



Summer Student Research Program 2021

A Retrospective





“

THROUGH BIG-PICTURE RESEARCH AND STREET-LEVEL SOLUTIONS, MAP SCIENTISTS TACKLE COMPLEX COMMUNITY HEALTH ISSUES – MANY AT THE INTERSECTION OF HEALTH AND INEQUITY.

”

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A WORD FROM THE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

This year marks the fourth year of the MAP Summer Student Program, we're excited to share the work of this year's summer students and their respective research teams. This program has enabled students to gain research skills, access professional development resources, participate in skill-building workshops, seek mentorship from MAP scientists and network with like-minded peers at a world-leading health equity research centre.

On behalf of the summer students, we'd like to thank the MAP organizers, principal investigators, supervisors and research scientists we've had the pleasure of working with for their guidance and learning experiences!

- MELENA, PERI & CHRISTINA

Handwritten signatures of Melenna, Peri, and Christina in black ink.

**WORDS FROM
MAP'S FIRST
COHORT OF
SUMMER
STUDENTS**

MAP SUMMER STUDENT
PROGRAM 2021

04

ADDY LAGUNJU



SHE/HER

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Hello, my name is Addy Lagunju and I am an undergraduate student at Western University. I am currently enrolled in the Health Science program which inspired my interest in health equity. Alongside my stated interest, I enjoy spending time outdoors by exploring trails and engaging in various low impact sports.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

Throughout the summer, I have been working alongside Dr. Booth and her team in performing a scoping review on the literature concerning how our use of public space has changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Within this project, we hope to develop a deeper understanding of the role public space plays in health as well as identifying the inequalities regarding access to outdoor spaces. This research can also be used to determine the changes needed to be implemented in order to promote the longevity and proper usage of outdoor spaces.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

Throughout my time as a summer student, I have been introduced to new ways to communicate my thoughts and ideas. This has been learnt through the many opportunities I had to present my findings and challenges with the team. I have also learnt how to properly access and analyze different literature in order to develop a deeper understanding. This skill is useful in finding evidence for my research question and growing my knowledge regarding a specific topic.



06

AKLIL NOZA



SHE/HER

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My name is Aklil, I'm a recent graduate from the Honours Health & Society program at McMaster University. I will be entering the Master of Science in Public Health program at McGill University this coming fall, further pursuing my interest in program implementation and evaluation.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer, I'm on board the Calls to Defund Police Scoping Review project which is looking to examine the calls to defund police emerging within public health and health care.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

I've learnt just how much work is currently being done in health equity research in order to better marginalized communities. It's brought me a lot more hope for what's to come and how much greater Black lives can be when we engage in radical imagination.



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AMAL MOHAMED



SHE/HER

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My name is Amal Mohamed and I am a recent graduate from York University where I studied Law & Society with a minor in Health Studies. Through my experience working alongside various community initiatives, I hope to reduce barriers that inhibit marginalized communities from accessing health and social services.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

Over the summer, I worked alongside Dr. Ahmed Bayoumi and Dr. Michelle Firestone on the MARCO Study, particularly, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic response for people who are marginalized. The research study examined how the current public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic affected people experiencing marginalization. Through tasks such as data cleaning and qualitative data analysis, I was afforded the opportunity to hear various perspectives on how the pandemic compounded preexisting health and social inequities.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

The most valuable thing I learned as a MAP summer student is the need for an interdisciplinary and integrated approach to health care. The MARCO Study provided me with better insight into how collaborative efforts between community services and medical services can create long lasting solutions. I remember in one meeting with the MARCO Evaluation Leads, a researcher mentioned that COVID-19 did not let the government abandon people anymore. I found this comment to be so insightful and valuable because it shows that it took an entire pandemic to prioritize the basic necessities of people experiencing marginalization.



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AMNA MAJEED



SHE/HER

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Amna is a second year medical student at UofT. She is passionate about global and public health and is excited to do research within health systems. Amna is an avid reader, loves exploring new cuisines, and learning new languages (she is currently learning her sixth language now!)

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer, I have been working with Dr. Ahmed Bayoumi on the project entitled "Supervised Consumption and COVID-19 in Ontario: An Evaluation (SCCONE)." This project aims to evaluate the impact of the pandemic on the access and use of supervised consumption sites (SCSs) across the province. Specifically, we aim to understand optimal services models and sustainability of SCSs across Ontario including the potential for innovations in service delivery using program evaluation methods. Moreover, we evaluate the facilitators and barriers to accessing SCSs for specific groups of people, with a specific focus on racialized and Indigenous communities, women, and people who use stimulants. In doing so, we aim to determine the optimal configuration of SCSs in Ontario as well as the potential impact of scale-up and scale-down of SCSs in the province using simulation modelling.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

The most valuable thing I learned as a summer student was the importance of flexibility. The pandemic has been a challenging time for everybody, and commencing a research project from home amidst this time has not been easy. It's important to take everything in stride, seek the appropriate help in your project where needed, and take time off for a break when needed!

I was delighted to partake in the MAP Summer Student Program this year. The administrative staff, the PIs, fellow lab members, and all of the summer students were absolutely amazing and, even though we were all conducting our projects at home, it felt like a proper community. I could always reach out for help when needed and the weekly check-ins allowed us to converse, talk about our projects, our successes, and our challenges, while making friends. I had a great time this summer!

