What graduate degree did you complete?

Directly after completing my Bachelor's at UW-Madison, I enrolled in the Master of Public Health (MPH) program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where my focus of study was Community and Behavioral Health. Due to my experiences both inside and outside the classroom (such as the Community Health Internship Program), I learned that community engagement and health education were critical components to effectively promoting health and healthy behaviors. I felt an MPH program would provide the knowledge of theories and models related to health education and skills on how to impact health at a population level. UW-Milwaukee's MPH program was most appealing to me because the courses emphasized the theme of social justice.

How did completing the Certificate in Global Health prepare you for graduate school?

The global health courses truly solidified my passions and interests and directed them towards a viable career path. The rigor of the Certificate program guaranteed that I was able to determine credible research sources and present scientific data to a variety of audiences (regardless of the audiences' education level)—both of which are extremely helpful skills as a professional and as a graduate student.
Describe a typical day in your job.

I work at Molina Healthcare as a Healthcare Analyst. The goal of my position is to compile the most relevant information from our members' health records (of which there are thousands!) that will be able to best evaluate a program's effectiveness or identify trends related to health and/or disease and member behavior.

A typical day involves meeting with the staff from the business or clinical side of the company to understand their needs and then working to collect valid and accurate information that will be useful to them. Although it sounded like a data-heavy (computer) position when I first applied, I work with a variety of professionals and I feel as though the number crunching and report development actions I complete have an impact on day-to-day operations and members' health.

What tips would you give to students aspiring to follow this career path?

In the broad field of global health, it's hard to know exactly what skills or degrees you will want or need to succeed. It is my belief that any skill you can strengthen or gain will make you more competitive in the job market — and, the experience will teach you more about your own interests! Continue to seek out learning opportunities and these skills will continue to open new doors for you.

What are three top skills that are important to your job?

1. **Analytical skills** - The journalism and communication courses at UW-Madison helped me to become a smarter critic of data and to understand how to best present information in a transparent and easily digestible manner.

2. **Computer skills** - I was fortunate to have wonderful supervisors, mentors, and coworkers who helped train me on using Structured Query Language.

3. **Communication skills** - Being able to listen, understand, and communicate affects how productive you will be when working with others. These skills also help you write fewer or more succinct e-mails, which all coworkers appreciate!

How has your experience shaped your perception of what it means to be healthy and promote well-being?

I have come to appreciate how every single aspect of your life has an impact on your health! Also, being "healthy" has shifted from the perfect diet and exercise routine to a much more broad definition that also incorporates things like social relationships, physical environments, and stress management.