

BOSTON IN TOUCH WITH BSCPP

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

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The Leadership Alliance

In 1992, The Leadership Alliance was launched as a means to increase representation of minority students and faculty in the life, physical, and social sciences, as well as the humanities. The Alliance is an academic consortium of 24 institutions of higher learning that includes leading research and teaching universities, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

In addition to increasing the number and quality of talented minority students at these academic institutions, the program is geared toward retaining them at Alliance graduate schools by changing the academic environment to include modifications in support programs, methods of evaluation, scholarship, and research support.

"While the Ivy League does wonderful things in terms of educating people, many of the initiatives that we have are done on a competitive basis," says James H. Wyche, executive director of the Leadership Alliance and associate provost at Brown University. "When we looked at the issue of under-representation in our faculty and graduate environment, it became clear that we were not doing as well as we'd like. So we came up with the idea of merging efforts into a more altruistic mechanism, trying to devote our resources, energies and talents together to enhance representation and prepare young scholars for the academic world."

Working under the aegis of Brown President Vartan Gregorian, Wyche developed the concept

of the Alliance and initiated discussions with a council of Ivy League presidents.

Initially, the program focused on attracting young, under-represented students to academic research, as a first step toward graduate school. In five years it has evolved into a full menu of projects, involving students at the pre-col-

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ALLIANCE MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

Brooklyn College
Brown University
Clark Atlanta University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Delaware State University
Harvard University
Howard University
Hunter College
Johns Hopkins University
Morehouse College
Morgan State University
New York University
Prairie View A & M University
Princeton University
Southern University at Boca Raton
Spelman College
Tougaloo College
University of Maryland,
Baltimore County
University of Pennsylvania
University of Puerto Rico
Xavier University, New Orleans
Yale University

Mentor Profile: Winfred W. Williams, M.D.

As he describes the realities behind his various titles and positions, it becomes clear that Winfred W. Williams, Jr., M.D., has at least two full-time jobs — with a lot of committee and volunteer work thrown in.

Williams is director of Interventional Nephrology for Transplantation at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), and director of the hospital's Office of Minority Health Professions (OMHP). A kidney specialist, Williams primarily treats patients with moderate to advanced kidney insufficiency. He also teaches Harvard Medical students, as well as those in the MGH Internal Medicine Residency and Renal Division Training Programs. And he conducts clinical research in the field of liver and kidney transplantation.

As OMHP director, Williams oversees MGH's efforts to increase opportunities for students and physicians of color. He is particularly proud of two OMHP programs, the Science Education Program (SEP) and the Summer Research Trainee Program (SRTP).

The SEP is an extension of an NIH-funded effort to bring high school students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds

to centers like MGH and provide them with rigorous science educational experiences. Students accepted into the program work in an MGH laboratory for the summer, under the close supervision of an MGH scientist/mentor.

The SRTP, which is co-sponsored by MGH and Merck Pharmaceutical Laboratories, offers summer laboratory and clinical research experiences to exceptional

If you would like information about applying to the MGH's SEP or the SRTP, contact the Office of Minority Health Professions at: (617) 724-3831.

college and medical school students. The application process is extremely competitive, with 80 to 100 applicants from across the country seeking 12 spots. "These are real 'walk-on-water' students," Williams notes. "Fully greater than 95% of the undergraduates go on to medical school or pure science graduate programs, and many have extended their lab work at MGH for a number of years."

It was primarily his work in this area that led Williams to the BSCP, first as an advisor to students at the BSCP Student Careers Conference; and later as a participant in its Career Development Series.

"As an [BSCP] advisor, I talk with students about what it means to pursue a career in the sciences and medicine and emphasize the many rewards of becoming a physician or a physician/scientist," Williams says. "I talk about what's exciting about a life committed to patient care, teaching, and the study of the complexity of the human body."

"Although the training period is long and sometimes arduous, there is an enormous range of opportunities open to one who completes a medical degree," he continues. "For example, one can build a career devoted to patient care and become an outstanding clinician, or become a health policy expert and participate in shaping national health care policy. The opportunities are virtually limitless. From my perspective, this is one of the real attractions of pursuing a medical education — and one not fully appreciated by students in the early stages of planning their futures." ♦

Mentor Profile: Nancy Norman, M.D., M.P.H.



Nancy Norman

As a student at the Harvard School of Public Health in 1992, Nancy Norman attended the Biomedical Science Careers Conference in Boston at the recommendation of some friends and fac-

ulty. She was impressed. So impressed that five years later, having moved out of the area and back again, she called the BSCP to ask if there was anything she could do to help the organization.

"Looking back at my experience, and that of my colleagues, I see how important personal contact is — especially if it is informal," like the mentoring relationships fostered by the BSCP.

Now an internist with the Fenway Community Health Center in

Boston, Norman will serve as an advisor at the BSCP Conference in February (see back page). "As a student, you have an idea of what it is like to practice medicine, but most often you find that the reality is quite different," she says. As a BSCP advisor, Norman is looking forward to helping current and prospective medical students navigate their academic careers, and to preparing them for the realities that await them upon graduation. ♦

Career Paths: Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences

BY JORDAN BARAB

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH, AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

The field of Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences offers diverse and exciting career opportunities. Specialists working in this field are principally concerned with identifying and eliminating hazards in the workplace. Settings that use professionals in this field, or in the related public health field, include industrial and agricultural workplaces, office settings, and health care facilities.

Other career possibilities include placements in unions, academic research programs, occupational health clinics, and govern-

ment agencies such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and others. Work involves close contact with people in a variety of occupations, and may include some involvement in labor-management relations and governmental enforcement activities.

