

Digital Mentoring and Career Guidance System to Facilitate the Entry of Minorities into Health Care Professions

It is well established that mentoring and career guidance play an important role in the professional development of students. Lack of mentors and guidance can negatively affect the career prospects of any student or young professional. This is even more applicable for women and ethnic or racial minorities. As a result of this, students from racial or ethnic minorities are less likely to enter or achieve success in healthcare professions, creating a cycle of discouragement for students interested in the field. This leads to racial maldistribution of healthcare professionals and inefficiencies in providing healthcare to minorities. Studies of the healthcare sector have shown that this lack of racial diversity is correlated with unconscious bias, culturally insensitive medical advice and lapses in care. Considering this lack of diversity, a system that can provide better guidance on entering the health professions to students from predominantly underrepresented racial or ethnic minorities will be highly beneficial to the students as well as to the profession. The purpose of this invention is to address these shortcomings in the health care field, providing support to students during a challenging process. This app will bring mentorship and career guidance to students, especially those from minority communities, who wish to pursue a career in health care.

Technology

This innovative M3 (Mentoring Minorities in Medicine) App provides an iOS and Android electronic method that will offer students a personalized platform through which they can access resources that will enable them to succeed as students and later as professionals in a healthcare-oriented field. It will serve as a personalized, gamified mobile-enabled web application that will be populated with checklists, career support resources, a mentoring platform and strategies to support minority students in healthcare fields. To maintain oversight of monitoring and evaluation, the app is built to track retention metadata, such as app downloads, retention over time, and user engagement. To ensure common code base between various mobile platforms, the App will be built on a reactive native framework.

Application

- Students will be able to use this app as their personalized, gamified dashboard for a career path in medical field and to access important information and resources
- The M3 app will connect new students with clinicians, health care leaders, and medical students from minority communities who can serve as mentors and allow students to ask questions through a unique mentor forum
- Students will be able to create an individualized checklist for major milestones so that they can track their own progress

Advantages/Benefits

- The main pathway and checklist of the App can be "gamified" for improved engagement and encouragement of users
- This app will provide students/applicants from minority communities with information and guidance regarding applying for minority related scholarships and other related resources
- The M3 App will improve the experience of predominantly minority students entering the healthcare profession and encourage more of them to become leaders

Status of Development

- Concept and Design Framework - completed
- Planning and Storyboarding - completed
- Graphic Design Phase: Stage 1- in progress

Intellectual Property – Provisional Patent Application filed on September 24, 2019.

Information on Inventors



Farzana Haffizulla M.D. FACP FAMWA – Dr. Haffizulla is the Chair, Department of Internal Medicine at NSU's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine and is the former Assistant Dean for Community and Global Health, Co-chair of Admissions and founding team member at NSU MD. She is the 2014-15 National President of the American Medical Women's Association (AMWA), an author, medical TV Host and an internationally recognized speaker.



Anjali Ramoutar – Anjali Ramoutar, MPH, recently graduated from Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health where she studied Sociomedical Sciences and earned a certificate in Health and Human Rights. Anjali worked closely under Dr. Haffizulla to support Caribbean Health initiatives at NSU MD.



Vejendra Ammar – Vejendra (VJ) Ammar is an experienced software engineer and applied scientist, currently serving as a Software Engineer at Amazon. VJ is versed in FDA requirements for health technology as well as technical requirements including iOS development, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and REST services.



Hemangi Rajpal – Hemangi is a freshman at Vanderbilt University, pursuing a BS in Neuroscience on the pre-medicine track, and a Cornelius Vanderbilt merit scholarship recipient. She is also the chief product owner and designer of her own app Chreate (on the App Store).



Anam Ahmed – Anam Ahmed is a freshman at the University of Miami, pursuing dual bachelor's degrees in Microbiology & Immunology and Public Health, on the Foote Fellows Honors Program. She has performed independent research at the Diabetes Research Institute at UM and University of Florida.

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