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BRIANNA DUNSTAN



SHE/HER

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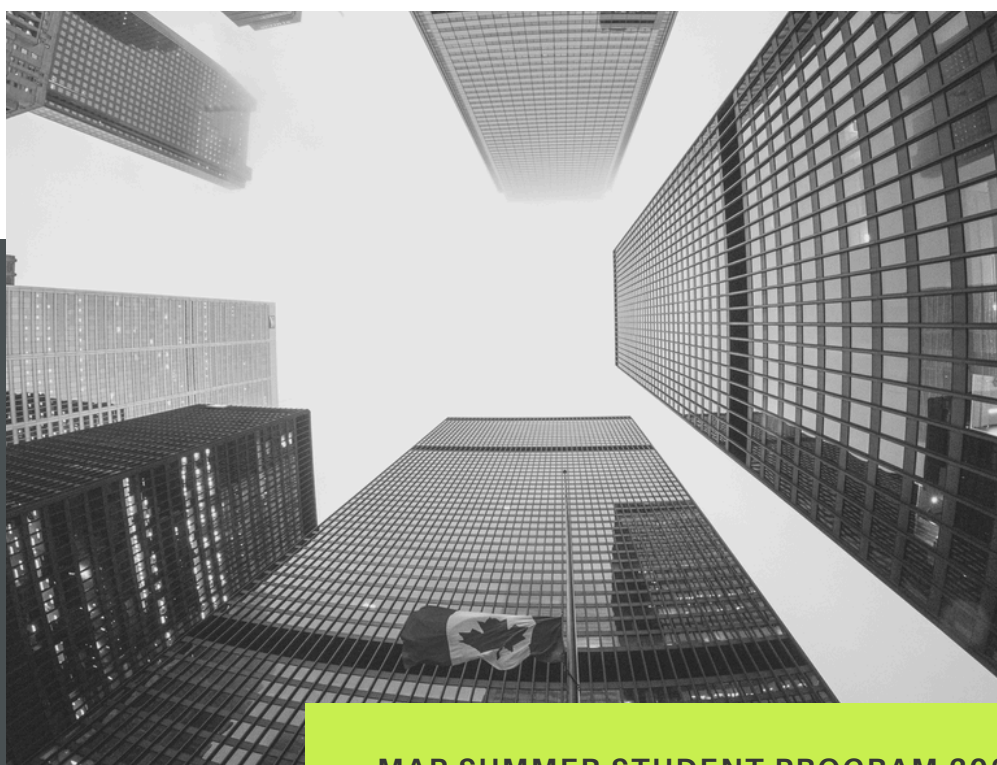
Brianna Dunstan is a student here at MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions. She is a recent graduate from Wilfrid Laurier University, where she completed her Bachelor of Science majoring in Health Science, minoring in Biology and Psychology. Brianna is excited to be involved in a program providing students the space to be a part of health equity research.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer as a MAP Summer Student, Brianna has been working alongside Dr. Aisha Lofters and Dr. Ambreen Sayani to spearhead a Twitter content analysis. The study is focused around creating a more inclusive form of Patient Engagement, that would be ideally be commonplace in health research involving patient partners. In this study, the social network site, Twitter was used to analyze vast amounts of freely available, user generated, textual data containing personal reflections and opinions on health matters. In particular, the content analysis pinpointed the highly active conversation among patient partners and those interested and involved in patient engagement on Twitter that began in February 2018, with the hashtags “#HowNotToDoPatientEngagement” and “#HowToDoPatientEngagement”. In analyzing this conversation Brianna, Dr. Lofters, and Dr. Sayani aim to create an inclusive framework widely recognized in health research that is patient-oriented and speaks to the unheard concerns patient partners have voiced for so long.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

Brianna is grateful to be a part of a program where diversity, inclusivity and equity are at the forefront of the research in which her and her colleagues are involved. She is also appreciative that throughout her time here at MAP she has been able to learn from her colleagues and the projects they have been working on throughout the duration of the 10-week program. During her time at MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions, Brianna has been able to put her academic background in the Health Sciences and Research to use in order to independently lead a research study. Currently, she is working towards publishing the work she has done alongside Dr. Lofters, and Dr. Sayani thanks to this opportunity provided by the MAP Summer Student Program.



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CHELSEA CHIOMA ANTHONY



SHE/HER

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Hello, my name is Chelsea and I'm a recent graduate from the University of Toronto. During my time in Toronto, I completed a double major in neuroscience and political science. The intersection between science and politics nurtured my interest for health inequity research and health policy which ultimately led me to my summer at MAP. In my free time, I absolutely love listening to music and going out to eat with friends.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer, I worked with Dr. Nav Persaud on a project re-examining racism in health care. To do so, we researched racism in the research discourse among general medical journals as well as identified clinical tools that incorporate "race" and the basis for this inclusion given that race is a social rather than a biological construct.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

I enjoyed my time this summer that it's strange to think how quickly the time passed and how much I actually learnt. While I certainly learnt a lot about the process of research in terms of conducting reviews and looking for information, I would definitely highlight the strength of having a calm temperament and silent leadership. Working with Dr. Nav this summer, I got to see this first-hand and I hope I am able to emulate a little bit of that from him going forward, especially when I'm faced with so many projects and feel myself getting stressed out.

I'd just like to thank everyone who helped me this summer. A warm shout out to Dr Nav, Aine, Carolyn, Hannah, Desiree, and Suzanne for all your help this summer.



