

ENS Timothy ARR
JRCOSTEP Summer 2016
Missouri Southern State University
Billings Area Office
Billings, Montana



My name is Timothy Arr and I am a senior at Missouri Southern State University (MSSU) in Joplin, MO studying Environmental Health and Safety. In 2015, I completed my first JRCOSTEP and gained a lot of experience in the field of Environmental Health and Safety. After completion of my first JRCOSTEP, I came back to MSSU ready to learn more and reapply to the JRCOSTEP.

In May 2016 I began my second JRCOSTEP experience at the Indian Health Service, Billings Area Office, Division of Environmental Health Services. The first week in the office involved quite a bit of orientation but also included a lot of learning about the local tribes in Montana and Wyoming.

In the following few weeks I worked mostly with the Crow Tribe in Crow Agency, MT and conducted quantitative respirator fit testing at the Crow Hospital. While working at the Crow Hospital, I gained an expansive knowledge on the local culture and history, and also the problems faced by many of the tribes in the Area. Also at this time, I was able to expand my knowledge on general safety requirements in hospitals and in the workplace. I also used this time to network with so many people and came to enjoy working with each and every one of them.

While working in the Billings Area Office, I was able to work with so many people with many different responsibilities and backgrounds. There were many notable people, including each individual sanitarian for the tribes, safety officers, and many other people at the tribal, federal, and state levels. Each of these people, including my preceptor, Darcy Merchant, taught me a lot about the Area, their background, and the duties that they perform and what it takes to succeed in the Indian Health Service in this Area. I was able to participate in food service surveys, temporary food establishment surveys, spay/neuter clinics, rabies vaccination clinics, quantitative respirator fit testing, bike rodeos, and numerous trainings. Some of the most notable work I was able to do was working at the different powwows in Montana and Wyoming. The experience of going to these locations and getting to witness, first-hand, the culture of the area, was absolutely amazing.

Throughout the internship I had a few projects to work on. The projects consisted of evaluating the amount of work being done by each Tribe's Sanitarian by going through the database called WebEHRS. There were other projects including working with ArcGIS, assisting with seatbelt surveys, and many other numerous activities.

The last few weeks I spent assisting a local organization in Billings called the Rocky Mountain Tribal Epidemiology Center (RMTEC) on injury prevention planning. RMTEC received funding from the IHS Tribal Injury Prevention Cooperative Agreement Program for 2015-2020. It was here that I met some amazing people and got to work cooperatively to set up different trainings. I was able to learn a lot about RMTEC and got to see a different view from working with the local tribes.

During my internship I had a chance to travel to many different places both on and off the clock. I was able to visit some very notable places including: Yellowstone National Park and Beartooth Pass; Glacier National Park; Flathead Lake; Seeley-Swan Valley; Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument; and many more. One of my favorite places to visit was Fort Washakie, WY which is on the Wind River Reservation. The sights and scenery at the Wind River Service Unit and the surrounding areas were amazing and leaves you speechless. Each place I visited in Montana and Wyoming were all so amazing in their own way.

I would like to thank all of the people I worked with for everything they have taught me and the experiences I have gained while working with each and every one of them. I would like to thank all of the tribes I worked with for allowing me the opportunity to come and work with them. Each tribe I worked with now holds a special place in my memories and I am thankful for the time I had with each and every one of them. Each location I worked at welcomed me with open arms and provided me with the knowledge and skills that will help me in my decisions for future work.

The JRCOSTEP can provide a person with the skills and experience one might need to be successful in the field of Environmental Health and Safety. I would highly recommend any student to apply and if chosen take in everything you can while you are there because the skills, experiences you have there, as well as the memories and friends you make, will definitely last a lifetime.

