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Physician Diversity Project: Greater Boston Pilot

THE LACK OF PHYSICIAN DIVERSITY IN the workforce is a significant public health issue that contributes to poor quality of care and to health status disparities among racial/ethnic groups. It is also emblematic of a basic inequality of opportunity for racial and ethnic minorities to succeed as medical professionals. This is both a public health issue and a social justice issue.

For instance, a black baby in Boston is three times more likely than a white baby to die during



JOSEPH M. CARRILLO, M.D.

the first year of life. In addition, Boston Latinos are three times more likely than whites to die from diabetes. Joseph M. Carrillo, MD, Physician Convener for the Physician Diversity Project and Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, says, "As a physician of color, my bicultural background gives me a huge advantage in communicating with and treating my patients. I understand the cultural nuances of the health beliefs of my patients, and I am certain that because of my bicultural background, patients relate to me at a different level than if I were white. Trust is more readily achieved, and compliance with medical care is greater."

The Physician Diversity Project, created by Community Catalyst, a national health care consumer advocacy agency based in Boston, and funded by a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, seeks to develop and implement networks and strategies to increase the number and proportion of physicians from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. The project is an outgrowth of Community Catalyst's April 2002 briefing paper, *The Color of Medicine: Strategies for Increasing Diversity in the U.S. Physician Workforce*.

Community Catalyst has selected Health Care for All to lead the development and implementation of a greater Boston pilot site, and Citizen's Action of New York to lead efforts in the state of New York. The pilot sites will create models for a comprehensive program that can be replicated in cities across the United States. As part of a broader national effort to address the lack of diversity in health professions, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation has also funded Duke University Medical Center to conduct public hearings throughout the United States on this issue, and the Institute of Medicine in Washington D.C. to complete a comprehensive review of diversity in the health care workforce and its impact on health.

The objectives of the Physician Diversity Project are to:

- increase key stakeholders' and other leaders' awareness of inadequate physician diversity as a basic contributing factor to poor quality of care and health status disparities;
- gain the commitment of key stakeholders and community leaders to take action to address the lack of physician diversity;
- put in place strategies and structures that can be replicated in other cities and states to increase diversity in the physician workforce; and
- achieve measurable results that will allow objective assessments of the efficacy of the various structures and strategies.

In Boston, working with physicians, hospitals, medical schools, policy makers, public health advocates and community leaders, the Project should result in the formation of a special legislative commission to address racial and ethnic health disparities. Project leaders also hope to organize an active, politically engaged association

ANNOUNCEMENTS

E-Scholar Web Site Debuts

THE E-SCHOLAR WEB SITE kicked off in late May 2003 with information about hundreds of federally funded education scholarships, fellowships, grants, internships and cooperative programs valued at more than \$400 million. The site contains information for students — from high school through post-graduate — and career professionals. New programs are added daily. Visit the site at www.studentjobs.gov/e-scholar.htm. ■

ATTENTION STUDENTS:

Please make sure to update your contact information on the BSCP Web site,

www.bscp.org

Go to the home page, and click on "Update/Submit Your Information." You can also post your resume to the site, where prospective employers can see it.

Where Are They Now?

SINCE 1998 THE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE Careers Program (BSCP) has awarded, through corporate sponsorship, HOPE Scholarships to academically outstanding minority students. The students each receive \$5,000 (\$2,500 per year for two years) toward their education. Past HOPE scholarship recipients have gone on to do varied and impressive work in the biomedical sciences field. Here's a look at what some of them are doing.

1998 RECIPIENTS

Mayra E. Lorenzo received a scholarship while in her third year of an MD/PhD program at Harvard Medical School. She is currently in the clinical years of medical school, having completed a PhD in Virology.

Nilton D. Medina received a scholarship while an undergraduate at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. He graduated from Dartmouth Medical School this past June and recently began a Plastic Surgery Residency at Brown University.

Ricardo M. Zayas received his scholarship while he was in the PhD program in Neurobiology at Tufts University. He received a PhD in Biology from Tufts in February and is currently a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Cell and Structural Biology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

1999 RECIPIENTS

Marlon D. Green received a scholarship while an undergraduate at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, and graduated in 2002. He is currently working at Tufts University School of Medicine and is considering graduate school.

Tina Ann Kerr Thompson received a scholarship while she was a medical student at Boston University School of Medicine. She is now doing a Family Practice Residency at Emory University in Atlanta.

Raymond R. Montoya, II received a scholarship while a student at Catholic Memorial High School in Boston. He graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a major in Biology in June 2003. He is a 2003 MIT Walter L. Milne Scholar and received the

2002 MIT Certificate for Academic Excellence from the Office of Minority Education. Raymond is applying to medical school for matriculation in 2004.

2000 RECIPIENTS

Joyce I. Imahiyerobo received a scholarship while she was a junior at Harvard University. She graduated from Harvard in 2001, and was awarded the Harvard Master's Prize and named a Brent Lambert Scholar for excellence in the sciences. She is currently in the second year of a Master's program in international development at Cambridge University in England, and is applying to medical school.

Carl E. Reid received a scholarship while a PhD candidate at Tufts University School of Medicine - Sackler School. He received his PhD in 2001 and is now a scientist in the Discovery Biology Group at Biogen, Inc.

Chukwuka Okafor received a scholarship while a medical student at Boston University School of Medicine. He is currently an MD and MBA candidate and is doing a research fellowship at the National Institutes of Health.

2001 RECIPIENTS

Gillianne DeFoe received a scholarship while working at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute as a clinical research coordinator in the Department of Sarcoma and applying to medical school. She is currently a third-year medical student at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Elizabeth Glater received a scholarship while a PhD candidate at Brown University. She has passed her qualifying exams and advanced to PhD candidacy in the Neuroscience Graduate Program at Harvard University. She was awarded a Society for Neuroscience Minority Predoctoral Fellowship.

