

BSCPP

IN TOUCH WITH

B I O M E D I C A L S C I E N C E C A R E E R S P R O J E C T

News of Note:

Fall 1994 Volume 1 Number 4

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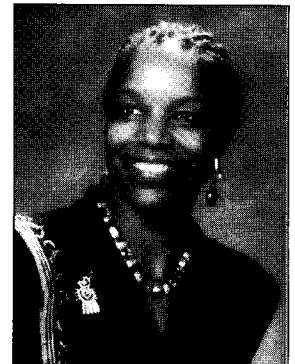
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Biomedical Science Careers Project Incorporated

Thanks to the help of David Szabo, an attorney with Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C., the Boston law firm that has provided significant support to the Biomedical Science Careers Project (BSCP) since early 1993, the BSCP is now incorporated. Joan Reede, M.D., M.P.H., M.S., the driving force behind the Project, is president and chairperson.

Since 1991, when Reede formed BSCP, it has been run out of her Office for Minority Faculty Development at Harvard Medical School. As an inde-

pendent, nonprofit organization, with a Board of Trustees in place, BSCP will now have more resources to draw upon as it continues its efforts to help minority students find careers in the biomedical sciences. The Project is in the process of applying to the Internal Revenue Service for tax-exempt status, which will enable the organization to accept charitable donations.



**Joan Reede, M.D., M.P.H.,
M.S., President and
Chairperson**

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Financial Opportunities:

National Institutes of Health Research Supplements for Under- represented Minorities

As the cost of an advanced degree continues to escalate, it is increasingly difficult for low-income minority students to achieve their educational goals. Those that do usually graduate owing tens of thousands of dollars on student loans they were forced to take in order to finance their education. And they seek out jobs that will pay enough to enable them to support themselves and pay back the loans. As a rule, research jobs do not fit into this category.

In the biomedical field, as well as others, this financial reality is resulting in a lack of qualified biomedical and behavioral researchers. In particular, there is a lack of minority scientists participating in biomedical and behavioral research. To balance that picture, and to try to avert a projected labor shortage in the 21st century, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) last year began offering research supplements to attract underrepresented minorities into biomedical and behavioral research.

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Mentor/Student Connections

LeAnn Williams

When LeAnn Williams was in high school in the late '70s and early '80s in St. Louis, she was discouraged, as a woman and as a minority, from taking the science courses that she loved. Now a "non-traditional" student at Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass., 30-year old Williams is majoring in biology and chemistry and plans to go on to medical school.

After graduating from high school, Williams pursued jobs with a scientific focus. She held different laboratory jobs in industry, and did some summer internships in scientific laboratories and at area colleges. People there encouraged her to go to college and graduate school. "I didn't know how I was going to do it," she recalls, "but I knew I was."

Three years ago Williams was ready. She selected Mount Holyoke because the school had excellent science facilities and offered a program for non-traditional sciences. "I also figured that even if I never made it to graduate school, a B.S. from Mount Holyoke was okay," she says.

Last spring, at the recommendation of one of her professors, Williams attended the BSCP conference in Boston. In the summer she returned to Boston for a 10-week internship at Children's Hospital through its Summer Internship Program for Students of Color. The program, now called "Together," is open to students from colleges across the country and is not limited to science majors. It is geared to expose participants to all aspects of a hospital, from administration

through lab work and patient care.

Williams worked in the Hospital's virology lab, which does more viral analysis than any other hospital in the Boston area. She learned how to prepare specimens to be tested for viruses and ran some viral analyses — including those for the rotavirus and the virus that causes chicken pox.

"I would definitely recommend [this internship]," she says. "In addition to the work I did in the lab, I was exposed to the entire workings of a hospital, from the doctors to patients. Before the internship I was pretty sure I wanted to get my M.D. or Ph.D. and do research. After this summer, I know I do not want to see patients. I'm definitely a researcher."

The internship also helped Williams make contacts who will be valuable as she prepares to apply to medical schools. "The biggest upside of the program was that I got to meet and work with so many doctors from Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School — many of whom I had met at the BSCP conference," she says. "I have kept in touch with many of the doctors and am talking to some about medical school."

