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**UC Tech Awards Program 2023 Candidate**

**Category:** OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE  
**Name:** UCLA Health IT /UCLA Health Project Teams  
**Number of people**: (50+)  
**Location:** UCLA Health

Submitter: Kyrie Bass, Manager, UCLA Health IT, [kbass@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:kbass@mednet.ucla.edu)

Award Category: Mojgan Amini Operational Excellence Award

Nominee: UCLA Health IT/UCLA Health

Location: UCLA Health

**Health IT Project Teams**

Patient Advocacy Through Technology (PATT)

**All About Me Phase 1**

* UCLA Health IT
  + Hazel Oza
  + Jessica Powers
  + Heather Hitson
  + Dr. Eric Cheng
* UCLA Health
  + Patricia Alberto
  + Dr. Medell Briggs-Malonson
  + Dr. Naveen Raja
  + Dr. Animesh Sabnis

**All About Me Phase 1B**

* UCLA Health IT
  + Hazel Oza
  + Jessica Powers
  + Dr. Eric Cheng
  + Dr. Jamie Bell
  + Alex Kurpinski (MyChart)
  + Brandon Fox (ADT)
  + Leslie Backus (ADT)
  + Sheyron McNeil (Cadence)
  + April Taylor (Cadence)
  + Stephanie Larson (ASAP)
* UCLA Health
  + Patricia Alberto
  + Dr. Medell Briggs-Malonson
  + Dr. Naveen Raja
  + Dr. Animesh Sabnis
  + Maria Gordillo
  + Ryan White

**HEDI Dashboards**

* UCLA Health IT
  + Hazel Oza
  + Jessica Powers
  + Dr. Eric Cheng
  + Star Kaye
  + Varian Hamilton
  + Russ Smith
* UCLA Health
  + Patricia Alberto
  + Dr. Medell Briggs-Malonson
  + Dr. Naveen Raja
  + Dr. Animesh Sabnis

UCLA Health IT Black Advocacy Workgroup/EDI Leads (EDI RFP Process & Recruitment Best Practices)

* RoShawnda Willingham
* Tiffany Barrett
* David McNeil
* Kenneth Patten
* Leslie Backus
* Peter Westermayer
* Victor Gonzalez
* Narek Mkheyan
* Eric Anderson
* Patricia Torres
* Laona LeBeouf
* Kyrie Bass
* Anel Herrera

UCLA Health IT Leadership and Business Operations Support Team

* Ellen Pollack
* Jeanne Markland
* Dr. Eric Cheng
* Bill Lazarus
* Bill Holloway
* Albert Duntugan
* David Fraquelli
* Kyrie Bass
* Ayumi Pantell
* Laona LeBeouf
* Lisa Engalla
* Christina Lee
* Mike Kristensen

***Summary:***

UCLA Health IT has been working on process improvements in support of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives. As both a healthcare and IT organization, we understand the importance of our role in ensuring that patients, business owners, and team members have a positive and inclusive experience. As part of our process improvement efforts, we focused on several areas with a significant DEI impact.

The UCLA Health IT Patient Advocacy through Technology (PATT) team was formed in 2020 with the goal of actively addressing racial injustice and inequity within our IT systems. PATT has two areas of focus 1. Education 2. Enhancements to operational and technical workflows to reduce inequity.

On the education front, PATT Journal club was created with the objective to educate UHIT colleagues on technical biases and educate business owners on potential gaps or opportunities. PATT Journal club meets monthly to discuss a repository of journal articles to help the organization better understand the interplay of race, ethnicity, gender identity, and language in medicine and IT.

One of the biggest enhancements PATT has taken on, has been to improve our demographic data collection. Patient demographic data is used in a variety of ways. It is primarily used by local health system leaders to detect disparities in care of our patient population. It is also transmitted to external entities for reporting purposes. It can be used in quality improvement projects, and in emerging areas such as variables to be used for artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms.

During the pandemic, we tried to analyze disparities in care at our health care system, but we found the demographic data to be suboptimal for two reasons. First, a considerable proportion of patients had an unusable or unspecific race value as “unknown” or “declined.” (55% were not specific enough- level one race, 25% were unusable values such as other, declined, unknown). That meant only 20% of our patient data was actually usable. A potential root cause is that our options for race and ethnicity were too limited. Second, we weren’t confident that the source of the data was truly the gold standard patient self-report instead of the outdated practice of observer reported data. Some of the data was collected decades ago when the standards and methods of data collection were different from what is done today.

