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THE STANFORD-EAST PALO ALTO HEALTH CAREER COLLABORATIVE (HCC): A COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERSHIP AIMED AT INCREASING URM STUDENTS' SENSE OF BELONGING IN MEDICINE

The current composition of our healthcare workforce is not representative of our patient population. This reality aids in the perpetuation of our country's rampant health inequalities as our physicians are not fully in tune with many patient's day-to-day realities. Efforts must be undertaken to lessen this disconnect.

In an effort to achieve equity, the Stanford-East Palo Alto Academy chapter of the Health Career Collaborative was established in 2018 to create inroads to medicine for high school students from backgrounds underrepresented in the current medical landscape. By empowering youth with mentors, many whom hold shared lived experiences, the HCC seeks to increase underrepresented students feelings of belongingness in academic spaces and in medicine at large.

Pre and post-program surveys were implemented to assess the program's impact on participants' sense of connection to a mentor in healthcare, the presence of a plan toward achieving their career goals, and their perceived sense of belonging in medicine.

Preliminary data suggests that upon completion, a greater number of participants state the presence of a mentor in healthcare and acknowledge having a more solidified plan to achieve their career goals. Additionally, data suggests that upon completion, participants feel an enhanced sense of belonging in medicine, a metric that has been shown to be tied to long-term follow through in other fields.

Given this data, future work should be invested in exploring mentorship and career exposure programs for underrepresented youth as a potential vehicle for making our workforces more diverse, equitable, and representative for all.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

**HEALTH CAREER COLLABORATIVE & EAST PALO ALTO
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