FY 2015 MD-715 Success Stories

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# Introduction

As the nation’s premier biomedical research institution, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is devoted to a noble mission of improving health and saving lives. That mission can best be accomplished if all are given a chance to contribute in the most productive way. The Agency depends on the unique talents, skills, and expertise of its employees, and they in turn depend on the Institution to create an environment where they are treated with respect and dignity. The NIH is dedicated to cultivating a workplace where employees can perform at their highest potential and where all of their ideas contribute to advancing its mission.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, the NIH took many positive steps in being a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization. This Success Stories document is prepared by the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) to highlight examples of these accomplishments and to demonstrate success in line with Management Directive 715 (MD-715). MD-715 is the policy guidance which the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) provides to Federal agencies for their use in establishing and maintaining effective programs of equal employment opportunity (EEO) under Section 717 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Much of the information in the Success Stories below was gathered from responses to the FY 2015 MD-715 Call for Accomplishments to NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs) and Offices. This compilation of these responses offers a holistic understanding of the incredible work being done across the Agency to enhance diversity and inclusion. Further, it substantiates NIH’s commitment to being a model equitable, diverse, and inclusive workplace. As the efforts, such as the successes described below, continue, NIH will be shaped as an organization where equity, diversity, and inclusion are reinforced each day of the year, and where all talent is fully used in pursuit of the NIH mission.

The information contained in the Success Stories spans through a range of topics and comes from many organizations within the NIH community. The Success Stories start off with the recipients of the 2015 NIH Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Awards. This is followed by accomplishments in relation to the FY 2015 MD-715 Focus Areas and by successes in: pipeline initiatives; outreach; training and development; employee engagement; and diversity and inclusion strategy. In addition to successes in workplace diversity and inclusion, there are stories of accomplishments in NIH’s language access plan. The final portion of this document showcases successes from the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Each section begins with an overview description and is followed by spotlights of particular accomplishments from NIH organizations.

Note: The below information is a sampling of accomplishments and is not all-encompassing. For more information, please contact the preparer of this document at [edi.strategy@nih.gov](mailto:edi.strategy@nih.gov).

# NIH Awards for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Each year, the Agency recognizes the contributions individuals in furthering equity, diversity, and inclusion at NIH through two awards – the Harvey J. Bullock Jr. Award and the NIH Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Award of the Year.

The Harvey J. Bullock Jr. Award was established to recognize employees who champion the ideals of equity, diversity and inclusion. This award is granted to a non-supervisory general schedule (GS), wage grade (WG) or equivalent employee or group of employees at the grade 12 or below who exemplify the spirit of the award by furthering NIH’s equity, diversity, and/or inclusion efforts. Ms. Elena Leon, Contract Specialist with the National Library of Medicine (NLM), was the 2015 recipient of the Harvey J. Bullock Jr. Award.

The NIH Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Award of the Year was established to recognize executives, supervisors or managers who have excelled in furthering NIH’s equity, diversity and/or inclusion efforts. This award is granted to leaders who exemplify the ideals of equity, diversity and inclusion. Dr. Peter Blumberg, Senior Investigator with the National Cancer Institute (NCI) was the 2015 recipient of the NIH EDI Award of the Year.

## 2015 Harvey J. Bullock Jr. Award: Elena Leon, NLM

Elena Leon has helped numerous employees, outside of her role of Contract Specialist, gain access to training, employment opportunities, promotions, and mentoring. For over a year, she has done a remarkable job leading a program called Conéctate (Get Connected!) with Acquisitions. Elena’s volunteer involvement in this program has resulted in the creation of a growing group of 40 employees who are actively engaged in mentoring, networking and career progression.

She has created a venue where participants give presentations, discuss career opportunities, and share knowledge and information with each other. Elena has initiated discussions that are sensitive to the Hispanic community like overcoming bias and language barriers. With guidance she created a system where participants and presenters can now receive Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) for their engagement in the program. Thanks to her efforts, over 60 CLPs have been awarded to participants. She has connected five participants with supervisors and senior leaders for mentorship.

Elena has volunteered to help convey the importance of the NIH mission and resources to communities and individuals. Over the past year, she has connected people to the wealth of health research information that is available to the public at the NLM and in NIH Institutes and Centers. She volunteered to give presentations to senior citizens in the Oaks at Four Corners in Silver Spring. MD. In her presentations, she shows the senior citizens how to navigate the NIH information media, how to participate in NIH clinical trials, and how to obtain NIH clearinghouse health information, in both English and Spanish languages.

## 2015 NIH Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Award of the Year: Dr. Peter Blumberg, NCI

Dr. Blumberg understands the priority of increasing the representation of those with disabilities in the workforce. He extended research training opportunities to talented scientists who are deaf and hard of hearing. He established a recruiting network at Gallaudet University to identify competitive students for his research training positions. The results have been extremely impressive. Twenty-two scientists who are deaf or hard of hearing are current or former members of Dr. Blumberg’s lab. Altogether Dr. Blumberg’s staff who are deaf and hard of hearing have published 63 papers and co-authored one patent application.

Dr. Blumberg has also established a collaborative research effort with Gallaudet researchers, with the concept that all aspects of the projects that are within the capabilities of the Gallaudet facilities can be done there, while those aspects for which Gallaudet is not equipped are done in his lab at the NCI. For students who are deaf everywhere, the highly successful scientists from Dr. Blumberg’s group serve as much needed role models. A person who is deaf giving a scientific seminar is rarely if ever seen, and thus the outstanding performance of Dr. Blumberg’s trainees has opened the eyes of the hearing community to the often-overlooked potential of citizens who are deaf.

# MD-715 Focus Areas (Part I – EEO Plan to Eliminate Identified Barrier)

As a part of the evolution of NIH’s MD-715 strategy, EDI “level-set” NIH’s demographic workforce data in FY 2015 by comparing it with current U.S. labor force data, the 2010 Civilian Labor Force (CLF) and other benchmarks. This comparison identified where gaps exist in terms of lower than expected participation rates along lines of race/ethnicity, sex, and disability at the NIH.

