

A close-up photograph of a person in a laboratory setting. The person is wearing orange safety glasses, a white surgical mask, and blue nitrile gloves. They are holding a white pipette. On their dark grey t-shirt, there is a yellow circular logo for Dalhousie University and a name tag that says "Carely". The background is blurred, showing other people and lab equipment.

Promoting Diversity in Health Care

A Year in Review
2016-2017



MESSAGE FROM THE DEANS OF **DENTISTRY, HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND MEDICINE**

Diversity and inclusion are major considerations for those in the health professions. The Maritime provinces contain diverse populations, but that diversity is often not as well represented among health professionals as it should be. For us, it is important that communities can see themselves in those who care for their health needs. For young people from diverse backgrounds, it is vitally important that they can see themselves in the health professions, so that they know this is a goal that is within their reach.

Our faculties strive to improve access to education for students from diverse backgrounds and populations, to enable them to study the health professions and to help them throughout their studies. Through programs, scholarships, and other supports, we aim to achieve greater representation of our diverse populations within our healthcare system.

Diversity is not just about numbers, however. For us, it is about how well our faculties value and include all faculty members, staff, students, patients, and the wider community we serve. It means practising inclusion in every aspect of what we do. This is what makes our professions meaningful and it is what we expect our students to take with them into their professional lives.

Alice Aiken
Dean of Health Professions

David Anderson
Dean of Medicine

Thomas Boran
Dean of Dentistry



INDIGENOUS HEALTH PROGRAMS

Beginning in April 2017 and building on the successes of the Aboriginal Health Sciences Initiative (AHSI), the vital work of advancing student success will be expanded across every Faculty through the University's commitment to enhance the scope of Indigenous student access and success, and program development. As currently structured, the AHSI wrapped up on March 31, 2017 with exciting next steps planned.

Created in 2009, the AHSI was established in response to an acknowledged need to increase the educational interest and success of Indigenous peoples in health sciences. Between 2009 and 2017, the AHSI advanced Indigenous student support at Dalhousie in key areas:

- **Community Outreach:** regular visits and outreach activities with Indigenous communities across the Maritimes
- **Pathway Programs:** Junior University which introduced junior high school students to careers in health through a one-week summer camp and the Aboriginal Health Sciences Success Program, a pilot transition year program.
- **Supporting Students:** support to potential and current Indigenous students through individual mentoring and advocacy.
- **Curricular Developments:** embedded Indigenous content in existing course curricula, creation of a new course in the Faculty of Health Professions and the Medicine Wheel Speaker Series.

MOVING FORWARD

In October 2016, Dalhousie Medicine established an Indigenous Health Program to provide additional support to the needs within the Faculty for students, community and faculty members. This innovative program is aimed at supporting the recruitment and retention of Indigenous students in medicine. The program also aims to address the recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and further Dalhousie's commitment to social accountability to the Maritime Indigenous population. The program is available to all Indigenous applicants, providing mentoring (peer and professional) as well as admissions interview preparation. A program manager was hired to provide leadership to this work.

The university has an Indigenous Advisory Council to provide advice to senior administration. In December 2016, the Faculty of Medicine established an Indigenous Health Working Group chaired by Dr. Amy Bombay to fulfil the social accountability mandate with the Indigenous communities in the Maritimes. There will be attention to:

- developing admission pathways
- creating mentoring and outreach opportunities
- ensuring equity in admissions for all students of Indigenous descent
- pursuing opportunities for curriculum development
- promoting health research relevant to the community

JUNIOR UNIVERSITY PROGRAM

Since 2011, the junior university is held every summer for one week at Dalhousie's Halifax Campus. The program accepts 15-20 Indigenous

youth between the ages of 14–17. The youth accepted from the Maritime Provinces into the program are given the full university experience.

With the success of Junior University at Dalhousie University, two new opportunities will be made available for students in 2017. Dalhousie Medicine will partner with Cape Breton University, St. Francis Xavier University and the Nova Scotia Community College to offer special summer camps through the Indigenous Health Program in collaboration with PLANS.

