



Parrot Summer Special!

Your ARC newsletter by and for ESL, multicultural, international students, new Californians, and, well, anybody really...

Summer Issue Summer 2017

Squawk! Reading is Hot!

Ah! Vacation reading at a gorgeous white-sand beach or at Grandfather's hand-hewn lake-side cabin or, perhaps more likely, in your mosquito-ridden back yard! What could be better? Well, we would all agree that student writing is meant not just to



be coerced but also to be read. As such, The Parrot has some pleasure reading for you, some wonderful research papers on a variety of topics

by students working in a foreign language (an outstanding achievement). One composition is from recently-retired English Professor Harold Schneider's English WR300 class and the remaining five from Professor Evelyn Rojas' ESL W340 class. Parrot feathers to these hardworking students

and their instructors. As they probably say in academic circles, "Research rocks!" keep up the submissions, ARC!



Always read something that will make you look good if you die in the middle of it.
P.J. O'Rourke



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Arab Immigrants and Refugees in The United States

Section One: What I Know, Assume, or Imagine

Wars and revolutions have severely affected countries in the Middle-East during the last twenty years because almost all people suffered the unbearable consequences of those wars and revolutions, such as lack



of food, electricity, gas, and water. It all started in Iraq after the American invasion. Al-Qaeda became very active in Middle-Eastern countries, and they committed a series of terrorist attacks on the civilians and the government. Sadly,



civilians and innocent people were affected by those terrible actions, which forced them to leave their beloved countries unwillingly. Most of those victims are from Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Palestine, and Libya.

Those innocent people have been through the worst because of what happened in their country, and they probably have lost a loved one or a family member. I chose this topic because I want to know more about the stories of those people and why they immigrated to the United States. Also, I want to portray the situations that they have encountered on their way to the U.S. and the countries that they had to stay at to be able to apply to the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and travel to the designated country. Those immigrants or refugees left their countries because they wanted to seek a better life and provide a better future for their kids. My family left Iraq for the same reason; a terrorist group threatened to kill my parents if they did not leave the country.

As a result, my parents were victims of terrorism, and it forced them to leave because they were concerned about our life and future. My family and I traveled to Syria to escape from the terrorists and their wicked threats of slaughtering my entire family. We spent five years there and waited for the American embassy to approve our case. When we got the approval and were granted the Special Immigration Visa, our hearts were filled with joy and happiness. I assume there are many cases similar to ours in regard to fleeing one's country due to terrorism. After what I have lived, suffered, witnessed, and encountered in Syria and Iraq, I'm positive that most people would move from their country because of the current and past situations, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and other terrorist groups. Those groups sent a clear and loud message to all civilians who live in those countries, which is, "you and your children will never feel safe again. You will never live a happy life. We will kill you and your children and rape your wife." Also, some people left because of the sectarian violence and strife.

Section One: What I Know, Assume, or Imagine

Wars and revolutions have severely affected countries in the Middle-East during the last twenty years because almost all people suffered the unbearable consequences of those wars and revolutions, such as lack of food, electricity, gas, and water. It all started in Iraq

after the American invasion. Al-Qaeda became very active in Middle-Eastern countries, and they committed a series of terrorist attacks on the civilians and the government. Sadly, civilians and innocent people were affected by those terrible actions, which forced them to leave their beloved countries unwillingly. Most of those victims are from Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Palestine, and Libya. Those innocent people have been through the worst because of what happened in their country, and they probably have lost a loved one or a family member. I chose this topic because I want to know more about the stories of those people and why they immigrated to the United States. Also, I want to portray the situations that they have encountered on their way to the U.S. and the countries that they had to stay at to be able to apply to the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and travel to the designated country. Those immigrants or refugees left their countries because they wanted to seek a better life and provide a better future for their kids. My family left Iraq for the same reason; a terrorist group threatened to kill my parents if they did not leave the country. As a result, my parents were victims of terrorism, and it forced them to leave because they were concerned about our life and future. My family and I traveled to Syria to escape from the terrorists and their wicked threats of slaughtering my entire family. We spent five years there and waited for the American embassy to approve our case. When we got the approval and were granted the Special Immigration Visa, our hearts were filled with joy and happiness. I assume there are many cases similar to ours in regard to fleeing one's country due to terrorism. After what I have lived, suffered, witnessed, and encountered in Syria and Iraq, I'm positive that most people would move from their country because of the current and past situations, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and other terrorist groups. Those groups sent a clear and loud message to all civilians who live in those countries, which is, "you and your children will never feel safe again. You will never live a happy life. We will kill you and your children and rape your wife." Also, some people left because of the sectarian violence and strife.

Section Two: The Search

On April 14, I was thinking about many topics for this essay, and it gave me a headache until I finally got one. I spent almost three hours thinking of a great

topic that interests me and expands my knowledge on a specific subject. I chose to write about the experience and life of new Arab immigrants and refugees in the United States. I thought this topic would be a good experience for me to get to know more people and their stories. I believed there would be many people who would want to share their story regarding the horrendous events they had experienced on their way to a safe and caring country.

On April 17, I was in the English writing class, and Professor Schneider had asked us (the students)

if anyone wanted to share the topic that he or she chose. I raised my hand, and he said, “go ahead Rafi. What topic did you choose?” I was not brave enough to share the title of my topic or research because I thought it would not be interesting. However, when I told Professor Schneider that

it will be about the title, he liked the idea very much and encouraged me to write about that. Professor Schneider is the best English writing professor I have ever seen. He makes us enjoy what we write about and never criticizes what we do. He is always there to support and guide us through the essays.

On April 18, I started to write the first section of the essay, and it took me a couple of hours to write why I chose this topic and what information I had.

On April 19, I have created the interview questions, which took me an hour to brainstorm, so I brainstormed good questions after I got back from work. I was very exhausted because I was working for six hours and cleaning the playgrounds before I closed the store. Afterward, I got home and took a shower then I sat on my comfortable chair to continue writing the essay. Moreover, I was worried about writing those questions and whom I would interview.

On April 20, I was sitting at home thinking about creating critical interview questions,

and after spending almost two hours to figure that out, I wrote good interview questions, which are:

1. Why did you come to the United States?
2. Why did you flee your country? And what country did you go to first to seek shelter, sanctuary, and protection? Why?
3. What did you like about America? Why? How is America better than your country



of origin?

4. Is the life here different than the life in your country of origin? How?

Awadees 4

5. Did the government accommodate your needs? How? Do you suggest that the

government should provide more help for the new refugees? Why?

6. What do you think of Trump’s travel ban executive order? Will it benefit America or not and how?

On April 21, I went to work (I work at Wacky Tacky) and I had a six-hour shift. After I finished working and cleaning up the whole store, my friend Ahmed was working with me at the same time, and I asked him if I could interview him because I have an essay to write about refugees and immigrants. He liked the idea very much and answered all of my questions.

On April 22, I asked my friend Laith if I could interview him, and he agreed. Afterward, I started to ask him the interview questions, and he was listening carefully to my questions and answered all of them with detailed information that helped me with increasing my comprehension on the assigned topic.

On April 23, I went to the Arab-American Learning Center, a center that helps Arab refugees with filling out applications for housing, setting up



an appointment with doctors and the DMV, and giving them home supplies. I wanted to interview more refugees, and I came across an Iraqi refugee and asked him if I could interview him, and he agreed. He provided clear and comprehensive details that helped to establish good information on this topic.

On April 24, I wrote the first and second sections of this essay. It was an exhausting experience because I had to brainstorm and write why I chose this topic, and I had to provide information on what I know about this topic. I also looked for credible resources on this topic that can help me to increase my knowledge on the crisis that many refugees and immigrants encounter on their way to safety.

On April 26, Talen Andersen, Andrey Pishtoy, and Kai McMiller revised my essay in class and provided valuable feedback on it.

