

Maggie's First Week on the Job

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Hello Readers!

My name is Maggie Herman and I am a rising senior at Tulane majoring in public health and minoring in political science and international development.

What is your internship this summer, Maggie?

This summer I am interning with the New Orleans Regional AIDS Planning Council (NORAPC). NORAPC works to develop and maintain a comprehensive system of care for individuals living with HIV/AIDS in New Orleans Metropolitan area. NORAPC is a federally mandated public planning body working in collaboration with the Mayor's Office of Health Policy and Office of Public Health. NORAPC is funded by the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Modernization Act of 2009, which provides funding for various HIV/AIDS services. The planning council brings members of the affected community together with health officials to plan how to allocate funding as well as formulate recommendations of policy changes for the future based on the needs of the effected population.

Many are unaware (including myself pre-internship) that the New Orleans Metropolitan area is ranked FIFTH in AIDS case rates in 2010 among large metropolitan areas in the United States. HIV/AIDS is a huge health issue in New Orleans and this council works to promote positive change.

What are you internship responsibilities?

As of my first week I have worked to update informational materials for the members of the planning council. The various committees of the planning council and well as the whole general council will use there materials later in the summer to prioritize what they believe are the greatest issues facing the HIV/AIDS community in the New Orleans Metropolitan area.

Over the course of the summer I will continue to learn how to collect, organize and analyze data. I will also have the opportunity to participate in NORAPC community planning meetings as well as learn about New Orleans' HIV/AIDS local infrastructure to address the community's HIV/AIDS needs.

How did you find and secure your internship?

I found my internship through Tulane's Center for Public Service's website. Using the search tools, I narrowed down the organizations that related to my field of study and personal interests. Though I have already completed my second tier service learning through a CPS internship, CPS's website is extremely comprehensive and a great tool for learning about organizations. I sent and email to NORAPC asking if there were any internship positions available, and much to my delight there was one! I attended one of the planning council's monthly public meetings. After attending the

meeting and learning a little more about the organization, I decided this internship would be an excellent learning opportunity.

What are my expectations for the summer?

I'm really interested in gaining a better understanding of how public health and the public health concepts that I have learned about in my undergraduate courses really work in the "real world". I am looking forward to learning about the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS in New Orleans because the issue is so multi-dimensional and multi-faceted.