

During Fall 2020, public health undergraduate student interns collaborated with health department staff and Zuckerman College of Public Health faculty and staff to complete community engagement projects on behalf of the Academic Health Department Initiative. The students created a blog summarizing their experiences.



Jassmin Castro

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During my internship for MEZCOPH's Office of Community Engagement and Outreach's Academic Health Department, I coordinated efforts to formalize an Academic Health Department partnership with Pinal County Health Department. I am passionate about the health of my community and how I can serve those around me. Since I grew up in Pinal County, I was able to bring to the internship an understanding of my community needs and potential health messaging strategies. While working with the health department, I collaborated with the Epidemiology Division Manager and the Public Health Director on a variety of projects driven by the community's needs.

As part of my internship, I revised and reviewed Pinal County Health Department's School Toolkit for responding to and reporting disease outbreaks and created educational information for parents, students, staff, and nurses. I developed the COVID-19 chapter for the school toolkit and researched content and messaging for infographics that were made in collaboration with a fellow graphic design intern. Additionally, I created content for messaging Influenza prevention as the upcoming flu season, in combination with the COVID-19 pandemic, continues to be a concern. I developed messaging explaining the difference between a "case" and an "exposure" to reduce confusion among the community. Some organizations in Pinal County expressed concern on how to report a case while also respecting the individual's privacy. In response to these concerns, I collaborated with Pinal County Health Department to draft a letter to schools addressing privacy concerns. I met with MEZCOPH faculty member, Leila Barraza, to understand confidentiality laws, especially in regards to school outbreaks. While working on these projects, I also collaborated with University of Arizona faculty, Professor Kelly Reynolds, to learn more about disease transmission. This internship has been a great opportunity to learn from a variety of public health professionals and understand the roles and responsibilities of a health department.



COVID-19 Case vs. Exposure Letter Template

Dear _____

This letter is to inform you of the definition of a Coronavirus (COVID-19) "case" and an "exposure". As Coronavirus cases increase in our country and our community, we urge you to