This Fall, I completed my Internship for CU Denver at the Anschutz Medical Campus in the Radiation Safety department. The Anschutz Medical Campus (AMC) is located in Aurora, Colorado. Once I got over the drive, the internship was one of the best hands-on learning experiences. I learned a lot about working in an Environmental Health and Safety Department, working on a medical campus, and working in a Radiation Safety department. A lot of the work I did was related to radioactive waste management and working with radioisotopes in relation to medical research.

An important part of working with radioactive materials is making sure that proper instrumentation is provided. The instrumentation that I worked with on a regular basis was a Geiger-Muller (GM) probe, Low-emitting Gamma (LEG) probe, and a Liquid Scintillation Counter (LSC). The GM was primarily used to detect low-energy beta emitters while the LEG was used to measure gamma emitters. The LSC was one of the most important instruments that I used. This was because the LSC is used to detect removable contamination and the presence of H-3.

Radioactive waste management was a large portion of this internship due to the large amount of waste produced by researchers working with radioactive materials. Segregating waste after a waste pickup was very important because a portion of the waste is shipped off to a holding facility or to be incinerated. If the wrong waste is in the improper waste stream, the waste will be rejected and returned. It was important to make sure that all waste was accounted for.

The Environmental Health and Safety department at AMC was very welcoming. I had many opportunities to learn about the other departments and their tasks. The department also made sure to meet once a month to make sure that everyone was touching base and staying informed.

I believe that anyone who enjoy Radiation Biology or physics will enjoy this internship.