

A Mentor Role – Not a Program Director Role

2–4 hours per semester. Promotion credit across three categories. Mentorship with the students most committed to their communities.

What Is Aequitas Health?

A national medical honor society recognizing medical students who complete community health projects – the third pillar alongside Alpha Omega Alpha (academics) and the Gold Humanism Honor Society (compassion). 12 chapters, 12 states, 250+ fellows. Entirely volunteer-run. No cost to students. Recognized with the 2023 McNulty Catalyst Award (Aspen Institute).

What You Do

- Serve as institutional liaison (sign charter, attend ~1 meeting per semester)
- Mentor student leaders on project design and community partnerships
- Review fellow nominations with the student selection committee
- Connect fellows with clinical and community resources at your institution

Time commitment: 2–4 hours per semester. No course development. No curriculum design. No grant writing. No fundraising. No day-to-day supervision. Chapters are student-led – the national organization handles infrastructure, branding, journal publication, and conference programming.

How This Counts Toward Promotion

Advising counts as **institutional service, mentoring, and community engagement** – three categories most promotion committees evaluate separately. A single volunteer role generating credit across multiple promotion pillars is uncommon and valuable.

The national organization provides a formal letter of service for your promotion file, and the Faculty Advisor Guide includes quantification frameworks and sample language.

Sample promotion narrative:

"Faculty Advisor, Aequitas Health Chapter, [School]. National medical honor society recognizing medical students for community health projects. Mentored [X] fellows on project design, community partnerships, and scholarly dissemination. Fellow work published in the Aequitas Health Journal and presented at the National Aequitas Health Conference."

Recommendation Letters with Substance

Instead of "This student is a hard worker," you can write: "This student partnered with Champlain Valley Head Start to build a pediatric vision screening program, used rideshare health services to address transportation barriers, and published the results in a peer-reviewed journal." Program directors notice the difference.

What Fellows Are Building Under Faculty Mentorship

Tribal health infrastructure — A fellow partnered with his Tribal Council to secure \$40,000+ for community walking trails and a telehealth building. **Menstrual equity** — A fellow secured institutional permission for free menstrual products across an entire hospital system. **Street medicine** — Fellows established outreach targeting a city's homeless population, 75% Native American, building toward a student-run clinic. **Bilingual medical education** — A four-year-running program introduces underserved elementary students to science and medicine with take-home experiments and bilingual family materials.

What the National Organization Provides

- All branding, templates, charter framework, and organizational materials
- Journal publication pipeline — indexed with Google Scholar metadata
- Annual national conference — free, virtual, asynchronous
- Competitive grants (\$500 each) for fellow and chapter projects
- 10 career development resources for fellows (CVs, personal statements, grant writing)
- Student leadership onboarding and ongoing support
- Formal letter of service for your promotion file upon request

Your National Faculty Network

Faculty advisors across 12 medical schools form an informal network of educators committed to community health. Distinguished conference speakers have included leaders from Penn, the VA, Vizient, UAMS, and Grapevine Health — peers you can connect with through the network. Any specialty welcome.

Common Questions

What if I leave the institution? Chapters transition advisors regularly. The national organization helps identify and onboard a successor.

Is this a political organization? No. A medical honor society. Does not lobby, endorse candidates, or take positions on legislation. Students and faculty from across the political spectrum participate.

What does the first month look like? You sign the chapter charter, attend one introductory meeting, and connect with the national organization. Students handle the rest — recruiting, elections, and project development.

"I've written countless recommendation letters. But when I write one for an Aequitas fellow, I'm not describing a student who joined something — I'm describing a student who built something. That's a different letter."

— Dr. Elizabeth Mack, Aequitas Health Chapter Faculty Advisor

Ready to Advise a Chapter?

Contact **Benson Hsu, MD, MBA** at health.equity@aequitashealth.org — or have your student visit aequitashealth.org/quick-start-guide to begin the process.