

# Applied Field Experience

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October 2, 2020

Lazos America Unida

*Understanding COVID-19 Through the Undocumented Immigrant Population*

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# Lazos America Unida

- To represent and advocate on behalf of the Mexican American community as well as strengthen the relationship between the Hispanic and the broader community through grassroots projects that seek to enhance and foster individual and collective prosperity and involve the public, private, civic and research sectors at the local, state, national and transnational levels.



# Lazos America Unida

- Organize and promote Mexican arts and culture through festivals and other events
- Immigration advocacy through legal guidance or assistance and connection with network of resources
- Various programs and partnerships with Rutgers University such as the Citizen Science Youth Program and community health worker training



# Lazos America Unida

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- Hold and support protests or other forms of activism for relevant causes

# Why Lazos?

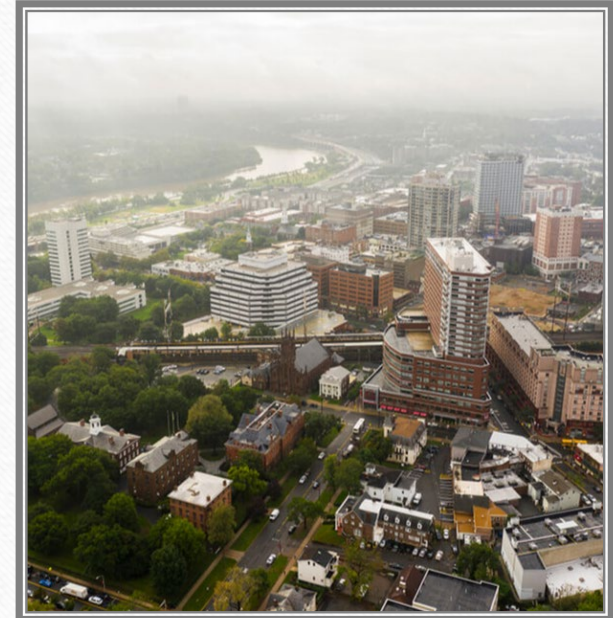
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- Apply relevant coursework in helping LAU with effective management
- Provided opportunity to undertake academic research within own community
- Local immigrant nonprofit advocating for Mexican American community
- Aligns with personal interests

# A Little About Myself

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- Born and raised in New Brunswick
- Mexican-American
- First generation college student/graduate
- MPP student with policy concentration in health
- Interests in community outreach, civic engagement, and health policy



# Role and Tasks at LAU

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- Redevelopment Plan
  - Aid in redevelopment plan for more effective management
  - Internal restructuring through committee establishment
  - Mission reevaluation
- Supporting Living Learning Community (LLC) Program
  - Coordinating undergraduate interns
  - Attending meetings with and preparing projects for undergrads

# Role and Tasks at LAU

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- Preparing Report: *Understanding COVID19 Through the Undocumented Immigrant Population*
  - Relevant to local community and LAU
  - How widespread is this issue?
  - What are the differences in how this community has been affected by the pandemic?



# Undocumented Immigrants and COVID

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- According to the Pew Research Center, 10.5 million undocumented immigrants reside in the U.S. as of 2017
- Lack of health insurance and fear of legal status are major obstacles in accessing care



# Undocumented Immigrants and COVID

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- Minority voices oftentimes minimized in medical settings
  - Only exacerbated by language barrier
- High risk of spread in jobs
  - Usually unskilled labor
  - Often essential work in food supply or retailing
  - Employers may not adhere to proper regulations or guidelines

# Undocumented Immigrants and COVID

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- Furloughing or unemployment takes harder toll on undocumented population
  - No government aid
  - Suffer similar issues faced by all Americans in terms of rent, food, and other costs without similar support networks
- Funeral costs present different challenge as body repatriation is common
  - Community already faces elevated financial strain

# Final Reflections

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- Policy options must be explored at all levels of government to resolve issues
- Experience has allowed for focus on my concentration through relevant research and use coursework in real world application
- Firsthand experience understanding role and impact of nonprofits in community
- Encouraged critical thinking of policy solutions to social issues



# Thank You

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Special thanks to my supervisor and  
Executive Director of Lazos America  
Unida, Teresa Vivar