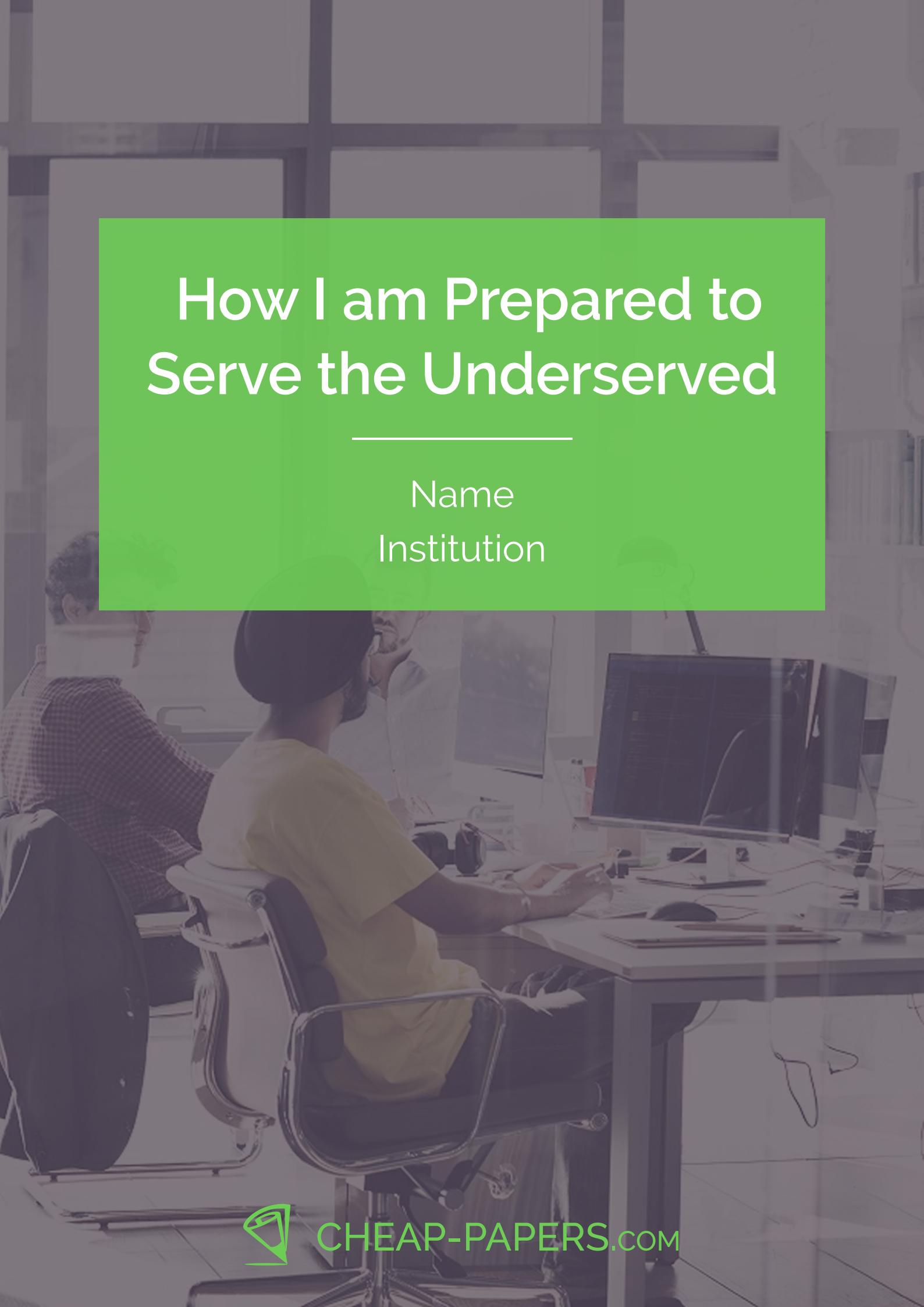

How I am Prepared to Serve the Underserved

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HOW I AM PREPARED TO SERVE THE UNDERSERVED

How will you contribute to the mission of the National Health Service Corps in providing care to underserved communities?

Being raised in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is of the utmost importance in my life. Adding to the fact that I was a Boy Scout, I carried out service to the community in many different ways. It included visiting the sick in hospitals, feeding the homeless, as well as providing a helping hand to the elderly. I was given the responsibility to be a church youth leader. A responsibility I embraced in the spirit of service through organizing activities, camps and teaching principles of life to the younger generation. Driven by this fact, while at Utah Valley University, I worked as a certified tutor. Here, I volunteered my time to help students who were struggling in their education. Seeing them improve and perform well on exams gave me a sense of achievement. I was also very involved in the Pre-Dental Club. I worked with a local organization, and was entrusted with the task of performing assemblies and applying fluoride varnish to students at Title I Elementary Schools. It was fun to see the smiles on the kids' faces as they learned about how they should brush and floss, and eat healthy foods.