Section Three: What I Discovered

After interviewing these brave people, I concluded that they had different reasons to immigrate from their country of origin. Ahmed Ali Al-Tamemy, an Iraqi immigrant and a close friend of mine, fled his country because of the life-threatening situations in Iraq. He stated, “I escaped from Iraq because an unknown terrorist group threatened to kill me and my family if I do not leave the country immediately” (Al-Tamemy). Ahmed is a successful engineer that helped the Iraqi government and the U.S. forces with building and establishing good communication towers. He also mentioned that those terrorists threatened him because he helped the U.S. Army. As a result, he traveled to Turkey and stayed there for a couple of years because Turkey was cheaper, safer, and closer to Iraq (Al-Tamemy). He did not go to Syria because it was suffering a horrible crisis. Ahmed came to America because the UNHCR directed his file to America; you do not have the right to choose which country that you want to immigrate to because the

UNHCR does not allow that. When I asked Ahmed about what he likes in America, he answered, “The freedom in the American society and the constitutional rights” (Al-Tamemy). You can do whatever you like in America because it is a free country; however, in Middle-Eastern countries, you do not have much freedom because most of the Arab officials tend to care

about their positions and their high salaries instead of providing safety and freedom to the people. Ahmed explained that life in America is different because, in Iraq, he had a high salary and a good job in Iraq, and he illustrated that the social and economic life in Iraq is better than America’s. Furthermore, America needs to provide more help for the new-coming refugees because many refugees, including Ahmed, complain about the difficulty of finding a decent job. They suggest that the government should help them with finding jobs and putting them in good schools to learn proper English. Ahmed appreciates the financial and other sorts of help that the government is providing, but he suggests that there should be more attention to the new refugees. Ahmed illustrates, “Trump’s travel ban executive order is a positive point that helps to make America a safe place, and there should be an extensive background checking, and the U.S. government should collect more information on the new refugees that come to America” (Al-Tamemy).

Furthermore, my friend Laith Abdulkareem has some similar points to Ahmed’s. Laith is an Iraqi refugee who moved to America several years ago. His family fled because Christians were and still are persecuted in Iraq by the terrorists. Laith and his family traveled to Syria because it was safer and better than Iraq (Abdulkareem). Syria was safe before 2011, but after 2011, the Arab Spring started, and it caused serious problems in the area. Laith shared the same idea and point as Ahmed, which is America is a free country. Laith states, “Iraq lacks safety and security, and it does not provide the basic needs or rights for people” (Abdulkareem). These refugees have many things and reasons in common; they fled their countries due to its poor and bad services. A successful country provides excellent services to its people; unfortunately, Iraq has failed to accomplish that. Also, Laith mentioned that life in America is harder than Iraq’s because it is difficult to adjust to the American society. He appreciates the American government for providing for his needs, and he suggests that the government should help the new refugees with finding jobs and houses and provide financial support so that the people could stand on their own. Laith agrees with Trump’s travel ban because he believes that it will help the U.S. to maintain security and prevent terrorists from entering the U.S. (Abdulkareem).

However, Ahmed Ameen has a different story and reasons for leaving Iraq and traveling to a different country. He came to America because he loves it, and he believes it will provide him the security that he needs. He fled Iraq because a terrorist group has killed 21 of his relatives. When I was writing down this information, I looked in his eyes, and I saw the pain in them, and it made me feel very sad and devastated to hear that. He traveled to Syria and spent seven years there waiting for the UNHCR to accept his case. What he likes about America is: the freedom of speech and the clean and beautiful environment (Ameen). According to Ahmed, “life in America is better than Iraq’s because America provides excellent services to its people” (Ameen). Ahmed Also appreciates the help of the American government with accommodating his needs. He suggests that the government should provide residential areas for the new refugees and build new houses for them. However, when I asked him about his opinion on Trump’s travel ban, he said, “it is a bad decision because it will reflect badly on America’s immigration policy” (Ameen). Ahmed said a profoundly touching sentence that influenced me; he said, “America is a country that was built by immigrants” (Ameen). It is a beautiful sentence that is worthy of meditating on. The people I interviewed have increased my knowledge about the situation of refugees and immigrants in the United States. They left their countries because there was no peace and security. They only wanted to live in a country that provides rights and protection for them, which Iraq failed to provide. They miss their country so much, but they cannot go back due to the horrendous situations. Their stories also affected me, especially Ahmed Ameen’s story because when you lose more than twenty of your relatives, it would be better for you to leave your country and seek a better one.

Moreover, those refugees face many difficulties when they try to adapt to a new society that is different than their society. According to Robert Thomas Woodson, an expert in sociology and urban studies at Biola university, “Arab refugees, whether Muslim or non- Muslim, face considerable difficulties when it comes to assimilating and holding onto their values once they come to the United States. Some of the difficulties faced by these refugees include racism, language barriers, mental illness, culture clash,

and generational gaps in the process of integration” (Woodson 3). In other words, refugees experience difficulties when they try to adjust to a new society. I noticed this when I interviewed Ahmed Al-Tamemy, Ahmed Ameen, and Laith Abdulkareem. They mentioned that they were frustrated because they cannot adapt to the new life and society easily. For example, I faced many difficulties when I tried to adapt to the American life and society because I spent almost nineteen years in Arabic countries. Furthermore, the American invasion of Iraq forced many people to immigrate because of the bad and dangerous situations in Iraq. According to Mary C. Sengstock, a Professor of Sociology at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, “U.S. invasion of Iraq and fall of Saddam Hussein’s government; U.S. occupation of Iraq; more refugees and increased impetus for immigration, primarily of Christians and Shiite Muslims” (Sengstock 1114). Many people fled Iraq after the invasion because some people turned against each other and started to kill each other. Sectarian violence is the main factor in Iraq’s instability. In short, those refugees need help with adapting the differences between their culture and society and the American culture and society, and the U.S. invasion has changed everything in Iraq since 2003 till the present time.

I enjoyed writing this essay because it was a nice experience to interview people and talk to them about what they encountered on their way to America. I learned that these refugees suffered a lot because of the war, bad situations, and terrorists. They came to America to live a happy life full of safety and protection. Furthermore, the U.S. government has contributed generously to accommodate the needs of refugees, including me.

Acknowledgments

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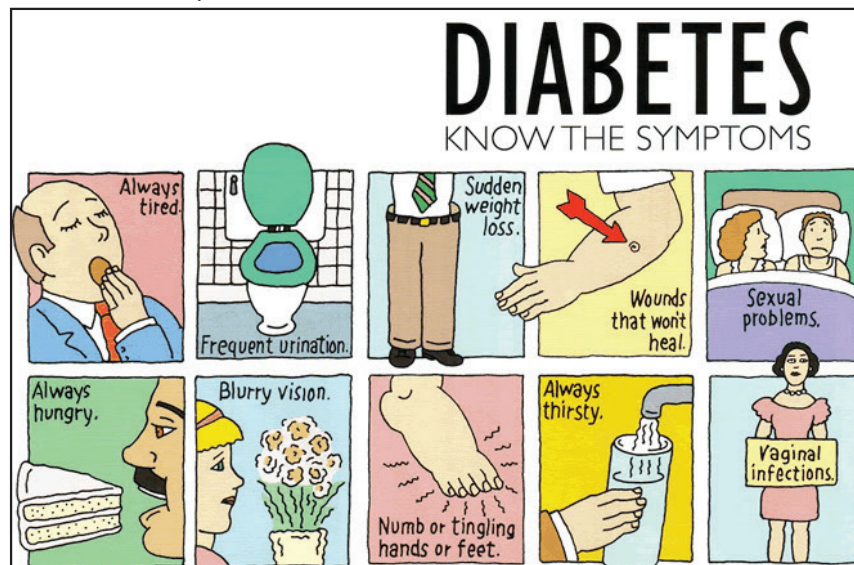


Diabetes

"Diabetes affects more than 100 million people worldwide, and it is among the most common causes of death and disability in North America and Europe" (Diabetes Mellitus). Since diabetes

is so common many people do not know how serious it can be. Some have the misunderstanding that it only occurs in obese or overweight people. However, diabetes can happen to anyone but it is more common to affect people who are heavier in weight. With the dramatic increase, diabetes receives a lot of funds to find treatments and solutions. Many researchers and doctors are focused on trying to find ways to prevent this disease but they should be informing people on what diabetes truly is. Knowing how diabetes forms, the different types, the causes, and effects can give people an insight on this common

yet deadly disease. The rise of this disease is related to the large amount of people who do not know the factors and the differences between Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes.



