



Training Researchers to End Disparities (TREND)

Presented by:
Dr. Krissa Smith
Director of Research Programs



Research Priority: Eliminating Breast Cancer Disparities

WHAT Causes Differences and HOW to Get Care to Everyone

- **Understand the factors impacting breast cancer disparities**
- **Identify populations at risk for disparities & define the variances in the care**
- **Identify and test interventions that bring equity to delivery and access to quality care**



Training Researchers to End Disparities

Intended to establish a training program for graduate students to support careers in understanding and eliminating disparities in breast cancer outcomes.

- **Attract graduate students, specifically those from minority populations affected by disparities in breast cancer outcomes, into research careers.**
- Develop novel and creative methods to empower these students with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively explore the causes of differential breast cancer outcomes and develop interventions to reduce and eliminate such disparities.



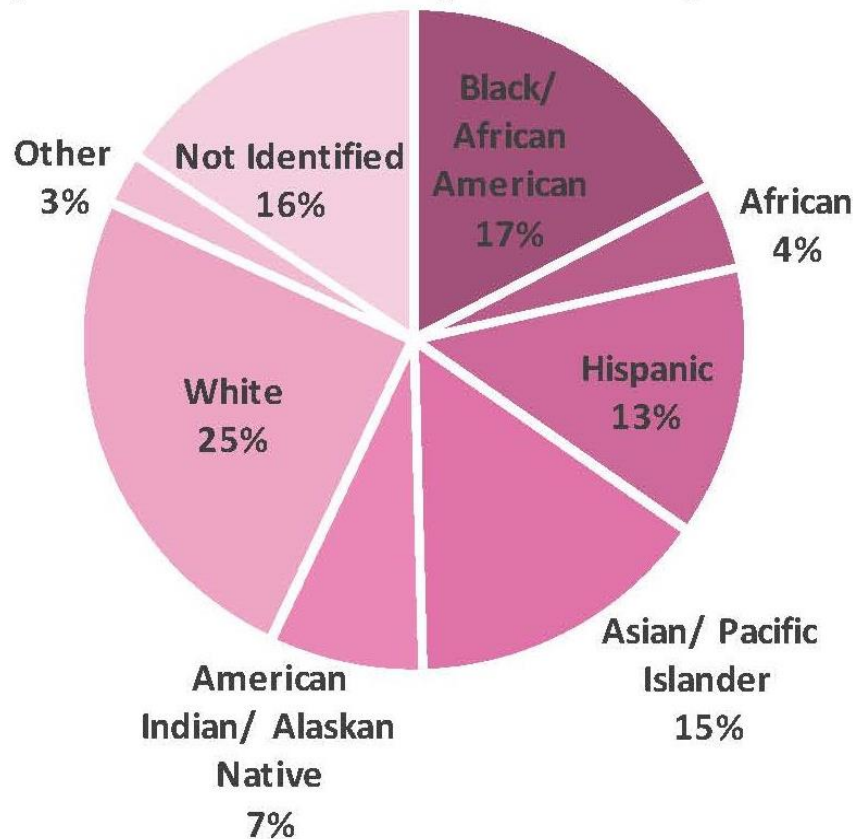
Did it work?



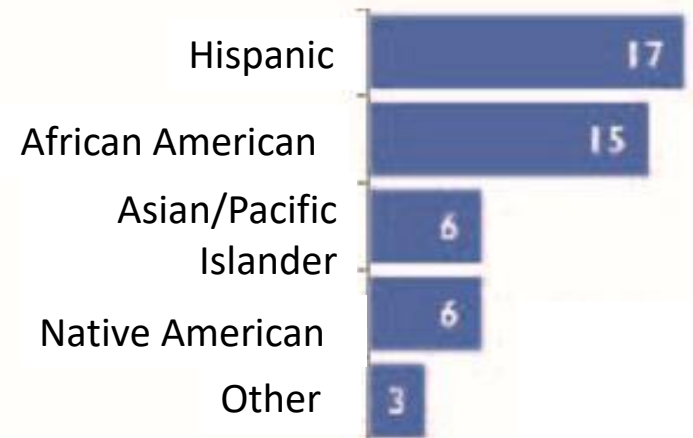
25 training programs supported



133 students trained



Populations studied by TREND programs



After 10 years

2019





2018



2017



- 90% of PIs stated there was increased interest in breast cancer health disparities research at their institution and the program **was attracting students from populations affected by breast cancer disparities into the field**
- Over 40% of trainees indicated that the most important opportunity resulting from the TREND grant was having **contact with experts in the field and networking opportunities**



- Most projects focused on Hispanic or African American populations
- 60% of grantees had at least one TREND related publication, with an average of 1.4 publications per grantee
- All grantees presented TREND related research at a scientific conference, with an average of 8 presentations per TREND program
- 50% of grantees received an honor or award for PDF related research, with a total of 16 reported awards (as of 2017)
- Three of the 10 TREND grantees (who reported) received additional funding as a result of TREND research, totaling over \$2 million, for a 54% return on investment



Institutional Support is key



- **Beyond one on one mentoring and single funded grants, structured formal programs increase resources, collaboration opportunities, and shared knowledge and experiences.**
- **The TREND program builds institutional infrastructure aimed at minority recruitment, disparities focused curriculum, and community collaborations at each funded institution.**
 - Principle Investigators funded through this program indicate an additional strength is the building of collaborations across disciplines and departments that have not traditionally collaborated.



Connecting researchers with communities: **We are all part of a community**



The TREND program provided opportunities for students to interact directly with communities affected by breast cancer disparities in outcomes as well as with Komen Affiliates which would not have occurred in a traditional sciences program.

- Trainees reported that this interaction instills a sense of community engagement which remains a part of their research after their TREND training is complete.
- Mentors indicated that these engagements provide communities with a voice and empowers them to voice health concerns



‘Without a formal Komen program and backup, we [our program] wouldn’t have a face and a name, and way to reach out to partners at the cancer center or state [organizations]; [Without Komen, we would have] nothing behind us and no organizing foundation.’



Challenges

- **Recruitment of trainees**
- **Diversity of Program PIs**
- **Follow up with trainees for evaluation**
- **Supporting trainees past the program (few breast cancer disparities job opportunities)**



Applicant pools are a key factor for success

- **Flexibility!**
- **Commitment to the goals**
- **Clear awareness of opportunities at institution**
- **Building relationships (with institution and PI)**
- **Program name recognition**
- **Collaborations across institutions especially HBCUs**
 - Georgetown and Howard University
- **Traditional methods of recruitment by Request for Application can be insufficient**
- **Building momentum through mentorship**
- **Annual meetings for networking and fostering collaboration**



Follow up

- **This year we are piloting evaluation plans as part of the individual programs**
- **Requiring 2nd email address (not tied to institution)**
- **Building relationships and connecting past graduation and past program funding**
- **Stricter requirements for renewed programs**



Supporting trainees through the pipeline

- **Still working on this!**



Summary

- **Tied minority recruitment to populations who have a disparities in outcomes**
- **Institutional infrastructure and support**
- **Flexibility (programming, students, research)**
- **Branding and Marketing of a program or grant mechanism to generate interest but also to help build long term partnerships (working with the program not a specific trainee)**
- **Increased our evaluation requirements for the programs**
- **Included evaluation activities as part of our trainee meetings**

