

A Summer With Saul's Light

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This Summer as an intern for Saul's Light in New Orleans, Louisiana, I've had the opportunity to learn and understand the importance of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and its relevance to Reproductive Justice. Saul's Light is a grassroots organization committed to supporting NICU infants and bereaved families in Louisiana by providing financial, emotional, and infant support through their outreach programs and initiatives. NICU awareness is crucial because not only are there disparities within healthcare but there are many aspects of Maternal and Child

Health and the NICU that are overlooked by society.

During this internship, I've developed a deeper understanding of the different needs that NICU infants and families have, whether that is learning to cope with infant loss, accessing community resources, or finding the financial means to care for their baby. I believe there should be more awareness around the NICU, and the hardships families experience because admitting your child into the NICU can be a very stressful and terrifying period for families to go through. I admire the work of this organization because of their dedication to supporting and making an impact in the lives of families, parents, and babies.

As part of the work, I've been doing with Saul's Light in the past few months, I took part in organizing a list of community resources by Parish in Louisiana for families and parents in need of food pantries, diaper banks, housing, domestic violence support centers, etc. to be shared amongst members within the community. These resources have helped many individuals in need to better care for themselves and their families. Aside from that, I've also put together graphics that represent the demographics of families Saul's Light has supported which gives us a better understanding of which groups are in most need of resources and the number of individuals and families Saul's Light has served over the course of time. Finally, I've also been in the process of creating infographics and bookmarks to educate families and parents about topics such as coping with grief & infant loss, perinatal mental health, preterm birth rates in Louisiana, and the importance of breastfeeding and donor milk for premature babies.

This internship, as well as my supervisor Kimberly Novod, have fueled my passion for Maternal and Child Health. I am grateful to have interned for an organization that is as dedicated to this work as I am, and I can't wait to continue interning for Saul's Light this next term. I look forward to growing and expanding my knowledge within this field and to continue my journey in fighting for Reproductive Justice."