

ISSUES/GAPS IDENTIFIED

- **Unequal Access to Care in Specific Localities:** Bath County lacks a Federally Qualified Health Center. Highland County lacks a permanent physician.
- **CSHD District Infrequently Surveyed by Staff:** CSHD aids in District Hospital CHA efforts, but does not conduct its own.
- **Limited District Presence in Bath & Highland County**

PROJECT OVERVIEW

- **Goal:** CSHD strives to strengthen the relationship with low income and rural populations through the establishment of a mobile clinic. The Rapid Community Needs Assessment aims to capture input on community healthcare and social needs, and mobile unit operations in a 3.5 week time period.
- **Outputs:** I helped (1) determine RCA focus areas & populations through CHA reviews, (2) design the RCA survey, (3) coordinate RCA tabling, survey distribution, & canvassing with over 57 RCA events (4) coordinate an 11 person RCA team for survey distribution.
- **Outcomes:** The RCA survey has not only collected needed data, but increased CSHD visibility and encouraged vulnerable conversations with our community.

CHALLENGES

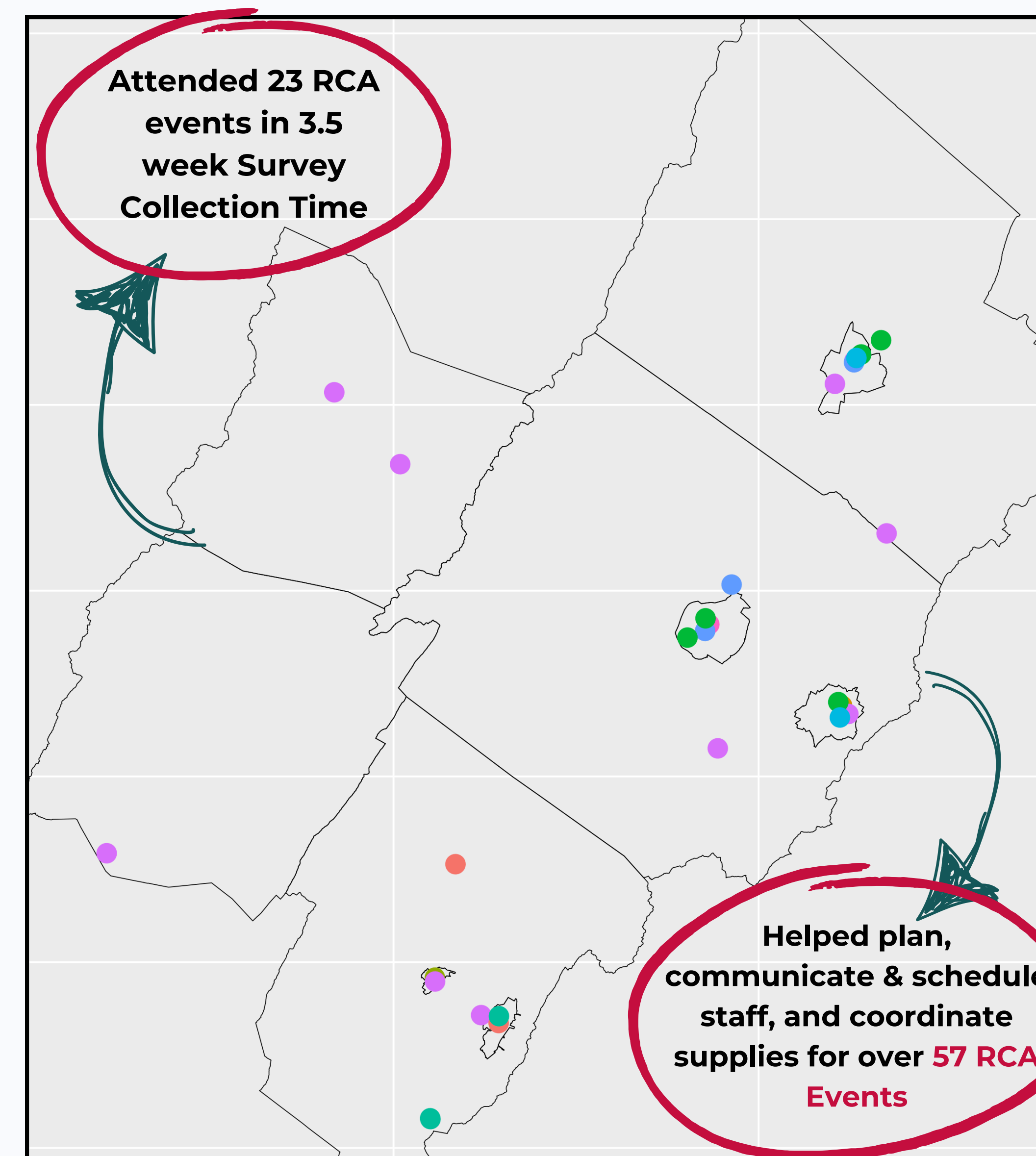
- **Time:** Short survey collection period.
- **Lack of Community Partnerships & Contacts in High Need Areas**
- **Staff Capacity:** Struggle to schedule intense RCA efforts alongside other daily work duties.
- **Public's Understanding of Health Department Services:** Individuals struggled to understand the HD role as not only a clinical service provider, but preventative care as well.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The RCA pushed me to interact & connect our survey in unique ways across CSHD. As an out of area intern, the RCA allowed me to not only interact with our District's community, but be **immersed** in them through many community events, conversations with residents, & community partnerships connections in a short period of time.

