



Wake Forest Baptist's Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity Awarded Grant to Grow Health Careers in Underrepresented Groups

\$1.5 Million Grant Will Fund Medical Career and Technology Training Programs for American Indian and Appalachian Region High School Students

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. – Sept. 25, 2015 – The [Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity](#) (MACHE) at [Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center](#) received a five-year award from the Office of Minority Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services totaling \$1.5 million to support the Medical Careers and Technology (MedCaT) Pipeline: Health and Biomedical Workforce Development for American Indian and Appalachian Region High School Students.

The MedCaT Pipeline is an academic-community partnership between MACHE, [The Center for Native Health](#), the [Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians](#) and the [Mountain Area Health Education Center](#).

“This grant will enable the partnership to quickly build upon the existing programming of each partner,” said [Ronny Bell, Ph.D.](#), director of MACHE and MedCaT project director. “It will allow us to develop new program components to address gaps and create a structured pipeline to engage American Indian and Appalachian region high school students in North Carolina with resources that support the pursuit of health and biomedical science careers.”

The MedCaT Pipeline will expand on the current summer academy to provide academic year programming for these students from underrepresented backgrounds to gain knowledge in and exposure to the biomedical sciences. In addition, the grant will also support mentorship and scholarships for American Indian and Appalachian high school students during undergraduate health and biomedical science education or entrance into the workforce.

The MedCaT Pipeline grant will also provide mentorship for high school health science teachers to enhance their professional knowledge base and enable them to better engage students in health/biomedical science education by utilizing relevant science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curricula and technology tools.

“Programs like MedCaT are key to increasing the diversity of health and biomedical science professionals and improving the health of our Cherokee and Western North Carolina communities,” said Lisa Lefler, Ph.D., executive director for The Center for Native Health and MedCaT project co-director.

The MedCaT Summer Academy, funded by the Burroughs Wellcome Foundation, started in 2010 and provides a week-long health and science enrichment experience for high school students based on problem-based learning methodology and focused on career opportunities in health care and biotechnology. The Academy has served more than 100 students along with nine teachers through its annual summer program.

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Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center (www.wakehealth.edu) is a nationally recognized academic medical center in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, with an integrated enterprise including educational and research facilities, hospitals, clinics, diagnostic centers and other primary and specialty care facilities serving 24 counties in northwest North Carolina and southwest Virginia. Its divisions are [Wake Forest Baptist Health](#), a regional clinical system that includes [Brenner Children’s Hospital](#) and has close to 175 locations, 900 physicians and 1,000 acute care beds; [Wake Forest School of Medicine](#), an established leader in medical education and research; and [Wake Forest Innovations](#), which accelerates the commercialization of research discoveries and specialized research capabilities of Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center and operates [Wake Forest Innovation Quarter](#), an urban district for research, business and education. Wake Forest Baptist clinical, research and educational programs are annually ranked among the best in the country by U.S. News & World Report.

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