

# BSCCP

IN TOUCH WITH

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CAREERS PROGRAM

September 2001 Volume 6 Number 3

## Editor

Andrea Pyenson  
CorPublications

## Editorial Board

Corinne Broderick  
Senior Vice President  
Massachusetts Medical Society

Debra L. Canner  
Vice President Human Resources  
Haemonetics

Emorcia V. Hill, Ph.D.  
Senior Analyst  
Abt Associates Inc.

Lise D. Kaye  
Executive Director  
Biomedical Science Careers Program

Martha R.A. Fields  
President and CEO  
Fields Associates, Inc.

Joan Y. Reede, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.  
Associate Dean  
Faculty Development and Diversity  
Harvard Medical School  
President and Chair  
Biomedical Science Careers Program

## Special Thanks To

Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky  
and Popeo, P.C. and the Massachusetts  
Medical Society for their support of this  
newsletter.



**Ann Caldwell**

## Dental Medicine Field is Wide Open

How many of you, or how many people that you know, have said since they were young, "I want to be a dentist when I grow up"? Probably not many. Dentistry is very strong right now as a profession and as a business. Opportunities for jobs are plentiful and varied. Yet the number of under-represented minorities in dental schools across the country today is less than five percent of the total. The shortage of students naturally leads to a shortage of professionals.

According to Raul I. Garcia, DMD, MMSc, Professor and Chair, Department of Health Policy and Health Services Research at Boston University School of Dental Medicine, and a Past Presi-

dent of the Hispanic Dental Association, "Students from under-represented minorities are actively recruited by dental schools who understand that there is a need for people from diverse backgrounds in dental schools and dental practice... [but] the pool of applicants is small."



**Raul I. Garcia, DMD, MMSc**

Garcia suggests that a lack of role models – fewer than three percent of practicing dentists are African American or Hispanic (and

**continued on page 3**

## Nurses Wanted

According to Ann Caldwell, president, MGH Institute of Health Professions, a graduate school affiliated with Massachusetts General Hospital, nursing is the largest health profession, with a variety of career paths — from primary care settings to large urban hospitals to clinical research. But while opportunities within the field continue to grow, the pool of newcomers is declining. And among those in the profession, the ratio of under-represented minorities is small.

"Nursing is a wonderful career, but people have an outdated view of what nurses do," Cald-

well says. "It's a very challenging field with lots of science and technology. Historically, nursing and other health professions haven't attracted minorities in the large numbers that they should and could. And it's still a predominantly female profession — despite efforts to attract men."

An African-American male who has been a nurse since 1967, and who was the single parent of two children (now grown) for much of his training and early career, Ron Greene, RN, is an exception to most of the stereotypes. A primary base case manager at MGH, where he has worked since 1969, Greene is also president of the New England Regional Black Nurses Association

**continued on page 3**

## Where are they now?

### Carl Reid, Evening of Hope Award Recipient, 2000

*There really is life after school, and BSCP students have a very strong track record when it comes to finding jobs in their chosen fields. From time to time we will shine the spotlight on some of these remarkable people.*

In April 2000 Carl E. Reid, Ph.D., then a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Molecular Biology at Tufts University School of Medicine, was one of the first BSCP Evening of Hope scholarship recipients. The scholarships, awarded to six academically outstanding minority students, were sponsored by Biogen, Inc., Boston Scientific Corporation, Genzyme Community Foundation, Millennium Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Pfizer Inc., The Fleming Family Foundation, Inc. and MassMEDIC.

Reid received his Ph.D. in July 2001. In August, he began working

as a research scientist at Biogen, a global biopharmaceutical company that discovers and develops drugs for human health care through genetic engineering. He credits his involvement with BSCP, and receipt of the scholarship, with helping him find exactly the position he wanted.

At the 2000 Evening of Hope dinner, Reid was seated with a group of people from Biogen. He kept in touch with them, and visited the company several times. "This didn't happen overnight," he says of his new job. "I was in touch with people at Biogen for a year and a

half, visiting labs and going on exploratory interviews."

At the 2001 Evening of Hope dinner, Reid met James. C. Mullen, Biogen's president and CEO. "I told him I was interested in his company and had been an Evening of Hope scholarship award winner. I think that might have been what did it," he says.

Though he is too new to the job to discuss his work in great detail, Reid is unequivocal on one point: he is very happy to be where he is, and is convinced that his involvement with BSCP helped him get there. ♦



**Carl E. Reid, Ph.D.**

## NCI Awards

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) offers Cancer Research Training Awards (CRTA) that help in-house, domestic fellows acquire training in: basic, clinical, biomedical or behavioral research relating to human health – including extending healthy life and reducing the burdens of illness; medical library science or related fields; or the communication of human sciences information.

