

# PIPELINE UPDATE

THE APA/NIGMS PROJECT NEWSLETTER

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## We're BAAACCKK!

It has been some time since our last newsletter, and I'm pleased to say that the grant project, managed by the APA Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs and funded by the National Institute for General Medical Sciences, has been re-funded for a 3-year period. In September 2003 we submitted a competing continuing application that initially was not favorably received. The application was revised and resubmitted for a second review. Eventually, the application was funded for the period of 8/15/04 through 7/31/07. Although the process was not without a few bumps, we are thrilled to be functioning. We are working toward our initial project goals, and have hit the ground running. Much of the first 6 months of our new grant period has been spent reinvigorating the institutional teams and trying to reach the level of activity and momentum we gained prior to the ending of our previous funding cycle. Coming out of a no-cost extension year in which the project was unfunded, many of the institutions did not have project funds to carry them through the 13-month gap. In several instances, institutional activities simply ceased. While the project was, shall we say "resting," we are now fully energized and excited to be up and moving full steam ahead.

The 2003 application submitted requested a 5-year funding period and proposed four types of new and enhanced efforts that were associated with eight expanded project goals. These goals, with the exception of one, were not funded. The project did receive additional funding for institutions with an increase of \$3,400 per year, per institution. Although our expected funding was significantly less than we had initially requested, we are hopeful that our achievements will far

outweigh our costs, and we are likely to see cost-effective benefits for the next 3 years. Even with the diminished budget, our underlying goals and objectives remain the same.

### GETTING BACK ON TRACK

As we continue our work, our objectives continue to be met through the use of both systemic and pipeline approaches. The former involves collaboration among institutions, strategic planning, consultation, and evaluation of the project's activities and demonstrations, while the pipeline training approach involves outreach and orientation, engagement, mentorship, academic support, and preparation for educational transitions. These are constant throughout the project and guide the project as a whole.

Some of the achievements, advances, and enhancements to the project are as follows:

- With the increase in demonstration funds, it is expected that institutions will continue with their outlined goals and objectives as well as enhance their tracking efforts at each of their respective institutions.
- The project has a new addition to Northern Plains Regional Center that completes this region. The project is pleased to welcome Sisseton Wahpeton College. Sisseton is a 2-year Tribal College located in Sisseton, SD, on the Lake Traverse Reservation and is considerably closer logistically to both the University of South Dakota and Sinte Gleska University, the other two institutions that make up this regional center. With this addition, we also welcome new Core Team Leader Mr. Harvey DuMarce, who also serves as Sisseton's Vice President for Academic Affairs.

- Two Core Team Leaders have been added to the project, both from our Midwestern Regional Center, Dr. Mahesh Gurung, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology and Biotechnology at Truman Community College, and Josie McDonald, Center for Urban Mental Health Research at Chicago State University. Both are new to the project. We are pleased to have them on our team.
- APA staff member Dennis Bourne is a new addition to the APA/NIGMS Grant Project's APA staff. Mr. Bourne serves as the project's Research Associate and is responsible for the day-to-day coordination of the project's research and evaluation activities. More specifically, Mr. Bourne maintains the project's database and works to track former and current students' entry and progression through the educational pipeline. He is also a graduate student at Howard University, pursuing a degree in clinical psychology.
- In June 2005, the project submitted a progress report to NIGMS for the period of 8/15/04 through 4/30/05.

### WHERE WE ARE NOW

As we look at our past successes and also develop projections for the future, there are some impressive data to share.

- Since the inception of the APA/NIGMS Grant Project in 1997, the project has had a total of 480 students involved in intensive mentored research. To date, we have had about 102 research mentors participating in the project.
- Project students have made a total of 319 research presentations at regional, national, and international confer-

ences and developed 22 journal articles and/or book chapters for publication. Sixty-three students have transferred to 4-year institutions from community colleges. A total of 184 students have graduated with BA/BS degrees, 42 students have pursued MA/MS degrees, 58 students have pursued PhD/PsyD degrees, and 16 students have pursued professional degrees such as an MD, DDS, JD, or an MSW. Seventeen students have graduated from master's programs, seven have graduated from doctoral programs, and three have graduated from professional programs.

### WHERE WE ARE GOING

The project continues to be grounded in the development and implementation of the participating institution's strategic plans. These plans serve as an agree-

ment between the institution and APA that outlines activities and tasks to be performed and/or developed within an identified period of time. The top five demonstrations identified by the participating institutions include:

- Activities that develop or strengthen and sustain minority students' interest in biomedical research
- Activities that enhance an institution's existing biomedical curricula in psychology
- Activities that link faculty and students at 4-year and/or 2-year institutions with those at research universities for purposes of biomedical research training and professional development opportunities
- Activities that develop linkages or partnerships with high schools, participating 4-year and 2-year institutions,

and/or research institutions

- Activities that provide increased professional and personal development and academic and social support for participating students

The project continues to demonstrate the efficacy and cost effectiveness of its hallmark systemic and training approaches to recruiting, retaining, and training ethnic minority talent in biomedical research. The activities and efforts continued to be guided by the characteristics of the ethnic minority pipeline in specific geographical regions. With regard to the systemic process, the project continues to promote education and information related to the state of knowledge and practice related to ethnic minority recruitment, retention, and scientific training, as well as institutional partnership development and enrichment.

## The APA/NIGMS Project—Overview and Objectives

In the 1997 *Final Report of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Commission on Recruitment, Retention, and Training in Psychology (CEMRRAT)*, the 15-member group determined that the representation of persons of color markedly decreases at each succeeding level of psychology's educational pipeline—high school through postdoctoral studies. To address this, APA's Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA) submitted a grant application to the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) in January 1996 entitled "Developing Minority Biomedical Research Talent in Psychology: A Collaborative and Systemic Approach for Strengthening Institutional Capacity for Recruitment, Retention, Training, and Research." This training capacity grant, or what is known as a T-36, is an ancillary grant under the traditional and longstanding Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) grants that are customarily awarded to academic

institutions. This ancillary grant provided the opportunity for scientific societies and organizations to apply.

The project's major objectives are to:

- Establish five multi-institutional Regional Centers of Excellence in recruitment, retention, and training of students of color interested in biomedical research in psychology, with each center consisting of a major research university and two predominantly minority institutions including a community college;
- Implement at each regional center a specific methodology for strengthening linkages between the center's major research institution and its minority-serving institutions related to minority recruitment, retention, and training;
- Provide technical assistance (diversity consultation and scientific advisement) to the regional centers and facilitate implementation and evalua-

tion of the centers' demonstration programs and strategies for strengthening the capacities of their psychology faculty and departments to effectively recruit, retain, and train students of color for biomedical research careers in psychology;

- Increase the number of students of color interested in pursuing biomedical research careers in psychology at the project's participating institutions and improve these students' rates of retention;
- Facilitate the recruitment, retention, and training of the nation's future minority biomedical researchers by disseminating the project's findings, procedures, and demonstration models to all of the nation's academic departments of psychology and to other appropriate scientific/professional associations and societies; and
- Document and evaluate the impact of the proposed systemic approach.