

**MINORITY HEALTH AND HEALTH DISPARITIES  
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING (MHIRT) PROGRAM  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA  
MHIRT APPLICATION PACKET 2018**

Aloha! This informational packet contains all of the required application materials for the 2018 Fellowship. Please read through it carefully. It is your responsibility to see that your complete application (including the completely filled application form, essays, unofficial transcript, and any other supporting materials) is submitted by **November 1, 2017**.

APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED IF ANY OF THESE ITEMS ARE LATE OR MISSING.

This informational packet consists of:

Application Form (Applicant information, Essays and Contact information of References)

Health Disparities Information

Checklist Application

#### Eligibility

This program is open to U.S. citizens and permanent residents from health disparity communities who are currently an undergraduate or graduate student. Students from all academic disciplines are welcome to apply. You must be enrolled in classes for the entire Spring 2017 semester in order to be eligible. For the purposes of this program, the U.S. Government has defined members of health disparity communities as follows: African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, and the medically underserved (i.e., socio-economically disadvantaged individuals in rural and urban areas). Students of Filipino and Vietnamese ancestry are also eligible.

Please submit all completed application forms via:

E-Mail : [mhirt-l@lists.hawaii.edu](mailto:mhirt-l@lists.hawaii.edu) (as one PDF file) or

Mail:                      Attn: MHIRT Program  
                                    Department of Tropical Medicine, Microbiology and Pharmacology  
                                    John A. Burns School of Medicine  
                                    651 Ilalo St. BSB 320  
                                    Honolulu, HI 96813

All questions regarding the application process or the fellowship program can be directed to [mhirt-l@lists.hawaii.edu](mailto:mhirt-l@lists.hawaii.edu). You may also contact Dr. Vivek R. Nerurkar ([nerurkar@hawaii.edu](mailto:nerurkar@hawaii.edu)) or Dr. Diane Taylor ([dwtaylor@hawaii.edu](mailto:dwtaylor@hawaii.edu)), MHIRT Principal Investigators.



**INTERNATIONAL BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH TRAINING FOR  
MINORITY STUDENTS**

**National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities, NIH  
(1T37MD008636-04)**

**John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii at Manoa  
MHIRT APPLICATION FORM 2018**



Please fill the application form below. If you have any questions about the application process, please contact us at [mhirt-l@lists.hawaii.edu](mailto:mhirt-l@lists.hawaii.edu) or (808) 692-1652

The deadline for applications for the 2017 fellowship is **November 1, 2017**.

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Current mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Birth date (MM/DD/YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_ Gender  Male  Female  Other Student ID No \_\_\_\_\_

Foreign Language proficiency (if yes, please specify language and indicate proficiency \_\_\_\_\_)

Yes  No

U.S. Citizenship (If No, Resident Alien card will be requested if selected)

Yes  No

Do you have a passport? (If Yes, please provide expiration date \_\_\_\_\_)

Yes  No

**ACADEMIC BACKGROUND**

Major field of study \_\_\_\_\_ Minor field, if you have one \_\_\_\_\_

Academic standing (please check one)

Second year undergraduate

5+ year undergraduate/Postbaccalaureate

Third year undergraduate

Masters student

Fourth year undergraduate

PhD student

Current GPA \_\_\_\_\_ Anticipated graduation date (Semester and year) \_\_\_\_\_

**ETHNIC BACKGROUND**

Ethnic category (select all that apply)

Hawaiian

Pacific Islander American

Native American/Alaskan

Hispanic/Latin American

Asian American

Filipino American

African American

White American

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity (e.g. Samoan, Mexican, Vietnamese) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently receiving need-based financial support through the Financial Aid Office?

Yes No

Are you from a health disparity community as defined below? Yes No

*The US government has defined members of health disparity communities as follows: Blacks and African Americans, Hispanics/Latino Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders Americans, and low-income Americans with annual income thresholds defined by the U.S. census Bureau. Low income applicants must demonstrate they have: 1) qualified for federal disadvantaged assistance or 2) received any of the following student loans: a) HPSL, b) Loans for Disadvantaged Student Program, or c) scholarships from the US department of Health and Human Services under the scholarship for Individuals with Exceptional Financial Need.*

Are you from a rural health disparity community as described below? Yes No

Please check the following website to see if you qualify: <http://www.raconline.org/amirural>

If yes, please provide zip code \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSAYS

1. Research Experience(s): Describe your previous research experience(s), if any in the space below (please limit to 200 words)

2. International Experience(s): Describe any international travel/study experiences you have had and the reason for the travel (please limit to 100 words)

3. Health Disparities: Based on the definition of Health disparities (see page 7 ), *please write an essay on - what do you think is the biggest health disparity in your under-represented group (i.e., Pacific Islander, Hawaiian, Filipino, rural area, etc.) and give a specific example on how biomedical research might help solve the problem (maximum 1,500 words). Refer to health disparities examples on pages 7-8. If you need more space, please include essay as a separate attachment.*

4. Career choices: Tell us why you think you are interested in a career in research (please limit to 500 words)

## CONTACT INFORMATION FOR REFERENCES

Please provide the name, email address and/or phone number from 3 references who are familiar with your academic background and/or research interests, e.g., professors, teaching assistants, coaches, or Directors of other Minority programs (e.g., McNair). You **do not** have to ask your references to write the letters. We will contact them directly via email or the telephone.

