

Minding the health insurance gap



Three teams were chosen to present their solutions to a panel of state lawmakers.

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What's the best way to provide health insurance to 400,000 Virginians who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but too little to purchase their own insurance? That was the challenge facing about 200 JMU students from multiple majors in the College of Health and Behavioral Studies and the College of Business during the fourth annual Health Policy Summit.

While state lawmakers have been grappling with the dilemma for

years, the students were tasked with developing solutions in 45 minutes. And since the Virginia General Assembly has repeatedly voted against expanding Medicaid to cover the gap, the students were barred from using Medicaid expansion as an option.

Social work professor Laura Trull, an organizer of the summit, said the students learn to appreciate the strengths and breadth of each others' disciplines, adding, "It is impressive how they find a way to work with people... and face the problem head-on."