

Students from racially/ethnically diverse backgrounds are underrepresented in graduate programs in biomedical disciplines. These findings can inform the design of internship programs aimed at increasing rates of graduate school attendance among underrepresented students. [PUBLICATION ABSTRACT] One goal of the Minority Institution/Cancer Center partnership between New Mexico State University (NMSU) and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (FHCRC) is to expand the number of underrepresented students who are trained in cancer research. This study examined the graduate school attendance rates of past interns, explored interns' perceptions of the training program, and identified ways to improve the program. Thirty undergraduate students enrolled at NMSU participated in the internship program from 2002 to 2007 and telephone interviews were conducted on 22 (73%) of them. Students rated highly the following aspects of the program: mentored research, informal time spent with mentors, and research seminars.