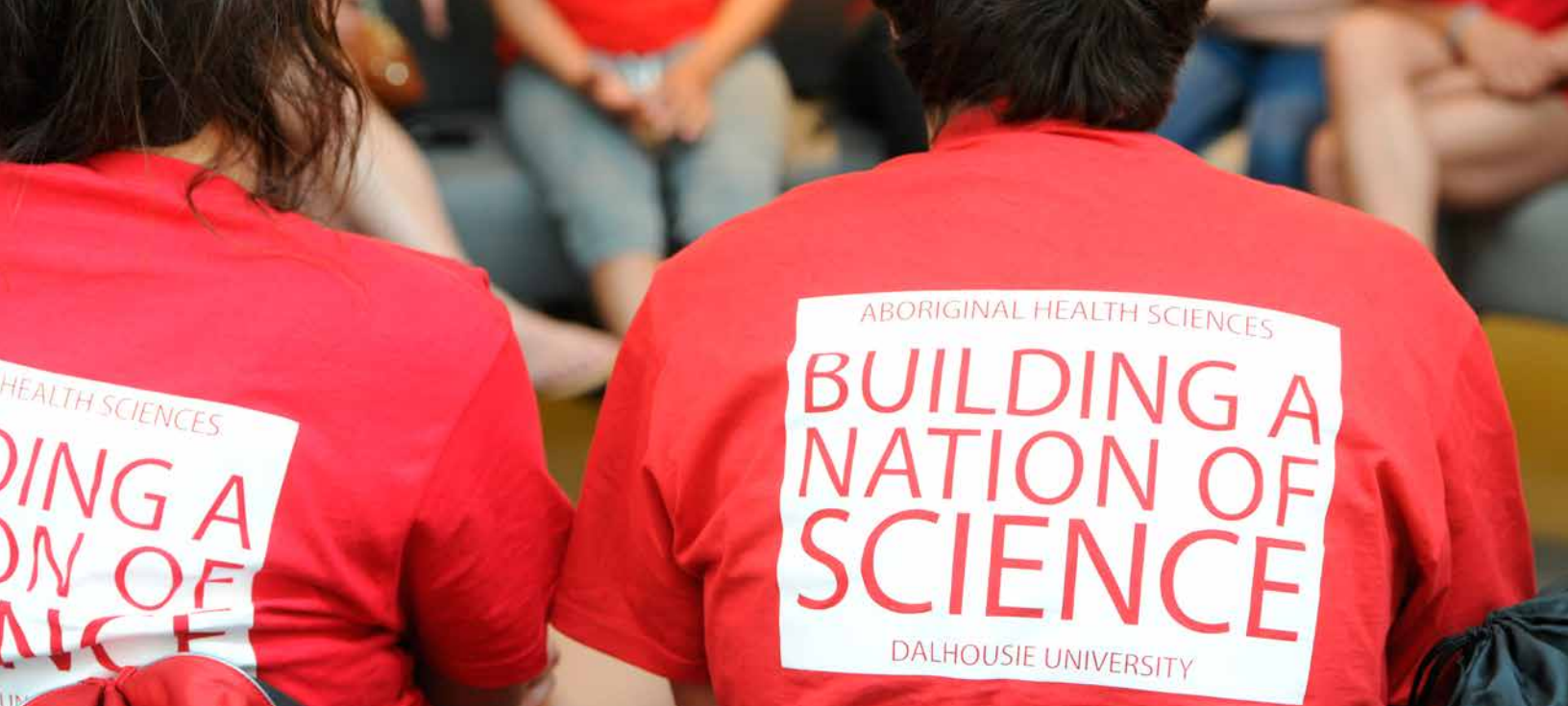
In August 2017, the Junior University will be offered in Halifax for students to learn about Dalhousie University and participate in hands on learning in the health faculties.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In 2016, there was an expansion of community outreach with Indigenous communities beyond the Halifax campus. The Miramichi site in New Brunswick has a partnership with Eel Ground First Nation in which students gain valuable experience working closely with a First Nation community to gain better access to doctors in their community.

In 2016, Dalhousie Medicine bolstered their relationship with the Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre in Halifax by showcasing opportunities for community members to engage within the medical school curriculum. Through this outreach, there has been an increase in the number of indigenous community members participating in key programs in medical education.

Dalhousie Medicine also reached out to the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs (APC) for support in the development of curriculum on Indigenous health within the medical school curriculum. APC supported the development of case studies, identified presenters on Indigenous health, health care delivery, and culture.



