BREAKING THE STIGMA BEHIND HIV/AIDS

HOSA COMMUNITY AWARENESS

HOSA CHAPTER #69153- SECONDARY DIVISION

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TARGET AUDIENCE: 14-25

TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERACTIONS: 11,160

OLENTANGY HIGH SCHOOL

OHIO

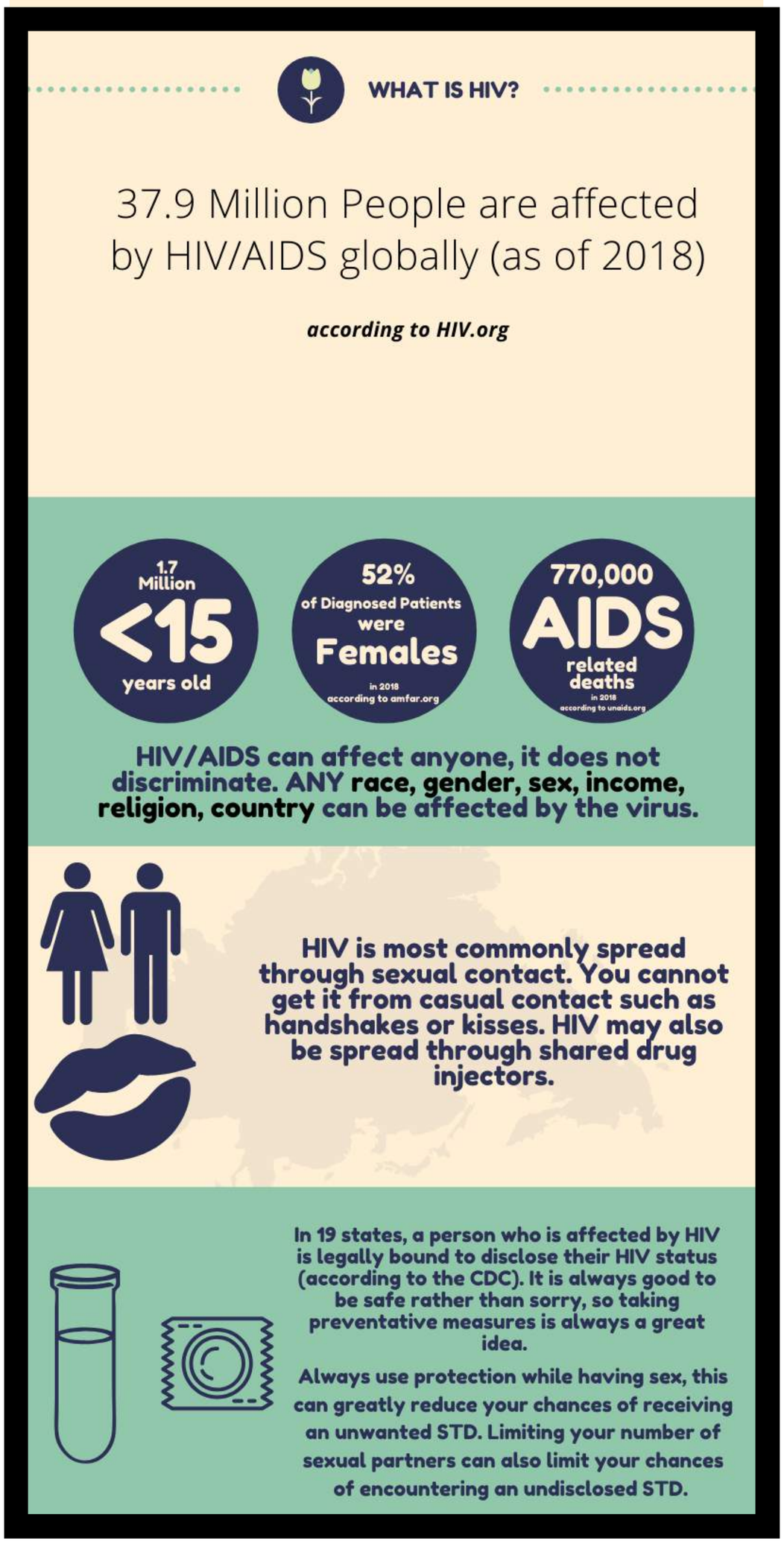
The project that we developed involves the topic of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the disease that it causes: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Formation: We started off with identifying various issues within our local community, age demographic, and on a larger national scale. One of the most striking topics to us was HIV/AIDS. We chose this topic because of the background we already had in this topic; we had learned about it in a broad sense in our Advanced Placement Biology class. This stimulated and provoked our interest in the topic not only because of the micro scientific aspect, but also the macro aspect.

