

As a Fellow at NIAID, I was tasked with a variety of small- and large-scale projects. Some of these projects were developed around my personal interests and experiences, while others stemmed from the needs of the Office of Global Research (OGR) team. With every effort came a learning experience. I find my experience as a Fellow at OGR to be a rich one, and one that will contribute to the impact I will make in my future endeavors.

As a result of my recent abroad experience in Bolivia and interest in zoonotic disease emergence and reemergence in Latin America, I was tasked with writing a White Paper around potential collaboration between NIAID and Bolivia. This required exploring background information on the country (i.e. geography, economy, health status, prominent infectious diseases), past and present NIAID-funded grant awards, potential grant awards for future research, prominent infectious disease researchers, as well as interviewing both US- and Bolivia-based researchers. What ensued was a 40-report as well as a slide deck from my presentation to the OGR team. Following the presentation, I continued my efforts to initiate collaboration between NIAID and Bolivia by providing the Bolivian researchers I had interviewed with a list of NIAID-funded grant award opportunities they could pursue as well as introducing a Bolivian researcher to US infectious disease (ID) researcher who has the largest ID research presence in Bolivia of any US academic institution. Additionally, I am in the midst of exploring possible visiting Fellow candidates for NIAID's intramural program. It is also worth noting that it is possible I will collaborate with one these researchers on a grant in the future as a result of this project.

In addition to this, I have assisted in developing a variety of resources for OGR, including a comparison chart for the various trainings that federal employees can take prior to international travel. Similarly, I assisted in creating a chart for global-scale initiatives of interest to NIAID around COVID-19, which included information on the organization it was established by, the aims, funding partners, and organizations involved. As a result of COVID-19, I was tasked with assisting in compiling all NIAID-affiliated COVID-19 publications, a living document that is added to on a daily basis. Particularly timely given the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, a NIAID-WHO Collaboration Center was recently established, and for that I helped develop a SharePoint site to capture WHO requests and activities. Additionally, one of my first tasks as a Fellow was to draft an article for Inside NIAID, which pertained to a new safety training requirement established by the US-Embassy in Bamako, Mali, for Federal employees, and included information around the nature of the training, its necessity, relevant exceptions, and information around how to obtain it. Lastly, I am currently completing a project evaluation of seven pilot projects that took place in collaboration with Mongolia. My role is to evaluate what has been accomplished as a result of these projects, what subsequent activity stemmed as a result of them and the thoroughness of various reports and evaluations provided to NIAID by the Civilian Research and Development Foundation (CRDF).

I was very intentional when choosing possible internship sites for my academic program. My goal was to pursue an internship at a site that could offer me an experience that my academic

courses could not, and I feel that I accomplished just that. When it comes to mentorship, I appreciate that my preceptors tailored some of my activities to my interests, and that they fully understood my personal goals and intent prior to bringing me onto the team. I was always encouraged to incorporate my perspective, particularly because of my background in social science. Because of the nature of the office, COVID-19 impacted both workflow and priorities. There were times where I had to put larger projects aside and pick up smaller-scaled requests as they came in. As a result, I had to embrace flexibility and the inability to always be in control, a skill necessary and relevant to any position. In closing, as a result of this fellowship, I have acquired a great deal of knowledge, experience and perspective that I know will play an integral role when pursuing a career upon graduation.