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Innovative Idea: Northwest Ohio's V Project Seeks to Vaccinate 70% of Community

Hundreds of leaders from various sectors unite in historic effort

COLUMBUS – Conceived in fall 2020 by local businessman Sean Savage, V Project has been extremely successful in educating, motivating, and vaccinating residents in the Toledo and northwest Ohio region to slow the spread of COVID-19.

This grassroots community initiative's goal is to vaccinate 70% of the community using a variety of ways to get the word out about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines, with a special emphasis on reaching out to those most vulnerable in marginalized communities. Currently, the combined vaccination rate of Lucas and Wood Counties is above the average rate in the state.

In a historic move, Savage and hundreds of leaders from government, healthcare, education, nonprofit, and religious communities united to work in partnership with Toledo-Lucas County Public Health and Wood County Public Health. Organizers and volunteers met with Governor Mike DeWine, Senator Sherrod Brown, and Senator Rob Portman.

The V Project used a variety of methods to reach the northwest Ohio community including billboards, radio, and television spots that provide education on the vaccine; pin and wristband giveaways to those who have been vaccinated so that they can spread the word; and educational webinars and Facebook live events with religious leaders who are trusted in their communities and others active in the vaccination effort. The V Project worked in conjunction with providers to develop strategy on getting the vaccines to the people in creative ways such as walk-in clinics in neighborhoods, free transportation to clinics, and phone banking and neighborhood canvassing to make residents aware of clinics. A "Vaccinathon," a 42-hour mass vaccination event is scheduled for this weekend.

V Project connected businesses to vaccine providers. A partial list of those participating in the initiative include:

- Businesses—Dana, Owens Corning, The Andersons, First Solar, and Owens Illinois
- Healthcare Institutions—ProMedica, Mercy Health, University of Toledo Medical Center, McLaren St. Luke's Hospital, Wood County Hospital, and Toledo Clinic
- Nonprofits—United Way, Area Office on Aging, YMCA, YWCA, Lucas County Library System, and Toledo Art Museum
- Schools—University of Toledo, Bowling Green State University, Lourdes University, and nearly every public, religious, and private school in Wood and Lucas counties
- Government—Toledo Mayor's Office, county commissioners, Toledo-Lucas County Public Health and Wood County Public Health, and Rep. Marcy Kaptur
- Faith Leaders—Toledo Catholic Diocese, Islamic Center, Jewish Federation, independent suburban and central city churches, and Hindu Temple

Innovative Ideas is a new feature from the Ohio Department of Health highlighting ways providers and organizations are encouraging COVID-19 vaccinations. You can find more featured examples on the Ohio Department of Health's Innovative Ideas page at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/healthcare-providers-and-local-health-districts/innovative-ideas>.

If you are interested in hosting your own clinic, the Ohio Department of Health has a toolkit for businesses and organizations available at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination-program/businesses-and-organizations>. This toolkit contains a collection of resources vaccine providers and Ohio employers and organizations can consider using to build partnerships across the state to offer convenient vaccinations to their employees and members.

All Ohioans age 16 and older are currently eligible to be vaccinated. Ohioans can find additional vaccination opportunities and schedule appointments by visiting gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov or by calling 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). Walk-in appointments are available at many providers statewide. Anyone with questions regarding COVID-19 vaccination within the state of Ohio can learn more at coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine.

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