Carlos Valdez, a recent NCI intern, experienced many firsts in the year he spent at NCI – from using sophisticated instruments such as a nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectrometer, to working with a team of scientists from different fields.

Under the mentorship of Dr. Larry K. Keefer and Dr. Joseph

E. Saavedra, Valdez, a graduate of Florida International University, spent a year conducting research on nitric oxide-releasing compounds in the Laboratory of Comparative

Carcinogenesis. Having completed his internship, Valdez will earn a Ph.D. in organic chemistry and medicinal chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley.

"I feel that [the internship at NCI] has been one of the best decisions I have ever made. It has prepared me well for the challenge of grad school," he says. "One of the great things about working at NCI was that I was able to work independently. But whenever I needed advice or discussion regarding my project, I would just go to Dr. Saavedra, whose lab was next to mine. He was 100 percent available all the time."



**Carlos Valdez**

Applications to NCI's programs are accepted on an on-going basis. Qualified candidates are selected by Lab/Branch Chiefs and/or Principal Investigators. Candidates should apply directly to Keith Ariola, Recruitment Officer, Office of Diversity and Employment Programs, National Cancer Institute, 6116 Executive Blvd., Room 502, MSC 8342, Bethesda, MD 20892-8342. You can also call 301-402-0306, or email [riolak@mail.nih.gov](mailto:riolak@mail.nih.gov). ♦

### Biomedical Science Careers Student Conference

It's never too early to start planning. The 2002 biennial Biomedical Science Careers Student Conference will be held Friday, March 1 and Saturday, March 2 at The Boston Park Plaza Hotel. Application forms will be available in November, and you can request one by calling (617) 432-0552. Hope to see you there!

## Dental Medicine

continued from page 1

fewer still from other minorities) – may be responsible for the lack of applicants to the field. “Lots of minority young people don’t get exposed to dental medicine because they don’t receive routine dental care,” he says.

Lonnie Norris, DMD, MPH, Dean of Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, echoes this. “I think that when [minority students] decide to go into sciences, 10 to one choose medicine, rather than dentistry. And some of the brighter students might want a shorter road to success. We really have to work harder at mentoring students at earlier ages about entering health sciences in general, and dentistry in particular. We must increase the applicant pool of underrepresented minorities in order to provide diversity in health care delivery and increased access to underserved populations.”

While becoming a dentist requires four years of school after

college (with an additional two to six years for specialties like orthodontics), once students graduate from dental school they are ready to practice – unlike medicine, which requires years of internships and residencies. And being a dentist is just one of the many options. Others are dental laboratory technicians, who make the crowns, bridges, dentures and other devices that dentists put into people’s mouths, or work in labs; dental assistants, who work alongside dentists during patient treatments; and dental hygienists, who clean teeth, apply protective sealants, take dental X-rays and help patients prevent oral disease.

In the 25 years since she earned her degree Cynthia Hodge, DMD, MPH, Past President of the National Dental Association, an organization representing African-American dental profes-



Cynthia Hodge, DMD, MPH

sionals, and now a fellow with the Commonwealth Fund Harvard University Fellowship in Minority Health Policy, has taught dental students, lectured around the world

on the oral manifestations of HIV (an expertise she developed because of her commitment to improving access to care for underserved populations), and was in private practice for 11 years. “There are several reasons to consider dentistry,” she says. “It allows lots of

flexibility and offers the opportunity to make significant contributions to the community. And it has allowed me to travel all over the world.

“Because the demographics are changing so dramatically, and so rapidly,” she continues, “dentistry is one area where we’ll need lots more people. It’s a very secure profession, particularly for underrepresented minorities.” ♦

## Nurses Wanted

continued from page 1

and chair of the Association of Multicultural Members of Partners.

When Greene first began training to become a nurse, in the late 1960s, “it wasn’t seen as a legitimate profession,” he says. While he was in school, earning his LPN, he worked as an orderly at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston to make sure he liked the hospital environment. In 1983 he went back to school to earn an Associate’s Degree in Nursing, and in 1999 he earned a B.S. in Nursing from the University of Massachusetts Boston.

To this day, Greene says, minorities have a harder time getting into nursing, and once they are in they face more challenges than non-minorities. But he doesn’t think anyone should give up, and has been an active mentor of nursing students and entry-level nurses. “There was

nobody there [to give advice and support] when I was just starting, and I wish there had been,” he says. “We work with students and nurses of color and encourage them to stay strong and to keep themselves focused. Our message to them is, ‘don’t let anybody or anything make you think that you are less than what you are.’”

