Eye to the Future: Developing the Next Generation of Childhood Obesity Prevention Educators
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Background & Significance

Latino minorities are critically underrepresented in the nutrition/dietetics (ND) and healthcare professions

Traditionally, minority groups have relatively high rates of obesity and related chronic illnesses

There is a significant need to increase the diversity of the nutrition/dietetics and healthcare professions

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine if the ETTF internship improved nutrition knowledge, health career readiness, and professional development in a sample of Hispanic undergraduate students.

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that there will be an increase in nutrition knowledge and health career readiness pre- and post-ETTF internship.

Methods

1. Didactic Seminars. Delivered 25 didactic seminars focused on health program design, implementation, and evaluation. Seminars included: teaching techniques, classroom management, data management, mentoring sessions, etc.
2. Professional Development. Administered professional development workshops to interns, to ensure career readiness. Workshops included: interview etiquette, job searching, resume development, etc.
3. Experimental Learning. Interns assisted in the delivery of nutrition education, exercise, and behavioral psychoeducational family-based interventions to reduce obesity in low income Hispanic and African American boys and girls (ages 9-14 years).
4. Requirements. Interns completed internship program over the course of 20 weeks, and were required to complete 290 hours (15 hours per week).

Results

Figure 1. Pre-Post Changes in Nutrition Knowledge Scores

Figure 2. Pre-Post Changes in Career Readiness Scores

It is hypothesized that there will an increase in nutrition knowledge and health career readiness pre- and post-ETTF internship.

Qualitative Interview Results

- "I liked that we engaged with both children and parents through the community programs."
- "I appreciated that the interns had a lot of responsibility in planning and implementing the programs--whether it be through data collection, recruitment, or lesson plans."
- "Learning more about the aspects that go into designing and implementing an effective health program were incredibly enlightening."

Conclusions

The Eye to the Future internship further guarantees career readiness in the nutrition/dietetic profession through experimental learning, mentoring opportunities, and diversity training.