

Santa Barbara County 2021 CSAC Challenge Executive Summary**Category: Disaster/Emergency Response & Management****Overview:**

“Protect. Respect. Wear a Mask” campaign, is a public outreach campaign targeting the 18-49 population on the importance of wearing the appropriate face coverings to slow the spread of COVID-19. (Examples follow the written submission)

Challenge:

In June 2020, statistics showed that more young people between 18-49 were contracting and spreading COVID-19. At the time, most believed that only the elderly and those in compromised health were at risk from the disease, but it was often spread by asymptomatic individuals who weren't following safety protocols.

Solution:

We developed this awareness campaign featuring Gen X/Y about the potentially life-saving action of simply wearing the correct face covering. If not for themselves, their actions could protect family and friends in high-risk categories. The County developed a bilingual multi-faceted campaign featuring still photos of multiethnic up-and-coming business and community leaders and college students wearing a common photoshopped mask accompanied by their quote about why and for whom they wear a mask. For transparency and peer-relatability, we included their full name, age and profession or college. We purposefully did not use stock images. From July to December, 2020, the campaign utilized earned media, paid media, as well as County social media, government cable TV and weekly press conferences. Tactics included video, bus advertising, radio and TV public service announcements, social media, yard signs, and distribution of 5,000 free blue denim masks with the logo similar to the one seen in the campaign. Messaging and visuals were also included in the weekly press conference videos posted on the County's YouTube channel.

Innovation:

To save time, money and working within a virtual environment, we solicited young leaders and influencers to submit their photo and a quote in English, Spanish or both. The photos were photoshopped to remove the background, converted into black and white, and a denim blue mask was added to their face. The blue mask was emphasized against the black and white image. The final image and quote was placed on a white background with the campaign logo. We strived for a balanced mix of age, ethnicity, students, young professionals, and gender. The County Facebook cover image featured the campaign and the denim mask was added to the County seal used as our profile photo on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Results:

While the paid transit campaign officially ended in September 2020, several of the MTD buses serving Santa Barbara, Goleta and Isla Vista continue to display the posters. Several of the featured Gen X/Yers shared the County's post on their social media accounts, which helped raise awareness, impressions and reach. **Impressions from Twitter, Facebook and Instagram totaled 313,809.** The reusable, adjustable, comfortable, washable denim giveaway masks were snapped up, and accepted by the college crowd as hip, cool and better than the surgical disposable masks. The messaging also helped introduce common sense concepts about how easily and unknowingly the disease could be spread. We believed this to be an effective way to reach this age group who is not typically listening to or following County and public health social media. We targeted the yard signs for the UCSB and Santa Barbara City College in high foot and bicycle traffic areas featuring students from those schools. Even after colleges went to remote learning, many students live on or near campus.

Replicability:

The campaign strategy, messaging and graphics can easily be replicated by other agencies, cities and counties. The campaign was developed in-house using Canva and Microsoft Publisher for electronic and printed materials. We tapped into our partnerships with other agencies, NGOs, schools, teen groups and churches to identify and outreach to ideal Gen X/Y candidates to secure 35 Protect. Respect. ambassadors. The campaign slogan and logo got their start at Allan Hancock College in north county where substantially more infection and deaths were occurring. We were given a green light to use the Protect. Respect. logo and transform the messaging into a countywide robust and highly visible Gen X/Y campaign. We also duplicated the logo in Spanish and ran a bilingual campaign. After seeing the images and social media, local elected officials, and civic and business leaders requested to participate. We created similar images for three city councils, Board of Supervisors and many of the County department heads to use for their own e-news and social media.

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