

Closing the Gaps in the Medical School Applicant Pool— Research in Support of AspiringDocs.org

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At the outset of its efforts to develop the AspiringDocs.org campaign, the AAMC wanted to answer a fundamental question—is there a sizeable group of minority students who are not considering careers in medicine? To determine the answer, AAMC researchers utilized several different databases¹ in a first-of-its-kind analysis of the number of minority biology majors by undergraduate institution type and the yield of the institution in terms of medical school applicants. The analysis revealed that while an increasing number of minority (and non-minority) students are graduating with biology degrees, the number of minority student applicants to medicine has remained essentially flat.

Key Findings

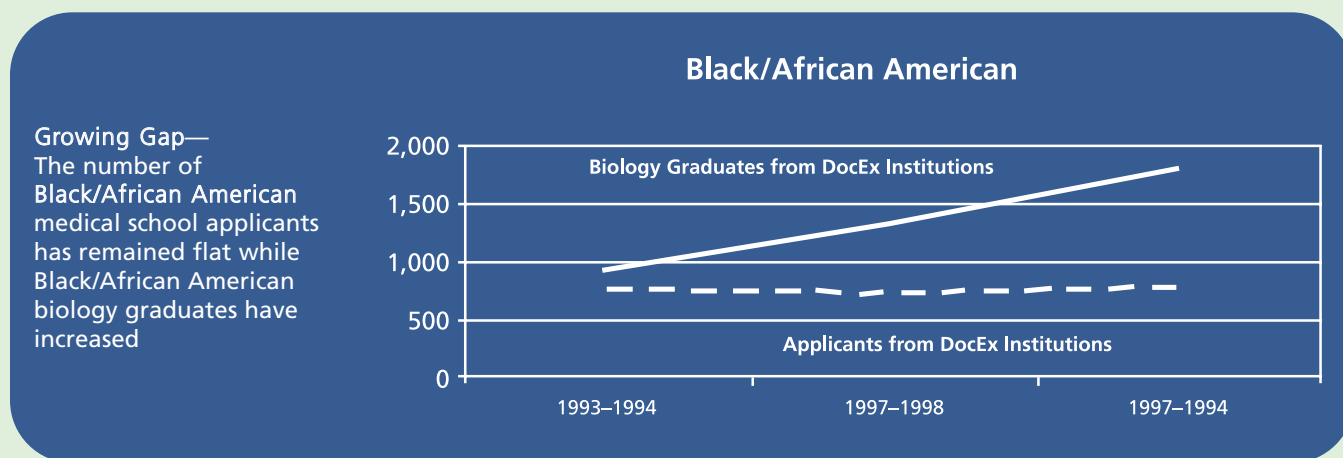
Historically, about **3 percent** of all U.S. BA/BS graduates apply to U.S. medical schools. Over the past decade, biology majors have, on average, represented over **55 percent** of all medical school applicants.

In 2003-2004, 63 percent of all medical school applicants came from doctoral-extensive institutions (DocEx)². The same year, DocEx institutions supplied:

- 42 percent of Black/African American medical school applicants (1,237 of 2,963)
- 49 percent of Hispanic/Latino medical school applicants (1,216 of 2,489)
- 53 percent of Native American/Alaskan Native medical school applicants (182 of 342)

Analysis of yield data (the number who apply divided by the number of possible applicants) over the past decade (1993-94 to 2003-04) shows that the yield of biology-major medical school applicants from DocEx institutions has **decreased**—across all race and ethnic groups.

