

Not the same old nursing profession- Effecting the future of nursing

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Abstract

Allen College, like many colleges of nursing across the country, was concerned with the lack of diversity in the student body which threatened efforts to build a diverse, culturally competent nurse workforce prepared to respond to health care access/health disparity issues among local populations. A goal was developed to build an accessible pool of underrepresented, eligible participants who could enroll in and graduate from our various nursing programs far into the future. Research demonstrates that minority graduates are more likely to return to underserved communities where they can confront access to health care issues, improve knowledge, improve health literacy and decrease health disparities.

Allen College developed a revolutionary six-week summer nurse camp for students who were educationally or economically disadvantaged, including ethnic and racial minorities, to teach them about the profession of nursing. This program provides: hands on experiences, nursing mentors, tours to hospitals and health care facilities, teaches students about admission requirements for colleges of nursing, provides insight on how to pay for college with limited resources, and works to improve current math, science, and study skills which aid in their success in the prerequisite period. A key hallmark of the program is that all high school students earn a bi-weekly participation stipend which allows them to choose summer camp instead of a summer job. The program graduated 40 students in year one and 38 students in year two. These students demonstrated improvements in multiple areas including science and math. Programs like these have the potential to change the face of nursing in the coming decades. These future nurses have the potential to develop programs which will eliminate the health care disparities seen in minority populations.

Biography

Doreen Mingo, MSN, RN, CNE has twenty years of nursing experience. She is currently employed at Allen College in Waterloo, IA. Ms. Mingo works as an assistant professor in the undergraduate nursing program, Coordinator of the Office of Diversity Services, and Project Director for the Nursing Workforce Diversity Grant, the largest grant ever received by the College. She began her nursing career as a licensed practical nurse through Hawkeye Community Colleges one year certificate program. She remained there to complete her Associate Degree in Nursing. She then received her Bachelor's of Science in Nursing from Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, IA. Ms. Mingo attained her Master of Science in Nursing with honors from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Her research interest includes Nursing Workforce Diversity and Health Disparities. Mrs. Mingo believes that for the Nursing Profession to one day reflect the diversity we see in the general population we have to begin some grassroots efforts to interest those historically underrepresented in the profession.

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