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\$1.3 million to summer science program for low-income minority high school students

BY JENNIFER WELSH

The [Stanford Medical Youth Science Program](#) will receive a \$1.3 million Science Education Partnership Award from the National Institutes of Health, spread over the next five years. The grant will extend science educational opportunities to California's low-income and underrepresented minority high school students.

The Stanford program's aim is to increase diversity in science and health professions through encouraging low-income and underrepresented minority students to engage in science activities to develop critical thinking skills. The program's faculty advisor, professor of medicine [Marilyn Winkleby](#), PhD, said she hopes that increasing diversity will bring attention to large disparities in health occurring in these populations. The program also seeks to spur the creation of precollege science education programs at other universities.

For the last 21 years, the Stanford program has been educating some of California's most underserved high school students in science and medicine. The program has multiple branches, including a five-week summer residential program on Stanford's campus, where students learn about public health and medicine and are taught about the college admissions process. The program also partners with teachers at local high schools to deliver a curriculum that teaches students about health disparities, community-based public health research and health careers.

"The award will add several dimensions to the Stanford Medical Youth Science Program," said Judith Ned, EdD, the program's executive director.

Additional learning opportunities funded by the award will include the development of a curriculum for the San Jose East Side Union High School District that teaches students about health in their communities. This is in direct response to teachers' requests; students will learn about community health problems, map factors that influence health in their neighborhoods and participate in community advocacy to address those health issues. Over time, the funding provides for expansion of this program to other school districts and post-secondary institutions.

The award, granted by the NIH National Center for Research Resources, will also fund a study of the impact of the Stanford summer residential program. The evaluation will compare students in the program with a group of non-participating students of the same ethnicity, sex, income level and GPA. Researchers will follow each group of students for five years, obtaining their rate of high school graduation and college enrollment, GPA, field of study and employment.

In addition, the award will expand the alumni association of the summer residential program, which includes the 500 high school students who have attended the program and over 100 Stanford student counselors. Alumni will mentor new students in their local communities and learn leadership skills through alumni activities.

Stanford supports the Stanford Medical Youth Science Program with in-kind resources

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and teaching and shadowing experiences at the School of Medicine, Stanford Hospital & Clinics and the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System. The award comes at a critical time as the program seeks to sustain itself on a long-term basis.

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