Diversity & Inclusion Mini-Grants
“Social Determinants of Health Speaker and Workshop for the Biomedical Symposium”

PROGRAM/PROJECT OBJECTIVES: To support a speaker Dr. Minoli Perera, PharmD, PhD who is from Northwestern University and is an alumna of UTHSC’s PharmD/PhD program

Dr. Perera’s research involves looking at African America specific ancestry in understanding response to warfarin and the pharmacogenomics of other drugs. She was a keynote speaker and we also held a panel in which she was a part of that attendees could ask questions of career development including her diverse perspectives as a person of color. We also had another speaker from UT/West Clinic who spoke about diversity and was a part of the translational medicine career panel Dr. Gregory Vidal, MD, PhD.

This money was greatly appreciated and was put to good use in helping us carry out this large event and making sure that SDH and diversity were highlighted as highly important. There were many great discussions on how we can better serve our diverse community and make our research applicable to black, indigenous and people of color.

We hope that in future events we may continue to highlight issue that is important now more than ever.
**Austin Dalgo, MD**  
**Pediatrics, Palliative Care**  
**College of Medicine**  
Awarded $2000

**“Fostering Skills for Addressing Social and Clinical Determinants of Health”**

**PROGRAM/PROJECT OBJECTIVES:** The objectives and outcomes in the project entitled “Fostering Skills for Addressing Social and Clinical Determinants of Health” were as follows:

- Explain how social and clinical determinants of health combine to shape the health outcomes of diverse populations.
- Identify and intervene in their own practice and with colleagues when unconscious bias produces disparities in the quality of care for stigmatized populations.
- Demonstrate narrative competence as a means of providing care that is responsive to cultural differences.
- Implement cultural humility/intelligence in clinical interactions.
- Apply empathy as a practice that supports family-centered care.

**Introduction and Background**
We held 4 weekly workshops titled, "First Do No Harm: Understanding Cultural Bias" on June 7th, June 14th, June 21st, and June 28th, 2021.

Over 50 people enrolled in the 4-week bloc registration, and we averaged 20 people per session.

The 4 weekly session topics were:
1. How Unconscious Bias and Social Determinants Produce Disparities
2. Panel Discussion of Latinx Experiences in Healthcare
3. Panel Discussion of Rural Experiences in Healthcare
4. Practices of Narrative Competence and Empathy

Each participant was given the opportunity to take a 20-minute Cultural Intelligence (CQ) survey that provided immediate feedback with a pdf report from their answers. Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is a person’s capability to function effectively in a variety of cultural contexts - both internationally and domestically. In our own cultures, we usually have an idea of what's going on around us because we have a wealth of information, most of which is subconscious, that helps us make sense of what we experience and observe. When we interact with individuals who have a
different cultural background, the same cues may mean something entirely different. CQ results were divided into 4 domains: drive, knowledge, strategy, and action. Each person filling out the survey got a score out of 100 in these domains and the sub-domains under each category. Furthermore, the results were tabulated at the end of the document to give the participant an overall profile of their answers and results. The document then allowed space for each participant to create a “Development Plan” based on their strengths and weaknesses. Finally, the document categorized the participants’ answers into cultural value orientations and showed where each set of answers fell on the spectrum of certain cultural values such as short-term v. long-term planning, being v. doing, etc. The cultural value orientations can be grouped into cultural clusters where you’re likely to find a significant presence of a specific cluster of cultural values. The clusters below represent the five domestic clusters as broadly defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Results
In terms of data, 28 people took the first assessment prior to the first session, but only five took the assessment a second time after the 4 sessions. There was an average of 15-20 participants in each session. Some data points:

Every participant who took the assessment the second time had an overall average improvement in their scores across the four primary capabilities of CQ.

