

3. **Expended Food and Nutrition Education Program**

Mentor: [Susan Baker](#)

Location: Front Range

1. **Faculty Mentor**

The faculty mentor, Dr. Susan Baker, is a Professor and statewide Extension Specialist in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition who also administers the statewide Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

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2. **In what region(s) will the student be working (county/region/state)?**

This project will be conducted in the Front Range Region in Colorado. However, the research will involve the statewide Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), currently staffed in Weld, Denver, Arapahoe, and Pueblo Counties. The student will work closely with two Extension multi-county EFNEP supervisors in those counties. This project also will support EFNEP programs on a national level.

3. **In less than 150 words, please describe the proposed internship goals, scope, and objectives.**

EFNEP works in local communities, providing nutrition education to low-income audiences to improve health and food access. Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) approaches address public health issues to support healthy eating and active living by making the healthy choice the easy choice. Currently, EFNEP programs are in the early stages of implementing PSE efforts, and resources and training are necessary.

Accordingly, internship goals and objectives include: (1) mastering distance-training development and delivery (e.g. webinars), and (2) finalization of PSE strategies and formatting of the EFNEP PSE Resource Kit. PSE pilot activities are based in settings EFNEP is active in, such as food pantries, schools, and human resource agencies. The pilot will inform finalization of an EFNEP PSE Resource Kit, which ENFEP leaders at local and state levels can use to strengthen community partnerships and benefit wider audiences in their communities.

4. **Which PRU activities are included in the scope of this internship?**

EFNEP is an integral part of CSU Extension's Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health PRU. Successful implementation of PSE activities will play a role in improving health and food security for EFNEP participants and their communities by providing community outreach that helps to make the healthy choice the easy choice. PSE efforts will also encourage greater participation in EFNEP, which targets five core areas also critical to this PRU, diet quality, physical activity, food resource management, food safety, and food security.

5. **What student learning outcomes do you anticipate and are there opportunities for professional development?**

By making the healthy choice the easy choice, PSE approaches have significant potential to improve the health of the general public. However, EFNEP approaches have historically focused on behavior change through direct nutrition education only, which engages small groups of participants in lessons on nutrition and healthy living.

Although EFNEP has been allowed to introduce PSE strategies over the last few years, PSE approaches are not routinely implemented as a component of EFNEP programming, and thus training and resources are needed.

Learning Outcomes. The student will have the opportunity to learn about EFNEP and PSE, and how PSE implementation within EFNEP can promote healthy eating and active living. He/she will also learn about Resource Kit design and the development of training materials, including webinars. Furthermore, the student will learn about how to conduct multi-state pilots in the field of community nutrition and will be heavily involved in implementation of the actual training.

Professional Development. Ample opportunities for professional development are available, including attending meetings with EFNEP professionals and partner agencies. There is also the potential to attend conferences, such as the annual Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior conference in July. Also, the student will shadow EFNEP educators and collaborate with EFNEP educators, supervisors, and state staff members. Furthermore, the student will regularly correspond with EFNEP program leaders and staff members in other states during the design and implementation of the training. Overall, the intention of this internship is to promote the improved health of individuals and communities and the enhanced collaboration between EFNEP, Extension staff members, and the community on local and national levels. This internship will provide the student with critical multi-state qualitative applied research experience.

6. **How does this internship support identified stakeholder needs in your county/region?**

CSU EFNEP is deeply integrated in Colorado communities, serves diverse audiences, and reaches a myriad of stakeholders, including participants, human services agency staff, clients, and community leaders. Building upon these established networks can facilitate integration of nutrition education throughout local human service agencies and food systems. PSE approaches will enhance EFNEP's capacity to implement effective strategies to improve the health of low-income populations in Colorado communities and within EFNEP programs across the country.

Active communication with community partners is essential to facilitate recruitment of a wider range of participants who would benefit from EFNEP classes and PSE efforts. Overall, integrated interventions that combine PSE strategies with EFNEP's traditional direct nutrition education will reinforce and maximize positive effects for communities as well as the individuals served. These upstream changes will expand the reach of EFNEP

beyond individuals to include partnering agencies and the communities in which participants live. To ensure that PSE activities in the Resource Kit are effective, a multi-state pilot will be conducted. Thus, the Resource Kit benefits Colorado, in addition to broader application across the country.

7. What is your experience with mentorship? In less than 100 words, please describe your experience with and approach to mentorship.

Dr. Baker has led EFNEP programs at the county and state level for 30 years. She has had the opportunity to mentor many Extension professionals and paraprofessionals. She has also mentored graduate students at CSU for 14 years and has served as a preceptor for RD interns for over 20 years. She also successfully mentored an Extension intern in 2019.

8. Are there on-going connections with CSU faculty associated with this project, or is there identified faculty interest?

Dr. Leslie Cunningham-Sabo is associated with this project. Dr. Sabo has ample experience working in school settings and is currently investigating PSE evaluation. Dr. Sabo and Dr. Baker also have worked together on many projects, including an Extension Summer Internship in 2019. In addition, Dr. Dawn Thilmany is providing guidance on project design and evaluation.

Furthermore, PSE activities may be piloted in farmers' markets, food pantries, human service agencies, faith-based organizations, and/or school settings. This would allow for collaboration with other faculty doing work in these spaces.

9. Are travel funds available? Opportunities to provide student assistance with housing?

Assuming a Fort Collins-based CSU student is selected, housing assistance would not be necessary because the student would be based out of Fort Collins at the EFNEP office at CSU, sometimes commuting to other counties. Thus he/she could stay in his/her current housing situation. Funds to support the intern's travel to attend EFNEP classes, agency meetings, and PSE sites of PSE activity implementation are available.