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National Medical Fellowships Celebrates 75th Anniversary with Appointment of New President & CEO Michellene Davis

Under Davis' leadership, NMF recommits to changing the face of healthcare

May 2021 (New York, NY) – Celebrating their 75th Anniversary this year, the [National Medical Fellowships](#) (NMF) announces the appointment of their new **President and CEO, Michellene Davis, Esq.**, and their continued commitment to change the face of healthcare. NMF's vision to support underrepresented minority aspiring physicians and healthcare professionals began in 1946 as one of the nation's first diversity organizations. Since its inception, NMF has provided over \$40 million in scholarships and grants to increase the pipeline for minority medical students to enter the healthcare workforce.

Davis is a nationally recognized, award winning health equity innovation strategist and senior policy executive. In addition to supporting significant healthcare industry growth in New Jersey, she also advanced racial equity approaches in aiding vulnerable populations through evidence-based, equity-informed policy and procedural transformations. Davis will lead the organization as a thought leader, strategist, and advocate for eliminating healthcare disparities and advancing health equity by attaining better, more equitable healthcare outcomes and diversified healthcare workspaces all over the country.

“I am honored to lead this incredible and vital organization that has had a quiet and profound impact on growing the numbers of underrepresented clinicians in healthcare,” said Davis. “Through their scholarship and grant programs and services, NMF has directly sought to reduce healthcare disparities by creating new generations of clinicians and healthcare leaders who are dedicated to realizing health equity. At a time when a global pandemic has magnified the impact of historical structural and systemic inequities and the world’s reliance on the essentials who are often the most vulnerable, the mission of NMF is more poignant than ever. NMF is dedicated to increasing access to care with doctors and healthcare professionals that look like the communities they serve.”

“Michellene's experience, passion and unique perspective of the Healthcare Ecosystem will be a tremendous asset to building the new pipeline of physician leadership and to furthering NMF's mission of "changing the face of healthcare" to reflect and serve our diverse nation" said Dr. Sandra B. Nichols, SVP, CMO Health Inclusion, UnitedHealth Group, Chairman of the Board, NMF.

Only 6% of U.S. physicians are from under-represented minority populations, not for lack of talent but lack of resources and access. To change this, NMF has and will accelerate its fund-raising activities to provide more significant scholarship and other educational assistance to under-represented minority medical students. And in 2021 the scope of the organization’s programs will expand to include training of under-represented minority physicians to participate in clinical trials as principal investigators, as part of the effort to diversify patient participation in clinical research. In 2020, the [Bristol Myers Squibb Foundation](#) announced a \$100 Million, 5-year partnership with NMF to train and develop clinical investigators and researchers who are racially and ethnically diverse. Also beginning in 2021 NMF will initiate a similar program to train under-represented minority physicians as clinical investigators, with support from the Janssen Division of [Johnson & Johnson](#) and [Merck & Co.](#) Better understanding of the safety and efficacy in minority as well as majority patients and populations of new pharmaceutical, biologic and vaccine, and medical device products, should improve health equity for all.

During this 75th anniversary of NMF’s founding, the organization is seeking to engage with a greater number of the over **32,000 alumni** recipients of financial assistance. Their support not only provides more resources for scholarships, but also facilitates funding from philanthropic, corporate, and other donor sources. Costs related to medical education can exceed \$300,000, a significant majority borrowed by students and their families, presenting a significant barrier for most under-represented minority students. Working with U.S. medical schools, NMF is committed to reducing these barriers and facilitating attainment of the goals and dreams of so many students to become physicians. NMF is also dedicated to providing medical students from

underserved communities training for leadership roles not only in clinical care, but also in public policy, health services research, and healthcare administration. Examples of these programs include:

[Genentech/NMF Diversity Innovation Fellowship Program](#)

[Johnson & Johnson](#)

[NMF Primary Care Leadership Program](#)

[United Health Foundation/NMF Diverse Medical Scholars Program](#)

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About National Medical Fellowships

National Medical Fellowships, Inc. (NMF) is the only private organization providing scholarships and support for underrepresented minority students in medicine and the health professions. NMF has provided over \$40 million to more than 32,000 students and aspiring health professionals. NMF was founded in 1946 and was one of the first diversity organizations in the U.S. The organization is supported by a national network of alumni, philanthropy and corporate sponsors, and institutions.