Identification of the issue: We knew that HIV/AIDS was already a huge ongoing issue. The scale of the virus/disease is global. It also affects a variety of age demographics within each part of the world. However, not only the disease itself is the issue, but there is a stigma around this sexually transmitted disease. In a study conducted by the The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (2015), it was observed that in 35% of countries with data available on HIV/AIDS, 50% of people reported to have experienced discrimination against HIV/AIDS. Not only does this stigma create an unsafe environment for people living with the disease, but it also can contribute to the spread of this disease. This taboo manifests itself in the form of violations in health care, dissociation between family and friends, discrimination in the workplace. Ultimately, the environment created leads to a constrained access to treatments that should be easily accessible and other services because of the fears surrounding the topic (Stangl, Lloyd, Brady, Holland & Baral, 2013). Additionally, it was appropriate to choose the age demographic of 14-25 because of the overwhelming prevalence of the stigma and moderate uneducatedness on HIV/AIDS. In 2014, 3.9 million people between the ages of 15-24 were infected with HIV (UNAIDS, 2015). These statistics provide more than enough evidence to deduce that HIV is not just an “adult” issue, but more so an adolescent and young adult issue.

Goals, Accomplishments, Effectiveness, and Impact of the Project: One of the first steps to reaching an end to the HIV/AIDS pandemic is through breaking the stigma behind HIV/AIDS. After in depth analysis of various sources, we came to the conclusion that the biggest indirect factor to the spread of the disease is silence. Young adults and teens who are afflicted with the virus hold fears of ostracization (Fielden, Chapman & Cadell, 2011). In our efforts, we first want to break the stigma within adolescents and young adults to create a safer environment for those infected and possibly those who could be affected in the future. By breaking the stigma behind HIV/AIDS this would encourage people to seek out the care and treatment necessary to live and cope with the disease. Our project has brought numerous people to the attention of HIV/AIDS and has created more conversation on the topic.