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CHRISTINA CHOO



SHE/HER

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Hi! My name is Christina Choo, and I am a student at the University of Toronto, completing a double major in Neuroscience and Physiology. Through my school courses and through learning on my own, I discovered my passion for health equity research and I hope to help increase the accessibility and quality of care of the healthcare system for everyone in the future. In my free time, I love to read, binge old TV shows, and experiment with food recipes.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

During the summer, I've had the privilege of working with Dr. Rosane Nisenbaum to explore the At Home/Chez Soi (AH/CS) database. The AH/CS study evaluated the effect of a Housing First intervention, which is a model that provides housing and other social support without requiring individuals to undergo prior mental health or substance use treatment. Using data from the second phase of the study, we were interested in studying the association between impulsive behaviour and traumatic brain injury among homeless adults with mental illness. Specifically, we wanted to see whether a higher level of impulsiveness was linked to an increased rate of traumatic brain injury events. Through this experience, I had the opportunity to learn how to use R to calculate simple descriptive statistics, build exploratory graphs, and apply regression models to analyze the data. I'm also working on a paper to summarize the findings from our project.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

Throughout my time as a summer student at MAP, I have learned so many things that I will carry with me for the future. I learned how statistics play a crucial role in science, and have gained valuable insight in conducting statistical analysis and interpreting the results, which are essential skills for research. I'm also grateful for the opportunity to learn how to use R, and discover its powerful capabilities. My time at MAP definitely helped me grow as a researcher, as I have learned how to properly find literature and develop my research writing skills. Throughout my time in this program, it has also been really enlightening to attend a vast variety of skill-building workshops and learn more about the different fields of health equity research that is going on in MAP. This summer program has been a wonderful experience, and I am grateful to have learned so many skills that I will definitely carry with me for the future.

I would like to thank Dr. Rosane Nisenbaum for giving me the opportunity to work with her this summer. She has always made me feel supported and have taught me so much. I will miss our weekly chats. Thank you also to the members of the Working Group for checking in and creating a safe space to talk and share our unique perspectives on important topics. Truly, I am so grateful to have been part of this amazing program.

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FAITH MAELZER



SHE/HER

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Hi! I'm Faith, a recent graduate from the Bachelor of Health Sciences program at McMaster University. While completing my minor, I developed an interest in the social determinants of health and passion for pursuing health equity research. Outside of MAP, you can find me hiking, cooking, or reading historical fiction.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer, I assisted with a project called “Home for Good: Evaluating an integrated Housing First program in the COVID-19 context”. This project collaborated with Mainstay Housing, a non-profit housing agency in Toronto that combines a Housing First approach with on-site supports for people exiting homelessness. Our aim was to evaluate the Home for Good program and examine how it has adapted in the context of the pandemic. Using a mixed-methods approach, we specifically explored tenants’ experience with housing, social relationships, food security, engagement with the community, quality of life and wellbeing, and utilization of building and program services. While this project is ongoing, the results of the evaluation will be used to evolve the Home for Good program and other Housing First programs. As well, it will provide insight for future housing responses and service delivery should another public health emergency arise.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

My goals coming into the program were to develop my research skills and better understand health equity research. I had the opportunity to work with qualitative data, where I learned how to extract and codify data from qualitative interviews and translate those findings into a presentation and plain language report.

Through this process, I also gained valuable insight into conducting qualitative interviews with vulnerable populations, where patience and sensitivity is key. However, in my 10 weeks with MAP, my most profound experience by far was connecting with the Community Expert Group. Here, I experienced the power of storytelling, as the problems I had merely read about in the literature became the reality of the person before me. This was a transformative moment that emphasized to me why people with lived experience should be at the forefront of the research process and have their voices amplified in the research we produce.

Working with MAP has been a wonderful experience where I feel I have not only expanded my skillset, but my expertise as well. The team here has been extremely supportive every step of the way – from meeting to discuss their projects to sharing life advice and providing direction. Shoutout to my supervisor Dr. James Lachaud, whose mentorship and guidance has been pivotal to my learning this summer. I am extremely grateful to MAP and Dr. Stephen Hwang’s team for taking me on this summer and for helping me confirm my desire to pursue health equity research in the future.

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JOLEN KAYSEAS



HE/HIM/THEY

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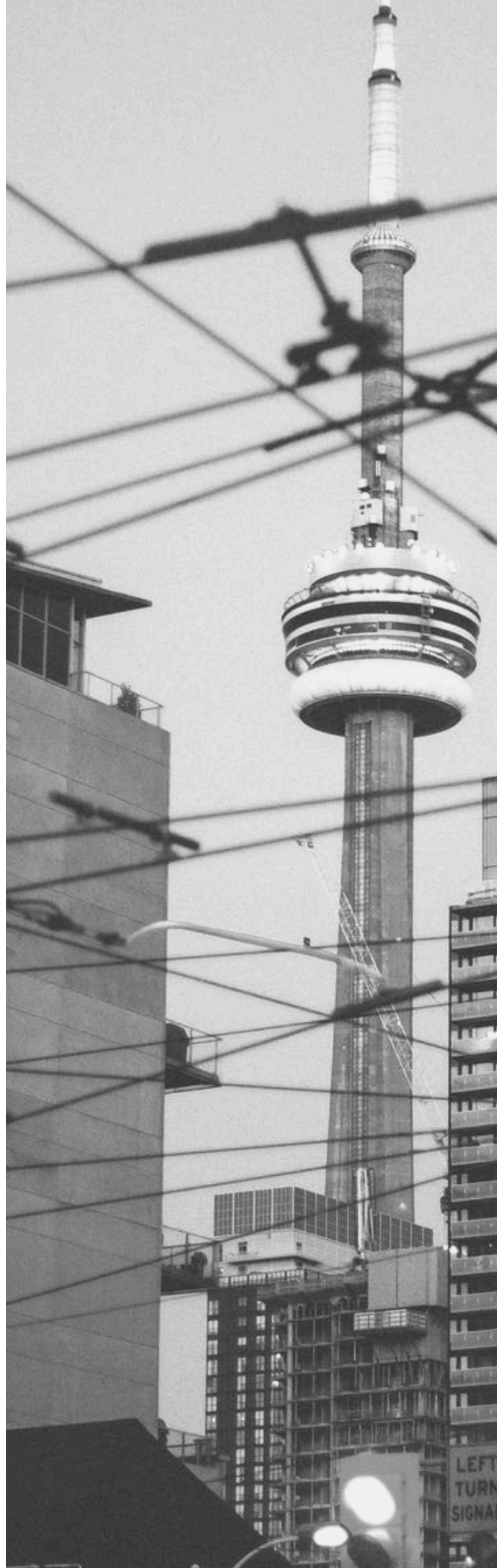
Currently entering my fourth year studying Intercultural Relations at Ryerson University, with a concentration in organizational behavior. I have done ethnography work alongside my peers, in which we later implemented ideas and strategies to create a more equitable space for students. Outside of work & school, I have a passion for writing poetry.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer I worked on the Qualitative Exploration of Vaccine Uptake and Hesitancy Among People Experiencing Homelessness in Toronto. Under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Stephen Hwang, Dr. Jesse Jenkinson and Ruby Sniderman, we worked on preparing documents to submit to the Research Ethics Board to review our proposed research methods. We also connected and collaborated with service providers regarding how the information collected from this research can best inform agencies that work to protect those experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic and future crises.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

