

STUDENTS TAKE ACTION

PROJECT Citizen



Providing Emergency Care

In 2005 officials in Iron County, Missouri, opened a 24-hour critical care facility to treat emergency patients. The center provides sorely needed services in a county whose only hospital had closed several years earlier. The new emergency care center was made possible in part by the efforts of local students who convinced a nonprofit foundation to make a sound business decision based on local need.

Community Connection Like many other people in their community, students participating in the Project Citizen program in Mr. Don Barzowski's government class were concerned about the lack of a hospital in their area. "The lack of emergency care in Iron County affects everyone," said one student. The students decided to work on getting support for a new critical care facility.

Taking Action Working with other groups, students contacted local, county, state, and federal government officials to gain support for funding a new facility. The students also gathered data to see how the absence of a hospital affected the area. When the state's largest foundation for hospital funding held public forums to discuss a new facility, the students attended, prepared with a detailed presentation. The teens noted that Iron County had the fourth highest accident rate in Missouri. With no local ambulance service or urgent care facility, it took between 32 and 50 minutes to travel to the nearest hospital. When the foundation agreed to give \$900,000 to help fund a new facility, it cited the presentation by Mr. Barzowski's students as a major influence on its decision.



Students in Iron County, Missouri, helped bring a critical care facility like this one to their community.

go.hrw.com

Project Citizen

KEYWORD: SZ7 CH17

SERVICE LEARNING

1. What steps did the students take to gather support for their idea?
2. Why do you think the Iron County students were able to convince the foundation to help fund a new critical care facility?