One contributing factor to Type 1 and 2 Diabetes is the creation of more fast food restaurants, emerging around the world and this is encouraging people to eat out more often. The decrease in homemade foods in households has led to people eating high carb foods. "These foods are

often high in calories yet offer little or no nutritional value. "When fast food frequently replaces nutritious foods in your diet, it can lead to poor nutrition, poor health, and weight gain" (Pietrangelo and Carey). This can result in the common illness; diabetes. Diabetes occurs from complications in the pancreas and when the body is working properly the pancreas

is responsible for producing insulin and releasing it into the bloodstream to help glucose go into the cell. Insulin acts like a key to opening the door for glucose to enter the cell so that there is not a lot of sugar in the bloodstream. If more sugar stays in the bloodstream then the blood stream has more sugar than normal and this is known as high blood sugar. Glucose is a sugar used for energy in a cell to help the cell function properly. Diabetes is when sugar or glucose cannot enter the cell because the insulin, which is the key, is not working properly. However, there are other more rare types such as gestational diabetes which can occur during pregnancies but goes away once the baby is delivered. In more common diabetes, the body either cannot respond to insulin properly or is harming its own beta cells.

Another factor that can result in developing diabetes is through your own family genetics. This rare type is Type 1 diabetes, which is when the immune system starts attacking its own beta cells. Beta cells are the ones responsible for making the insulin in the body. These beta cells live in the pancreas and when one has Type 1 diabetes their body cannot even produce the insulin because the immune system thinks that the insulin is a virus. This particular type of diabetes is rare and usually happens in people 20 years old and under (Web MD). Since it is so rare, the only way of getting Type 1 diabetes is through family genetics. If the family has a history of having Type 1 diabetes than it is possible that the person could develop it too. However, it can also occur alongside some other autoimmune illnesses such as Grave's disease or Vitiligo (Web MD).

The risk factors of Type One Diabetes are:

- Heavy thirst and Dry mouth
- Increased hunger (especially after eating)
- Nausea and Vomiting
- Pain in your belly
- Frequent Urination
- Unexplained weight loss
- Fatigue

- Blurred Vision
- Frequent infections of the skin or urinary tract

Knowing if a person has this type of illness can prevent many complications in their health later on because this type of diabetes is dangerous. If one does not get the treatment they can lose their eyesight, develop kidney damage, poor blood circulation, and nerve damage (WebMD). The best thing to do is to visit a doctor and develop the best way to personalize each person's treatment for the Type 1 diabetes.

The increasing and more problematic factor of diabetes is the more well-known type of diabetes, Type 2. This more common form of diabetes is when it can still produce insulin but the body does not respond to it normally. This causes the blood sugar level to rise which makes the pancreas work more (Kidshealth). This type is usually caused by the unhealthy lifestyle the person usually leads (BBC). More children and adults are becoming at risk of Type 2 diabetes because they are living a sedentary life. Type 2 diabetes used to occur mostly in adults but now it occurs in 45% of children. Nowadays a lot of children are inactive which further reduces the body's ability to react to insulin (Kidshealth). People need to use diet, exercise, and medicines to control insulin levels. If one does not try and control their insulin the pancreas will work until it becomes worn out. The pancreas is an important part of a person's body because it tightly regulates your glucose levels in your bloodstream.

People who have this illness most likely have a family history of Type 2 diabetes or their parents have the illness. Rather unsurprising most people who develop type 2 diabetes have excessive fat because it makes it harder for cells to respond to insulin.

The risk factors of Type 2 diabetes are:

- High blood pressure
- High blood triglyceride (fat) levels
- Gestational diabetes or giving birth to a baby weighing more than 9 pounds



- High-fat and carbohydrate diet
- High alcohol intake
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Obesity or being overweight
- Ethnicity
- Aging

Certain groups are at a greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes than non-Hispanic whites such as African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans (WebMD). Increasing age is a significant risk and after age 65 it becomes easier to get type two diabetes. This is again because of the sedentary lifestyle that is led when a person is old and too weak to exercise.

At this point, one might wonder how diabetes is diagnosed. Before receiving treatments the patient must visit a doctor about

concerns of having Type 1 diabetes, the doctor will check the blood sugar levels. They will also ask about any family history that had Type 1 diabetes from the mother and father side. The doctor might also test the patient's urine or if they have the types of cells that kill beta cells. The test given for blood sugar levels can also be taken to determine if the person has Type 2 diabetes. Some diagnostic tests for diabetes include Glycated hemoglobin (A1C) test, Random blood sugar test, Fasting blood sugar test and Oral glucose tolerance test. Most of them require for one to fast overnight and then test their blood sugars the day after; then the doctor can check the patient's normal insulin levels without any changes from food consumption. Although some may have to test the blood sugar level at any random time such as the random blood sugar test.

The first way to treat Type 1 diabetes is through regular testing of a person's blood sugar

levels to keep them within the range your doctor has prescribed (Web MD). A patient will also need to use insulin injections so the body can have enough insulin for glucose to enter all the cells. When taking insulin injections there are three types of steps that will go on in the body. The first is onset which is the length of time it takes the insulin to reach the bloodstream. The second is peak time which is when the insulin is working to lower the blood sugar levels. The final stage or step is the duration or how long it will keep working to lower the levels. There are several injections that have a certain time in which they start to work such as the Rapid-acting, Regular

or short-acting, Intermediate-acting, and the Long-acting. After getting treated by a professional doctor, the next step one needs to take is to control their diabetes. Some ways to control the illness is by balancing out food intake, exercise duration, and insulin dosage. This way the patient can make sure that their blood sugar levels stay within a normal range. Another way to control it is to regularly test their sugar levels

so that the patient can ask their doctor to review the insulin dose age to see if that it is still too high. Another way to control it is to eat healthy because this way one can manage insulin levels at a regular pace without any drastic changes that can be caused by junk food. If a person is having trouble maintaining healthy meals, they can hire a dietitian to push them back on the right track. The last thing they can do is to squeeze in thirty minutes of exercise every day to keep their blood sugar levels low.

Another factor that most people do not know about diabetes is the misconception of how difficult it is to get rid of the illness. Shockingly to control and possibly get rid of Type 2 diabetes, people need to acquire the ability to eat healthily and exercise. Patients have the misunderstanding that they need to get shots every day to keep their blood sugar level in control but that is not the case. First, they need to center their diet on high-fiber and low-fat foods such



as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. The person needs to lessen their consumption of carbohydrates, animal products, and sweets. One way to know how quickly a food causes the blood sugar to rise is through the glycemic index foods. Foods that are low on the glycemic index have more fiber and help a patient achieve a more stable blood sugar. To help plan their diet they need to hire a registered dietitian so they can help incorporate their health goals into daily meals. Another way to reduce the risk is by getting more exercise every day. The more active the person is the more excess fat they can burn off. This can help the body become aware of the insulin because there is not as much fat blocking it as there used to be. People with Type 2 diabetes should aim for at least thirty minutes of exercising a day. They should do a combination of exercises such as aerobic, stretching and strength, and resistance training. Possible treatments are Metformin (Glucophage, Glumetza, others), Sulfonylureas, Meglitinides, Thiazolidinediones, DPP-4 inhibitors, GLP-1 receptor agonists, SGLT2 inhibitors, and Insulin therapy. All of these treatments are drugs that can be taken to help improve insulin and blood sugar levels. Another option a person can get is Bariatric Surgery



which is a weight-loss surgery. Even though it sounds like a good option it can result in death, nutritional deficiencies, drastic lifestyle changes, and osteoporosis. One must sit down with their doctor to see what the best plan is for them.

In conclusion, the effects of both Types of diabetes can majorly derail a person's life through the constant doctor visits and medications taken. The more information a person can get about diabetes, the easier it will be in helping more people know how to prevent it. As can be seen, diagnosing and treating diabetes effectively can be challenging for both doctors and patients. With all this knowledge about diabetes one is able to know why it is

so common in many societies worldwide. However, it will also aid in preventing the person from getting this illness. Even if it is hereditary, the person will know early on to treat it before it becomes too advanced and deadly. The good news is that through regular exercise, living a healthy lifestyle, and medication management, if necessary, one can prevent this deadly disease.

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Achieving U.S. Citizenship through Naturalization

The concept of citizenship has evolved over time in the United States.

