

2017 WVU CED Diversity and Disability Fellowship Project: Diversity and Disability Educational Content Expansion in Medical Curriculum

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Background

The West Virginia University Center for Excellence in Disabilities (WVU CED) Diversity and Disability Fellowship (DDF) program works in collaboration with the West Virginia Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) program. In 2016-2017 and through the LEND and DDF programs, a second-year diversity fellow continued to obtain real-life experience by attending and supporting several interdisciplinary clinical and field experiences including the Social Group for Teens with Autism, the intensive Autism Services Delivery (iASD) Clinic, the Feeding and Swallowing Clinic, the Next Steps Clinic, the Klingberg Neurodevelopmental Clinic and the Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) Clinic.

Objective

This presentation will highlight the scope of activities achieved during the second year of participation in the diversity fellowship, and will emphasize those activities that promoted the development of diversity and culturally competent professionals and leaders.

Description of the Program

- ^ The diversity fellow pursued interdisciplinary studies in disabilities and was given increased responsibilities and expanded work scope:
- ^ Member of the newly developed Diversity and Inclusion Committee that implemented the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Assessment at the WVU CED and offered Poverty Simulation training
- ^ Student coordinator
- ^ Social Group for Teens with Autism
- ^ Journal club
- ^ AUCD LEND virtual trainee liaison
- ^ WVU LGBTQ center support
- ^ iASD Clinic community support activities
- ^ Community outreach

Capstone Project

Part of the DDF capstone project involved participating in the WVU School of Medicine (SoM) Diversity Thread Project, whose goal was to increase education content in the areas of diversity and disabilities to improve the quality of healthcare services and increase future healthcare practitioners'

cultural competency. The diversity fellow's role involved:

- ^ Researching available training materials that readily fit the SoM curriculum
- ^ Recommending the use of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Autism Case Training and the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) Life Course Training – Interdisciplinary Case Studies
- ^ Reviewing Problem-Base Learning (PBL) course content for first year medical students in fall 2016 and spring 2017 semesters
- ^ Supporting efforts to increase SoM curriculum content in the areas of diversity and disabilities

Resulting Recommendations

- ^ Recommendations submitted via the DDF capstone project were well received by the SoM Diversity Thread Director
- ^ Recommendations were subsequently presented to the SoM Thread Directors for approval for inclusion in SoM curriculum revision.

Conclusions

Through the LEND and DDF programs, the diversity fellow received mentorship and gained interdisciplinary team clinical and family-centered care experience, resulting in increased cultural competence. The second year of participation in the LEND and DDF programs allowed the fellow to gain increased awareness and experience with:

- ^ Cultural competence
- ^ Advocacy
- ^ Community organizations
- ^ Understanding hidden disabilities as a result of participation in the Interdisciplinary Certificate in Disabilities Studies offered by WVU CED in collaboration with the Department of Special Education. Completing the capstone Diversity Thread project gave the fellow an opportunity to have lasting impact on the training of health professionals. Updating the SoM curriculum will help ensure medical students have adequate skills to handle diverse groups of patients from different cultural backgrounds.