Compassion, empathy and the willingness to speak out against injustices are the most valuable traits one can possess when doing research. Especially with the pandemic exacerbating and highlighting many unjust and unethical systems in our society. Always stand up for what you believe in.



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MARIYA SHIREEN



SHE/HER

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Hi! My name is Mariya and I`m a recent graduate from the Health Studies, Specialized Health Policy Program at York University. My passion for public health stems from volunteering and working in marginalized neighborhoods, as well as, learning about Canadian health policy issues. As an aspiring public health professional, I hope to bridge the gap between research and policy practice and bring the voices of vulnerable groups into conversations. During my free time, I enjoy listening to the Hamilton Musical, baking (eating) cakes, and going on long walks!

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer, I worked with the REACH Nexus Team- a research network working towards addressing HIV, Hepatitis C and other STBBIs in Canada. My main task was to support some of the recently launched knowledge translation initiatives, specifically The Positive Effect and The Pozcast Podcast; two initiatives mobilizing data, results, and lived experiences with the actions to address HIV stigma across communities in Canada. Some of my work included conducting a literature review to identify sources of HIV stigma, curating social media posts, writing a blog that explores stigma as a SDOH and structuring podcast episode. I also had the opportunity to attend a wide range of workshops to freshen my data analysis skills including Introduction to R, Statistics, and Research Analysis webinars.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

The most valuable piece of information that I gained was learning about the detrimental impacts that HIV stigma has on the health and well-being of populations, and how people's experiences with stigma differ from one province to another. By learning about this, I was able to make connections with other stigmatized diseases such as Tuberculosis and COVID-19 and recognize the urgency in shining light on this social disease that drives our epidemics.

At the same time, acknowledging that stigma doesn't exist solely at one level of an organization/community/system was also critical to my understanding of the multiple mechanisms that influence stigma. Surely, interventions that use a multi-sectoral approach that is done in collaboration with health systems and guided by people with lived experiences is a promising path that can help us move towards reducing HIV stigma.

I've always had an appetite for doing work that was meaningful, rewarding and had the potential to create real life change. Working at MAP was a valuable experience that not only fulfilled my ambition, but also further confirmed my interest in pursuing a career in public health. I'm grateful to have worked with the REACH Nexus team and their passion for changing the way we look at HIV was truly inspiring and something that I will remember forever. Thank you to everyone who encouraged and supported me this summer, especially Dr. Sean Rourke and Megan Deyman.

Words of advice for upcoming students:

Talents are universal but opportunities are not, so wherever you go, take initiative and create your own opportunities!

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MELENNA AWAJU



SHE/HER

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Melenna is a Biomedical Science student at the University of Ottawa, passionate about nutrition, minority health and tackling chronic diseases from a multidisciplinary lens. From researching metabolic mechanisms behind inflammatory pathways to understanding socioeconomic and cultural determinants of health, she hopes to promote healthy communities through research and health policy reform. My leisure activities include travel vlog-inspired road trips, reading and dance.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

Under the supervision of Dr. Pat O'Campo, a world leader in social epidemiology, Melenna was involved in two research projects - Safe at Home Hamilton (SAH) and the Precarious Work Research (PWR) Study. SAH is a partner violence implementation program based on the original Australian model, requiring the perpetrator to vacate the home and victims to either stay or depart with integrated health, social and legal supports. Melenna worked on tailoring the original model to Hamilton by undertaking literature reviews, conducting environmental scans and developing a framework for a core pillar of the program. The PWR study aimed to study precarious employment in Ontario, income-related policy gaps and its effects on the health and wellbeing of workers and family, building on an initial cross-sectional mixed-methods study. Melenna coded qualitative interviews on NVivo and prepared REB amendments to the research study. Melenna also got the opportunity to work with a Master's of Community Health practicum student at the University of Toronto to conduct a literature review on culturally-safe IPV interventions.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

1. Connect, connect, connect! Take advantage of work and study spaces to network with professionals, professors and other students to learn and grow.

You worked hard to get into a learning institution or work environment, so take advantage of this inner circle and especially your student title.

The latter because opportunities are much more open to students. So don't be shy: book those informational interviews, have a (virtual) coffee with a prof with career- and life-related questions, and apply to those exclusive opportunities that may not be as readily available down the line.

2. Establish your goals at the start of something new - whether it be an internship, course, or hobby. What do you want to learn and how does this fit into the 'big picture' (or how will this help you develop personally or professionally)? However, there's no need to master new skills you may be learning all at once! Skill development is a marathon, not a sprint.

