The Pipeline to Opportunities Program (POP), an Alameda Health System (AHS) workforce development initiative, will prepare Oakland’s youth and young adults for sustainable healthcare career opportunities in their communities. Along with training and mentoring opportunities, it aims to retain participants in the community to serve the community.

The Pipeline to Opportunities Program (POP) will enable Alameda Health System (AHS) to expand the career pathways programs it currently supports: Health Excellence and Academic Leadership (HEAL) and Mentoring in Medicine & Science (MIMS). POP will enable these programs to expand their reach to students from middle school and high school (as part of its partnership with Oakland Unified School District) through to college and careers.

It will also develop experiential learning and healthcare career pathways for young adult learners by strengthening AHS’s partnership with the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency’s Emergency Medical Technician and Health Coach training programs, which provide health career training opportunities for young adults from low-income backgrounds.

Opportunities and Solutions

AHS’s Pipeline to Opportunities Project (POP) is designed to serve as a solution to a community-level problem of lack of access to quality healthcare, education, and employment. It offers an innovative solution that is supported by sound research, the expert opinion of community leaders and partner organizations, and AHS’s own experience. It addresses two key needs that are related to health disparities:

• The growing need for well-trained professionals across the spectrum of healthcare occupations—including rapidly expanding areas such as health IT, and evolving and fast-growing fields such as Community Health Outreach Workers, Health Coaches, and Patient Navigators; and

• The need to expand the pool of health professionals from our community who serve our community. It reduces inequities by combining quality academic learning, tailored to participants’ stage of development, with age-appropriate experiential learning in a healthcare setting, supplemented by instruction and mentoring by trained professionals.

Health Professions Education and Training Center

Another important component of POP is the creation of the Health Professions Education and Training Center (HPETC) that will be located in Oakland and will house POP’s administrative and operational functions. By promoting excellence in Alameda Health System’s workforce, and inspiring and training the healthcare workforce of the future, the HPETC will:

• Address the need for work-based training of healthcare professionals, especially those impacting patient care and experience, and

• Become a catalyst for research, education, and training, and create a dynamic learning environment that will include a Simulation Lab and computer labs where mentoring, coaching, and hands-on learning will occur.

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