This analysis provided a broad high-level awareness of where potential barriers may exist and the following were identified as the Part I corporate MD-715 focus areas for NIH:

* The recruitment and retention of People with Disabilities
* The recruitment and retention of Hispanics
* The recruitment and retention of American Indians/Alaska Natives

In addition to the MD-715 corporate focus areas, NIH recognizes the continued need to remain dedicated to diversity of the Agency’s biomedical workforce. Therefore, the following will continue as biomedical areas of focus and will be emphasized and spearheaded by the Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD):

* The recruitment of Black tenured and tenure-track scientists/investigators
* The recruitment of Asian/Pacific Islander Lab and Branch Chiefs

Throughout this year, EDI did foundational work to address the identified corporate focus areas. This work is complemented by efforts of NIH Offices, ICs, and employee groups. The FY 2015 successes in this area are described below.

## MD-715 Corporate Focus Areas – EDI Activities

EDI’s efforts on the focus areas centered on educating the NIH on the focus areas, building capacity to provide support in addressing the gaps, and raising awareness on strategies and resources. Each quarter, the EDI Director and Deputy Director meet with IC Executive Officers (EO) and relevant staff. During these meetings, IC leadership was informed of the NIH MD-715 focus areas and their IC’s specific workforce data. Further, the Portfolio Strategist for People with Disabilities attended EO meetings in FY 2015 to share information and strategies in relation to the MD-715 focus area of the recruitment and retention of people with disabilities. The Portfolio Strategist for Native Americans and the Portfolio Strategist for Hispanics will be presenting in the next rounds of EO meetings.

In FY 2015, EDI launched NIH’s MD-715 Technical Assistance Group (TAG); a group comprised of MD-715 points of contact throughout the NIH community. This year’s sessions discussed information and resources for NIH’s three corporate MD-715 focus areas. For session one, the Portfolio Strategist for People with Disabilities presented information on where to find and how to hire candidates with disabilities. For session 2, EDI arranged for presentations by American University’s Washington Internship for Native Students (WINS) and Indian Health Services’ Division of Health Professions Support. And for session three, EDI hosted a panel discussion with representatives from Health and Human Services, Excelencia in Education, Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools, and the Hispanic Association for Colleges and Universities. Participant feedback on TAG was very positive, and participants’ comments reflect that they found the information, resources, and meetings valuable.

In addition, the three Portfolio Strategists for the corporate focus area groups have worked this year to develop recruiting toolkits for each of the corporate focus area populations. These guides will be rolled out to hiring managers in 2016 and will be a resource outlining recruitment strategies and sources, search strategies, and hiring authorities. The TAG presentations and toolkits are in direct response to customer feedback as ICs have requested information on how they may affect change in the MD-715 focus areas.

## MD-715 Focus Areas – NIH Activities

NIH Offices, Institutes and Centers, and employee groups have done a range of activities in support of the recruitment and retention of NIH focus area groups. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

* Engaging with and presenting at events by organizations such as the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS), and the National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA),
* Hosting groups at NIH such as the National Native American Youth Initiative, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Health Professions Schools, and Deaf in Government,
* Supporting the Hispanic Research and Scholars Workgroup (through the National Institute on Drug Abuse) and the Native American Research Centers for Health program (through the National Institute of General Medical Sciences),
* Conducting outreach to institutions such as Gallaudet University, the Rochester Institute of Technology – National Technical Institute for the Deaf, and the Universidad Central del Caribe,
* Using the Workforce Recruitment Program to find candidate with disabilities,
* Utilizing Schedule A hiring authority to onboard employees with disabilities,
* Developing reasonable accommodations policies and procedures and enhancing 508 compliant documents,
* Continuing the Project SEARCH internship program (through the Clinical Center), the Diversity in Research, Executive, and Administrative Management – DREAM program (through the *Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development), and the Sacred Root: Native American Information Fellowship Program (through the National Library of Medicine), and
* Laying the foundation for an initiative that will bring together the Clinical Center’s Department of Nursing, the University of New Mexico’s Health Sciences Center, and the Office of Human Resources’ Corporate Recruitment Unit to develop a summer internship program for Native American and Hispanic students.

### Corporate Focus Areas: American Indians/Alaska Natives – NINDS Spotlight

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) has long-championed the recruitment and retention of American Indians/Alaska Natives through the leadership of Dr. Rita Devine, lead for the NINDS Summer Intern Program in the Neurological Sciences. As a result of Dr. Devine’s outreach efforts, in FY 2015 ten Native Americans students were selected to participate in the NINDS Summer Intern Program. These students had the opportunity to receive first-rate training in neuroscience research through hands-on experience working with leading scientists in the Institute's Division of Intramural Research.

In addition to their day-to-day research experience, Native students at NINDS attended the first annual White House Tribal Youth Gathering to explore issues relevant to Gen I (Generation Indigenous). The event included speeches about health and wellness, public safety and strong communities as well as breakout sessions for the Native youth to discuss innovations technology and other issues. Moreover, more than half of these students were able to present data from their NINDS research at the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) Conference. This accomplishment serves as another form of recruitment; when other students see the type of research that they do at NINDS, it could pique their interest for pursuing a career in neurological biomedical research.

Dr. Devine participates in other activities to recruit and retain Native Americans to the NIH, such as her engagement with NIH-hosted programs for Native students and professional organizations, her outreach efforts, and her support for the weekly Summer Journal Club Series for Native Issues. In addition, during Native American Heritage Month, Dr. Rita Devine and her team organized presentations by the NIH Native Scholars for the NINDS staff to learn about the Native American culture. There were two post-docs and four post-bacs that spoke about their experiences on reservations. Additionally, she informed the NINDS staff about how the Summer Internship Program (SIP) runs and how they can continue to help make the program successful.