PATT was and remains instrumental in implementing system wide optimizations to improve the accuracy and reliability of our patient demographic data. One of the solutions for the unreliable data was to implement the “All About Me” questionnaire which launched in April 2022 to allow patients to easily self-identify their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and language characteristics. Since then, for the patients we have implemented the new workflow and 87% of patients gave us a usable race value. The “All About Me” questionnaire was rolled out in the outpatient setting, and now our focus is to implement this workflow in the ED (origin of nearly all hospitalized patients).

In addition, we created a HEDI Dashboard to measure the impact this project has had on improving the quality and reliability of our data. This dashboard is used by health system leadership to drive data driven enhancements and workflow design as we continue to expand the use of the “All About Me” questionnaire. These metrics will also be used within other analyses to drive other initiatives to close disparities.

The organization’s Black Advocacy Workgroup (BAW), also established in 2020, collaborated with Health IT Business Operations and UCLA Health Purchasing to improve the RFP process by adding EDI questions to the RFP process. UCLA Health IT is committed to becoming an anti-racist organization, and as such, the organization wanted to embed Diversity, Equity and Inclusion principles into the RFP/RFI processes. Specific DEI-related questions/concepts are now included in the selection criteria (see below).

1. Does your company have an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) program?
   1. What year was it established?
   2. What has your EDI program achieved?
2. Does your company have a designated individual responsible for leading your diversity initiatives?
3. Does your company mentor and/or has your company established programs to develop talented individuals of diverse backgrounds for future opportunities within your company and/or industry?
4. Does your organization have any programs or initiatives that aim to increase the diversity and equity among your employee population?
5. Does your company have a written and public anti-racist policy?
6. Do you incorporate Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in your hiring process?
7. Does your Company have a supplier diversity program? If so, please describe your program beyond a broad “Commitment to Diversity” statement.
8. Has your company examine the usage of outdated terminology/language?
9. Describe your demonstrable commitment to principles of diversity and community involvement.

The questions were added in the Fall of 2021 as informational questions in the sustainability section of the RFP/RFI questionnaire and are not included in the weighted scoring at this time. Responses are being tracked for the purpose of refining questions, collecting meaningful data, and to help better understand our new vendors. EDI concepts have been included in the RFP training for our business owners within UCLA Health.

Other UC campuses have expressed interest in using these questions in their RFP/RFI process, and the UCLA Health inclusion of these principles were presented at the UCOP (University of California Office of the President) level.

The BAW also established an EDI Liaison as part of the IT Leadership group. The liaison provides updates at the monthly ITL meetings and quarterly Town Halls and helps to promote the efforts of PATT as well as other DEI initiatives. The BAW was heavily involved in helping to create EDI Listen and Learn sessions, develop the UCLA Health IT recruitment model and EDI best practices, and surveying staff to identify additional opportunities for improvement.

***60-word limit elevator pitch:***

UCLA Health IT’s Patient Advocacy Through Technology was formed, to identify and address any bias that may exist within our patient-centered technology. A few outcomes from this group were the All About Me questionnaire, HEDI Dashboard and a Journal Club to keep abreast of health equity discussions. The Black Advocacy Workgroup (BAW) improved the RFP process and other DEI improvements.

***250-word summary to post in the UC IT Blog:***

The UCLA Health IT Patient Advocacy through Technology (PATT) team was formed in 2020 with the goal of actively addressing racial injustice and inequity within our IT systems. PATT has two areas of focus 1. Education 2. Enhancements to operational and technical workflows to reduce inequity.

On the education front, PATT Journal club was created with the objective to educate UHIT colleagues on technical biases and educate business owners on potential gaps or opportunities.

One of the biggest enhancements PATT has taken on, has been to improve our demographic data collection. Our solution was to implement the “All About Me” questionnaire which launched in April 2022 to allow patients to easily self-identify their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and language characteristics. PATT also developed a HEDI Dashboard to drive future initiatives.

The organization’s Black Advocacy Workgroup (BAW), collaborated with Health IT Business Operations and UCLA Health Purchasing to improve the RFP process by adding EDI questions to the RFP process. This new process has been replicated at other campuses. The BAW also established an EDI Liaison as part of the IT Leadership group. The liaison provides updates at the monthly ITL meetings and quarterly Town Halls and helps to promote the efforts of PATT as well as other DEI initiatives. The BAW was heavily involved in helping to create EDI Listen and Learn sessions, develop the UCLA Health IT recruitment model and EDI best practices, and surveying staff to identify additional opportunities for improvement.