Project #1



November 12th-19th, 2019

3290 Views and Interactions

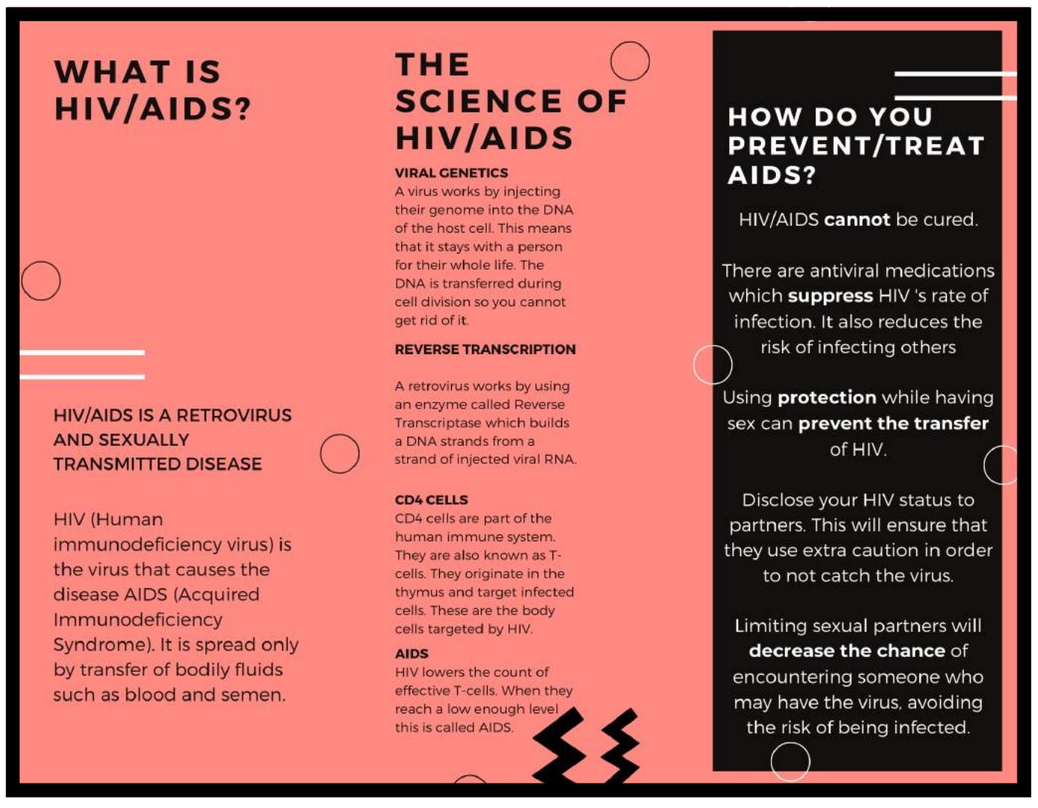
Our first activity was social media based. After assessing multiple methods of spreading information, we found that one of the most effective outlets was social media. This was posted on various platforms by various different people which maximized the amount of viewers and reach. Furthermore, this targeted our age group perfectly, as many of the viewers were our peers

Project #2

December 14th, 2019

50 Participants

Our second activity we went around the campus of Ohio State University, and played a game with students who consisted of the upper age audience. The game was a trivia based game and brochures were handed out to each of the students that we had interacted with. If they lost the game, they would receive a second brochure which they would then pass on. These brochures contained the scientific background of HIV/AIDS which much of general public lacks knowledge on. December was also AIDS Awareness Month. Each brochure contained a ribbon in represenation.