### Corporate Focus Areas: Hispanics – Conéctate Spotlight

Sponsored by NIH Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Conéctate (Get Connected!) with Acquisitions promotes employee engagement in mentoring, career development and networking in a supportive and inclusive environment of common career interests.  Through this program, employees have created a venue where they give monthly presentations, discuss career opportunities, and share knowledge and information with each other.

In 2015, the group grew to more than 40 members from diverse backgrounds and occupations, many of them actively engaged with each other in mentoring, networking and career progression.  With guidance from their executive sponsor, Ms. Olga Acosta Polston, Director, Office of Acquisitions NICHD, and support from EDI, the group created a system where participants and presenters receive Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) for their monthly engagement in the program.

In August 2015, the group established a formal leadership committee with an appointed Chair, Co-Chair, Secretary, and Public Relations representatives.  They also established a listserv, CONECTATE-ACQ-L@LIST.NIH.GOV and began mapping a full year of activities.  This group is on its way to becoming a very important voice in the field of acquisitions.  In FY 2015, they exemplified the EDI vision of cultivating a culture of inclusion where diverse talent is leveraged to advance health discovery.

### Corporate Focus Areas: People with Disabilities – NIH ABILITIES Spotlight

Dr. Kathy Mann Koepke sought to nurture an interest group that was broadly welcoming to persons with any/all disability types and led formation of the NIH ABILITIES group that launched in FY 2015. Dr. Mann Koepke reached out to other NIH advocates, EDI, and the other focused interest groups in order to understand the level of interest in nurturing a new interest group. Finding strong support, the ABILITIES listserv (ABILITIES@LIST.NIH.GOV) was created and the first ABILITIES meeting was held with more than 30 persons in attendance.

Initial meetings of the ABILITIES group have focused on articulating a group mission and defining how and toward specifically what goals ABILITIES members want to move its mission forward. Contributors have shared a breadth of information relevant to accessibility, challenges and solutions employees encounter, resources of special interest to persons with disabilities, as well as opportunities for new learning. The NIH ABILITIES group was created to foster a welcoming, supportive, and respectful workplace that promotes success for all NIH staff, regardless of ability or disability and aims to grow and expand to meaningfully benefit the entire NIH community.

### Biomedical Areas of Focus – Office of Intramural Research Spotlight

The Office of Intramural Research (OIR) has engaged in a range of activities in support of the recruitment of Black tenured and tenure-track scientists/investigators and Asian/Pacific Islander Lab and Branch Chiefs as describe below.

* The Black Scientists and Friends e-mail listserve, managed by an Assistant Director of OIR was expanded from 516 to 558 recipients. This listserve is used to disseminate information about job and training opportunities, networking events, and general career advice. In February, a different Black scientist at NIH was highlighted each day.
* OIR co-sponsored the annual Kuan-Teh Jeang lecture during Asian/Pacific Islander heritage month. Dr. T. Jake Liang, an intramural Branch Chief, was the 2015 keynote speaker.
* OIR e-mails the ads for Scientific Director openings directly to all NIH Intramural Senior Investigators. This is as a direct response to Asian scientists at NIH, who said that they wanted to be notified when leadership positions arose.
* OIR approved the nominations of several Black and Asian scientists for their prestigious Wednesday Afternoon Lecture Series (WALS). Such seminars have been used in the past to help identify qualified candidates for senior level positions.
* OIR promotes the inclusion of Black and Asian Scientists on key committees that it manages, such as the Earl Stadtman Investigator Search Committee and the Central Tenure Committee. Such service helps to develop leadership skills and peer-recognition of those skills.

# Pipeline Initiatives

Pipeline initiatives and efforts designed to train and prepare students (i.e. undergrads, grads, postdocs) to join the workforce of a particular field. These programs often target individuals, across career levels, who have lower than expected participation in the workforce. NIH ICs and Offices recognize the importance building diversity in the next generation of the workforce and have demonstrated this through the following activities from FY 2015.

Many ICs hosted interns from the Office of Intramural Training and Education’s High School Scientific Training and Enrichment Program (HiSTEP) and Community College Summer Enrichment Program (CCSEP). The goal of HiSTEP is to expand the pipeline of students interested in biomedical and healthcare careers by providing opportunities for high school students from schools with a large population of financially-disadvantaged students. The purpose of CCSEP is to increase the number of community college students who participate in the NIH Summer Internship Program. ICs also hosted interns from NIH’s Project SEARCH program. Project SEARCH is a program dedicated to providing education and training to young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through an innovative workforce and career development model that benefits the individual, workplace, and community.

Some ICs have their own organization-specific internship programs to enhance diversity and others hosted interns from external third-party internships with a diversity-focus. Many NIH organizations promoted existing agency programs to diverse audiences by speaking at minority-serving institutions, bringing students in for tours, and sharing information with diverse professional associations. ICs also partnered with local high schools to expose students to biomedical careers and utilized the Pathways program to onboard students and recent graduates into the workforce.

## Pipeline Initiative – NEI DIVRO Spotlight

The National Eye Institute’s (NEI) Diversity in Vision Research & Ophthalmology (DIVRO) program was established in 2011 and is a direct outcome of the MD-715 report to address underrepresentation/low participation rates of specific groups in the workforce. The program seeks to increase the number of African-American, Latino, and Native American scientists in vision research by promoting career development opportunities for science students interested in pursuing a career in research. This year was the fifth consecutive and successful DIVRO class. These students are dedicated to their research and future success and have received exceptional feedback from the Principal Investigators (PIs) and lab staff.

The DIVRO program offers many activities during the internship to provide context that will benefit the interns’ lab and overall internship experience. All DIVRO interns presented their research at NIH Poster Day and other activities from this year include:

* Lunch meetings to discuss the program, meet one another, go over expectations, and have general conversation about NIH/NEI, academics, careers, how to do well and have a great experience during their internship,
* Brown Bag at the Central Animal Facility with Dr. Raber, Chief Veterinarian,
* Brown Bag with Dr. Roland Owens, Associate Director NIH Office of Intramural Research, discussing careers in research, academia and how to be successful,
* Brown Bag with Dr. Hannah Valantine, NIH Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity, to discuss careers in medicine, research and how to keep moving and adjusting to your career and life, and
* Brown Bag with Dr. Belinda Seto, NEI Deputy Director about career paths, research and incorporating life with career.

