

Alaska Community Action on Toxics
Environmental Justice and Community Health Researcher/Advocate

Location: Anchorage, with opportunities to conduct field work, community-based research, and monitoring in remote communities of rural Alaska

Description & Goals of Assignment:

- Gain understanding of how to translate science to action, using science to inform the public, policymakers, and policy at the state to international levels.
- Contribute information toward a GIS data and story mapping project concerning contaminated and proposed extractive sites in Alaska, including mining, oil and gas, and military sites.
- Conduct grassroots organizing and community outreach as part of our integrated voter engagement program to achieve positive change in policies and laws.
- Conduct field research and community-based monitoring including collection of environmental samples (air, water, biota); and monitoring of water quality and effects of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) and microplastics on Alaska lakes, streams, wetlands, and coastal ecosystems.
- Design/conduct field work and scientific literature reviews on the effects of chemicals and microplastics in the marine environment, with an emphasis on how climate warming affects the mobilization and distribution of microplastics and associated toxic chemicals. This work will contribute to ACAT's state, national, and international policy initiatives on chemicals and plastics.

Intern Responsibilities:

- Work with staff to research and write fact sheets and other informational materials concerning the impacts of mining on water quality and community/public health.
- Assist with grassroots organizing to engage citizens in the environmental health and justice policy work of Alaska Community Action on Toxics—this will include events organizing, phone and door canvassing, presentations at workshops, and tabling at summer events.
- Conduct community-based participatory research, environmental sampling, and educational activities in remote Alaska communities.
- Conduct research using peer-reviewed scientific journals and other literature sources that address the combined effects of chemicals, plastics, and climate change on the marine environment and potential public health consequences.
- Work with the ACAT Organic Gardening Coordinator to organize organic gardening workshops, work with volunteers in the community “Yarducopia” gardening program, build and maintain community gardens. Prepare fact sheets about the climate and watershed protective benefits of organic gardening.
- Conduct research and prepare informational fact sheets for the Alaskan public about safe, climate protective alternatives for products including pesticides, cleaning products, and children's products.

Intern Qualifications:

- Interest and experience in working with people of diverse cultures, particularly Indigenous communities.

- Interest and experience in conducting field sampling, scientific investigations, and/or environmental health research.
- Strong science and/or public health background and experience with community and/or environmental health and justice issues.
- Coursework in environmental health, environmental justice, biological sciences, environmental toxicology, or environmental law desirable.
- Experience in community organizing and outreach.
- Graduate student preferred (with focus in environmental or public health) or advanced undergraduate.
- Interest in and experience in organic and community gardening.
- Excellent research, writing and verbal skills to communicate effectively with the public (e.g., comfortable with public speaking, writing of informational materials, research translation, social media).
- Excellent computer skills, preferably with experience in graphic design and/or database management and data analysis.