- The average improvement was 6.65%.
  - For CQ Drive, the average change was a slight decline in the scores (-0.60%). But, for the other three areas, there was an average improvement:
    - CQ Knowledge: an average increase of 15.2%
    - CQ Strategy: an average increase of 5.6%
    - CQ Action: an average increase of 6.4%

- Given the small number of participants who retook the assessment it is difficult to extrapolate, but the signal of the data with improvement in ¾ domains and an overall improvement in scores suggests that the symposium had a positive effect on cultural intelligence scores.
PROGRAM/PROJECT OBJECTIVES: The objectives were to inform pregnant Black mothers of pregnancy complications, connect doulas to pregnant and postpartum Black mothers and to advocate for Black Maternal Health.

Advocacy: In July 2019 I presented my research thesis, “Do Physicians Think Pregnancy Apps Can Reduce Pregnancy Complications to Combat the Rising Black Maternal Mortality Crisis?” as a graduation requirement for my Master’s in Health Informatics and Information Management. Although the 2019 Black Maternal Health Conference was cancelled last year, I attended the Black Birthing Summit in Rochester, New York in October 2019. I presented my research poster to conference attendees and met doctors, doulas, midwives, nonprofit advocates and city leaders working to reduce the disparities in Black Maternal Health in the state of New York. I learned about the methods New York state was developing to address the Black Maternal Health crisis. The total costs of the travel, conference registration, research poster and hotel was $599.43.

Education: In January 2019 I met Kristin Mejia-Green, certified birth/postpartum doula and lactation specialist, of Homeland Heart Birth and Wellness Collective and attended Nashville’s first community training for doulas. In the training I learned techniques that doulas use to comfort the laboring mother, postpartum complications and assessments, risks of pregnancy/birth and advocacy strategies. I was interviewed by NPR reporter, Damon Mitchell, and shared how I believed that community doulas can combat the rising Black maternal mortality rate in Tennessee by teaching pregnant women about signs of pregnancy complications, advocating during child birthing and
supporting during the postpartum period. Also, I listened to the birth stories of mothers as they shared past adverse births and complications.

**Connection with Doulas:**
Connecting doulas with pregnant and postpartum Black mothers was essential to the success of my project. Instead of using American Press and Label for print material and media, I used Times Media to print flyers, posters and cards. The total costs for the print materials was $400 and included 25 13X19 posters, 1000 postcard flyers and rack cards and 500 business cards. In addition, the flyers and rack cards have been posted to Instagram and Facebook. The flyers have been distributed and posted at Metro Health department locations and two Neighborhood Health clinics. I plan to continue to distribute the flyers and posters to more clinics and pregnant mothers as soon as clinics reopen. I’ve included copies of the flyers, posters, rack cards, the NPR story of the January Community Doula training, the Black Enterprise magazine story and pictures from my attendance of the Black Birthing Summit in Rochester, New York.

In conclusion, thank you for awarding me the Diversity and Inclusion grant. I’ve enjoyed this project and I will continue working to reduce Black maternal mortality.

Reference links:

Kathleen M. Kenwright, Ed.D. And Linda W. Pifer, Ph.D.,
Department of Diagnostic and Health Sciences
College of Health Professions
Awarded $2000

“Clinical Laboratory Sciences Conference for Minority High School Career Counselors: Recruiting Minority Students for Sustainable Careers in the Clinical Laboratory Sciences”

PROGRAM/PROJECT OBJECTIVES: The objectives and outcomes in the project entitled “Clinical Laboratory Sciences Conference for Minority High School Career Counselors” held on Friday, July 19, 2019 were as follows:

