

Student Profile

Filiberto Cedeno, MD

ACCORDING TO FILIBERTO CEDENO, MD, medical education in Mexico, where he earned his medical degree in 2005, is very clinically oriented. Though he had passed his boards to practice medicine both in Mexico and the U.S., he wanted to have some research experience before applying to a medical residency in dermatology. When BSCP advisor J. Roberto Trujillo, MD, ScD, whom he met through mutual friends in Mexico, invited him to work in his laboratory at the Institute of Human Virology (IHV) at the University of Maryland, Cedeno jumped at the opportunity.

At the IHV, Cedeno “fell in love with research,” and decided he wanted to further pursue the work he had been doing with Trujillo (see related article, “J. Roberto Trujillo, MD, ScD” in September 2008 *In Touch with BSCP*). He applied and was the first Mexican national to be accepted into the immunology program at Harvard Medical School. He is now in his second year of study toward his PhD.

Cedeno says he wants to combine research, teaching and clinical practice. “My aim is high,” he says. “I want to go back to my country. Somebody has to do the ground-breaking work. Not many people are doing the basic science [there]. I want to create opportunities for people like I’ve had.”

Before applying to graduate school, Cedeno attended a BSCP conference and presented a poster at a New England Science Symposium. Attending the conference “was extremely helpful in my decision-making process,” he says, tipping his decision to continue his education in the U.S. He praises the BSCP’s great mentors. “They really help you. They



FILIBERTO CEDENO, MD, LEFT, WITH J. ROBERTO TRUJILLO, MD, ScD

told me, ‘If you get your PhD from a top institution, you will have many doors open for you when you apply for a dermatology position, because MDs who have PhDs are more attractive.’”

Cedeno concedes that his move to the U.S. has been a significant adjustment. “I didn’t have a strong background in molecular biology and biochemistry, but somehow I was able to overcome that. One thing that is very different between schools in the U.S. and Mexico is that here you train people to think. In Mexico, education focuses more on memorizing facts. That was the hardest thing for me to get used to... and I loved it.”

He has also been able to keep up with his dermatology training, joining a dermatology lab at Brigham and Women’s Hospital. Between the lab, classes, preparation for

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BSCP PARTICIPANTS FROM 1992 TO 2004: PLEASE COMPLETE THE ONLINE SURVEY

YOU RECENTLY RECEIVED a letter inviting you to participate in a BSCP online survey conducted by Harvard Medical School, along with its partner, Abt Associates Inc., for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). By completing the survey, you will be entered in a random drawing for a gift card to be used at your leisure. A total of 139 gift cards (i.e., four at \$500, ten at \$100, twenty-five at \$50 and one hundred at \$25) will be awarded at the end of the survey field period as our way of saying thank you.

Go to www.bscp-pathways.org and enter your login code. Can't find your login code? E-mail BSCP_Survey@hms.harvard.edu.

Please take a moment to update your contact information. Visit the BSCP website at www.bscp.org. Click on "Update/Submit Your Information," then update or submit your information under "Current and Former BSCP Participants."

Internships, Fellowships and Summer Programs Harvard Catalyst

HARVARD CATALYST CONNECTS everyone from researchers to clinicians and from medical to college students toward a common vision — to reduce the time it takes for laboratory discoveries to become treatments for patients and engage communities in clinical research efforts. Harvard Catalyst, like NIH's 37 other Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSAs), is composed of critical, key programs. One of these, the Catalyst Diversity and Health Disparities Research Program, is led by Joan Y. Reede, MD, MPH, MBA, BSCP founder, president and chair, and dean for diversity and community partnership at Harvard Medical School.

The Harvard Catalyst program emphasizes the recruitment and retention of a diverse clinical translational workforce. It aims to build a robust and diverse pipeline by focusing on junior faculty, medical students and college students. Toward that end, the following new programs have been created under the auspices of Catalyst Diversity and Health Disparities Research. Please contact Vera Yanovsky for application information at vera_yanovsky@hms.harvard.edu or (617) 432-1892.

Faculty: Harvard Catalyst Program for Faculty Development and Diversity (PFDD)

PFDD is a two-year, non-degree Faculty Fellowship Program for Harvard junior faculty. It is designed to provide additional support to conduct clinical and/or translational research and to free junior faculty from clinical and teaching demands at a key point in their career development. Each faculty fellow will receive \$100,000 over a two-year period to support his or her scholarly efforts.

Medical Students: The Visiting Research Internship Program (VRIP)

VRIP recruits medical students, trainees and fellows to Clinical and Translational Science Center training programs, particularly individuals from groups that are underrepresented in health-related sciences. Medical stu-

dents in good standing from accredited U.S. medical schools may apply for the one- to two-month rotation (with room and board provided) during each calendar year of the grant.

College Students: The Summer Clinical and Translational Research Program (SCTRP)

Undergraduate sophomores, juniors and seniors attending Minority Access to Research Careers- and Minority Biomedical Research Support-funded institutions, historically black colleges and universities and/or Hispanic-serving institutions and tribal colleges with baccalaureate degree programs are eligible to apply to this 10-week summer clinical/translational program (room and board provided).

Harvard Catalyst is a pan-Harvard University enterprise dedicated to improving human health. It is a shared enterprise of Harvard University's 10 schools and 18 Academic Healthcare Centers, as well as the Boston College School of Nursing, MIT, the Cambridge Health Alliance, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and numerous community partners.

