Sewa DTL

Maine Team 1

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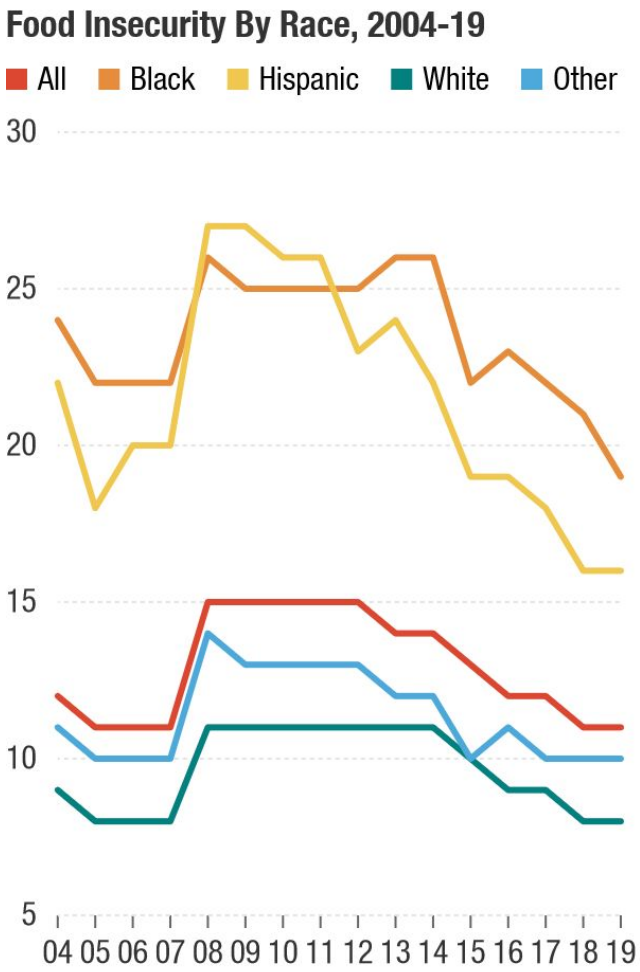
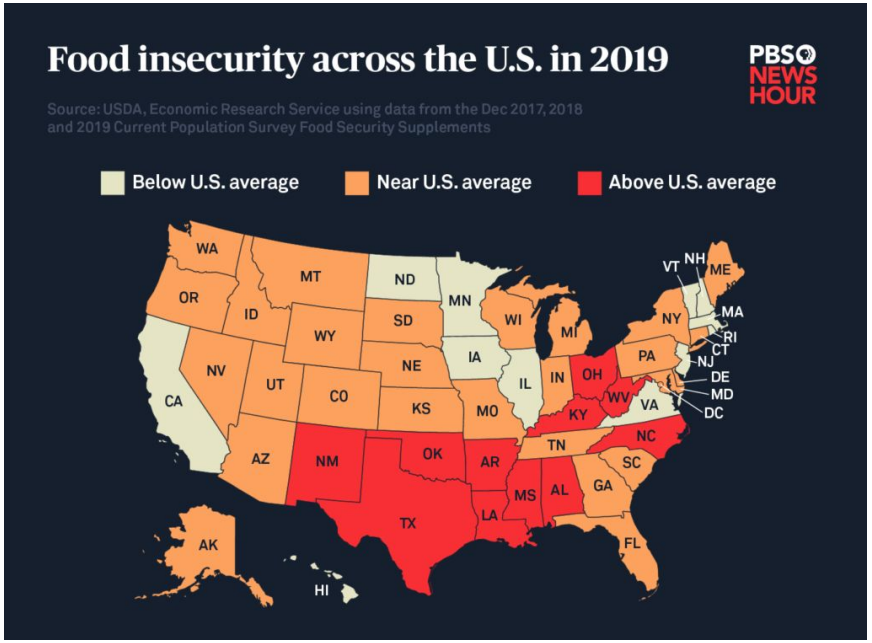
Unmet Need:

Food Insecurity among Immigrants

Introduction

Throughout the Sewa DTL, or Design to Lead program, led by Dr. Anurag Mairal we learned to create a service program using the Stanford University biodesign methodology. We utilized this successful project to ultimately determine and accomplish the universal, critical, and current problem of food insecurity in immigrants. There has been a growing population of immigrants and refugees in our state, and the government has struggled with housing and feeding these groups of people. The state partnered with some hotels in various cities to house the struggling immigrant and refugee population. Some recent immigrants who struggled to pay for food and make a living were allowed to be housed in the hotels as well. Because there is a struggle with getting the food to all the people housed in the hotel, we wanted to create a plan to utilize existing resources and form a system to get food around to each hotel. Food insecurity is a very important social issue which needs to be addressed more than it is.





This figure shows the food insecurity stats in 2019. This has probably worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Maine ranks **9th** in the nation for food insecurity.

14.4% of Maine households are food insecure

1 in every 5 children are food insecure

16% of seniors are food insecure

Phase 1

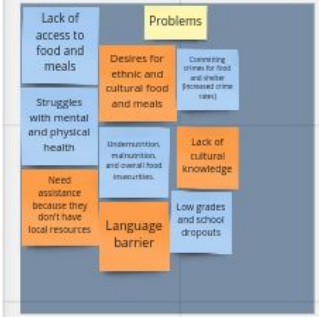
- As a group, we choose to focus on food insecurity among immigrants.
- We began researching the topic by gathering articles online, where we discovered numerous stakeholders.
- Stored all of our work on miroboard, and created a stakeholder map to organize our information.
- We contacted the stakeholders, and conducted interviews to learn more about this topic.
- Our group created need statements based on the issues the stakeholders discussed.

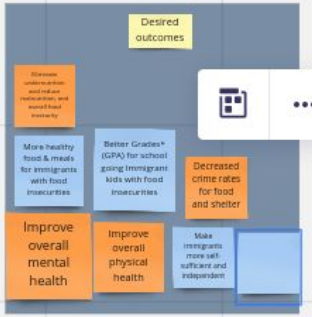
Phase 2

- We developed must haves and nice to haves for our need statements in order to determine what was feasible and needed
- We created a ranking criteria with the help of the core team, and ranked all of our need statements as a group based on factors like feasibility and realisticness among others.
- We chose the top three need statements that had the highest rankings
- Our group created solutions for these need statements, and 3 prototypes for each solution
- As a team, we decided which solution and prototype we wanted to focus on.
- We cycled through many ideas including utilizing social media and promoting the program on our school's website.

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVOFxZOtc=/

IMPACT OF FOOD INSECURITY IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES





Must Have

Scalability because the population of immigrants is drastically increasing

Low-Cost

Ethnical Food that represents the culture of the immigrants

Nice to Have

Food Delivered On Time

Food contributes to a balanced diet

Social Awareness because not many people know about this issue

Phase 3

- In phase 3 of the DTL Program, we began implementing our prototype. We created a food donation program with the assistance of the Maine Immigrants' Rights Coalition (MIRC).
- The organization also utilized large food companies like Tyson which have food plants in Maine to donate batches of food for the program.
- Through this system, we delivered cooked meals to immigrants/refugees housed in hotels. We worked in a Howard Johnson because they provided a workspace.
- We helped cook large batches of food with chefs appointed by the organization, and boxed them into individual meal containers.
- We then transported these meals to other hotels nearby, using Howard Johnson's shuttle because they weren't using it due to housing the immigrants.
- Overall, we implemented our prototype and received positive feedback from the immigrants. We are still trying to continue with this program, to ensure its sustainability.
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