



Promoting Clean Indoor Air

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Community Preceptors: *Brad Cary, American Heart Association; Traci Kennedy, MPA, American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation*



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



The primary mission of the American Heart Association is to promote longer and healthier lives. Working alongside the American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation and other organizations, the American Heart Association is dedicated to ensuring that all indoor workspaces are smoke-free. Currently, their work in Pennsylvania focuses on promoting clean-air laws and providing resources for those who are negatively impacted by secondhand smoke in their workplaces. For more information about the American Heart Association, go to <https://www.heart.org/>.

BACKGROUND

According to the CDC, each year about 41,000 people die from secondhand smoke (SHS) exposure. Casinos, private clubs, bars, and other venues in Pennsylvania and many other states are exempt from state laws that prohibit indoor smoking. Every day, employees in these locations are unwillingly subjected to the harmful health effects SHS, such as the increased risk for heart and lung diseases.



TEAM'S EXPERIENCE

The intern researched and collected up-to-date scientific information about the harmful effects of secondhand smoke and organized them into infographic-based fact sheets. They also worked on outreach by speaking to and meeting with state representatives and other important stakeholders. In preparation for these meetings, they created a document summarizing the Protecting Workers from Secondhand Smoke Act, which would eliminate the exemption that allows smoking inside casinos and private clubs in Pennsylvania.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/JOYS

- Connecting with casino employees across the nation
- Advocating for a marginalized population
- Developing a positive relationship with PA state representatives and leaders of the PA VFW and American Legion
- Creating concise, easy-to-read, and accurate data sheets that can be used to self-advocate and educate

REFLECTION

"This past summer has been an eye-opening and meaningful experience for me. As a life-long Pennsylvanian, I was shocked to discover how many venues still allow smoking indoors. After listening to casino employees' stories, it was heartbreaking to hear about the detrimental effects that these toxins have had on their health. The only way that everyone will have the right to the 100% smoke-free air that they deserve is for progressive legislation to be made. The advocacy work and support from the American Heart Association and American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation is crucial in making these changes happen, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve them."