

Nina Ovia

Project SAFE Internship

Summer 2016

This summer I will be interning at Project SAFE in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Established in 2004, Project SAFE is an all-volunteer grassroots organization, providing advocacy and support for women working in street economies. I will be promoting human rights-based health among women working in the sex and drug trades on the street in Philadelphia. This internship will consist of both harm reduction assistance and advocacy components.

In order to expand the harm reduction efforts I will be in charge of a pilot program to assemble new types of harm reduction kits as well as retrieving feedback from this program for future reference. I will be in charge of researching what materials to get and how to obtain them. Once obtained, I will be in charge of assembling kits and distributing them directly during outreach or to other volunteers. At the end of the summer I will provide information about how much money was spent as well as a report on what worked and what failed.

I will be assigned shifts doing direct outreach, deliveries, and assisting with the drop in center. I will also be in charge of creating a better accountability process for volunteers to ensure that outreach and deliveries are completed as scheduled, or promptly rescheduled if something comes up. During this accountability project we will also be working to promote better data collection during and after outreach efforts.

Project SAFE is working to expand their advocacy efforts as they grow as an organization. I will be presenting at conferences and giving talks at other local organizations that serve similar communities. I will be launching an advocacy project for safer injection facilities by building literature that is accessible for other advocacy groups that are less informed on the topic. This will be distributed at conferences and workshops in the future to promote collaborations on next steps in harm reduction advocacy. Aside from presenting, I will be attending and tabling at various other conferences on behalf of the organization. I will also be assisting on grant writing for future projects.

My goals for the summer are to gain more hands on experience with harm reduction outreach in order to expand my own abilities to advocate for the affected communities. I hope to assist Project SAFE in strengthening their advocacy as an organization and to build networks with other organizations in the Philadelphia area to promote legislative change in the future. Upon graduating, I hope to return to Philadelphia and resume the work I will accomplish in my time here.