Cultivating Diversity in Medical Education

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Benefits of Diversity in Medical Education

- Students reported little contact during their formative years
- Diversity of the student body enhanced the education of the student in two medical schools
- Access to medical care of underserved
- Cultural competence when treating diverse populations

Academic Medicine May 2003
“Diversity among students clearly improves the breadth of class discussion, a fundamental educational benefit and a basis for learning culturally competent health care”
Do we really need to identify racial diversity?

- Color blindness
  - Reduce, eliminate or ignore category membership
  - Led to greater racial attitude bias

- Multiculturalism
  - Consider and emphasize, celebrate category membership
  - Promoted interracial harmony
Race conscious admission policies

- Inclusive rather than exclusive
- More likely to work in underserved areas
- Improved patient satisfaction
- Reducing racial and ethnic health disparities
How did we get here?

- 1960’s affirmative action
- University of California Regents vs Bakke
- Hopwood Vs. Texas
- State initiatives
- Grutter vs Bollinger et. al. and Gratz vs Bollinger et. al.
University of Michigan

- Compelling interest
- Narrowly tailored
  - Competitive review
  - Individualized consideration
  - Exploring race neutral alternatives
  - Not unduly burdening the non-minority applicants
  - Periodic review
- Critical mass
Where is the quick sand?

- Is it truly a common admissions process?
- Worries about critical mass and its relationship to quotas
- Are there educational benefits that flow from racial diversity?
Other forms of diversity

- Age
- Gender
- Experiences
- Disadvantaged
  - Educationally
  - Economically
- Geographic diversity
Other forms of diversity

- Achievements/Leadership
- First generation college
- Documented disability
- Overcoming personal or family adversity
- Community or public service
- Special extracurricular involvement
- Multiple languages
- Special talents