

Building the Pipeline: Increasing Students' Preparation for Nursing through Outreach Programs

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Topic: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Category: Research Project

Abstract

Background/Introduction

Background/Introduction: Outreach programs have shown success in helping diverse and/or underrepresented students prepare for college. A federal TRIO program, Upward Bound is funded by the U.S. Department of Education to increase educational opportunities and diminish barriers to college access and completion for first-generation, low-income high school students. The program is a direct result of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty Act and was created as part of the Educational Opportunity Act of 1964.

Purpose

Purpose: The College of Nursing (CON) at Kent State University (KSU) is partnering with KSU to offer the Upward Bound program to high school students with an interest in the nursing profession. Goals of the program include engagement of diverse groups of students to prepare them to succeed in college, understand the nursing role, and see themselves as practicing nurses.

Methods or Processes/Procedures

Methods: Over the past seven years, the CON has hosted approximately 90 rising 9th-12th grade participants for a summer nursing immersion experience. Of those participants, 88% were from underrepresented minority groups.

Results

Results: Of the 55 graduating Upward Bound high school seniors (summers 2017, 2018, and 2019), 37 entered college and eight declared nursing as their major.

Limitations

Limitations: Limited access to Upward Bound students once they leave the program presents a challenge.

Conclusions/Implications for Practice

Conclusions/Implications for Practice: Colleges of nursing are uniquely positioned to offer outreach programs in meaningful ways to help underrepresented and disadvantaged students prepare for higher education and to see themselves in the nursing role. Schools and communities have seen positive results to meet the critical need to develop a culturally diverse nursing workforce. Developing a diverse nursing workforce will increase nurses' ability to address the social determinants of health (SDOH) and improve access to care and health equity. Further research in collaboration with pipeline programming in inner city schools and a healthcare partner is underway.

Biography

Ann James, MSN, RN, CEN, serves as Associate Lecturer, Lab and Clinical Instructor, and Skills Lab Coordinator for Kent State University College of Nursing. A two-time alumna of the College, James has taught a range of nursing courses over the past decade. Her clinical practice includes positions as a registered nurse in medical/surgical and emergency departments. In addition to her ongoing interest in nurse preparation through outreach programs, she currently serves as Key Personnel for an NSF-funded project investigating haptic reality for nursing education. In 2017, James was recognized with the national DAISY Faculty Award honoring exceptional nursing faculty.

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