After graduating from dental school, I am certain that I will aspire to continue this trend of service, especially by offering my dental skills to the underserved; thus, contributing to a state of wellness in their lives. However, the challenges that I face have never been so real. The debts I have accrued from my student loans and the pressure of finding a well-paying job are the facts that may hinder my ability to serve. I possess a strong desire to help those in need. It is a responsibility that I have been entrusted with as a soon-to-be dentist. I get a real sense of fulfillment when I do things for others that they cannot do themselves.

Improving their quality of life by relieving pain, allowing them to eat things they could not before, improving the esthetics of their smile, and educating them on how to improve their health are among the issues that I trust I have been called to do. I believe the best solution to my predicament happens to be the NHSC scholarship. It will permit me to eliminate my debt sooner and also be able to serve people that could really use my help. I plan to have a life full of service, and working with the NHSC would help me start my career off on the right foot by serving the underserved population.

What familiarities have you had or events have you partook in that have prepared you to work with underserved populations?

From a young age, I have been exposed to situations that have provided me with service learning opportunities. I have had many chances to provide service to the underprivileged community. It has called for adequate preparation and deep reflections that have enabled me to learn the requirements for public service, how to offer the services and how to meet set goals. It has played a huge role in molding me into the person I am today. I developed good citizenship virtues at an early stage, and can say that up to now I hold firm to these founding principles.

During multiple Christmas seasons, I volunteered to work with children with cancer. It is a condition that has made most of the children despair as life seems vague and loses meaning to them. Working with children living with cancer benefited their families in a great way. I had a similar experience as a mentor for the Children's Justice Center. There, I spent time building relationships with children who have undergone abuse, both sexually and physically. The innocence in these children moved me to tears as they happen to be victims of levels of cruelty that they did not deserve. The overwhelming desire to see them lead normal lives propelled me actively to offer my services in other areas.

Other than this, I also actively worked with UVU Pre-Dental Club. I successfully organized service activities for the club members providing an opportunity for them to build lasting relationships and interact on levels that added value to individuals. As the president of the club, I carried out club activities that were aimed at serving, educating and helping students prepare and apply for admission to dental school.

The managerial and communication skills I have gained through these experiences have become invaluable to me as I have worked in a volunteer clinic in Omaha. I have taken on a delicate task of providing dental exams, prophylaxis and restorative work. My interest in underserved areas stems from the strong foundations that were instilled in me from a young age. I have been involved in working with underserved individuals, and I have come to love them. I would love to be given the opportunity to use the passion and skills I have gained to benefit others through working with the NHSC.

Discuss your dedication to pursuing a profession in primary health care.

When I look at the problems that exist in the healthcare sector, my heart is moved. It results as an inner search and deep reflection as to how I can contribute to a solution. I would like to pursue a career in primary healthcare because I feel it is where I belong. From a holistic view of things, primary health care is where complete care in primary health can come into view. Primary health care is holistic in nature, and so the idea of it resonates within me. Not only does it concentrate on the individual patient, but it also incorporates the patient's family as well as the community. I intend to take care of the whole of patient's family. If done properly, primary health care for an individual patient can be a powerful thing. It fosters friendship between the doctor and patients. Basing on the aspects of friendship, the patients will happily and positively accept the wise counsel of doctors, and I believe, this can go a long way and is the first step in building healthier communities.

Human suffering is something that I don't like to see. When I do, I feel a challenge from within urging me to take a step and stop the suffering. Diseases are some of the challenges that bring human suffering. The environment in which I was brought up prepared me for a profession in primary healthcare. To me, primary healthcare is a call as well as a profession. However, one requires the professional skills to be able to serve the call. I will work hard to achieve the best levels of this profession thus be able to give quality professional services to patients.

As individuals receive care and become more comfortable with their doctor, a familiarity develops with their family. As families develop a relationship with their primary care practitioners, the health and the strength of the community will also increase. That is why I believe in the purpose of primary health care and am committed to pursuing a career in the field. I want to help individuals, families and communities and I believe that one cannot improve a field without considering others. The holistic approach is effective in underserved communities where even a single doctor can make a significant difference. Since my youth as a Boy Scout, I was taught the importance of building strong communities. That idea has not left me, and I look forward to having a career that will permit me to participate in an even bigger role of strengthening the whole community.