

DEVELOPING A DIVERSE HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE TO ADDRESS HEALTH INEQUALITIES

The UniversityLink Medical Science Program

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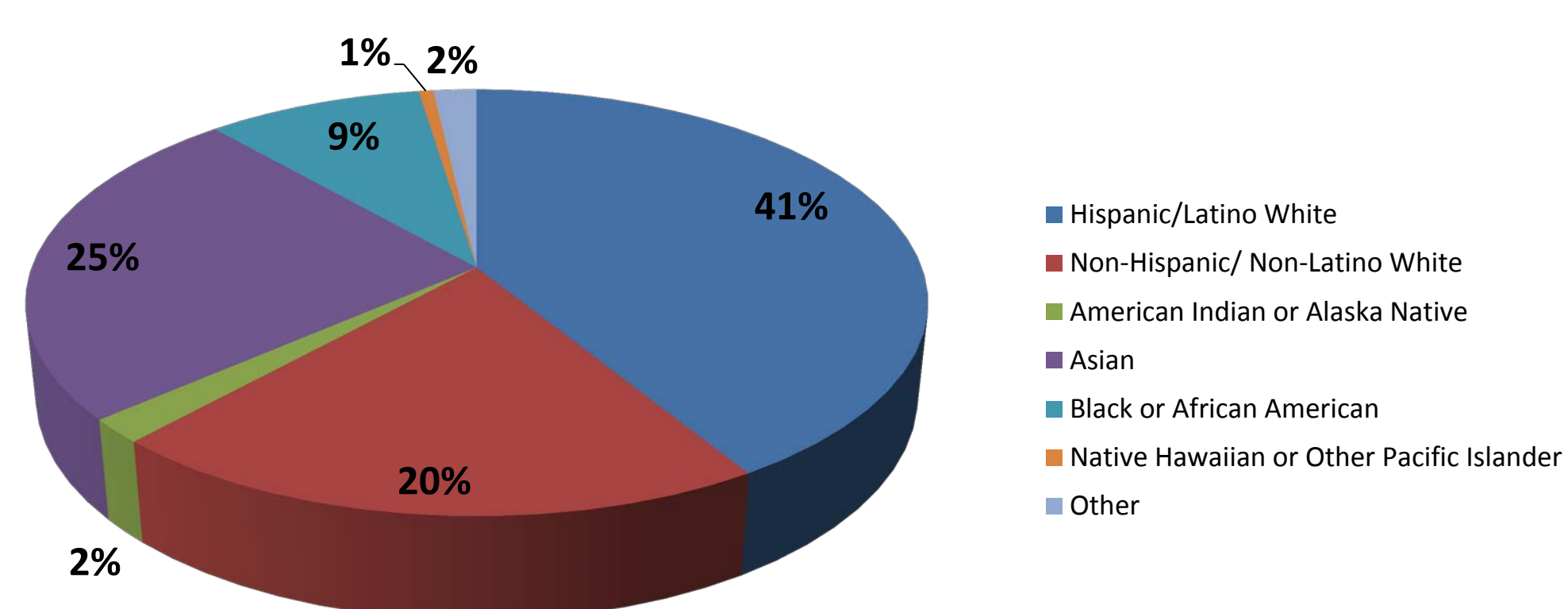
Background

The lack of diversity among students being retained in the behavioral, clinical and biomedical sciences poses a challenge in the development of strategies for reducing health disparities, meeting the needs of the medically underserved and achieving the goals of Healthy People 2020. Nationally, community colleges enroll forty-four percent of all undergraduates and serve as the entry-point to university for a large segment of diverse, low income and first generation students. Within California, a greater share of underrepresented minorities (43%) enroll in the community college system compared to enrollment in the California State University (37%) and University of California system (23%). The **UniversityLink Medical Science Program (ULMSP)** was founded as a health workforce development program that assists URM and disadvantaged community college transfer students to insure that they persist in the sciences by creating learning communities, providing access to diverse mentors and role models, and, fostering career choice validation through out-of-class experiences.