The Occupational and Environmental Health Sciences offer many options to those interested in science, biology, chemistry, and public health disciplines. Specializations within this field include medicine, nursing, law, health education, epidemiology, industrial hygiene, ergonomics, and safety. The health of our workplace and community en-

vironments depends on knowledgeable and creative individuals who are committed to making a difference in the world around them. ♦

Please contact us if you have had a change of address, or if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

**BSCP c/o
Minority Faculty Development
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164 Longwood Avenue #204,
Boston, MA 02115-5818**

Phone: (617) 432-0552
Fax: (617) 432-3834

Leadership Alliance

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lege level, right on through to graduate and doctoral programs.

Opportunities with the Alliance include:

♦ **Mentoring Network** — a series of linkages among Alliance members that allows students to work with faculty on advanced research projects. Working closely with faculty mentors, students gain theoretical knowledge and practical training in academic and scientific experimentation.

♦ **Summer Programs** — research activities at 12 Leadership Alliance doctoral degree-granting campuses. Each institution provides a direct financial match for each student accepted from the Leadership Alliance applicant pool. An important component of the Summer Program is the maintenance of a database on all Alliance student participants, which can be shared with all Alliance members. Interaction between students and their mentors is closely tracked, and the relationships fre-

quently extend beyond the summer research activities.

♦ **Graduate Student Initiatives** — offering financial assistance to students seeking to take Kaplan-type GRE courses in preparation for applying to graduate school, and graduate fellowships for Alliance students seeking entrance to doctoral programs at Alliance institutions.

♦ **Minority International Research Training (MIRT)** — opportunity for minority undergraduate and graduate students, and faculty, to participate in international research projects. Visiting faculty-led teams spend eight weeks to six months at an affiliated foreign research site and are encouraged to present their research data when they return.

♦ **Science Web (Mentoring Online)** — a World Wide Web site (www.leadership-alliance.org) that will provide a major national resource for minority scientists on the Web. It will include a database of scientists and students who are

part of a developmental scientific pipeline, as well as inspirational biographies, video clips, abstracts, grant information, information on recent developments, and other related scientific initiatives.

Even with the success of the Alliance to date, Wyche is working to increase its reach and attract even more talented individuals. "I'm always looking at a way to get students interested in research, to augment their educational development," he says. "In terms of my efforts with the Alliance, as I've been working with this wonderful community of scholars, I can only say that because of them, we have been able to build a comprehensive set of offerings that goes beyond science to include everything from archaeology to anthropology and zoology." ♦

For more information about the Alliance, or to apply to an Alliance-sponsored program, contact:

*The Leadership Alliance Executive Office, Box 1963, Providence, RI 02912;
Tel: (401) 863-1474;
Fax: (401) 863-2244;
E-Mail: James_Wyche@Brown.edu.*

Upcoming Events and Important Dates

Biomedical Science Careers Conferences

Date: February 28, 1998
Location: Park Plaza Hotel
Who can attend: High school juniors and seniors, college, graduate and post-graduate students from the six New England states

Career Development Series

Date: March 25, 1998
Location: UMass Medical Center, Worcester, MA
Who can attend: Physicians in post-doctoral training, junior faculty and residents
For information call: (617) 432-0552,
Fax: (617) 432-3834, or *e-mail:* lkaye@warren.med.harvard.edu

Presentations at Harvard Medical School

Date: January 30, 1998
J. Emilio Carillo, M.D., M.P.H.
Medical Director
New York Hospital
Community Health Plan

Date: February 27, 1998
Pedro J. Greer, Jr., M.D.
Assistant Dean for Poverty and Homeless Affairs
University of Miami School of Medicine
For information call: Ying Wang
(617) 432-2313

Symposia

Southern New England Regional Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS)

Date: March 20 and 21, 1998
Location: Harvard Medical School
Who can attend: Massachusetts and Rhode Island high school students
For information call: (617) 432-4634

A Sample of Diversity Web Sites

HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL

Faculty Development and Diversity
<http://www.hms.harvard.edu/fdd/>

YALE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
<http://info.med.yale.edu/dakit/studrec.html>

BROWN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
www.leadership-alliance.edu

TUFTS UNIVERSITY
<http://www.tufts.edu/sackler/home.htm>

Symposia (continued)

Biotechnology Symposium, Trade Exposition and Poster Session

Date: May 19, 1998
Location: Museum of Science, Boston
Sponsor: Massachusetts Biotechnology Council
For information call: (617) 577-8198

Special Programs

Boston University School of Medicine

Boston University School of Medicine has a diverse student population with a strong academic program, along with a support system that includes academic, personal and career counseling.

In addition, the Office of Minority Affairs established and administers the Post-Baccalaureate Program, which is designed to enhance the competitiveness of minority and disadvantaged students who have applied to medical school and been rejected. The year-long program includes a summer phase with MCAT review courses and seminars on study skills and self-esteem. During the academic year,

Boston University (continued)

the program includes courses on physiology, biochemistry, and endocrinology; seminars on public health and medical issues; and a shadowing program that gives students the opportunity to watch physicians practicing medicine.

For students already accepted to medical school, BU offers a six-week Pre-entrance Enrichment Program that consists of instruction in histology, anatomy, and psychiatry; seminars in the health problems of the disadvantaged; assessment of each student's learning style; and seminars and individual sessions designed to enhance learning, study skills, and self-esteem.

The Early Medical Selection Program is designed to provide an early and decompressed transition to the medical school curriculum through provisional acceptance into medical school after successful completion of two years of undergraduate study. This program only applies to undergraduate schools with which BU has agreements in place. ♦

For more information, contact:
Phyllis Stevens, Director of Minority Affairs, Boston University School of Medicine, (617) 638-4163.