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Empowering Nursing Students for SUCCESS

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EMPOWERING Nursing Students for SUCCESS



It started with an OFD program grant....

A diverse nursing workforce is beneficial to the health of our community and society. In 2015, a team of nursing faculty, Dr. Yvonne Ford, Ms. Kimberly Searing, Ms. Mary Stahl, and Ms. Joanne DeWit, along with Andy Brown in Student Success, was led by Dr. Mary Ann Stark to design a program to encourage the success of students from underrepresented groups. After a review of literature related to “at risk students” and underrepresented minorities in nursing, this team wrote and received a program grant from the WMU Office of Faculty Development for \$5,000.

Birth of the Marie Gates Scholars program...

With that OFD grant, we were able to offer 14 students a small stipend (\$300) to work with faculty who helped them identify academic and personal issues that impede success. Upper level students were hired as Navigators to help the student scholars achieve success. All 14 scholars in the program passed and progressed in the nursing program. This program was called the Marie Gates Scholars Program in honor of our previous BSON director who valued and supported diversity in nursing.

Success breeds more success...

Based on the success of the Marie Gates Scholars Program, Dr. Mary Ann Stark, with the support of this faculty team, wrote a grant to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for funding to support Nursing Workforce Diversity. This \$2 million grant will be spent over four years to support a new BSON program: Empowering Nursing Students for Success (Empower Success). Empower Success is designed to recruit, retain and graduate more students from underrepresented groups and educationally and financially disadvantaged populations.

The birth of Empower Success...

Students will benefit from this program in several ways. Financial aid (\$225,000) will be given each year to students from the target population. Students needing academic and peer support will receive that from faculty and student Navigators. Dr. Mary Ann Stark is the program director and principal investigator of the Empower Success grant. Kim Searing serves as program coordinator while Mary Stahl serves as faculty mentor to students.



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- The current professional nurse work force does not mirror our society. Racial and ethnic minorities comprise one third of the population yet only 12% of the Michigan nursing workforce (Michigan Center for Nursing, 2015).
- A nurse who looks like and speaks the patient’s language improves clinical outcomes (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2013; Institute of Medicine, 2003)



Nursing Workforce Diversity

The overall purpose of the Nursing Workforce Diversity program is to increase nursing education opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, including ethnic and racial minorities who are underrepresented among registered nurses.

HRSA -17-063

What Students Have Shared with Us

- I learned time management, dealing with perfectionism, allowing social support of my cohort even if they are very different than me.
- Tools: reflective journaling, scheduling, time management (accountability).
- With the grant money I could drop down to two jobs!
- Faculty didn’t just look at academic problems but also the underlying causes of problems.
- Helped me study in a different way
- Recognized that my problem was being broke. Helped me use creative problem solving.
- I didn’t know until I was part of this program that I could just walk up and talk to my professors.
- When the professors say that they are here for us... they really mean it!
- When I learned I got a grant, my mom cried and I felt like I could breathe again.

Target Population: Nursing Students

- ❖ Economically disadvantaged backgrounds
- ❖ Educationally disadvantaged backgrounds
- ❖ Race is Black or African-American
- ❖ Race is American Indian, Native Alaskan or Native Hawaiian
- ❖ Race is Hispanic or Latino



- Minority nurses are role models by providing culturally congruent care.
- A culturally and ethnically diverse student body enriches the teaching and learning in classrooms and clinical experiences.
- Many of the barriers to retention and graduation of students from underrepresented groups are related to social determinants of health. This includes economic instability, educational inequalities, community contexts, access to health care, and the built environment (United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Healthy People 2020).



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