2018 Upstate Institute Summer Field School Fellowship

**Title:** Madison County’s Healthy Workforce Initiative  
**Community Partner:** Madison County Department of Health

A survey project on wellness and safety programs offered by Madison County employers that will further positive workforce development in the area and provide research skill development for a student.

**Project Description:**
A Field School Fellow will work with Madison County’s Department of Health to develop and implement survey of employers who employ fifty people or more in Madison County to determine the types of both “wellness” and occupational safety and health programs they make available to employees. The survey will gauge use and satisfaction of these programs, costs, logistics, challenges, benefits, and gaps and/or resource needs. The data collected through these surveys will provide baseline data on these types of programs and will be used to develop various products and services, such as tool kits, trainings, best practices, and guide further initiatives such as enhanced surveillance and research projects.

The county’s Healthy Workforce Initiative advocates a “Total Worker Health” approach, established by the National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOSH) to address health and safety in Madison County’s worksites. TWH aims to protect, support, and enhance the health of workers through comprehensive programs that simultaneously addresses workers’ health protection (injuries, illnesses) and employee personal health behaviors (tobacco use, obesity, mental health).

The TWH initiative advances the health department’s efforts to address priority health issues identified in the 2016 Community Health Improvement Plan. This work will further benefit work-age adults, employers and communities within the Upstate region by reducing or preventing workplace related fatalities, illnesses, injuries, and personal health risks, that not only impact an individual’s quality of life, but concurrently impact businesses in terms of productivity and economic growth.

**About the Community Partner:**
The Madison County Department of Health’s Healthy Workplaces in Madison County report provides a comprehensive look at the issue of worker health and sets in place the recommendations and strategies that this specific project will work to address.  
[https://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3061](https://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3061)

**Required Skills:**
This project requires strong interpersonal and communication skills. A Fellow working with the Department of Health will need to have the ability to collect, analyze, and present basic survey data. The student will research and identify appropriate resources based on survey results, and as a result will learn more about survey design, implementation, data collection and analysis. In addition to this project, the Fellow will attend staff meetings as needed, present findings to staff, the Board of Health, the Employer Wellness Coalition and the County’s Health and Human Services Committee. The Fellow may also interact with technical experts (e.g., NIOSH staff, TWH Centers of Excellence professionals, and local employers).

**Logistics:**
This is a full-time paid research position (35 hours per week) to last approximately 10 weeks, conducted under the joint supervision of the Upstate Institute and the Department of Health. Field School Fellows receive a research stipend of $4500 plus reimbursement for any costs associated with transportation for
this project. A car is not required for this project, but may be helpful. A Fellow will need a U.S. drivers’ license to complete this work.