Nowadays, citizenship provides a new identity and connection for noncitizens that meet certain eligibility requirements and seek to become a United States citizen. The U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) is a new division of the Department of Homeland Security, which was founded in 2003 instead of the agency known as the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), who was responsible for processing all applications. Statistics show that each year approximately 680,000 applicants reach the Oath of Allegiance, which is the culmination point in the naturalization process.

There are four paths to becoming a U. S. citizen, such as citizenship through parents that involves children's birth outside and inside the USA, the permanent residents who are mar-

ried to U. S. citizens for more than three years, and the resident holders in the military and their families. The fourth most important way is through naturalization that refers to the acquisition of legal membership in the American nation. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service claims that "Naturalization is the manner in which a person not born in the United States voluntarily becomes a U. S. citizen" (USCIS). The naturalization process is divided in ten steps that should be followed by immigrants, who have the greatest desire to acquire U. S. citizenship, in order to reach their goal.

Before applying for citizenship, immigrants should appreciate the risks and possible downsides,

like the risk of exclusion from the United States because this process of obtaining citizenship may uncover secrets, such as fake marriage, a criminal conviction in one's home country, false documents that shows a sponsor which does not exist, or voting in a U. S. election, and many others illegal activities that will send applicant directly into deportation process. In her article "Obama Has Deported More People Than Any Other President," Serena Marshall stated that "Between 2009 and 2015 his administration has removed more than 2.5 million people through immigration orders..." of which the majority were illegal immigrants and condemned criminals (ABC-News). The 2015 Yearbook of Immigration Statistics provides data on foreign citizens, who are naturalized



or admitted as temporary non-immigrants that includes removals and arrests each year in every state in the United States. According to this source, 333,341 aliens were removed from the United States in 2015; on the other hand, 730,259 persons were naturalized

by state or territory of residence in 2015, and 741,548 persons were naturalized in 2016 (Department of Homeland of Security, Yearbook 2015: Table 39, 22).

First of all, the naturalization process begins with a short assessment that applicants must be sure, if they are eligible to apply for it. In contrary, the application process could harm them by wasting their time, energy, lose money fee, or worse, they can be deported from the United States, if the U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Service notice any irregularities during the whole naturalization process.

Eligibility for citizenship is reserved for immigrants who are legal and permanent residents and

were in possession of a green card for at least five years. This group represents the second step in the long path of achieving the U. S. citizenship. According to the Department of Homeland Security, any permanent resident should meet a list of requirements for naturalization, such as being eighteen years old at the time of filing the application, be a green card holder for at least five years, and is present in the United States, not abroad more than six months or more. So, it is required by this Department to be physically present in the U. S. for at least 30 months out of the five years and live in the same state or USCIS district for three months before applying to the citizenship. Moreover, the legal immigrants should prove the good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States during all relevant periods under the law; for example, paying taxes, child support, and not committing any crimes. It is true, as Bray states, that "if [the immigrants] have some minor negative behavior to account for- for example, a series of traffic tickets or a past drinking problem - [they] will need to balance out [their] bad acts by providing specific evidence of good things [they] have done (p. 59). For example, volunteer work, caring for an ill or elderly relative or friend, or regular attendance at a church, temple, or mosque can help applicants to show their good side before applying for citizenship (Bray, p. 79). Another important requirement in order to apply for naturalization is the knowledge of English language and U. S. history and government. So, any resident that applies for the U. S. citizenship should be able to read, speak, and write English at the citizenship interview and pass a brief oral test covering the U. S. history.

The third step in becoming a U. S. citizen is the application for naturalization itself, which consists of the following documents: Form N-400 Application for Naturalization that can be downloaded from the Internet at www.uscis.gov, two color photos, a photocopy of front and back of green card, cover letter, and fee payment. Form N-400 is the main and most important document that includes all basic information about applicants and examines to make sure that they will meet all the nationality eligibility desires. Kimmel and Lubiner accentuate in their guide the requirements that photos should meet; for example, "the image should be 30 mm

from the hair to just below the chin, and 26mm from left cheek to right ear", and the total size of photo should be 40mm in height and 35mm in width (p. 90). Including a cover letter is not necessary, but it can be a good idea of making one, if the applicant has some special circumstances, and it reminds for the applicant the list of all the documents needed to be included in his packet. Thus, it will be easier for the U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Security to understand and organize the applicant's file. According to USCIS, payment fees for the application in \$640 and \$85 for fingerprints made by signing a personal check, or cashier check, or money order payable to Department of Homeland Security. Before submitting all the documents, make complete copies of every page of application form, checks, photos, and documents to avoid any risk of losing them (Bray, p. 116).

The fourth step includes submitting the Application for Naturalization to a USCIS "lockboxes" or offices located near to applicant address. Once the applicant submits Form N-400 and gets the N-400 Receipt Notice (I-797C, Notice of Action), the period of time begins. Before the interview, several weeks or months might pass for the applicant to spend this time rationally and prepare his knowledge of English language and U. S. history.

Usually within a couple of months after the receipt notice, the applicant will get the next notification from the Department of Homeland Security about general information about an appointment, such as time, date, and location, where the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service will take the applicant's fingerprints. This is the fifth step of the naturalization process, where the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) will verify the applicant's biometrics that summarizes any criminal or immigration charges or convictions. According to the Alien Registration Act of 1940, every applicant older than 14 and younger than 75, must have their fingerprints scanned before USCIS will schedule an interview with the applicant (USCIS, Volume 12: Part A).

The next part of the naturalization process is the interview itself with the USCIS representative that is the most important step in order to become a citizen of the United States. Once all the preliminary



processes on case are complete, the Department of Homeland Security will send an Interview Notice (I-797) that should be shown to USCIS officer. Usually, this notice is sent about two weeks before the interview, so it is very important for applicant to make all efforts to attend the original interview date. In order to pass the U. S. citizenship test, the applicant needs to establish basic skills in reading, writing, and speaking English. For some applicants, the English test can be one of the most difficult parts of the citizenship process. Applicants will be required to read aloud one of three sentences and write them correctly. Thus, the applicant is tested on understanding the U. S. history and government that includes the most important events in the history of the United States. The history test contains ten questions chosen randomly from a list of 100 questions that are grouped into categories, such as System of Government, Principles of American Democracy, Rights and Responsibilities, American history, geography and holidays. All study materials for test preparation are free and can be founded on the official website of the Department of Homeland Security, where interviewees can prepare for the interview.

The seventh step is a very important one because this is when, according to the results of the interview, the officer will decide whether the applicant is eligible or not for naturalization. After the interview, the CIS Officer will give an Interview Decision which explains the reasons if the application was denied, and details the next steps that the applicant should take. According to Bray, application could be denied, if the applicant fails the English or U. S. history (Re-Interview Notice), or it misses some important documents that are requested by USCIS representative (Request for More Documents) (p. 255). Another concern for applicants may be the

situation, when the officer cannot make the decision and give the reasons of denying of citizenship application at the interview time. In this case, the applicant will receive the response within 120 days of the interview (Bray, p248).

If the interview goes well and the application is approved, the interviewer will receive a notice to take the Oath of Allegiance that represents the next official step in the naturalization process. The applicant could be scheduled at the same day as interview, or the U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Security will mail a written notification a Swearing-In Notice (Form N-445) with the date, time, and location of scheduled oath of ceremony that should be completed before the ceremony.



Taking the Oath of Allegiance to the United States is the ninth step in this long process of naturalization, so the eligible applicant is not a U. S. citizen until he takes the Oath of Allegiance at a naturalization ceremony that is administered by USCIS. The crucial moment is when all people raise their right hand and repeat together the Oath of

Allegiance in order to become a U. S. citizen. At the end of the ceremony, the USCIS officer will give to all present people Naturalization Certificate or N-550 Document that gives the opportunity to apply for a U. S. passport at the ceremony. Citizenship ceremonies serve an important function in sustaining the American nation; thus, they represent the voluntary consent between citizens and the United States.

