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**JRCOSTEP Summer 2016**  
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My experience with the Office of Environmental Health and Engineering (OEH&E) at the Fort Defiance Indian Hospital in Arizona has been very educational. I have learned so much in the short time I have been stationed here. This is the first time I was away from home for a long period of time, and the farthest as well. The area is very different from what I'm used to, but from the moment I arrived I fell in love with the atmosphere and the people. The richest experiences were when I would drive to Gallup, NM every weekend and immerse myself in the local traditions and culture.

I loved working in this office because every day I got to experience different parts of the job and what it entails. I loved the office staff. They always wanted to know how my weekends went and were always offering to take me on assignments and help me when I needed it. Whenever we were in the car going on a case they would teach me how to handle the situation as well as information on the subject we were investigating.

While here I performed multiple objectives in order to gain a better understanding of the job and to learn to perform the job duties on my own. I assisted the OEH&E staff with the annual rabies clinic by preparing rabies supplies, and administering rabies vaccine to local dogs and cats. I also helped conduct water surveys, as well as food surveys. The surveys included high schools, elementary schools, an assisted living center, a child care center, and a community water source. I helped monitor food vendors and celebration activities at the local Fourth of July celebration. I also worked on a summer long project involving car seats. I did research to see what car seat policies exist in the hospital, created an educational brochure, as well as collect information from car seat observational surveys.



Though most of the work was done in the field, much was done in the office where we had to write reports, create brochures, and teach classes to people on food safety as well as car seat usage. It was great to experience the area first hand learning and gaining experience in environmental health. The weekends provided many opportunities to travel and sight-see. One weekend my sister came and we went to Canyon De Chelly, as well as the window rock trail. Seeing what beauty this area has really made me enjoy my time even more.

This internship exposed me to some serious topics. On the Navajo Nation and throughout the state of Arizona an outbreak of *Shigella* was noticed. Shigellosis is a diarrheal disease and the outbreak allowed me to learn more about the disease, causes of it, and how to prevent it. Our job as sanitarians was to educate the public by telling them how to prevent an infection or lower their risk of infection.

By and large, my COSTEP was a fantastic experience. I have learned more than I could have hoped for, and have been exposed to so much in the field of environmental health. I feel prepared to go back to school and find a job in the work force because of the information I have gained from this internship. I highly recommend looking into the JRCOSTEP.