



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

News Release

Office of Public Affairs
Media Relations

Washington, DC 20420
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 9, 2021

VA seeks increase in academic relationships with minority-serving institutions to expand health professions training

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hosted the 2021 Minority Summit: The Power of Collaborating with VA, June 9, to strengthen and expand its relationships with minority-serving colleges, universities and medical schools, and professional organizations.

VA's Office of Academic Affiliations hosted more than 700 participants in a collaborative effort to increase academic affiliations with minority-serving institutions to create a more diverse cadre of health professions trainees to learn and care for Veteran patients at VA.

Summit discussions centered around affiliation, scholarship and research opportunities available through VA. Included were panels comprised of representatives from VA and academia, remarks by VA Secretary Denis McDonough and a keynote address from Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Clinical Services and Chief Medical Officer of the Veterans Health Administration Kameron Matthews, M.D., J.D.

"Veterans are one of the most diverse populations, representing America in all its strength, a wealth of races, ethnicities, genders, and geographic and cultural backgrounds," said McDonough. "It's vital we build a workforce that reflects the diverse population we serve — not only because it's the right thing to do, but because doing so will save lives. VA has affiliations with more than 200 minority-serving institutions across the country to train health professionals for VA and the nation, and we look forward to establishing even more partnerships to fulfill our mission."

VA has made strides in broadening diversity in the workforce and with its trainees.

The Veterans Health Administration is the largest education and training program for health professionals in the U.S. working with 97% of the country's medical schools and more than 1,800 universities and colleges.

Each year, 120,000 trainees in over 40 clinical health profession education programs, including nearly 20,000 students from minority-serving institutions, train in a VHA facility. Approximately 70% of the country's physicians have participated in training at VA.

Learn more about VHA's mission of training health care professionals at the [Office of Academic Affiliations](#) and viewing this [video](#).

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