For more information about Together, which is open to students from colleges around the country, contact Children's Hospital at 617-735-7656.

Robert J. Blendon

Robert J. Blendon, Sc.D., M.B.A., Director, Program for Public Opinion and Health Care at the Harvard School of Public Health, has served as a mentor for the Biomedical Sci-



Robert J. Blendon

ence Careers Project since the program began in 1991 because, he says, "I have always been interested in the problems of getting minority students into the health professions."

Blendon came to Harvard University's School of Public Health in 1987 with an interest in introducing political analy-

sis into the school's Ph.D. and health professional programs. He has since created the Program for Public Opinion and Health Care, the only university-based, independent center that polls Americans on their thoughts regarding health care and reanalyzes other groups' polls. The center has established strong relationships with the White House, the Health subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Republican Senate leadership. Since 1993, at the request of the House Ways and Means Committee, Blendon and his staff at the center have been conducting polls and reporting periodically on where Americans stand on the ongoing debate over health care reform.

Blendon defines health policy as the scientific study of facts and issues relating to what the government should do to improve health and explains, "Many of the issues of government policy require an understanding of science. Policy makers need a scientific approach to examining the facts of what would improve health."

In his work with the BSCP, Blendon talks to medical and graduate students in the sciences primarily about the Ph.D.-level opportunities that exist as alternatives to medicine. And he has kept in touch with many students for years following their ini-



LeAnn Williams

News

Massachusetts Medical Society Scholarship Program

BY CORINNE BRODERICK,
DIRECTOR, EDUCATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS
MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) sponsors an annual scholarship program to recognize outstanding third-year students at medical schools in Massachusetts. Each May at its Annual Meeting, the MMS awards four \$10,000 scholarships — one each to a student from Tufts University School of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, University of Massachusetts Medical School and Boston University School of Medicine.

To be considered, students must demonstrate high academic standing, commitment to community service and financial need. The application process begins in February. Students can apply through the Student Affairs Office at their school. Based on their applications, four students from each of the four schools are nominated to participate in interviews with physicians at MMS headquarters in Waltham, MA. One student from each school is selected, and winners are presented in mid-May at the MMS Annual Meeting.

The MMS Scholarship Program was launched in 1993 and so far has recognized eight outstanding medical students — all of whom have demonstrated significant commitment to community service. Their volunteer efforts have focused on areas such as medical assistance in third-world countries, work in community health centers and homeless shelters, and domestic violence prevention and intervention.

The Massachusetts Medical Society is the professional membership

organization for more than 16,000 Massachusetts physicians and medical students. Founded in 1781 to “work towards the advancement of medical knowledge and to upgrade patient care,” it is the oldest continuously operating state medical society in the United States. The Society owns and publishes The New England Journal of Medicine, Journal Watch and AIDS

Clinical Care.

In addition to its Scholarship Program, the MMS runs a Charitable and Educational Fund that provides low-interest

loans to qualified third- and fourth-year medical students enrolled in medical schools in Massachusetts. Loans are made in the amount of \$5,000 each and are administered through the medical schools. Students may qualify for loans for both the third and fourth year of medical school. Qualifications include residency in Massachusetts at the time of the loan, U.S. citizenship, and enrollment in an accredited medical school in Massachusetts.

For more information about the MMS Scholarship Program, contact the MMS Department of Education and Communications, 1440 Main Street, Waltham, MA 02154 or call 617-893-4610. For information about the Student Loan Program, contact the MMS Charitable and Educational Fund at the same address.

What's Happening In Washington Project 3000 by 2000

Project 3000 by 2000 is a national campaign that was started in 1991 to help increase the number of under-represented minority students enrolled in medical schools throughout the United States. The project is

funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Science Education Partnership Award Grant.

