

Public Health Education and Career Pipeline Development for HBCU and Community College Students

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Abstract:

Public health sectors are experiencing an unprecedented workforce crisis, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Public health education plays a crucial role in promoting community well-being and addressing health disparities, especially within historically marginalized populations. In order to address health inequities and promote community well-being, public health education is essential, particularly for historically disenfranchised populations. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) play a critical role in providing educational opportunities for African American students and members of underprivileged communities. By preparing them for careers in the workforce, HBCUs help close the skills gap in this industry.

This abstract encompasses three interrelated topics: public health education programs, career development, and the introduction of an associate degree program in public health and information technology. All three topics converge at only HBCU in the nation's capital. Public health education at HBCUs equips students with the skills and knowledge to tackle pressing health issues while addressing the socio-economic and cultural factors that contribute to health inequities. These programs provide a robust platform for career development, offering pathways into public health professions through mentorship, internships, and partnerships with healthcare organizations. Moreover, the emphasis on culturally competent care and community-based initiatives prepares graduates to advocate for health equity and lead transformative changes in public health policy. HBCUs play a critical role in developing the next generation of public health professionals, empowering students to contribute to the well-being of their communities while advancing their careers in public health sectors.