

Collaborating to Strengthen Health Careers Pipelines at UC Davis

Arra Jane Concepcion

The Center for a Diverse Healthcare Workforce's (CDHW) first Community of Practice (COP) convened key stakeholders working to advance educational opportunity and access to health careers at the University of California, Davis. From May 2017 to March 2018, members of the COP crossed disciplines and campuses to engage staff and faculty from medicine, nursing, undergraduate pre-health, and K-12 outreach to align and strengthen UC Davis-wide efforts to promote a diverse healthcare workforce to advance health equity.

UC Davis and UC Davis Health house several programs and departments that advance diversity and inclusion among their student bodies. Pipeline programs are designed to provide academic, financial, social, and emotional support to minority students interested in pursuing a healthcare profession. Pipeline programs are vital for addressing the primary care shortage across the nation as well as workforce diversity needs. Although these UC Davis programs and departments share the same passion and commitment to furthering diversity, they often work independently of each other.

The Community of Practice created a space for current and potential partners to connect, share best practices, and build linkages across programs that diversify health careers pathways. Five teams were created, bringing together staff from various programs to design and implement collaborative projects. Through these projects, the COP teams developed strategies to

engage students across the full spectrum of the pipeline, from underrepresented in medicine or disadvantaged backgrounds, ensuring a warm-handoff between programs that previously worked independently.

Together with the Center for a Diverse Healthcare Workforce, members of each team met monthly to solidify connections and working relationships between partners committed to strengthening health careers pipelines at UC Davis. These efforts enabled programs to establish shared pathways and serve students more effectively, especially those who too frequently fall through the cracks of a workforce development system that cannot afford to lose them. On March 19th, the COP hosted the event "Collaborating to Strengthen Health Careers Pipelines at UC Davis" wherein each team presented their project findings and the ways in which each of their programs are stronger because of collaboration with similar programs at UC Davis.

KEY MESSAGES

From Dr. Tonya Fancher, Associate Dean of Workforce Innovation and Community Engagement, UC Davis School of Medicine

BETTER CARE: "[Diversity] gives more options for patients. If you have the choice to see a doctor or a nurse or a psychiatrist or a dentist that looks like you, you're going to make that choice. We ought to be able to create a workforce that allows for that choice. And when that happens, those folks get better care."

BETTER ACCESS TO CARE: "Having a diverse workforce leads to better access to care. We know that the folks who choose to practice in the areas that are the hardest to practice in — which usually means they have the fewest clinicians, the fewest nurses — that's where students of color choose to go."

“The challenge we face is not that our students are unprepared for college. Our challenge is that the colleges are not prepared for our students.”

- Jim Collins, Dean of Sciences & Allied Health at Sacramento City College

About the Center

The mission of the Center for a Diverse Healthcare Workforce at UC Davis is to promote best practices nationally and challenge the healthcare field to advance diversity in the workforce through:

- Community-informed research
- Innovative communications and storytelling
- Communities of practice

Our research agenda focuses on:

- Nontraditional pathways to health careers
- Admissions policies and practices
- Creating an inclusive educational environment
- Provider placement and efforts to address maldistribution

COP TEAM PROJECTS

Team A focused on “Building Linkages Between MESA, Community College, and Medical School.” In collaboration with UC Davis School of Medicine and Los Rios Community College District, MESA (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) sought to invite its students—specifically those who are underrepresented in medicine—to explore careers in medicine.

Team B looked at “Restructuring the UC Davis Saturday Academy.” For almost 20 years, the Saturday Academy called upon UC Davis medical students to mentor high schools with populations not well represented in the medical professions. Members of Team B identified the strengths and gaps of the Saturday Academy program and hopes to restructure its processes to maximize its impact.

Team C’s project, “Charting a Course for Diversity & Inclusion at the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing,” sought to make recommendations for prioritizing diversity and inclusion efforts within the School of Nursing and identifying committees and offices to oversee diversity and inclusion work.

Team D explored ways of “Reshaping the Approach to Health Careers Advising at UC Davis.” Team D met with UC Davis undergraduate students from communities not well represented in medical professions to find that advisors discouraged students to pursue their desired career track. Team D created a series of training workshops for pre-health advisors to provide information for support and alternative pathways to health professions.

Team E recognized that many UC Davis healthcare career pipeline programs existed in silos, making it difficult for students to navigate from one pipeline program to the next. Team E worked on “Mapping the Linkages among Health Career Pathway Programs,” specifically to encourage connection, build working relationships, and share resources among programs working to advance diversity within the healthcare workforce.

Contact us

For more information, visit us online at:

www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/workforce-diversity

hs-cdhw@ucdavis.edu

(916) 703-2472