Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

The Harold Amos Medical Faculty Development Program: Evaluation of a National Program to Promote Faculty Diversity and Health Equity

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The Harold Amos Medical Faculty Development Program (AMFDP), a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, seeks to support academic physicians from historically disadvantaged backgrounds and serves as a model program for promoting faculty diversity and health equity. Our objective was to determine differences in scientific productivity, promotions and retentions, and leadership attainment among faculty applicants to this national minority faculty development program. Final-round interview applicants from 2003 to 2008 were selected. Differences in publications, grants, promotions/retentions, and leadership positions through 2013 were compared between funded scholars and unfunded nonscholars. Semistructured interviews were conducted to identify factors that facilitated and hindered academic success. A total of 124 applicants (76 scholars and 48 nonscholars) who participated in final-round interviews from 2003 to 2008 were eligible. Scholars and nonscholars had similar number of publications. Scholars had greater number of grants and grant dollars, but differences were not significant after accounting for AMFDP program awards. Scholars were more likely to hold leadership positions (28% vs. 10%, p=0.02), but equally likely to be promoted (67% vs. 58%, p =0.32) and retained (84% vs. 75%, p=0.21). In interviews, all participants endorsed mentoring, funding, and nonscientific education to academic success, but scholars reported greater availability of leadership opportunities consequent to AMFDP. There were few differences in academic productivity attributable to a national faculty diversity program. However, program participants were more likely to endorse and attain leadership positions. Academic institutions should consider facilitating leadership development of minority faculty as a means of advancing health equity research and training.

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Authors: Guevara JP, Wright M, Fishman NW, Krol DM, Johnson J