

Partnering with Teachers to Enhance Henrietta Lacks High School Symposium

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Background: After the publication of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* in 2009, the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine decided to promote discussion about Henrietta Lacks, her role in medical discovery and ethics with the community, especially with young people in Baltimore. The Community Engagement Program (CE) of the Johns Hopkins Institute for Clinical and Translational Research works closely with the family of Henrietta Lacks, the Community Research Advisory Council, and partners to conduct the Henrietta Lacks High School Symposium with the financial support of the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and Hospital, a \$40,000 scholarship for a local graduating high school student. Following student and teacher request, the symposium has involved a student-centered focus.

Methods: High school teachers, basic scientists, bioethicists, and C-RAC members developed a program that included: 90-minute lecture on Henrietta Lacks, 2-hour science, ethics/social justice, art, or community engagement labs, presenters from the Lacks family, Johns Hopkins, and high school students. The program was promoted to 17 schools through in person visits, phone/emails.

Results: 249 students registered from 12 schools; 181 students and 17 teachers attended; 58% of the students participated in the science; 25% Ethics/Social Justice; 11% Community Engagement, and 6% Art labs: 97 students and 12 teachers completed the evaluation survey.

Summary: 91% of the teachers rated the program as very interesting, engaging, student centered, 71% of students reported a better understanding of the Henrietta Lack's story; 68% reported increased interest in scientific research careers. Teachers and students offered to help plan future programs.

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