



PRESS RELEASE

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Health Equity Initiative Launches *Take Action on Health Equity!: A School Poster Contest*

Contest is open to all high school students interested in health equity.

New York, N.Y., October 20, 2014: Health Equity Initiative (HEI), a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to building and sustaining a global community that engages across sectors to advance health equity, announces today the launch of *Take Action on Health Equity: A School Poster Contest*. Participating U.S. high school students are eligible to earn community service credits for their work in support of Health Equity Initiative. Students from other countries are also encouraged to enter the contest and submit their poster in the English language.

The contest is designed to provide high school students with an opportunity to learn about health equity through a creative and engaging project. Students are asked to work in groups to design a unique poster on the topic of health equity. The contest aims to produce creative posters that will be displayed on HEI's website, You Tube channel, other social media, and in the students' school. The goal is to advance discussions about issues related to health equity in homes, neighborhoods, and communities.

Health equity is a field of action and study that focuses on the unjust disparities that exist between communities. Health equity is about providing everyone with the same opportunity to stay healthy and cope with disease, regardless of different social and living conditions. Health disparities are linked to diverse factors, which include socio-economic conditions, race, ethnicity and culture, as well as having access to health care services. Communities with greater disparities experience higher rates of infant mortality, higher incidence of disease, and lower life expectancy, with a significant impact on the ability of their children and future generations to thrive, as well as long-term consequences for community productivity and well-being. Combined costs of health inequities in the United States totaled \$1.24 trillion from 2003 to 2006, making this an important issue for all communities.

"We are pleased to provide this kind of creative and educational opportunity to students as part of our efforts to engage young people on health equity. Health equity is still a complex



concept for too many people, so it's important to start early with preparing the future generations of leaders." said Renata Schiavo, PhD, MA, HEI's Founding President. "We hope this project will encourage students to become aware of health equity issues and inspire them to become champions for a healthier and more equitable future."

HEI will post ten winning entries on the HEI website and social media channels. All participating students from U.S. schools will also be eligible to receive four hours worth of community service credits from Health Equity Initiative for their work. Winners will receive an award certificate and additional hours of credits. These community service credits may go towards community service hours required by their high schools.

A panel of students and HEI members will evaluate all entries. Posters will be judged by:

- Unique nature
- Artistic appeal
- Ability to draw attention to health disparities and/or possible solutions

All posters should include: individual and team names, school, and contact information. The deadline for the poster contest is December 20th 2014.

To submit a poster, send a scanned or PDF file to: postercontest@healthequityinitiative.org

Background

This poster contest was created in conjunction with materials developed by a group of high school students from the United Nations International School (UNIS) in New York City. As part of their community service efforts for Health Equity Initiative, these students also developed two presentations on the topic of health equity. The first of these materials, "How to Talk with High School Students/Peers on Health Equity" provides information on health disparities and outlines how to initiate discussions within the school community. The second presentation, "Take Action on Health Equity!" complements the first presentation and includes sample activities to be implemented by high school students to take action on health equity. Developed by kids for kids, these resources are intended to be used as a tool for high school students to start a conversation on health equity with their friends and peers and could also be used by teachers within relevant high school courses.

"UNIS seeks to increase our students' involvement in the community and make an impact on important social issues. Working with HEI on this project gave us the opportunity to foster multi-age participation from our students in grades nine through eleven, and engage them in a collaborative community service project. This project is particularly meaningful



because it was developed by kids for kids, which is an important component of empowering students to become champions for health equity. The prezi presentation provided us with an excellent medium to address these issues in an engaging way for other kids. I am thankful students had the opportunity to learn in a 'real-life' work environment creating a sense of community between HEI and UNIS," said Zakaria Baha, Director of Student Activities at UNIS.

To download a free copy of the health equity materials developed by UNIS students, visit the HEI website at: <http://www.healthequityinitiative.org/hei/resources/>

About Health Equity Initiative

Health Equity Initiative (HEI) is a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to building and sustaining a global community that engages across sectors to advance health equity. HEI is unique in its efforts to bridge silos and build ONE community for health equity.

For additional information and to join the health equity movement/become a HEI member, visit www.healthequityinitiative.org. | Follow HEI on Twitter [@HlthEquityInit](https://twitter.com/HlthEquityInit) | Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HlthEquityInit> | Join our LinkedIn Group: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/Health-Equity-Initiative-3913570/about>