

# UNDERSERVED PATHWAY

## Annual Report 2020-2021

The Underserved Pathway (UP) aims to address physician shortages in underserved communities through curriculum, mentorship, service learning, and clinical experiences.

### LARGEST CLASS EVER!

Seventy-five members of Class of 2021 graduated with a certificate from the UP, representing over 25% of the graduating class!

# 75

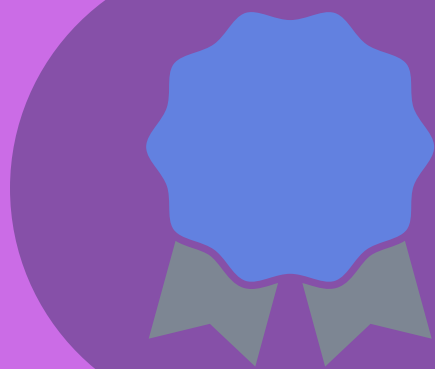


### FAMILY MEDICINE MATCH

In the 2021 Residency Match, 26% of UP graduates matched in Family Medicine! Overall, 58% of UP graduates matched in primary care.

### MODULES

UP scholars completed over 400 module evaluations. The three modules most likely to influence future practice: Health Literacy, Intimate Partner Violence, and Veterans' Health.



### HUSKY 100

The 2021 Husky 100, which celebrates the accomplishments of UW students in academics, service, and leadership, included 4 UP Scholars!

### EVENTS

Using teleconferencing software, UP scholars attended multiple online events including a panel on physician advocacy, and a roundtable discussion on COVID vaccine access.



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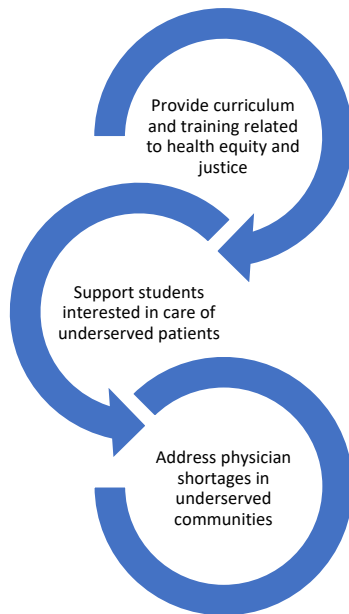
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## **Overview:**

The Underserved Pathway (UP) launched in 2006 at the University of Washington School of Medicine (UWSOM) and is based in the Family Medicine Department. The UP is an elective longitudinal experience that has various components including preclinical and clinical experience, service learning, mentorship, and an option to complete a research project.



As we continue to see physician shortages in underserved communities, the UP aims to nurture student interest by providing supplemental education and training outside of the required medical school curriculum. We help prepare students for residency and practice in underserved communities by engaging them in activities that explore social and structural determinants of health, health disparities, and tools for achieving health equity and justice.

Students from all six UWSOM campuses are encouraged to join the UP, as are students with a range of specialty interests. We believe that all students benefit from the experienced and education offered through the UP.

## **Enrollment:**

With students from all six campuses and across all curriculum stages, 279 students actively participated in the Pathway during the 2020-2021 school year. Figure 1 shows Pathway enrollment by Foundations Campus. While Seattle has the largest class size (100 students per year), Montana routinely has the largest percentage of its students enrolled in the Pathway, as seen in Figure 2.

The UP is one of five core Pathways at UWSOM: Indian Health, Global Health, LGBTQ Health, Hispanic Health, and Global Health. Over 60% of UP scholars (176) participated in at least one additional Pathway or special program, such as the Targeted Rural Underserved Track (TRUST) or the Community-focused Urban Scholars Program (CUSP).

Figure 1.

