The IMSD program introduced a new training module on “Managing and Sharing Your Research Data” to kick off its 2014-2015 series. The module, which consisted of four weekly 2-hour sessions, was developed and led by Andrew Creamer, Science Data Specialist for the Brown University Library, with the assistance of senior scholar John Santiago. Participants gained practical information about resources and best practices for managing, storing and sharing research data, a topic of increasing importance in light of new mandates from major funding agencies including NIH and NSF.

Module participant Tatum Ponte, a project manager in Brown’s Office of Biomed Computer Services, commented “As part of my work I refer staff, faculty, and students to resources within Brown that can meet their IT needs so it’s wonderful that I can refer them to the great resources provided by the library to support their research. “ She added, “Data preservation is an issue near and dear to me. The worst part of my job is telling someone that their data is lost and not recoverable. Having a good data management plan…and storing data in digital repositories…means that I can have fewer of those kinds of conversations.” – KZB
Congratulations

Michael Lopez, IMSD Trainee in Biostatistics, successfully defended his doctoral dissertation on July 16, 2014. His thesis research on “Causal Inference for Multiple Treatments” was conducted under the guidance of faculty advisor Professor Roe Gutman.

Allison Porman, IMSD senior scholar and Ph.D. candidate in Molecular Biology, Cell Biology and Biochemistry, successfully defended her thesis on July 23, 2014. Her research on “Identification and Regulation of White-Opaque Phenotypic Switching in Candida tropicalis” was conducted in the lab of her advisor, Professor Richard Bennett.

Stacy-Ann Allen-Ramdial, former IMSD senior scholar (Brown PhD 2013), began a new position in September 2014 as Research Scientist at Battelle in Arlington, Virginia. Her work focuses on Battelle’s STEM philanthropy and STEM education outreach.


Research Matters

Eric James, IMSD trainee and senior scholar in Neuroscience, was among a select group of ten Brown University graduate students and alumni chosen to present a Ted-X style research talk as part of the University’s 250th Anniversary Celebration. Eric’s talk explained how his research, using tadpole models, shows an apparent connection between valproic acid, an antiseizure medication sometimes taken during pregnancy, and neurodevelopmental disorders, including autism. The symposium was moderated by Heather Bennett, IMSD trainee and senior scholar in Neuroscience. Thanks to both Eric and Heather for helping to communicate to a broad audience the important message that “Research Matters”! – KZB

Fellowships, Awards & Achievements

Cristina A. Fernandez, IMSD trainee in Epidemiology, was awarded an NIH F31 National Research Service Award for her project entitled “Vulnerability to PTSD after a disaster: Clinical and public health implications”.

Two IMSD trainees were recognized for their submissions to the Ford Foundation Fellowship Programs. Heather L. Bennett from Neuroscience received Honorable Mention for her entry to the dissertation competition, and Hawasatu Dumbuya of Molecular Pharmacology and Physiology, received Honorable Mention for her entry to the predoctoral competition. The full list of national awardees, as well as details on the 2015 competition, is available at the Ford Foundation website.


Trainee & Program Publications:


Carolina Ramirez and Eric James received awards at the 2014 SACNAS conference for best undergraduate poster presentation and best oral presentation in Neuroscience, respectively. Photo credit: Mashfiq Hasan

Noelle Hutchins Kelso, former IMSD senior scholar (Brown PhD 2013), has obtained a postdoctoral research fellowship at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, TX with Dr. Bruce Beutler (2011 Nobel Laureate) in the Center for Genetics of Host Defense.

Eric James, IMSD trainee and doctoral candidate in Neuroscience, received an award for best oral presentation in Neuroscience at the 2014 SACNAS conference in October. The topic of his research presentation was “Effects of Histone Deacetylase Inhibitors on Developing Neural Circuits”. Eric’s participation in the conference was supported by travel awards from the Brown Graduate School and Neuroscience Department.
IMSD Launch Event Celebrates Student Achievements

Dr. Victoria Ruiz (PhD 2012, Pathobiology) was a featured alumnus speaker and shared her perspectives as a former IMSD program participant and partner student. Victoria is currently a postdoctoral fellow at NYU Medical Center and was recently profiled in an NPR article about the shortage of academic jobs for PhDs in the biomedical sciences. Kirk Haltaufderhyde, a PhD candidate in Molecular Pharmacology and Physiology, also shared his perspectives as a current IMSD trainee and former York College student.

Thanks to everyone who attended and contributed to the success of these events! – KZB

*Doctoral Initiative on Minority Attrition and Completion (DIMAC) supported by the Council of Graduate Schools (NSF grant #1138814).