The program is an effortless way of incorporating diversity into the institute after the initial start-up. The program has succeeded despite the sequestration, lab moves, budget cuts and marketing a different way of selecting interns for the summer program in intramural. To encourage the intramural labs to provide interns with expert hands-on experience, the Office of the IC Director (Dr. Sieving) pays for each DIVRO intern’s stipend out of his budget. Funds that could have gone to other pressing matters within the Office of the Director (OD) are instead allocated for up to twelve DIVRO interns each summer. This encourages and supports increasing the number of students underrepresented in the sciences, expanding the diverse talent pool to eventually streamline the hiring pipeline to the benefit of NEI or NIH. Having OD pay for each DIVRO intern sends a very strong message and demonstrates the importance of diversity and NEI’s priority of increasing the inclusion of underrepresented staff in the workplace.

## Pipeline Initiative – NLM’s Distance Learning Program Spotlight

The National Library of Medicine’s (NLM) Specialized Information Services (SIS) Division participates in the NLM Distance Learning program with indigenous students, Hispanic students and students of color from four high schools located in Kotzebue, AK; Honolulu, HI; Los Angeles, CA; and San Juan, PR. The bi-weekly program is conducted using teleconferencing. The theme for the 2014-2015 school year was Connecting Students to a Healthy America and featured speakers about health and health careers.

A paper describing the lessons learned about the NLM Distance Learning Program which promotes health careers was published. See: *Craig Locatis, Cynthia Gaines, et al. Lessons Learned from ten years on distance learning outreach, Journal of the Medical Library Association, 103(2): 78-82, April, 2015*. The abstract from this paper is as follows:

* Objective:
  + The study tested the efficacy of providing distance learning with real-time videoconferencing to broaden high school student knowledge of health careers.
* Methods:
  + A pilot program was tried out and extended over ten years to include other schools in four different time zones and the National Library of Medicine. Survey results, site visits, and continued school participation were used as effectiveness indicators. Student ratings, site visits, and ongoing discussions were used to evaluate critical factors in the program.
* Results:
  + Nine program factors contributed to success.
* Conclusions:
  + Synchronous communication can be effective for outreach to special populations given appropriate infrastructure, technology, program design, and implementation.

## Pipeline Initiative – NIDA Spotlight

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has detailed one of its senior Title 42 executives, Dr. Joe Frascella, to the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) to lead a mentorship program for the important purpose of reducing the disparities in diversity in the biomedical and health sciences at NIH and in the general field. This mentorship program is a pioneer model for increasing the number of underrepresented minorities in biomedical research in both intra- and extramural research programs. NIDA hopes to use this program to develop a collaborative model between federal and non-federal organizations that can be exported to other institutions to enhance research training and diversity in biomedical and health sciences. Both NIDA and UMBC will benefit from this collaboration.

Dr. Frascella will not only help the next generation of researchers navigate the research grant process, but he will also enhance the pipeline of underrepresented students into research, as well as of underrepresented researchers into the NIH. Dr. Frascella will work directly with students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty, principally in the neurosciences/life sciences, to create linkages with NIH intramural and extramural programs, helping to expand diversity within NIDA and NIH. In particular, he will work with NIDA's intramural diversity program director, Dr. Jean Lud Cadet, and Science Director, Dr. Antonello Bonci, to establish research and training opportunities for students, postdocs, and faculty interested in the areas of substance abuse and addiction.

On a broader NIH level, Dr. Frascella will work with Dr. Hannah Valentine, Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity at NIH, to help diversify the scientific workforce at the NIH more globally by establishing new connections and programs between UMBC and the NIH. These activities will directly support NIH’s and NIDA’s goal to ensure that the scientific talent is nurtured, recognized, and supported across all demographic groups, and to ensure that the most creative minds have the opportunity to contribute to realizing our national research and health goals.

# Outreach

Outreach refers to efforts designed to widen and diversify applicant pools for recruitment(s). NIH ICs recognize that if they draw on the wisdom of a workforce that reflects the population they serve, they are better able to understand and meet the needs of their customers. In line with this ICs have completed outreach activities to enhance workforce diversity.

NIH organizations advertised vacancies in diverse publications and through numerous diverse email lists, participated in local career fairs and in conferences targeting diverse populations through presentations and employer booths, and partnered with professional organizations that are affiliated with diverse populations.

## Outreach – CSR’s Early Career Review Program Spotlight

The Center for Scientific Review (CSR) created the Early Career Reviewer (ECR) Program to train and educate qualified scientists to become critical competent and fair reviewers, provide peer review experience to help improve applicant competiveness, and enrich the existing pool of NIH reviewers. Since its inception, there have been approximately 1,666 ECRs on 269 CSR study sections, across 24 Integrated Review Groups and five divisions. An average of 19% of the ECRs who served have been underrepresented minorities.

In an effort to recruit and help advance more underrepresented minorities. CSR held a webinar on "Meet the Experts in NIH Peer Review for R01 Grant Applicants feature a presentation and video on the ECR program: Jumpstart Your Career with CSR’s Early Career Reviewer Program.” Further, The Early Career Reviewer Advisory Committee promoted the ECR program at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS); the NHLBI/Association of Black Cardiologists Seminar: Demystifying the National Institutes of Health; the NCI/Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities 2015 Professional Development Workshop; and the NIMHD/Translational Health Disparities Course.

## Outreach – COSWD’s Future Research Leaders Program Spotlight

The NIH Future Research Leaders Conference (FRLC), sponsored by the Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD), was an event held in conjunction with the NIH Research Festival. The purpose of the event was to promote knowledge and awareness about scientific career opportunities in the NIH Intramural Research Program (IRP), as well as to provide talented scientists from diverse backgrounds opportunities to network with IRP investigators. In alignment with the COSWD and NIH missions, the FRLC was a trans-NIH outreach event to increase scientific workforce diversity within NIH by increasing applicant-pool diversity for various NIH scientific searches and positions at NIH. It is also a vehicle for increasing scientific workforce diversity in the broader biomedical and behavioral sciences community by providing continuous outreach and recruitment with recipients of NIH programs that support diversity such as the Diversity Supplement Program (which targets groups with lower than expected participation in science).

