

# Obamacare Deploys Martial Artist, 'My Drunk Kitchen' Chef

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Photograph by Andrew Harrer/Bloomberg

Volunteer Tony Hausner, left, assists an enrollee arriving to a health insurance education and enrollment event in Silver Spring, Maryland, on Dec. 7, 2013.

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Backers of Obamacare, looking to build interest among young people, have hit on a new way of selling health insurance: An endorsement from a mixed martial arts fighter who has bragged about the taste of his opponents' blood after a bout.

There's also a message from a tipsy chef.

Mixed martial arts fighter Adam Ward and Hannah Hart, a comedian who hosts a weekly YouTube series in which she cooks while intoxicated, are among the irreverent social media figures that supporters of the president's Affordable Care Act have turned to in the hope of enrolling young people in the health care law's online insurance marketplaces.

Add another voice as well: Today retired NBA star [Magic Johnson joined in with a post on the White House blog](#).

Getting covered, Johnson says, "saved my life."

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In the first three months of open enrollment, only about 24 percent of the 2.2 million people who signed up for private health plans through insurance exchanges were 18-to-34-year-olds. White House officials say they expect more young people to sign up closer to the March 31 deadline to avoid the health law's financial penalty for going without insurance.

The White House is concentrating on enrolling younger, healthy people to assure that the insurance pools aren't skewed to chronically ill people.

[Bloomberg's Emma Fidel has written](#) of the difficulty of recruiting the young "invincibles."

Ward and Hart will be part of the roster for a six-hour [YouTube event today starting at 3 pm New York time](#).

Hart, who has 935,000 subscribers on her YouTube channel, hosts a web video series called [My Drunk Kitchen](#).

[Ward, in a web video describing the aftermath of a fight, once said](#), "All you can taste and smell is iron from blood being all over you."

Content from the event will also be cut into short clips that can be promoted through social media, says Peter Lee, executive director of Covered California, the state's insurance exchange, which is leading organization of the campaign.

A short clip from an interview with Ward, for example, might later be promoted through Twitter and Facebook messages from skateboard stars to their followers, Lee says. "One of the nice things about social media is you can really target demographics very well, in looking at who has followers in the age demographics we're looking at," he explains.

A broader social media campaign, backed by 17 state exchanges, the federal agency responsible for healthcare.gov and the advocacy group Enroll America has been underway since Dec. 11. Pop singer Adam Levine, dubbed "The Sexiest Man Alive" by People magazine, and rapper T.I. are among the celebrities who have promoted enrollment through social media messages.

A web video released this week for the campaign features actress [Aisha Tyler](#) pummeled in a series of accidents after refusing such safety devices as a helmet for football, a mouth guard for boxing and a seat belt for driving.

Through Jan. 14, the "Tell a Friend – Get Covered" campaign had generated messages to a combined total of 41.3 million followers on social media websites, according to Lee. The social media messages had been re-tweeted or shared about 2,000 times and generated slightly more than 28,000 clicks to the campaign's website, she says.

Lee says the campaign is intended to begin ramping up this month, both as the enrollment deadline draws closer and as college students return to classes from the holidays. "It's the time for young people to be engaged in looking ahead," Lee says.



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