

Advancing Diversity in the Physician Workforce through Mission-Based Pathway Programs: UC Davis Community Health Scholars

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Background

- The maldistribution and shortage of physicians, especially in primary care is associated with health disparities throughout California and the nation [1].
- Racial and ethnic concordance between physician and patients results in better health outcomes and greater patient satisfaction [2-3].
- Despite California's Proposition 209 banning affirmative action in 1996, UC Davis School of Medicine developed an innovative approach to addressing the shortage of culturally and linguistically competent physicians by creating inclusive mission-based pathway programs.

Description

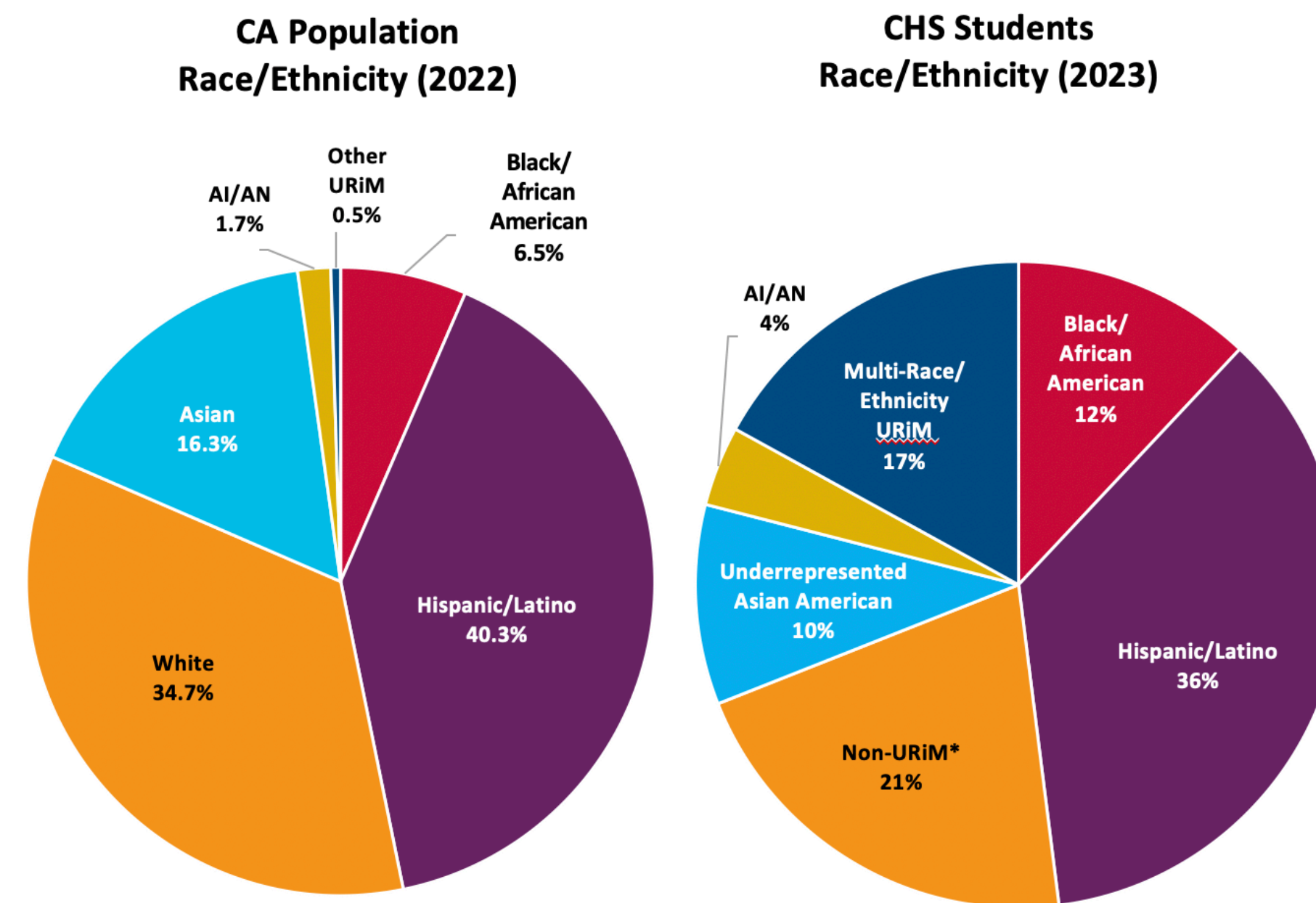
- Five **Community Health Scholar (CHS) pathways** were established, each addressing the healthcare needs of a vulnerable population including rural, central valley, urban underserved, and tribal communities.
- These mission-based UME pathways focus on cultural humility, mentorship, leadership, equity, and the care of underserved communities.

Methods

- A retrospective review of self identified race/ethnicity and first-generation (FG) college status of enrolled CHS students as of November 2023.
- We defined underrepresented in medicine (URiM) as:
 - American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN)
 - Underrepresented Asian American (e.g. Filipino, Hmong, Vietnamese, Cambodian)
 - Black/African American
 - Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 - Hispanic/Latino
 - Multi/Race/Ethnicity URiM if they belonged to at least one of the above URiM groups

Results

- Of 125 Community Health Scholars students enrolled in Academic Year 2023-2024:
- 98 (78%) identify as underrepresented in medicine
 - 67 (54%) identify as first-generation college students



* Non-URiM includes White, non-underrepresented Asian, or non-reporting

| URiM and First Generation College Status by CHS Program | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------|--------|------|------|
| Program | # of Students in Program | # URiM | % URiM | # FG | % FG |
| Rural PRIME | 30 | 17 | 57% | 17 | 57% |
| REACH (Central Valley) | 32 | 29 | 91% | 22 | 69% |
| Tribal Health PRIME | 8 | 8 | 100% | 1 | 16% |
| TEACH-MS (Urban Underserved) | 35 | 29 | 83% | 14 | 40% |
| Accelerated Primary Care | 20 | 15 | 75% | 13 | 65% |

URiM, underrepresented in medicine; FG, first generation college status

Discussion

- The race and ethnic distribution of CHS students is similar to California's population, underscoring how mission-based pathway programs can meet the healthcare needs of an increasingly diverse nation.
- Over half of the CHS students identify as FG college students, demonstrating the importance of academic and other support for students in mission-based pathway programs.
- Limitations include limited data on intersectional identities and the underrepresentation of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students.

Summary

- Mission-based pathways focused on underserved communities, mentorship, and leadership can improve recruitment and retention of diverse students, **leading to a more diverse physician workforce and health equity.**

References

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Learn more about CHS



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