A joint program of the University of California, San Francisco Comprehensive Cancer Center & the University of California, Los Angeles School of Public Health

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the MTPCCR?

A training program for minority master’s students in health science programs or master’s trained health professionals consisting of:

- a 5-day summer institute
- paid internships
- doctoral application support awards

What is the purpose?

To encourage minority students in master's level health programs and master’s trained professionals to pursue a doctoral degree and a career in cancer control research.

So it’s for people who know they want to get their doctorate and study cancer?

No, not exclusively! The MTPCCR is designed to introduce individuals to the idea of a career in research, especially for those who haven’t considered this possibility yet. For individuals already interested in going on, the program will give them many of the tools they need to take the next step.

We hope many of our participants will go on in the field of cancer control, and the faculty for our summer institute are mostly cancer control researchers. But the main aim of the program is to foster interest in public health research among those whose ethno-cultural background is underrepresented in their field.

But I’m really not interested in cancer. Is this still for me?

Yes. Many people think of microscopes and lab coats when they think of cancer research, but virtually any interest one may have in public health is represented in cancer control research.

The field of cancer control includes the study of disease trends and etiology in populations; research on how to change behavior for health promotion including health communication; environmental epidemiology; health economics; policy research and advocacy; health psychology; and many more public health topics.

In particular, there is a great deal of cancer control research that focuses on underserved populations, including how to conduct valid research across cultures, and identifying and eliminating disease disparities.
I am not a U.S. citizen, can I still apply?

Yes, non-U.S. citizens are eligible to apply. The application will be reviewed in its entirety. This includes an applicant’s desire to pursue a doctorate and career in cancer control addressing underserved populations. All applications will be competitively evaluated.

I am in a doctoral program, which includes the attainment of a master’s degree, can I apply?

No. The program is set up for those persons who are thinking about applying to a doctorate program but have not made the final step OR who have not thought about it until hearing about the program.

I have a medical degree from another country, can I apply?

Yes. However, applicants must be currently enrolled in a master’s health science program or have obtained a master’s degree in a health science program from a U.S. institution or an institution abroad.

Can I be enrolled in any master’s level health program or does it need to be in public health?

A person in any master’s level health program may apply to the MTPCCR, including those in the population sciences and social health sciences (epidemiology, biostatistics, health education, nutrition, behavioral sciences, health psychology, anthropology, etc.).

What is unique about this program?

The Summer Institute features accomplished minority role model researchers who share their research and their personal experiences in the field of research. Concrete tools on how to get into and stay in a doctoral program are provided. Internships give students first-hand experience in a research setting, usually working with diverse and underserved communities. Doctoral Application Support Awards provide financial assistance to offset the cost of testing, applications, and campus visits for those wishing to apply to doctoral programs.

When was the MTPCCR established?

The MTPCCR was first funded by the National Cancer Institute in 1998. A new five-year grant began in 2001.

How many people have participated in the program so far?

A total of 231 people have already attended the program (159-UCSF & 72-UCLA). Of the 231, 58 (38-UCSF & 20-UCLA) participants have been placed in internships.
**What do former alums have to say about MTPCCR?**

"The program has been tremendous. It has played a role in helping me to appreciate so many cultures and the great need for insiders like me. I believe that I have been empowered to take this inspiration to the next level." - S.G.

The summer institute has dared me to think and dream beyond the world of a MPH degree. I can say to myself “what if I went on for a doctorate” and not “should I”? It has opened my eyes to the possibilities. - J. S.

"Before the Summer Institute, the biggest fear I had was the fear of not being successful. Now I know, that the key to success is having support from those who have been where you are trying to go." - L.C.

I can’t express how I feel about the gift that MTPCCR has given me. I will strive to give to others in the same powerful, positive spirit. - A.B.

"The Summer Institute has encouraged me and guided me to reach further, not only to pursue a doctoral degree but to reach above ordinary expectations to be more than I ever imagined!" - N.F.

The MTPCCR is a wonderful opportunity to meet world renown ‘minority’ researchers, to meet fellow participants who truly have the motivation to succeed, and to meet program staff who support our endeavors. - S. S.

There is no question this program will motivate and inspire you to become a PhD. Just by being here you demonstrate your passion and commitment, and your sense of social justice. Carry that with you and you will achieve your goals. – Y.A.