Community Outreach and Mentoring to Ensure the Next Generation of Health Care Providers

Priya Radhakrishnan, MD, Paige Gemuenden, BA

INTRODUCTION

• In today’s fast-paced, and quickly changing medical education environment, mentorship of young and aspiring female clinical science and health care providers is often overlooked.

• Successful Mentoring:
  • Increases personal and career development for both mentee and mentors
  • Improves mentees’ professional outcome
  • Encourages students to consider medical and health care related career paths otherwise not explored
  • Prevents burnout of mentors
  • Creates an academic medical community

• To address this need, the Women in Academic Science and Medicine Health Care Careers Mentorship Program was created to:
  • Impact the future of medical education
  • Increase the number of female medical providers

METHODS

• Candidate selection was targeted at high school level female students in central Phoenix with the goal of guiding mentees to explore different career path possibilities within the fields of science and medicine.

• The curriculum objectives: share professional guidance, knowledge and experience with mentees, identify and resolve potential obstacles in achieving mentees’ career goals, enhance mentees’ educational efforts, demonstrate how mentees can develop greater initiative, increased independence and self-reliance, and encourage and support mentees’ college applications.

• A traditional didactic mentoring model was implemented by pairing an experienced provider with a high school or college level female student with similar career ambitions.

• Three sessions throughout the academic year were offered on emotional intelligence and ethics, professionalism, and different careers in science and medicine.

RESULTS

• At the end of the academic year, attendance for meetings averaged 75% with attrition for the following year at 80% (8/10) for mentees and 100% (8/8) for mentors.

• 80% (8/10) of mentees continued to pursue a career path in science and medicine and 20% (2/10) against a career in medicine.

• A summer volunteer program within the Internal Medicine department was generated to expose the students to research, patient interaction, and science opportunities within medicine during their time off from school.

• The future direction of the program: incorporate mini-med school and mini-MBA programs into the curriculum to facilitate an understanding of expectations for health care providers.

CONCLUSION

• Mentees were given the ability to develop important skills needed in medicine and science such as leadership, emotional intelligence, professionalism, and basic medical and business concepts. This was accomplished by forming connections and collaborating with female medical professionals.

• Given the societal need to secure a continuous pipeline of diverse, motivated and primed scientists and health care providers, it is imperative that intentional and effective recruiting and retention strategies are developed to ensure the next generation of health care providers.

SOURCES
