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Project Initiation

Project Data for Accession Number 1033298

Project Title

National WIC Fellowship for Students at Minority Serving Institutions

Project Details

Sponsoring Institution National Institute of Food and Agriculture	**Project Status** COMPLETE
Funding Source NIFA Non Formula	**Grant Year** 2024
Grant No. 2024-39594-43814	**Cumulative Award Amt.** $1,250,000.00
Proposal No. 2024-07534	**Multistate No.** (N/A)
Project Start Date Sep 15, 2024	**Project End Date** May 06, 2025
Program Code [WWNV] Novel Proposals	

Project Director

Probert, K.

Recipient Organization

ASSOCIATION OF STATE AND TERRITORIAL PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION DIRECTORS
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Performing Department

(N/A)

Non Technical Summary

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) improves health behaviors and reduces food insecurity which positively impact maternal and infant mortality. As WIC turns 50, thoughtful and well-funded efforts to modernize the program are underway, and supporting the workforce is one area of focus. A WIC workforce that mirrors the race, ethnicity, and culture of WIC participants can increase participation by reaching those populations that are eligible, but not enrolled, and by reducing barriers such as language, culture, or stigma; and increase participants' likelihood of adopting recommendations, by enhancing trust, communication, and understanding between staff and participants.The "National WIC Workforce Strategy" includes recommendations and strategies to modernize the workforce. It focuses on engaging with existing WIC staff. We propose a complimentary cohort to increase diversity by engaging with potential WIC staff - students at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).Our organization, the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists, has prioritized workforce development for 70 years,

and we have extensive experience offering public health fellowships for MSI students who are underrepresented in the public health field. We propose a program that connects students from MSIs with unique WIC projects in local, state, and tribal WIC agencies. Our proposed program will also prioritize learning from this prospective workforce of WIC professionals. The project is called the National WIC Fellowship for Students at MSIs (WIC Fellowship-MSI).The mission of the WIC Fellowship-MSI is to enhance diversity of the WIC workforce through partnership with and leadership from MSIs. We will offer unique WIC fellowship opportunities to students attending MSIs. And we will assess capacity and listen to students and faculty at MSIs so that we build a sustainable and inclusive program for long-term success in recruiting and retaining diverse college students who will pursue WIC as a viable career option. The long-term goals of the proposed project are to realize....More MSIs (e.g. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPI)) as active participants in conversations about WIC workforce development.Greater cultural diversity and improved cultural competency of the WIC workforce.Greater accessibility and participation in WIC of eligible, but not enrolled, families.Greater adoption of nutrition and breastfeeding recommendations.

Animal Health Component

Animal Health Component: 0%

Research Effort Categories

Basic	0%
Applied	100%
Developmental	0%

Classification

Knowledge Area (KA)	Subject of Investigation (SOI)	Field of Science (FOS)	Percent
703	6050	3020	100%

Knowledge Area

[703] Nutrition Education and Behavior

Subject Of Investigation

[6050] Communities, areas, and regions, including states and their institutions and organizations

Field Of Science

[3020] Education

Keywords

WIC Minority Serving Institutions Student Fellowship Workforce Modernization Diversity

Goals / Objectives

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Collaborate with Minority Serving Institutions.Provide 8-week and 12-week fellowships for students enrolled in MSIs pursuing health-related degrees including nutrition, health education, public health, social work, etc.Create an inclusive culture for a variety of degrees and all students.Support state, local, and indigenous state WIC programs with unique student opportunities.Understand WIC employment recruitment and retention needs of students attending MSIs.

