

Mentoring Students and Early Career Professionals

2025 UPHA - Olivia Jolly, MPH



Who am I? Why me?

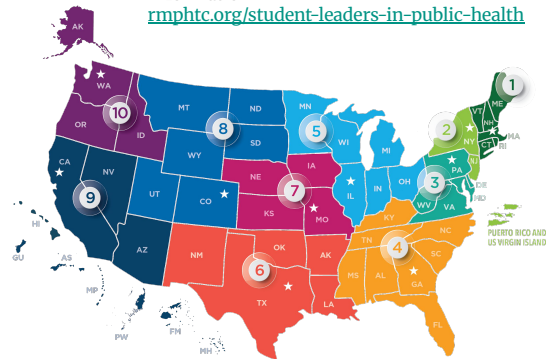


- ❑ Intern
- ❑ Supervisor
- ❑ Faculty Member
- ❑ Manager/Stipend Program
- ❑ Supervise Team of Students
- ❑ Mom of 2 Gen Alpha



Regional Public Health Training Center Network

Student Leaders in Public Health Stipend Information
rmphtc.org/student-leaders-in-public-health



Objectives

*a few session norms



- ❑ Describe the importance of mentoring student workers and young professionals as a pathway and retention tool
- ❑ Identify strategies to provide quality, consistent mentoring to student workers and young professionals
- ❑ Discuss specific workforce needs and strategies to recruit students and young professionals
- ❑ Identify Generations of the Workforce



Why is this topic important to you?

- ☐ New to PH - learning "all the things"
- ☐ Currently Work with Higher Ed Students (ex MPH)
- ☐ Want to work with Higher Ed Students
- ☐ Supervisor of Emerging Leaders
- ☐ Higher Ed Student or Young Professional



Pair and Share Activity - Reflection

1 minute per person

Discuss your first internship experience or first job experience

Who was your supervisor?

What do you remember most?



PBL/Internships/Experiential Learning

WHY is this important?

- ☐ Increased value to student's development and provides benefit to the host organization = WIN! WIN!
- ☐ Students complete projects the org may not have capacity to complete = EXTRA HELP!
- ☐ Students provide an inquisitive approach and may provide creative ideas and solutions = FRESH SET OF IDEAS!
- ☐ Students build professional capacity and may be recruited to become part of org's workforce = PATHWAY PROGRAM
- ☐ Org and preceptors have an impact on the field of public health by participating in the education of future professionals. = LEGACY



Reflection:
Brainstorm 1-2 projects where you could utilize a student on your team.



Student Project Examples

Literature Reviews
Data Collection (Survey, Focus Group, Key Informant Interviews)
Data Analysis
Toolkit Creation
Social Media Campaign
Meeting/Event Coordination (logistics, scheduling, note-taking)
**Job Description Templates Available*

Develop a Learning Plan

- ☐ If student is required to complete a learning plan for course requirements, ask for a template ahead of time.
- ☐ Provide student with history of the project, project description, project needs/activities
- ☐ Ask student to help with new/innovative ideas
- ☐ Be specific – activity, learning objective, tracking, timeline
- ☐ Obtain a signature from preceptor/mentor, student and faculty advisor (if applicable)
- ☐ This document can serve as the “contract” between student and agency and can help guide mid point and final review discussions



Ongoing Support for Students

- ☐ Set a consistent meeting time/date ahead of time. Invite on Outlook or shared calendar. At least 1 per week. Short mtg to prep for week
- ☐ Set a mid-point review/check-in ahead of time - put on calendar
- ☐ Invite student to community meetings, staff meetings any useful networking event
- ☐ Connect with student on LinkedIn
- ☐ Share resources with student (books, articles, Ted talks)
- ☐ Ask student to present at the end of the internship. Encourage student to submit to present at conferences (local, state, national)



Reporting/Evaluation of Interns

- ☐ Mid Point Review
- ☐ Final Review
- ☐ Possible Preceptor review from the university/college
- ☐ If agency has required deliverables, review and provide feedback for student (example: data analysis report, curriculum, website content, final report)
- ☐ If appropriate write the student a letter of recommendation for job, grad school etc. Write a recommendation on LinkedIn.



