STUDENT

VOICES

"From this experience, I've learned how to identify, through research, issues within communities, how to be comfortable communicating with community leaders and organization leaders to ask questions to obtain data and gain insight on how a business/organization currently operates, and how to pitch recommendations for solutions for process improvement."

"I learned the importance of understanding communities and their struggles in order to create methods that will promote change. I learned how to market audience benefits to a priority audience, how to motivate them to adopt a specific desired behavior, and the tactics needed to successfully launch a community-based social media campaign."

"This experience has been a great one because I learned how to work with a community partner and hear what their needs were and come up with a product to help them meet their goals. With this project I realized communication is not only key in relationships but in business too. You have to hear your clients' needs and wants and figure out as a company how to meet their demands. I learned through quantitative research how to identify a specific target audience to ensure the product we create fits their needs."

"I plan to use the skills I learned in this class in the healthcare environment. Many public hospitals in Southern California that treat primarily uninsured people of color are underfunded which heavily impacts patient's health. Soon, I want to work closely with an underfunded clinic/hospital and be able to observe any issues and implement solutions to help their staff, improve patient health outcomes as much as I can, and decrease health disparities."

"I can see myself being more engaged and involved with causes that speak to my heart. I love servicing people and being part of a community that concentrates on development and growth to improve itself."

"Through Dr. Upadhyaya's guidance and support, our Community-Based Social Marketing course allowed us to examine major community issues and reflect on their importance. I explored my community in a way I had not previously done to get a closer look at the issues at hand. Throughout the course of days, I noted several focus points I could review for my project. Something I once saw and never questioned now turned into a question of "Has the city presented a plan to solve the problem?" and "How could I aid in finding a solution?" The community engagement projects encouraged new and effective ways to combat issues as they often resulted from an event we had never experienced, a global pandemic. My experience further assured the importance of leading change and involvement within one's community. Today, I strive to make meaningful contributions to my community and its students by advocating for positive change."

"Researching and approaching businesses with a relationship-interest rather than a profitable-interest will take you further and matters more. I have learned that in order to change a behavior of a community you have to act as their friend and be a part of the community. Relationships are always valued, even in a low-context business culture. The knowledge I have now with assessing an area, finding out what their needs are, and finding out how I can help solve it, has changed more than I realized. It has lightened an interest in community-based social behaviors that I didn't think I would get."

"It has been quite an experience to be in places where I was not expecting to find tax return services."

"VITA adds so much value to many people's lives, and I'm grateful to be a part of it, assisting families in accessing services that are growing increasingly expensive as time passes."

"My second client was an older gentleman he was really happy with our help and I further understood why we were there in the first place, he had multiple difficulties using technology and I was able to assist him with some of his needs."

"It's been a really good experience. I've enjoyed talking with the students and hearing what they think. It felt more like a two-way conversation, not just us giving advice. I liked how open and thoughtful the students were...and it felt good to share my own stories, knowing they might learn something from them. It's nice to know that a simple talk can make a difference."

"As a result of this project, I now have the ability to recognize and comprehend specific community issues and requirements. Through this project, I have learned how to communicate effectively, skills I can use to raise awareness and advocate for change in my community. I have also learned how to work with various stakeholders effectively and the importance of building strong partnerships. Additionally, by sharing the information and abilities I have gained, I can engage others locally to participate and add to change arranging."

The project really got me motivated to work in a career that is meaningful to me instead of focusing on other factors such a prestige or pay."

"The experience has instilled in me a deep appreciation for nonprofits' dedication and effort. I am committed to actively volunteering my time and skills to contribute to positive change in my community. I recognize the importance of hands-on involvement in fostering positive change, whether it involves participating in community events, assisting with fundraising initiatives, or contributing to specific projects."

"Throughout the Hearts for Sights and Pando Days project process I learned a lot in terms of marketing analytics. The use of AI technology was also definitely helpful because I had never dipped my toes in it before, so I believe the experience will help in the future. My conversational skills improved tremendously especially because of how often my group had to discuss with each other on the project with specific timelines on when things needed to get done. I think overall the opportunity to assist a real life company will help if I ever try to do the same thing later on."

"In this project, I learned that based on the survey results and using the Ascribe software for data analysis, I can identify the barriers, benefits, and motivators of personas. Using Ascribe for data analysis enhanced my understanding of diverse perspectives by creating and customizing coding structures to analyze the survey results. It is also one of the skills I gained from doing this project. Another skill I improved is leadership skills, collaborating and communicating with my team to create practical marketing recommendations for Hearts for Sight. One aspect of the project I like is using data analysis software that I have never heard of before, which can also enhance my research capabilities and data analysis using Ascribe in other classes. It not only helped me look at data as numbers or a bunch of words but as stories and perspectives from the participants and able to customize them into specific categories."

"One aspect I dislike about the project is that there is not enough information about the marketing promotions HFS used; this can help us eliminate unsuccessful marketing strategies. I believe this project has built a strong foundation for my future career by shaping my approach to problem-solving and teamwork. Overall, my experience with the Hearts for Sight and Pando Days project has been a growth journey and enriched my skills."