



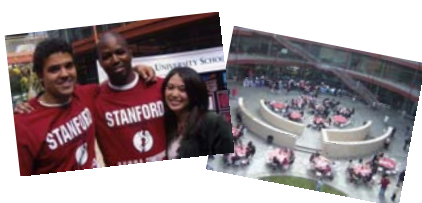
Evaluating the Stanford University Minority Medical Alliance (SUMMA) Conference



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Abstract

SUMMA is a coalition of Stanford medical students, including representatives from SNMA, LMSA, and SAIMS. The Center of Excellence (COE) in Diversity has supported SUMMA since its inception. For the past 16 years, SUMMA has hosted an annual premedical conference that draws approximately 700 students. The goal of the conference is to increase the number of underrepresented in medicine (UIM) and disadvantaged applicants to medical and other health professional schools, in order to improve access to health care for underserved communities. The purpose of this study is to assess whether the SUMMA Conference is successful in achieving these purported goals. This is a prospective cohort study and is comprised of three surveys. We hypothesize that the SUMMA Conference will be correlated with an increase in UIM students' interest levels in pursuing a career in medicine, as measured by their confidence levels in their ability to successfully navigate the application process, and in their ability to find a reliable source of information regarding the application process through the conference. Implications include recognizing the SUMMA Conference as an effective intervention in increasing medical school matriculation for minority students, and validating other day-long conferences that are conducted nationwide with similar goals in mind.



Introduction

Need: Changing Demographics & Diversity in Medicine

Today, minority populations are the fastest growing segments of the U.S. population. By 2010, according to U.S. Census Bureau projections, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Pacific Americans, and American Indians/Alaska Natives will make up 32% of the population. These demographics highlight the need to enlist greater numbers of minority physicians into the work force.



Background

- The greatest predictor of whether or not a student will apply to medical school is whether they have taken the MCAT¹
 - Once UIM or disadvantaged students take the MCAT, their rates of applying to medical schools are comparable to those of non-minority students
- UIM and disadvantaged undergraduates at Stanford decrease significantly in premedical interest over the 4 years compared to their non-minority counterparts²
 - UIM and disadvantaged students were most likely to lose interest particularly after taking the pre-required organic chemistry and biology courses
 - There is a lack of adequate mentorship for URM and disadvantaged students



Community Partner

SUMMA is comprised of Stanford medical students from the Student National Medical Association, the Latino Medical Student Association, and the Stanford American Indigenous Medical Students. The COE was established in 1993 through federal grant support from the Health Resources & Services Administration's Bureau of Health Professions. Its missions are to increase diversity in the number of leaders in academic and clinical medicine, and to expand Stanford's capacity to offer information, research, and training on minority health care issues.

Objectives

- To examine whether the conference is successfully reaching its target audience of UIM and disadvantaged students interested in medicine or the health professions.
- To examine students' motivations, attitudes, and perceptions regarding the medical school application process before the conference.
- To assess whether the conference increases students' confidence in their ability to successfully apply, be accepted to, and receive adequate financial aid from medical schools.
- To assess whether the conference successfully provides students with a reliable source of information regarding the medical school application process.
- To gather students' feedback on the various components of the conference.

Methods & Materials

Design

This is a prospective cohort study assessing the effects of the SUMMA Conference on UIM and disadvantaged students interested in the health professional fields. The study is composed of three surveys. The first survey was given at the time of pre-registration for the 2008 conference. Students will then be given two follow-up surveys: one immediately following the conference in February, and the second 7 months after the conference.

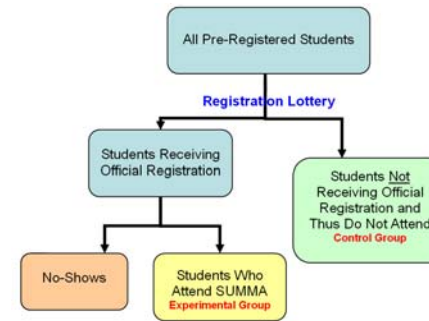


Figure. Experimental and control groups.

Outcome Measures

- Students' confidence in their ability to successfully apply, be accepted to, and receive adequate financial aid from medical schools
- The conference's ability to connect students with a reliable source of information regarding the medical school application process.



Hypotheses

- The conference successfully reaches out to its target population of UIM and disadvantaged students.
- The conference increases students' levels of confidence in their ability to successfully apply and be accepted to medical school.
- The conference provides students with a reliable source of information regarding the medical school application process.

Implications

- Recognizing the SUMMA Conference as an effective intervention in increasing medical school matriculation for UIM and disadvantaged students.
- Allows an evaluation of the conference components based on students' feedback, thus allowing the conference to be adapted each year in order to best meet the needs of the students.
- Validating other day-long conferences that are conducted nationwide with similar goals in mind.

Acknowledgments

This research is supported by the Haas Center for Public Service and the Medical Scholars Research Program at the Stanford University School of Medicine.

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