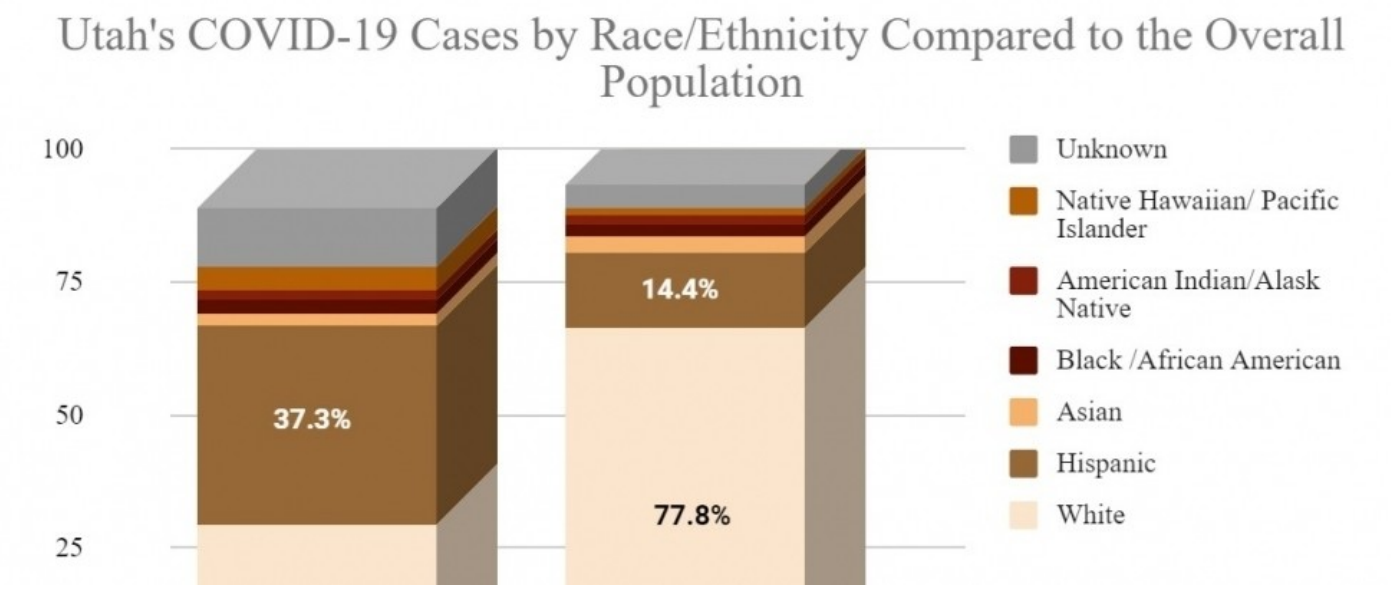
My Internship Reflection | Liliana Tapia Bolanos

Published: Wednesday, 16 September 2020 13:51
Written by: Liliana Bolaños



Utah’s Latinx Community Has Been Heavily Hit By the COVID-19 Pandemic and this is what it means to me.

It is no question that the Latinx community has been hit heavily by the COVID-19 pandemic all over the nation. There is a fear that exists in the Latinx community of getting testing and treatment for the virus. That fear can partially be associated with some community member’s immigration status and the changes that have recently been made by the Trump Administration’s Public Charge Rule.

Case counts for the state show that the Latinx community has made up 37.3% of total positive coronavirus cases but they only make up 14.4% of the total population. The Latinx community and White community together make up 78.3% of the positive coronavirus cases in the state of Utah. That percentage consists of my friends, family, co-workers and neighbors. It is alarming to note that the percentage of positive tests was higher in the Latinx community than any other ethnic group. This implies that in our Latinx community, it is more likely that people are obtaining testing when they believe they have contracted the virus. Our mixed-status families face obstacles to obtain testing and treatment for several reasons including misconceptions and mistrust that exists from the "chilling effect" of the Public Charge

