

The Hayley Petit Injury and Violence Prevention Fellowship



A Stewardship Report
Prepared Especially
for

**The Petit
Family
Foundation**

By Connecticut
Children's Medical
Center Foundation





Dear Dr. Petit, Hannah and board members of the Petit Family Foundation,

You hold in your hands a testament to your vision and a uniquely fitting tribute to Hayley's life and spirit. This report will give you a sense of the long-term impact of the **Hayley Petit Injury and Violence Prevention Fellowship** on the young women who have participated in it and the providers who mentored them. As you will see, these women have leveraged their experience—or perhaps been leveraged by it—and the field of injury prevention will be better off for it.

I want to take this opportunity to personally thank the Petit Family Foundation for your support of these wonderful young women over the past six years and your support of the work we do here at the Injury Prevention Center. It is an area of medicine that can sometimes be overlooked by the medical and public-health community, but you saw the importance of this work and the long-term value, and you had the vision and patience to support it, to plant these seeds that will bear fruit in the future.

You and this unique and special program really are making a difference.

Sincerely,

Garry Lapidus, PA-C, MPH
Founding Director, Injury Prevention Center, Connecticut Children's
Assoc. Prof., Pediatrics & Public Health, UConn School of Medicine



Making the World Safer, Now and Into the Future

The Hayley Petit Injury and Violence Prevention Fellowship is the perfect complement to Connecticut Children's focus on child health. As you know, we provide top-tier medical care for children who are sick or injured—children from across Connecticut as well as other states and countries. But we feel strongly that a commitment to children has to include an effort to keep them from needing medical care in the first place. Our Office for Community Child Health (OCCH) is dedicated to that proposition, and it is nationally recognized as a leader in this area.

One of the Office's core principles is that everything in a child's life affects that child's health, including the immediate environment, socio-economic conditions, family stressors, government policies, nutrition, exercise, school conditions, and many more. With that in mind, OCCH partners with a broad range of community organizations to coordinate and amplify their services. Among other activities, they offer programs to address early detection and treatment of developmental and behavioral concerns, exercise and nutrition, healthy housing, asthma management, advocacy, care coordination and, of course, the Injury Prevention Center.

Injury and violence prevention are at the heart of our efforts, and that is why the Petit Fellowship is so important.

Over the course of six weeks, participants in the fellowship get an in-depth exposure to the field: There are scientific journal articles and books to read. These are bolstered with lectures, discussions, video reviews and web sources. One invaluable aspect of the fellowship is shadowing healthcare workers at Connecticut Children's. Fellows observe the daily routines of doctors, nurses, and others; they learn about the academic, technical and personal skills the specialty requires, and they learn about options, career pathways and connections between education and healthcare work. And finally, each participant sets up a research project, choosing the topic, conducting a literature review and designing the study methods, all under the direction of the Injury Prevention Center staff.

By providing college women with exposure to this work, the fellowship broadcasts these principles into the wider medical and public-health community. You see this first-hand, Dr. Petit, when you attend the closing ceremony of each session and hear what the young women learned. But the impact of the Petit Foundation gift does not stop with that ceremony. Indeed, that is where the real impact begins.

The experience of watching, learning, and engaging in the work of injury and violence prevention changes participants and in some cases redirects their education and career paths. But that change—that impact—often happens out of sight, after the fellowship session has ended.

To show you the extent of the impact of the Petit Foundation gifts over the past six years, we thought it would be helpful for you to hear from some of the fellowship alumnae. On the following pages, five of the 27 participants you've supported reflect on how their lives were affected by their participation, where they are now and where they hope to go in their careers.



Natalie Fulco

Fairfield University, 2017



I had the honor of being a Petit Fellow during the summer of 2017, shortly after completing my sophomore year at Fairfield University.

The Hayley Petit Injury and Violence Prevention Fellowship gave us fellows a holistic experience of the field. We were mentored by medical anthropologists, clinical psychologists, medical practitioners, lawyers, researchers and clinical social workers. Together, they gave us an encompassing understanding of the issues surrounding health inequity, domestic violence, child maltreatment, safety and suicide. Furthermore, we were able to network with these professionals and understand how public health is a collaborative, community effort. We had the opportunity to ask questions, sit in on numerous research meetings, attend weekly Pediatric Grand Round lectures, shadow clinicians in patient-care settings, and see how the Injury Prevention Center (IPC) interacts with the surrounding Hartford community.

