Introduction
The Health Design Lab is an interdisciplinary space that offers the unique opportunity to apply design thinking in healthcare.

Objective of Internship
This summer, I focused on applying the design thinking methodology to understand and address obstacles facing Kensington, Philadelphia: “the center of America’s opioid crisis.”

Work profile
• Worked with two Philadelphia organizations to launch a 6-week health & nutrition program.
• Organized community engagement events in Kensington.
• Created documentary to give voice to the Kensington community.

Reflection
• We collaborated with two local Philadelphia organizations to co-create Recipe for Health, a six-week health and nutrition education program in Kensington, for 50+ residents.
• Twice a week, we brought together Kensington residents and educated about the importance of food access, behavioral health, exercise, and family relations.
• I was able to experience the design process by the constant feedback, reflection, discussion, and implementation of changes to our program throughout the summer.

Looking ahead
• I plan to pursue medicine and will move forward equipped with a design thinking framework to bring “health beyond the hospital walls” and into communities.

Questions
• How do we truly understand the obstacles that communities face in an unbiased manner?
• How do we best empower local communities to make health and wellbeing related changes?

Conclusion
Empathy is the heart of design thinking. By listening to residents, community leaders, and organizations within a community, we can work together to solve complex health issues.

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