Porter Physiology Development Committee Report

The goal of the Porter Physiology Development Program is to encourage diversity among students pursuing full-time studies toward the Ph.D. (or D.Sc.) in the physiological sciences and to encourage their participation in the American Physiological Society. The program provides 1-2 year full-time graduate fellowships. The program is open to underrepresented ethnic minority applicants who are citizens or permanent residents of the United States or its territories.

2011-2012 Porter Physiology Fellowship Program
In 2010-2011, the program provided funding for eight fellows.

2012-2013 Porter Fellowships - New and Renewal Applications
A total of eleven new and two renewal applications were submitted for the January 15 deadline and reviewed by the Committee. The stipend paid to the Porter Fellows for 2012-2013 will be $28,300, consistent with the NIH scale.

2011-2012 Travel Awards
The Porter Committee reviewed and recommended award recipients for Minority Travel Fellowships to attend APS meetings and conferences. Four travel fellows received funding to attend the 2011 APS Conference, “Physiology of Cardiovascular Disease: Gender Disparities,” from October 12-14 at the University of Mississippi in Jackson. The Committee also selected 42 Travel Fellows to attend EB 2012. Former Porter Fellows and past Travel Fellows volunteered to be mentors for the younger Travel Fellows.

2012 Travel Fellows Luncheon
The Travel Fellows Luncheon was held on Wednesday at EB. The Fellows heard from keynote speaker, Dr. Richard Nakamura, Acting Director, Center for Scientific Review at the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Nakamura’s speech centered on the Porter Physiology Development Committee’s “Be Counted” campaign and highlighted the importance of self-identification as minority physiologists. He spoke about his personal experiences that contributed to both his impediments and successes in achieving a thriving research career. He made insightful arguments about the importance of being identified as a minority scientist and stressed the responsibility of promoting success of future minority scientists. Dr. Nakamura’s talk will be available on the APS website and in the Archive of Teaching Resources.

Following Dr. Nakamura’s presentation was a panel discussion on the importance of “being counted”. The panel was led by Martin Frank, APS, L. Gabriel Navar, Tulane University School of Medicine, and Mildred Pointer, North Carolina Central University. The panel speakers gave their individual perspectives on being identified as a minority scientist. Minority scientists attending the luncheon offered additional input and posed interesting issues related to spreading the burden of training and support to non-minority scientists and of recognition for these additional activities. At the end of the Panel discussion it was suggested that there are still disproportionate barriers to the success of minority physiologists.

Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students - 2011 APS Awards
The APS exhibited at the November 2011 meeting in St. Louis, MO to promote undergraduate programs, graduate study in physiology and the APS programs for minority students. The APS was pleased to again provide $2,500 for cash awards for the most outstanding undergraduate presentations in physiology research. APS was represented by Inimary Toby, 2011 APS K-12 Minority Outreach Fellow, and Brooke Bruthers, APS Diversity Programs Coordinator. Sixteen undergraduate students received APS-sponsored awards for the best oral and poster presentations in the physiological sciences. Students also received a complimentary one-year print subscription to the APS journal, *Physiology*, and an APS “Life, Logic, Study” shirt.

**Society for the Advancement of Chicanos & Native Americans in Science - 2011 APS Exhibit**

In 2011, the theme for the SACNAS annual conference was “Empowering Innovation and Synergy through Diversity.” The conference took place from October 27-30, 2011 in San Jose, CA. A total of 3,653 attendees participated in the conference: 44% postdocs and professionals; 38% undergraduate students; 14% graduate students. A record-breaking 980 students presented their research at this national conference (43% in biological, agricultural, and environmental life science). There were also more than 330 exhibitors. Heidy Contreras, 2011 APS K-12 Minority Outreach Fellow, and Carmen Hinojosa-Laborde, Porter Committee Member, staffed the APS booth to promote APS minority programs, K-12 resources and materials, and Undergraduate Summer Research Fellowships, as well as other APS awards, grants and fellowships, trainee and career information, and APS membership.

**“BE COUNTED” CAMPAIGN**

It has been difficult for APS to track progress in increasing diversity among physiologists, to gauge the effectiveness of our diversity programs and to secure external funding for APS diversity programs. It also has been difficult for the various committees and programs to reach out to minority and female trainees to encourage their participation in Society and Section activities and for nominating committees to identify candidates for leadership positions from diverse racial/ethnic groups.

In response to these needs, the Porter Committee launched the ‘Be Counted’ campaign to encourage APS members to update their membership profile to provide information on their gender and racial and ethnic groups. The goal of the campaign was to encourage all APS members to review their membership profile and update it as needed. The Committee targeted launched the campaign at EB12.