The last step outlines the most important rights and responsibilities to the new American citizens which should always be obeyed and applied in order to ensure the continued vitality of the United States. Naturalized citizens have the right to vote, to apply for federal jobs, to be called up for jury duty, and run for elected offices. Thus, they obtain freedom to communicate their thoughts and be respectful to the rights, and opinions of others nationals. Another

benefit of having citizenship is the ability to reunite with other members of the family, such as parents, brother, and sisters, or to pass citizenship automatically to the children born abroad. In addition, the U. S. citizens have a chance to receive any retirement, or other benefits earned from Social Security while living in other country. Also, the U. S. citizenship creates employment opportunity for immigrants, such as federal government jobs, or receives federal grants and scholarships.

In conclusion, achieving citizenship certainly makes a big change in the lives of many immigrants and their families. The new American citizens acquire rights, responsibilities, and benefits that affect their economic, social, and political paths. However, everything comes to reality only after applicants have completed all of the steps of the naturalization process in order to become a U. S. citizen and fi-

nally get a new passport. As a result, citizenship will be helpful for people who enjoy traveling in other countries. They gain protection and assistance from the State Department during the entire trip. Nowadays, citizenship can be a unique and legal chance of security from the possibility of future legislative changes that may affect the lives of legal immigrants. Going through all of the components of the naturalization process, which includes checks for good moral character and the knowledge of English, history, and civics that will become a big triumph for immigrants, if all the steps will be understandable at the beginning of the process. Ultimately, naturalized citizens become more confident and secure both inside and outside of the United States.

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How to Have a Career as an Interior Designer

Homes, offices, hospitals, stores, and even schools are all interior spaces which require the input of talented professionals in order to create a pleasing environment. “Interior design is as old as the Cro-Magnon culture, where walls were decorated to bring a sense of place to the interior environment. Ancient

designs from the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans form the basics of interior design” (Jones). Interior design is about “space and style.” Space is for the colors and texture that define planes. Also, space is the result of expressing the elements like the walls, floors and ceilings. Style is about creating the atmosphere for the client. Many people think that interior design is merely decorating, but is not because decorating is something that anyone can do as a hobby. Interior designers, however,

must complete an interior design program at a college, university, or design school to get a degree and work for it. Interior designers must be creative to satisfy the client and fill the space of the room from both an artistic and a functional point of view.

First of all, some people think that interior design is just decorating, but this is not true. What is truly interior design? When people walk into a room, they notice the little touches that give it a style: the furniture, the carpet, the lighting, the crown molding,

the wallpaper, etc. these individual elements give a room a personality of each person. Every room must have the character and the personality of the owner. Designers begin work with four blank walls and a lot of empty space in between. That space must be filled with color, light, furnishings, and other decorative

touches. Interior designers design the empty space of the room. They don’t plan in each room to be pretty it’s also the safe, functional, and appropriate for the client. All interior designers must approach each room with all senses: sight (color and lighting), touch (shape and texture), and sound (noise and echo). Not all elements must be pleasing, but also the elements must work together as a whole to create a harmonious environment. To create this sense of harmony, designers must have an in-depth understanding of color, sound, light, patterns, furniture, fabrics, paint, styles, and art. Designers must also be familiar with a variety of design styles, both modern and historical. The following definition, developed by the National Council for Interior Design



Qualification (NCIDQ), demonstrates the scope of the interior design profession: Interior design is a multifaceted profession in which creative and technical solutions are applied within a structure to achieve a built interior environment. These solutions are functional, enhance the quality of life and culture of the occupants and are aesthetically attractive.

Every career has a history of the profession. “During the 1920s, the interior design of homes, offices, and public building attracted grates gen-

eral interest in America than it ever had in the past” (Interior Design). The establishment of professional interior design began in the 1930s with the development of the American Institute of Interior Decorators (AIID), which gave credibility to the new profession. “In the 1850s, authors became deeply interested in how human comfort was affected by sound principles of design. At the time, the Industrial Revolution (particularly in Europe) was producing a variety of poor-quality household goods. Many individuals condemned the use of the machine to create inferior products designs” (Jones). One of the most famous individuals to offer interior design services to the public was New York actress Elsie de Wolfe, who had expert knowledge of French furniture and antiques. In 1901, Elsie de Wolfe began her business as “American’s first professional interior design.” Through her efforts, along with others interior designers, the profession of Interior Design was established.

But what, you may ask, does an interior designer do in today’s day and age? Today, interior designers work with contractors, architects, engineers, craftsmen, furniture dealers, and business and home owners. To become a successful interior designer, designer need an education and the skills to work within many disciplines (architecture, graphic design, decorative arts, and textile, furniture, and lighting design). Interior designers are expected to have working knowledge of:

- Textiles, materials, color, space planning, sustainability, etc.
- Software applications for 2D & 3D computer-aided design (CAD) and building information modeling (BIM)
- Structural requirements, health and safety issues, and building codes.

In the past, designers didn’t have education about graphic design, or working on software applications such as CAD. Today in interior design, more advanced technology is used, which provides a creative space for the client.

So are interior designers and interior decorators the same? No, they are not. Interior design is the art and science of understanding people’s behavior to

create functional spaces within a building. Decoration is the furnishing or adorning of a space with fashionable or beautiful things. In short, interior designers may decorate, but decorators do not design (NCIDQ). Decorators focus only on the surface touches of a room, the paint, floor covering, sofas, and curtains. On the other hand, interior designers often start with four bare walls and then must create the mood and feel of the room. Designers often step into the process early, working closely with architects and contractors while the building is still under construction. Any person can be a decorator but an interior designer most require that designers graduate from a two or four-year college and work in the field for a few years, then pass an exam to receive a license. On the other hand, decorators are free to practice their craft without a license. For example, today there are many people who are decorators, and they display their skills through YouTube. However, although they may have a great deal of talent, creativity, and skill, these individuals most likely have not earned any profession credentials.

Throughout the decades, every professional industry has had to adapt to technological advances. Interior design as well has learned to fluctuate, change, and evaluate over time. Although traditional interior design style still remains prevalent and very desired, the design style is evolving with current trends that seem to be affecting many markets, such as becoming Eco-Friendly, energy efficient, and technologically enhance to embrace the scientific knowledge of the 21st century. In this 21st century advancements in Interior Design are Cabinetry upgrades, water saving features, techno-savvy hardware, outdoor entertaining, hands free faucets, lighting fixtures, and The I POD Era. This are the most advanced in the interior design industry. Now designers use this advanced technology for the clients to have a better and more comfortable homes, offices, hospitals, stores, etc.

Interior designers work with clients to plan and implement design arrangements for stores, home, offices, and other spaces. For doing this process designers includes choosing color schemes, wall hangings, floor covering, furniture, and other elements for the room. There are many career options are available

in the field of interior design, such as:

- **Interior Decorator:** Plans and executes decorative arrangement for store, homes, offices, and other indoor spaces.
- **Interior decorating consultant:** Works independently to provide advice to another interior decorator or interior decorating firm.
- **Design firm employee:** handles interior decoration tasks for an interior decoration or interior design company.
- **Decorating supervisor:** oversees a staff of interior decorators.
- **Commercial decorator:** responsible for the preparation and installation of trade and industrial show decorations or displays and performs similar work for expositions and festivals.
- **Retail in-store consultant:** assists with merchandising and setup of displays in a retail environment.
- **Director of interior decorating:** oversees an interior decorating department of a design firm. A four-year degree in interior design and extensive experience are sometimes required; licensure in interior design may be necessary.

Additionally, there are other specialized careers one can have as an interior designer. Some of those include floral designer, who design and assemble arrangements of flowers, either as an employee, consultant, or business owner. Healthcare designers use the evidence-design process in designing and renovating healthcare centers, clinics, doctor's offices, hospitals, and residential care facilities. They specialize in making design decisions based on credible research to achieve the best possible outcomes for patients, residents, and the facility. Sustainable designers use strategies to improve energy and water efficiencies and indoor air quality, and they specify environmentally preferable products, such as bamboo and cork for floors. They may obtain certification in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). Universal designers renovate spaces to make them more accessible. Often, these designs are used to renovate spaces for elderly people and people with special needs; however, universal designs can benefit anyone. Kitchen and bath designers

specialize in kitchens and bathrooms and have expert knowledge of the variety of cabinets, fixtures, appliances, plumbing, and electrical solutions for these rooms. Corporate designers create interior designs for professional workplaces from small office settings to large-scale corporations within high-rise buildings. They focus on creating spaces that are efficient, functional, and safe for employees. They may incorporate design elements that reflect a company's brand in their designs. Thus, interior designers need to look at a room and think about how it could be more aesthetic or functional. Designers learn everything from design and color theory, to creating hand-drawn and renderings of commercial and residential interiors.