Efforts Included:

- **Door to Door Canvassing in Target Census Blocks**
 - **Tabling at Retail Stores**
 - **Tabling with Community Partners**
 - **Tabling at Health Department Outreach Events**
 - **WIC Farmers Market**
- Community Events Attended:
- **Harrisonburg Reentry Fair**
 - **Augusta Mobile Health Clinics**
 - **RARA Grocery Distribution**
 - **Community in Motion Bus**
 - **Rockbridge Transportation CAN Community Dinners**

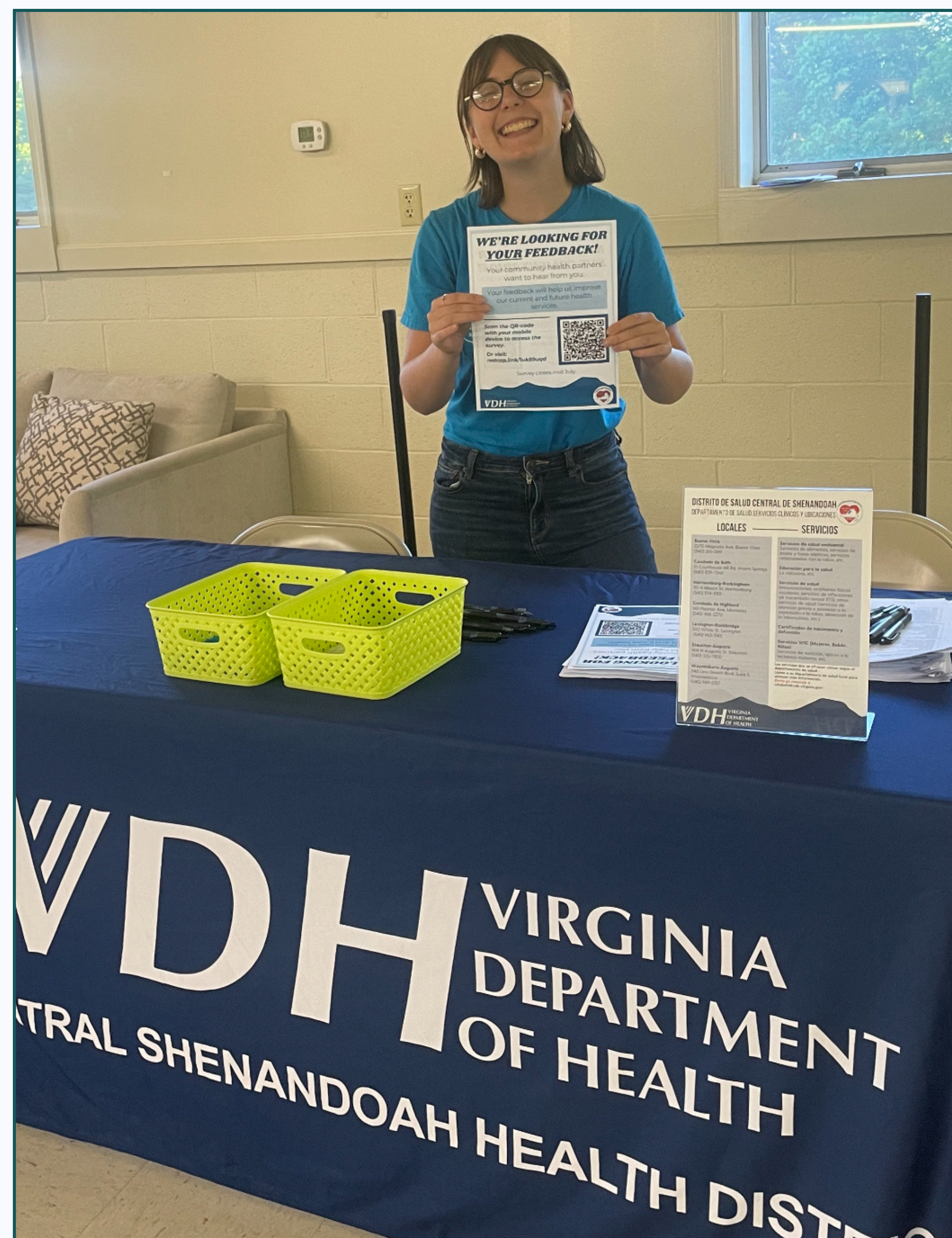


KEY TAKE AWAYS

- **Program Decision Making:** We must learn to value quantitative data & community narratives equally.
- **Government & the Public's Relationship:** Our communities are willing to answer if we have the bravery to not only ask, but to listen.
- **Grassroots Change:** Community Health Workers social network is pivotal to shifting health outcomes.
- **Public Service is My Calling.**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to Laura Lee Wight, LeeAnn Gardner, & all of the CSHD Population Health Team. I am grateful to have an amazing & supportive host site. Thank you to Jeff Stover, Bridget Cochran, and Felicia Baez for VDH Intern Academy Support.



MEET LEAH

College: East Tennessee State University
 Class of 2026
 Major: Community Health
 Interests: Rural, Maternal, & Adolescent Health