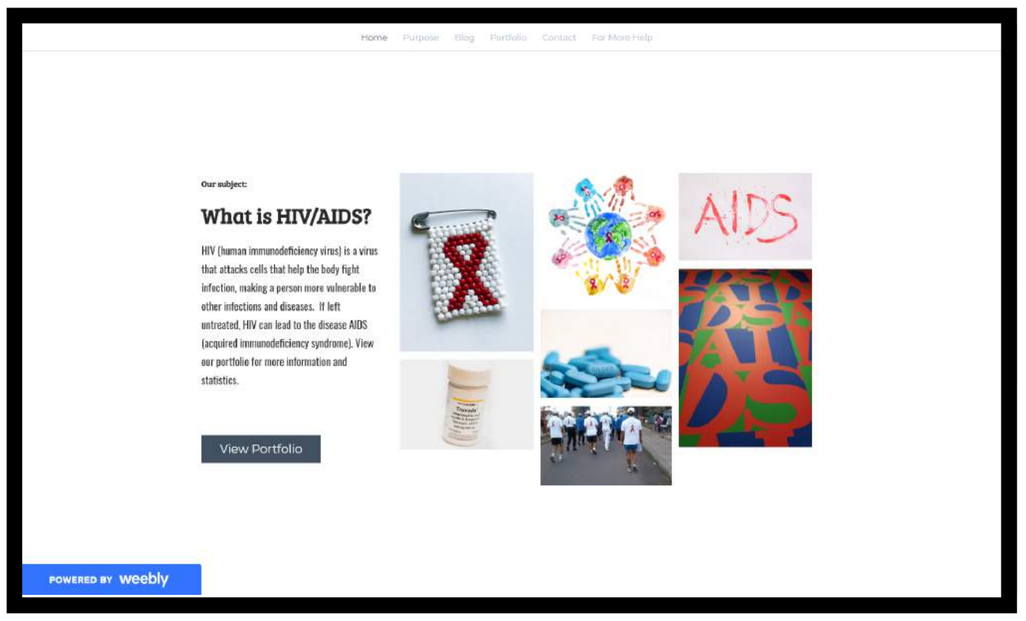


Project #3

January 7th

300 Page Viewers

Our website was first published on this date. This has served as one of our biggest companions for further information on the topic. It contains a blog in which people can be updated on our progress as well as resources for more information.



Project #4

January 7th, 15th and 22nd

1700 interactions

Flyers were posted in various locations around the community such as at our high school and at our local community library's community board. Each poster contained different information and a QR to our project website. Additionally, we placed them in teachers' classrooms.

Project #5

January 14th, 25th, and 27th

30 Participants

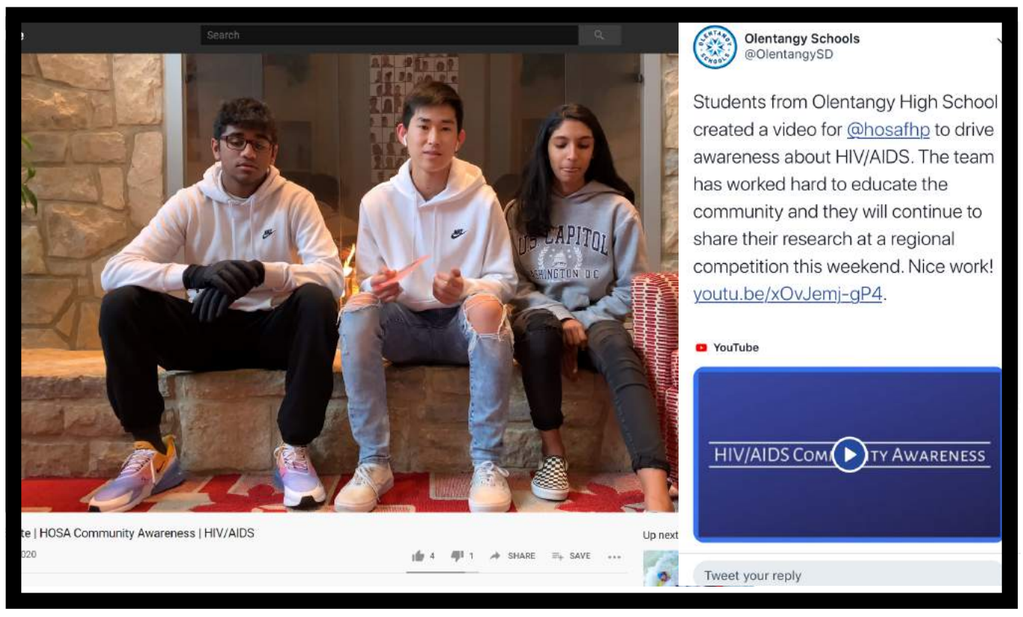
The goal of this project was in an effort to spread around the information that was contained in the brochures. We place some inside of the nurse's office at school and we went back to OSU to hand out a few more brochures to students. We also handed them out at our chapter's bake sale at school

Project #6

February 6th, 2020

1000 Views and Interactions

Our video that documented our trip to OSU is published on YouTube on this date. It was an informational video that illustrated that the general public lacks knowledge of HIV that may be integral in finding a solution to the stigma. **Additionally, our video was endorsed by our districtwide twitter page.**



Project #7

February 11th, 2020

10 Participants

We partnered with the group Actify at our local library. Actify is a group where local teens meet and talk about their issues to other teenagers in a safe environment. We talked to the participants about the danger of AIDS and how people with HIV may not be able to seek out treatment due to fears of ostracization. We also talked about sexual pressures and how people with AIDS cope with mental health.