Harvard Catalyst was founded in May 2008 with a five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health (see related article, "Steven Freedman, MD, PhD" profile in September 2008 *In Touch with BSCP*) and contributions from the Harvard University Science and Engineering Committee, Harvard Medical School, Harvard School of Public Health, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Children's Hospital Boston, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Massachusetts General Hospital. The program combines the best of Harvard innovation, discovery, novel learning and community engagement to train and recruit diverse future clinicians and scientists to speed the reduction of human illness. For more information, visit <http://catalyst.harvard.edu>. ■

New England Science Symposium Planning Committee

THE NEW ENGLAND SCIENCE

Symposium (NESS) was established in 2002 for medical, dental and graduate students; post-baccalaureates; college and community college students (particularly African-American, Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native individuals) to present their research, in the form of oral and poster presentations; exchange ideas that can further their career development; and expand their professional network. In its first year, NESS received 21 abstracts, and in 2008 it received 185. Attendees in 2002 came from 88 institutions in 17 states plus Puerto Rico; by 2008, that number had climbed to 129 institutions in 21 states plus Puerto Rico.

The NESS planning committee is made up mainly of present and former BSCP students. Among this year's planning committee members are two Harvard postdoctoral fellows who are former Hope Scholarship recipients and a graduate student at Tufts University.

Jamil Scott, PhD, a postdoctoral research fellow at the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH), first presented at NESS in 2005, when she was in the Division of Medical Sciences at HSPH, and says the experience was very important to making her postdoctoral connections. She says the symposium allowed her "to establish and main-

tain a valuable support network and provided the opportunity to get feedback on the direction of [her] research projects."

Amara Ezeamama, PhD, also a postdoctoral fellow at HSPH, presented at her first NESS in 2003 and has attended every one since. "I thought it was great to have other people — minorities — doing what I was doing," she says, adding that her first NESS was so helpful "that I remained in contact with them and I have been to 85 to 90 percent of BSCP events since then." Jamil Scott asked her to join the planning committee this past fall, and she accepted because, "I felt public health and epidemiology were underrepresented on the symposium."

Edyth Comenencia Ortiz is a graduate student in the Sackler School of Biomedical Sciences at Tufts University School of Medicine. She attended her first NESS in 2006. "I'm a big supporter of BSCP," she says. "We all talk about how surprised we were, the first time we came to the symposium, to see other people like us because there aren't that many minorities, and that is really special." She feels it is important to have students on the committee because, "You can have a professor tell you you should be part of this program and it's great, but it's even better coming from one of your peers." ■

FILIBERTO CEDENO

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his dissertation and trying to make time for his wife, Cedeno is making the most of his time here. "I was the first Mexican national to be accepted [into his program], but in the class after me there is another Mexican student who did what I did." He adds, with complete humility, "I think I left a good impression." ■

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Joyce I. Imahiyerobo-Ip, MD

JOYCE I. IMAHIYEROBO-IP, MD, an intern at Cambridge Hospital who graduated from Weill Medical College of Cornell University last spring, first became involved



with the Biomedical Science Careers Program (BSCP) when she was a student at Boston Latin High School. The daughter of Nigerian immigrants, who is the eldest of six, says, "My parents are awesome. They've always been very involved in my education... but they didn't know how to open all the doors." The mentors Imahiyerobo-Ip met through BSCP did.

As a high school student, Imahiyerobo-Ip participated in Project Success and attended a BSCP conference. She remained connected to the program through her undergraduate years at Harvard College, when she attended BSCP conferences, participated in the New England Science Symposium and received a Hope Scholarship in 2000.

"I feel like BSCP and Project Success were really important when I was in high school because I didn't really know what steps I should take," she

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HARVARD CATALYST

NESS PLANNING
COMMITTEE

JOYCE
IMAHYEROBO-IP

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Save the Dates

April 3, 2009

New England Science Symposium

The Joseph B. Martin Conference Center
at Harvard Medical School

To register, go to
www.NewEnglandScienceSymposium.org.

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Lise D. Kaye at
lise_kaye@hms.harvard.edu.

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JOYCE I. IMAHYEROBO-IP, MD

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says. "I have these poignant memories; even though I knew I wanted to be a doctor, I didn't know how to get there." She says the encouragement from people she met at conferences, as well as that of her teachers, helped drive her "to accomplish beyond what I thought I was capable of." She also remembers attending panels on getting into college and, years later, she sat on those same panels and offered advice to high school students.

After graduating from college, Imahyerobo-Ip attended Cambridge University in the United Kingdom, receiving a master's in international development in 2003. She says she has always been interested in medicine in developing countries and

studied sociology, economics and health policies there. She then worked for the American Heart Association as the director of cultural health initiatives for the Greater Boston area for a year between graduate and medical school.

Once she completes her internship, Imahyerobo-Ip hopes to pursue a career in academic medicine and health policy, and she plans to continue practicing clinical medicine in underserved communities, domestically and abroad.

Imahyerobo-Ip's success has trickled down to her five siblings who, between them, hold three degrees from Harvard and one from Columbia. "I needed the outside help of mentors and teachers to excel," she says. "I

was always the one seeking out the extra help I needed." Her siblings, all of whom followed her to Boston Latin High School, have benefited from her success, her experience and the same parental encouragement she had — and, of course, their own talents.

Because she was in New York during medical school, Imahyerobo-Ip was not able to participate in BSCP activities, though she did serve as a mentor for minority high school students at Cornell. She is currently trying to figure out how to balance her intern schedule with mentoring activities. "I have to get through a few more months of internship," she believes, before adding any more activities, "but I'm really looking forward to continued involvement in BSCP." ■