The FRLC was purposefully designed to facilitate interaction between NIH scientific leadership and early-stage scientists from diverse backgrounds to achieve the conferences objectives. Approximately 30 talented, early stage scientists from diverse backgrounds (i.e., future research leaders, FRLs) who demonstrated a track record or trajectory of independent scientific research AND were interested in learning about IRP career opportunities were invited to participate in the conference.

Over the course of a one-and-a-half-day conference, the FRLs learned about the IRP mission, organization, current scientific work, resources for investigators and application/search processes at the IRP. In turn, the FRLs were asked to present and share their science with the NIH scientific community. The conference also provided ample opportunities for IRP senior leaders such as IC directors, scientific directors, branch and lab chiefs and current investigators to meet with the selected FRLs to discuss scientific work of shared interests (e.g., one-on-one meetings, networking session, lab tours). These interactions provide opportunities for IRP leadership to identify emerging talent that resonates with IC scientific interest areas, and the FRLs the opportunity to network with current NIH investigators and seek mentoring opportunities when appropriate. FRLC 2016 is currently in the planning stages and is developing programming to maintain engagement with the first FRLC cohort. COSWD staff is working with the Diversity Supplement Points of Contacts, in the Extramural Research Program, with these continued efforts.

## Outreach – WALS Spotlight

Reprint from the NIH Record Article by Cerise Elliot: Women of Color Featured as WALS Speakers

Five outstanding women joined the 2015- 2016 Wednesday Afternoon Lecture Series roster, in an effort to promote the successes of women in science by the committee on women of color in biomedical careers, a subcommittee of the NIH working group on women in biomedical careers. “Many women of color confront a number of challenges in finding a way into biomedicine and in staying there,” said Dr. Janine Austin Clayton, NIH associate director for research on women’s health and working group co-chair. “Role models and sponsorship are just two points, and NIH is working hard to address a range of factors related to the research enterprise that affect women in the scientific workforce.”

The sponsored additions bring the number of women on this season’s lecture roster to 17. The dates and speakers are:

* Dec. 16, 2015—Dr. Roberta Diaz-Brinton, R. Pete Vanderveen Chair in therapeutic discovery and development, University of Southern California, is a recipient of the Presidential Citizens Medal by President Obama for her advocacy in increasing the number of minority students pursuing STEM. She has demonstrated that loss of ovarian hormones leads to activation of a sequence of compensatory responses that ultimately lead to the development of Alzheimer’s pathology.
* Jan. 27, 2016—Dr. Yang Dan, professor of neurobiology, University of California, Berkeley, is a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator. Her research elucidates how visual information is encoded and processed in the mammalian brain and how neural circuits are shaped by visual experience.
* Mar. 2, 2016—Dr. Vivian Cheung, geneticist, University of Michigan, is an Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator and National Academy of Medicine member. Her research with Dr. Richard Spielman characterized changes in DNA sequence and the effect on gene expression. They mapped and catalogued genetic differences among people from Asia, Africa and Europe; this analysis cemented the importance of regulatory or “junk” DNA.
* Mar. 23, 2016—Dr. Brigid Hogan, professor and chair, department of cell biology, Duke University, is an Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator, National Academy of Medicine member and fellow of the Royal Society. Her research focuses on stem cell techniques and transgenic technology. She is a leader in mammalian embryo manipulation techniques through her publication Manipulating the Mouse Embryo: A Laboratory Manual. Her current focus is the cellular and genetic mechanisms underlying the development, maintenance and repair of organs derived from embryonic foregut endoderm.
* Apr. 13, 2016—Dr. Paula Hammond, head of the department of chemical engineering and David H. Koch chair professor of engineering, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is a member of the 2013 class of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, recipient of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers Charles M.A. Stine Award and fellow of the American Physical Society. Her group focuses on the self-assembly of polymeric nanomaterials, with an emphasis on the use of electrostatics and other complementary interactions to generate functional materials with highly controlled architecture.

“Every one of these exemplary scientists was delighted to accept the invitation to be a speaker for the NIH Wednesday Afternoon Lecture Series,” said NIA deputy director Dr. Marie Bernard, committee co-chair. “We of the women of color committee are honored to facilitate their engagement with the NIH community.”

Lectures occur from 3 to 4 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10.

# Training and Development

Training and development activities focus on professional development, career services, resources, and other learning opportunities to enhance an individual or groups' job-related performance. These activities are important as they allow employees to feel supported, empowered, and equipped to work at their full potential. NIH ICs and Offices recognize the value in enabling training opportunities for their workforces and supported the following activities this year.

Employees from a plethora of NIH organizations participated in NIH’s Leadership Development Programs hosted by the Office of Human Resources. These include the Management Seminar Series; Mid-level Leadership Program; Senior Leadership Program; and Executive Leadership Program. Additionally, some ICs have customized internal leadership development programs. ICs are also supporting mentoring and sponsoring trainings related to general career development. Many organizations have also enhanced their orientation and onboarding programs, and their new supervisor training.

## Training and Development – NCATS Spotlight

In FY 2015 each of the National Center for Advancing Translational Science’s (NCATS) 40 supervisors and points of contact for government contractors participated in the Power of Positive Change, a six-workshop leadership development program for supervisors and group leads created in response to a survey of employee engagement. Survey responses indicated that that employees felt NCATS leaders needed to develop more advanced management skills. Workshops include hands-on dynamic learning experiences, peer-to-peer problem solving and coaching, and reading leadership books and articles. The workshop topics were: leadership and trust, coaching high performers, emotional intelligence, crucial conversations, inspirational leadership, and group genius and collaboration.

