Alumna Abby Spiegelman was able to fully realize her passion for public service and public health through the CVM’s smaller second major.

by Kasey Heath
“With this work, I see how my university studies degree has provided me with the foundation I needed to interact with such an eclectic group of people—from farmers and ranchers, to elected officials, to college professors and high school teachers—on any given day.”
topics. This experience helped me write healthcare legislation memos for Congressman Flores. I had fun because I talked to doctors and researchers, and learned to simplify complex health topics to communicate with lobbyists and constituents.

“As the district director for Rep. Kacal, my job is to go out into the community and represent the representative; I listen to constituent concerns and conduct casework with state agencies when necessary,” she said. “With this work, I see how my university studies degree has provided me with the foundation I needed to interact with such an eclectic group of people—from farmers and ranchers, to elected officials, to college professors and high school teachers—on any given day. I would never have been equipped to communicate so freely with such a wide array of people if I didn’t have such a flexible education.”

Spiegelman said she made the switch to USVM after a presentation in an introductory biomedical sciences course that brought in professionals from different areas of life sciences careers. The professionals spoke about their experiences and taught the class about the routes students can take with a degree in biomedical sciences.

Hearing about all the opportunities showed her that pharmacy school was not her only option.

“That class inspired me to look at how to apply my major in different ways,” Spiegelman said. “Once I realized all of the opportunities and landed my internship with a politician, which helped me discover my love for politics, I wanted a degree program that was more flexible. University Studies allowed me that flexibility.”

Upon graduation in December, Spiegelman’s academic career took another turn, and she was accepted into an online master’s program through Georgetown University in emergency and disaster management.

“I liked the high-stress scenarios in public health I was exposed to through the courses I took (at Texas A&M) to complete the Public Health Entomology certificate,” she said.

Spiegelman said she sees endless career opportunity ahead of her.

“I would love to work at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a policy analyst,” Spiegelman said. “But I could also use my congressional background and work with lobbyists. My master’s degree specializes in bioterrorism, which deals a lot with pre-disaster solutions. I have a bunch of different ways I can go.

“I like to say that my undergraduate degree was a ‘Jack of all trades, master of none,’” she said. “I really feel like I have a lot of options.”

Spiegelman said the diversity of the education through USVM can make any student more mentally flexible and able to adapt to many different environments within the biomedical sciences world.

“What I love about the university studies program is the broad education it provides,” Spiegelman said. “I feel like some students tend to ‘pigeon hole’ themselves into one area, and when they graduate, they don’t realize they will have to deal with many different
My degree helped me with my flexibility of thinking, and that is important in any position.

- ABBY SPIEGELMAN