



# Supporting Clean Indoor Air for Casino Workers

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## American Heart Association



- Dedicated to ensuring that all indoor workspaces are smoke-free.
- Work in Pennsylvania focuses on casinos, which have exemptions from state laws that ban indoor smoking.
- Works closely with American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation and other organizations across PA to promote clean-air laws.

### Background

- There is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.<sup>1</sup>
- **90%** of casino employees are exposed to toxic secondhand smoke in the workplace.<sup>2</sup>
- Many casinos that allow indoor smoking cite old data claiming that smoking increases revenue.
- New studies show that non-smoking casinos do not experience a dramatic drop in gaming revenue.<sup>3</sup>



### Team's Experience

- Support the Clean Indoor Air Act through addressing secondhand smoke exposure in casinos, its effects on casino workers, and its long and short-term implications on their health and well-being.
- Encouraged self-advocacy through supporting initiatives aimed to build solidarity among stakeholders and address issues commonly-faced by casino workers.
- Interviewed casino workers and learned about their struggles to secure a smoke-free working environment.
- Evaluated research on smoking and pandemic-era casino revenue; created a one-page document for PA policymakers based on findings from research
- Drafted letters to PA policymakers regarding CPR kit funding for all PA high schools

### Digital Storytelling Project

Digital storytelling is a community-based participatory research approach that provides participants an opportunity to narrate their own stories and communicate their own needs.



**Meet Mike Danay**  
A loving husband, caring father, and a casino worker sacrificing his health for a job

**"My throat was sore, my voice was weakened, and breathing was labored"**  
-MIKE DANAY

**"If not for my 2-year-old daughter and my family, I may have walked out and resigned that day."**  
-MIKE DANAY

### Reflections



My work with Bridging the Gaps and the American Heart Association helped remind me why I chose to pursue a career in healthcare. We need to bring compassion and empathy back into healthcare through listening to stakeholders and recognizing that we will never be the experts in their unique lived experiences. It is only then that we can capture and utilize narratives to influence decision making and improve community health outcomes for vulnerable populations.

**-Hind**



"My Bridging the Gaps experience gave me a deep appreciation for advocacy work that promotes smoke-free environments. This summer, I've realized that striving toward a worthwhile cause makes work more meaningful and valuable."

**-Patrick**

### Sources

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, February 27). *Health effects of secondhand smoke*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved July 25, 2022, from [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/secondhand\\_smoke/health\\_effects/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/secondhand_smoke/health_effects/index.htm)
2. <https://no-smoke.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/BridgingtheGap-ExecutiveSummary.pdf>
3. C3 Gaming. "Evaluation of Post-Pandemic Non-Smoking Trends in U.S. Casinos." June 2022.



**It is time to BRIDGE THE GAP in smoke protections**