

Finishing Strong

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As I write, I have just arrived for RA training in New Orleans and have had time to reflect on what I've been referring to as my dream summer. As a refresher, I was working at [The Rogosin Institute](#) in New York this summer. Affiliated with New York Presbyterian/Weill Cornell, Rogosin combines compassionate clinical care with innovative cutting edge research, policy analysis and humanitarian outreach. Though I came in with outlined learning objectives, I also brought an open and hungry mind, yearning to soak up as much about healthcare and community engagement as possible.

The environment here is extremely collaborative and I am exposed to a range of settings: from professional meetings with health care providers and researchers to community health worker trainings on kidney health to a Brooklyn community meeting in a local diner. I truly felt I was at the intersection of community engagement and healthcare. Though at times a lack of routine/schedule posed as a challenge, I am grateful to have had to problem solve and think on my feet. To my surprise and benefit, I learned that I thrive working in a less structured environment.

This unique work environment connected me with mentors who have helped pave the way for aspiring healthcare professionals like myself, and whose work emphasizes the needs of vulnerable populations. I also appreciated being able to create, implement, and see through projects; many peer institute internship programs only allow for students to focus on a specific part of a project. To name a few, I was able to create our new monthly newsletter titled Rogosin Reader, develop a coloring book therapy initiative in waiting rooms and promote/fund the project through Google One Today, and spearhead a Kidney Kindness Whiteboard Campaign.

My passion for photography and human rights storytelling led me to work for [Voice of Witness](#), where I serve as an Advisory Board Member. Little did I know that these skills would be applicable in a Kidney Dialysis Center. In my internship, I have become the go-to photographer.

This summer I also applied to be a delegate for The Novus Summit. On July 17, 2016, 47 speakers entered the United Nations General Assembly Hall in New York City to share in this incredibly transformative experience. We based our work on the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

As the Founder, Kunal Sood, reflected, "Innovators, psychologists, CEOs, fashion models, journalists, doctors, humanitarians, entrepreneurs, and youth explored the worlds of science, global well-being, and the pursuit of happiness to promote human flourishing during the morning session of Novus Summit. The power of a healthful diet, the science of happiness, and the incredible telepresence and application of technology such as the Beam and life saving drones allow us to have meaningful interaction with people on the other side of the planet. The energy in the UN General Assembly Hall shifted in the afternoon session to help us dream, wonder, and provoke new thoughts while highlighting exponential technology, innovation, and global impact. We explored how to confront a lack of empathy, begin a journey of

inquiry, face human rights violations, and how to solve international problems by taking a page from the incredible women and men who participated in the international space program.”

Novus was an incredible experience and I was also able to generally talk about Rogosin to a couple people. To name just a few of my favorite speakers, I was blown away by Leslee Edwin (Director of India’s Daughter) , Martin Seligman (the founder of Positive Psychology), and Mason Zayid (one of my favorite TED talks and comedians). Being from the Bay Area, the Silicon Valley social innovation buzz is not new to me. However, I was in awe of some of the initiatives that married technology with humanity.

Specific advise for students looking to intern in this field/at The Rogosin Institute: I would tell new interns to first learn more about CKD and PSBH/The Institute’s history. This can be done by reading and researching, but also by listening to all of the moving parts of The Rogosin Institute (clinical, administrative, research, and community outreach). There are so many different people working towards the Institute’s vision of promoting better health, and all of their experiences are very unique and worth taking the time to listen to. I was able to develop deeper relationships with inspiring public health professionals and “do-ers.” Don’t be afraid to ask thoughtful questions because it’s one of the best ways to find mentorship and guidance that applies to your journey as well. Though we talked a lot about the social determinants of health and interventions that take such dynamics into account, it would be beneficial to directly address how our intersectional identities (i.e. race, class, gender identity, etc.) impact working with different communities in the Greater New York area. Many organizations and non-profits that engage closely with communities of people of color have their staff go through such trainings.

Some of the best advice I have been given is to write down your dream and tell it to people as much as possible. I’ll never forget Pam telling me her career and life journey as a few of us sat around a table in Brownsville Recreation Center, preparing for a massive event, Old Timers Day. She’s been at the Rogosin Institute for over 14 years and landed the position by telling her dream to to a woman in her gym class.

So after this ~Dream Summer~ I have been able to do some soul searching and also reaffirm my career goals. After receiving my Masters of Health Administration I would like to manage a holistic health center and clinic to provide coordinated care to those who usually lack access. This internship has placed me at the cornerstone

of healthcare and community engagement. These are not mutually exclusive at all; but in fact intersectional as well. I would also like to find a niche market for someone with my love for oral history/ photography, experience with gender based violence prevention, and passion for improving healthcare.