Ashburn, Mary: The Community Health Alliance

Proposal

The community Health Alliance is an organization that is dedicated to helping groups in communities across the world with their health needs. The goal of the CHA is to help communities create a healthier environment as well as gain more knowledge and experience in health issues. The CHA views their relationship with the communities they help as a partnership by exchanging resources and knowledge. CHA has conducted and promoted events such as food drives, fundraisers, walkathons, preventive health workshops, service learning programs, and demonstrations against police brutality. Not only does CHA fundraise for communities in need they also promote diversity and appreciation of all cultures. The events sponsored by and promoted by CHA has helped refugees, migrant farmers, diabetics, local citizens gain health insurance and etc.

"Ethnography can be defined as a way of making a detailed description and analysis of human behavior based on long term observational study" (Heider: 1976: 6). In my ethnography I will record and observe the community Health Alliance, an origination that strives to make local and globe health changes as well as promote equality. I will be conducting one on one interviews with members of the organization as well as group observation during meetings and events. It is important for an ethnography to include information that gives readers an understanding what the writer/filmmakers relation is to the topic is, because it allows them to better analyze what they are reading or seeing (Mendoza: 2008:8). As a female minority that has been raised by parents in the health and law enforcement field in a small town, I have learned first hand the importance and power of community. Over the years I have seen people in my community struggle through hardships, as well as face some myself. I have perceived the effect that a community can have by coming together to support one another, whether it is fundraising/donating to support local causes, walkathons, clearing neighborhood streets during big storms, or helping neighbors clean up after natural distastes community support is essential for society to prosper.

Scholarly background

1 day late As the cost of living increases more people have become dependent on government funding. Every year budget cuts made to these government funding program increase leave many single mothers, elderly, and the disabled people to pay for medical services out of pocket or go without (Singletary: 2018). Governmental assistance programs are not enough for people to on these services would not survive. Because many older people can not work so they rely on this government programs to survive. Without organizations like POC many of the elderly that rely food banks is a signal of household food insecurity and increase the risk of medical issues due to nutritional risk (Jensen, 2002). Studies show that the use of healthy lives” (Jensen, 2002). Food banks served an estimate of one in seven people in the United States (Feeding America). Supplies and relatively low food prices, many households do not have assured access to enough food to lead active and healthy lives” (Jensen, 2002). Food banks served an estimate of one in seven people in the United States (Feeding America). Studies show that the use of food banks is a signal of household food insecurity and increase the risk of medical issues due to nutritional risk (Tarasuk: 109-113). This is problematic because many older people can not work so they rely on this government programs to survive. Without organizations like POC many of the elderly that rely on these services would not survive. 

Questions asked

What does POC mean to the community?

What does it mean to you?

Why are volunteers important?

The Parish Outreach Center mostly helps the elders in the community. Many of the people that reach out to the POC for help are older people who do not have insurance or their insurance doesn't cover medication/procedures that they need. Governmental assistance programs are not enough for people to survive off of, people have difficulty maintaining food security (Quandt: 1999: 29). “Due to Trump's Trump's Trump's Trump's Trump's Medicaid cutbacks people 65 and older as well as people with disabilities increases their out of pocket expenses for their medications, food services, such as meals on wheels” (Singletary: 2018). An Increase in poverty levels results in an increase in need for government funded programs and food drives (Bacon: 2017: 899-919). “Ample aggregate food supplies and relatively low food prices, many households do not have assured access to enough food to meet their dietary needs to lead active and healthy lives” (Jensen, 2002). Food banks served an estimate of one in seven people in the United States (Feeding America). Studies show that the use of food banks is a signal of household food insecurity and increase the risk of medical issues due to nutritional risk (Tarasuk: 109-113). This is problematic because many older people can not work so they rely on this government programs to survive. Without organizations like POC many of the elderly that rely on these services would not survive. 

Religious organizations have been a vital resource to their community for years. Because these organizations are usually associated with churches they are typically volunteer based. “The assistance provided by the Church represents a form of traditional poor relief in a modern setting where fieldworkers are left with considerable freedom to address local needs” (Hiliamo: 2012: 404). Throughout history churches have helped people in need. Although POC is run through the Methodist church they help people of different religions and backgrounds. POC gives people the option to work on spiritual and mental healing. They provide spiritual healing through pray circles to help people cope with their hardships. The church focuses on spiritual activities and work with the elderly and the handicapped.
The Parish Outreach Center is a nonprofit: because of this they rely on volunteers and donations from the government, the community, and Suny Geneseo students. The people who are regular volunteers consist mostly of elderly women. Because they lack student volunteers they struggle to keep up with the workload as well as modern technology. The POC still uses paper filing systems forcing them to spend hours in maintenance alone. The center lack of technological skills as well as equipment also sets them back: the office consist of one phone that is used for keeping up with patient calls, calling insurance companies and medical labs and etc. If the POC had more student volunteers they could take over these task so they could dedicate more time to helping the community. Nicely done, see rubric below.

Video Link

Video Reflection

In my proposal I planned to make an ethnography on the Community Health Alliance ability to make social change by helping communities in need across the world. After talking to the CHA board and it’s members, I discovered that the organization was nothing like they appeared to be. When I would contact members in CHA they would agree to being interviewed, but when I would try to plan a time to meet they would stop responding. I learned from attending The CHA meetings, that were held about once every two weeks, that they were only social gathering consisting of music, games, and snacks. Because the meetings were nothing more than social gatherings volunteering opportunities and service projects that they were conducting were not discussed. When I reached out to the Parish Outreach Program I soon discovered that this was because the majority of the members of CHA were not volunteering or working on service projects.

I decided to change the focus of the ethnography from CHA to the POC impact on the Geneseo community and the hardships they face because of CHA lack of volunteering. Not being able to interview CHA volunteers and members increased the difficulty in getting my original focus of the film across. One method I decided to use was text narration in order to eliminate bias that can occur from using the voice of god approach. Using narration allowed me to give the viewers background information needed in order to fully understand what the organizations do and to tie the video and written work together. I used video clips of the interviews I conducted so the viewers could connect with the organization and its members better, I also used music to influence the mood of the viewers. I think these methods were successful in conveying the focus of my video as well as tie together with the written work. The video worked better at captivating the heart of the organization as well as all the work and sacrifice that is put into it to keep it running, allowing viewers to be more empathetic. The written work does just as good of a job conveying why the organization is important and its impact. When uploading the video I faced technical difficulties with the sound: in part of the video the music and voice overs overlapped and made it difficult to understand. I fixed this by uploading the video again using a different wifi network.

Written Reflection on Final Video Rubric

Evaluates your video in relation to your written wiki space and the course readings, with explicit references to both.

Outstanding Strong Adequate Weak

Discusses choices you made about the style of the video and evaluates how successful were they in conveying the subject matter.

Outstanding Strong Adequate Weak

Discusses how well the video worked in comparison to the written component?

Outstanding Strong Adequate Weak

Explicitly reference the course readings (and other resources if you wish).

Outstanding Strong Adequate Weak

Entry is in past tense.

Yes No
References in American Antiquity format.

Yes  no  some problems