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The Impacts of the United States Healthcare System on French-Speaking Immigrants: A Shorty Story

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ALLISON VANASSE

(Cell & Molecular Biology, French)

The Impacts of the United States Healthcare System on French-Speaking Immigrants: A Short Story

Sponsor: Leslie Kealhofer-Kemp (Modern Languages)

Stories are a powerful tool that can be used to educate others on topics requiring attention in the world, such as healthcare. In the United States, the structure of the current healthcare system affects disadvantaged populations and minority groups in adverse ways, making adapting to and living under this system difficult. This project brings to light these issues in the form of a short story. French speaking-immigrants of various ages, countries of origin, and perspectives were interviewed regarding their experiences with the U.S. healthcare system. Five individual interviews were conducted over the phone lasting 15-30 minutes each in order to gain a more in depth understanding of how non-native citizens and immigrants are impacted by the system's structure. These interviews provided valuable insight into the true stories and experiences of French-speaking immigrants, and were used to inspire and write a fictional short story to educate others in the U.S. on the disparities that this population faces in the healthcare industry. The story focuses on a young mother from France who moved to the United States over a decade ago, who has created her life and family here ever since. From her experiences struggling to make appointments for her children and affording medical expenses, her story serves as a fictional template for the countless true instances of such treatment occurring in the country today. This story also aims to spark larger conversations about other populations who are negatively impacted by the state of U.S. healthcare.