

July 7th, 2021

Vasu Rishi, Morgan Gibbs, and Aerial Thao

Our goal for the COVID-19 Outreach Program was to reach out to the rural populations of northern Wisconsin. We talked to Rob Mentzer, a radio host for Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR), who did a brief investigative story about vaccine hesitancy in the rural areas of Clark County. We talked about the rural populations of Wisconsin, and were educated about the Amish and Mennonite communities, also called "Plain People," and their reluctance toward the COVID-19 vaccines. Mentzer advised not to focus on these communities as many resources have already been directed to encourage them to get vaccines. We switched our focus toward farmers in the surrounding counties (Lincoln and Langlade).

We contacted the Marathon County Health Department to discuss resources or suggestions about how we could reach out to the rural communities of Wisconsin. We set up a meeting with Laura Scudiere, the Community Health Improvement Director at the Marathon County Health Department. In our meeting, we discussed the difficulty in reaching rural populations, and she said she would connect us with Sandi Cihlar, supervisor on the Marathon County Board of Supervisors, and Dr. Corrie Norrbom. Norrbom would then connect us with H2N, a health communication network which focuses on the Hmong and Hispanic populations in the Central Wisconsin area. We never received any response back from Scudiere, Cihlar, or Norrbom, despite repeated attempts to follow-up with them.

We set up a meeting with Cassie McLain, Regional Community Coordinator with Wisconsin Literacy and talked about our efforts in reaching out to the rural areas of northern and central Wisconsin. She suggested that we reach out to the Merrill Recreational Center to set up an informational booth and the Lincoln Health Department to learn what they are doing in terms of COVID-19 vaccine outreach, and how we could help.

One way we wanted to approach Wisconsin farmers was by creating a raffle with the local feed stores or large agricultural companies in Wisconsin. We wanted to encourage farmers to get vaccinated by giving them an incentive. The Marathon County Literacy Council had \$500 set aside specifically for the COVID-19 Outreach Program, and would be used to create this incentive. Marathon Feed, Power Pac, Riesterer and Schnell, and Swiderski Equipment were all contacted via email in hopes of a partnership for this project. We received no responses from all locations.

Another approach we considered was to set up an information booth about the COVID-19 vaccine at the Land O'Lakes Job Fair in Marshfield. In order to contact the head organizer, Ann Solaski, we first reached out to the Communications Department at Land O'Lakes. We did not receive a response.

If given more time to continue the project, we would have reached out to the Merrill Recreational Center and set up a COVID-19 vaccine informational booth where we would talk to individuals about the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine. Additionally, we would have reached out to more organizations regarding vaccinations of local farmers. For example, partnering with H2N would allow us to educate local farmers about why being vaccinated is important and how the vaccine works. We will have the chance to reach local farmers at the Wisconsin Valley Fair at Marathon Park in early August.

Contact	Date	Means of Communication
Rob Mentzer	06/15/2021	Email; Phone call
Land O'Lakes	06/16/2021	Email
Marathon Feed	06/16/2021	Email
Power Pac	06/16/2021	Email
Riesterer and Schnell	06/16/2021	Email
Swiderski Equipment	06/16/2021	Email
Laura Scudiere	06/21/2021	Email; Zoom meeting + follow-up email
Cassie McLain	07/06/2021	Email; Zoom meeting