**APS Awards $131,100 to Its 2015 STEP-UP Undergraduate Research Fellows**

23 Fellows in the 2015 Cohort

Bethesda, Md. (May 20, 2015)—The American Physiological Society (APS) is pleased to announce its 2015 Short-Term Education Program for Underrepresented Persons (STEP-UP) Fellows. Fellowship winners spend the summer in the laboratory of an established scientist and APS member or other biomedical researcher. The STEP-UP program recruits undergraduate students nationwide from disadvantaged backgrounds and from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups and students with disabilities to work with researchers in the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) mission areas of diabetes, endocrinology and metabolic disease; digestive diseases and nutrition; and kidney, urologic and hematologic diseases.

**2015 STEP-UP Fellows:**

(Research hosts are listed under each Fellow’s name)

**Asebot Abebe** – *University of Maryland, Baltimore*

**Udayan Guha, MD, PhD** – *National Cancer Institute*

**RussL Altatabaee** – *Arizona State University*

**Layla Al-Nakkash, PhD** – *Midwestern University at Glendale, Arizona*

**Chasy Amado** – *University of Guam*

**Chris S. Lobban, PhD** – *University of Guam*

**Benchaa Boualam** – *University of Maryland, College Park*

**Lijie Grace Zhang, PhD** – *The George Washington University*

**Marcus Byrd** – *Georgetown University*

**Carolyn M. Ecelbarger, PhD** – *Georgetown University*
Rosemary Carter – Rochester Institute of Technology
Daniel M. Merfeld, PhD and Torin K. Clark, PhD – Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary

Patrice Dixon – Trinity Washington University
Carolyn M. Ecelbarger, PhD – Georgetown University

Edgar Domenech – Northeastern University
Richard Noel, PhD – Ponce Health Sciences University

Dave Enriquez – University of California, Riverside
Margarita C. Curras-Collazo – University of California, Riverside

Julian Gaitán – University of Virginia
Allison Meni, PhD – The George Washington University

Fatema Jahra – St. John’s University
Marcos F. Vidal Melo, MD, PhD – Massachusetts General Hospital

Ananna Kazi – Binghamton University
Frederick Kaskel, MD, PhD – Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University

Emily Leboffe – Susquehanna University
Tooraj Mirshahi, PhD – Sigfried and Janet Weis Center for Research at the Geisinger Clinic

Kayla Lee – Saint Leo University
Erin Keen-Rhinehart, PhD – Susquehanna University

Debby Lee – University of California, Merced
Rudy M. Ortiz, PhD – University of California, Merced

Meaghan Menth – Seattle Pacific University
Wendy Thomas, PhD – University of Washington

Tessa Muss – Harvard College
Lijie Grace Zhang, PhD – The George Washington University

Diana Nguyen – Clemson University, South Carolina
Eric Lazartigues, PhD – Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans

Tomide Owolabi – University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign
Michael De Lisio, PhD – University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign

Ashlee Seldomridge – West Virginia University
Paul D. Chantler, PhD – West Virginia University

Erica Steele – Rochester Institute of Technology
Tracy Anthony, PhD – Rutgers University of New Jersey
Fellows are selected based on academic merit, a personal statement, resume/CV and references. Each Fellow receives a $4,500 stipend during the 8–12-week fellowship and an additional $1,200 in travel funds to present his or her research at the NIDDK STEP-UP Summer Research Symposium, August 2–6, 2015, in Bethesda at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Research hosts receive $500 for student lab supplies.

STEP-UP Fellows participate in hands-on research and learn to develop a hypothesis, design and troubleshoot experiments, collect and analyze data, and write and present results. In addition, Fellows have the opportunity to:

- network with other APS undergraduate Fellows interested in biomedical research,
- explore the nature of research and the scientific process,
- investigate career options and what it takes to find career success,
- pose their career questions to members of the APS Porter Physiology Development and Minority Affairs Committee and Advisory Board, and
- learn about common ethical issues in figure and text preparation.

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undergraduate and graduate levels, with a particular focus on women and underrepresented minorities. APS also supports refresher courses and teaching awards promoting continued excellence in education at the professional level. In May 2004, APS won the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring (PAESMEM).

**About the APS:** Physiology is the study of how molecules, cells, tissues and organs function in health and disease. Established in 1887, the American Physiological Society (APS) was the first U.S. society in the biomedical sciences field. The Society represents more than 11,000 members and publishes 14 peer-reviewed journals with a worldwide readership.