In conclusion, there are many steps to becoming a professional interior designer, including education, experience, and an examination process. One of the biggest step to becoming a successful Interior Designer is to complete an interior design program at a college, university, or design school. When a student designer become a professional, the designer continues his or her education through advanced coursework and participation in professional organizations. Also, successful interior designers are not only creative artists but also need to be good businesspeople. When a student is learning the colors, building systems, space, materials, furnishings, fabrics and the profession of interior design, he or she is also learning how to become a good business designer. To become a successful business designer, one needs to have a business plan, structure, insurance, and documents. Many people think that decorating is interior design, but as can be seen, this is not true because anyone can be a decorator, but a successful interior designer is an educated and licensed professional who is not only an artist, but is also a savvy business person.

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Health Insurance in the United States

The health insurance system is one of the biggest fields in the U.S. Moreover, it is very important in each individual's everyday life. Thus, the individual health insurance market plays an important valuable function in the U.S. health care system by serving individuals and families who cannot access or afford employer-sponsored insurance and who may earn too much to qualify for Medicaid. Until recently, however, this market too many times failed to provide these consumers accurate or affordable health coverage. Premiums were often prohibitively expensive for consumers, especially women, older adults, and less healthy people to whom insurers could charge higher rates. Insurers also considered some consumers from pregnant women and expectant fathers to individuals who had suffered from acne, allergies, or bunions “uninsurable,” and would deny them any coverage. In addition, some insurers would strategically rescind coverage when consumers became sick, denying consumers the benefits for which they had contracted and paid. To the extent

that individual consumers could obtain and retain individual health insurance coverage, their policies typically provided limited protection against out-of-pocket medical costs, covered fewer benefits, and imposed greater restrictions than did employer-sponsored plans (Monahan pg. 1120-1121). Even though the U.S. government wants affordable and high quality medical insurance for people, in reality, there are many reasons why it is not easy to have high-quality health insurance coverage that is readily affordable.

Most researchers agree that access to affordable, quality health care positively influences a country's health outcome. While some countries adopted universal health care coverage many years ago, the approach taken by policymakers in the U.S. has been more incremental, often relying on a mix of private and solutions. For example, in the first part of the twentieth century, employer-sponsored health insurance became more widely available, particularly among employers dealing with a unionized labor force. Workers compensation, which includes pay-



ments for work-related injuries and illnesses, was adopted by the states during the same time period, too. In 1965 the U.S. government got involved in financing health care for persons aged 65 and older in an unprecedented way through Medicare. At the same time, the U.S. Congress extended support for poor persons, regardless of age, who needed assistance in paying for health care through Medicaid. Despite these efforts, the number of uninsured persons in the U.S. grew significantly over the last two decades of the twentieth century and well into this century, thanks partly to health care costs escalating, cuts in employer-sponsored health insurance, a shrinking

middle class, and other factors (Cooper pg.53). Consequently, the U.S. government passed a law which is "The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010." This

law is commonly known simply as the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and signed into law by Congress in March of 2010. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) believes that the ACA represents the most significant federal effort to reduce health disparities in U.S. history. Their agencies are specifically working to address health disparities experienced by underserved populations who have historically had poorer access and health outcomes. The ACA includes extensive legislation with ten distinct titles, all relating to aspects of reaching the key goals to improve quality, increase access, and protect consumers of health care in the U.S. Some highlights of increased accessibility, as stated by the HHS, include expanding the coverage of young adults up to age twenty six under their parents' insurance, increasing Medicaid eligibility to those who are below

138 percent of the national poverty line, and strengthening Medicare's preventative coverage. The primary way in which the ACA intends to protect health care consumers is through ending arbitrary withdrawals of coverage, guaranteeing rights to appeal, and banning lifetime limits on coverage. Lastly, an overarching goal of the ACA is to eventually lower overall national health care costs by improving health status among individuals and entire communities (Hegenauer pg.94-95).

Because of the passage of the Patient Protection and ACA in 2010, health insurance advocates

finally saw a health care program that requires the participation of virtually all U.S. citizens and legal permanent residents. In order to permit implementation

of its mission of expanding access to affordable, high-quality health care, the law required major reforms of the health insurance market, particularly the individual and small group segments. The ACA also created a mechanism aimed at reducing premiums by increasing the number of health insurance providers and thus competition in state markets. More specifically, the ACA provided for a network of federally chartered Consumer Operated and Oriented Plans (CO-OPs) operating in newly created insurance exchanges that would provide a nonprofit competitor to for-profit insurance companies. The CO-OPs came about as part of a legislative compromise between those who wanted a single-payer public option and those who opposed the ACA. As start-ups, CO-OPs faced the challenge of competing with existing health insurers who arguably understood their respective



competitive environments better. Unlike the incumbent insurers, CO-OPs were also subject to rules that restricted many aspects of their operations, further disadvantaging them against what was in some cases robust competition. Risk stabilization programs included in the legislation suffered from poor design and implementation. The ACA also limits access to external sources of capital for the CO-OPs which have proved particularly problematic for those experiencing a less-favorable loss experience than expected. Despite initial congressional promises of significant, periodic financial support to help stabilize these start-ups, Congress has fallen short on its promises many times. For some, like Iowa's CO-OPs, an unmet request of federal funding needed to continue operations was the straw, necessitating intervention by the state's insurance commissioner. Finally, note that allegations of oversight failure on the part of the HHS continue to raise doubts about whether the federal government could have made better decisions about CO-OPs (Cooper pg. 53-54). According to detailed information gathered about some failed CO-OPs created under ACA, a majority staff report prepared for the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the US Senate released March 10, 2016, provides the most recent findings and analysis available from Congress at the time regarding responsibility collapse of CO-OPs (Congress or HHS). HHS officials suggested that series of budget cuts passed by Congress played a role in the CO-OPs failures. However, evidence collected by the subcommittee says that this was not the case, because rather than depriving the failed CO-OPs of any funds requested in their loan applications, they received \$350 million more than they requested in their 2011 loan applications, based on 10-year business plans. The budget cuts' main reason was to prevent HHS from funding any more of the CO-OPs, one per state, provided for by the ACA. Moreover, the report shows that estimated costs with the CO-OPs failures approximating \$2.33 billion in unpaid federal loans and non-loan liabilities. As a result, it limits future losses to the taxpayers (Cooper pg.69).

The exchange concept that was included in the ACA is to improve access to health insurance. Attempts to improve coverage quality include creation

of an essential health benefits package, out-of-pocket maximums, removal of lifetime and annual limits for essential benefits, removal of cost-sharing for preventive benefits, coverage choices tied to cost-sharing, and the designation of qualified health plans (QHPs) and corresponding requirements (Cooper pg.54). A health insurance exchange (termed a "marketplace" in the ACA) is structured online marketplace (Web site) where qualified individuals and small business can compare and purchase coverage offered by competing private health insurers. Coverages available on exchanges are QHRs that provide comprehensive coverage and meet all of the private market reforms specified in the ACA. Exchanges also identify individuals who are eligible for Medicaid and other public programs. Similarly, Small Business Health Options Program exchanges aim at helping qualified small employers and their employees with the purchase of QHPs available in the small-group market. Employers can choose from among the exchanges' QHPs those they will offer to their employees and specify the amount of premium they are willing to contribute. The ACA requires public exchanges to be established in every state. A state can choose to create and run its own exchange; if it chooses not to do so, the state's residents can shop on an exchange run by the federal government, or the state can partner with the federal government to share responsibility for operating the state's exchange. At the beginning of 2016, there were 13 state-based (including the District of Columbia), 31 federally facilitated, and seven federal-state partnership exchanges. Public exchanges have played an increasing role in handling enrollments. In the 2014 open enrollment period, 8 million people signed up for coverage on the public exchanges 2.6 million on the state based exchanges and 5.4 million on the federally facilitated, including federal-state partnership exchanges. Public exchange enrollments for 2015 grew to 11.7 million consumers (2.9 million on the state-based exchanges and 8.8 million on the federally facilitated, including federal-state partnership exchanges). The role of public exchanges continues to grow, with 12.7 million enrollments (3.1 million on the state-based exchanges and 9.6 million on the federally facilitated, including federal-state partnership exchanges) during the 2016 open enroll-



