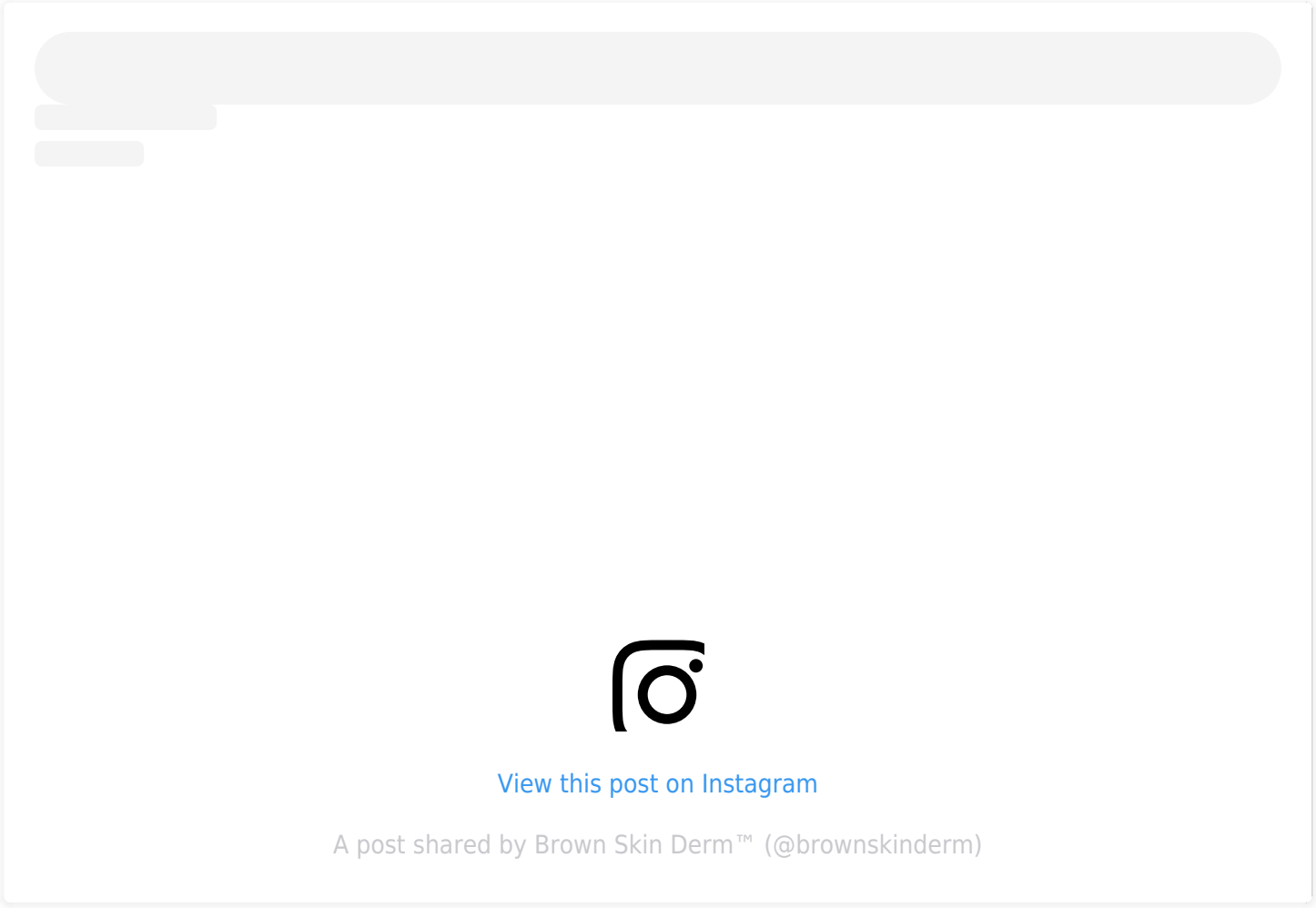
Addressing Skin Care Inequality

How one dermatologist is shaking up beauty standards and representation in skin care

September 22, 2022 By Laura Schmidt

Adeline Kikam, DO, FAAD, created Brown Skin Derm in response to the lack of Black-led skin care social media accounts and to increase representation of brown skin in the dermatology field.

As a teenager dealing with acne, Kikam rarely saw treatments with Black people on the packaging or products specifically for melanated skin. “This led to years of insecurity in my own skin,” Kikam said in a Healthline article. “I struggled back then with finding information on how to care for my skin as a Black woman.”



Kikam decided to pursue a career in dermatology in part to address colorism and the lack of representation of and treatments for people of color.

In 2017, she launched the platform Brown Skin Derm to change how skin care providers connect with clientele through social media, increase visibility of Black medical professionals and challenge beauty standards.

“It is important to highlight issues that disproportionately affect communities of color because those tend to be forgotten or not prioritized because they don’t affect the greater population of people,” Kikam said.

The account now has over 100,000 followers and nearly 1,000 educational posts covering everything from sunscreen application to treating hyperpigmentation to shaving tips.

Given that only 3% percent of dermatology students are Black, Kikam encourages Black medical students to consider dermatology as a specialty.

“I talk freely about my journey and struggles as a Black woman in one of the least diverse subspecialties in medicine,” she said. “It is impactful in terms of inspiring minority medical students to pursue dermatology, a competitive specialty to get into but certainly not impossible.”

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