



**Contact:** Dana Brandorff, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus  
303-724-1698 Dana.Brandorff@cuanschutz.edu

## **Despite a growing multiracial population, your nurse probably does not look like you**

*Researchers offer five steps to improve diversity in nursing profession and education*

**AURORA, Colo.** (January 31, 2022) – While considerable funding has been spent to increase diversity in nursing programs, the number of non-white students in the United States only increased [6.6%](#), and ethnically diverse nursing faculty members increased just 5% in the last decade, according to a new article published in [ScienceDirect.com](#), a multi-institution effort including researchers from the University of Colorado College of Nursing.

Nationwide, just [16%](#) of academic nursing faculty members are persons of color, with 30 of the 50 states falling below that average. Those non-white faculty tend to hold lower appointment ranks, serving as instructors and assistant professors.

Four out of every ten people in the United States today come from racial and ethnic diverse backgrounds, according to the [2020 U.S. Census](#). Yet when they get sick, chances are good they'll be seen by a nurse who is white and may not provide culturally-sensitive care. The disparity can be traced back to the very schools that trained them.

“Bringing more faculty of color into nursing programs can enrich the curriculum, ensure representation of a broader variety of perspectives in the classroom, and, concomitantly, improve clinical practice, service, scholarship and research,” wrote the authors.

“Additionally, racial and ethnically diverse nursing faculty can provide culturally sensitive perspectives on models of assessment, intervention, research, education and leadership concerning the needs of various populations of color served by the health care system.”

The article attributes the problem to implicit bias, unconscious prejudice, discrimination, negative stereotypes and a lack of mentors of color. To bring more faculty of color in nursing programs, the authors recommend five steps for higher education:

1. Adopt recruiting practices that expand applicant pools and track their effectiveness.
2. Implement strategies that foster a welcoming, culturally responsive and inclusive work environment.
3. Collaborate with professional organizations of color and minority-serving institutions to address structural and interpersonal barriers.

4. Revise nursing program admissions processes to yield a more different pool of applicants and increase the representation of students of color.
5. Implement a transparent plan with a structured evaluation and modification process to recruit faculty of color.

With the U.S. Census predicting that in 20 years whites will no longer be the majority, the authors say changing the face of leadership in higher education today will help mirror patients and improve the quality of health care.

The article, *Building a culturally responsive workforce: Faculty of color in nursing education*, was written by Latina Brooks, Ph.D., FNP-C, FAANP of Case Western Reserve University; Rosario Medina, Ph.D., FNP-BC, ACNP, CNS, FAANP at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus; Courtney Pitts, DNP, MPH, FNP-BC, FAANP at the Vanderbilt University School of Nursing; Chin Hwa Dahlem, Ph.D., FNP-C, FAANP at the University of Michigan School of Nursing; Loureen Downes, Ph.D., APRN, FNP-BC at Florida Gulf Coast University and Kenya Beard, EdD, AGACNP-BC, CNE ANEF, FAAN of Chamberlain University.

#### **About the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus**

The University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus is a world-class medical destination at the forefront of transformative science, medicine, education and patient care. The campus encompasses the University of Colorado health professional schools, more than 60 centers and institutes, and two nationally ranked independent hospitals - [UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital](#) and [Children's Hospital Colorado](#) - that treat more than two million adult and pediatric patients each year. Innovative, interconnected and highly collaborative, the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus delivers life-changing treatments, patient care and professional training and conducts world-renowned research fueled by over \$650 million in research grants. For more information, visit [www.cuanschutz.edu](http://www.cuanschutz.edu).

###

Find the latest University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus news [here](#).