

Career Goals and Objectives

Although I am nearing the end of the lengthy process I went through to get my Bachelor's of Science in Health Science, I am nowhere near having reached all of my goals. I truly believe that learning is a lifelong process, one that never stops. I am overjoyed to have finished earning my first degree, but I have many goals yet to be accomplished.

My primary career goal is to get a master's degree in epidemiology or biostatistics. That degree is the reason that I went back to college in the first place, and it is very important to me to continue my formal education as soon as I can. A Bachelor's of Science in Health Science is only a step down the road towards the Master's in Public Health that I am striving for. I believe that, in two years, I will be working on this degree, either attending school part-time or attending online classes, at Oregon Health and Science University. In five years, I should have completed this degree.

What I want to do with both my college degrees is to find a job that gives back to the community. I am not particular about the exact details of how I give back to the community, but I want to work in a job that makes a difference in people's lives, one that improves the community I live and work in. This goal is not easily measured, of course, but it is one of those intangible things that must be included anyway. I have spent many years of my life giving back, through my service to my country in the United States Army and through my extensive volunteer work. I intend to continue my commitment to such, which is why, when I start my job search, I will be looking for positions in governmental and non-profit organizations, rather than the for-profit sector. I believe I will be working towards change in my community for the rest of my life, far beyond the two and five year marks.

Another career goal that I have is learning to be fluent in Spanish. I believe that, with the massive increases in the Hispanic/Latino population in the past few decades, this is a skill that is almost mandatory. Professionals need to be able to speak Spanish in order to communicate with a large percentage of the population. I took two years of Spanish in college in the past but, without regular practice, I forgot most of it. I am confident that I can easily relearn the vocabulary and grammar and, since I live with a native Spanish speaker, I can practice until I become fluent. In two years, I intend to have repeated basic Spanish courses; in five years, I intend to have some amount of fluency in the language.

I am interested in continuing to develop my skills in public health beyond my college degrees. One step towards that goal is to pass the test for Certified Health Education Specialist (gaining the CHES designation), and the other is to pass the test for being Certified in Public Health (gaining the CPH designation). I will test for the CHES in October, 2009, and for the CPH once I have finished graduate school. While neither of these designations necessarily qualifies me for a particular job or position, I believe these designations will reflect my dedication and commitment to excellence and learning in the public health field. I foresee that, in two years, I will have earned the CHES and, in five years, I will have earned the CPH.

My final career goal is to find a community garden or farm to volunteer at or, if one does not exist in my area, to start one. I am very passionate about protecting and respecting the environment, and I am also a big believer in eating fresh, local food. A well-managed, organic, sustainable community farm or garden can accomplish both of these things, as well as teaching others the joy of a true connection to the land and growing one's own food. I currently volunteer on Sundays at a local community farm, Veggielution, and I hope to maintain such a link to both agriculture and the local community when I move to Oregon. In two years, I see myself hard at

work, double-digging garden beds and planting seedlings, and I see myself doing the same five years from now.

Having career goals is like having a map to my future. Knowing what matters to me and what I want to do with my life helps me to determine where I want to be, and when. Having clearly identified what it is I want to do, I am able to point my compass in the right direction and always find my way.