



Frequently Asked Questions

The Center for Diversity in Public Health Leadership Training Maternal Child Health – Leadership Education, Advocacy Research Network (MCH-RISE-UP) Program

Program Description and Activities

1. What is MCHC-RISE-UP?

The Maternal Child Health Careers/Research Initiative for Student Enhancement Undergraduate Program (MCHC/RISE-UP) is a summer public health leadership program. The MCHC/RISE-UP is designed for under-resourced and underrepresented undergraduate students in their junior and senior year and recent baccalaureate degree recipients (within 12 months of MCHC/RISE-UP orientation) interested in learning more about preventing and reducing health disparities. MCHC/RISE-UP is a national consortium of institutions that include the following:

1. Kennedy Krieger partnering with:
 - Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Medicine, and Bloomberg School of Public Health
 - Historically Black Colleges and Universities
2. The University of South Dakota partnering with Tribal Serving Institutions
3. The University of California, Davis (UC-Davis) MIND Institute partnering with UC-Davis Office of Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (* 6-week program)
4. Aaniiih Nakoda College/Fort Belknap Community

2. What is the public health leadership experience available to students during the summer program?

- **Research Experience:** Students work with research mentors on a wide range of public health, prevention, treatment, and epidemiological studies topics related to the elimination of health disparities. Students receive training in community-based participatory research, which engages communities that are currently underserved by mainstream systems.
- **Community Engagement and Advocacy Experience:** Students work with professionals in developmental disabilities, public health, and related systems on forming, implementing, and evaluating health care and disability legislation,

regulations, and practice guidelines. The critical importance of engaging underrepresented communities is particularly emphasized.

- **Clinical Track Experience:** Students rotate through clinical experiences provided by Maternal and Child Health disciplines (pediatrics, psychiatry, neurology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, nutrition, social work, psychology, speech/language, special education, and nursing). In addition, students gain experience in providing community-based healthcare and community support systems for underserved groups

3. What are the typical tasks of each public health experience?

Community Engagement and Advocacy Track:

- Conduct surveys in the community
- Community observations of programs and activities
- Public health program evaluation at the state or local government levels

Clinical Track:

- Observe patient evaluation and treatment
- Assist clinical staff in patient care

Research Track:

- Data entry for research projects
- Conduct literature review
- Make telephone calls to confirm participant data
- Analyze data from current and prior research projects

4. What are examples of past research experiences?

You can see examples of MCHC/RISE-UP scholar projects presented at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Showcase, JHU CARES Symposium, and Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists (ABRCMS) by clicking [HERE](#)

Eligibility

5. Who can apply to the MCHC/RISE-UP?

Individuals eligible to apply must:

- Be enrolled as a rising junior or senior, or received their baccalaureate degree within 12 calendar months of the MCHC/RISE-UP program orientation
- Have at least a 2.7 GPA, or better, on a 4.0 scale
- Interested in maternal and child health, the elimination of health disparities, or promoting social justice.

- Be a US citizen, US National, or a permanent resident
- Be able to commit to participate in program activities for the length of the MCHC/RISE-UP program.

6. I am not an underrepresented student. Can I apply to the MCHC- RISE-UP program?

Yes, you can. The MCHC- RISE-UP program is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) John R. Lewis Undergraduate Public Health Scholars Program. All scholars interested in maternal and child health, reducing health disparities, and promoting social justice, especially scholars from under-resourced and underrepresented populations in the field of public health, are strongly encouraged to apply.

7. Can international students participate in the MCHC- RISE-UP program?

No, international students (i.e., students with F1 or K1 visas) **are not** eligible.

8. Who can write my recommendation letters?

Two letters of reference from professors, clinical advisors, research advisors, teacher assistants, or academic advisors at your current or former university are **REQUIRED**. The referee should use their professional or university email address. A third referee is recommended (optional). The reference format includes a brief questionnaire and a letter of recommendation with up to 850 words. The deadline for letters of recommendation is January 31st (11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time), along with the completed application.

9. Can graduate students or upperclassmen undergraduate students participate in the MCHC- RISE-UP program?

No, graduate students are not eligible for the MCHC/RISE-UP. The MCHC/RISEUP is a program for undergraduate rising juniors, juniors, and seniors, as well as students who have earned a baccalaureate degree since June 2024. We encourage graduate students to apply to the Dr. James A. Ferguson EID RISE or EMURG Health Equity Fellowship programs.

10. Can students without health insurance apply to the MCHC- RISE-UP program?

Applicants without health insurance can apply to the MCHC- RISE-UP program. However, all accepted students must have health insurance.

Program Accommodations and Expectations

11. Do students receive a stipend for participating in the MCHC- RISE-UP program?

Yes, students receive a stipend during their participation in the summer program (see Kennedykrieger.org/MCHC-RISE-UP for details).

12. Are travel and housing costs subtracted from the stipend?

No. All travel costs related to the program are covered, including one checked piece of luggage per flight (The program does not cover overweight baggage costs). Dormitory style housing costs are covered throughout the summer program.*

13. Does the program sponsor the cost of meals?

Meals are covered during:

- Orientation Week in Baltimore, MD
- Weekly Research Seminars
- Weekly Professional Development and Advocacy and CDC Optimal Opportunities for Prevention to Promote Health Sessions
- And the CDC Showcase week in Atlanta, GA

14. Can the MCHC- RISE-UP provide necessary accommodations for varying ability levels?

Yes, we will provide accommodations. We are committed to supporting ADA-compliant learning environments across program activities. There is space in the application to note accommodations applicants may need to participate in the MCHC- RISE-UP program. Requesting accommodations will not influence the review of applications or decision-making about program acceptance.

15. Does the MCHC- RISE-UP program count towards academic credit?

The applicant's university/college determines if academic credit is granted for participating in MCHC-RISE-UP.

16. How many hours during the week does the student dedicate to the program?

Students should expect to devote 40 hours (full-time) per week to their project(s) and program activities.

17. Are the program dates flexible (i.e., start later; take time off to work)?

No, all students must commit to participation for the whole length of the program.

Application Details

18. Where can I apply to the MCHC- RISE-UP program?

The online application is available at [KennedyKrieger.org/MCHC- RISE-UP](http://KennedyKrieger.org/MCHC-RISE-UP).

19. Can the student select any partner site?

During the application process, the applicant selects the location they would like to receive their training.

20. To whom should recommendation letters be addressed?

Please address recommendation letters to the “MCHC- RISE-UP Selection Committee.”

21. Is there a standard recommendation form to complete?

Recommendations include a brief questionnaire and recommended questions referees are asked to address within the letter of recommendation.

22. How many applicants are selected to participate in the MCHC-RISE-UP?

The number of applicants varies from year to year. Slots are competitive.

23. When should I expect a decision letter?

Decision letters are emailed by the end of March.

24. Where can more information on the MCHC-RISE-UP be found?

Please visit MCHC-RISE-UP website, KennedyKrieger.org/MCHC-RISE-UP, for more information.

All program activities are contingent on federal funding.

Email additional questions to MCHC-RISE-UP@KennedyKrieger.org

**Aaniiih Nakoda College/Fort Belknap Community does not provide housing.*