



Racial Injustice & Inequities Perspective

Pushing Institutional Climate Change for Underrepresented Minority Students

by Chris Decker, MD, and Julia Schmitt

Malika Siker, MD, MCW's Dean of Student Diversity and Inclusion challenged our Kern Institute design team to dive into an important question: *Why don't our Underrepresented Students in Medicine (URM) apply to residency programs here at MCW?*

Surveys had been conducted over the years, but the data did not reveal what was *really* happening with these students during their medical school years. Why did so many of these students want to leave?

At the Kern Institute, we use [human-centered design](#) to elicit stories and experiences around an issue. We crafted an exercise, coined a “design sprint,” and asked volunteer URM students to share a story from their medical school experience when they felt they didn’t belong. We paired the twenty students and, as they shared stories with each other, we captured and grouped the narratives into themes.

Gathering Input from Students, Faculty, and Staff

Next, a Kern Café was convened, titled “Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion for Underrepresented Students,” in September 2019. The session attracted approximately a hundred participants. We reviewed the results from two MCW surveys on student experiences and the design sprint findings. The surveys demonstrated that students who self-identified as being from racial/ethnic minorities felt gaps in diversity, campus-wide engagement in diversity activities, and negative differences in how they are perceived and treated on

clinical rotations. The design sprint identified three themes: lack of respect, lack of support, and lack of connection.

After hearing the results, a student in the audience challenged us all: *“These results are not surprising. What is the plan for the institution to change the climate?”*

This challenge was supported by the rest of the audience. The combination of survey data and stories from the students made for a powerful presentation. Everyone wanted meaningful change.

Focusing Innovation on MCW’s Cultural Climate

As a result, we made “URM Student Inclusion” the theme of this year’s Transformation Ideas Initiative (TI₂). This is the Kern Institute’s seed grant program – three years running – where students, staff and faculty are invited to submit ideas on how to innovate medical education.



The call for ideas went out in January 2020. Of the more than fifty ideas received, we advanced sixteen into development this academic year – fourteen of which are focused on URM student inclusion and eight of which are student-lead teams. The teams are organized into four cohorts: mentorship, implicit bias, cultural humility, and leadership/professional development.

The program kicked off with a virtual workshop on June 10, 2020, with over eighty participants excited to get started! This will be a team effort by all, evidenced by the “virtual high-five” photo from our Zoom workshop.

Next Steps

This summer, we'll take them through workshops to help them refine and scope their project teaching and using an innovator's mindset. The foundation of this work is empathy and a relentless pursuit of creating value in their programs, using curiosity and creating partnerships. Each team will be surrounded by experts and facilitators along the journey.

The goal is to begin the rewrite the URM student experience at MCW – and to make good on our promise to those who want to change the climate for future students.

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TI2 2020 Projects:

