

# Invest in the Next Generation

Community health projects built by medical students — published, presented, grant-funded, and designed to outlast a single academic year.

## Theory of Change

Physicians who build community health projects during medical school become physicians who continue improving health outcomes throughout their careers. Aequitas Health makes that happen — at 12 medical schools across 12 states, with 250+ fellows inducted since 2021.

## The Model

A 501(c)(3) national medical honor society. Every fellow builds something — a clinic, a screening program, a community partnership. Fellow work is published in a peer-reviewed journal, presented at an annual national conference, and eligible for competitive grants. The fellowship is a lifetime credential: free to every student, forever.

## The Efficiency Case

Built on less than \$5,000 per year with zero paid staff. Every dollar goes directly to student projects and programming. Most medical education nonprofits carry significant overhead — Aequitas operates entirely on volunteer labor, making every grant dollar among the most efficient in the space. **We don't need funding to survive. We need funding to multiply.**

## What Funding Accomplishes

\$100	One fellow's recognition — certificate, cord, and journal access
\$500	One student-led community health project
\$1,000	One project + journal publication support
\$5,000	A full year of competitive grants across all 12 chapters
\$25,000	25 student projects, a full journal volume, and pilot expansion to new schools

## Measurable Impact

2 competitive grant cycles completed. 7 grant winners. 11 distinguished finalists. \$1,500 awarded annually across fellow and chapter project grants. 15 peer-reviewed journal articles across 5 volumes. 3 national conferences featuring fellows from all chapters and distinguished speakers from Penn, the VA, Vizient, UAMS, and Grapevine Health.

## What Your Dollars Build

**Tribal health infrastructure — \$40,000+ secured.** Brandon Schonour (University of South Alabama), an enrolled citizen of the Southeastern Mvskoke Nation, partnered with his Tribal Council to fund community walking trails — now used daily by families — and a telehealth building giving elders healthcare access without leaving home.

**Pediatric vision screening — 33% → improved follow-up.** Jasmine Bazinet-Phillips (University of Vermont) partnered with Champlain Valley Head Start. Before the project, only 33% of children under three reached ophthalmology appointments. The initiative used rideshare health services to eliminate transportation barriers.

**Street medicine — reaching 75% Native American homeless population.** Narysse Nicolet (University of South Dakota) established healthcare outreach in Rapid City, building toward a student-run clinic for a community that previously had no access.

**Medication adherence — migrant & Indigenous toolkit.** Christian Henry (University of Arizona) built a data-driven toolkit with bilingual medication cards, pill sorting packets, transportation assistance, and copay support for COPE Community Services.

**Menstrual equity — system-wide hospital implementation.** Javier Rincon (University of Vermont) secured institutional permission for free menstrual products across the entire Nuvance Health system — main hospital and outpatient clinics.

## Why This Model Works

- **Honor society structure** creates selectivity — top 5–10% of each class
- **Community partnership requirement** ensures projects address real needs
- **Publication and presentation pipeline** builds a scholarly record
- **Zero overhead** means every dollar reaches students and communities
- **Multi-school footprint** creates a national physician network

## Organizational Credibility

- **2023 McNulty Catalyst Award** — John P. McNulty Prize (Aspen Institute)
- Founder: Benson Hsu, MD, MBA — Bush Fellow, Aspen Health Innovators Fellow, Presidential Leadership Scholar, NIH-funded researcher (75+ publications incl. NEJM Catalyst, HBR)
- Peer-reviewed journal (5 volumes) · 3 national conferences · 7 distinguished speakers
- 501(c)(3) EIN: 86-1852003 · Zero paid staff

## What Funders Receive

Tax receipt upon donation. Annual impact update with project outcomes, fellow counts, and grant utilization data. Named recognition opportunities available at \$5,000+. Accepts grants, individual donations, and donor-advised fund (DAF) contributions.

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## Ready to Invest?

Contact **Benson Hsu, MD, MBA** at [health.equity@aequitashealth.org](mailto:health.equity@aequitashealth.org) — or visit [aequitashealth.org/support](https://aequitashealth.org/support) to give today.