Project Methods

Develop Informative Marketing Materials. Develop resources that 1-describe how multiple health-related degrees (e.g. social work, health education, public health, nutrition) have a role in the WIC program and 2-highlight the value of perspective, connections, and skills from students who attend an MSI (e.g. building on the relationships that MSIs have with their communities). The type of resources could include stories, example fellowship experiences/projects, student videos, informational products, a dedicated webpage or training sessions.Distribute Informative Marketing Materials. Through existing relationships and our partners, widely disseminate the informative marketing materials to MSIs and WIC agencies.Recruit Students and Faculty. Develop application materialsNotify Minority Serving Institutions about the program, which could include holding recruitment events for students and faculty at MSIsSolicit student applicationsConvene student selection team and select studentsRecruit Preceptors. Recruit preceptors and WIC agency placement sites that will offer learning experiences for students of MSIs enrolled in health-related programs.Identify WIC agencies in communities that Minority Serving Institutions also serve or recruit students from and notify them about the program.Solicit preceptor applicationsSelect and confirm preceptorsDevelop guidance for WIC staff that leads to student experience opportunities that will be helpful to agencies and achievable for students; Operate the Fellowship Program. Provide WIC fellowship training opportunities in the fall, spring, and summer sessions for students from MSIs.Place students in WIC programs located in the communities that the MSIs serveDevelop and deliver an orientation for studentsOffer training and professional development for students and faculty throughout the 8- or 12-week fellowship period. (The summer session is 8 weeks and the fall and spring sessions are each 12 weeks)Provide students with a fellowship scholarship/grant.Support Students, Faculty, and WIC staff. We know that success requires providing wrap-around support to students, faculty, and WIC staff.Monitor and provide professional development support for WIC Fellowship-MSI fellows through regular calls, webinars, reports, and visits. For example, the consultant team could provide support in developing professional abstracts and posters of their fellowship projects; mentoring; career coaching; assistance with job searching; support in obtaining health professional credential(s); and help deciding whether to pursue an advanced or an additional degree and professional certifications.Provide professional development activities for MSI faculty and technical assistance and capacity building for these academic institutions. Prepare Progress and Evaluation Reports. Develop and disseminate progress reports and evaluation findings to key partners including federal agency staff, MSI faculty, WIC agencies, and students. Develop reports and materials appealing to federal, tribal, state, and local WIC staff that recognizes the WIC Fellowship-MSI program as an important recruitment tool for state, local, and tribal WIC programs.Learn From Students and Faculty. Assess student and faculty support for students to pursue a career in WIC and to better understand some of the recruitment and retention needs of a potential workforce of diverse students.Data Types: Two types of data will be collected for this project. Qualitative data will be collected through focus groups to assess program feasibility and satisfaction and will solicit opinions from fellows regarding the fellowship program and how it should be designed/improved. Quantitative data will be collected through surveys to assess program efficacy and satisfaction and will measure any changes in knowledge, perceptions, and self-efficacy among the fellows. We will also administer quantitative surveys to preceptors to measure their attitudes towards the fellowship program and assess the fellows. All focus group protocols and surveys will be developed by the evaluation manager and all electronic surveys will be administered via Survey Monkey.All data will be de-identified and coded to ensure anonymity of organizations and individuals. The evaluation manager will develop all electronic survey links and send to the project director via e-mail. The project director will distribute the survey links to the appropriate groups (fellows and preceptors). Fellows will receive a link to a survey that will ask them to answer questions to measure: (1) knowledge about WIC, nutrition, and relationships between WIC, nutrition, and communities, (2) perceptions regarding

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WIC employment including enablers and barriers to WIC employment, (3) self-efficacy regarding WIC employment, and (4) overall satisfaction and opinions about the fellowship program and WIC placement. Preceptors will receive a link to a survey that will ask them to: (1) assess fellows they mentored during the semester and (2) provide their satisfaction level and general opinions about the fellowship program. Quantitative data will be collected online and downloaded to the evaluation manager's computer and on One Drive ensure use conforms to the highest data security standards.Qualitative data will be transcribed from Zoom-recorded audio files. In focus groups, fellows will be asked to provide feedback about their fellowship experiences including their opinions about preceptors, placement sites, daily operations as a fellow, and how we can improve the fellowship program.Data Format: Quantitative data collected via Survey Monkey will be exported as Excel files to the evaluation manager's computer under password protection and on One Drive. Both the actual value (text answers) and numerical value (numbers only) data files will be downloaded for each Survey Monkey data set to ensure data coding is correct. All data will be stored on the evaluation manager's password-protected computer. A data codebook will not be developed; however, the quantitative surveys will be pre-coded to ensure understanding and validation of analysis procedures. Quantitative data will be analyzed using SPSS, a quantitative analysis software.Qualitative data will be transcribed verbatim. All audio and transcription files will be stored on the evaluation manager's password-protected computer. Audio files will be transcribed using an external transcription vendor and analyzed using Atlas.TI, a qualitative analysis software.Data Sharing, Protection, and Public Access: Data will not be shared with anyone or organization outside of the ASPHN project team. Data will be shared only through One Drive files to ASPHN project members. After completion of the project, all data collected belongs to ASPHN and will be shared with ASPHN. For this reason, data will be stored at ASPHN's office. ASPHN may be contacted directly for requests to use data for subsequent analysis after the end of the project. These measures preserve the long-term safety and accessibility of collected data. All data will be de-identified before the sharing process. Because all data will be de-identified, there will be minimal risk of breach of confidentiality or privacy. Nonetheless, only the ASPHN project team will have access to data, and they will adhere strictly to data security and management protocols.Business confidential information and intellectual property rights will be addressed by establishing MOUs with participating WIC Departments, ensuring that WIC Departments agree to share required data and ensuring that confidential information regarding their participants will be protected. There are no restrictions such as copyright, confidentiality, patent, appropriate credit, disclaimers, or conditions for use of the data by other parties.