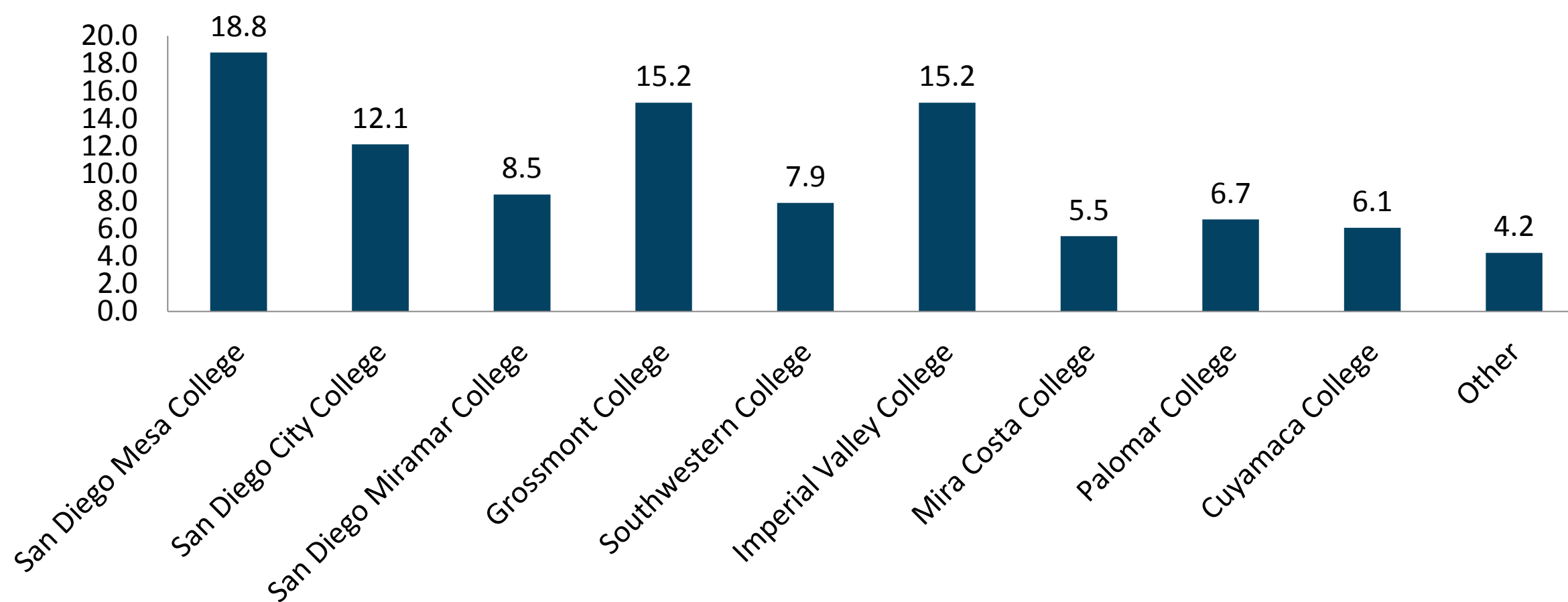
Participants

Students are recruited from all nine Region X community colleges, representing San Diego and Imperial Counties. To date, 165 community college students have participated in ULMSP. Ninety-eight percent have transferred to 4 year colleges or universities. Participants are 54% female and 46% male.