ment period. However, in contrast with open enrollment, problems have been encountered with regard to special enrollment periods that permit individuals to enroll in one of more than 30 categories of special enrollment, creating difficulties for insurers. Insurers indicate their costs are being driven up by people who are gaming the system by using special enrollment periods where compliance with eligibility requirements is often not validated to delay signing up for coverage until medical expenses are actually encountered while, at the same time, avoiding a penalty for missing open enrollment, quickly incur claims, and then drop coverage without paying much in the way of premiums. Another problem is that people enrolling in special enrollment periods have higher claims costs, resulting in higher loss ratios than expected. A third concern is with the absence of any requirement of documentation or validation, such as that which is commonly required in other guaranteed issue markets. In response, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) tightened the rules for certain special enrollment periods effective May 11, 2016 and made it clear that special enrollment periods are available only in six defined and limited types of circumstances. In a 2015 survey of health care consumers, 76 percent of the public insurance exchange enrollees indicated the overall amount that they have to pay in terms of premiums, deductibles, and copays was an important factor when they chose their current plan, and 64 percent said that finding good value/benefits for what they pay was also important (Cooper pg.58). However, those enrolled in an exchange are less confident they can find affordable care when they need it as compared with those in employer, Medicaid, and Medicare plans (Cooper pg. 59). The changing health care financing system is pushing insurers and providers to develop new ways to align their incentives. Public and private insurers described value based purchasing as a key strategy for transforming the health care delivery system. Value-based purchasing is ties reimbursement to health care providers to quality metrics. The intent is to create incentives for high quality, cost-effective care. The ACA has simplified for consumers the use of quality metrics in the purchase of health insurance. The use of quality metrics in the

choice of plan increases the incentive of insurers to integrate with health care providers (Custer pg.41). However, Republicans wanted a new type of health account a qualified small employer health reimbursement arrange into the newly signed 21st Century Cures Act. This Act revives small employer's ability to give workers cash for individual health insurance premiums. Some moderate Democrats like health accounts, and Trump frequently mentioned expanding health account programs as a tool for replacing ACA coverage expansion programs. If Republicans can get any new health measures at all through Congress in 2017, they will probably pass big health account measures (Bell pg.37-38).

It is too early to come to a quick conclusion about the ACA's success or failure, although many admit that it has some major flaws. Firstly, it is not easy for all of the health insurance industry members to join in one goal or direction. Secondly, there is a wide variety of consumers in the U.S. and it is hard to create a health insurance system which fits all consumers similarly. Finally, if the ACA needed to be replaced, it is not easy to devise an alternate one in a short time. Even though some people don't like everything about the ACA, it has helped to reduce the number of uninsured people. Since health insurance is one of the biggest fields in the U.S., the ACA needs a reasonable amount of time and some modifications in order to be able to provide excellent and affordable health insurance for all U.S. citizens.

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Three Components of Good Health

Many people do not realize how important it is to be healthy, and that achieving optimal health is a multi-faceted pursuit. Healthy people can easily do everyday activities and be satisfied with their lives. A good place to start is with the definition of the word health. The World Health Organization Constitution of 1948 defines health as a "State of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Very often, people focus solely on their physical health. However, it is very important to have a balance between physical, mental and social health and to understand how those factors help people have a healthy life. It is very important to have good health



in order to live a long and healthy life full of energy and happiness. People who have bad habits such as smoking, drinking and eating unhealthy foods can easily damage their health. Not only is it very easy for people to destroy their health, but some people do not even think about how hard it is to rebuild once they have lost their health—sometimes it is not even possible at all. In order to be healthy, people should observe a close connection between physical, mental and social health, and have the correct information to make appropriate choices.

For most people, physical health means that they do not have any serious diseases. A large part of



physical health is regular exercise. Physical activity can include regular exercise, strength, flexibility, and endurance exercises. In the book “Fitness and Exercise Sourcebook,” edited by Laura Larsen, we read, “Vital at every age for healthy bones, exercise is important for treating and preventing osteoporosis. Not only does exercise improve bone health, it also increases muscle strength coordination, and balance, and it leads to better overall health. (31)” People who exercise regularly have better posture. With regular exercise, people improve muscles that support their

back. Having good posture is very important for people’s backs and health. Additionally, the more people are active the higher their chance is to live longer and have a happier life. Another benefit of regular exercise is that it helps people lose weight. When people exercise regularly, they build muscle mass that can help increase their metabolism.

If people’s metabolism is higher, they will naturally burn more calories, helping them lose weight. Professor Rebecca J. Donatelle says, “Regular physical activity improves more than 50 different physiological, metabolic, and psychological aspects of human life. Now is an excellent time to develop exercise habits that will improve the quality and duration of your own life” (296). Exercising regularly helps increase energy levels because blood receives more oxygen and you get more nutrients and better blood circulation. Also, regular exercise helps prevent and manage some health problems, such as high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes and arthritis. In the article “How Exercise Helps You Lose Weight,” medical and health writer Leslie Goldman writes, “But the benefits of exercise are worth every moment you spend on it. From weight loss to disease prevention, exercise is a natural and proven health elixir.

Make it a daily part of your life to reap the benefits for years to come.” One thing that is repeated in this information is the word regular. Regular exercise is

important because that is necessary for the benefits to apply. If you don’t do it regularly, then you will not get as many benefits from it. People should perform at least 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of very intense activity per week. In aforementioned article, Goldman also says:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourages healthy adults to complete at least two hours and 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity includes many

forms of exercise, such as brisk walking, using an elliptical machine, or swimming laps.

Alternately, you can complete one hour and 15 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity per week, such running or cycling.

Generally, if people exercise five days a week, they have to spend 30 minutes a day exercising.

Therefore, doing exercises daily, or at least on a regular schedule,

will help them meet that goal 150 minutes while only doing half an hour of exercising or less. Also, it is a lot easier to find time for a half hour session a day rather than trying to do a lot of exercising at once. It is very important to make exercise a habit and a part of regular life because then it is easier to do exercises regularly. For people who want to lose weight, it is better to have more activity during the day. They should exercise up to 300 minutes a week. Also, it is necessary to spend less time sitting because people have a higher risk of having metabolic problems, even if they meet goal of your daily exercise. Also, it is good to make exercising as fun as possible by perhaps involving friends and relatives to exercise with. However as important as physical exercise is it is not the only part of physical health, it is one of many things to consider.

Another important part of physical health is proper eating habits and nutrition. Our health depends on what we eat every day. Foods that are full



of nutrients, vitamins, and minerals are beneficial to our body. When people consume healthy foods, they are full of energy, they are happy, and they can work and think productively. In the article “How to Keep Healthy” the authors suggest:

Avoid fad diets—they are often incredibly unhealthy. To get all the nutrition the human body needs, you must eat a balanced diet including dairy, grains, protein, fruits and veggies as well as fat (yes, even fat!). By doing so, you’ll have a healthy heart, healthy brain, and a fully functional immune system. Eating highly varied foods will also help insure you get all the vitamins, minerals, oils, and enzymes your body craves.

Foods that do not have enough nutrients, vitamins, and minerals are bad for your digestive system and cause you to suffer from many health problems. The digestive system plays a very important role in our health. If your body does not receive enough vitamins, nutrients and fiber, because it was destroyed during chemical processing, your digestive system will not work in the proper way. For these reasons, people can have problems with their digestive tract, and suffer from infections and allergies. The digestive system requires a good amount of friendly bacteria that is very important for health. People who balance their diet by eating a lot of fresh fruits and fresh vegetables and also support their digestive system by eating kefir and yogurts that contain probiotics, have fewer problems with their digestive system and can prevent infection and chronic diseases. If physical health is defined by not having any diseases then proper nutrition is just as important, if not more important, as regular exercise.