The other Petit Fellows and I witnessed firsthand the incredible strides in injury prevention and advocacy made by the members of the IPC, Connecticut Children's and Hartford Hospital, which is served by the IPC. The work they do has only reaffirmed our aspirations to work in the healthcare field, and given us the tools to

go out and implement public health and injury prevention in all our future endeavors.

I have been busy doing just that since the fellowship. In May 2019, I graduated from Fairfield University with a B.S. in biology and a minor in mathematics, as well as a research distinction awarded through the Biology Department. I am currently working as a medical scribe for ScribeAmerica in the Dermatology Department of UConn Health. I'm also in the process of applying to medical school with aspirations of becoming an oncologist.

During my junior and senior year at Fairfield University, I helped initiate and conduct a research project under the direction of Dr. Shelley Phelan, Biology Department Chair. In August 2019, my research partner and I published our findings (“Oleuropein Reduces Prdx1 Expression, Cell Proliferation and Viability in K562 Human Leukemia Cells”) in the fifth volume of the *ACR Journal of Cancer Science*.

The Petit Fellowship was, in fact, a major motivation in my seeking out a full-time research position at my university. Prior to the fellowship, I was unaware of how significant and interesting the overall field of research could be, and I am beyond grateful for the opportunities presented to me as a fellow. My eyes were immediately opened to the vital role that research plays in the medical field.

Garry Lapidus, the staff and faculty of the IPC, and several providers within Connecticut Children's not only ignited my interest in research but also took the time to educate and guide me through the research process. I strongly believe that I would not have applied for the research position at Fairfield if it weren't for my time as a Petit Fellow. Before my time as a fellow, I expected to complete the necessary academic prerequisites for applying to medical school, such as courses and laboratories in biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, etc. Additional research, including my position at Fairfield University, was not a requirement, so I didn't expect to apply for a position. But the Petit Fellowship allowed me to explore various research opportunities and more thoroughly understand how involvement with research makes for a more well-rounded applicant and future healthcare provider.

As a result of my time as a fellow, I am fascinated by public health and I experienced firsthand the impact our research had on healthcare provided by Connecticut Children's and the greater community, as well. The education and guidance experienced as a Petit Fellow has also motivated me to share my knowledge with others. As a senior at Fairfield University, I mentored underclassmen in the processes of research and trained students within my principal investigator's research lab. I was also a research instructor for the 2018 and 2019 sessions of B.A.S.E. (Broadening Access to Science Education) Camp, where I taught science labs and oversaw individual research projects. B.A.S.E. Camp is a two-week, residential camp at Fairfield University for female high school students interested in scientific research. The camp is designed to engage them in hands-on, research-based experiences in the natural sciences and mathematics and to inform and excite students about the process of science.

The Petit Fellowship has not only shaped my educational journey but has influenced my career goals. Prior to the fellowship, I was strongly interested in pursuing a career in anesthesiology. However, my shadowing experiences as a fellow opened my eyes to several other careers within the medical field. I am now interested in oncology and other fields on the cutting edge of research. Recently, I am considering applying to Physician Assistant programs, a career that intrigued me after shadowing Garry Lapidus in the Emergency Department of Connecticut Children's. I have always had an interest in medicine, but the Petit Fellowship ignited my passion to strive for a career in healthcare, and for that I am beyond grateful.



Sydney Osborne

UConn, 2019



My six weeks as a Petit Fellow were a fantastic experience that helped me discover my passion for public health. Currently, I am a second-semester sophomore at the University of Connecticut (UConn), where I am in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources as an Allied Health Sciences major. My long-term education and career goals include pursuing a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree either before or at the same time as I pursue a Physician Assistant program through an MPH-PA dual-degree program.

Before the Petit Fellowship, I was in the ACES-Exploratory program at UConn (for undeclared majors), had no definite plan for the direction of my future career and had never considered the possibility of entering the public-health field. The experiences I was exposed to through the Petit Fellowship are responsible for giving me the confidence to choose my academic path, as well as influencing my decision to work toward a public-health degree.

