OMICS Group Conferences
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# Diversity in the Health Profession : Are we ready for it?

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**Abstract**

The world we live in is becoming more diverse every minute. Our lives are becoming more global, every child / adult has in one form or another encountered someone who is different, countries around the world are no longer monotonous, and even in our midst, amongst ourselves, we are different.

The word 'diversity' has been in existence since way back when. However, it is only in the past 10 years that society has taken the word ' diversity' seriously. Accrediting bodies take diversity as one of the criteria for accreditation. Institutions and businesses are creating programs to enhance their recruitment and retention of diverse employees. The Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) has become commonplace in corporate America, higher education, non-profit organizations and government agencies.

The face of diversity is all around us. It is in the increasing presence of women, people of color, people with disabilities in the media, politics and entertainment. It exists in laws that police overt discrimination and in educational programs that teach students about history from new and different perspectives. From a business standpoint, the case for diversity is obvious : increased diversity of the workforce, cost impact of diversity-related employee retention issues and a diversity of products and services tailored to marketplace and workforce needs. One example : McDonald's Breakfast Burritto in Texas which raised the sales of the company to millions of dollars, because it not only provided the nutrients and calories but it was easy to hold and eat (behind the wheels). The breakfast burrito was introduced by a Mexican immigrant.

As health professionals, we continue to discover new ways/methods to treat and or eradicate diseases. We develop new technologies and new approaches to treat our patients. But all these new discoveries is not 'one size fits all'. Studies show that by 2050, the minorities are expected to consist 54% of the population and minorities will be the majority in America, The minority population ushers in new cultures, beliefs and new way of life. Their cultures make an impact on their health care. As health professionals, it is our responsibility to learn and adapt to the ever changing demographics in our society, to render the best health care for everyone. The challenge faced by institutions of higher education in the United States, particularly in the health sciences field is to engage our faculty and staff in embracing and accepting our different values and culture in order to fully utilize the talent of the population. In so doing, we create programs to teach and train our graduates to be culturally sensitive and be able to adapt their management and attain the best care for the patient.

My talk will show the programs initiated and currently undertaken at the University of Utah, Health Sciences, to promote awareness and embrace our differences and also to recruit, retain and promote faculty, staff and students from diverse backgrounds.

**Biography**

Dr. Evelyn V. Gopez is the Associate Vice President for Inclusion, Health Sciences at the University of Utah and the Chief Diversity Officer for the Health Sciences. She is also the Associate Dean in the School of Medicine, Office for Inclusion and Outreach. Dr. Gopez oversees the recruitment, retention and promotion of faculty, students and staff in the Health Sciences, and the creation of programs and initiatives to facilitate the recruitment, retention and support of underrepresented minority faculty, students and staff. Dr. Gopez obtained her medical degree from the University of Santo Tomas, Manila Philippines. She obtained her residency training in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology at Berkshire Medical Center in Massachusetts and didtwo fellowships in Cytopathology and Surgical Pathology at the Hospital of University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA. Dr. Gopez has been in academic practice for 20 years, doing clinical service work, teaching medical students, residents and fellows in addition to her administrative functions are Director of Pathology Residency Program (2005-2012), Medical Director of Cytology Laboratory at ARUP (2009-2012), and Fellowship Director for Cytopathology (2009-2012). She is also a Fellow of the prestigious program at Drexel University called Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM).

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