

UW-Health: Leadership Institute aims to advance health-disparities research

Posted on Monday, Jun 10, 2019

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

MADISON – Dozens of researchers from around the country will soon come to UW-Madison for a research and leadership immersion program to help increase the number of minority researchers investigating health disparities and health equity.

The annual Health Equity Leadership Institute (HELI) will be held on campus June 17 to 21. Twenty-five attendees are expected from 16 institutions spanning 15 states, including California, Texas and, of course, Wisconsin.

As evidence mounts that significant disparities persist in health-care access, treatment and outcomes, the research community is putting effort into increasing the number of investigators, particularly minority investigators, engaged in research on such disparities. The Institute is an intensive weeklong career development opportunity focused on African-American, Asian-American, Southeast Asian, Hispanic/Latino and Native American investigators who are underrepresented in the health-care and public-health workforces. HELI alumni now number 177 in the U.S. and abroad.

Specifically, the program is designed to support health equity researchers to successfully secure tenure-track academic appointments in schools of public health, medicine and other health and behavioral health science disciplines. It is also designed to help them attract research funding through the National Institutes of Health.

The HELI program is hosted by the UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research's Collaborative Center for Health Equity in partnership with the Maryland

Center for Health Equity in the School of Public Health at University of Maryland, College Park.

“It’s an honor to offer this Institute with our longtime Maryland collaborators who also joined us just this May to bring their Building Trust Between Researchers and Minorities curriculum to Wisconsin,” said Dorothy Farrar-Edwards, director of the Collaborative Center for Health Equity.

Importantly, the Institute also fosters professional networking for participating scholars and creates a collaborative learning environment for Institute alumni, scholars and faculty.

“We’re thrilled to have HELI alumni return to share their experiences with the new cohort,” Farrar-Edwards said. “Seven of our HELI alumni will be lending instruction to the program this year, as will four of our Collaborative Center for Health Equity Research Fellows.”

This year’s attendees are scholars involved in community-based participatory, behavioral health, health services, public health and community-engaged research in African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, White, American Indian/Alaska Native and Hmong communities, with special interests in underserved rural/urban, low socioeconomic disadvantaged, marginalized youth, formerly incarcerated and limited English proficiency populations.

Institute sessions are carefully structured to include large didactic and small group opportunities, special events and mentoring. Community-engaged translational research efforts, focused on health equity and disparities in Wisconsin, are showcased all week and most of these studies are being conducted in partnership with agencies who serve members of diverse communities.

“I’m also proud to have our invaluable Milwaukee-based partners at the United Community Center host one day of the program and lend instruction about community-academic partnerships,” Farrar-Edwards said.

A reception to welcome the 2019 scholars to Madison will occur from 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 18, in the H.F. DeLuca Forum in the Discovery Center, 330 N. Orchard St. This event is free and open to the public, but [registration is required](#).

Reception speakers include Robert N. Golden, dean of the UW School of Medicine

and Public Health and vice chancellor for medical affairs, Patrick Sims, deputy vice chancellor for diversity and inclusion, vice provost and chief diversity officer at UW-Madison, and Mona Fouad, senior associate dean, diversity and inclusion at University of Alabama at Birmingham.

For more information about HELI, please visit: <https://uwheli.com/>