The structure of the fellowship allowed me and the three other fellows in the 2019 cohort to experience the intersection of medicine

and public health. I saw that the incorporation of both entities is crucial to providing the best outcomes, but too frequently the importance of public health is overlooked. Most of all, I was greatly inspired by our mentor and Director of the Injury Prevention Center, Garry Lapidus. He is a great example of the kind of practitioner I want to emulate because of how he has integrated working as a physician assistant and working in public health.

An important aspect of the fellowship was the emphasis on “living Hayley’s legacy.” We learned that she was constantly trying to help others and her community. As a Petit Fellow, it is an important responsibility for us to honor and uphold Hayley’s legacy by drawing from her selfless approach to life and her unbreakable spirit.

Because of the support and perspectives of all of the professionals at the Injury Prevention Center and the 2019 cohort of Petit Fellows, I am better able to recognize and identify when something I encounter is a public health problem. It is no longer possible to go about my daily life without encountering situations that challenge me to question what research can be done to advance the field and discover solutions.

At the Injury Prevention Center, Garry and his team stress the goal of using awareness, research and policy to reduce the number of children and teens affected by unintentional injury and violence. The effectiveness of this approach is clear through their success, and it has allowed me to understand and follow their mantra: Injuries are not accidents; they are predictable and preventable!



Grace Jarmoc

Boston College, 2015



I am currently completing my Master's Degree in Medical Science at Boston University. I have been accepted to the Boston University School of Medicine and will begin medical school this coming summer.

For me, the Petit Fellowship offered a tremendous opportunity to expand my understanding of medicine, public health and healthcare policy and practice. Before this fellowship, I did not always view injury as predictable and therefore preventable. I now approach my practice as an emergency medical technician very differently and will alter my methodology as I move forward as a physician. I plan to carry these lessons with me and continue to educate patients on the importance of injury prevention and its impact on one's well-being.

The fellowship exposed me to so many aspects of health and healthcare. But one of the most important things it exposed me to was an excellent mentor, Garry Lapidus. Garry was incredibly thoughtful and encouraged us all to see the world through a new lens. I will forever be grateful and strengthened by the insight and knowledge that he shared and continues to share with me.

Aziz Sandhu

UConn, 2017



I found my experience as a Petit Fellow to be fundamentally formative when thinking about my education and career. It cemented my love for public health and policy and led me to multiple other incredible learning experiences, while also affirming the criticality of injury and violence prevention.

We learned that health has a number of social determinants, and that we need to pay special attention to groups that are vulnerable or have historically been disenfranchised. It made me challenge the status quo; I remember learning that “accidents” are preventable, and that term is misleading and results in complacency rather than change. I also learned about the pervasive effects that violence has on the health and resilience of communities. The fellowship was an empowering experience that helped me recognize that I want my impact to be at the intersection of public health and policy.

After my experience as a Petit Fellow, I actually individualized my major at the University of Connecticut to focus on Global Health and took additional graduate coursework in Public Policy. I later interned in the Office of U.S. Senator Chris Murphy on Capitol Hill, where I was able to get a firsthand perspective of the U.S. legislative process and the role that advocacy has to inform and drive change. When I returned to the University of Connecticut as a senior, I

interned with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), where I supported their intimate-partner violence work as it deeply intertwined with child maltreatment and family violence. This role with DCF allowed me to really apply principles of violence prevention that I learned as a Petit Fellow when asking questions and conducting my work. It also shaped my view of violence and trauma as pervasive threats to public and community health. After graduating from the University of Connecticut, I interned with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in their Office of Business Management and Transformation, where I explored the role that federal government has in spurring innovation in healthcare.



In August 2019, I began my graduate education at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, where I am currently pursuing my Master of Science in Public Health with a focus on health systems and policy and additional training in humanitarian assistance.

My time as a Petit Fellow sent me down a path of exploring the role that governance and meaningful policy has in shaping systems-level change in the health of communities. In the long term, I hope to work internationally and domestically in the United States in the policy space to strengthen health systems in various contexts. I believe in the power of public service and policymaking to advance health and achieve equity for the most vulnerable populations. The Petit Fellowship shaped this belief on a very personal level and has provided consistent support as I've been developing my career and my ideas over the past few years, and for this, I am extremely grateful.