For her part, Caldwell emphasizes the opportunities available in nursing today. “Career paths in nursing are so varied,” she says. “You can enter and, depending on your own lifestyle, you can move in different directions.” In addition to the options in private practice and hospital care, nurses are sought after for clinical research at biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies, “because so many of the studies involve patients, and those patients need care.”

Caldwell also stresses the importance of education. “There is so

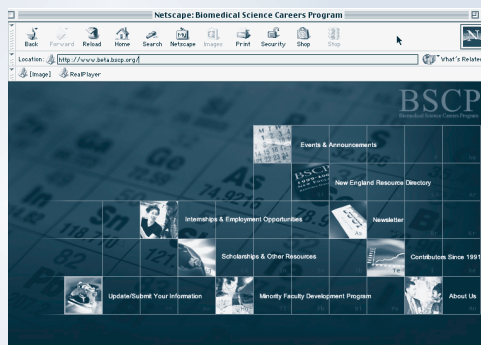
much new knowledge contributing to the diagnosis and treatment of patients, that whatever their entry point, nurses will have to do more continuing education throughout their careers,” she says. Nursing students at the MGH Institute come from a variety of academic backgrounds and other careers – from law to computer science to urban planning. Many of them are drawn to advanced practice nursing, Caldwell says, for the opportunity to directly help patients and still have a fairly high level of professional autonomy.

In order to reduce the nursing shortage, Caldwell feels it is important to expose people to the profession when they are in high school or college, so they will know what the options are. “There are more jobs for nurses than there are for MDs,” she says. ♦

## Check Out Our Web Site

The updated BSCP Web site, [www.bscp.org](http://www.bscp.org), has been up and running for several months and we are continually adding new and useful information. Site categories include:

- Events and Announcements
- Internship and Employment Opportunities
- Scholarships and Other Resources
- New England Resource Directory
- Newsletter (*In Touch with BSCP Online*)
- Contributors Since 1991
- Minority Faculty Development Program
- Update/Submit Your Information
- About Us



Please update your contact information online immediately.  
Go to: Update/Submit Your Information.

## NIH-Sponsored Research

The Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) at the National Institutes of Health seeks your help in building a cadre of minority scientists in the behavioral and social sciences. OBSSR is interested in linking NIH-funded investigators (mentors) with minority students, post-docs, and junior faculty members. If you are a current principal investigator of an NIH grant and are interested in being a mentor, or if you are a minority student, post-doc, or junior faculty member interested in furthering your research skills, please visit the NIH's interactive Web site at

<http://www4.od.nih.gov/research/>

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERIES: Establishing a Career and Succeeding in Academic Medicine

*Featured Speaker: Kenneth R. Bridges, M.D.*

### *Panelists:*

- Joanne S. Ingwall, Ph.D. — Basic science
- Carol C. Nadelson, M.D. — Women's perspective
- John T. Potts, Jr., M.D. — Clinical research, non-surgical specialties
- Joan Y. Reede, M.D., M.P.H., M.S. — Moderator
- Augustus A. White, III, M.D., Ph.D. — Clinical research, surgical specialties
- Marshall A. Wolf, M.D. — Teacher clinician, primary care

*Tuesday, October 2, 2001*

*Program: 5:30 PM – 6:00 PM*

*Networking and Dinner: 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM*

*Location: Inn at Longwood Medical (Fenway Room)*

Pre-registration required by calling (800) 843-6356  
Audience: physicians in post-doctoral training, junior faculty and residents, particularly underrepresented minority physicians

### *Co-sponsors:*

Harvard Medical School Faculty Development and Diversity, Boston University School of Medicine Office of Minority Affairs, Tufts University School of Medicine Office of Minority and Student Affairs, University of Massachusetts Medical School Office of the Associate Vice-Chancellor, Massachusetts Medical Society, and Biomedical Science Careers Program.

## ATTENTION ALL STUDENTS

Please send us your e-mail addresses, new permanent and new campus addresses:

Biomedical Science  
Careers Program  
c/o Minority Faculty  
Development Program  
Harvard Medical School  
164 Longwood Avenue  
2nd Floor  
Boston, MA 02115-5815

Fax: 617-432-3834

E-mail:

[lise\\_kaye@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:lise_kaye@hms.harvard.edu)

or go to: [www.bscp.org](http://www.bscp.org)