Summer Urban Health Fellowship: Improving Our Communities' Health One Student At A Time

Wilmington, United States
Gilberto Granados

Year Founded: 1991
Organization type: hybrid
Project Stage: Scaling
Budget: $10,000 - $50,000
Website: http://harboruclasuhf.weebly.com

Education
Mentorship
Youth development
Youth leadership

Project Summary

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

A health professional pipeline program in which family medicine residents, medical, college and high school students, engage our community to improve health and well-being. Students engage in community-based research, health fairs, shadow physicians and form long-term mentorship relationships.

WHAT IF - Inspiration: Write one sentence that describes a way that your project dares to ask, "WHAT IF?"

What if 95% of inner city high school students graduated, went on to attend professional schools and returned to work in their communities?

About Project

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

Ethnic minorities are 25% of the nation’s population, but make up only 6% of its health professionals. Minority communities often experience less access and lower quality health care that is culturally unmatched. Although minority physicians are more likely to practice in underserved communities, pre-professional health students often lack the preparation and support to thrive in college, enter professional schools, and fulfill their dreams.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

The fellowship aims to bolster the pipeline of under-represented minority professionals by connecting UCLA/CDU medical students with college and inner-city high school youth in a rigorous internship in an under-resourced community. They learn about health disparities, shadow physicians, get academic seminars while organizing health fairs, and providing health education in the community. Students present their community-based research at scientific and community forums. They provide resources to tackle some of the challenges facing our communities.
Family medicine residents, medical, college, and high school students form a mentorship chain. We aim to inspire students towards the highest level of education with a sense of social justice.

**Impact: How does it Work**

**Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.**

Imagine doctors and medical students talking with college and high school students of the hurdles they overcame educationally and their impassioned commitment to service to the poor. Imagine workshops on MCAT prep, mock interviews, college prep and learning skills. Imagine high school and college students presenting on social and human rights issues. Imagine students working as teams to plan health fairs, community health talks and shadowing physicians. Imagine students conducting scientific community based research on health issues and presenting results at a public forum and scientific poster fair. All these things actually occur during the fellowship and serve as launching points for long lasting mentorship relationships.

**Impact: What is the impact of the work to date? Also describe the projected future impact for the coming years.**

Over 180 medical students, 160 undergraduates and 180 high school students have participated in the program. Greater than 78% of them are underrepresented minorities. Over 180 medical students, 160 undergraduates and 180 high school students have participated in the program. Greater than 78% of them are underrepresented minorities. Greater than 78% of them are underrepresented minorities. Drs. Olmos and Soto, both from Wilmington, were former participants. A college student, Alondra reflects, “In this program not only did we advocate for health issues…but we all had the opportunity to help one another regardless of the students’ stage of education, which I found highly empowering”. Dr. Shamasunder, faculty at UCSF remembers, “The summer program changed the way I think about health … my fellowship in global health strives to put into place the experiential learning that I benefitted from so many years ago”. Most inspirational however, is the ubiquitous high school student question, “Can I do this program again next year?”

**Spread Strategies: Moving forward, what are the main strategies for scaling impact?**

Growth is aimed in multiple directions. First, we would like to strengthen and maintain the mentoring intensity throughout the year with student specific support and guidance. Second, we would like to expand the program to include younger students and parents. Ultimately, this effort supports families and communities in their struggle to advocate for health and education equity. Lastly, we would like to develop a formal mentoring curriculum that any organization can implement in their own community.

**Sustainability**

**Financial Sustainability Plan: What is this solution’s plan to ensure financial sustainability?**

Our annual budget is about $50,000. Most of the costs are medical and undergraduate student stipends, which are about $3000/medical student and $700/undergraduate. Some of the costs are supported by funds from Supervisor Don Knabe, UCLA-Geffen School of Medicine, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, and Molina Medical Centers HMO. These are long-term, stable sustainers.

**Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?**

While there are many health professional pipeline programs, no other program has the breadth of participants that spans the educational trajectory from high school student to medical doctors in specialty training. This team of students and health professionals allows for a unique mentoring chain for role modeling, counseling and support that serves to motivate and empower all involved. Family medicine residents mentor medical students who mentor college students who mentor high school students. Many students return as medical students/doctors having participated as premedical students.

**Team**

**Founding Story**

In 1991, through epidemiological research Harbor General Hospital staff realized that many patients utilizing the Emergency Department were coming from the community of Wilmington. The department of Family Medicine then made inroads into this community, establishing a family health center and establishing what today is the Summer Urban Health Fellowship. Initially it introduced medical students from UCLA/CDU SOM to inner city family medicine. In response to the decreased numbers of under-represented minorities entering professional schools with dismantling of Affirmative Action in California education, the program expanded to include high school and later, undergraduate college students making it the pipeline program it is today.

**Team**

Our team consists of family medicine faculty and residents who ensure a robust experience in research, health policy, community advocacy and offer mentorship in healthcare and the social/political factors of health. The medical students guide aspiring premedical and high school students on their journey into health professional schools. Community members educate us on their resources and needs. Getting parents more involved is the next step.

**About You**

**First Name**
Gilberto

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About Your Project

Organization Name

How long has your organization been operating?

Project

Organization Country

CA, Wilmington

Country where this project is creating social impact

CA, Wilmington

What awards or honors has the project received?

Funding: How is your project financially supported?

Friends and family, Individuals, Businesses, Regional government, National government, Other.

Supplemental

Describe your partnership.

On the academic side, we partner with: 1. Los Angeles Unified School District with Gardena and Banning High Schools.
2. DGSOM/CDU SOM.
3. PRIME at DGSOM
4. UCLA School of Dentistry

On the community side we partner with:
1. Instituto de Educacion Popular del Sur de California(IDEPSCA) a community advocacy organization working with day laborers.
2. Little Company of Mary Hospital
3. Robert F. Kennedy Institute of Family Medicine and Community Health
4. Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation
5. Gardena High School Healthy Start
6. Adobe Community Affordable Housing

We have worked with these partners for at least 5 years and some for over 20 years. We work together to bring this program to fruition

How does your project enhance community engagement for UCLA Health and/or the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA?

We introduce students from the DGSOM at UCLA/CDU to become one with the community to witness their struggles and work to learn and empower one another. We seek to take public medical education and connect it with the needs of our communities.

Source URL: https://www.changemakers.com/discussions/entries/summer-urban-health-fellowship