

## National Rural Health Day Essay

The world we live in today is more advanced than it has ever been before. With innovative technologies to treat disease, effective drugs to manage symptoms, and knowledge like never before, this modern era of healthcare has set the stage for improvement for many years to come. We have been able to nearly eradicate diseases such as smallpox, measles, rubella, polio, and many more. One might assume that, with all this new knowledge and technology, everyone in America is stable in terms of healthcare. However, this is far from the truth. This country is experiencing a divide like never before. There is a barrier between those who are knowledgeable and those who simply do not have access. To ease the bisect, there are many things university and college students can do in terms of education and healthcare access and quality.

To improve the nation's health and wellbeing, the US Department of Health and Human Services created a plan called the Healthy People 2030. One of the areas of pinpoint is defined as "the connection between people's access to and understanding of health services and their own health."

By far, to help DHS meet this goal, the most effective first step is to reach out to organizations within a community to see what is already happening. Once established, college students organize their own events. For example, with the help of a group of willing individuals, college students could host a health fair on campus open to the public. In this free health fair,

educational pamphlets, flu shots (administered by professionals,) healthy snack options, etc., could all be provided. Information about practitioners in the area and their abilities could be provided. If local healthcare agencies were willing to get involved, a health fair could launch peoples' understanding of health services and their own health.

One of the biggest problems when it comes to healthcare in America is its cost. According to PBS as of August 2, 2022, "roughly 26 million people" (about the population of Texas) "remain without health insurance in the US. Just under 2% of children are uninsured." This is a horrific statistic. With simple health procedures costing up to thousands of dollars, everyone needs health insurance. To educate the community, college students could host an educational night on campus. They could pair with local community health centers who offer low costing insurance depending on income. Representatives from insurance companies as well as Medicare and Medicaid could attend to give brief seminars with general information. Volunteers could also attend to help members of the community sign up for a plan that suits them. With this educational opportunity, more members of the community could have access to health services that they did not know was possible before.

Access to and education about healthcare is so important. With these two examples of educational events, college and university students can improve the lives of those in their community and allow for healthcare access and quality.