Priming the Pipeline: Lessons Learned from the Tour for Diversity in Medicine (T4D)

Alden M Landry MD MPH
Co-Director - Tour for Diversity in Medicine
Faculty Assistant Director, Office of Diversity Inclusion and Community Partnership, Harvard Medical School
Overview

• Background
• The Tour
• The Research
• Lessons Learned
• Conclusions
• Suggested Actions
“Unless the current trend is reversed, our country will see a growing ethnic and racial disconnect between those who receive care and those who provide that care”

- Former U.S. Surgeon General Regina Benjamin, MD
The Pipeline

Primary Education
Secondary Education
College
Medical School
Physicians

Physician Workforce

Health Outcomes
Mission: Tour for Diversity in Medicine

To educate, cultivate and inspire future physicians, **dentists** and **pharmacists** of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds by forming local connections in order to fulfill a national need.
Tour for Diversity in Medicine: The Bus
Tour for Diversity in Medicine: Mentors
The Tour
Tour Outcomes

- 37 Stops
- 26 States
- 2000+ Students served
Beyond the Bus

- High School Program
- Web presence
  - Webinars
  - Blog
  - Resource Guide
  - Social Media
- Tiered Mentorship Model
  - Professional Development and Success
  - Internal Development Program
- The Research
The Research

Research Objectives of T4D

- Identify challenges of URiM students interested in pursuing a career in the health professions
- Identify concerns of URiM students interested in pursuing a career in the health professions
- Assess the impact of a 1 day intervention pre-health program
Qualitative Study

• Objective:
  ◦ Identify perceived barriers among undergraduate URiM students to pursuing education and careers in medicine or dentistry
  ◦ Identify possible factors contributing to the leakiness of the pipeline.
Schools

September 2012
Georgia State University
Fisk University
Kentucky State University
Indiana University Bloomington
Central State University
University of Michigan Dearborn

February 2013
The University of Texas at El Paso
The University of Texas at San Antonio
Texas A&M International University
Texas A&M at Corpus Christi
Prairie View A&M University
Texas Southern University

TOUR FOR DIVERSITY IN MEDICINE
TO EDUCATE, INSPIRE AND CULTIVATE
## Focus Group Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group % (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.4 years (median)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61% (50) Black/African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31% (25) Latino/Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2% (2) Caucasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% (1) Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3% (3) African</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% (1) Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21% (17) Freshmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23% (19) Sophomore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25% (21) Junior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24% (20) Senior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7% (5) Post-Baccalaureate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Group Participants

Career Interest
- Medicine: 74%
- Dentistry: 9%
- Pharmacy: 3%
- Nursing: 6%
- Other: 6%

Major
- Biology: 71%
- Chemistry: 4%
- Other: 25%
## Focus Group Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Focus Group % (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timing of Decision to Enter Health Profession</td>
<td>52% (43) Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16% (13) High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First in Family to Attend College</td>
<td>38% (31) First in Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Family Member in Health Profession</td>
<td>44% (36) with a family member in the health profession (50% Nursing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in SMDEP</td>
<td>7% (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Themes

- Inadequate Institutional Support and Resources
- Limited Personal Resources and Social/Family Conflict
- Lack of Access to Information, Mentoring and Advising
- Societal Barriers
Inadequate Institutional Support and Resources

- **Academic Success**

  “So my GPA is lower because I had other things. And maybe my A- on paper, and A is an A. But my A- to me is a little bit more because I was running on two hours of sleep. And somebody else who never worked—had to work for anything and their parents paid for all their college, it’s their GPA is obviously going to be higher because all they had to focus on was school.”
There a lot of pressure on my family—on my side of the family because I’m the first generation to go to school. And so my parents are from Mexico and they didn’t get them an education. And so, they really do push me to succeed and sometimes, really nerve-wracking"
Lack of Access to Information, Mentoring and Advising

- Mentoring and Advising

“I think that just more guidance, as in here in the—in this campus. Just more guidance as of what to do, from freshman to senior, undergrad, MCAT and everything because I feel kind of lost. I know I want to be there, but I just don’t know how to get there. I know I have to get good grades. I know—but, basically what I’m doing now is just studying my butt off a lot and I mean. Just something concerns me is just guidance”
Lack of Access to Information, Mentoring and Advising

- Mentoring and Advising

“I’m just saying if people knew at a younger age instead of some ways in high school... They’re not telling us that the different stuff we can do in college.”
Societal Barriers

- Work Life Balance (Gender Specific)
- Uncertainty

“…but there are students every year who don’t get matched. And they try the next year and they still don’t get matched. And then where do you go? What happens if you never get matched, I guess? Because that’s a possibility and you don’t go through residency, so you’re stuck with an M.D. who can’t practice medicine”
Conclusions

- Identified some of the challenges students face when pursuing a career in the health professions.
- To improve the pipeline we must address these concerns.
- Similar challenges have been described at different points in the health professional and STEM pipeline.
Suggested Actions

- Support “small batch organizations” and combine efforts/share resources
- Family education early is key
- Mentoring: You can’t be what you can’t see
- Support policy and legislation that offers resources to disadvantaged students
Like Us!

@tour4diversity

Tour4Diversity

Tour4Diversity

Tour4Diversity