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Virginia-Nebraska Alliance

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## UNMC, historically black colleges form alliance to increase number of minority health care professionals

Partner profiles:

- Hampton University
- J. Sargeant Reynolds  
Community College
- Norfolk State University
- St. Paul's College
- Virginia Commonwealth University
- Virginia State University
- Virginia Union University

Summer internships

Faculty exchange

UNMC recruiting day at  
Dillard

White paper and agreement

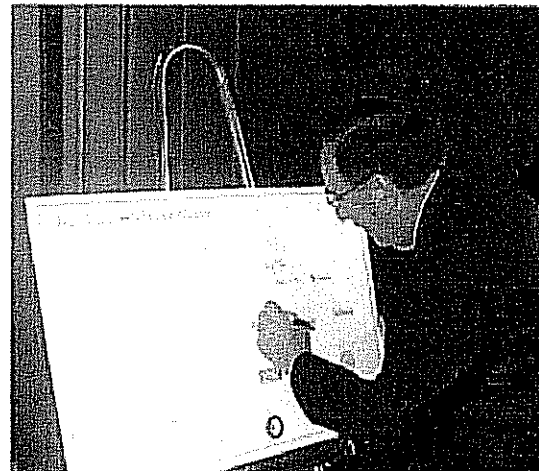
Other UNMC affiliation  
partners

News from Washington Post

Five Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and a leading Virginia community college signed an agreement today to partner with the University of Nebraska and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) to create a special program to provide a multitude of academic and research opportunities for minority undergraduate students and faculty.

The five HBCUs and community college are: Hampton University, Hampton, Va., Norfolk State University, Norfolk, Va., St. Paul's College, Lawrenceville, Va., Virginia State University, Petersburg, Va., Virginia Union University, Richmond, Va., and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Richmond.

Called the Virginia-Nebraska Alliance, the ultimate goal of the unique partnership is to increase the number of minority health professionals and researchers nationwide, with the hope of promoting better health outcomes for underrepresented minorities.



UNMC Chancellor Harold M. Maurer, M.D., signs the agreement.

### Audio clips

Rubens Pamies, M.D., vice chancellor for academic affairs, comments on:

Encouraging minority patients to participate in research studies.

Funding minority research partnerships.

The impetus for this partnership is the national need recognized by all of the institutions to reduce disparities in access to quality health care based on racial and ethnic status, economic and social circumstances. Though racial diversity in the United States is increasing, there is a significant lack of racial diversity in health care policy, administration, researchers and health practitioners.

Virginia State Sen. Benjamin Lambert III, a key player in bringing Virginia

How this partnership enriches all involved.

Creating more opportunities for minority students.

and Nebraska together for the partnership, is thrilled with the alliance. "This opens up opportunities for African-Americans to attend professional school. This is something we really need," he said. "The numbers of African-Americans pursuing health careers has dropped. This will really enhance the opportunities for students to become doctors, dentists and other health professionals."

Louis W. Sullivan, M.D., chairman of the President's Advisory Committee on HBCUs, echoed Sen. Lambert's feelings about the alliance. "This really has the potential for being a model that can be used in many places," he said. "This is a model that deserves the careful scrutiny of all 106 HBCUs."

Dr. Sullivan is president emeritus of Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta and served as secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under President George H.W. Bush from 1989 to 1993. He intends to cite the Virginia-Nebraska Alliance at the annual meeting of the President's Advisory Council on HBCUs, which begins Sept. 12 in Washington, D.C. He is chairman of the council. In addition, he will allude to the alliance when he makes a presentation at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 20, as part of his duties as chairman of the Sullivan Commission, an organization that looks at the status of health professionals in terms of diversity.

The agreement focuses on four key areas: student exchanges to cultivate undergraduate students' interest in pursuing graduate education in health and basic sciences; research and clinician faculty exchanges; faculty research collaboration; and institutional collaboration for funding opportunities.

At the Sept. 8 signing ceremony, attendees included:

- Sen. Lambert;
- Dr. Sullivan;
- Sidney A. McNairy Jr., Ph.D., D.Sc., National Institutes of Health;
- Harold M. Maurer, M.D., chancellor, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, Neb.;
- Eugene P. Trani, Ph.D., president, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va.;
- Jay Noren, M.D., executive vice president and provost of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb.;
- William R. Harvey, Ph.D., president, Hampton University, Hampton, Va.;
- Alvin Schexnider, Ph.D., acting president and executive vice president, Norfolk State University, Norfolk, Va.;
- John Waddell, Ph.D., president of St. Paul's College, Lawrenceville, Va.;
- Eddie N. Moore, Jr., Ph.D., president of Virginia State University, Petersburg, Va.;
- Belinda C. Anderson, Ed.D., president, Virginia Union University, Richmond; and
- Gary Rhodes, Ed.D., president, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community

confidence. Most importantly, the program allowed me to make lifelong friendships with other minorities from all around the country who are on the same path as me. It also has provided valuable lessons about school, as well as life."

Besides UNMC Chancellor Maurer's tie to Virginia, two VCU administrators have ties to Nebraska. Dr. Trani served as assistant vice president for academic affairs at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) from 1976 to 1980. Marsha Torr, Ph.D., vice president for research at VCU, served as vice chancellor for research at UNL from 1999 to 2001.

Sept. 12-18 has been designated as National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week. President Bush is scheduled to issue a proclamation that week honoring America's HBCUs.

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