Since the campaign began, 125 medical schools in the U.S. have ap-

pointed Project Coordinators who serve as liaisons between the schools and the Project. Medical schools are encouraged to look to high schools in their area with large minority populations and work with the principals to inform students who show promise or an interest in science — but who most likely would not know how to go about pursuing their interest or developing it into a career — about what it takes to go to medical school.

Boston University Medical School has a program that exemplifies Project 3000 by 2000's goals. Its Early Medical School Selection Program invites students from historically black colleges — primarily in the South — to spend a summer taking courses at B.U. Those who do well in the program, and do well overall as undergraduates, will be accepted to B.U. Medical School after they graduate.

If you would like more information about Project 3000 by 2000, or a directory of participating schools, talk to your science teachers or call the Project at (202) 828-0584.

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tial meetings. "Lots of Boston-area students in particular call me once they're enrolled in a program, or after they've completed one, to ask, 'What do I do next?'" Blendon's short answer is, "look for opportunities that interest you — no matter how unusual it may seem. If it's an exciting opportunity, go for it."

"There are many exciting fields that minority students usually don't know about," he continues. "And many programs offer fellowships, so students don't have to worry about borrowing money to pay for tuition." Within schools of public health and medical schools, it is possible to get a

"There are many exciting fields that minority students usually don't know about. And many programs offer fellowships, so students don't have to worry about borrowing money to pay for tuition."

ROBERT J. BLENDON

Ph.D. in areas ranging from biostatistics and anatomy to epidemiology, behavioral sciences and pharmacology — areas of study that could lead to careers in Congress; at the White House; with state or federal health commissions; in business, serving as government relations experts for pharmaceutical companies; or in academia, teaching, conducting research and offering future students the same kind of guidance Blendon has been providing for so many years.

Who What Where

Since the first BSCP conference in March, 1992, scores of student participants have enrolled in college, graduate or medical school, found internships and jobs with the help of contacts they made at the conference. As we stated in the first issue of *In Touch with BSCP* one year ago, the primary goal of the newsletter is to further expand your exposure to opportunities. And being dedicated to networking, as we are, we thought you could really benefit from the experiences of your peers.

While the mentors and guest speakers you meet at the conferences can provide you the hard facts about a particular discipline, academic program or internship, your fellow students can provide you with the inside scoop... what's the work really like... how did they feel as minorities at a given place... what programs would they recommend/advise you to skip.

In this issue, we introduce Who What Where, a forum for readers to communicate with each other. Following are excerpts from letters we have received from students whose participation in our annual conference led to interesting opportunities. We encourage all of you to write and share your experiences, in order that we may make this column a regular feature.

... I feel a need to write and thank you for the wonderful conferences, mentors and information that your organization has been providing. Not only have I learned valuable information at these conferences about networking and the sciences, but I have found that the networking really does work... this summer I have a paid internship at Mount Desert Island Biological Labs in Bar Harbor, Maine, thanks to your most recent conference [March, '94]. I was placed at a table with Barbara Kent, the director of Mount Desert Island Biological lab and we struck up a conversation about my interest in dolphin communication and neurobiology. This... led to her giving me an application for an internship I would have never known existed...

Leslie Castelo
sophomore, Harvard University

... just wanted to let you know that the NIH approved my funding request to the tune of \$20K (\$300 short of full request). The program is the NIH Minority Research Supplement, and I found out about it at your conference...

Stanley Saulny, MECPO

If you would like to share your experiences with us, please write to Joan Reede at: Harvard Medical School, Minority Faculty Development Program, 164 Longwood Avenue, Boston, MA 02115. You may also fax letters to Joan at (617) 432-3834; or send an e-mail to: JREEDE@WARREN.MED.HARVARD.EDU.