ULMSP Students, Race and Ethnicity



Community College Attending at Transfer

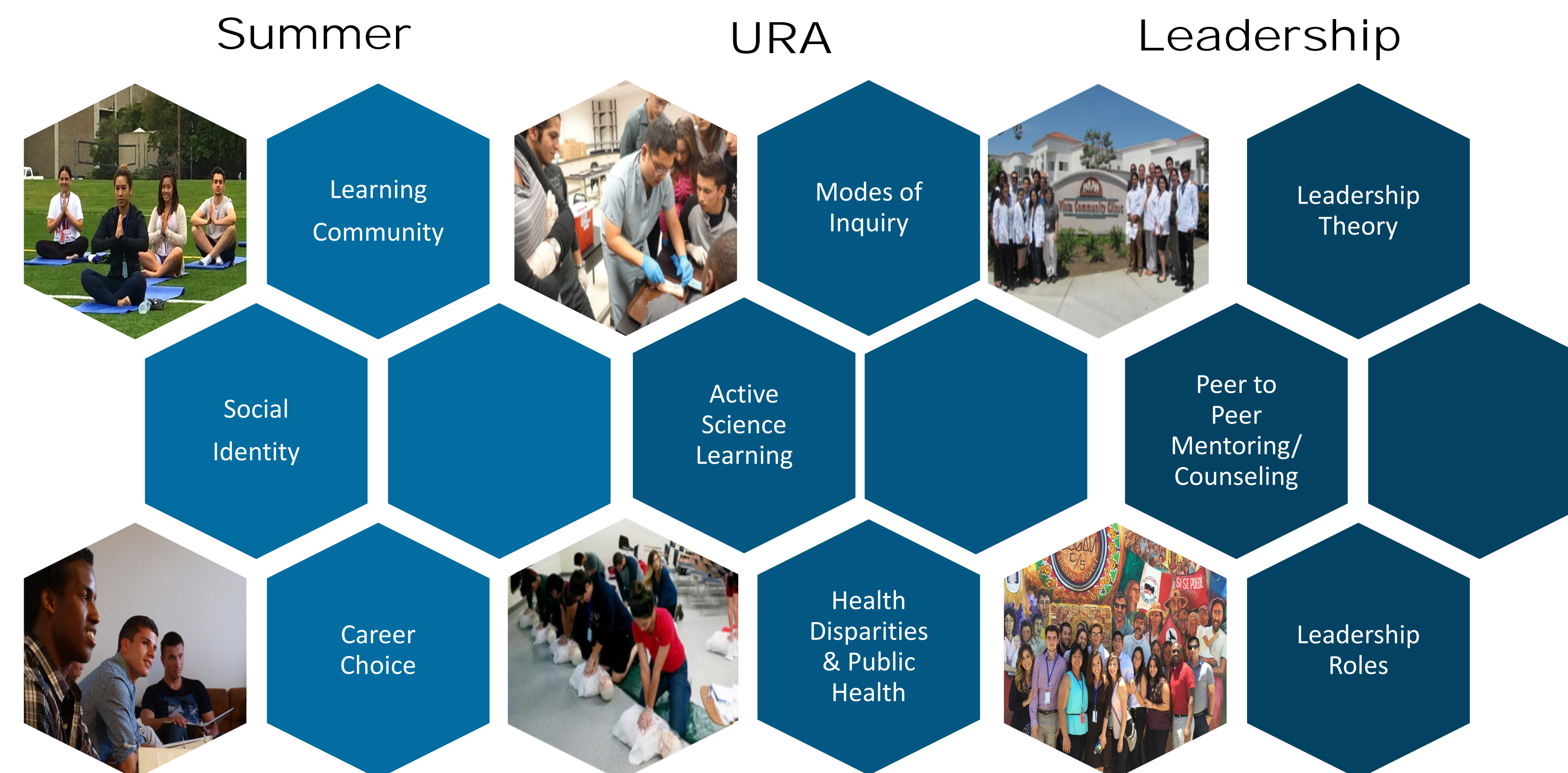


Program Description

The ULMSP curriculum is adapted and modeled after the Stanford Medical Youth Science Program and UCSD School of Medicine's National Center of Leadership in Academic Medicine (NCLAM).^{1,2} Core curricula areas leading to student success include: understanding institutional culture; developing academic skills; building social and professional networks; increasing professional and career knowledge; and, providing instrumental mentoring.



ULMSP is a structured longitudinal curriculum that begins with a four-week residential summer immersion program prior to transfer. Emphasis is given to building a strong connection with peers, understanding institutional resources, introducing and developing skills needed for successfully completing an undergraduate degree, as well as, increasing knowledge of health professions and health disparities. The summer program is then followed by the University Research Academy (URA), a year-long, one day a week, course designed to improve writing proficiency, research and analytic skills. Opportunities for instrumental mentoring regarding internships, academic advising, test preparation, and professional networking are provided to ULMSP students throughout their academic career. Students are tracked for ten years. ULMSP alumni are integral to the ongoing success of the program and provide key leadership as program staff, advocates, volunteers and mentors.



Outcomes

98%



Transfer Rate

98% (158/165) Students transferred from CC to University. 5 students are still enrolled in CC. 2 students obtained an Associate's Degree in Nursing.

88%



Graduation Rate

87.6% (106/121) Students graduated from University. Of the 158 students that transferred 121 were eligible to graduate three years after transferring.

87%



Retained in the Sciences

86.79% (92/106) Students graduated with a bachelor's degree in the sciences.

60%



Entered Professional/Graduate School

60.37% (64/106) Students enrolled in Professional or Graduate School (Master's Degree, PhD, Dental, MD, PharmD)

Policy Implications

Outcomes from ULMSP demonstrate that providing programming aimed at eliminating educational barriers for disadvantaged and underrepresented community college students improves the likelihood of completion of an undergraduate degree in the sciences, and subsequent enrollment into graduate/professional school.

- Provide contextualized curriculum and experiences designed to reinforce the meaning an individual connects to his interests and competencies related to career roles to assist in the integration of academic self-efficacy and development of social capital.
- Engage students in a 'student interest' cohort model designed to create a community of peer support characterized by collective effort and commitment to professional goals, in order to lessen the sting of the "transfer shock" that students may experience upon transitioning to university.
- Provide access to mentors who can mediate career outcomes by providing positive influences at critical career choice junctures.



ULMSP alumni attending UCSF School of Pharmacy, 2015