

Southwest Environmental Health Sciences Center Staff Working During COVID-19

By: Micaryn Begay



Marti Lindsey, PhD, Director SWEHSC CEC

“Working virtually has been a challenge because of the limitations of not seeing people in person, partners and students having less adequate technologies, and not being able to drop into the office to catch up. I have had to do more organized scheduling rather than spontaneous catch up sessions with the staff. It was awkward in the beginning but now it is more comfortable. I have had to be creative with getting students the technologies they need. I still mess up Zoom meeting links.”

Ben Richmond, Assistant Director SWEHSC CEC

“The COVID-19 Pandemic has created unique challenges in community engagement. One of the most difficult challenges has been providing summer programs for youth. We were able to transition all five of our summer programs, that are usually held on the University of Arizona campus, into a virtual format. We were able to accomplish this by rearranging the schedule of the programs to be more manageable in an online environment.”



Cheyenne Grabiec (Diné), Program Coordinator SWEHSC CEC

“Working virtually was definitely a challenge, because I really enjoyed being able to meet with partners face to face. I had to adapt to being able to have effective Zoom meetings so that our projects could continue to move forward.”

Alex Benavides, Program Coordinator SWEHSC CEC

“Working virtually has made my work experience more convenient but also more challenging at the same time. For “A Student’s Journey”, it was a challenge to adapt our original program model, goals, and activities to a virtual format, while also keeping our students engaged for every online meeting. I took this challenge as an opportunity to prepare the students for this new era of virtual learning, and to ensure they felt comfortable utilizing online systems.”



Micaryn Begay (Diné), Tribal Consultant SWEHSC CEC

“Working virtually was challenging but an adaptable experience. It was my first year at SWEHSC as an intern which was more difficult to complete my internship remotely. However, with the amazing team at SWEHSC, I learned a lot my first year as an intern and interacted with various tribal partners through zoom meeting. We were able to manage and continue our tribal projects despite the obstacles endured during COVID-19.”

Jordania Livingston (Diné), 2020 Intern SWEHSC CEC

“Working virtually was a learning experience and applying myself more into discussion during Zoom meetings while experiencing fatigue.”