3. Plan time frequently for leisure and self-care! Also, some sage advice from seniors at the hospital I used to volunteer for: here's what we regret the most - 1. Not having the courage to live life truest to oneself and not based on others' expectations; 2. Working too hard; 3. Ruminating and worrying over what we can't control; and 4. Being afraid of vulnerability and expression. Keep these in mind, grasshopper, throughout your future adventures.

MAP has been and will forever be a pivotal point in my career. In all honesty, I was previously unsure about where I wanted to move forward, however, MAP has enabled me to hone in on my career aspirations within public health and the wonderful team I worked with gave me the confidence to pivot from biomedical sciences to a field I was much more excited about and aligned more strongly with. In particular, I believe that improving health at a systemic level and preventative stage has a much greater impact than at the individual level and treatment stage. The MAP Centre has not only been a solution for urban health inequities, but has also been *my* solution in terms of solidifying what I care about most and in what sphere I'd like to serve. Finally, I'm always open to connect - e-mail me!

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MORGAN MARTIN



SHE/HER

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I am a recent graduate of the Life Sciences program at McMaster University and am entering my first year of medical school at the University of Toronto. My passion for health equity made me excited to join the MAP Summer Student Program this summer.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer I have been working under the supervision of Dr. Ann Burchell on a narrative review focused on the burden of Covid-19 among people living with HIV. This review will help us to understand whether people living with HIV are more susceptible to Covid-19 or severe outcomes due to Covid-19, such as hospitalization and mortality. Understanding the association between HIV-status and Covid-19 outcomes can help to inform researchers, healthcare professionals and policy makers moving forward, and lead to the implementation of measures to prioritize this population if necessary. Throughout the summer, I gained many valuable research skills as I was able to develop a search strategy, conduct the search across five databases, perform screening and data extraction, and produce a final written report. I was also able to present my progress in July at a meeting for the ESTIMATE lab.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

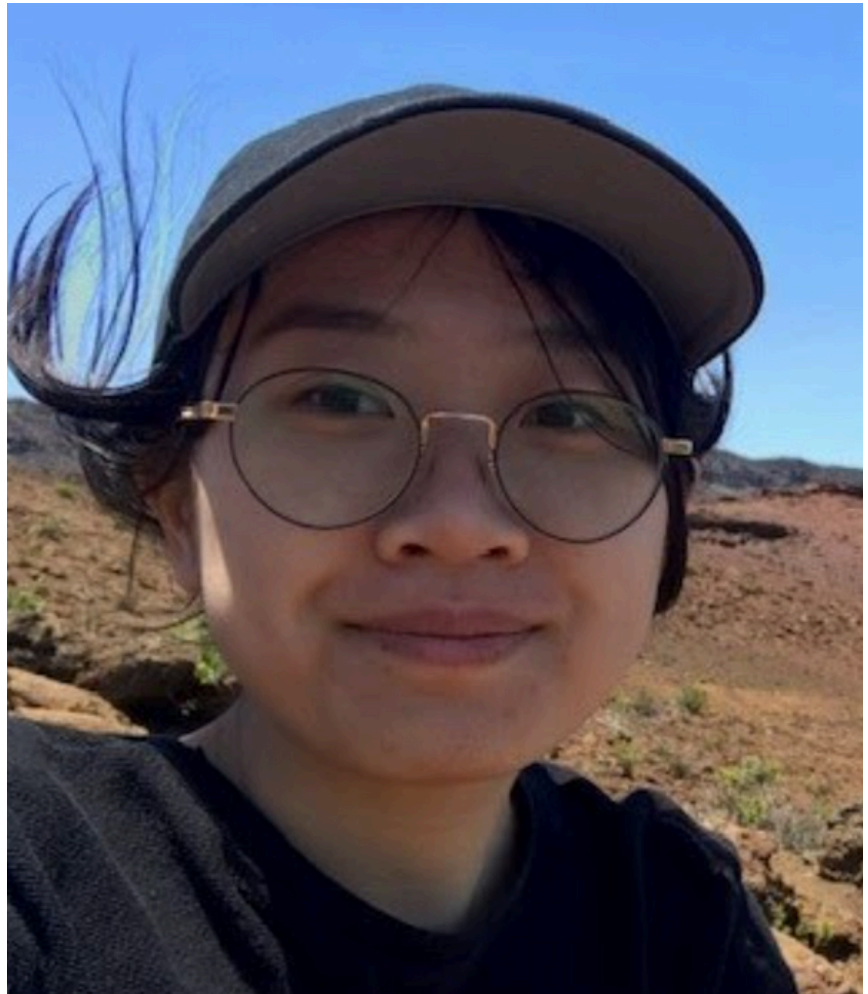
I've learned many valuable lessons this summer that I will take with me moving forward!

Firstly, I learned that research is very iterative and requires a lot of determination. In the process of designing my search strategy, I went through several phases and iterations, and often had to make changes to my research question based on the results I was finding. I became more resilient as I overcame the setbacks I was faced with and worked efficiently to manage time constraints. I also learned more about research methods and epidemiology thanks to my amazing supervisor, Cassandra Freitas, who took the time to educate a fellow summer student and I on study designs and measures of disease outcomes during our weekly meetings. Finally, I improved my communication skills as I communicated with my supervisor and fellow summer student and gave a formal presentation to lab members.

Thank you to my amazing PI, Dr. Burchell, my supervisors, Ashley Mah and Cassandra Freitas, and the entire ESTIMATE lab for making my experience at MAP so enjoyable. I also want to thank everyone that worked endlessly to make this program possible. I wish my fellow summer students the best of luck in the future!