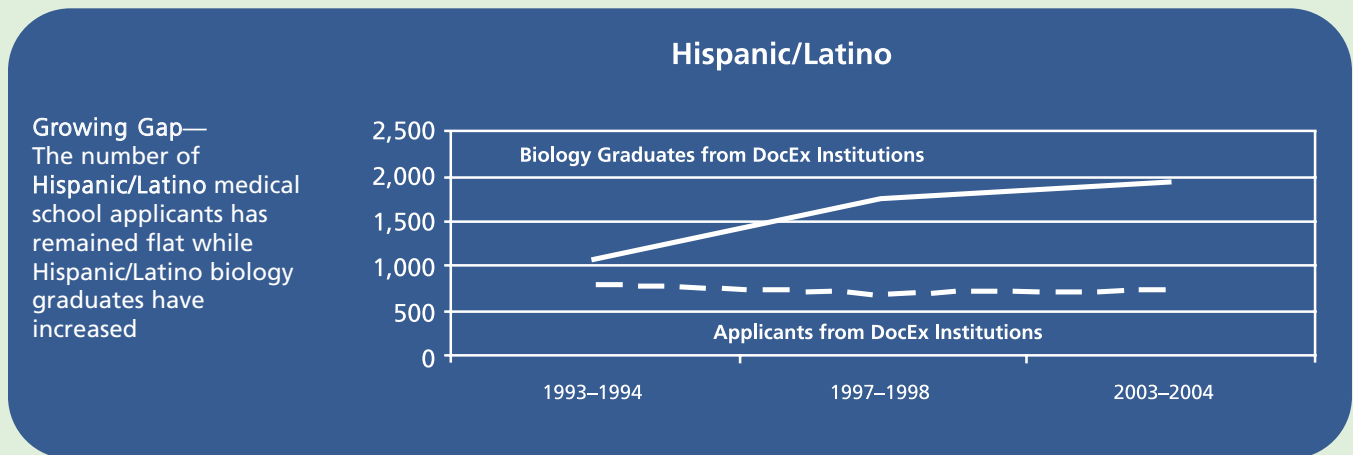
Over that time period, Black/African American biology majors increased 96 percent, from 899 to 1,763, while the proportion of Black/African American biology majors who applied to medical school decreased from **83 percent** to **44 percent**.



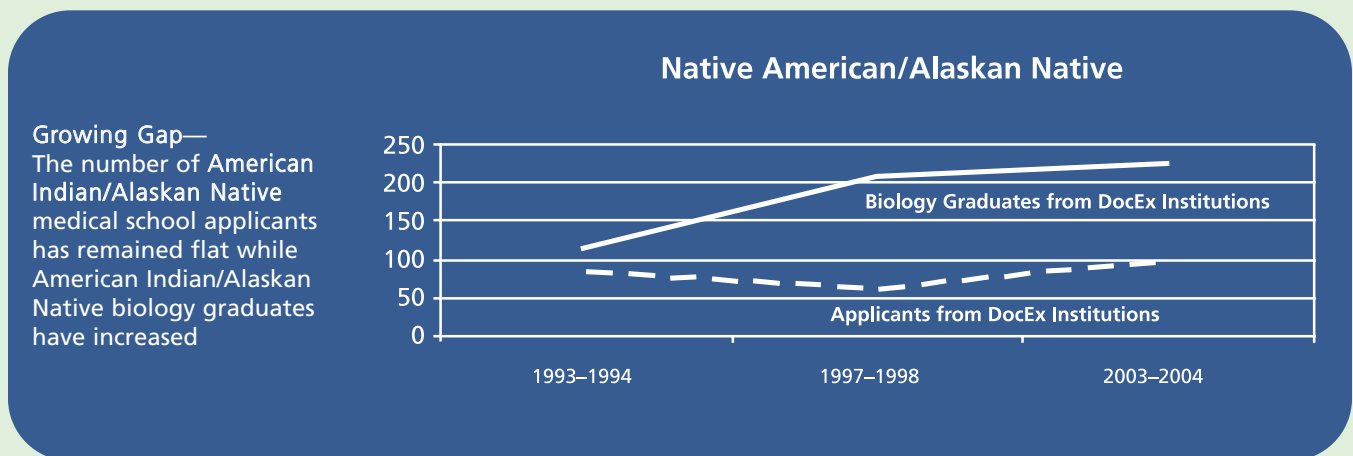
¹ AAMC Data Warehouse; NCES-IPEDS 2004.

² According to the Carnegie Foundation classifications, these institutions offer a wide range of baccalaureate programs and are committed to graduate education through the doctorate. Extensive institutions award 50 or more doctoral degrees per year across at least 15 disciplines. - Carnegie Foundation.

Similarly, Hispanic/Latino biology majors increased by 80 percent, from 1,066 to 1,921, while the proportion of Hispanic/Latino biology majors who applied to medical school decreased from **75 percent** to **39 percent**.



American Indian/Alaskan Native biology majors also increased by 93 percent, from 115 to 222, while the proportion of American Indian/Alaskan Native biology majors who applied to medical school decreased from **73 percent** to **45 percent**.



Decreases in the proportion of Asian American and white applicants also occurred in this time frame. Asian American biology majors increased 37 percent, from 4,294 to 5,899, while the proportion of Asian American biology majors who applied to medical school decreased from 81 percent to **51 percent**. White biology majors increased **29 percent**, from 18,916 to 24,345, while the proportion of white biology majors who applied to medical school decreased from **41 percent** to **27 percent**.

The AAMC's AspiringDocs.org campaign seeks to address the growing gap between minority biology majors and minority medical school applicants by providing students with new, dynamic resources to help them consider and pursue careers in medicine.