

# Abbott And Women As One Partner To Help More Underrepresented Physicians Lead Clinical Trials

- New partnership will provide physician training to drive improved diversity in clinical trials
- Training program is open to underrepresented groups including female, Black, Native American, Asian, South Asian, Hispanic and non-binary cardiologists
- Provides opportunities for underrepresented physicians to receive training on the clinical trials process, learn new skills, expand their networks and increase visibility with industry partners

ABBOTT PARK, Ill., May 11, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- Abbott (NYSE: ABT) today announced a new partnership with [Women as One to launch a new program designed to](#) train more female and underrepresented physicians to pursue clinical trial research and help recruit clinical trial participants from historically underrepresented groups.

Women as One is a nonprofit organization with the mission to promote talent in medicine by providing women physicians with unique professional opportunities. Abbott provided funding to develop a new program called CLIMB Research, which provides skills training for underrepresented cardiologists.

The new program builds upon Abbott's [diversity in clinical trials initiative](#) that was established in 2021 to further develop and create a more inclusive clinical trial ecosystem in the U.S.

Research shows there is systemic underrepresentation of women and under-resourced populations such as Hispanic and Black participants in clinical trials<sup>1,2</sup>. By training physicians, Abbott, in conjunction with Women as One, is helping close the gaps and overcome the existing barriers to clinical trial participation: lack of trust, lack of access, lack of understanding and lack of a common language.

Through six monthly sessions, which include a mix of instruction, case reviews and group discussions, participants in the new CLIMB Research skills training program will receive:

- **Global Connection Among Underrepresented Physicians**  
Learn new skills, expand their networks and increase visibility with industry partners.
- **In-Depth Knowledge from Experts in the Field**  
Enhanced curriculum includes renowned guest faculty and training in research such as Good Clinical Practice (GCP) protocol oversight, Institutional Review Board reporting, safety management and practical applications in the clinical trial environment.
- **A "New to Research" Track**  
Provides skills training for physicians who are interested in pursuing clinical research.
- **An "Enhanced Research" Track**  
Enhanced skills training for physicians with some knowledge and experience in clinical research.

"Clinical trials are the basis of modern medicine and have the power to drive innovative therapies to fight diseases. Today, women and populations from under-resourced communities are vastly underrepresented in clinical trials," said Lisa Earnhardt, executive vice president, Medical Devices, Abbott, and the co-executive sponsor for the company's Diversity in Research steering committee that she leads alongside Andrea Wainer, executive vice president, Rapid and Molecular Diagnostics, Abbott. "Through our new partnership with the Women as One CLIMB Research skills training program, we are actively changing the trajectory of how underrepresented physicians address clinical trial care for underrepresented groups."

The collaboration with Women as One is the latest addition to Abbott's broad corporate initiative designed to improve diversity in medical research. A key focus of the company's efforts is to increase the number of diverse investigators leading trial sites, a situation that compounds the challenges of increasing enrollment into clinical studies. The new training program is open to underrepresented groups including female, Black, Native American, Asian, South Asian, Hispanic and non-binary cardiologists.

Abbott provided funding of \$150,000 for the CLIMB Research program which adds to the more than \$5 million Abbott has committed since last year, which includes nearly 300 scholarships to medical schools at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and minority nursing associations. The company has also established a Diversity in Clinical Trials Medical Advisory Board and dedicated funding to increase diversity enrollment within Abbott trials.

"Women and underrepresented groups are too often absent from industry-driven activities. Enhancing the representation of these groups leading clinical trials will have a direct impact on the number of diverse trial participants," said Roxana Mehran, M.D., Women as One Founding director. "By advancing our training program with Abbott, we are actively increasing the number of diverse researchers in clinical trials to create a safe haven of trust to ultimately support underrepresented patients."

CLIMB Research 2022 is co-sponsored by the Global Cardiovascular Clinical Trialists (CVCT) Forum. CVCT is a unique annual educational forum aimed at discussing the latest and most critical cardiovascular, cardiorenal and cardiometabolic trials. In line with the goals of CVCT to increase the number of underrepresented individuals in cardiovascular clinical trial leadership, CVCT is an active collaborator on CLIMB Research.

To learn more about Women as One Climb Skills Training program #TIMETOCLIMB sponsored by Abbott, visit:

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<sup>1</sup> Clark, L.T., et al., *Increasing Diversity in Clinical Trials: Overcoming Critical Barriers*. Curr Probl Cardiol, 2019. **44**(5): p. 148-172.

<sup>2</sup> Yates, Byrne, Susan Donahue, Linda McCarty, & Mathews, 2020.

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For further information: Media, Alicia Swanson, (669) 210-7204; Financial, Mike Comilla, (224) 668-1872

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