

Essay: Future Educational and Professional Plans, Financial Need, and Commitment to Health Education

Building a career in health education is not only an ambition of mine but also an intention aimed at accomplishing a burning desire to contribute towards the well-being of humanity. My **future educational goal** is to earn a doctoral degree in public health and equity science **with a focus on health promotion and education**. This will equip me with the advanced knowledge and skills to develop evidence-based interventions, advocate for health equity, and empower marginalized communities. My long-term plan is to work as a health educator in community-oriented settings with a focus on reducing health disparities through culturally tailored programs.

Professionally, I am interested in contributing towards programs that can eliminate the barriers to adequate health among the marginalized populations. This will be targeted at promoting access to preventive care and increasing health literacy resources for all. Gaining further educational training will help me better serve as an advocate for policy changes that will address social determinants of health and eliminate health disparities.

As a first-generation student from a low-income background, **finance** has always been a challenge in my academic pursuit. I have constantly combined academic obligations with part-time work to support my education. Notwithstanding these efforts, tuition and other educational financial costs remain a hurdle yet to be crossed. A scholarship would help take care of the financial stress and enable me to fully focus on my studies and community work, and to attend and present at professional conferences.

I have consistently sought professional development opportunities to improve my expertise. I have attended various health education and advocacy workshops where I have been fully certified for practice in those areas. These include Peer Educator Certification, Quality Improvement and Patient's Safety, Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) South/West Border Region Certification, Adult Mental Health First Aid and others. Through these, I gained insights into innovative strategies for promoting individual and community health. These experiences have reinforced my passion for health advocacy and provided networking opportunities with professionals who share my vision.

My dedication to service and advocacy is evident in my involvement with organizations such as Brighter Bites and Aggie Cupboard where I have been volunteering in food distribution to youths and families. Other volunteering work includes participation in health fairs, peer-to-peer mental health tutoring. I also conduct educational workshops on nutrition and physical activity, nutrition and mental health, and community-based research projects addressing obesity and chronic diseases as part of the volunteering work. Furthermore, I am an active member of the New Mexico State Public Health Association, which has allowed me to contribute to health advocacy initiatives and stay up to date on the current developments in the field.

Altogether, given my work towards advanced education, including my current Ph.D. program and continued professional engagement, I am confident in my ability to affect meaningful changes in public health. A scholarship would not only ease the financial burden, but also boost my passion for serving communities and advocating for health equity and well-being.