The Teen Health and Success Partnership, led by Suzanne Piotrowski, is one of two recipients of the 2013 Presidential Diversity Award. The Teen Health and Success Partnership works with University departments, the Rochester City School District, the Hillside Work Scholarship Connection, and a host of community agencies to create employment opportunities for at-risk, underrepresented minority teens at the University. In just three years, the program has grown from 11 to 100 University-employed youth, who work in 36 different departments across campuses. One hundred percent of the University-employed teens have graduated from high school, and 87 percent of those teens have enrolled in college or trade school. The program has become a national model for health facilities employing underrepresented teens and has been replicated in Syracuse, N.Y., and Prince George’s County, Md.

More than just an employment opportunity for teens, the program provides youth with the many resources offered by the University, making Rochester a desired place to work. As employees of the University, teens have access to health care services, libraries and computer labs, counseling services, college application preparation support, academic tutoring, leadership and management skills workshops, and campus social, cultural, and athletic events, among others.

Professor Lynne Maquat is a recipient of the 2013 Presidential Diversity Award. Maquat, an internationally respected researcher and scholar, has spent her career strongly advocating for young women in the sciences. Perhaps the best demonstration of her dedication to young postdoctoral and graduate students is the University’s Graduate Women in Science (GWIS), a program she initiated in spring 2003.

Maquat created GWIS in conjunction with her application as principle investigator for the NIH T32 grant, which supports the training of graduate students. Today, the program has grown into a highly valued means of outreach and mentoring for many women scientists. Each month, GWIS hosts a roundtable discussion featuring high-profile speakers who are using advanced degrees in traditional and nontraditional ways. Often times, speakers share how they successfully navigated their own personal and professional hurdles. Elizabeth J. Grayhack, associate professor, Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics, and director of the Undergraduate Biochemistry Program, wrote "this type of personal interaction is amazingly helpful to young scientists in navigating a career in science."

In 2011, Maquat, who joined the University in 2000, was elected a member of the National Academy of Sciences—one of the highest honors possible for any scientist—for her exceptional work in the field of RNA biology. She has been a member of the RNA Society since its formation in 1993 and was honored with the society’s Lifetime Achievement Award in Service in 2010. She also was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2006.