RESOLUTION NO. 15

WHEREAS, a health disparity is defined as a difference in health outcomes across subgroups of the population (1) and;

WHEREAS, osteopathic medicine has a unique focus on providing care to populations suffering from health disparities (2) that is in alignment with the Healthy People 2020 goal to achieve health equity and eliminate disparities (3); and

WHEREAS, a contributing factor to this nation’s growing health disparities is the lack of health professionals from those communities (4); and

WHEREAS, physicians from communities suffering from health disparities are more likely to return to practice in underserved areas (5) (6), and choose primary care/family practice as a specialty (4), and it has been proven that increasing the diversity of medical providers is an important strategy to address health disparities (6); and

WHEREAS, pre-admissions programs have been successfully implemented by medical schools to increase diversity of applications and enrollment of medical students (7) (8) and have been found to be effective in increasing the diversity of the physician workforce (9); and

WHEREAS, a multitude of strategies have been set forth to enhance the diversity of minorities in the healthcare workforce. Two key strategies include (7):

1) increasing the representation of diverse faculty on major institutional committees, including governance boards and advisory councils

2) advise and support socio-economically disadvantaged students before applying to medical school through recruitment, advising, and pipeline programs; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) shall advocate for medical schools to implement programs that increase recruitment from communities suffering from health disparities by active recruitment of underrepresented medical school faculty within all U.S. medical schools. This includes implementation of recruitment, advising, and pipeline programs for medical students from disadvantaged communities while encouraging them to return to underserved areas to practice medicine. This may effectively contribute to the elimination of growing health disparities in the United States.

ACTION _________________
Resources


