the program. I spent many weeks integrating the data to understand and then develop a sexual health education based on the findings I developed.

Within my area of focus, sex and sexuality education has been exposed as a critical issue in education and methods within my field. An important subject, in addition to identifying college students' gaps in STI knowledge, my other project involved helping to develop a communication measure for the

National College Health Assessment (NCHA) survey, and I assisted Dr. Lederer with her work on reproductive rights and advocating for a family planning and comprehensive counseling grant proposal. Each of these projects involved different parts of the research process, whether it was funding to start a project, instruments design to collect data, or analysis to present results. While

"I learned how reproductive health and justice pervade economic, housing, criminal, and other issues."

I enjoyed the autonomy of the research and the support of my advisor. I had weekly meetings with Dr. Lederer to discuss my findings.

I am grateful at how much I learned from Dr. Lederer. Her passion for learning a new idea always motivates me. I expanded my research presentation skills and learned to great introduction, methodology, and discussion and conclusions. As a neuroscience and public health student, I have a profound appreciation for scientific advancements and how research can influence systematic processes.

I hope our findings inform health care providers and advocates to fight the prevalence of STIs. While my desire to become a physician has not wavered, I now hope to continue my education in public health and advocacy. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn in a new field of study. I am grateful for the support of my advisor, I expanded my research presentation skills and learned to great introduction, methodology, and discussion and conclusions. As a neuroscience and public health student, I have a profound appreciation for scientific advancements and how research can influence systematic processes.

Tulane community is the key issues we are working on.

This internship also introduced me to the pervasive impact of reproductive health in society. Through the work of Dr. Lederer, other researchers and guest lecturers, I learned how reproductive health and justice affects education, housing, and criminal justice. I have also learned to continue as an advocate for reproductive health and rights issues.

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I cannot believe I am over halfway through the Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health Internship for the semester. My work with Dr. Lederer has been an invaluable exposure to sexuality health education. Last blog, I wrote about the strides I have made in my scientific writing. At each weekly meeting, Dr. Lederer and I add to the manuscript, refining the introduction, methodology, and results. I value the collaborative process, as I have learned from her feedback and writing style, and I hope these skills will inform future projects. Once, these sections are more solidified and polished, we will begin the work on the discussion where we can not

only interpret findings and compare results to previous work, but also explain the implications of the research of sexuality education knowledge gaps and how health professionals can mitigate knowledge deficiencies.

As discussed previously, working on the manuscript has improved my scientific writing. The final product will be submitted to a scientific sexuality health education journal whose readership is primarily composed of researchers, clinicians, and educators to hopefully guide improved education practices. Nevertheless, writing for public audiences can be just as important as academic groups. Over the summer, the Media Specialist at the Newcomb College Institute asked to feature my work as a Reproductive Rights and Reproductive Health Intern in NEWCOMB Magazine. I was elated at the opportunity to share my internship experience with others. Over Homecoming weekend, the magazine was distributed and Newcomb alumni and Tulane parents read about my personal and academic progress from the internship.

In my short article, I discussed the individual projects that I completed or was working on with Dr. Lederer as well as the broader implications of the internship experience. I wrote of connection to a group of women leaders that shares the same passion for reproductive justice, but developed the interest from diverse pathways. I discussed the inspiring professionals who took time out of their work days to speak about health, housing, economic, and criminal justice issues and explained the obvious and (often) not so apparent connection of their work to reproductive justice. I am so grateful to be featured in the magazine and not only share my development as a researcher, but also my growth as a reproductive rights advocate. I will continue to share my engagement with the field whether it is in print, online, or in person.