

Building research in a rural community-based school

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Challenges for rural and community-based programs

- Stronger orientation toward practice vs. scholarship
- Less interest in academics/promotion
- Stronger alignment with promoting the welfare of the local community rather than doing research to improve overall health in the world
- Inexperience with research
- Less time for scholarship



Create interest

- Think about community needs and issues as motivation.
- Start small with more motivated faculty. Mentor aggressively.
- Hire or embed research-oriented faculty in clinical departments, as role models and resources
 - Co-appointments/salary support
- Don't be shy about reaching out to basic scientists.
 - (“They don't want to talk to me.”)
- Celebrate successes!
- MSU culture change: Hiring a research nurse



Define “research” creatively

- QI challenges
- Educational innovation
- Suboptimal patient outcomes
- Communication with patients
- Business practices and workflow issues
- Social determinants of health
- Ethics
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion (for patients, communities, faculty, staff.....)



Research teams

- Multiply and supplement individual expertise
- Reduce the workload and offer easy entry points for someone to get involved
- Are just more fun than working solo
- Research assistance
 - Clinical research nurse
 - DaCCoTA research navigator role
 - Biostats / informatics consultants
 - How to write a paper workshop / writers' circles
 - Senior departmental faculty research director/advisor



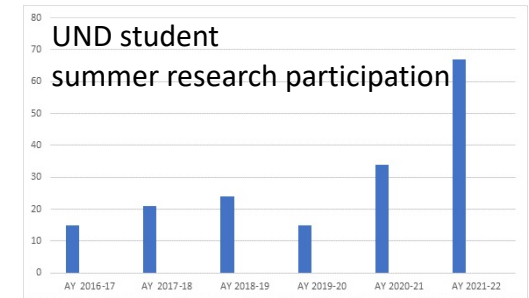
Broaden the talent pool

- Feasibility mini-grants
- Targeted RFA's may entice a new participant
- Build clinician-non-clinician teams
 - Lunch sessions
 - Pilot funding for teams
 - Custom assembly of teams by invitation
 - Grad student clinical rotations
- Cast a wide net for investigators (nurses, allied health professionals, psychologists, counselors, social workers)
- Practice-based research networks both widen the pool and increase the “n”.



Incorporate trainees

- Use trainees as engines. Helping others is more fun!
- Incorporate research into the trainee curriculum and culture
- Reminders about the pragmatic utility of scholarship
- Trainee publication costs
- Mini-pilot grants for trainees
- Trainee research expectations/requirements
 - “Force” research but also expose learners who might not try
 - Change the faculty culture by changing trainee culture
- The resident “research year” –right and wrong ways
- Presentation vs. publication
- Student research lab



Reject the notion of inexperience

- Faculty may not have “research” experience, but....
- Literature searching for patient care challenges
- Making independent judgments about published work
- Clinical quality improvement / assurance work
- Evaluating new educational programs
- Filling out less than comprehensible forms (!!)
- Preparing lectures for trainees
- Written communication (EMR notes, letters, essays.....)



Address inexperience by mentorship

- Critical for success
- Community-based faculty may not have been raised in a tradition of scholarship
- Identify potential mentors within each unit
- Mentor the mentors
- Walk the walk as well as talking the talk. Senior leadership should demonstrate that this is valued and part of their own values.
- Provide didactic training
 - Starter curriculum for DaCCoTA clinician buy-out award
 - “How to write a paper” workshop
- Pragmatic assistance with details (DaCCoTA)
 - Mandatory consultations before application
 - Research navigators to facilitate these interactions
 - How do I fill out the forms? What forms do I even fill out? What am I supposed to write here?
- Medical librarian support with literature search, journal choice, etc.
- Again, celebrate successes!!



Finding the time

- Adjust expectations of both the new investigator and mentors and leadership. Productivity on nights and weekends is NOT the same as productivity with 50% effort.
- Protected time is not necessary but is very helpful. (MDB personal experience as junior faculty.)
- Compensation for scholarship time and teaching time as a double-edged sword
- Once faculty catch fire, they will try to find time, but you have to light the spark and fan its growth
- QI vs. “research”: The IRB perspective
- Trainees as surrogates for time



Finding the time for trainees

- “Research month” vs. longitudinal experience
- UND REMS program – reimagined
 - 2 week pre-curriculum
 - Elective course credit vs. summer stipend
 - Comp to the faculty for time/breakage/publication costs
- UND 4th year research month elective – reimagined
- The resident research year
- MPH or PhD in residency
- Training grants to support residents in research
 - Individual vs. institutional



Fanning the flame

- Celebrate successes (for the third time because it's so important!)
- Consider honoraria for trainees who publish
- Move successful researchers into mentorship roles for others
- Build the culture
- Grant writing workshop
- Grant writers' circle
- Mock study section
- UND SMHS meritorious grant award

