Supporting the enrolment and success of under-represented medical students in Alberta

By Pauline Zulka

UCalgary undergraduate program of their choice, a relocation allowance (if needed), a paid summer research internship, and mentorship opportunities. Once their undergraduate degree is complete, and certain criteria are met, Pathways to Medicine scholars are guaranteed admission into the CSM’s Undergraduate Medical Education program. In total, each scholarship recipient receives up to $30,000 of funding towards their journey of becoming a doctor.

With the Pathways to Medicine Scholarship program, students from under-represented populations are given access to the post-secondary education and resources necessary to achieve their academic and scholarly goals — transforming Alberta’s next generation of doctors to more accurately reflect the diverse patient population.

Graduating high school and preparing to enter the world of post-secondary education can often be a stressful time. For students coming from low-income families, furthering their education may seem out of reach — especially for those who dream of becoming a doctor.

In 2016, the Cumming School of Medicine (CSM) at the University of Calgary introduced the Pathways to Medicine Scholarship, which is designed for high school students from under-represented populations (e.g. Indigenous, rural or low socio-economic backgrounds) who wish to pursue a career in medicine. The goal of this scholarship is to foster diversity within the medical profession. Every year, up to five students are provided tuition support towards a UCalgary undergraduate program of their choice, a relocation allowance (if needed), a paid summer research internship, and mentorship opportunities. Once their undergraduate degree is complete, and certain criteria are met, Pathways to Medicine scholars are guaranteed admission into the CSM’s Undergraduate Medical Education program. In total, each scholarship recipient receives up to $30,000 of funding towards their journey of becoming a doctor.

Based on research published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal, medical students in Canada were found to be unrepresentative of the general Canadian population, with medical students more likely to be children of highly educated parents within high-earning households in urban areas.

Pathways to Medicine Scholarship

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For more information, visit cumming.ucalgary.ca/pathways or email pathways@ucalgary.ca.