Highlight Student Work

- ❑ Submit for an award (ex. UPHA, School Award, National Award)
- ❑ Submit piece to school newsletter, social media
- ❑ Invite student to present to full team/staff or larger audience
- ❑ Highlight internship program/student on website



Lessons Learned

- ❑ Communication: Regular check-ins and feedback are crucial
- ❑ Expectations: Clear learning plan with timeline
- ❑ Quality of final products: clear Instructions, feedback
- ❑ Manage time effectively: Create a structured schedule/deadlines
- ❑ Balance autonomy and supervision: Gradually increase responsibilities
- ❑ Address performance issues: Provide timely, specific feedback and support
- ❑ Gap in skills: Provide additional training and resources
- ❑ Communication/Presenting: Encourage practice presentations



One word or phrase to describe a positive quality you've experienced while working with students or young professionals



Positive Experiences

Tech Savvy
Innovative
Creative
Work/Life Balance
Inclusive
Mental Health Awareness



One word or phrase to describe a challenge you've experienced while working with students or young professionals



Potential Challenges

Communication Style
How to motivate and support
Commitment
Work Expectations
Mental Health Challenges
Pay
Retention



Hear it from the students and YPs

Mentor/Supervisor
Common Feedback

Supervisor Too busy
Not enough info to do project well
No feedback...until too late
Bored
Disconnection
No room for creativity



Generation Info and the public health workforce data

Generation Alpha	2012–today
Generation Z	1997–2012
Millennials	1981–1996
Generation X	1965–1980
Baby Boomers	1946–1964
Silent Generation	1928–1945

Currently 5 generations in the workforce

** Gen Z expected to represent 30% of the workforce by 2030

**25 % of US Workforce is expected to retire by 2030, as the majority of Baby Boomers exit the workforce



Gen Z Qualities

- ❑ Native to the Digital World
- ❑ COVID-19 impact
 - ❑ Adaptable, resilient
- ❑ Inclusive
- ❑ Socially-Minded
- ❑ Ethnically diverse
- ❑ Mental Health Awareness
- ❑ Entrepreneurs
- ❑ Authentic and Transparent

Most influential driver of Gen Z happiness...sense of purpose -43-49% of Gen Z do not feel what they do each day is interesting, important or motivating (Gallup)



Current POV: Public Health Workplace

- ❑ Current Priorities - Evolving threats
- ❑ Purpose and Vision - Aligned?
- ❑ Cost Conscious/Budget Constraints
- ❑ DEI Priorities
- ❑ Work Dynamic
- ❑ Culture and Wellness
- ❑ Workforce Shortage/Burnout



Employee Life Cycle

- ❑ Attraction
- ❑ Recruitment
- ❑ Onboarding
- ❑ Development
- ❑ Retention
- ❑ Separation (Off Boarding)



Connection before Content
Connection before Collaboration
Connection before Constructive Feedback

Retention Strategies: young professionals in public health

- ❑ Exercise Growth Mindset
- ❑ Consistent Feedback
- ❑ Communication - Embrace Digital Options
- ❑ Tech Savvy - Utilize this!
- ❑ Promote Work-Life Balance
- ❑ Lead with Humanity (Empathy, Compassion)
- ❑ Develop an Inclusive Environment
- ❑ Work with Purpose



Retention in Action: young professionals in public health

- ❑ Career and Goal Setting
- ❑ Job Shadow Opportunities
- ❑ Professional Development
- ❑ Create a Networking Connections
- ❑ Feedback and Reflection



What is one action
step you will
consider in the next
6 months?



Resources and Contact Information

- ❑ Internship Job Description
- ❑ Template Internship Learning Plan
- ❑ Template Mid-Point and Final Evaluation Template

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RMPHTC.org



Resources

US Census Bureau

Pew Research Center

The Brookings Institute

NACE (National Assoc of Colleges and
Employers)

Worklife with Adam Grant Podcast : 3 Big
Myths of Mentoring

Generations at Work Podcast

Reimagine Talent Co.