

# Jessina's Success with Epidemiology

*A guest article by Jessina McGregor, HBS & HBA 2001.*

Shortly after graduating from OSU and the UHC, and only a day after returning from a trip to India, my husband and I drove across the country to Baltimore, Maryland. We arrived in Baltimore just days before I began my PhD program in Epidemiology at the University of Maryland. Soon after deciding to study Epidemiology, I became accustomed to correcting people's misconceptions: Epidemiology is not the study of skin; rather it is the study of diseases and health-related factors in populations or groups of people. Having completed my Honors degree in Microbiology, my interests were in infectious diseases. Though it was this interest that drew me to Epidemiology, my coursework and training soon allowed me to develop a broader interest in the methods and statistics used in this field.

*Epidemiology: the study of diseases and health-related factors in populations or groups of people.*

After completing my PhD, I remained in Baltimore to complete a one-year postdoctoral fellowship. During this time, I also spent three months working at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta. At the CDC, I had the opportunity to work on a project involving surveillance for methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infections. This allowed me to network with nationally recognized public health officials, and to understand the differences between academia and federal public health efforts.



*Jessina McGregor on the OHSU gondola in Portland, OR.*

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