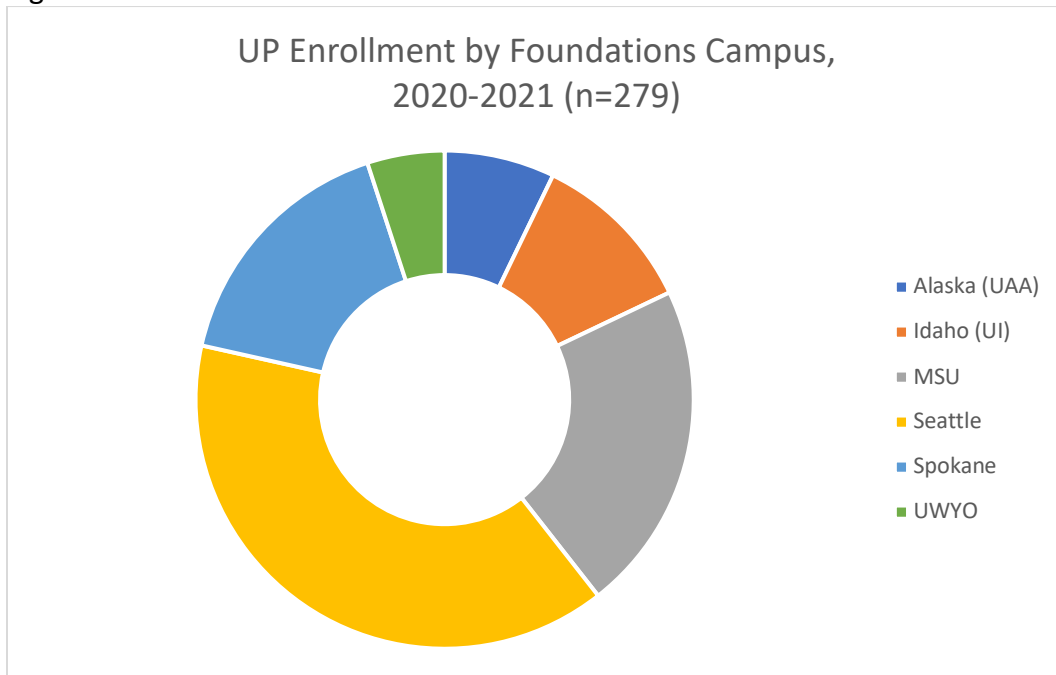
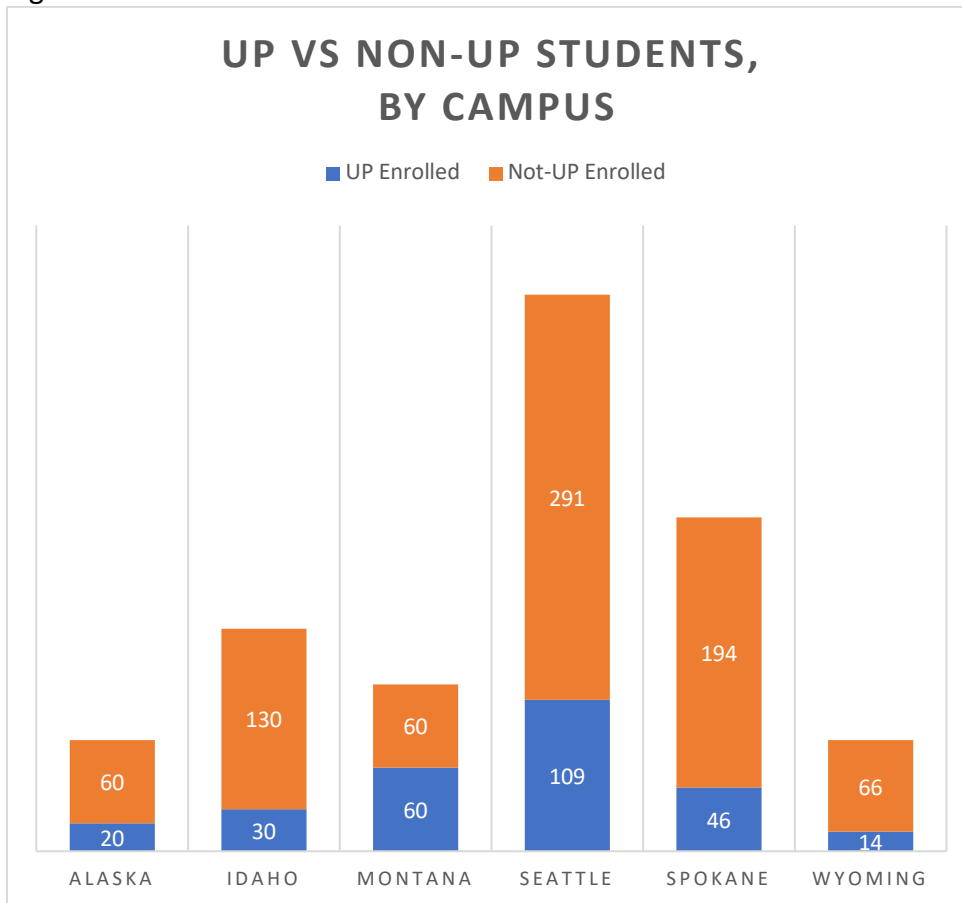


