



NAAMA Summer Mentorship and Volunteer Program for Health Navigation Support

Background:

Currently a significant gap in healthcare access for Arabic-speaking residents and low-income immigrants exist. A primary obstacle is the language barrier, which severely limits their ability to navigate the healthcare system, including:

- Initiating and completing Medicaid applications.
- Locating and scheduling appointments with providers who accept Medicaid.
- Initiating and accessing necessary services such as special education and public-school support for students with disabilities.
- Connecting with nonprofit medical clinics for ongoing care of Medicaid ineligible patients.

These challenges not only delay essential healthcare but also exacerbate health disparities among refugees and immigrant populations.

Program Proposal:

5 Summer Mentorship Volunteer Opportunity designed specifically for **bilingual (Arabic-English) college students or graduates**.

Volunteer Role:

- Facilitate the connection of qualifying Arabic-speaking residents and low-income immigrants to Medicaid services.
- Assist families in scheduling and navigating healthcare appointments, including primary care as well as specialists' referrals.
- Support families in initiating educational accommodations and disability-related services for school-age children.
- Guide families to nonprofit, Harris health/Gold cards clinic systems and low-cost clinics for ongoing medical care.
- Assist low-income families in navigating job and career opportunities such as Texas workforce commission applications, resume updates, and connecting to nonprofit organizations that provide job assistance programs.
- No minimum hours or productivity is required.

Program Structure:

- **Duration:** 5 to 6 weeks.
- **Participants:** Bilingual College students or graduates proficient in Arabic and English.

- **Training:** Initial orientation covering:
 - Medicaid enrollment processes.
 - Scheduling practices and finding providers who accept Medicaid.
 - Overview of public schools' disability services and resources including request for a full individualized evaluation FIE and initiation of Individualized education plan IEP and 504.
 - Introduction to nonprofit clinic networks.
- **Supervision:** Participants will be supervised by Disaster Relief leadership and/or experienced volunteer coordinators. Participants will submit a weekly summary report of families assisted and services initiated.
- **Stipend:** Modest educational grant offered to qualifying participants in the mentorship program. Stipend is NOT tied to productivity.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Fluent in Arabic and English.
- Strong interpersonal and organizational skills.
- Interest in community health, public service, and refugees and low-income families support.
- Commitment to attend all training sessions and completing the mentorship program.

Benefits to Participants:

- Professional experience in healthcare navigation, community and nonprofit services.
- Service to a vulnerable community with high impact.
- Certificate of Completion from the National Arab American Medical Association.
- Networking opportunities with NAAMA Physicians and leaders.

Impact:

- Immediate relief to refugee families struggling to access essential healthcare and educational services.
- Empowerment of bilingual young professionals to engage in meaningful community work.
- Strengthening of the National Arab American Medical Association's role in disaster relief, refugee support, and public service.