



## Advancing Quality Care Efforts with a Student Volunteer

A few years ago, a collaborative community team completed a comprehensive community health assessment (CHA) led in partnership by the service unit, Tribal health, Tribal human service and the local Partnership to Advance Tribal Health (PATH) team. The survey resulted in an extensive 90+ page report evaluating the current state of many different factors contributing to the health and well-being of the community. The team planned to use that report to prioritize and address issues that would improve public health.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and, like the rest of us, all attention and energy were diverted to addressing the public health emergency.

Last spring, a student getting her master's in public health (MPH) approached the Indian Health Service (IHS) hospital to see if she could do her capstone project in partnership with the health care community. The graduate student was inspired after visiting the service unit through an MPH site visit program. An enthusiastic and motivated volunteer, this student has provided hours of support to help the IHS hospital complete a "CHA refresh," updating publicly reported data and conducting a streamlined version of the community survey.

This effort is getting a lot of support from hospital and Tribal department leaders. The team taking on the refresh includes the hospital's quality manager, acting clinical director, the MPH student, the Tribal health director and assistant director, the Tribal human services director and assistant director and support from the area's PATH quality improvement advisor (QIA).

Is there an opportunity for you to connect with your local college, university or other public health program to create mutually beneficial opportunities with eager students who can bring fresh ideas to your facility or health care community—at potentially no cost to you?