



Maryland Department of Health Student Research Project

Food Is Medicine

Focus Areas:

Strategic planning; evaluation; social determinants of health

SUMMER 2026

May 26 – July 31

This project is being offered through the **University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPowering the State** (<http://mpower.maryland.edu>) – a formal collaboration between the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP). The University of Maryland Strategic Partnership – “MPower” – provides funding for the program.

MDH MISSION

The mission of the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) is to work together to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders through disease prevention, access to care, quality management, and community engagement.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The selected student will be part of the Population Health and Strategic Initiatives team, and will support MDH’s launch of a new “Food Is Medicine” pilot program.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

As a UM Scholar you will have the opportunity to support the new Food is Medicine pilot program by analyzing community needs, supporting program evaluation, and contributing to the creation of food systems infrastructure, such as local food hubs and aggregators. “Food Is Medicine” is an evidence-based approach to addressing the upstream drivers of health, including food insecurity and nutrition.

Daily activities may include:

- Stakeholder and community engagement;
- Participation in planning and implementation meetings;
- Literature reviews;
- Drafting of presentations, reports and memos; and

- Preparing meeting agendas and materials.

The UM Scholar will develop skills in the following areas:

- **Communication:** The UM Scholar will develop their oral presentation and written skills.
- **Program Implementation:** The UM Scholar will gain project management and technical expertise in Food Is Medicine.
- **Program Evaluation:** The UM Scholar will support a formal mixed methods evaluation and enhance their understanding of how State agencies make programmatic decisions based on evidence.

IDEAL CANDIDATE

This project is ideal for a student with:

- Familiarity with population health concepts and upstream drivers of health;
- Interest in food systems and desire to work collaboratively across State agencies;
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills;
- Strong research and analysis skills; and
- Organizational skills.

ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

Students may come from UMCP's School of Public Policy; School of Public Health, and Graduate School and UMB's School of Social Work and School of Graduate Studies.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project will be delivered in a hybrid format. When in person, this is the address that the student will report to:

MDH State Center
201 W. Preston Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Mentor and student should discuss delivery details during the interview, including method (in-person, hybrid, or remote), expectations, location, and meeting frequency. Flexibilities to complete the 10 weeks of research may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

PROJECT LEAD/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Bronte Nevins, Senior Health Policy Analyst

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PROJECT REQUIREMENTS:

- 10 weeks/400-hour student research project conducted with schedule mutually defined and agreed upon by the student and mentor.
- The project is funded by the [University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPowering the State \(MPower\)](#) and is a part of the [UM Scholars program](#).
- The selected student will receive a stipend for their work, to be paid in multiple installments over the 10 weeks.
 - **\$5,500** for undergraduate students
 - **\$6,500** for graduate students
- Work is expected to occur during typical business hours; Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.
- To be eligible, the student must be enrolled in the Fall 2026 semester.
- Travel to and parking at MDH is the responsibility of the student and costs are included in the stipend.

[APPLY HERE](#)