## Training and Development – CIT Spotlight

The Center for Information Technology (CIT) hosted a number of training seminars for leadership and staff on Understanding the Federal Hiring process and Managing Your Federal Career. This opportunity allowed staff from the NIH Office of Human Resources to interact with CIT staff demonstrating how to navigate on USAjobs.gov, search for federal opportunities, and match skills and abilities with opportunities. This session was open for staff at all levels and was well received. The session was available on live videocast and archived for those unable to attend. This was extremely helpful for 24x7 shift workers within the Center. We are mindful and inclusive of staff within CIT who work non-traditional schedules or in positions such as Help Desk Technicians, IT Specialist, Telephone Technicians or Customer Service Specialist unable to participate in-person.

## Training and Development – NICHD Spotlight

In FY 2015, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) launched a training program and awards competition termed the Three-minute Talks (TmT). The participating graduate student and postdoctoral fellows must explain their research to a general scientific audience, including the public health relevance of their work, in three minutes or less using just one slide. Objectives of the program include public speaking training to develop confident, clear delivery of effective presentations and to tell stories that can engage and inform the public, and others, about the importance of biomedical research. The 2015 competition expanded to include trainees from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research and the National Human Genome Research Institute.

## Training and Development – NIGMS Spotlight

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) developed a new training curriculum for newly hired NIGMS program directors that details the material they should learn, and also serves as a resource for all staff. The Institute launched a new Intranet site that contains a comprehensive set of suggested training activities, with links to key reference materials, to assist in the training of newly hired program directors. The site should also serve as a useful compendium of information for use by all program and other staff. The site is organized chronologically, with information that a new program director should learn in the first week, the first month, and beyond the first month at NIGMS.

## Training and Development – NHLBI Spotlight

As a part of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute’s (NHLBI) efforts to foster an environment of inclusion that values input from staff of all backgrounds and positions, the NHLBI continued its unwavering commitment to supporting both formal and informal training opportunities for staff. Not only does the NHLBI recommend employees for formal NIH leadership training programs, but the Institute has also developed formal, in-house leadership training programs to meet the demand of staff training needs. The NHLBI's actions in these areas for FY 2015 are as follows:

The NHLBI enrolled employees in the NIH Management Seminar Series (MSS), the NIH Mid-Level Leadership Program (MLP), and the NIH Senior Leadership Program (SLP). Applicants to all three programs came from across the NHLBI and represent a diverse talent pool in scientific and administrative positions.

The NHLBI offered its second cohort of the Emerging Leaders Program (ELP), an in-house, customized leadership training program for 24 GS/12-13s, to a diverse group of scientific and administrative applicants from across the NHLBI. One of the eight session topics focuses specifically on Diversity and Inclusion (D&I). Participant's supervisors were invited to a 90 minute "mini session" during the D&I training day, to learn with their employees and engage on the topics. The alumni pool currently has over 43 graduates. The NHLBI will continue to sponsor the ELP, having selected an additional cohort of 24 diverse participants for the FY16 program.

The success of the first four years of the NHLBI's Leadership Lab (LL) training program prompted a successful contract re-compete process in FY 2015, which enables the NHLBI to continue to offer this excellent opportunity to staff. The LL is a specialized NHLBI leadership training program for GS/14-15 and equivalents, designed for a diverse group of scientific and administrative employees. There are currently 85 graduates still employed at the NHLBI, with an additional 22 graduates anticipated by the end of the FY16 program.

In order to leverage the skills of, and provide opportunities for further engagement to the diverse group of training recipients at the NHLBI, the NHLBI Leadership Lab and Emerging Leaders Program graduates have been tapped to participate on other projects and initiatives across the IC. Some examples include participation in Technical Evaluation Panels for contracts, membership in the Human Capital Committee and its working groups, and serving on awards review panels.

The NHLBI has recognized that limited leadership training opportunities still exist at all grade levels, particularly at the lowest and highest levels, despite current training offerings. In an effort to increase inclusion of these populations, the NHLBI awarded contracts for the development of three additional training programs. One program will target executive and senior leadership, and two programs will be designed for the GS/5-13 audience.

# Employee Engagement

Employee engagement activities are designed to foster employee commitment to the organization's mission and goals, to encourage contributions to organizational success and to enhance employee sense of well-being. These activities are a critical part of inclusion and encompass efforts to enhance communication, support for employee wellness initiatives, practices to promote work-life balance, structures that recognize employee contributions, support for involvement in employee resource groups, and more. In line with this, NIH organizations have made strides in enhancing employee engagement this year.

ICs and Offices have held awards ceremonies to recognize employees for their contributions to the workplace. Of these, some also have a category that honors efforts in the diversity and inclusion. In addition to annual ceremonies, organizations are working to recognize employee efforts informally throughout the year with highlights in employee newsletters and small amount gift cards.

Some ICs have committees dedicated towards enhancing employee experiences in the workplace. The roles and functions of these committees vary, and overall, they aim to improve employee morale, promote IC camaraderie, and increase communication between employees and leadership. Activities of the committees range from hosting social, employee health, and cultural events to advising and making recommendations to leadership on employee satisfaction.

ICs and Offices were engaged in enhancing wellness at work. Activities supporting this include holding healthy lifestyle challenges, encouraging employee breaks, hosting wellness-related speakers, and participating in and hosting overall NIH wellness programs such as Take a Hike Day.

Many organizations are also working to increasing communication and transparency throughout their organizations. They are doing this by holding retreats and town hall meetings, having open sessions with leadership, circulating newsletters, and utilizing intranets.

## Employee Engagement – NCI STAY Program Spotlight

The National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) STAY program is designed to gain a deeper understanding of what motivates employees in the following areas:

* What keeps you here?
* What might entice you away?
* Are we fully utilizing your talents?
* What is one thing that would make your job more satisfying and rewarding?
* What part of your role is most challenging? What is least challenging?
* What can I do differently to best assist you?