Figure 2.



**Graduates:**

During the 2020-2021 school year students have been busy with the Underserved Pathway curriculum. Our graduating class in 2021 was our largest ever, with 75 scholars completing the Pathway and earning a graduation certificate! We are always proud of our graduates and give extra recognition to those who persisted despite the pandemic, despite civil unrest and significant changes to their medical school experience.

Since the program began, 561 scholars have graduated from the UP. Figure 3 shows the growth of the Pathway Program since our first graduating class. Figure 4 shows 2021 graduates by Foundations Campus. Two-thirds of the UP class of 2021 (50 students) participated in another Pathway or the TRUST Program.

Figure 3.

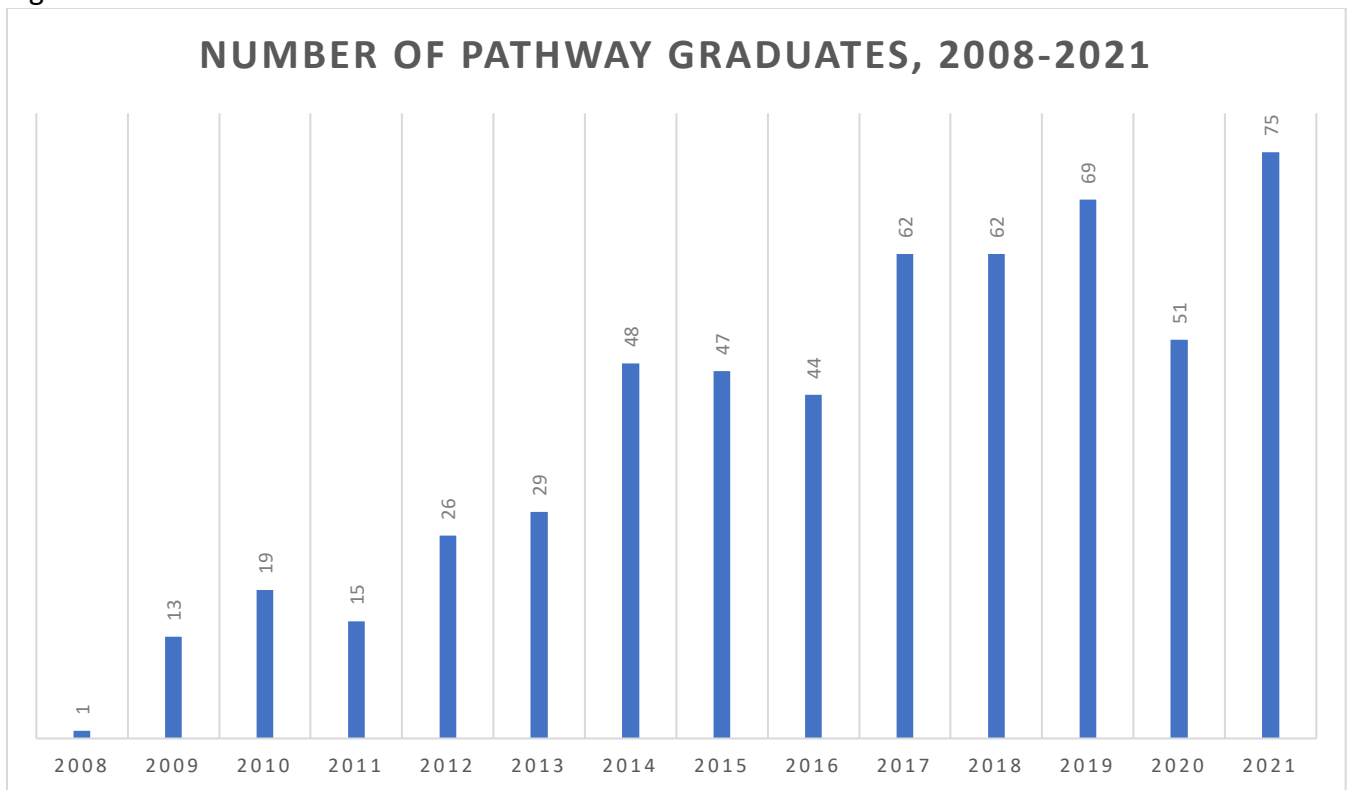
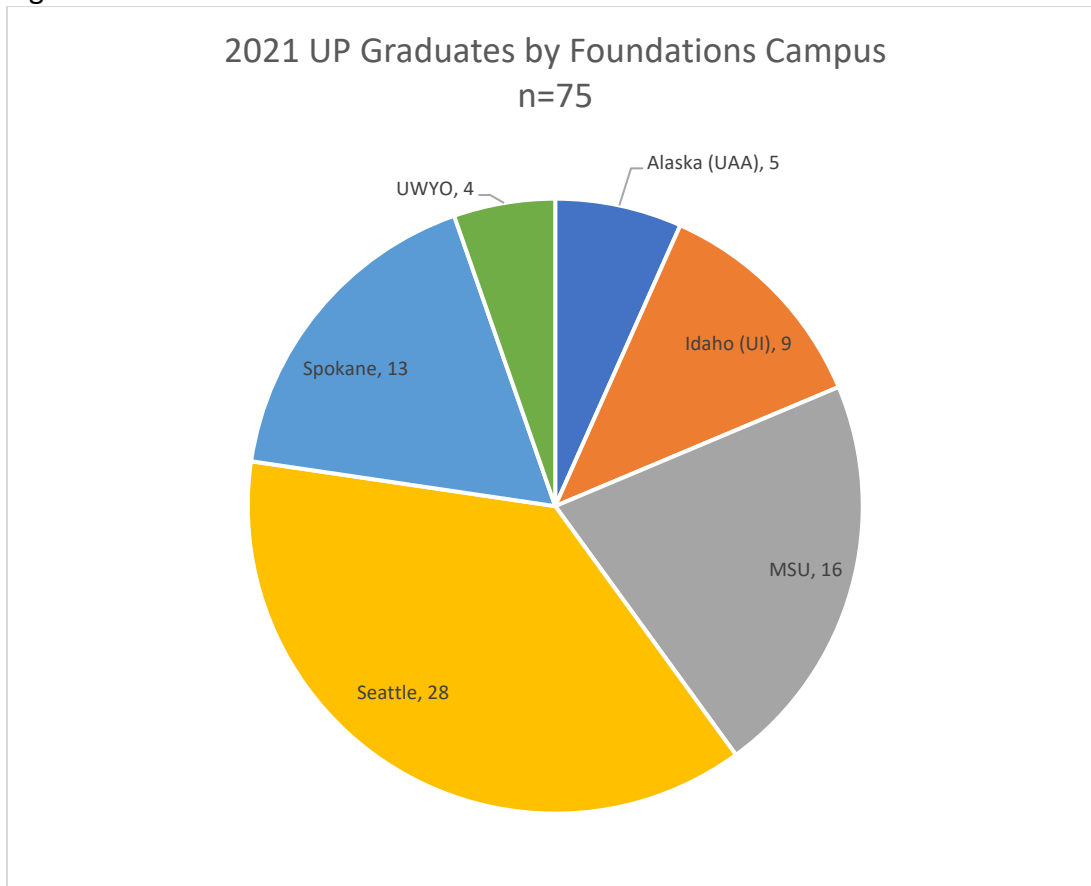


Figure 4.



**Graduation:**

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the five core Pathways joined with the Office of Healthcare Equity for a virtual graduation celebration honoring our scholars. Students heard inspirational words from leaders in our school and community including Dr. Suzanne Allen, Dr. Paula Houston, Dr. Bessie Young, Dr. Raye Maestas, Edwin Lindo, and Dr. Terry Maresca. We also celebrated Pathway Graduate Garrett Lee Strizich, who was awarded the United States Public Health Service Award for his work to expand Medicaid coverage in Idaho.

