

Family Medicine Updates



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STFM FOUNDATION LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT UNDERREPRESENTED IN MEDICINE

The STFM Foundation has launched a 2-year fundraising campaign to raise \$150,000 to support programs and scholarships for underrepresented in medicine (URM) students, residents, and new faculty. "We need a diverse and culturally competent workforce to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse patient population," said Campaign Chair Judy Washington, MD.

The Association of American Medical Colleges defines underrepresented in medicine as: "those racial and ethnic populations that are underrepresented in the medical profession relative to their numbers in the general population." While 1 in 8 Americans is African American, only 1 in 15 doctors is. And though 1 in 6 Americans identifies as Hispanic/Latino, only 1 in 20 doctors does. The percentages of medical school graduates by race and ethnicity have remained consistent over time. Whites (58.8%) and Asians (19.8%) continue to represent the largest cadre of medical school graduates, comprising more than three-quarters of medical students graduating in 2015. For the same year, only 5.7% of graduates were Black or African American and only 4.6% Hispanic or Latino. As family medicine resident Melissa Melendez, DO, explained, "I'm kind of alone out here in medicine."

Donations to the URM campaign will support scholarships for students to attend the Conference on Medical Student Education, scholarships for residents to attend the Faculty for Tomorrow Workshop, and scholarships for new faculty to attend the STFM Annual Spring Conference. The STFM Foundation also seeks to provide mentoring opportunities and fund innovative projects that contribute to a diverse family medicine workforce.

"How much richer would a medical department be if they had people of lots of different backgrounds and experiences informing the residency training process, informing how we deal with patient care and how we interact with office staff?" mused Christina Johnson, MD, PhD.

To date, the fundraising effort has raised \$109,427. STFM Past President Jeannette South-Paul, MD, kicked the campaign off with a \$30,000 contribution. Watch the campaign video and support the campaign by visiting <http://www.stfm.org/foundation>.

Traci Nolte, STFM



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THE IMPERATIVE FOR A COLLECTIVE IMPACT APPROACH AMONG FAMILY MEDICINE ORGANIZATIONS

It is increasingly apparent that many of the most pressing problems of our time are too formidable, complex, and resistant to change to be solved by individuals and individual organizations acting alone. In family medicine, we have our share of these vexing issues—what are often termed "wicked problems."¹ Among them are getting more medical students to select family medicine as a career, transforming the primary care practice model, ensuring joy in practice, maintaining comprehensive scope of practice, increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of the specialty and of medicine as a whole, and asserting leadership by departments of family medicine in the nation's academic health centers.

To make progress solving these wicked problems requires stakeholders with shared goals to work together in a cohesive manner. Inadequate progress on these types of issues is attributable not only to the inherent difficulty of the problem and the power of opposing forces, but to weaknesses in strategic planning and execution characterized by parallel play, uncoordinated activities, and lack of synergy among groups with common objectives. This is hardly a predicament unique to family medicine. The failure of many of our communities and nation as a whole to make greater progress in addressing childhood obesity, failing schools, violence, environmental degradation, homelessness, and other social problems reflects these same dynamics.

Several years ago, the nonprofit consulting group FSG embarked on qualitative research in search of bright spots—initiatives that demonstrated unusual