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PERI REN



SHE/HER

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My name is Peri! I'm an incoming medical student at Western University and I hope to involve health equity, mental health, and knowledge translation in my future endeavours. In my spare time, I like doodling, finding new music, and getting absorbed in stories.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

Throughout my summer I've had the opportunity to work on several projects! A primary focus of mine has been the creation of knowledge translation pieces for a study into the relationship between childhood adversity, positive childhood experiences, and oral health. This led to the idea of creating a board game that would allow children to engage in conversations about adversity and diversity, a project we'll hopefully pursue further. Aside from that, I've also been assisting with some quantitative analysis for an investigation into pandemic responses within developmental sector agencies in Toronto.

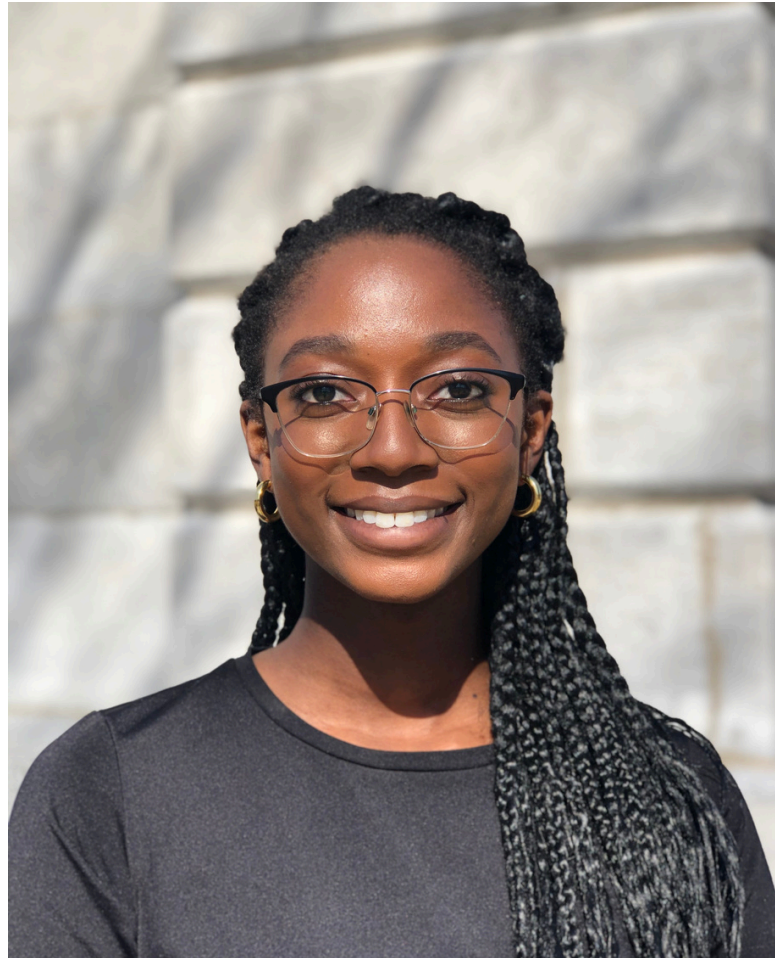
WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

It's been truly eye-opening to learn about the myriad of ways in which events within our childhood can have long-lasting effects upon our physical and mental health. Another major takeaway is regarding the role of knowledge translation in research. Developing consent forms, questionnaires, and presentations gave me insight into the thoughtfulness involved in making scientific information accessible to all.

Thank you so much to Anna & Maryam for your support and down to earth guidance. I felt that I was able to contribute my strengths and while being met with patience and gentle guidance when I stepped outside of my comfort zone. Your enthusiasm for my ideas has helped me gain confidence in my contributions and better value my skill sets. I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be a part of MAP and I hope to carry all that I've learned into my future career and studies.

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RACHEL OTCHERE



SHE/HER

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My name is Rachel and I am a recent graduate from Queen's University where I studied Psychology. My goal is to go to graduate school to study Clinical and Counselling Psychology. I hope to continue to learn about how early interventions can positively shape child health outcomes. In my free time, I enjoy reading and cooking.

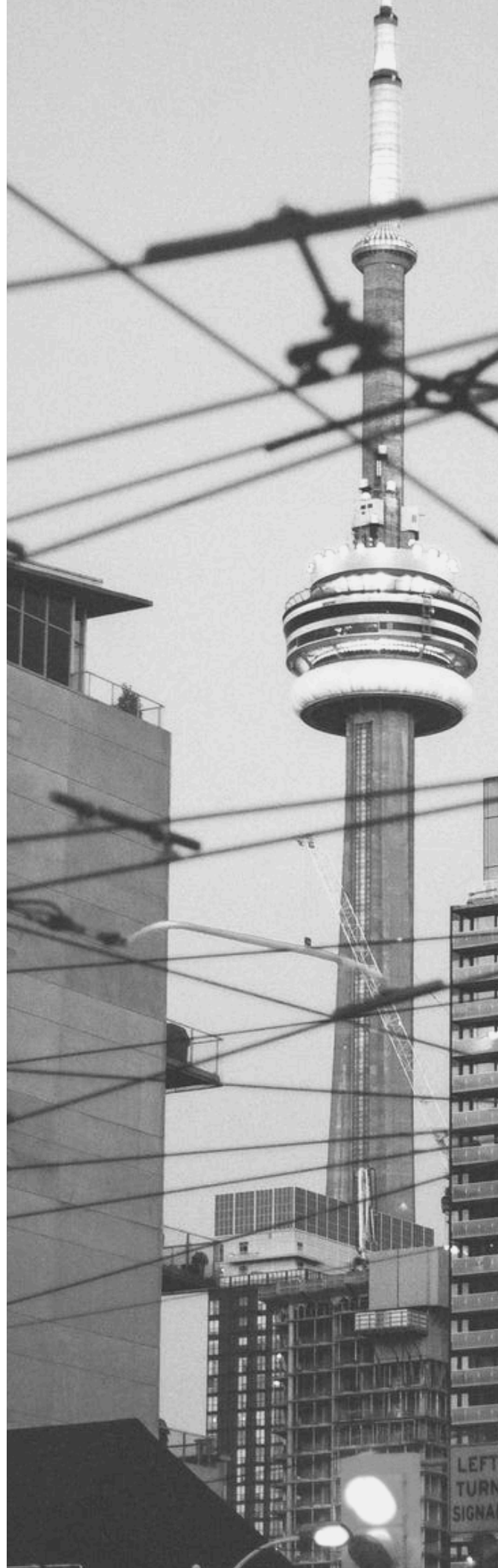
WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer I had the opportunity to work with Dr. Katerina Maximova and Dr. Sloane Freeman, researching the health benefits offered from a full-day kindergarten curriculum. My research focused on children who face certain socio-economic risk factors, with the goal of informing future policy decisions revolving around health equity. Working on this project was a very rewarding experience, and I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

