Message from the Director

Spring is the time prospective graduate students commit themselves to programs and institutions for graduate training, and this year Brown has benefitted from the close work between our graduate programs and IMSD. Underrepresented minority student admissions to our PhD programs is up to 23% (compared to 17.5% in the pre-IMSD era). These individuals were selected from our largest and most competitive applicant pool that included the highest number of URM and disadvantaged applicants to date. This ‘upick’ in URM application numbers, normalized against the general increase of applications, is considered to be an IMSD affect we hope to sustain in future years.

This has also been a year of change as leadership in the BioMed Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies passed from outgoing Associate Dean, and IMSD Co-PI, Nancy Thompson to Elizabeth Harrington. The Brown IMSD program also welcomed Dr. Medeva Ghee to its Internal Advisory Board. Dr. Ghee is Acting Executive Director of the Leadership Alliance, which has a long history of cultivating the talents of under-represented students. Two new members of our External Advisory Board this year are: Drs. Laina King, PhD Director, Diversity in Life Science Programs of the Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology, and Michael Leibowitz, Director of Graduate Academic Diversity and Professor at the University of Medicine and Dentistry, New Jersey (UMDNJ). Dr. Leibowitz was a featured speaker in the IMSD seminar series where he discussed his current research into the life cycle of malarial parasites. Brown IMSD was also fortunate to host Dr. Winston Thompson of Morehouse School of Medicine this spring. Dr. Thompson presented his research of “Prohibitin Signaling in Folliculogenesis and Gynecologic Disease”. Both Leibowitz and Thompson also met with IMSD trainees and shared their wisdom about how to best approach graduate training, career considerations and how to prioritize research interests and future research pursuits.

As the academic year draws to a close, Brown IMSD expresses gratitude to our colleagues, friends, collaborators and supporters and look forward to working with all of you in the coming year.

Andrew G. Campbell, PhD

Everage Receives PhD in Epidemiology

IMSD trainee and senior scholar Nicholas J. Everage will receive his PhD in Epidemiology from Brown University in May 2011. Nick successfully defended his dissertation on April 8th and presented his research on “Potential Roles of Racial Discrimination and Sociobehavioral Risk Marker Clustering in the Pathophysiology of Coronary Heart Disease.” He is currently interviewing for positions in the scientific consulting field. We all wish Nick the best of luck with his career and future plans.

Brown IMSD modules presentation receives ‘National Postdoctoral Association Award’

A presentation of Brown’s IMSD skill-based training modules received 1 of 4 “Innovation in Action” poster awards at the 2011 Annual Meeting of the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) held March 25–27th on the NIH campus (http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/no-modules/516-2011am-poster-winners). The poster entitled “Brown’s IMSD Grant Addresses NPA Core Competencies”.

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Congratulations


Angel Byrd, IMSD senior scholar and graduate student in Brown’s MD/PhD program, was chosen as a 2011 UNCF/Merck Graduate Science Research Dissertation Fellow. Congratulations to Angel on receiving this prestigious and highly competitive fellowship.

Cyrena Gawuga, an IMSD graduate student and senior scholar in the department of Molecular Pharmacology and Physiology (MPP), was selected as the Helen Fitzgerald Cerr Memorial Fund Pre-doctoral Fellow for FY11. A meritorious student is designated by the Associate Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in consultation with Graduate Program Directors.

Kristin Beale won first place for “Best Graduate Student Oral Presentation” at the Regional Society for Developmental Biology (SDB) meeting March 26-27, 2011. As a result of her winning presentation on “Gamete plasma membrane fusion triggers a block to polytubey in Arabidopsis thaliana” she was also awarded a $1,000.00 travel grant to present in the national SDB meeting in Chicago summer 2011.

Teresa Ramirez, received a FASEB MARC Travel Award to attend the 2011 Experimental Biology Conference. She was joined by fellow IMSD student and senior scholar, Diana Lizarazo who gave oral and poster presentations of her research. Both Teresa and Diana serve as FASEB Peer Mentors.

IMSD Training Modules

The Brown IMSD program offers a slate of ‘not-for-credit’ training modules throughout the calendar year. These modules, developed initially for IMSD trainees, now include an increasing number of non-IMSD graduate trainees, postdoctoral fellows and even the periodic visiting scholar/faculty. The modules help to refresh earlier training experiences, provide additional foundational training in preparation for advanced/graduate coursework and introduce trainees to new areas that will likely become essential for their success in scientific training. Modules are led by faculty members who are assisted by senior graduate students who serve as IMSD Scholars. Modules have clear goals and are highly interactive.