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According to NIH guidelines, eligible minorities are defined as individuals belonging to a particular ethnic or racial group that has been determined by a grantee institution to be underrepresented in biomedical or behavioral research — with priorities given to projects involving Black,

Hispanic, Native American and Pacific Islander. The NIH awards research supplements in the following categories:

- *Underrepresented minority high school students who have expressed an interest in biomedical or behavioral sciences.*

The purpose of this program is to give minority high school students an opportunity to obtain meaningful experience in various aspects of health-related research that will stimulate their interest in careers in biomedical or behavioral sciences. To be eligible,

students must be enrolled and in good standing at a high school in the United States. Principal Investigators at institutions with a Minority High School Student Research Apprenticeship Program (MHSSRAP)

grant are encouraged to coordinate the selection of high school students for this program with MHSSRAP program directors. Students in this program can receive up to \$2,000 for summer internships and/or part-time work during the school year.

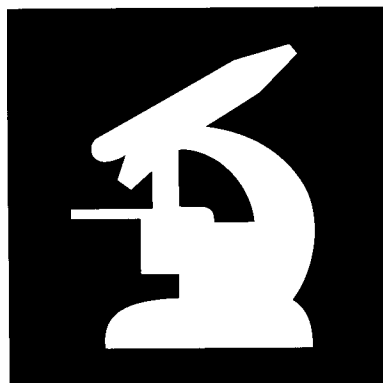
- *Underrepresented minority undergraduate students who have demonstrated an interest in biomedical or behavioral sciences and wish to pursue graduate-level training in these areas.*

This program provides an opportunity for minority undergraduate students to participate in a research project at a research institution dur-

ing the summer or the school year. The success of this program depends on the abilities of Principal Investigators to identify students, who must be affiliated either with the applicant institution or another academic institution. Students can earn up to \$6.00 per hour in salary, plus \$125 per month for supplies and travel. For each year that they receive supplements, students are expected to devote the equivalent of at least three months full-time to the research project and related activities. In most cases, NIH will support students for at least two years.

- *Underrepresented minority graduate research assistants who wish to develop research capabilities in the biomedical and behavioral sciences.*

The goal of this program is to reach out to minority graduate students already in biomedical and behavioral sciences and provide them with an opportunity to further develop their research skills. Any mi-



Higher Education Information Center Is Source of Financial Aid Information

It's never too early to start planning for financial aid. The Higher Education Information Center (HEIC), located on the Concourse Level of the Boston Public Library, is a resource center for students in need of financial aid. The Center has printed materials on private scholarships, and federal and state financial aid programs, an on-line scholarship database, and catalogs from approximately 2,500 colleges and universities across the country. The Center also has a satellite office at Freedom House in Dorchester.

If you have any questions, you can call the BPL Center at 536-0200 or Freedom House at 445-0195.

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

Association of American Medical Colleges Conference

October 29

Boston Marriott -Copley Place

High School students

3:30 - 5:30 p.m.,

College students

5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

For registration information call Phyllis Stevens at (617) 638-4163, Colleen Romain at (617) 956-6576 or Alvin Poussaint at (617) 432-1572

National Council of Black Engineers and Scientists Conference

October 20 - 22

Atlanta, Georgia

For information call

(213) 896-9779

Biomedical Career Development Conference for Academic Fellows and Junior Faculty

December 3, 1994

Boston Park Plaza Hotel, Boston

For information call

(617) 432-0552

Test Dates

Allied Health Professions Admission Test (AHPAT)

Registration Deadline:

December 10, 1994

Test Date: January 14, 1995

for information call

(800) 622-3231

Graduate Record Exam (GRE)

Registration Deadline:

November 5, 1994

Test Date: December 10, 1994

for information call

(609) 771-7670

Medical College Admission Test (MCAT)

Registration Deadline:

March 24, 1995

Test Date: April 22, 1995

for information call

(319) 337-1357

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)

Registration Deadline:

December 22, 1994

Test Date: January 28, 1995

for information call

(609) 771-7600

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Mintz Levin will continue to provide pro bono legal support to the BSCP. According to Jim Durham, director of Community Service at Mintz Levin, "The objectives of the BSCP are so closely aligned with our commitment to community service, and our extensive biotechnology practice, that our relationship was a natural. It is an extraordinary opportunity for us to work with the BSCP."

Members of the BSCP Board of Trustees, who will oversee the Project's future activities, are:

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