SPEAKER SERIES

To raise awareness of excellence within the Indigenous health community, Dr. Barry Lavallee (family physician specializing in Indigenous health and northern practice) and Dr. Nadine Carron (first female Indigenous surgeon in Canada) were keynote speakers at Dalhousie University and shared their experiences as leaders within Canada's health sector.

CURRICULUM SUPPORT

Pivotal to addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Recommendations is supporting the inclusion of Indigenous health within the curriculum. In the Faculty of Medicine, Indigenous content was integrated into exams, the Skilled Clinician Program, Volunteer Patient Program, Professional Competency case development and identification of tutors.

Selected Indigenous community members with knowledge of Indigenous culture and Indigenous health were chosen to co-tutor the Indigenous themed cases as an additional resource for students and tutors.

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Five elders joined Dalhousie in 2015 as part of the Elders-in-Residence Program. The Elders are committed to being available to students for guidance, counsel and support, as well as provide smudging ceremonies at the Multi-Faith Centre on campus and conducting talking circles for students on request.

In 2016, Dalhousie celebrated Mi'kmaq History month with the raising of the Mi'kmaq flag on campus and a large Mawio'mi (gathering). This permanent installation of the flag demonstrates Dalhousie's commitment to create a more inclusive atmosphere for its Indigenous students while also educating all students, faculty, and staff on Mi'kmaq culture and history.



PLANS

PROMOTING LEADERSHIP IN HEALTH FOR AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIANS

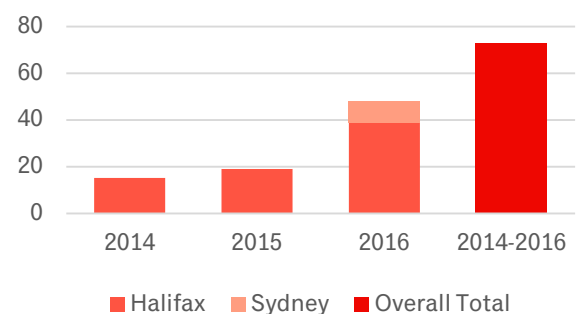
There are 20,790 persons who identify as Black, which is 2.3% of the total Nova Scotian population. African Nova Scotians are the largest racially visible group in Nova Scotia. The current work force, including health care, is not representative of the diversity that exists in Nova Scotia.

In 2013, PLANS was established to increase representation of people of African descent across the health professions through recruitment and retention, collaborations and partnerships that foster a pathway of equity and support.

SUMMER CAMPS

A key activity for PLANS is hosting the African Nova Scotian Health Sciences Summer Camp. In its first two years (2014 and 2015), camp participation numbers increased from 15 to 19. In 2015, a marked interest in the camp was shown through the number of applications from interested youth growing over 300%.

African Nova Scotian Health Science Summer Camp Participation 2014–2016



In 2016, 39 African Nova Scotian learners from across the province attended the program in Halifax and there was an expansion of the camp to Cape Breton University in Sydney. Both camp locations had the same goal of providing participants with interactive programming to introduce health programs and careers, post-secondary life, opportunity to meet new friends, and have fun.



Core programming was selected to provide camp participants the opportunity to explore a wide range of health programs and professions offered at the diploma, undergraduate and graduate or professional level. Camp participants were engaged in activities related to medicine; nursing (including continuing care), licenced practical nursing; dentistry (including dental hygiene); health promotion; medical sciences, biology, and nutrition.

2016 Outcomes

- Increased number of camp participants (48), locations (2), and partners (Cape Breton University, Cape Breton Business College, Cape Breton Service Providers Network)

- More than 95% of campers indicated interest in applying to a post-secondary health program in the future
- Majority of campers reported a better understanding of post-secondary health programs options

