PIFP Mentor Profile

Name: Christen Lara

How would you like fellows to contact you? Christen.Lara@state.co.us or cell 719-229-0211

CC graduation year: 2008

Other education: None

Current employment position: I am a unit manager within the Public Health Informatics Program at the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE). I lead two teams, one that helps primary care clinics improve performance on preventive service indicators (example: percent of patients referred to Quitline to stop smoking), and one that supports web-based data applications for collection of public health data (mostly related to breast and cervical cancer screening). I’ve been at CDPHE since 2009.

Experience/areas of interest: I’ve worked with many issue areas related to public health programming and data analysis. Some that may overlap with a fellow’s work include implementing components or reacting to the Affordable Care Act, health informatics (use of information technology in public health), social determinants of health/health equity, and administration of state and federal funds.

Why have you chosen to work in (or support) the nonprofit sector? Focusing my time and skills on positively impacting my community is important. Working for a state department in particular has given me the opportunity to influence a variety of statewide initiatives and develop strategic responses to emerging issues.

Why have you chosen to be a PIFP mentor? I enjoy supporting growth of smart, talented people finding their passion and developing their career within the non-profit sector.

What’s your favorite book or movie? Life of Pi
What is something most people would be surprised to know about you?
I own a serious (industrial) espresso machine, and I could talk endlessly about coffee.