



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

Award ID:
RP170301

Project Title:
Osteopathic Scholars in Cancer Research (OSCR)

Award Mechanism:
Research Training

Principal Investigator:
Vishwanatha, Jamboor

Entity:
University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth

Lay Summary:

The diversity of Texas population continues to expand as the number of Hispanic and other underrepresented minorities (URM) continues to increase. This, in turn, is associated with an increasing challenge of health disparities among these URM groups. These increasing disparities include higher prevalence and significantly higher death due to cancer in URM populations. There is a profound lack of diversity of physicians and physician scientists, highlighting a critical need to train more physicians with a commitment to reduce health disparities and train scientists actively working on cures for and improved diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Physician scientists (MD/PhD or DO/PhD degreed) are uniquely qualified to achieve both goals, however, there is a gross lack of URM professionals who are physician scientists. The proposed program will focus on recruiting and training URM and disadvantaged students for the combined dual degrees of DO (physician) and PhD (scientist). The research focus will be specific to cancer. The financial support requested through this grant will be supplemented by institutional funds to allow the DO students to complete research training to achieve the PhD. While multiple programs are available at other institutions to support MD/PhD programs, this program exclusively supports the DO/PhD program and especially to promote diversity by training underrepresented and disadvantaged scholars. This program will capitalize on existing pipeline programs at UNTHSC student recruitment into this program. Participants will receive a well-defined curriculum, train with established research mentors from UNTHSC and other local research institutions, and interact with eminent physician scientists through the national research mentoring network. The initial goal is to train two new DO/PhD students per year for the next 5 years from URM backgrounds with a focus on cancer, and establish a continuation of this training indefinitely.