

October 9, 2011

Dear OEHA Board,

My name is Angelina DeSantis. I was fortunate to be awarded this year's OEHA scholarship. During my public health educational journey I would frequent my advisors office with internship ideas. I would tell her my newest idea and she would commonly answer "really? No one has ever asked to do that before." Last August I had come into her office with my newest internship idea of consumer safety through a state, county, or federal institution. Again I got a similar answer and a phone number for someone that used to run the internship program at Multnomah County. By October 2010 I was interning with a fabulous group of people at Multnomah County Environmental Health Department. I interned from October 2010 until March 2011.

The environmental health food safety program is lead by Jon Kawaguchi and his team of environmental health professionals. They made me feel very welcome and encouraged my education in the field of environmental health. Each of the registered environmental health specialists that took me along to inspections taught me how to increase public health in our communities through safer practices. Several of the REHS's told me about OEHA and how they would be a great organization if I was serious about this field. This is how I learned of the scholarship. This scholarship allowed me to extend my internship from 3 months to 6 months.

The experiences and knowledge gained from working with registered environmental health specialists has shown me how valuable they are to the public health of our communities. I thoroughly thank OEHA and its members for supporting the scholarship program. It enabled me to expand my education in a way that I could not gather from a classroom. In addition it gave me confidence to pursue opportunities in this field.

In March of 2011 I graduated from Portland State University with a Bachelor of Science, in Health Sciences, Community Health Education, and School Health. The internship opportunity from Multnomah County and the financial assistance from OEHA have given me direction in my search for a meaningful career. I hope that this program can be funded again in further years to offer other students the same opportunities.

I want to offer my sincerest thank you to the OEHA board for their generosity.

Angelina DeSantis

[Angelina216@live.com](mailto:Angelina216@live.com)

(503) 260-9109