CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY | SCHUBERT CENTER FOR CHILD STUDIES

My name is Cara Giannuzzi. I am a senior psychology student and also working on my MA in Bioethics and Medical Humanities through the IGS program. I am interested in becoming a physician and working with children in the future, which is what sparked my interest in the childhood studies minor. My goal in partaking in the Mann Policy Externship was to try something outside of my comfort zone and gain an understanding of the impact that policy and medicine have on each other. I was placed with the Antifragility Initiative under the direction of Pediatric Surgeon Chief of University Hospitals, Dr. Edward Barksdale. The Antifragility Initiative is a Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program that works with pediatric victims of violence to combat social determinants of health that lead to more violence. The main focus of the program is to help each child to achieve post-traumatic growth, which means to be stronger for having been broken, or antifragile.

I was privileged to observe and participate in several kinds of meetings AI had, such as grant writing sessions, meetings with the Cuyahoga County Council, AI team meetings, and even a monthly CWRU medical school class that Dr. Barksdale started. I went on home visits with Matthew Krock, the social worker who also works the day-to-day of AI operations, to meet families enrolled in AI. I was also able to interview the rest of the AI social workers about their experience with the AI population. As AI is a newer organization, I was able to help them transition into the mental health arena by studying the prescription of mental health referrals in the UH Emergency Department to pediatric victims of violence. I am planning to stay on another semester with Dr. Barksdale and AI in hopes of further pursuing this topic or new topics. This experience has reinforced in me the importance of being well-rounded to be an effective physician; clinical work alone is not enough to enact change for patients.

Cara Giannuzzi, December 2020