I was able to learn a lot of research fundamentals through the seminars I attended as a MAP summer student. Through working with my team, I was able to learn different methods for data analysis and how to write different types of reviews.

I had a great experience working with MAP as a summer student :)



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SADO AHMED



SHE/HER

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Hi! My name is Sado Ahmed. As an aspiring health care provider/researcher, my goal has always been to eradicate the health barriers that continue to effect minority populations. Mostly, I have always encouraged the importance of becoming the change our society needs if we are to see a brighter future.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

I have had the pleasure of working on conducting a systematic review regarding the effects of aerobic and resistive exercise interventions for persons living with HIV/AIDS. This enriching experience working with an exceptional team has given me the skills needed to conduct quality data collection while utilizing software, data analysis, research writing, project administration/coordination, and recognizing research 'bias' that may exist in literature. Reflecting on my experience, I have greatly valued the many opportunities provided by my team and MAP in gaining a better understanding of the 'behind the scenes' aspect of conducting quality research while shaping my skills. As a curious individual, I have particularly valued the knowledge I have gained learning more about the lived experiences from those impacted by HIV/AIDS during my data collection, and the incredible effect of exercise as medicine across health.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

I have learned the importance of having a great support system in your pursuit towards becoming a future health researcher. In addition, how quality research can truly change the world.

A special thank you to my amazing team: Anne-Marie, Dr.O'Brien, Dr. Glazier and Lauren for being such an incredible bunch. Not only have you all been very welcoming and supportive, but you have always made me feel inspired as a summer student to continue to learn and grow. Thank you also to the amazing community at MAP for constantly providing us students the opportunities to develop our skills through workshops, weekly meetings, journal club, and other opportunities. Truly, this was such an incredible experience that I will always remember. I encourage anyone who is passionate about health and research to apply to MAP.

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TERESA BENNETT



SHE/HER

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My name is Teresa Bennett and I have just recently graduated from the Health Sciences Program at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo with my Honours Bachelor of Science and minors in Chemistry and Biology. My future aspirations include going to medical school with the hope of becoming a neonatologist and also working towards my Masters in Public Health to pursue my passion of creating an equitable and fair health care system for all, especially racialized minorities.

WHAT PROJECT(S) HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON THIS SUMMER?

This summer I had the pleasure of working with REACH Nexus under the leadership of Dr. Sean Rourke. The main goal of REACH is to work towards ending HIV stigma across Canada and as such they have many ongoing initiatives that are working towards that common goal. Most of my time was spent working with an initiative called Because She Cares which specifically aims to share the experiences of and support HIV positive African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) women working within the HIV sector. We are currently in the process of moving the platform online and so as such, I've been assisting with knowledge mobilization efforts in that regard (i.e. drafting social media posts, creating blogs, researching the best tactics to increase engagement, doing presentations on the initiative, drafting email newsletters etc.). I've also been working towards writing a research paper with the other research students working within REACH, based on some of the results of a previously conducted study.

WHAT ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THINGS YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A SUMMER STUDENT?

Some of the most valuable things that I have learned/reaffirmed during my time as a summer student are:

1. Everyone's experiences are unique and valuable
2. With these different and unique experiences there needs to be targeted strategies for addressing the issues that individuals are facing (it can't be a one size fits all approach).
3. Working within a team with members who are passionate about the work that they are doing increases your drive to be a change maker as well.
4. HIV stigma looks differently across Canada. Change is possible when hard work is put in and the community is at the center of the change (specifically, when GIPA/MEPA principles are paramount to ending HIV stigma).
5. Research can be fun when your passionate about the work you are doing!

Being a part of the MAP Summer Student Program allowed me to develop so many amazing connections that I wouldn't have otherwise. Each one has been invaluable and has definitely helped to shape my career and future goals in medicine and research. I am extremely fortunate that I was selected for this opportunity and grateful for all the hard work that was put in to make it happen for myself and others.

SUZANNE ZERGER

RESEARCH PROGRAM MANAGER

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Supporting the MAP Summer Student Program has been a major highlight for me this year – the overwhelming number of outstanding applications from undergraduates interested in pursuing careers in health equity research was inspiring for me and the many staff who reviewed applications, and for the scientists and their teams faced with the hard task of choosing among the finalists. Working with the working group members has been a joy; their enthusiasm to find ways to improve the students’ experiences and their commitment to applying what we’ve learned for future students is awesome. I sincerely hope that our incredible 2021 cohort has found their time and experiences in this Program valuable, and that they know how wonderful it has been for us to have them here!