**Match Rates:**

Students who participate in the Underserved Pathway match in primary care specialties (family medicine, primary care internal medicine, pediatrics, and medicine-pediatrics) at higher rates than their non-UP peers. This was a particularly special year for Family Medicine, as the Department matched a total of 50 students on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Department! Of those 50, 19 completed the UP. Figures 5 and 6 show primary care versus other specialty matches for the general School of Medicine graduating class, and for the UP graduates. We are

also proud to report that over 45% of our UP grades are staying in the WWAMI region for residency!

Figure 5.

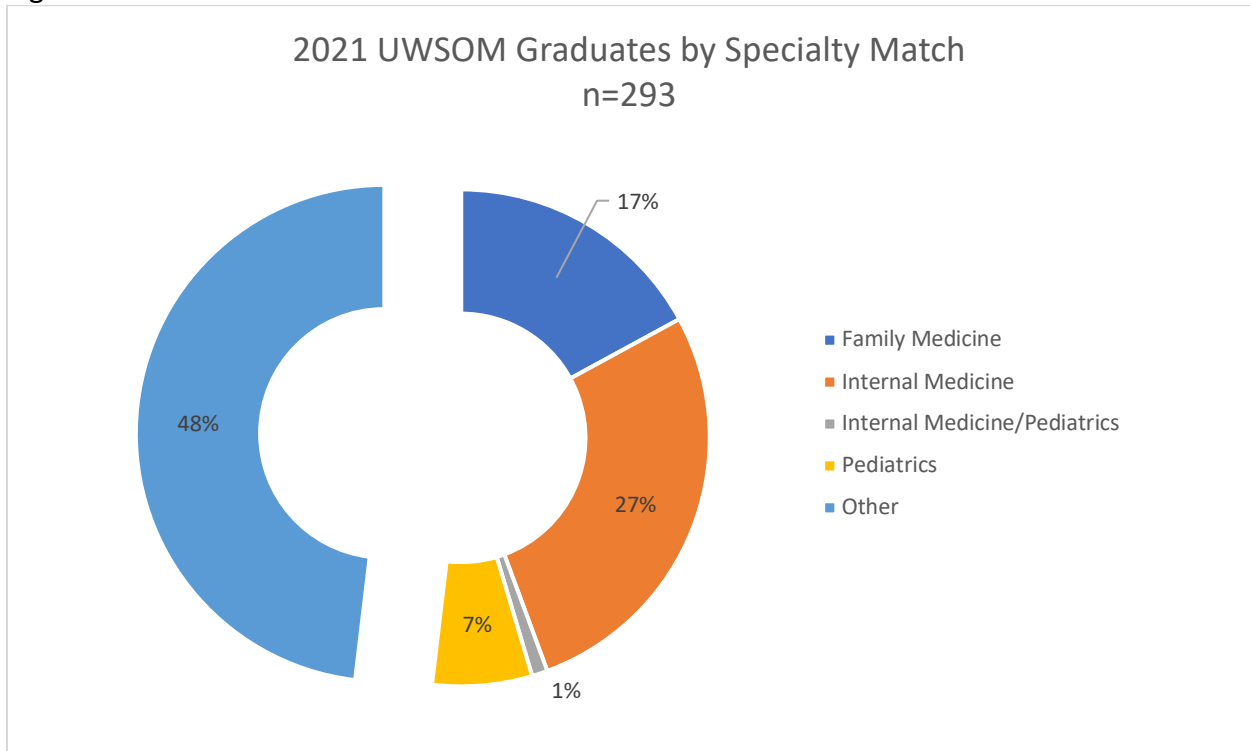
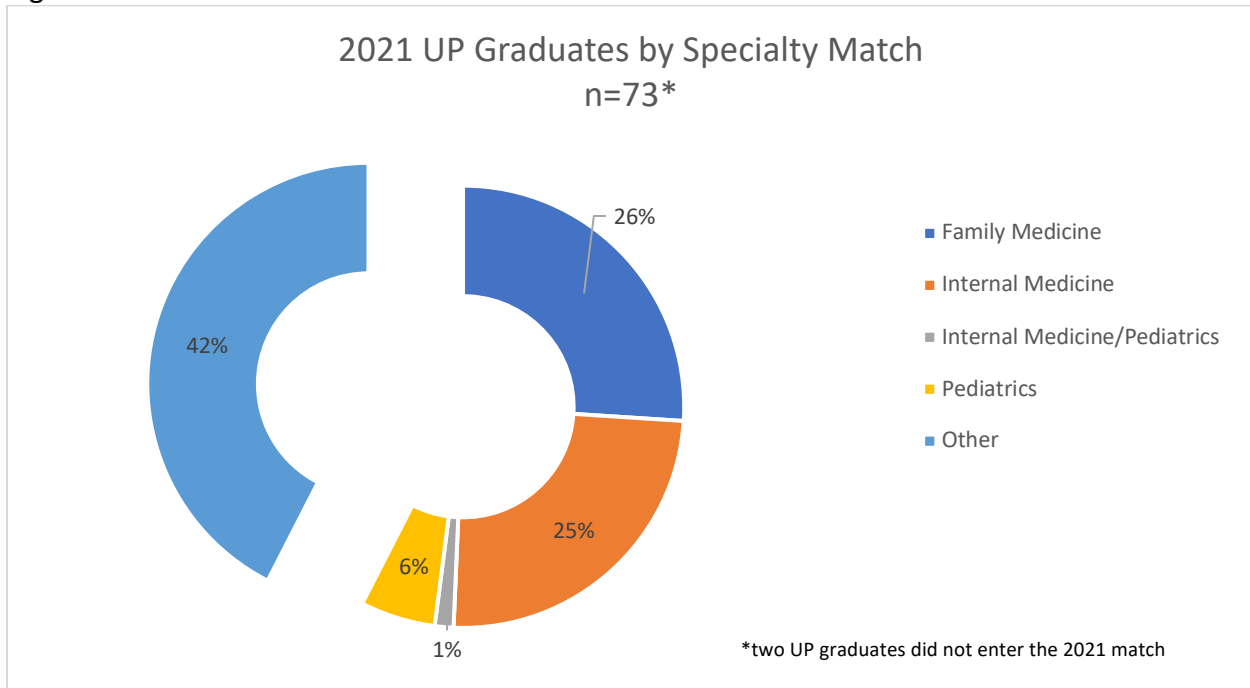