### Reference 1

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Office phone number \_\_\_\_\_  
Relation of Reference to Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

### Reference 2

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Office phone number \_\_\_\_\_  
Relation of Reference to Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

### Reference 3

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Office phone number \_\_\_\_\_  
Relation of Reference to Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

## Acknowledgment of commitment

By submitting this application form to the MHIRT 2017 program, you acknowledge that all the above information is complete, factually correct and honestly presented and that, if this representation is not correct, the UH MHIRT Program reserves the right to withdraw your application from consideration.

By submitting this application form you acknowledge that if accepted, you will 1) enroll in a directed reading course spring 2017 for credit, 2) attend a 5-day workshop during the summer, 3) spend ~8 weeks abroad, e.g., Bangkok, Thailand, Yaounde, Cameroon, New Delhi, India or another foreign site where you will conduct a directed research project, 4) attend a 3-4day workshop upon returning and 5) prepare a short written report on your research and/ research experience and give an oral presentation to faculty, friends and family (either at the end of summer or fall semester 2017).

## What Are Health Disparities?

In 2000, United States Public Law 106-525, also known as the "Minority Health and Health Disparities Research and Education Act," which authorized the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities, provided a legal definition of health disparities:

"Health disparities are gaps in the quality of health and health care that mirror differences in socioeconomic status, racial and ethnic background, and education level. These disparities may stem from many factors, including increased risk of disease from underlying genetic, ethnic, or familial factors, increased risk of disease from occupational exposure, and accessibility of health care."

*"Health disparities are differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups in the United States."* – National Institutes of Health

"A population is a health disparity population if there is a significant disparity in the overall rate of disease incidence, prevalence, morbidity, mortality or survival rates in the population as compared to the health status of the general population."

The following are examples of health disparities related to infectious diseases and diseases of the immune system:

### Asthma

- Approximately 2 million Hispanics/Latinos in the United States have asthma, and Puerto Rican Americans have almost three times the asthma rate of the overall Hispanic population.
- African Americans are diagnosed with asthma at a 28-percent higher rate than whites.

### HIV/AIDS

- African Americans, more than any other racial/ethnic group, bear the greatest burden of HIV in the United States. In 2010, the overall HIV infection rate among blacks was almost eight times higher than that of whites.
- Hispanics are also disproportionately affected by HIV. In 2010, the HIV infection rate among Hispanics was three times that of whites in the United States.

### Organ Transplantation

- African Americans are at greater risk than whites for diabetes, chronic kidney disease, and cardiovascular disease, all of which can lead to end-stage organ failure. Although minorities donate organs in proportion to their share of the U.S. population, their need for transplants is much greater, leading to a shortage of available organs for this group.
- In comparison to other racial and ethnic groups, African Americans experience higher rates of organ rejection and lower survival rates after transplantation.

**Health equity** refers to the study of differences in the quality of [health](#) and [healthcare](#) across different populations. Health equity is different from health equality, as it refers only to the absence of disparities in controllable or remediable aspects of health. It is not possible to work towards complete equality in health, as there are some factors of health that are beyond human influence. Inequity implies some kind of social injustice. Thus, if one population dies younger than another because of genetic differences, a non-remediable/controllable factor, we tend to say that there is a health inequality. On the other hand, if a population has a lower life expectancy due to lack of access to medications, the situation would be classified as a health inequity. These inequities may include differences in the "presence of disease, health outcomes, or access to health care" between populations with a different [race](#), [ethnicity](#), [sexual orientation](#) or [socioeconomic](#) status.

- Health equity falls into two major categories: horizontal equity, the equal treatment of individuals or groups in the same circumstances; and vertical equity, the principle that individuals who are unequal should be treated differently according to their level of need. Disparities in the quality of health across populations are well-documented globally in both developed and developing nations. The importance of equitable access to healthcare has been cited as crucial to achieving many of the [Millennium Development Goals](#).

## MHIRT 2017 APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Thank you for your interest in the Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training Program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. All application materials **MUST** be submitted via email or can be mailed to the address listed below.

ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1<sup>st</sup> FOR CONSIDERATION. If you have any questions, contact Dr. Nerurkar (nerurkar@hawaii.edu) or Dr. Taylor (dwtaylor@hawaii.edu). All of the following items must be included for your application to be complete:

- Complete ALL questions in the application form
- Write personal essays regarding: a) research experience, b) international experience, c) health disparity and d) career choices
- Provide contact information for three (3) academic mentors /references
- Include copies of school transcripts (unofficial copies are accepted)
- For those with low income eligibility, provide documentation such FAFSA SAR or your parents' income tax records.

Please submit all completed application forms via:  
E-Mail : mhirt-l@lists.hawaii.edu (as **one** PDF file) or

Mail: Attn: MHIRT Program  
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