Staying physically healthy also means that people should get good sleep every night. Sleep plays an important role in the human body. During sleep, most systems are in an anabolic state, helping to restore the immune, nervous, skeletal, and muscular systems. Medical Doctors Michael F. Roizen and Mehmet C. Oz write:

In fact, people who sleep fewer than six hours a night have a 50 percent increased risk of viral

infections and an increased risk of heart disease and stroke. Plus, lack of sleep is associated with mental decline and overeating (which leads to major aging conditions). Even worse, we don’t care enough that we don’t get enough sleep, even though it’s one of the major things that make us feel old. (181)

People who take enough time to sleep and relax help their body rejuvenate. People who have low quality sleep or a lack of sleep, have an increased risk of having serious health problems and they should consult with a health professional. People who exercise regularly have better sleep and a better night’s rest. This shows how connected these three parts of physical health are. Proper exercise will help you sleep, which will give you the energy you need to keep exercising. Poor sleep and improper nutrition can cause you to overeat and not have enough energy to exercise, leading to health problems. As we have seen in the previous paragraphs, physical health is very important and the three aspects of physical health are all connected to each other. However, these different aspects of physical health also connect with the other two parts of the definition of healthy.

The second aspect of health is mental health. Mental health plays a very important role because it is responsible for the choices that people make. People’s physical health, very often, is dependent of on the choices people make such as what they consume and how they spend their free time. People can decide to eat healthy and dedicate some time to exercise or choose to eat yummy food that is not good for you and spend all our free time doing something sedentary like watching TV. Barbara Wexler who is a medical writer and chronic disease epidemiologist states:

Mental health can be measured in terms of an individual’s ability to think and communicate clearly, to learn and grow emotionally, to deal productively and realistically with change and stress, and to form and maintain fulfilling relationships with others. Mental health is a principal component of wellness. Self-esteem, resilience, and the ability to cope with adversity influence how people feel about themselves and

whether they choose lifestyles and behaviors that promote or jeopardize their health (Wexler 147).

People who have a mental disorder can have affected thoughts, moods and behavior. Those people have difficulty handling stressful situations and coping with emotional situations and sometimes do not have the mental capacity to make the choices they need to make in order to be healthy. But this still applies to most people, most of whom do not have mental disorders, as well. Some people are more athletic and some people have a harder time exercising. Similarly people vary in how they handle stress and emotional events. Some people, in response to stress and feeling unhappy, will eat as a way to cope with that stress or to feel better. We know that our body releases endorphins when we eat which make us feel better. It is therefore important to keep this in mind and be aware of the choices we make when we are dealing with everyday stress. People can choose to deal with this in an unhealthy way, like overeating, or choose to go for a run or walk which will relieve stress and maintain good physical health. In the same book, Donatelle shows the importance of understanding and dealing with mental health of the following:

College students can be especially vulnerable to life's highs and lows. A study published in 2003 of the nearly 14,000 students who sought help from a Midwestern university counseling center over a 13-year period revealed that students frequently have more complex problems today than they did a decade ago. Issues included both the expected student problems—difficulties in relationships and developmental issues—as well as more severe problems, such as depression, effects of sexual assault, and thoughts of suicide. Some of these increases were dramatic. The number of students seen each year with depression doubled, the number of suicidal students tripled, and the number of students seen after a sexual assault quadrupled (Donatelle 30).

When people are dealing with serious problems such as depression or the effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) due to a traumatic

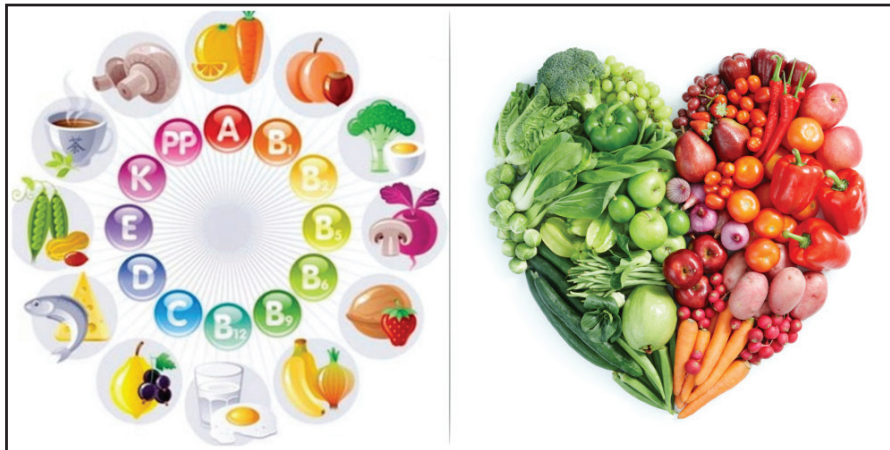
event their physical health is probably not a priority. In fact, as a way to deal with it, people might make choices that negatively affect their physical and overall health. Often people might turn to drugs or other negative actions which can have very serious repercussions on their overall health. As the previous quote said, that now young people are dealing with these issues much more than before therefore it is even more important than ever to be aware of how to properly deal with such things in order to stay healthy. As we can see mental health and physical health are very closely connected. Even though, overall, people mostly think of physical health, on an individual level mental health is more important. Most people don't have mental disorders and they only have to think about the choices they make regarding their physical health. But a person who has mental disorders might lack the mental capacity to even consider or worry about their health and wellbeing at all.

The final aspect of health is social well-being. On its own it might not seem like it is a big part of health, but it is in fact very closely related to the previous two aspects of health and is very important for maintaining health and enhancing the methods used to stay healthy. As Donatelle also explains, more much importance can be placed out social health:

Social health, an important part of the broader concept of psychosocial health, includes your interaction with others on an individual and group basis, your ability to use social resources and group basis, your ability to use social resources and support in times of need, and your ability to adapt to a variety of social situations. Socially healthy individuals have a wide range of interactions with family, friends, and acquaintances, and are able to have a healthy interaction with an intimate partner. Typically, social healthy individuals are able to listen, express themselves, form healthy attachments, act in socially acceptable and responsible ways, and find the best fit for themselves in society (Donatelle 33).

By itself, social health might not seem as important

as the other two aspects of health, as there are people who are less social than others but are still just as healthy. Social health however is helpful because it lets you get help from other people. People that are socially healthy will have friends and family around that will notice when something is not right and point it out even if that person does not notice it themselves. Also that person will have people who will support them through struggles and help them. This also ties in to the other aspects of health. If a person has friends that go to the gym they are more likely to go as well, even if it's just for social reasons. But that could be a way to get them started. People who are more social are more likely to be aware of how they look and will probably try harder to be and look healthy. A person who is socially healthy can turn to friends when they are feeling down and unhappy instead of turning to overeating and otherwise unhealthy eating habits.



Social health can also be a sign of mental health. A person with mental disorders will probably have a harder time making and maintain relationships and vice versa if a socially healthy person develops mental disorders they will have an easier time dealing with that problem because they have the support of friends. As we can see social health is also an important aspect of health that at the very least supports and enhances the other two aspects health.

In conclusion, being healthy requires first of all the knowledge to make the right choices. People have many resources available to them to get this knowledge such as the internet, health professionals, advise from friends, and students have many resources available to them at their schools. Because the three aspects of health, physical, mental and social, encompass almost everything in our lives and influence many of the choices people make every

day it is important to understand them. These choices can be deciding what to snack on, how to spend free time, who to spend it with and how to deal with the stresses and emotions of life. Physical health, having a healthy body, is the primary aspect of health and the one people most associate with health. It requires good eating habits and lifestyle habits that include regular exercise. The second aspect of health, mental health, although not the first thing people think of in terms of health, is very important because it is what is responsible for the choices we make; the choices that influence the other two aspects of health. And finally social health, an aspect that is helpful for main-

taining the other two aspects of health and having support that can help us stay healthy. All of the aspects of health are connected and influence each other and it can be very difficult to be completely healthy if even

one of the aspects is lacking. Why is all of this important? A lot of people say that health is wealth. If we can measure between health and wealth, we can see that health is more important than wealth. People, who have expensive cars, houses and a lot more, can only enjoy of all those things if they have good health. People, who lose health, lose happiness and confidence in their future. This tells us that health is real wealth and emphasizes just how important it is to care about and consistently focus on each and on all of the three components of health: physical, mental, and social well-being.

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