Meet Beth. She began college with an interest in biology and pre med. Then, life intervened, and she took a few years off. During that hiatus, she felt unfulfilled, and decided to go back to school, coming to the College of Charleston to study health. When the new major in public health was introduced, Beth was all in.

“I read about the different majors and public health was the one that really seemed to match the direction I want to go. I told myself, ‘I’ve found something I want to do.’”

“One of the exciting things about this major is that public health is a really broad, open field. You can pursue either a BA or a BS. If you want to work in research such as epidemiology, that’s possible. If you want to be involved in health policy or do hands-on work with people, those are also options. Plus, the professors are fantastic. They’re incredibly supportive. For instance, I was having trouble setting up a volunteer role for myself, and one professor said, ‘Wait a minute, I’ll put you in touch with someone whose organization does health promotion with children. I’ve got his number in my phone.’"

As it turned out, that was an important opportunity because Beth is interested in nutrition and the problem of childhood obesity – two areas that occupy much of the public health dialogue in the U.S. today.

“Hands-on work, whether through volunteering, internships or research, can give you tremendous insights into various aspects of your field. I’ve volunteered with several running events, and spent time working once a week in an after-school program with Louie’s Kids, which is a nonprofit geared towards fighting childhood obesity. We helped the kids prepare to participate in a 5K race, and that was really cool.”

Just like that, Beth is deepening her understanding of public health. With her degree and some practical experience on her résumé, she’ll be able to work in this field right away, without the need for an advanced degree.