

## She Ought to Be In Pictures

In mid-March, as COVID-19 cases were rising across the globe, Colorado opened one of the first drive-through COVID-19 testing sites in the United States. Jennifer Lehman, a CDC epidemiologist, was deployed to help the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) run this effort.

Lehman hoped to help increase the state's testing capacity and support the state in slowing the spread of the virus. However, she did not expect to become the subject of a widely recognized photo used by news outlets and a medical technology company.

The first day of drive-through testing ran smoothly. Each person was required to have a healthcare provider's note in order to get tested. The number of people requiring tests was manageable, and everyone waited patiently in their cars for their turn.

Then came day two. As Jennifer and her colleagues arrived at CDPHE's lab in east Denver to begin the day, cars were already lined up around the block waiting for the site to open. Reporters and photographers stood in every corner of public property: in the grass, between cars, and crouched on sidewalks. She recalls people looking visibly sick as they waited in line for several hours. The sun pounded down on the staff in their personal protective equipment and on people in their parked cars. The staff weren't expecting a crowd of this size.

As Jennifer and her team tried to keep patients happy and hydrated, a photographer crouched on the ground with a massive professional camera snapped a photo of her and her CDPHE colleague in action.

After an exhausting day of testing, Jennifer went home and got on the computer. As she searched for the Colorado drive-through testing site, she discovered a news article with her photo. She remembers thinking, "How very cool." Then the photo started circulating on popular news outlets. First it appeared on CNN, then Vox, then Good Morning America. Jennifer decided to track down the photo to get a copy for herself.

Jennifer figured out that the photo was available on Getty Images, and she contacted the photographer. After several attempts, Jennifer finally got a copy. Soon after, Jennifer and her colleague were contacted by Getty Images regarding a contract with a medical technology company to use the image in a print ad.

That high-profile marketing effort led to an opportunity for her to donate money to charity. When the company purchased the photo from Getty, Getty offered to pay Jennifer a fee. But, being a full-time government employee, Jennifer wasn't permitted to accept payment. Instead, Getty offered to donate the money to two charities of Jennifer's choice.

Jennifer walks by the framed photo when she gets home each evening. It was a Mother's Day gift from her husband, and a reminder of the long hours spent trying to save lives and flatten the curve.

"Working on a response can be chaotic. Everything is constantly changing and each morning you go in not knowing what the day will hold," says Jennifer. "You just have to jump in and be willing to help with whatever is needed."

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/responder-stories/lehman-picture.html>