A Stay Interview is an informal conversation between a supervisor and a direct report about what keeps the employee engaged and coming to work. The Administrative Resource Center (ARC) participated in a pilot for the STAY program and applied it to several staff members. Initial feedback has been positive and has helped supervisors in the ARC gain a deeper understanding of the wants and needs of staff. NCI cannot yet measure the success rate but note that none of the ARC staff have departed, and overall, staff report a positive outlook when questioned about their workplace. The ARC has not applied the STAY program to the everyday ARC procedures for supervisors at this time, mainly because of the limited time supervisors have to perform their current duties. Once NCI has further news from the Pilot, the ARC will reassess how to integrate or not integrate the STAY program.

## Employee Engagement – NHGRI EVS Spotlight

The National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) launched an Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) campaign to increase overall participation on the 2015 survey, resulting in 67% participation. In addition, NHGRI conducted two focus groups, one with employees and one with supervisors, to gain insight into NHGRI's challenges as reflected in the 2014 survey results. These focus groups have provided numerous actionable recommendations that will be pursued throughout calendar 2015 and beyond. 2014 EVS results were received in FY 2015 and the results indicated that NHGRI scored higher than the NIH as a whole on every question. Addressing one key point in the 2014 EVS survey results, NHGRI developed one page tips for conducting performance reviews for supervisors, and a one-page tip sheet for employees to empower them in preparing for their own performance review.

A few years ago, NHGRI took the lead in establishing an Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) Liaisons group to share best practices for promoting and managing the survey as well, as analyzing results and creating an action plan. In FY 2015, with feedback solicited from the liaisons, the group changed its name to the NIH Employee Engagement Liaisons (NEEL). The new name reflects the all-encompassing initiative to engage and motivate employees. This still includes sharing EVS best practices but it also includes employee recognition, empowerment, training, and career development. The Institute also fostered a collaboration with the Office of the Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD) by encouraging their participation in the NIH-wide Employee Engagement Liaisons group, which is co-led by an employee at NHGRI. The COSWD Office is interested in analyzing Employee Viewpoint Survey results across ICs and is interested in learning how ICs currently analyze the data from a diversity perspective.

In addition, NHGRI's Executive Officer and Management Analyst reached out to the Health and Human Services (HHS) Program Manager for Employee Engagement to establish a collaboration on how they can better engage employees at the NIH. NHGRI took the lead in setting up an NIH working group of employee engagement liaisons with participation across ICs. The working group met with the HHS Program Manager at the Hubert Humphrey building downtown in February. At this brainstorming session, ideas for employee engagement were discussed as well as ideas on how we can better help each other in this focus area. The group also discussed the Employee Viewpoint Survey, particularly increasing participation rates and establishing action plans after analyzing EVS results.

## Employee Engagement – NIMHD Worklife Committee Spotlight

In FY 2015, the National Institute for Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) chartered the NIMHD Worklife Committee, an inclusive group of staff from all levels of the Institute, to support employee engagement. The Worklife Committee committed to a vision of "a workplace where everyone feels included and is treated with dignity and respect" and a mission "to contribute to the advancement of NIMHD's mission by promoting a workplace environment for all employees that fosters mutual respect, inclusion, cohesion, teamwork, and creativity."

During FY 2015, the Worklife Committee sponsored or supported a number of activities to increase employee engagement and enhance employee worklife experiences. These activities included:

* October: Thriving Through Organizational Change Brown Bag Lunch
* December: Holiday Party
* February through December 2015: EDI "Taking the Pledge." Engaging in a year of conversations and to NIMHD's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
* February: Wear Red Day
* February: Executive Presentations Brown Bag Lunch
* March: Black History Month Lunch Seminar
* March: Pi Day Celebration
* April: National Walking Day for the Surgeon General’s Every Body Walk! Initiative
* April: Take Your Child to Work Day. NIMHD held three activities: The Cruise to Good Health; The DNA, Health Disparities, and Me; and the Smart Cycling Team. NIMHD's 8 sessions and 127 registrants is a testament to the success of these activities.
* April: Administrative Professional’s Day Celebration
* May: Take a Hike Day NIMHD Team

Although the NIMHD Worklife Committee is new, there has been a great deal of positive feedback from the staff. The long-term impact of these programs remains to be seen, but the short-term impact – increased camaraderie, greater intra-Institutional interactions, more relationship building, and improved work-life balance is already obvious.

## Employee Engagement – ORS Fostering a Culture of Individual Value Spotlight

The Office of Research Services’ (ORS) Fostering a Culture of Individual Value (FCIV) Director’s Initiative was established to prepare options for fostering employee engagement and the recognition of individual staff value and contributions. The FCIV consists of representatives from each of the areas within ORS, and many mid-level managers who have taken leadership roles. This inclusion has resulted in new involvement in the work of the organization and the development of new leadership skills for the members.

The FCIV worked to create, develop and coordinate the first ORS annual Awards Ceremony to recognize the efforts of ORS staff as they related to the ORS Core Values (Customer Focus, Excellence, Integrity and Collaboration). The ceremony took place at the ORS Town Hall and was themed “Celebrate ORS”. There were 84 award nominations submitted by ORS staff for the five award categories (One People’s Choice and Four Core Values). Three awards per Core Value and one People’s Choice Award (voted by ORS staff) were distributed. A total of 123 ORS staff were recognized resulting in improved morale and a sense of appreciation by ORS staff. Opportunities for recognizing employee contributions, promoting employee input, and fostering trans-ORS relationships are areas the FCIV identified as the group’s focus for moving forward. The group meets with leadership to share options for achieving the Initiative goals.

# Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) strategy refers to action(s) planned to enhance diversity and inclusion within an organization. In order to be successful with diversity and inclusion efforts, NIH recognizes it needs to take a critical approach to examining D&I, identifying goals, creating action plans, and evaluating success. Components of these efforts include elements of all of the activities described in the Success Stories thus far and additional actions such examining workforce data, analyzing procedures, educating the workforce on D&I, allocating resources to D&I initiatives, and demonstrating leadership support of D&I. These actions for FY 2015 are described below.