North Carolina A&T Hosts Fair

Representatives of the IMSD Program participated in the annual Maximizing Opportunities in Research promotes interest in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (MORE-STEM) Fair hosted by North Carolina A&T State University on September 17th. IMSD Program Coordinator Karen Ball and Vérida Léandre, IMSD trainee and PhD candidate in Biotechnology, shared information with NC A&T students about Brown’s graduate training programs in the biomedical sciences and public health. These types of exchanges help to strengthen our institutional partnerships and cultivate relationships with prospective graduate applicants and future IMSD trainees. – KZB

Bertuzzi Seminar Explores Career Options in Biosciences

Dr. Stefano Bertuzzi, Executive Director of the American Society for Cell Biology, was a featured guest speaker for an IMSD career seminar in September. Dr. Bertuzzi, who has extensive experience as both a bench scientist and a policy maker, offered a variety of options and insights for PhD students who are considering careers in the biological sciences. Following his talk, the speaker led a focus group discussion and engaged in Q&A with graduate students and postdocs. The seminar was co-sponsored by the Department of Molecular Pharmacology, Physiology and Biotechnology. – KZB
Funding and Training Opportunities

**Predoctoral Individual Fellowships**

**F31 Predoctoral Individual National Research Service Award (NRSA)**


Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards for Individual Predoctoral Fellowships (F31) provide support for promising doctoral candidates who will be performing dissertation research and training in scientific health-related fields relevant to the missions of the participating NIH Institutes and Centers. Individual opportunities may have different deadlines, please check the sites: [http://grants.nih.gov/training/F_files_nrsa.htm](http://grants.nih.gov/training/F_files_nrsa.htm)

**NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program**
The NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) application period is now open! NSF is soliciting applications for the GRFP until the Life Sciences deadlines on November 4, 2014. Three years of support is provided by the program for graduate study in science or engineering and leads to a research-based master's or doctoral degree. For more information on the awards, the application, and to look at recently funded proposals, visit the program's website: [http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=6201&WT.mc_id=USNSF_39&WT.mc_ev=click](http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=6201&WT.mc_id=USNSF_39&WT.mc_ev=click)

**Dissertation Support**

United Negro College Fund - UNCF/Merck Graduate Science Research Dissertation Fellowships are intended to support African American graduate students as they complete coursework, conduct research, and prepare the dissertation required for the doctoral degree in the biomedically relevant life or physical sciences and engineering. Application Deadline: December 2, 2014. Further information can be found at: [http://umsi.uncf.org/applyonline/graduateinstructions](http://umsi.uncf.org/applyonline/graduateinstructions)

**ASCB MAC, FASEB MARC, Keystone Symposia**
The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) provides information on their web site about science training and education awards made available through FASEB’s member societies for students, trainees and science mentors. A complete list of upcoming eligible national meetings for travel awards can be found at [http://www.faseb.org/MARC-and-Professional-Development/Travel-Awards/Eligible-Meetings---Conferences.aspx](http://www.faseb.org/MARC-and-Professional-Development/Travel-Awards/Eligible-Meetings---Conferences.aspx)

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<td>GSA: Strategic Conference of Zebrafish Investigators</td>
<td>Pacific Grove CA</td>
<td>Jan 17-21, 2015</td>
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<td>GSA: 56th Annual Drosophila Research Conference</td>
<td>Chicago IL</td>
<td>Mar 4-8, 2015</td>
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<td>ENDO 2015 (The Endocrine Society Annual Meeting)</td>
<td>San Diego CA</td>
<td>Mar 5-8, 2015</td>
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<td>HCS Immunohistochemistry and Microscopy Short Course 2015</td>
<td>Woods Hole MA</td>
<td>Mar 14-19, 2015</td>
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**Conference Travel Awards:**

**Intramural NIAID Research Opportunities (INRO) 2015**
INRO connects talented students from populations underrepresented in the biomedical sciences with training opportunities in immunology and infectious and allergic diseases at NIAID. The all expenses paid visit to NIAID will take place February 2–5, 2015, on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Campus in Bethesda, MD. Application Deadline: October 15. For details, view the program’s website.

**Keystone Symposia**

Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology is offering 57 conferences in the 2014-2015 season, spanning the range of the life sciences. Scholarships are available for Students and Postdoctoral Fellows from underrepresented backgrounds. For information about upcoming meetings, scholarships and travel awards, visit: [http://keystonesymposia.org/](http://keystonesymposia.org/)

**Northeast Scientific Training Programs (NEST) Retreat**
March 6–8, 2015
[http://biomed.brown.edu/imsd/nest/](http://biomed.brown.edu/imsd/nest/)
See you in 2015.

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Brown University’s Initiative to Maximize Student Development (IMSD) is a predoctoral research training initiative that aspires to significantly increase the number of PhDs from groups underrepresented in biomedical and behavioral research. The program is funded by a five-year continuation grant (R25 GM083270) by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, National Institutes of Health (NIGMS/NIH).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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**PARTNER INSTITUTIONS:**

- St. John’s University, New York, NY
- York College of the City University of New York
- North Carolina A&T State University
- The College of Mount Saint Vincent