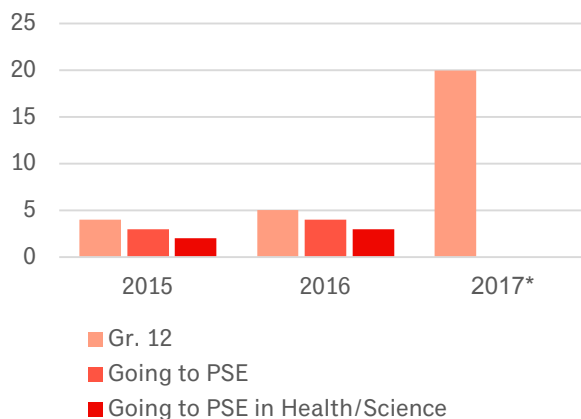
2017 Planned Outputs

- New location and partnership with St. Francis Xavier University and Indigenous Health Programs
- New summer program hosted at Dalhousie University to prepare learners entering post-secondary education
- Camp alumni choosing post-secondary education in a health field

SUMMER CAMP FOLLOW UP

Summer camps' participants are contacted by the program manager at various points after attending the camp to monitor student engagement in post-secondary education and health sciences.

Summer Program Grade 12 Follow Up (*in progress)



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Being present in the community is a valuable opportunity to raise the profile of PLANS and share information to the broader community. From attending community building events and mentorship nights hosted by the Dalhousie Black Student Advising Centre, speaking with community members at the Preston Area Community Health Fair or at the launch of Nova Scotia Brotherhood, to celebrating with the graduates of Dalhousie's Transition Year Program and 20 years of dentistry in North Preston.

In 2016, over 100 junior high and high school learners from across the Halifax area were brought together to meet with black health professionals from their community and participated in interactive sessions to learn more and help plan a career and education in health. This collaboration began in 2013 and has reached about 500 learners.

The Health Association of African Canadians – Student Organization (HAAC-SO) has the goal of bringing students together to create a community of learning centered on Black health issues, career development and community engagement. The group has hosted guest speakers to present on Black health issues, visited community youth groups to talk about health careers, supported HAAC endeavours, and participated as mentors to the summer camp participants.

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Dalhousie University is committed to diversity and inclusion. PLANS facilitates training on diversity and inclusion with Human Rights & Equity Services to students, staff, and faculty. A testament to this work was the inclusion of training to all incoming medical students.

“As a Black Canadian with Nova Scotian and Caribbean heritage I have often found that I am one of the only Black women, or persons of color, in certain academic settings... The [training] provided my classmates and I with a safe space to talk about issues that can, at times, be uncomfortable.”

– First-year medical student

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Develop educational materials for students and communities on health careers
- Offer structured mentorship for high school and current Dalhousie students
- Extend outreach into the communities and local programming
- Continue to develop and improve programming to meet the needs of the community and students.



MENTORSHIP

The development of a mentorship program will support the advancement of indigenous and African Nova Scotian students into health careers. Mentorship for prospective students includes advising from the program manager and admissions personnel, interactive sessions with current medical students to hear the personal stories, which often leads to sustained communications afterwards, and interview preparation.

The Indigenous Health Program provides mentorship and academic support to members of the Indigenous community through community

or school presentations, individual meetings with advisors or health professionals from the community, or formal mentorship through the Circle of Support Mentorship Program. The aim is to support and inspire Indigenous learners on their journey toward a career in medicine. Resources available within the Indigenous Program include study skills; time management; research skills; MCAT information sessions; and interview preparation.

In September 2017, the *Circle of Support Mentorship* Program will be launched with the beginning of the academic year. All components of the program will enrich the education experiences of young Indigenous and African Nova Scotian learners.



ADDRESSING THE FINANCIAL BARRIERS

Two types of bursaries were developed to support Indigenous and African Nova Scotian students access a career in health. The first bursary is designed to enable students to attend extracurricular programming as part of their professional development. The first funds were distributed in April 2017.

The second bursary program supports students applying to programs that require entrance exams (e.g. medical school, dental school). The goal is to reduce or eliminate the financial burden associated with application requirements.

The three health faculties are establishing a committee to oversee the Scholarship Program for Indigenous and African Nova Scotian students. The committee is developing selection criteria, promotional materials and reporting structures. The program will be promoted during the next academic year.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

FUNDING SOURCES FOR 2016–17

Private Donors	\$200,000
Johnson Scholarship Foundation	\$200,000
Government	\$40,000
Dalhousie University	\$210,000
TOTAL	\$650,000

With special thanks to the Johnson Scholarship Foundation and the Windsor Foundation. We are grateful to all donors who have contributed to the Johnson Pathway Programs. You are the foundation for our success.

