Your Name: Vanessa Voller

Your PIFP Organization: Bell Policy Center

Please give a brief description of what you do for your organization:
My primary responsibilities at the Bell Policy Center include: writing and translating (into Spanish) summaries of recent Colorado state and national policy briefings, carrying out specific research assignments pertaining to fiscal policy in Colorado, representing the Bell at various interim coalition meetings, and assisting in the editing process of a variety of print and electronic documents. I am currently beginning two small research projects, which will broadly explore (1) the gendered wage gap in Colorado and (2) the educational gap between Latino/Hispanic ESL/ELL students and their English-speaking counterparts.

What’s the most interesting thing you’ve learned in your fellowship so far?
Prior to coming to the Bell, I have had the opportunity to work for several grassroots organizations both domestically in Minneapolis and Colorado Springs and abroad in Latin America. Working at the Bell, a grasstops organization, has allowed me to see not only the importance of well thought out, holistic policy and good politics and how the work grasstops organizations, like the Bell, do have the potential to affect thousands of people, but also the dynamic relationship that exists between grassroots and grasstops organizations.

Why did you want to become a PIFP Fellow?
I wanted to be a PIFP Fellow to build upon some of my experiences working in the nonprofit sector in Latin America, while giving back to my local community here in Colorado. Additionally, I wanted to hone in on my social science research and writing skills, while exploring the career path of public policy analysts. And I would be lying if I didn’t mention that I wanted an excuse to stay in Colorado for the summer, enjoying the mountains in the summertime.

What activities outside of your work do you enjoy? Outside of the office I enjoy long distance running, gardening, hiking, strolling through the various summer
farmer’s markets in Denver, practicing yoga, brewing kamboucha, painting, reading, and enjoying the warm Coloradan summer nights.

**What is something most people would be surprised to know about you?**
I am a very early riser; I get up most mornings around 5:00 am. However because of this, I take a twenty-three minute power *siesta* every afternoon.