Pranally Desai

UConn, 2019



I'm a senior at the University of Connecticut about to graduate in two months with two degrees, one in physiology and neurobiology, and one in Spanish. I will be applying to medical schools this summer with the intention of starting school in fall, 2021. Since being a Petit Fellow, my perspective on medicine and my future career has changed for the better, and I have a more holistic approach to what I believe the field of medicine should be, and how my job should incorporate what I have learned.

Originally, I was planning on working to obtain my medical degree, but I now think I would like to be in a dual MD/Master of Public Health program, so I can engage in work similar to that pursued by Garry Lapidus and everyone at the Injury Prevention Center. In my opinion, those who combine work there with work in the broader medical field are engaging in the kind of approach that all medical professionals should be trained in and exercise. They are trying to

reduce the number of doctor visits and emergency department visits by eliminating the causes for injury and violence, which will create a higher quality of life for everyone. They practice what they preach, and they have the kind of conviction that all doctors should have when treating their patients, which is what I aspire to have one day.

I truly think that this experience has shaped my education and career by widening my perspective and forcing me to actually think about what I am learning instead of randomly consuming knowledge. Many times during my fellowship experience, I found that what I had learned from the media was incorrect, and that I still had a lot to learn. The information I learned from social media or by word of mouth about safety practices was often false, and learning the truth from this fellowship really helped push me into reevaluating everything that I was being taught, and forcing myself to take the time to properly learn and *understand*. I now feel as though I am trying to get to the root cause of what I am learning instead of solely skimming the surface.

I really feel like this fellowship changed me and forced me to reevaluate what a career dedicated to public service actually looks like. This fellowship was a dream experience: Every day we were immersed into a different topic that one of the professionals at the Injury Prevention Center was an expert in, and therefore had the opportunity to really, fully immerse ourselves into what we were learning each day from people who could tell us firsthand about the successes and setbacks of their respective fields. The level of passion and involvement each person had in their field was inspiring and forced me to think about what I wanted to do.

As a doctor, my goal will be to help people live the longest lives they can with the highest quality possible. In order to truly do that, prevention is essential. A doctor helps when there is an issue with one's health, but I feel as though they should help with the "before" part just as they are there for the "during" and "after." Prevention and public health tactics of preventing injury and violence is the "before" part for a medical professional, and I want to make sure I am doing my job right by engaging in everything I possibly can to help people, which is what this fellowship has taught me.



Petit Fellowship Alumnae 2014–2019

2014 Fellows

Sahiti Alava,
Farmington H.S.

Nadia Solati,
The Academy, Milford

2015 Fellows

Katrina Hodges,
UConn

Grace Jarmoc,
Boston College

Katie Tsitaridis,
CCSU

2016 Fellows

Alyssa Pilkington,
Fairfield U.

Debbi Foster,
UConn

Madeline Eldrege,
UConn

Neha Pawar,
UConn

Precious Baker,
E. Conn. University

Martha Sherman,
Temple University

2017 Fellows

Grace Nichols,
UConn

Aziz Sandhu,
UConn

Ashley Mulryan,
UConn

Natalie Fulco,
Fairfield U.

2018 Fellows

Maliha Ahsan,
Eastern CT U.

Natalie Wickenheisser,
UConn

Madison Adams,
UConn

Maggie McGeary,
Villanova U.

Leianna Dolce,
UVM

Adrienne Nguyen,
UConn

2019 Fellows

Calista Love,
UConn

Pranally Desai,
UConn

Liz Tavares,
UMass

Sydney Osborne,
UConn

Eve Larkin,
Trinity College

Mira Nahkle,
Trinity College

Thank You

Because of the Petit Family Foundation's vision and support, all of the 27 women who have participated in the Petit Fellowship are going out into the world and applying what they've learned. They and future Petit Fellows will implement actions and policies that will change other people's behavior, which will stop violence before it ever happens. Lives that might have been damaged may instead have new potential; stories that might have had tragic endings may instead take a new, more hopeful path. And that will continue to happen over and over, as long as these young women pursue their careers and pay forward the lessons they learned as Petit Fellows. You have started an avalanche of good that will only gain strength as it goes and we are honored to be a part of this fitting tribute to Hayley's memory.

On behalf of the young women you've supported and all the lives they will change, we thank you for your generosity and your steadfast support.





