

Meghan Lewis

*Master's student
Public Health Leadership Program*



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Meghan Lewis says one of the highlights of her time at UNC was a summer 2011 practicum as a Public Health Leader in Practice with Cabarrus Health Alliance, in Kannapolis, N.C. Lewis worked with Barbara Shepard, the program director of the Healthy Cabarrus Initiative, a partnership certified by the North Carolina Governor's Task Force for Healthy Carolinians (www.healthycarolinians.org).

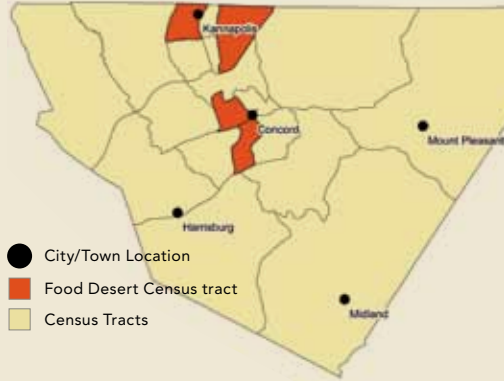
Lewis was part of a state-mandated Community Health Assessment, reporting statistical indicators to a planning council. She was asked to lead discussions about what the indicators meant for the county. After one such presentation, council members began a conversation that led to new funding being allocated to meet a need in the county.

"Being a part of that experience reminded me why I chose public health," Lewis says.

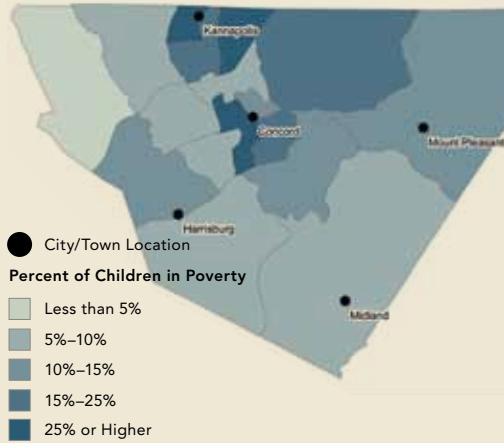
The experience gave her a chance to learn more about the community assessments initiative sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the important role assessments play in improving health. Her interest in evaluation led her to write a master's paper about her work in Cabarrus County. "It is my hope that after this research method is piloted in Cabarrus, it will be a useful tool for other counties in the state," she says.

Maps Lewis developed during her practicum in Cabarrus County, N.C.

Food Deserts



Percent of Children Living Below the Federal Poverty Line, 2005–2009



“ My training allows me to start conversations, improve the body of knowledge in the field and propose new ways of looking at old data. This ultimately leads to innovative programs that are both effective and efficient in their use of resources. —Meghan Lewis ”