Project #8

February 12th, 2020

30 Participants

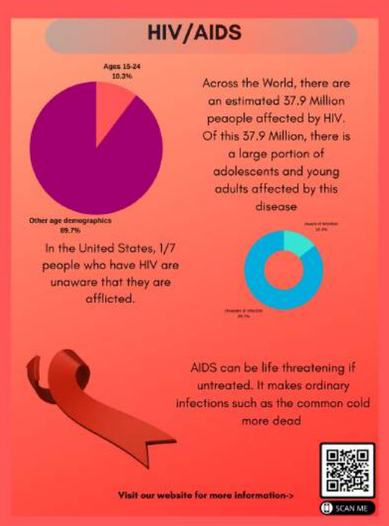
In our study hall, we played a trivia game with the students on statistics of HIV. We also played a simulation game.

Project #9

February 13th, 2020

70 Participants

In this project we partnered with our HOSA chapter's MRC Partnership team. We went to the freshmen health classes and gave a presentation on HIV/AIDS and the goals of our project. We played a simulation game that showed the exponential spread of the virus when undisclosed. We gave them handouts with statistics and QR codes to our website for more information.

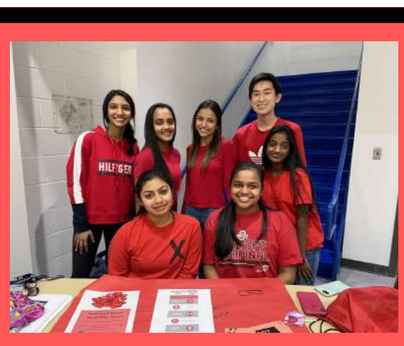


Project #10

February 13th, 2020

450 Participants

We established another partnership with the MRC Partnership group and Public Health group in this event. We held a Health Awareness Day on a variety health issues. This included HIV/AIDS. People wore red in support of HIV/AIDS and we passed out ribbons and candy at lunch for people who wore red.



Project #11

March 9th, 2020

1700 Participants

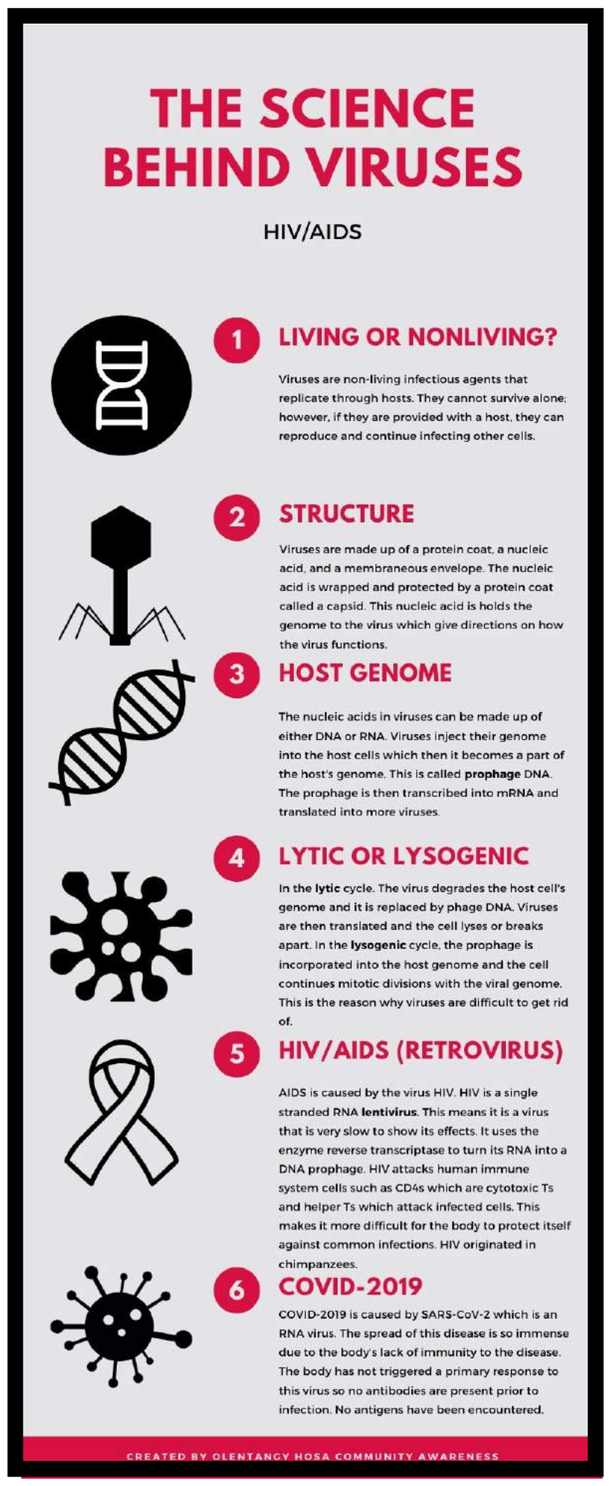
Our HOSA chapter made an announcement board in which we posted information about our chapter for everyone to see. We posted our infographics and posters for our events that we would host.