Depending on content delivered, the total contact hours can be as high as 12 hours over the course of a week. In responding to evaluative feedback from faculty and trainees, we have established a policy where IMSD supported trainees now complete a minimum of three of the currently available eleven training modules. This helps to broaden trainee knowledge base, provide better evidence and relationship between modules and trainee progress, and improve our ability to accurately measure the impact of IMSD support — particularly module work — on student progress. Further information about our training modules can be found at: http://biomed.brown.edu/imsd/training/ AGC
The New England Science Symposium (NESS) 2011 — Supporting the future of science

The 2011 NESS was held April 1st at the Joseph B. Martin Conference Center at Harvard Medical School (http://www.mfdp.med.harvard.edu/med_grad/ness/). The symposium was established in 2002 to promote and sustain career pursuits in biomedical science by postdoctoral fellows; medical, dental and graduate students; post-baccalaureates; college and community college students (especially African-American, Hispanic/Latino and American Indian/Alaska Native individuals). It is a venue for research presentations by trainees and an opportunity to hear from faculty and experts in the field about career choices, navigating the career paths and how to maximize professional success. Brown University was well-represented by IMSD trainees (Diana Lizarazo and Cristina Lopez-Fagundo) and senior scholars (Stacy-Ann Allen, also a member of NESS planning committee, and Victoria Ruiz). IMSD PI Andrew G. Campbell also attended and participated on a panel “Road to Science: Navigating Your Career”. NESS has grown significantly since its inception in 2002 thanks to the leadership of Dr. Joan Reed and her dedicated staff. It now stands as one of the strong regional programs that has developed a national identity in serving underrepresented students in the sciences.

Continuation of BROWN IMSD

was presented by lead author, Susan Rottenberg. Winners were selected based on poster content, especially content relating to emerging programs with the potential to impact the training of postdoctoral fellows. Brown IMSD skill-based modules provide scientific content and foundational training that benefit participants at many career stages. This feature of the modules raises their appeal among non-IMSD trainees, including postdoctoral fellows. Receipt of the NPA award is an honor for Brown IMSD as it validates the broader value of our modules to training beyond the graduate level in the larger scientific community.

De la Monte featured guest on Dr. Oz show

Dr. Suzanne de la Monte, Professor of Neurosurgery and Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, was a featured guest on the Dr. Oz Show on April 6th. De la Monte, an IMSD faculty trainer and module leader, discussed her ground-breaking research of the possible link between Alzheimer’s disease and diet. According to her research, chemicals from processed foods can affect insulin production in the brain, which may lead to Alzheimer’s. “We could be causing this epidemic ourselves just by the convenience of processed foods,” de la Monte says. A full report can be found on-line: www.doctoroz.com/videos/alzheimers-breakthrough-pt-1.

IMSD lunch with seminar speaker Dr. Winston Thompson (L to R): Pamela Gaddi, Anika Toorie, Leon Toussaint, Dr. Winston Thompson, Tania Nevers, Victoria Ruiz, Diana Lizarazo.
Funding and Training Opportunities

F31 Predoctoral Individual National Research Service Award (NRSA)
AIDS-related applications: Sept. 7, Jan. 7, May 7

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards for Individual Predoctoral Fellowships (F31)
This individual predoctoral research training fellowship provides 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)

Dissertation Support:

R36 Dissertation Support
Standard Deadlines: June 16, Oct. 16, Feb. 16
AIDS-related applications: Sept. 7, Jan. 7, May 7
Individual opportunities may have different deadlines, please check the sites.


Conference Travel Awards

Keystone Symposia
Keystone Symposia has announced its line-up of 55 conferences for the upcoming season that runs November 2011 – May 2012. The meetings cover all aspects of the life sciences. ([http://www.keystonesymposia.org/Meetings/ListMeetings.cfm](http://www.keystonesymposia.org/Meetings/ListMeetings.cfm)). The first meeting in the Keystone Symposia Global Health Series, will be held November 7-11, 2011 in New Delhi, India on “Malnutrition, Gut-Microbial Interactions and Mucosal Immunity to Vaccines.”

Global Health Travel Award application deadline: June 7, 2011
Scholarship/URM scholarship application and abstract deadline: July 11, 2011
[http://www.keystonesymposia.org/Scholarships/MinorityTravel.cfm](http://www.keystonesymposia.org/Scholarships/MinorityTravel.cfm)

The 2012 Keystone Symposia Fellows Program will welcome applications beginning June 1, 2011. This unique program allows early-career postdoctoral investigators to shadow the Keystone Symposia program development process for one year, including attending the semi-annual Scientific Advisory Board meetings in Keystone, Colorado, and to receive invaluable mentoring from leading scientists. Fellows do not have to be from an underrepresented minority background, but must be committed to encouraging diversity in the life sciences.

Application deadline: September 1, 2011.
[www.keystonesymposia.org/AboutUs/Diversity_Fellows.cfm](http://www.keystonesymposia.org/AboutUs/Diversity_Fellows.cfm)

FASEB MARC Travel Awards:
FASEB MARC Program Travel Awards are currently being offered on a “conditional/contingent upon funding availability” basis. See FASEB website for a complete list of upcoming eligible national meetings. [http://www.faseb.org/marc/home.aspx](http://www.faseb.org/marc/home.aspx)

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<td>35th Annual Symposium of The Protein Society</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
<td>7/23 - 7/27</td>
<td>5/31/11</td>
<td>6/30/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Society for Leukocyte Biology 2011</td>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
<td>9/22 - 9/24</td>
<td>7/1/11</td>
<td>7/15/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASHG 2011 Annual Meeting/12th International Congress of Human Genetics</td>
<td>Montreal, Quebec, Canada</td>
<td>10/11 - 10/15</td>
<td>9/1/11</td>
<td>9/9/11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biomedical Engineering Society 2011 Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Hartford, CT</td>
<td>10/13 - 10/15</td>
<td>9/1/11</td>
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Conf. L to R: Teresa Ramirez, Lisa Longato, and Diana Lizarazo explore Chinatown during the 2011 Experimental Biology Conference