

Abstract

This summer, I joined a group of researchers for the Activate Good Cause Wiki, a program run by the nonprofit Volunteer Center, Activate Good. The **Activate Good Cause Wiki** is a collaborative community project whose aim is to build a central information hub about issues local to the Triangle; this project aims to serve as a critical learning resource to educate and empower the Triangle community in post-pandemic recovery and resiliency efforts.

For this project, I will explore issues in the areas of food deserts, low-income housing and refugees. Hence, this was an experience directly linked to my personal and professional interests, as I am eager to pursue a career in policy.



Objectives

- Get exposed to issues affecting the Triangle Area
- Research topics in the areas of:
 - **Poverty, Employment, Homelessness, & Hunger**
 - **Immigrants and Refugees**
- Look for fact-based, objective studies or data published by nonprofit organizations, colleges and universities, government agencies, or other reputable sources, and collect trustworthy information about the issue.
- Submit findings and reference links to the Triangle Cause Wiki

Results

Results on two reports I wrote:

FOOD DESERTS – KEY FACTS (1,2)

- Nationally, 25 to 30 million Americans live in food deserts
- In North Carolina, one in every five is “food insecure.”
- At least 349 food deserts across 80 counties, impacting over 1.5 million of North Carolina residents
- Low-income residents and rural communities
- are particularly burdened by food deserts

FOOD DESERTS – Organizations to support

- [The Produce Box](#)
- [Feeding America](#)
- [Rural Advancement Foundation International](#)
- [North Carolina Community Garden Partners](#)
- [Feeding the Carolinas](#)
- [Farm to School Coalition of NC](#)
- [Carolina Farm Stewardship Association](#)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING – KEY FACTS (3,4)

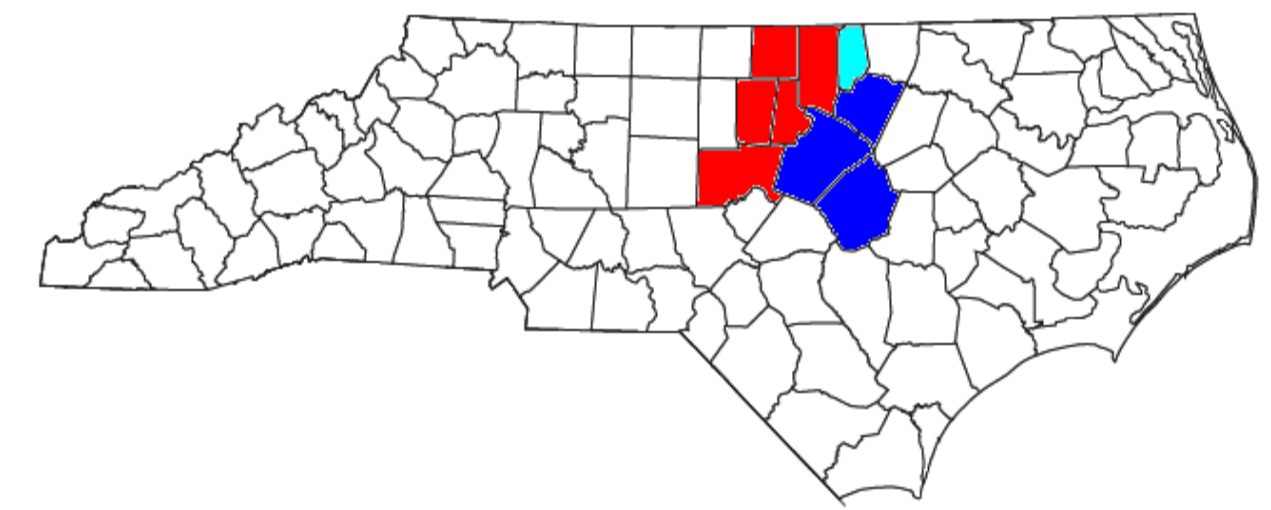
- The US is facing an affordable housing crunch, which has been worsening since the pandemic struck.
- According to the Joint Center for Housing Studies, nearly one in three households spend more than 40 percent of their income on housing.
- In North Carolina, 24% of renter households are extremely low income
- Studies have shown that affordable housing benefits
 - Health
 - Education
 - Economy
 - Communities

AFFORDABLE HOUSING – Associated Organizations

- North Carolina Housing Coalition
- North Carolina Housing Finance Agency

Conclusion

Working for Activate Good was a very eye-opening experience. It helped me become more aware of the issues that affect the Triangle Research Area, North Carolina, and even the US as a whole. Not only did I get to research and do in-depth study of critical social and economic issues, but I also got an opportunity to research relevant non-governmental and volunteer organizations that work to bring change in the communities affected. The aim of the Activate Good cause Wiki is to educate the public on critical issues affecting North Carolina and introducing them to relevant organizations, so that it is easier for them to find ways to contribute and volunteer. Therefore, concluding this experience I must say that I really admire the work that Activate Good does, and I feel grateful that I got to be part of Cause Wiki, a project that I am sure will be very successful in mobilizing people to volunteer more.



References

- ¹ The Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, Harvard Law School
- ² North Carolina Alliance for Health.
- ³ <https://phys.org/news/2020-06-lack-housing-worse.html>
- ⁴ National Low Income Housing Coalition

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