Mentorship Cohort		KERN INSTITUTE		
<p>Classroom to Clerkship: Professional Identity Training for Underrepresented Students in Medicine</p> <p>Leader: Sherrea Jones, PhD Mentors: Adina Kallet, MD, Greer Jordan, Valerie Carter, PhD, Jean Mallett, Navigator: Marty Muntz, MD Character Mentor: Chris Stawski, PhD</p> <p>URM Mentorship Forum</p> <p>Team: Zak Sharif-Sidi, Alexis Williams Advisors: Sanjay Bhandari, MD, Valerie Carter, MD, Mohamed Khalid, MD, Babiker Mohamed, MD, Malika Siker, Mentor: Pinky Jha, MD Navigator: Jose Franco, MD; Character Mentor: Fabrice Jotterand, PhD</p> <p>Summer Institute: Building Social Support and Resilience for URM Students</p> <p>Team: Paula Phillips, Stuart Riepl, Njeri Jackson Advisors: Jean Mallett, Teresa Patitucci, PhD Mentor: Sherry-Ann Brown, MD, Navigator: Chris Decker, MD; Character Mentor: Ryan Spellecy, PhD</p> <p>Under-Represented in Medicine Students Path to Success Program</p> <p>Leader: Sonal Chadratre, MD, Navigator: Karen Marcante, MD; Character Mentor: Chris Stawski, PhD</p> <p>MCW and Social X MKE Partnership to Improve Well-Being of URM Students and Their Future Patients</p> <p>Team: Jasmyn Griggs, Tenia Fischer Advisor: David Cipriano, PhD, Mentor: Malika Siker, MD, Navigator: Cassie Ferguson, MD; Character Mentor: Ryan Spellecy, PhD</p>	<p>Implicit Bias Cohort</p> <p>Mitigating Implicit Bias in Clinical Clerkship Evaluations</p> <p>Team: British Fields, Adriana Perez Mentors: Malika Siker, MD, Kris Saudek, MD, Michael Levas MD, Clerkship Advisors: Peter Wolfgram, MD, Sara Lauck, MD Navigator: Bipin Thapa, MD; Character Mentor: Ryan Spellecy, PhD</p> <p>Challenging Implicit Bias as Medical Students</p> <p>Team: Kyle Welhouse, Sasha Nuhn, Morgan Lockhart, Krystal Almazan, Amelie Schurke Advisor: Malika Siker, MD, Navigator: Julia Schmitt; Character Mentor: Fabrice Jotterand, PhD</p> <p>Identifying Bias in Classroom Clinical Cases: Making Clinical Cases More Diverse and Inclusive</p> <p>Team: Kerrie Quirk, Sarah Benett, Mindy Dwinell, Sandra Pfister, PhD Advisor: Lisa Cirillo, Mentors: Amy Bingenheimer, Toni Gray, Sara Revolinski. Navigator: Alexandra Harrington, MD; Character Mentor: Arthur Darse, MD, JD</p>	<p>Cultural Humility Cohort</p> <p>Advancing Cultural Humility in Pediatric Medical Training</p> <p>Team: Michelle Hwang, MD, Swathi Prasad, MD, Robert Trevino, MD, PhD, Ashleigh Watson, MD, Soore Akande, MD, Advisor: Michael Weisgerber, MD, Mentors: Constance Gundacker, MD, MPH, Michael Levias, MD Navigator: Gisela Chelmsky, MD; Character Mentor: Chris Stawski, PhD</p> <p>Kaleidoscope: A Program with a Diversity Lens</p> <p>Team: Jean Mallett, Adrienne German, Janalle Goosby, Advisors: Krystal Almazan, Na'il Scoggins, Brittany Doll, Abiye Agbeh, Doug Bierer, Navigator: Amy Prunuske, PhD; Character Mentor: Fabrice Jotterand, PhD</p> <p>Mental Health First Aid: Training Healthcare Students to Tackle Stigma and Save Lives</p> <p>Team: Kevin Bozymski, Himanshu Agrawal, MD, Navigator: Wendy Peltier, MD; Character Mentor: Fabrice Jotterand, PhD</p> <p>Educating Healthcare Providers on Hmong LGBTQ+ Experiences</p> <p>Leader: Bill Wong, Mentor: Kajua Lor, PharmD, Navigator: Kayt Havens, MD; Character Mentor: Ryan Spellecy, PhD</p> <p>Anticipate, Plan, and Deter + PsySTART</p> <p>Team: Julie Owen, MD, Deepa Pawar, MD; Navigator: Chris Decker, MD; Character Mentor: Arthur Darse, MD, JD</p>	<p>Leadership & Professional Development Cohort</p> <p>Leadership Education to Advance Diversity among URM (LEAD-UP)</p> <p>Team: Kristina Kaljo, PhD, Jeffrey Kirsch, MD, Callisia Clarke, MD, Monique Liston, PhD, Mentors: Greer Jordan, PhD, Julie Tetzlaff, PhD, Navigator: Jake Prunuske, MD; Character Mentor: Arthur Darse, MD, JD</p> <p>Addressing the Underrepresentation of Female Leaders in Healthcare through Design Thinking and Character Development</p> <p>Team: Gopika SenthilKumar, Kelli Cole Mentors: Libby Ellinas, MD, Tavinder Ark, PhD, Navigator: Amy Farkas, MD; Character Mentor: Arthur Darse, MD, JD</p> <p>Longitudinal Reflective Thread for Professional Identity Formation and Character Development</p> <p>Team: Teresa Patitucci, PhD, Jeff Fritz, PhD, Johnny Neist, Kate Stark, Sarah Thimmesch Mentor: Kathleen Fletcher, MD, Navigator: Ilya Avdeev, PhD; Character Mentor: Chris Stawski, PhD</p>	