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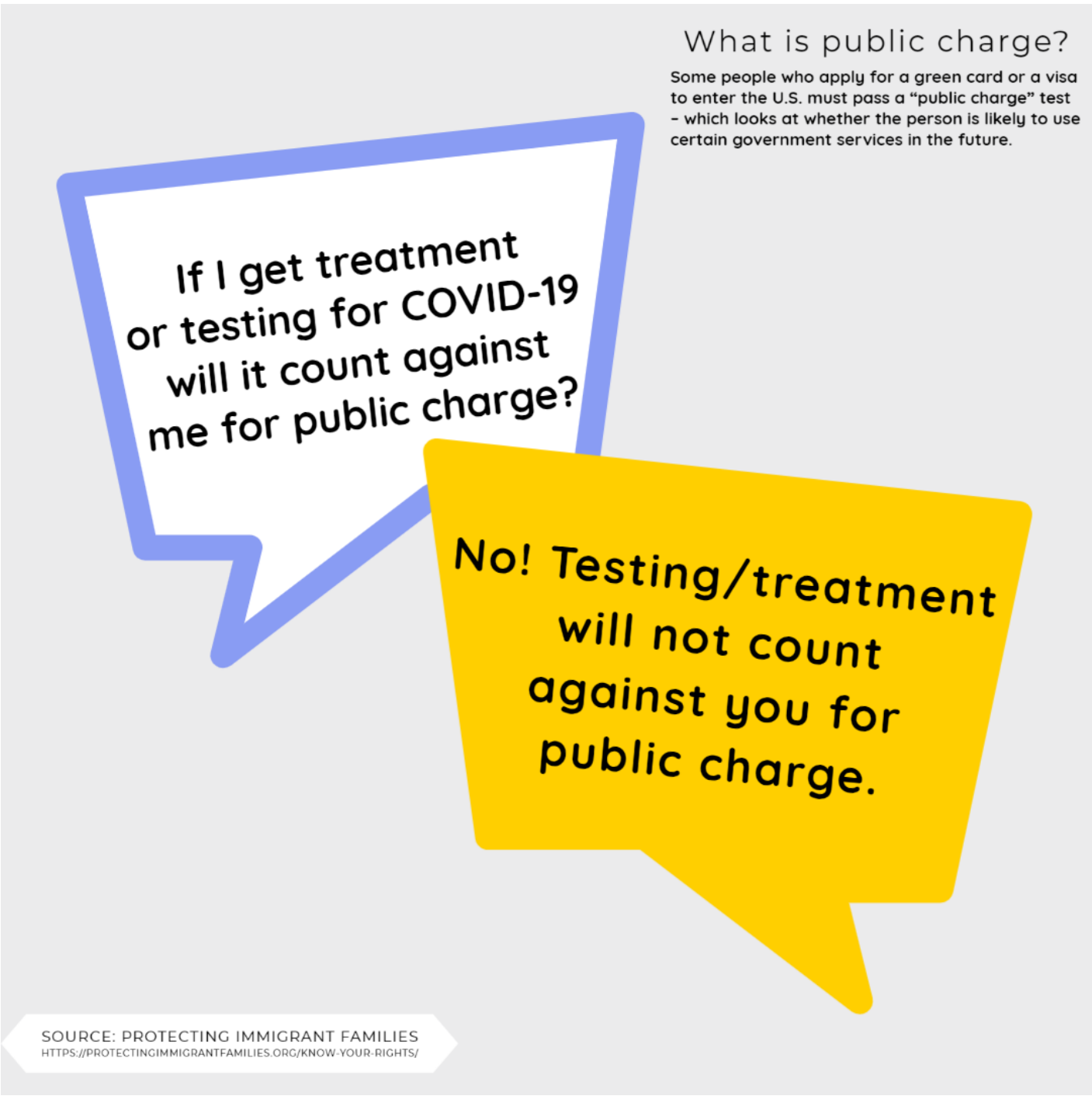
Rule.

The demographics speak loud and clear; there is a lot more work to do to ensure our Hispanic/Latinx community is receiving information about COVID-19 and ensuring they can get testing and treatment without barriers. Out of the 17,510 positive Latino cases in the state my parents and siblings have made up a small portion of that total. This issue is important to me as a Hispanic/Latina in Utah but more importantly as a daughter and sister. The fact that a percentage of the Hispanic/Latinx population are undocumented cannot supersede the fact that they are human beings in the midst of a worldwide pandemic and are deserving of medical treatment and support.

This is why this summer I interned at Voices for Utah Children. As part of my internship I worked on various projects that focused on helping the Latinx community in Utah. We did this by sharing information and resources in various ways that would lessen fear, increase information/knowledge and help support our mixed-status families. One way that we accomplished this was by having a COVID-19 resource list that can be found here. I also made social media graphics and flyers that summarized important information during the pandemic available in English and in Spanish. Available on Twitter and Facebook. And lastly, I also wrote an op-ed for the Deseret News about the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

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My interest in advocacy work has grown immensely during my time as an intern for Voices for Utah Children. I was introduced to the organization because they supported me with resources as a DACA recipient. Since then the organization has provided me with opportunities to serve the community just as they have served me and others in the state. Moving forward, I will continue to pursue my interests with advocacy work by finding more opportunities to serve in the community, do more research to understand the needs of diverse communities in Utah and finish my college education. Advocacy work is so important because it provides a voice for those in the community that often go unheard. Advocacy work is about making sure everyone's views and needs are genuinely considered and heard. To me, this is the

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most important work I can spend my time doing.



Liliana Tapia Bolanos

Intern at Voices for Utah Children

Summer 2020

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