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HMN 301-001

Progress Report

December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008

HAPLUK (The HIV and AIDS Project for Lexington and the University of Kentucky)

**Introduction:**

Since I have begun working on the meat of the project, I have broken my progress into five categories. Each one represents an area that will need to be taken care of before the website will be able to fully get off the ground, as well as sustain itself over the years to come.

**Community Interaction:**

This is the area where I have made the most progress, and am nearing “completion.” One of the most important aspects of the project is to ensure that I am delivering something that the community needs, and to deliver it well. In order to accomplish this task I have been working closely with several of the HIV/AIDS groups already available in Lexington. I participated in a Candlelight Vigil on December 1<sup>st</sup>, as well as volunteered my time to the Red Ribbon Ball on December 6<sup>th</sup>, both of which were dedicated to remembering and supporting members of the community who were or are currently living with HIV/AIDS. Through my meetings with AVOL and the BCC I have also met a number of people, both those who organize these services and those who use them, which has given me a chance to interact with the audience that will be viewing the website and to understand what is needed most by the community.

**Web Design:**

Multiple layouts for the overall web design have been created, as well as a background image that will function as the logo for the website. Each of the pages that will be covered (there

are currently seven) has been created, and most of the information that will be contained on these pages has been written—though it still needs to be proofread before it will go on the web. The pages that are nearing completion include: “The History of HIV,” “Living with HIV,” “Knowing Someone with HIV,” “Gaining Support,” “Getting Tested,” and “Web Links”—which currently includes a link to AVOL’s website, the BCC’s website, TheBody.com, and a community blog (which I may be taking over and incorporating into my final project design).

In order to tie the project into my love for psychology, there is also a newsfeed for “The Psychology of HIV,” as well as a newsfeed entitled “Medical Advances” that will link to stories which have significant information regarding improvements to healthcare. The one aspect of the website that needs the most work, outside of the forums, is the “Library Resources” tab, as I have not yet accomplished going to the libraries in Lexington and seeing what resources are available. Finally, the forums have not been designed; however I plan to finish them over winter break. I want to give a great deal of attention to this aspect of the website, as it will be the main draw for members of the community interested in using it for its ability to be utilized as a 24/7 self-help tool. Once that is achieved, the website will be complete.

### **Funding:**

In order to keep the domain that has been registered, the project will require \$5.00 a month for its lifespan. Initially this does not seem too costly, but as time passes it will be an obstacle that must be overcome in order to make the website sustainable. Though none of these ideas have yet been implemented, I have discussed a few ways of getting around this potential dilemma with my jury project advisors. The first of which is to create a “Donate” tab, in hopes that viewers of the website who find the information available useful will want to donate a small amount of money to keep the site running. Another idea is to meet with local community

organizations, such as GSA and OutSource at UK, to see if a yearly “donation drive” can be placed on their agendas, so that there is a constant stream of money coming in for the website that will enable it to stay afloat. Further ideas are still being brain-stormed.

### **Moderation:**

This area has been considered, but little progress has been made in terms of finding a good source of moderators that will be able to sustain the website over the years. One idea that I am fairly confident will be put into place is to dedicate one staff member and one volunteer each from AVOL and the BCC to watching the site, so that any vulgar comments left on the forums can be removed, and so that personal information is not presented that could put members of the community at risk for exposure. Hopefully by allowing this project to become intertwined with the two already existing resources of AVOL and the BCC, moderation will not prove problematic in the future. Gathering worthy moderators is the issue that will be tackled next in the schedule of things still needed to be accomplished.

### **Promotion:**

This is the final area of the project, wherein the least progress has been made. Having a drive of some sort to promote the website, once it is created, will be necessary if it is to receive the type of traffic and support that a 24/7 self-help group would require. Currently, there are two solutions to this that have been discussed. The first of which is to hold a promotional meeting at the UK Student Center that will be open to the public, in order to get a large influx of people involved. The second is to distribute fliers among Lexington’s libraries and other locations in downtown Lexington and at UK that will broadcast the website’s name and address to members of the community who might find the service useful. Having the website linked to (and from)

AVOL's and the BCC's already existing websites will also serve as a way for it to get the sort of advertising I am hoping to receive.