

**ENS Jessica Broach  
JRCOSTEP Summer 2023  
Harvard University  
Reno District Office  
Reno, Nevada**



My name is Jessica Broach and I am graduate student at Harvard University. I will be graduating in the spring of 2024 with a Master of Science in Epidemiology with a concentration in Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology. I was introduced to the Junior Commissioned Officer Student Training and Extern Program (JRCOSTEP) through my undergraduate advisor and decided to apply after attending an information session and hearing from previous COSTEPs' experiences. I knew this would be the perfect opportunity for me since I have an interest in working in State or Federal government for my public health career.

A few months after I applied, I was fortunate to receive an offer to be an extern with the Indian Health Service at the Reno District Office in Nevada. I was very excited as I had never been to the west side of the country before and in May of 2023 I began a four-day road trip from Michigan, traveling over 2000 miles. My preceptor was LT Francis Park, who is an Environmental Health Officer at the Reno District Office within the Office of Environmental Health and Engineering, Division of Environmental Health Services. My first few days there, we discussed the different activities I would get to participate in this summer including conducting surveys of food establishments, conducting rabies virus vaccination clinics, attending a food handler course, and traveling to the Uintah & Ouray Reservation for their 4<sup>th</sup> of July Powwow.

Throughout the summer, I was also assigned an individual project in which I used injury data from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to create summaries of the types of injuries experienced in several tribal communities in Nevada. This involved sorting through each individual case in an Excel spreadsheet and classifying injuries such as poisonings, falls, suffocations, etc. A problem we ran into was that we had a lot of data that did not contain information on specific type of injury but instead only had information on the type of physical harm or bodily damage such as fractures and sprains. We decided it would still be valuable to include information on the types of physical damage experienced in cases that we could not determine injury type. In the end, I created community profiles for nine tribal communities and a profile for the entire state of Nevada. These profiles will be presented to tribal leadership to support the creation of programs to help prevent injuries in these communities.

In addition to experiencing what a career in the U.S. Public Health Service as an Environmental Health Officer would look like, I got to do a lot of traveling for my externship and for personal experiences. Since I had never been to this part of the country, I took every opportunity to travel to new places. As part of my externship, I flew to Las Vegas and Salt Lake City, traveled to Northern and Eastern Nevada to conduct rabies virus vaccination clinics, and visit Bishop, CA to conduct food establishment surveys. In my personal time, I attended many local events in Reno like Food Truck Fridays and the Biggest Little Wing Fest, traveled to the Bay Area for a few concerts, and visited Lake Tahoe and Napa Valley.

My summer as a JRCOSTEP was an incredibly rewarding experience that furthered my passion to work in government and help underserved and minority communities and I definitely plan on applying to the U.S. Public Health Service in the future. Although I miss my family and I am ready to head home, I very much enjoyed my time in Reno and I highly recommend anyone with an interest in working in government to apply to be a JRCOSTEP.



Picture of Golden Gate Bridge from travels to San Francisco