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**WORDS FROM
OUR
SUPERVISORS
& WORKING
GROUP
MEMBERS**

MAP SUMMER STUDENT
PROGRAM 2021

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ANN BURCHELL

“It was a great pleasure working with MAP Summer Students Morgan Martin and Adebisi Akande this year! Morgan and Adebisi did a fantastic job synthesizing knowledge about COVID-19 risk and the impacts of pandemic restrictions on healthcare engagement for people living with HIV.”

SEAN ROURKE & THE REACH NEXUS TEAM

“Thank you, Mariya and Teresa, for all of your hard work, dedication and contributions to the MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions and REACH Nexus over the last few months. It’s been a real pleasure for us to have you join our team.

You have brought important contributions and perspectives to the projects we are working on. Each person, each conversation and discussion, and each step in our work gets us closer to having real-life impacts for the people and communities we serve.

We wish you and your families a great final month of summer, and much success in your next endeavours! From Sean Rourke and the team at REACH Nexus.”

PEARL BUHARIWALA, JANISHA KAMALANATHAN & PATRICIA O'CAMPO

“It has been an absolute pleasure working with Melenna Awaju this past summer. We feel very fortunate to the MAP Summer Student program for connecting us with such an insightful, fun and upbeat person to join our team. We will miss you and all your great contributions to our work, and know that no matter where you go next, you will do great things.”

GALO F. GINOCCHIO

“This program has been a game changer by empowering future scientists in Canada. The MAP Summer Student Program showed that learning about the social determinants of health can positively improve our society - from local to global levels.

What I noticed the most throughout this program was that each student developed their own unique voice - and they all gained confidence in how to use those voices to speak up about contemporary social problems. They showed me that they learned knowledge of the social determinants of health can be powerful tools - and that they can use their knowledge to create solutions to the problems they see in the world.”

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STEPHEN HWANG

“It’s been fantastic working with our summer students. I’ve particularly enjoyed the thought-provoking and refreshing conversations about research, impact, and advocacy that I’ve had with Faith and Jolen, the students on our team.”

ANDREW PINTO

“It was a privilege to be involved with the MAP Summer Student Program for 2021. The Upstream Lab, a research team in MAP, was fortunate to host Aklil who engaged in our work on police funding in Canada and sociodemographic data collection during COVID-19 and beyond. She worked closely with our other summer students, including Melanie, Samira, Thomas and Katrina. Summer students play an important role and bring enormous energy and new insights to our work.”

JAMES LACHAUD, STEPHEN'S RESEARCH TEAM

“Dear Students, it's been a remarkable journey. Always keep up the dedication and good work. Wishing you the very best for the future!”

JESSE JENKINSON & RUBY SNIDERMAN, STEPHEN'S RESEARCH TEAM

“Jolen and Faith have brought unique perspectives and insightful considerations to their work. Their contributions have helped to shape the direction of the research projects they are working on, and we are incredibly grateful for their input. We wish nothing but the best for you all in your careers and professional growth!”

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ANNE-MARIE TYNAN (& CO- SUPERVISED BY RICK GLAZIER & KELLY O'BRIEN)



I have worked with two students this summer, Sado Ahmed and Lauren Kanee. Sado was hired as part of the MAP summer student program and Lauren has worked alongside her but through a different funding source. Here are some comments about my experience working with these two exceptional young women during the summer of 2021:

I have had the immense pleasure of working with two incredibly smart, organized, and engaged young women this summer. We have met together weekly over the last several months and I so look forward to these weekly meetings. We have been working on a systematic review focused on the impact of exercise on outcomes for people living with HIV. I have been impressed by their ability to follow instructions, work independently, and complete complex tasks on time and with accuracy. Both reach out when they have questions and are curious about research methods and practice. The two of them are a “dream team” and I am privileged to have worked with them this summer. I know I will hear about their accomplishments in the years to come. Best wishes to Sado Ahmed and Lauren Kanee as they continue their studies in September. Many and grateful thanks for all you have done and continue to do!



ANNA DURBIN

“ The program was sensational. All the candidates we interviewed were strong and brought perspectives that would have made unique contributions to the team. Ultimately, we worked with a fantastic student who likely taught me as much as she learned. I hope to continue to work together as she progresses through her studies and her career.

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JEMAL DEMEKE



THEY/THEM, HE/HIM
jemal.demeke@unityhealth.to

I have worked in St. Michael's Hospital for 2 years, as a research volunteer, research assistant, and a research coordinator. In the fall of 2020, I joined Unity Health's Council for Anti-Racism, Equity, and Social Accountability (CARESA); this provided me the opportunity to network and actualize my desire to truly bring radical justice into research. Sitting as the Co-Lead for the Anti-Racism & Equity Advisory Group, it has been rewarding to become a part of the summer student program and see it include so many BIPOC students. I hope this initiative proves that we deserve a seat wherever we dream.

“ I want all the students to know that they do deserve kind favours and reliable support. You're not limited to what you have experienced or done, and you have the potential to move beyond research. I hope that this opportunity explained what research at this level, in this area, at this time. If you have an interest that does not exactly align with what you have seen, ask around! There is no right path, it's just your path.

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health equity

[/helTH/ /'ekwədē/] *n.*

Health equity is created when individuals have the fair opportunity to reach their fullest health potential. Achieving health equity requires reducing unnecessary and avoidable differences that are unfair and unjust. Many causes of health inequities relate to social and environmental factors including income, social status, race, gender, education and physical environment. We offer expertise and resources for integrating health equity in health promotion programs and policies.

PUBLIC HEALTH ONTARIO

Notes

A large rectangular area with horizontal lines, resembling a sheet of lined paper for taking notes. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page, providing a space for writing.

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Signatures



Amalika De Silva



P. Maelzer



Peri Ren



Chelsea A.



Akili Noza