Sederick C. Rice received a scholarship while a PhD candidate at the University of Vermont. He is currently preparing to defend his dissertation. He plans to teach at the junior high or high school level, train at a cancer institute, and eventually establish his own laboratory in an academic setting.

■ ■ ■ CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Save the Dates!

NEW ENGLAND SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

Friday, February 27, 2004

The Boston Park Plaza Hotel

Held by BSCP in collaboration with the Harvard Medical School Minority Faculty Development Program, the third annual New England Science Symposium is intended to encourage post-doctoral fellows, medical/dental, graduate and college students (particularly African-American, Hispanic American and American Indian/Alaska Native individuals) involved in biomedical and health-related research to share their work through oral presentations or at a poster session.

To submit an abstract, please include:

- Name of author(s)
- Contact information: mailing and email addresses, phone numbers
- Institution, academic level and expected year of graduation
- Research title and sponsor(s)
- Statement summarizing the work to be presented (not to exceed 400 words)

Submit abstracts via e-mail to Jabbar R. Bennett,

PhD, at jabbar_bennett@hms.harvard.edu. The deadline for submission is December 5, 2003.

For further information, contact Lise D. Kaye at lise_kaye@hms.harvard.edu or (617) 432-0552.

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CAREERS STUDENT CONFERENCE

Friday, February 27 and Saturday, February 28, 2004

The Boston Park Plaza Hotel

The seventh biennial Biomedical Science Careers Student Conference for postdoctoral fellows, medical/dental, graduate and college students, and high school juniors and seniors is an opportunity for underrepresented minority students to network with advisors/ role models from the basic and clinical sciences, medicine, public health, academic administration and biotechnology.

There is no registration fee, but pre-registration is required. To obtain an application, or for more information, contact Lise D. Kaye at lise_kaye@hms.harvard.edu or (617) 432-0552.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Third Wave Scholarship Program

THE THIRD WAVE SCHOLARSHIP Program offers scholarships for young women of color who prioritize social justice and the work done in the spirit of justice and equality over academic performance, and who integrate social justice into all areas of their lives. The scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 and are awarded largely based on financial need. To be eligible, female applicants must be full- or part-time undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in an accredited university, under the age of 30, demonstrate financial need and be involved as activists, artists or cultural workers addressing issues such as racism, homophobia, sexism or other forms of inequality.

The application deadline for spring 2004 is October 1, 2003. For information, call the Third Wave Foundation at (212) 388-1898, or e-mail info@thirdwavefoundation.org.

PHYSICIAN DIVERSITY PROJECT

Continued from page 1

of physicians of color; establish an institutional structure in which medical schools, teaching hospitals, policy makers and leaders from communities of color can work collaboratively to increase diversity in the physician workforce; and develop a media/public relations strategy that will communicate the importance of a diverse physician workforce to the broader public.

This is all good news to BSCP students. If you would like to get involved, or are interested in receiving more information about the Project, contact Dan Delaney, Project Director of the Boston site, at delaney@hcfama.org, or Michelle Burgos, Project Director of the New York site, at mburgos@citizenactionny.org, or visit the Community Catalyst Web site at www.communitycatalyst.org. ■

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Continued from page 2

2002 RECIPIENTS

J. Angelo Green received a scholarship while a PhD candidate at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He is currently a graduate student in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at UMass Amherst and is looking for a post-doctoral research position in molecular genetics and cell biology.

Hector Martinez-Wilson received a scholarship while an MD/PhD candidate at Tufts University School of Medicine. He is currently working on the PhD component of the program.

Vanessa Toney received a scholarship while an MD/PhD candidate at Brown University School of Medicine. She completed her PhD in the Department of Molecular Pharmacology, Physiology and Biotechnology and reentered the medical school in 2003 to complete the MD portion of the program. ■



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 c/o Minority Faculty Development Program
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**2003 HOPE
 Scholarship Recipients**

The Biomedical Science Careers Programs (BSCP) sixth annual fundraiser, An Evening of Hope, took place on May 1, 2003 at The Boston Park Plaza Hotel. The following students, pictured from left to right, received HOPE scholarships:

- *Christopher Morgan*, second-year medical student at Meharry Medical College
- *Cristina M. Velazquez-Marrero*, PhD candidate in the Neuroscience Department at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center
- *Patrick Zana Desgranges*, MD/PhD candidate at Tufts University School of Medicine
- *Marva V. Williams*, senior at Tufts University.
- *Nimisha Kalra*, second-year medical student at the University of South Florida College of Medicine
- *Elizabeth St. Victor*, senior at Newton Country Day School
- *Ida (Aidita) Wahlquist-Ortiz*, senior at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Coming up Soon! Save the Dates!

**NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
 (NEBHE) SCIENCE NETWORK AT MIT**

Saturday, October 4, 2003
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology

A program designed to address the needs and concerns of New England students underrepresented in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Open to high school, undergraduate and graduate students.

For more information, contact Amanda E. (Burton) Lapham at NEBHE, alapham@nebhe.org or (617) 357-9620, ext. 130.

**BSCP CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERIES
 NIH FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES: INTRAMURAL AND
 EXTRAMURAL PROGRAMS**

Tuesday, October 7, 2003

3:00pm – 6:00 pm, followed by dinner

and networking with presenters

Longwood Galleria Conference Center, 342 Longwood Ave., Boston

The session will cover intramural training programs, extramural grants and awards, loan repayment programs, and research supplements for underrepresented minorities. To register, call the Massachusetts Medical Society at (800) 843-6356.

For more information, contact Lise D. Kaye at lise_kaye@hms.harvard.edu or (617) 432-0552.