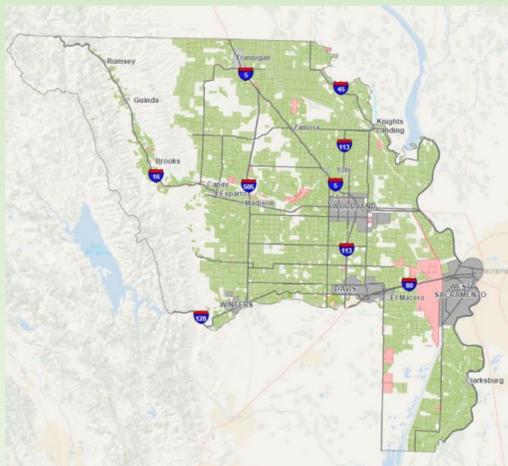


Yolo County Community Health Fair for Migrant Workers

Analiy Ortiz, BS

Background

Rural communities face major barriers to accessing healthcare. Remote locations, lack of transportation, few culturally appropriate health services, among other challenges contribute to the lack of access to care. One of the many challenges that workers, along with their families, face is the lack of familiarity with the US healthcare system. A large portion of farmworkers and their families reside in Yolo County. According to the Yolo County Department of Agriculture, there are a total of 1,011 farms in Yolo County with an estimated 2,764 farmworkers hired directly by growers and 3,968 farmworkers hired by contracted agricultural services. Fostering the health of farmworkers and their families is crucial to advancing health equity.

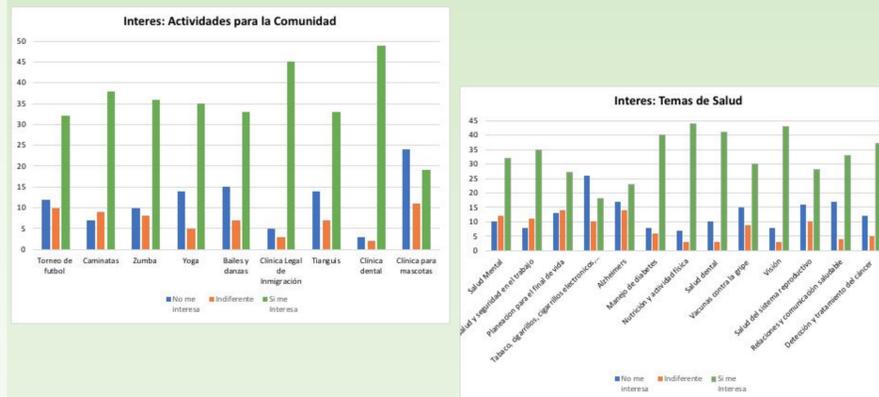


Community Partners

Puentes de Yolo Committee composed of CalAgrAbility, Health Education Council, UC Davis Western Center for Agricultural Health & Safety, Dignity Health, Communicare Health Center. The committee meets monthly to address the needs of the Yolo County community and implement events that best serve community members. Puentes de Yolo community leaders aim to empower individuals in Yolo County by training them to be health promoters through free workshops and annual conferences. The targeted population includes low-income, Hispanic, Spanish-speaking community members. Through the knowledge gained, individuals are encouraged to rise in the community by being advocates of their own health and the health of those around them. By having health promoters that are aware of local resources, disparities in accessing healthcare decrease.

Project Description

Through collaboration with CalAgrAbility, Western Center for Agricultural Health & Safety, among other members of the Puentes de Yolo committee, a health fair will be organized in Yolo County during the month of July. The agricultural communities of Yolo County will gain access to health and job safety information. Through the free health screenings offered, individuals will learn about disease prevention and be encouraged to take an active role in their health. Surveys will be given during the event to quantify the amount of knowledge gained by participants. Implementing a health fair in the Yolo County community in Spanish will provide a space for community members to receive the most basic access to healthcare and hope to continue to receive care through the resources given.



Lessons Learned

My project has allowed me to be a part of a space in which Spanish is used as the primary language for communication. It has been powerful to see community leaders voicing their concerns and initiatives in a way that always takes into account the perspective of community members. I have felt empowered to continue strengthening my Spanish vocabulary in order to use it in my professional development. Organizing a health fair centered around the community's interests and needs provides a space for individuals to be heard. Through the administration of pre-questionnaires, I have met community members and listened to the barriers they face in accessing healthcare. They shared how valuable community events are for them, especially when held in their native language. This has impacted me as a future health provider, for there are so many factors encompassing an individual's health.

Expected Outcomes

- Increase access to healthcare services by offering free health screenings and addressing any necessary follow-up care.
- Encourage community members to be active learners of their personal health through interactive activities addressing nutrition and physical activity.
- Raise awareness of agricultural safety by gaining knowledge about safe working conditions.



Future Directions

This project was developed to address the inequity in access to healthcare among rural, low-income, Hispanic communities. After the health fair is implemented, data obtained from the health fair will be analyzed and shared with the Puentes de Yolo committee. The success of the event will be evaluated as well as any points of improvements needed. I will continue to remain involved with the committee by attending monthly meetings. Furthermore, the effect of this project aims to empower community members so that they can recognize themselves as health promoters. The committee that served as my community partner hosts workshops to provide health promoters with tools to organize events they believe are needed. Ultimately, my project can be carried on by community members, allowing them to become leaders.

Acknowledgements

The logistics of the project could not have been as successfully carried without the help of the Puentes de Yolo committee members. They have ignited my passion to continue to serve the community and broadened my perspective on how I can accomplish this as a physician in the future. Community advancement will not happen immediately because of one project or event, but rather it will be accomplished because of the sum of effort instilled by community leaders aspiring to make a difference.