

## **Krystle Wittevrongel, MPP 2017**

**Current position:** Research Assistant, Social Policy and Health Division, School of Public Policy, University of Calgary

**Prior education:** Bachelor of Arts (Development Studies/International Development), University of Calgary; Bachelor of Science (Biological Sciences), University of Calgary; Refugee and Forced Migration Studies Certificate, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University

**Current role and description of a typical work week:** working closely with staff in the Social Policy and Health Policy program, a typical week is spent employing an objective, evidence-based approach to assessing policy and its impact on society and its most vulnerable members. My current focus is primarily in the Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Research Program investigating employment barriers for persons with developmental disabilities as well as identifying practical solutions and policy options to address these barriers.

**How the MPP program has furthered my career:** I was driven to undertake the MPP program as with more than six years' experience coordinating programming for vulnerable populations, I was intimately associated with front-line service delivery issues and was looking for systems-level change. While I had a base of both qualitative and quantitative data capture and reporting, the MPP program provided an unparalleled and interdisciplinary program that strengthened my ability to make and maintain connections, analyze and draft policy, engage various levels of government, and provide evidence-based recommendations on issues of importance to stakeholders. The MPP program gave me the ability to analyze the inefficiencies I was observing from a policy perspective, which has been an invaluable addition to my skillset.

**Advice I would give a new MPP student:** work hard, get to know your cohort and professors, and have fun! The program is intense and rigorous, but you get out what you put in. Attend the MPP events and make connections. Make use of the MPP mentorship program - the only of its kind – for invaluable alumni support. Ask questions. Utilize the wealth of knowledge and resources that your professors offer – especially while drafting your Capstone.