Figure 6.

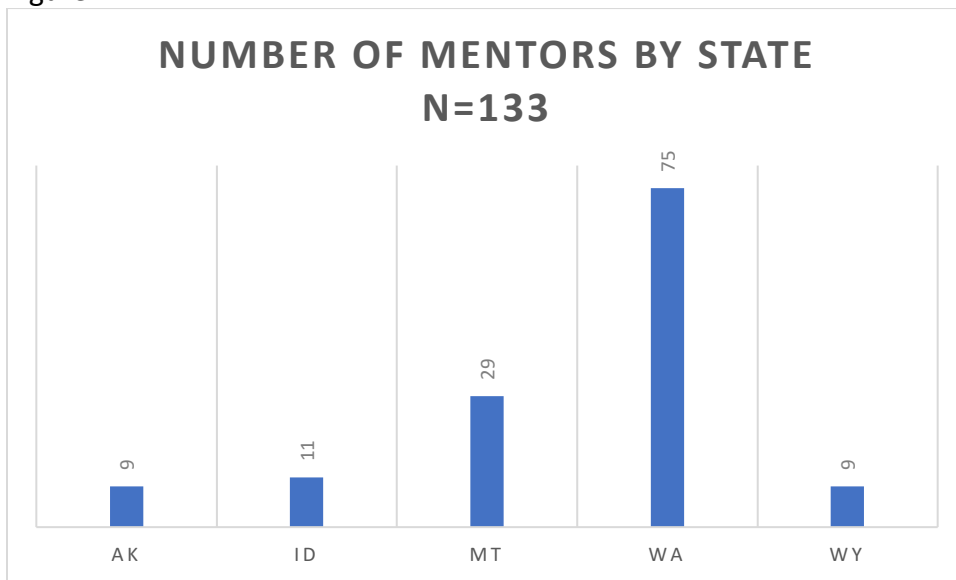


## **Mentorship:**

Thank you to our mentors! The UP had 133 active mentors this during the 2020-2021 year. UP mentors represent a range of backgrounds, specialties, and geographic locations. These mentors volunteer their time to share their experiences, expertise, and the joys of underserved medicine with our scholars. Figure 6 shows UP mentors by state; note that Washington includes both Western and Eastern locations, including many mentors at rural sites across the state.