Project #12

March 16th, 2020

2520 Participants

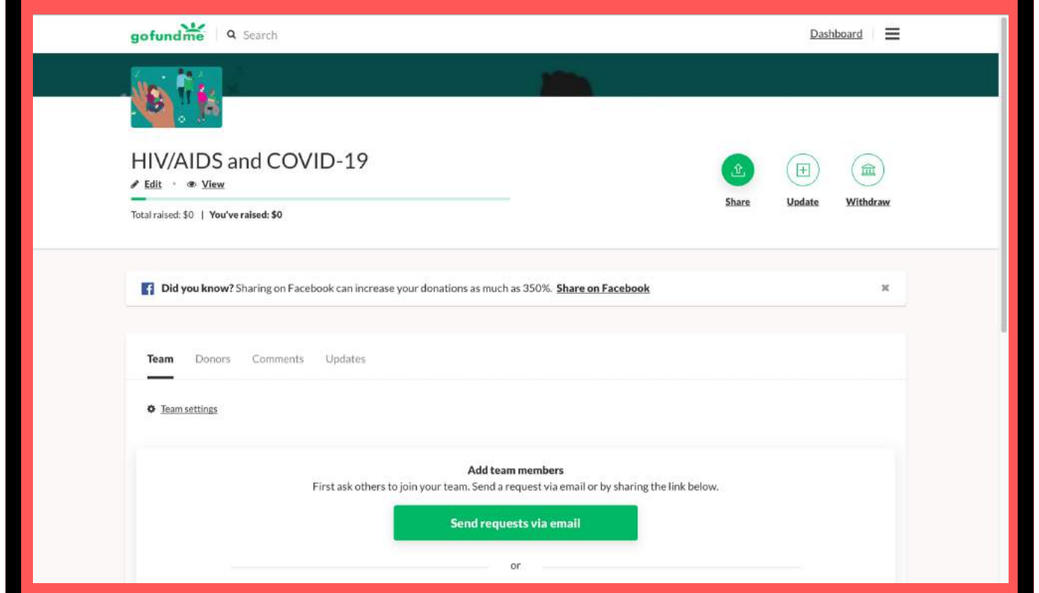
We made another infographic that gave information on the scientific background of HIV/AIDS. This would help people understand why you cannot get rid of the disease easily. It also gave facts about COVID-19 as it is also a virus and was relevant to spread information on at the time as well. This may have also cleared some misconceptions about COVID-19 and help people understand why this and HIV are so dangerous to humans. We plan to publish another infographic outlining preventative measures for both HIV and COVID-19.



