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DeepTok Receives $25,000 Grant from the Walmart Foundation to Coach Underrepresented Students Pursuing Healthcare Careers

Statewide pipeline program supports community college students preparing for doctoral programs in healthcare.

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—May 22, 2017—Underrepresented community college students now have access to role models, professional development workshops, and coaching as they pursue the path to doctoral programs in the health sciences. A $25,000 grant from the Walmart Foundation will support a pipeline of students, primarily from African American, Latino, and Native American communities, into healthcare professions through group coaching, workshops, and conversations with practicing professionals.

DeepTok was co-founded by Nancy Nkansah-Mahaney, PharmD, a Stanford medical student, and Associate Clinical Professor at UCSF School of Pharmacy. DeepTok expands access to healthcare professions requiring a doctorate by using technology to link underrepresented students to experts, educators, and coaches in healthcare fields, such as pharmacy, optometry, medicine, and physical therapy. These experts help community college students prepare for careers by giving real-world advice, sharing insights on entering their fields, and providing coaching and mentoring.

Underrepresented students face numerous barriers to pursuing advanced education in the health sciences, including a lack of role models, awareness of the college to career journey, a support system, and prior academic preparation. Community colleges serve as the primary gateway to a four-year college for Latino, African American, and Native American students, yet they often lack sufficient resources to support these students.

DeepTok will use funding from the Walmart Foundation to provide students in the program with interactive, online workshops, coaching, conversations with practicing professionals, and exposure to innovators and researchers in healthcare. The program helps students create a student Success Road Map to frame their academic-career journey, and then uses simple tools and one-to-one, online interactions to assist students as they progress toward their professional vision. Students build an academic network, develop their professional image, become more comfortable speaking with other professionals, and adopt a mindset for proactively keeping abreast of innovations in their field of interest.

When Paulina Hernandez enrolled in classes at Santa Rosa Junior College in 2012, she knew she wanted to pursue a degree in science, but didn’t know what career would fit her interest.

“DeepTok helped guide me. They gave me tips on how to become a professional and allowed me to shadow a pharmacist for a day,” said Hernandez. “Hearing the mentors’ stories, it became clear to me that pharmacy was for me.”
Ms. Hernandez will attend UCSF in the fall, with the ultimate goal of receiving a Doctor of Pharmacy.

DeepTok is a fiscally sponsored project of the Foundation for California Community Colleges. “We are thrilled the Walmart Foundation is investing in solutions that break down barriers to student success and promote equity in education,” said Keetha Mills, president and CEO of the Foundation for California Community Colleges. The Foundation provides programs and services designed to benefit students, colleges, college foundations, and the system as a whole, helping to improve education opportunities throughout the state.

For more information on DeepTok, please visit www.deeptok.org.

DeepTok was founded by four healthcare professionals who want to shatter boundaries and provide real-world advice and resources many students need to achieve their goals.” DeepTok contracts with California community colleges to provide services to students, and is supported by the Walmart Foundation. Co-founders of DeepTok are Nancy Nkansah-Mahaney, PharmD, Lupe Govea, PharmD, Maria Rivas, PharmD, and Jane Binger, EdD. DeepTok Advisors include Cynthia Irvine, MEd, Marcella Anthony, MPA, Jacqueline Bernhelm, MBA, Joe Bucher, MA, Brandon David, MD, PhD, Ron Garcia, PhD, Iris Gibbs, MD, FACR, Mark Gutierrez, MA, Sara Gaviser Leslie, MBA, Alden McDonald III, MD, Darci Rosales, MS, Rene Rubio, Neil Sarreshteh, BS-EE, Singari Seshadri, MBA, Rebecca Shubin, MS, and Barbara Webster-Hawkins, MNA. | deeptok.org

The Foundation for California Community Colleges is the official nonprofit foundation to the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and Chancellor’s Office. The Foundation’s mission is to benefit, support, and enhance the missions of the California Community Colleges system, the largest higher education system in the nation. Incorporated in 1998, the Foundation works with community colleges and partner organizations to manage donations, grants, programs, and services that drive excellence in education. Since inception, the Foundation has provided over $250 million in direct grants, support, and cost savings to California Community Colleges. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit corporation and receives no direct state or public support. | www.foundationccc.org

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