

Project Title: An “Ever Better” approach at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry to support career and professional identity formation in marginalized students.

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Background/Significance:

A diverse health care workforce is required to address the health care needs of a diverse population. Medicine has failed to provide inclusive learning environments that promote equity-based care. As we prepare to form the professional identities of increasingly diverse medical students, our educational systems are mired in historical racism, misogyny, xenophobia and socio-economic privilege. Thankfully, we have seen an evolution in the attention of many academic institutions with regards to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in the training of healthcare providers. Through structural and individual work, the URSMD has made significant strides in creating supportive learning environments. However, recent institutional data has shown that our minoritized medical students continue to suffer disproportionately from inequity in academic accolades, career development satisfaction, and matching within competitive subspecialties.

Purpose/Objectives:

The objective of my IAP is to envision, implement and sustain a 4-year longitudinal cohort program that will

- Support the development of our minoritized medical students’ professional identities by:
 - Providing structured support to demonstrate academic competency in standardized testing
 - Exploring meaningful and impactful research
 - Developing micro skills such as organizational competencies and financial literacy
 - Illuminating hidden curriculums present in medical education environments
 - Strategically exposing medical students to competitive specialties
 - Offering culturally responsive mental health supports
- Identify and train a “faculty academy” to provide foundational elements of professional identity formation for marginalized medical students. Important to the academy, will be the parallel development of a robust communication infrastructure to disseminate priorities, collate group input, and share resources.
- Promote faculty development through nationally recognized curricula, including:
 - Center of Improved Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER) Training
 - Association of College and University Training: Teaching for Equitable Learning

Approach/Methods:

This program will be built sequentially over 4-years. I plan to:

- Identify and assemble relevant partners in the faculty academy; such as mentors, course directors, clerkship directors and community partners
- Utilize institutional experts for specific micro curricular elements
- Identify mental health services specific for demographic needs of our students
- Explore and secure financial support for staffing, administrative and course needs
- Initiate a data base of student performance and outcomes

Outcomes/Results:

- The primary outcomes: development of this holistic program to support minoritized medical students and the creation of a faculty academy trained in culturally responsive mentorship for the medical students.
- Secondary outcomes: Satisfaction with the medical school’s educational environment, career development, and professional identity formation as assessed through annual national surveys. Standardized testing and NRMP Match data and institutional culture and climate surveys

Discussion/Conclusion:

Students from minoritized backgrounds face unique obstacles to success in medical school. Failure to support these students in a holistic manner will increase the incidence of academic and professional failures. These failures will perpetuate a health care environment that does not meet the needs of our diverse communities. It is essential that our institution invest in this work in order to accomplish our educational and service missions.