Project #13

April 6th, 2020

We made a GoFundMe fundraiser in which 50% of proceeds would go to unaids which would benefit developing nations dealing with the AIDS crisis making funds available for clinics and contraceptives in places where it access is low. The other 50% goes to the COVID-19 effort to help hospitals buy supplies such as food and masks, as well as any other items necessary.

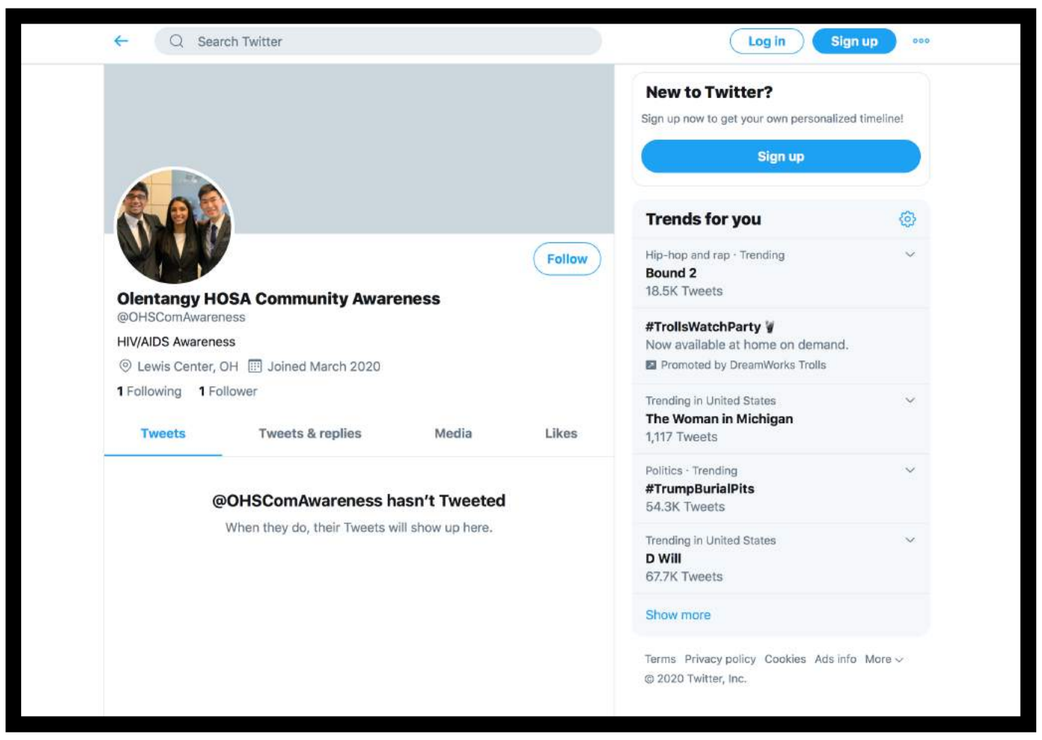


Project #14

April 6th, 2020

10 Participants

We also made a twitter page where we would post updates and announcements about our project. As well as facts about HIV/AIDS



Postponed Events

Unfortunately due to the circumstances of COVID-19, many of our events had to be cancelled such as our 5K red run which all proceeds were to go to UNAIDS. We also planned to host a bake sale in which we would donate all proceeds to UNAIDS as well. As well as Pediatric Associates where we were supposed to pass out brochures to patients.

Partners

Below is a list of all of the partners that we have worked with throughout our project.

- Actify
- Olentangy High School Service Club
- Olentangy High School HOSA
- Olentangy MRC Partnerships
- OSU Condom Club
- Pediatric Associates
- Equitas Health
- Olentangy Local School District
- UNAIDS
- AIDS Health Foundation

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