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# Student Wins Grant to Support Nonprofit

April 19, 2017

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Illinois Wesleyan University student Kyle Serafico '17 is the winner of a \$500 mini-grant to help launch a medication adherence campaign aimed at patients at the Community Health Care Clinic (CHCC).

As a student in the course "Grant Writing," Serafico and each of his classmates completed a "mini-grant" application on behalf of a community partner. Taught by [Action Research Center](#) (ARC) Coordinator Carrie Mack, the grant-writing course allows students to learn about fundraising strategies for nonprofits. Each student is paired with a local organization to research grant opportunities and best practices, and design a program and budget.

As the winner of the \$500 mini-grant, Serafico's funding will help launch the new 'Rock Your Meds' (RYM) campaign for CHCC. The campaign is dedicated to increase patients' adherence to their medication regimens, and the grant will help establish a medication adherence protocol that includes producing education materials in both English and Spanish for CHCC staff to use during patient interactions. The funds will also enable CHCC to purchase pillbox organizers, which have been shown to increase adherence to treatment plans.

"I'm grateful the judges chose to help the Community Health Care Clinic," said Serafico, who will also be completing a larger grant proposal for the CHCC by the end of the semester. He said winning the money for the clinic's project has given him more satisfaction than any good grade on an assignment.

The CHCC provides free primary care, referrals and medications to underserved adult populations in McLean County. In his grant proposal, Serafico noted that a large proportion of CHCC patients are Spanish-speaking people with chronic medical conditions who struggle to adhere to their treatment plans. CHCC will collaborate with Illinois Wesleyan "Medical Spanish" students to properly translate and execute the campaign in Spanish.

"Promoting patient adherence to medication involves a lot of patient education," said Byron S. Tucci Professor of Hispanic Studies Carolyn Nadeau, who teaches the "Medical Spanish" course. It is designed to help future health care workers overcome the language barrier with patients. In Serafico's grant proposal, Nadeau explained that under the RYM program, Medical Spanish students will review the medications and their purposes with patients, and then have the patient perform a teach back, which is an echo of what the student explained to the patient. Nadeau noted that the collaboration between the CHCC and Illinois Wesleyan students will not only accommodate the Spanish-speaking population, but will also give "students an opportunity to make a stronger relationship with the Spanish-speaking population they will provide care for in the future," she said.

Open to students from all academic majors, Serafico emphasized that the "Grant Writing" class is one where students learn useful skills that change the way they both think and engage with the community. "When we engage with the community in the way Carrie Mack teaches us, and when we are in a position to help, the stakes are too high to just take the class for credit," said Serafico. "I am certain I will become a more useful health care provider with the skills I take from this class."

A native of Buena Park, Calif., Serafico is a senior [nursing](#) student. At IWU, he is a member of Sigma Theta Tau international nursing honor society, former president of Residence Hall Association, and is a third-year employee for the Office of Residential Life. Last summer, he tutored English in Tokyo, Japan, as an IWU Freeman Asia Intern. Although Serafico is still considering whether he wants to work in epidemiology, public policy, or academia, his long-term plans are to work in the public health arena.



Nursing student Kyle Serafico '17 won a grant to help patients with their medication regimens at a local clinic.