



NEWS RELEASE

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BIPOC Medical Mentoring Program Sets Students Up for Successful Careers

Asheville and Buncombe County juniors are encouraged to apply for 2022-23 internships

Oct. 5, 2021—The [Minority Medical Mentoring Program](#) (MMMP) is currently accepting applications from Asheville and Buncombe County students in their junior year who have a serious interest in pursuing a health career and are members of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and/or underrepresented Asian communities.

The MMMP program is an immersive semester-long experience approved by Asheville City and Buncombe County school districts as an honors-level course. Student interns have the opportunity to shadow physicians, dentists, pharmacists, physical therapists, community health workers, and other health professionals. They also participate in MAHEC health career programs that support academic achievement, service learning, college preparation, and communication skills. Over the course of the semester, MMMP interns earn a minimum of 135 credit hours.

“Health career internships like these are critical for increasing the numbers of BIPOC health professionals in North Carolina, especially here in WNC,” explains Jacquelyn Hallum, MHA, MBA, Director of Health Careers and Diversity Education at UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC. “Unfortunately, many of these students have never seen a healthcare provider who looks like them. Students need to be able to ‘see what they can be.’ Becoming a healthcare provider is a powerful way to help eliminate the many health disparities facing communities of color.”



These 2019-20 Minority Medical Mentoring Interns shadowed a variety of health professionals, supported community health improvement projects, and researched health disparities affecting BIPOC communities.

MMMP interns receive individual mentorship and hands-on learning experiences to help them succeed in higher education and their chosen health career. Since 2005, 83 interns have graduated from the program and gone on to receive scholarships and awards and attend top-ranked health sciences programs at Johns Hopkins, Yale, UNC Chapel Hill, HBCUs, and other public and private institutions. Many graduates are in the process of earning advanced professional degrees, and former program participants are working as physicians, academic researchers, behavioral health professionals, nurses, and occupational therapists.

Mountain Area Health Education Center

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“Being an MMMP intern has opened a lot of doors for me,” shares Aniyah Beck, Spring 2021 MMMP graduate and current freshman at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. “It’s been really fun and connected me with different people who can give me advice and help me figure out my path.”

MMMP is a collaborative partnership between the Mountain Area Health Education Center, the Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement, Mission Health, and the Western Carolina Medical Society. The goals of this program are to increase the numbers of underrepresented minorities who train and practice in WNC, enhance the quality of care through increased workforce diversity, and increase health parity in WNC.

MMMP applications will be accepted from October 1 through December 11 for the 2022-23 academic year. For more information and to download an application, please visit www.mahec.net/mmmp.

Mountain Area Health Education Center was established in 1974 and is a leader in healthcare, education, and innovation. Located in Asheville, MAHEC serves a 16-county region in Western North Carolina and is one of nine [Area Health Education Centers](#) in North Carolina. MAHEC’s mission is to recruit, train and retain the workforce needed to create a healthy North Carolina with a focus on primary care in rural communities and those with less access to resources. MAHEC offers residency training in family medicine, ob/gyn, general surgery, psychiatry, and dentistry as well as fellowship training in addiction medicine, sports medicine, hospice and palliative care, and rural medicine. MAHEC’s Biltmore campus is also home to [UNC Health Sciences at MAHEC](#), an academic health center in partnership with UNC-Chapel Hill that includes programs from the UNC School of Medicine, UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, and UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy. For more information, visit www.mahec.net.