

Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine Partners with South Bay Family Health Care to Provide Innovative Service-Learning Opportunity

The Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine, in partnership with six Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), launched the first part of the school's service-learning program on August 20th.

Members of the school's inaugural 50-member class were placed at a Southern California-based community health centers – each representing diverse patient populations and clinical specialties – to address community needs under the mentorship of a service-learning preceptor. South Bay Family Health Care, based in Torrance, is one of the six participating FQHCs.

“This exciting endeavor will support the education and training of the next generation of community-focused physicians,” said Jann Hamilton Lee, CEO of South Bay Family Health Care. “Our center is honored and privileged to partner with Kaiser Permanente and the medical school's incoming class of 2024 – particularly during this historic time – in advancing our shared missions of ending healthcare disparities and supporting the wellness of our communities.”



The service-learning course is part of the school's health systems science curriculum and required of all students in their first two years of instruction. The program provides integrated experiential opportunities for students to learn about health equity and the structural factors that influence health, integrating classroom theory with the practice of community health. This is a core part of the school's mission to help create outstanding physicians with a desire to serve and an unwavering commitment to improve the health and well-being of patients and communities, and also reflects Kaiser Permanente's commitment to health equity.

“Our service-learning curriculum is a key part of our students' education, and one that will help them understand the critical role of community health centers and community supports in the lives of many people,” said Mark A. Schuster, MD, PhD, Founding Dean and CEO of the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine. “I want to thank our service-learning sites for welcoming our students and allowing them to learn among experts in caring for under-resourced communities.”

The medical school opened with an inaugural class of 50 students on July 27, 2020. By 2023, it expects to have a student body close to 200 students with 50 students per class. For information regarding service-learning, please visit <https://medschool.kp.org/student-life/service-learning>.