

NAME: ALISSA ZEGLEN

DISCIPLINE: MEDICAL STUDENT

Past/current experiences working in the field of disabilities:

My experience began in high school with the friendships I made with students with disabilities through a club called Breakfast Buddies. In college, I assisted four individuals with disabilities and complex medical needs in rural Missouri, which opened my eyes to the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in under-resourced areas. After college, I worked as a scribe in a pediatric clinic, where I began to understand the importance of collaborative care for children with disabilities. I then spent a year abroad volunteering with L'Arche Els Avets in Barcelona, where I supported adults with disabilities in achieving a more independent lifestyle. Now as a medical student, I'm really honored to have such impactful experiences to greatly inform my studies and career trajectory.

Goals for your LEND training experience:

LEND represents a pivotal opportunity for me to deepen my understanding of the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities, as well as an opportunity to strengthen my clinical, collaborative, and leadership skills in order to be a more effective physician advocate. I'm also interested in understanding disability on the policy level, and especially excited to work alongside others in an interprofessional environment to make healthcare more equitable for the disability community.

What you wish to contribute, in the future, as an advocate/professional/family member in the field:

Throughout my experiences working in a pediatric clinic and supporting adults with disabilities, I have been particularly impacted by the challenges encountered by adolescents transitioning from their pediatric care teams to adult specialists. I hope to improve this transition as a physician specialized in combined Internal Medicine and Pediatrics (Med-Peds).