

# Undergraduate medical student

Undergraduate [medical students](#) are a subset of medical students, specifically those in the first stage of medical training, usually before earning a bachelor's degree in medicine.

An undergraduate [student](#) is someone who is enrolled in a [program](#) of [study](#) at a college or [university](#) and is working towards their first bachelor's degree. Typically, undergraduate programs last four years and involve a combination of general [education](#) courses and courses specific to the student's major. Undergraduates are often referred to as "college students" and can pursue a wide range of academic disciplines, including business, engineering, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. Many undergraduate programs also offer opportunities for students to participate in research, internships, and other experiential learning opportunities to supplement their classroom learning.

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Charles et al. developed a virtual educational [event](#) for [undergraduate students](#) entitled "Future Leaders in Neurosurgery Symposium for Underrepresented Students" (FLNSUS). The primary objectives of the FLNSUS were to expose attendees to 1) neurosurgeons from diverse [gender](#), racial, and ethnic backgrounds; 2) [neurosurgical research](#); 3) opportunities for neurosurgical [mentorship](#); and 4) information about life as a neurosurgeon. The authors hypothesized that the FLNSUS would increase student self-[confidence](#), provide exposure to the specialty, and reduce perceived barriers to a neurosurgical [career](#).

To measure the change in participant perceptions of neurosurgery, pre- and postsymposium surveys were administered to attendees. Of the 269 participants who completed the presymposium survey, 250 participated in the virtual event and 124 completed the postsymposium survey. Paired pre- and postsurvey responses were used for analysis, yielding a response rate of 46%. To assess the impact of participant perceptions of neurosurgery as a field, pre- and postsurvey responses to questions were compared. The change in response was analyzed, and a nonparametric sign test was performed to check for significant differences.

According to the sign test, applicants showed increased familiarity with the field ( $p < 0.001$ ), increased confidence in their abilities to become neurosurgeons ( $p = 0.014$ ), and increased exposure to neurosurgeons from diverse gender, racial, and ethnic backgrounds ( $p < 0.001$  for all categories).

These results reflect a significant improvement in student perceptions of neurosurgery and suggest that symposiums like the FLNSUS may promote further diversification of the field. The authors anticipate that events promoting diversity in neurosurgery will lead to a more equitable [workforce](#) that will ultimately translate to enhanced research productivity, cultural humility, and patient-centered care in neurosurgery <sup>1)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup>

Charles AJ, Seas A, Corley J, Duvall JB, Owolo E, Abu-Bonsrah N, Elsamadicy AA, Simpson V, Sanusi O, Holly LT, Rodriguez A, Nduom EK, Levi AD, Liao LM, Quiñones-Hinojosa A, Karikari I, Grant G, Fuller AT, Goodwin CR. Promoting diversity in neurosurgery through a virtual symposium. J Neurosurg. 2023 Mar 10:1-8. doi: 10.3171/2023.1.JNS221743. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 36905659.

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