Mentors and mentees meet quarterly and in general, this can be in person, by phone, Zoom or email. These relationships help anchor UP scholars in their commitment to underserved care, and keep them connected to the communities they hope to serve. UP mentors serve an important role for scholars- teachers, role models, confidants, and friends. We especially appreciate the ways mentors went above and beyond to stay connected with UP scholars during the COVID pandemic.

Figure 7.



***We are always looking for new mentors, especially in Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, and Alaska! If you are interested, email [upath@uw.edu](mailto:upath@uw.edu).***

This year we would like to extend a special thank you to Audrey Lew, the Manager of Program Operations in the Medical Student Education section where the UP is housed. For over 45 years, Audrey served in the Department of Family Medicine, building and nurturing medical student interest in primary care. Since the Pathway's inception, Audrey has championed the program, its faculty and staff, and especially the students, and helped oversee 20 courses and programs in the four-year Family Medicine Medical Student Education (MSE) curriculum offered on the University of Washington Seattle campus and in the WWAMI region. We offer our most heartfelt thank you to Audrey as she celebrates her retirement.

## **Modules:**

A key component of the UP curriculum is our 28 online modules, which are open to the public and can be viewed at the following link: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1176574>. Students are required to complete 10 modules in order to graduate, though they may complete as many as they would like. Module topics range from skills-based content (for example, health literacy), to overviews of specific populations (LGBTQ health, immigrant and refugee health, rural health), to modules that focus on specific medical conditions (substance use disorders, HIV).

Between July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021, students completed and evaluated 418 modules. The most popular modules (besides the “Who Are the Underserved?” which is required for all UP participants) were:

1. Population Health Data
2. Human Sex Trafficking
3. Ethics of Medical Volunteerism
4. Patients with HIV
5. Advocacy I: Physicians as Advocates

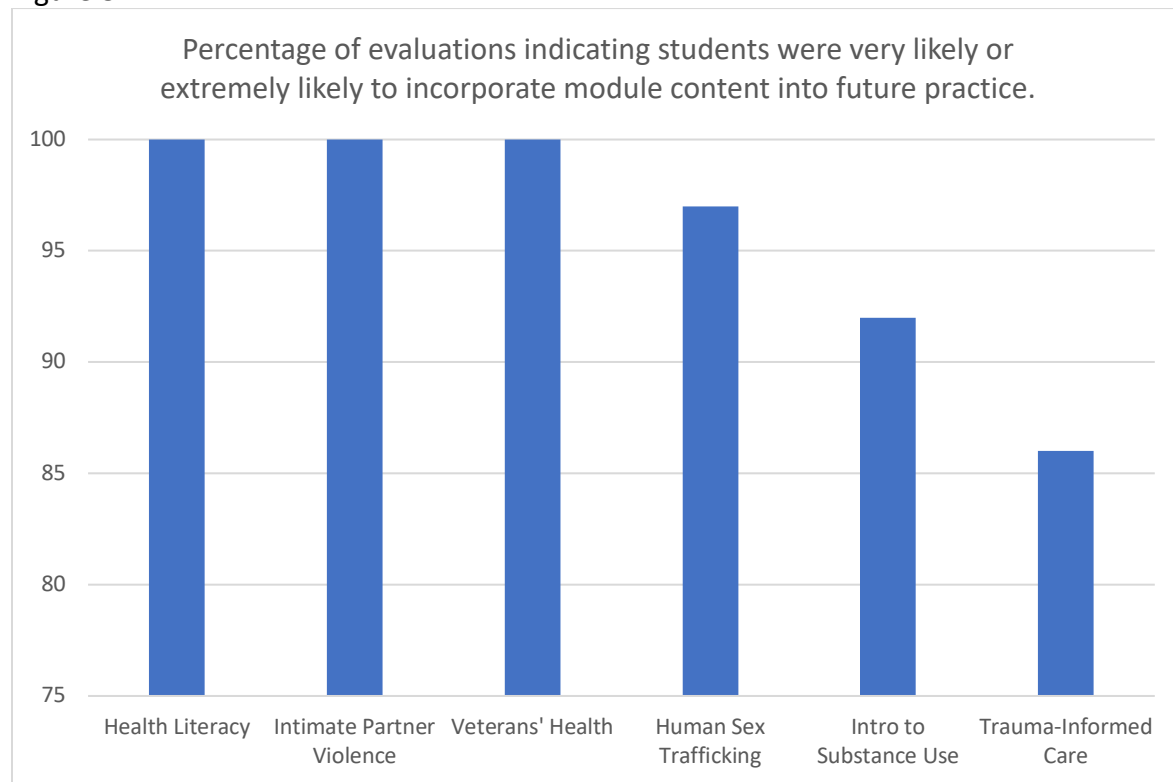
For each module evaluation, students are asked to answer six questions:

1. How much did this module contribute to your knowledge?
2. How effective was this module at conveying information?
3. How likely are you to incorporate this content into your future practice?
4. How encouraging or discouraging was this content to your interest in underserved medicine?
5. What would you have liked this module to cover, and/or what additional topics would you like to see?
6. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

Overall, over 70% of evaluations indicated that the module content contributed a good deal or great deal to students’ knowledge, 67% said the module was very effective or extremely effective at conveying information, and 76% said the module content was encouraging of their interest in working with underserved communities. Perhaps most encouragingly, 94% of students reported that they were likely to incorporate module content into their future practice. Figure 8 shows which modules had the highest impact on students’ future practice.



Figure 8.



Students always provide helpful feedback on modules, and send us comments about their experience. We use their feedback to make relevant updates and keep the module content up to date based on changing landscapes and language. This year's feedback included:

- Advocacy: "I really really enjoyed the advocacy discussion panel. I have found myself very burnt out lately, but listening to this made me excited about medicine again and inspired to advocate and do more for our community."
- Ethics of Medical Volunteerism: "I think it would have added to get a video or something with the patients' perspective on the pros and cons of medical volunteerism."
- Health Literacy: "I found the teaching point of having us evaluate and modify patient education materials to an appropriate reading level a powerful one."
- Exploring Disability – Beyond the Medical Model: "I would have liked to see this topic covered from a disability justice approach, for a more intersectional and comprehensive framework."

In addition to collecting feedback on modules, the Pathway Team works to develop new modules in response to emerging topics, student requests, and community engagement. This year, the Pathway Team will launch two new modules, in collaboration with medical student experts: Deaf Health and Native Health modules will debut on our Canvas page soon.

### **Recent Events:**

On March 10, 2021, 40 students participated in a virtual event, "COVID-19: WHO and HOW to Vaccinate," with Dr. Gib Morrow, Health Officer for Kitsap County. Dr. Morrow shared his experience of running a county health department during the COVID pandemic including the unique demographics of Kitsap County itself, which includes islands, rural communities, tribal land, a military base, and a large migrant population. He explained his approach to vaccine distribution and prioritizing underserved communities for access. In breakout discussions, students had a chance to discuss their ideas on vaccine priority groups and rollout. They wrestled with questions such as: If you oversaw vaccine rollout, what would you have done differently? Which groups would you prioritize for vaccinations? How would you handle the logistics in an urban vs rural county?

### **Looking Forward:**

This has been a unique and difficult year. We miss seeing people in person and hope to resume in person events in the near future. Thank you to the students, mentors, staff and faculty who have continued to work diligently to make the UP a meaningful experience. As we return to campus, we look forward to reconnecting with our students and bringing new energy to our Pathway activities.

As the Pathway continues to grow and expand, we both look to the future of our programming, and reflect on our impact thus far. The Pathway team is currently working on a research project looking back at eight years of UP graduates to determine whether our graduates are more likely than their non-UP peers to practice primary care and/or work in an underserved community. Stay tuned for our results!