A. OBJECTIVES:

• To extend a helping hand to the most underserved high schools in our area in a concentrated attempt to help young people find solid, sustainable STEM careers;
• To help minority high school career counselors become aware of the opportunities offered by our medical laboratory science programs;
• To provide them with hands-on experiences to take back to their schools that would enable them to describe in detail what our programs are about;
• To show them the time and financial advantages of our relatively rapid “turnaround” programs;
• To build a closer ties with our high schools and communities from which we draw our students and
• To fulfill one of the major goals of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center by increasing our focus upon equity, diversity and minorities in education.
B. OUTCOME NARRATIVE: To ensure that we reached the individuals who would most benefit by the planned conference aimed at assisting minorities in need, we studied the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Chamber of Commerce date to locate the Zip code areas with the highest African-American high school enrollment, the lowest per capita income, the highest reported level of criminal activity, etc. Our worksheets are included in this report for your convenience. In addition, the counselors in these Zip codes were asked to estimate the highest income of the homes in these areas, which are also provided.

Next we obtained “best” contact information on the career counselors associated with those high schools and began issuing invitation letters along with a descriptive flyer that contained all information about the Conference which we planned for Friday, July 19, 2019. These were all dispersed by email with an RSVP requested. Reminders were sent as well two weeks before the date of the Conference.

A full-day’s activity was planned beginning with a continental breakfast-icebreaker where we got acquainted with the attendees. The entire day was complimentary to the counselors and there were no fees for parking, meals, etc. However, we only had 7 in attendance despite the fact that we received far more RSVP’s to the contrary. Some had unexpected events to attend to such as family emergencies and others simply forgot about the event even though we were careful to send reminders. We attributed much of this to the fact that this event was held during a time when school was not in session.

The ones who did attend provided very strongly positive comments about the conference and asked if we were planning to hold it again next year. Please see the following evaluations completed by the attendees. In the following section.

C. EFFECTIVENESS

The impression that we received from the attendees was that it was highly effective and that they had learned so much and had found the learning process in the laboratory very enjoyable. There’s no question that the laboratory exercises were a big “hit” with the counselors, and if we host something like this again, hands-on activities will definitely be a part of it. The fact that they wanted to know if there would be another one next year was very telling. This is where we really got to know the attendees and everyone had an enjoyable time performing the experiments.

D. SUSTAINABILITY

This conference gave us a huge boost toward making this kind of operation sustainable, in fact, we have already submitted two more grants aimed at 1. Assisting and recruiting African-American women (Alliance of Women Philanthropists) and 2. Assisting and recruiting ALL women who are financially lacking from Tennessee’s 12 community colleges to UTHSC for a very similar program (American Association of University Women). This will help them toward
solid sustainable careers and will also boost the enrollment here at UTHSC. More women in Tennessee need college degrees to become financially strong and independent.

Unfortunately, the AWP grant application was not funded. However, we have thought about bringing in high school science teachers instead of counselors and giving them the opportunity to see what excellent careers we have to offer.

E. PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:
The investigators plan to present this study to the faculty of the College of Health Professions in a format called ‘Share it’ where we discuss our academic efforts in many venues. This would fall under the category of both recruitment and community engagement and enlightenment and would serve the purpose of strengthening the bonds with our high school career counselors. We want to continually make them aware of the excellent career choices that we offer to Memphis young people and we need their input to guide youth at EVERY level of the socioeconomic scale to become aware of what we have to offer.

Regarding publications, we are thinking of preparing a manuscript for the Journal of Allied Health Sciences or the International Journal for Professional Educators.

F. BUDGET FUNDS EXPENDED: 100%  [Appendix A]

Summary of comments made by Counselors attending Conference:
- Loved the hands-on lab experiments! Wish my science teachers were here for this!
- I’m looking forward to the tour of Regional One clinical labs
- Everyone was so nice
- Please do this again next year
- I really was interested in looking at the cancer cells through the microscope
- Everything was organized so well

Finally, we thank you for the award of the grant funds. We believe that good was accomplished in that high school counselors are now much more aware of what we have to offer here at UTHSC in the Department of Diagnostic and Health Sciences. This in turn, will benefit minority students, whom we always welcome.
“Moving Forward for the Mission”

PROGRAM/PROJECT OBJECTIVES: The objectives and outcomes in the project entitled “Moving Forward for the Mission” were as follows:

