

Bridging the Gaps



Title: *Making a Difference in Health Education through Breast, Heart, and Oral Health Workshops*

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Academic Preceptors: Hillary R. Bogner, MD, MSCE, University of Pennsylvania, Perelman School of Medicine
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Community Preceptors: Dianne Uwayo, MPH, African Family Health Organization

COMMUNITY PARTNER



Community Partner: African Family Health Organization (AFAHO)

The African Family Health Organization is a community-based organization that provides culturally sensitive health, social and educational services to African and Caribbean immigrants and refugees in the southwest area of Philadelphia. AFAHO's mission is to strengthen community health culture through a support model that uses shared language, cultural expertise, and advocacy to promote integration and support self-sufficiency.

Website: <https://afaho.org/>

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

According to the decennial census between 2000 and 2012, the African population tripled across areas in Philadelphia. By some estimates, there are now at least 50,000 African and Caribbean immigrants and refugees living across the Philadelphia area, constituting 8% of the total immigrant population. Fear, language difficulties, misinformation and a lack of guidance leave many of these immigrants and refugees on the fragile edges of society, underserved and vulnerable.

TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

Our work was centered around health and education. We supported AFAHO's health team by creating a Breast Cancer workshop, doing various community survey management, facilitating an oral health workshop for youth, and creating infographics bridging Cardiovascular health, erectile dysfunction, and faith. For the education aspect, we facilitated various Robotic and Electricity projects for the Youth STEM camp.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ CHALLENGES/ JOYS



Accomplishment:

- Successfully facilitating the youth STEM summer camp; creating a culturally sensitive breast cancer workshop; gathering resources on Cardiovascular Health

Joys:

- Being immersed into so many different cultures and languages; making an impact on a marginalized community

Challenges:

- Language barrier;
- Having to adapt quickly to changes in the schedule; adapting to the health literacy level of the population

REFLECTION

"This BTG summer experience has been so fulfilling in all aspects of professional and personal growth. We learned about the various cultures represented in the Southwest Philadelphia community and had a chance to serve, fellowship with community members at various events. AFAHO has made a significant impact on this community through health education, empowerment, and service. We were grateful to have played a minor role in such a great cause these past seven weeks. The staff and community members welcomed us in with open arms. We learned about the importance of effective teamwork and communication amongst interdisciplinary professions and departments to successfully run an organization. As a result, we saw the impact of program effectiveness and its ability to provide quality needed services to clients."