



*During a Poverty Simulation exercise, SCCOMBKU students were among those learning about the hardships some of their future patients may experience.*

As part of the interprofessional healthcare curriculum, first-year students at the Southern California College of Optometry at Marshall B. Ketchum University (SCCOMBKU), along with physician assistant students, recently participated in a Poverty Simulation, which was intended to help them understand the realities faced by low-income and poverty-stricken members of the communities they will work with as healthcare professionals. Tables placed in a common area represented community resources that low-income families may interact with, such as a bank or community action agency. The resources were “staffed” by university staff and faculty members. The students were randomly placed in families with varying levels of hardship, e.g., homelessness or raising their grandchildren, and tasked with using the services to survive the month. Some families ran out of money before the end of the month, while others had trouble obtaining a bus pass to get from one service to another.

University President and former ASCO President Dr. Kevin Alexander commented about the event for an [article at the MBKU website](#), saying “At Marshall B. Ketchum University, we’re not only training future healthcare providers, but also members of a community. It’s important that they graduate with the hard skills to do their jobs well, and also the soft skills to provide the best care possible for all of their future patients.”