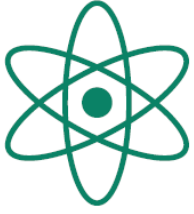


THE SCIENTIST

S N A P S H O T



Want to know more about CDC's environmental health laboratories but short on time? Check out **The Scientist Snapshot** to learn about one of the many scientists making a difference in Public Health at CDC.

Brought to you by **CDC's Environmental Health Laboratory**.

Brief profiles of staff in CDC's Environmental Health Laboratory who make the science happen.

Where did you attain your degrees?

Georgia State University – I have a B.S. and M.S. in Chemistry.

How long have you been working at CDC's Environmental Health Laboratory?

I've been working here for 6 years.

What does your laboratory do?

I'm in the Global Micronutrient Laboratory. My lab has participated in National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) testing for folate for almost 20 years now. We facilitate and manage the VITAL-EQA program, a global laboratory quality assurance program for multiple micronutrients. We are also working to harmonize folate testing worldwide by providing kits to labs interested in adopting our in-house folate method for their own national surveys.

Why is folate testing important?

It is extremely important. Folate testing helps detect deficiencies in the body that can lead to anemia and other health issues, including birth defects, such as neural tube defects, during pregnancy.

What is one of your favorite personality traits?

Not sure if it's a personality trait, but one of the things that has impacted my life the most is that my left leg is prosthetic. As difficult as it is at times, I wouldn't be who I am without it and it's always fun when kids think I'm a robot.

More Info on the Global Micronutrient Laboratory

The World Health Organization recommends the folate microbiologic assay to assess folate status in population surveys. CDC's Environmental Health Lab and the CDC Foundation are collaborating to develop regional laboratory capacity to measure blood folate using this assay.

The Vitamin A Laboratory – External Quality Assurance (VITAL-EQA) program assists labs in monitoring the degree of variability and bias in their assays. [Vitamin A Laboratory – External Quality Assurance \(VITAL-EQA\) | LQAP | CDC](#)





Christina with 7-year-old Poochy

What book have you read more than once?

I love re-reading books, so the list is very long. Most recently though, Project Hail Mary by Andy Weir. I've read that one at least 4 times now.

Best part of your job?

My coworkers. Everyone I work with is so wonderful. From the day I started they've made me feel welcome, and everyone always makes time to help out no matter how busy they are.

One thing about you that your CDC colleagues may not know?

I think most of my colleagues know this already, but just in case, I love baking. I'm currently working on perfecting my macaroon recipes.

What do you hope, best case, to see come from your lab in the next couple years?

I'd love to see an expansion of our folate harmonization project. The more labs that adopt our folate method, the more comparable their data is across the world

Summary

Christina Fischer serves as a Chemist in the Global Micronutrient Laboratory in CDC's Division of Laboratory Sciences. These laboratories conduct research, develop methods, and analyze essential nutrients, nonessential nutrients, and bioactive dietary compounds that are responsible for changes in health status.

The Scientist Snapshot is a quick glimpse into the background of scientists in CDC's Environmental Health Laboratory.