The Moving Forward Committee was established in 2018 to assist the College of Dentistry in increasing our student population’s diversity. Not only to increase the underrepresented minority (URM) applicants to our college but also to have a plan to ensure their success. The initial goal for using grant funds was to have current students, faculty, and administration assist us with an on-campus symposium. The symposium’s objective was to raise awareness of the essential elements necessary to be a competitive applicant in the UTHSC College of Dentistry application pool. The event was planned to be open to prospective students, their parents, and college advisors and was scheduled for the Spring 2019 semester. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we could not host group activities on campus, so we were forced to find a Plan B.

While researching methods to attain the original goals we set forth, resource after resource, stated that developing relationships with these students early in their college studies is key to being a competitive dental college applicant. Connecting with Pre-professional Advisors at HBCUs and informing them what we are looking for in their students is also essential. URM applicants are prone to seek advice from individuals other than admissions personnel at professional schools, such as dental professionals in their community who have been out of dental school for a while. Competitive dental applicant metrics had changed quite a bit over the years, so the metrics may be very different than when these dentists entered dental school. Many URM applicants come to us with extremely low overall grade point averages (OGPA) and Dental Admissions Test (DAT) scores. There are many reasons for this problem: a lack of college preparatory courses at the high schools they attended. This lack of preparation is detrimental to their success in undergraduate school. When these students are placed into two or more science courses that include labs their first semester of college, they struggle. Undergraduate advisors often do not consider URM student's high school experience when placing them in classes. This is the first time most students have been out on their own and away from their friends and family. Spreading the course load to include summer and between term semesters, especially early in college, is one solution. All of this must be presented to the students and advisors before their undergraduate education. Many URM students do not have parents that graduated from college or a mentor to help guide them in their journey. Our focus was to make sure these students have a robust support system,
and if not, we can be that support system. Matching potential students with current faculty members or students who have been through similar journeys would make a world of difference in their self-confidence and understanding of the requirements needed to be accepted into dental school. Setting up virtual information sessions for URM applicants and advisors titled "Getting into Dental School 101" is one of the ways that we chose to educate them on how to be a competitive applicants. We began by sending out email messages to the advisors at Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) in the Southwest region of the United States to inform them of the dates and times for our virtual events. We also asked for their mailing addresses and sent them a cinch sack filled with UTHSC items such as a facial mask, disinfecting gel, ink pen, lanyard, floss, the most recent college magazine, and brochures with information about the programs offered at our college. These items were purchased with the money we received from the grant. We hoped advisors would remember UTHSC when advising their students on preparing for dental school. We also sent UTHSC backpacks filled with several marketing items to each student that attended the sessions. In Spring 2021, we set up sessions to assist URM students in completing their dental school applications. The centralized application most dental schools use for their admissions is daunting for many students. There is so much material they need to input and questions to answer. We again sent emails to the same HBCUs offering their students the "goodie bags" for attending. The informational sessions allowed us to begin cultivating these students to be competitive dental school applicants. They gave us the contact information needed to check in with them along the way.

The number of students attending the HBCUs that participated in the virtual presentations has increased. Still, it will be a year or two before we can evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts since many of the students who attended our virtual sessions were sophomores and will not be ready to apply to dental school until next year. We still have a portion of the materials we purchased with the grant funds and will continue using them for the same uses as before. Attached is a table showing our application numbers before we began the programs and after to show the increase in applicants from the HBCUs that participated in our virtual sessions.

Our results would have been very different had we not had the restrictions from COVID-19 preventing us from having events on campus. As soon as the restrictions are lifted, we plan to offer the on-campus symposium as the original proposal described.

The invoice for the items we sent to advisors and potential students is attached and totals 946.43.
**High School Guidance Counselor's Workshop**

**FOOD**

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**LAB SUPPLIES**

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**Giveaways**

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