## D&I Strategy – D&I Town Hall Spotlight

Dr. Hannah Valantine, Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD) and Debra Chew, Director, Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) hosted a rich discussion on the important topic of workforce diversity and inclusion at the NIH in June 2015. The discussion focused on efforts to adopt best practices and identify/remove barriers to an inclusive environment. NIH Employee Resource Group members as well as any others interested in this topic and it implications on the biomedical research training community were invited to attend. The event was well attended and the future plan is to have a yearly town hall meeting.

## D&I Strategy – NHLBI Spotlight

Some of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute’s (NHLBI) recruitment efforts help to reinforce the culture of inclusion and diversity and NHLBI's commitment to keeping the focus on diversity in science and training of scientists. One exemplary case of this is the diversity workshop convened by the NHLBI's committee that administers the NIH Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research program. This workshop convened a group of early stage pulmonary scientists, most in the postdoctoral/fellowship phase of their careers, who are recipients of support through this program. The enthusiastic discussions that resulted identified and characterized the unique challenges faced by researchers from racial and ethnic minority groups at this critical early stage in their careers.

The perspective of minority individuals at the early career stage is especially relevant, since dropout rates are substantial at every step in the pathway toward scientific independence. This workshop's conclusions and recommendations have been collected in a manuscript titled "NHLBI Workshop Summary: Enhancing Opportunities for Training and Retention of a Diverse Biomedical Workforce," which will soon be submitted for publication. It was co-authored by a NHLBI scientist in conjunction with Dr. David Wilkes, Dean of the University of Virginia School of Medicine and Dr. Sonia Flores from the University of Colorado, Division of Pulmonary Sciences & Critical Care Medicine. Insight gained from these discussions will assist NHLBI in designing more effective programs to recruit and maintain minority individuals in pulmonary science.

## D&I Strategy – Women of Color Research Network Spotlight

The Women of Color Research Network (WoCRn) is one of the many efforts by the NIH Working Group on Women in Biomedical Careers to consider barriers for women in science and to develop innovative strategies to promote entry, recruitment, retention, and sustained advancement of women in biomedical and research careers. The Working Group Sub-Committee on Women of Color in Biomedical Careers (WOC in Biomed) created the WoCRn to provide women of color and supporters of their advancement in the biomedical sciences information about the NIH grants process, advice on career development, and a forum for networking and sharing information.

The WOC Committee is now working to bring together local members to encourage the organization of regional chapters in their home states.  Leveraging the WoCRn to form regional chapters allows members to share information, form robust professional networks, and initiate mentorship relationships within their geographical area.  The first WoCRn regional chapter was established at Indiana University in 2013; the second regional chapter was formed in North Carolina in 2014; and in 2015, the WoCRN launched two regional chapters based in Baltimore and Washington, DC.

## D&I Strategy – COSWD Workshop Spotlight

COSWD conducted two webinars – Developing a National Strategy to Enhance Scientific Workforce Diversity: Introduction to the Straw Model – with the goal to establish the framework for a comprehensive plan to achieve diversity at all levels of biomedical research workforce. The key elements of the straw model included: a network of partners, a research program to develop interventions to reduce barriers, and tracking and evaluation. Participants [Deans of Medical Schools and Graduate Schools, Vice Provosts, Vice Chancellors, Diversity Officers, and partners (Howard Hughes Medical Institute, NSF, etc.)] were invited to share their reactions, insights, and perspectives on the straw model, so that it will have the greatest likelihood to succeed. Questions/comments were collected prior to, as well as during and after, the webinars.

The overall themes that emerged from questions/comments were: partnerships; mentoring; current programs as models; promoting participation; resources; diversity of partners; evaluation and tracking; funding; and the Advisory Board. Key elements learned during the webinar and to be considered when developing the model are mentoring, funding, and current programs as models. Next steps are to convene the groups for feedback and to create timeline for funding opportunity.

## D&I Strategy – COSWD Diversity Catalysts Spotlight

This past spring, the Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity (COSWD) launched an exciting new program to tap into local talent on the NIH campus called the Diversity Catalysts. Diversity Catalysts is an internal NIH committee developed to advise COSWD on ways to enhance the biomedical research workforce using evidence-based strategies, broadly across NIH and at the Institute/Center (IC) level. Diversity Catalysts members were nominated by their IC Directors and approved by the COSWD and serve on one of seven subcommittees which are: Building Strategic Partnerships with Diverse Institutions; Career Development Programming, Leaderships, and Training; Recruiting and Retaining Postdoctoral Fellows, Staff Scientist, Assistant Clinical Investigators, Tenure Track and Tenured Scientists and Sustaining their Interest in Biomedical and Behavioral Research; Retention and Organizational Approaches to Enhance Diversity, including Attention to Research Support Staff; Building a Climate of Inclusion and Sense of Belonging within NIH Community; Standardizing Evaluation of Diversity Programs. The subcommittees have several overlapping themes and goals to accomplish: acquire the exit interview survey, launch the ambassador program, and create an inventory of partnerships and NIH diversity programs and work is in progress.

## D&I Strategy – NINDS Diversity Working Group Spotlight

The NINDS Diversity Working Group (DWG) is a working group of the Institute Director, senior staff, program directors and program analysts representing every scientific portfolio as well as our policy and communications offices. This NINDS-wide group meets monthly to discuss and address issues related to the institute’s diversity efforts. The increased awareness of diversity and dissemination of evaluation data across the institute has helped to create an atmosphere of shared responsibility for inclusion and wider accountability for diversity outcomes. DWG efforts have also included a re-vamped NINDS Merit Award for Diversity Achievement that acknowledges individual or group efforts in helping to achieve a culture of inclusion in support of the NINDS Mission. Recently the Diversity Workgroup has formed three subcommittees to address some important issues:

1. DWG Broadening Research Awareness In Neuroscience Skills and Readiness for Underrepresented Students (BRAINS R US) Subcommittee is actively exploring ways to reach earlier in the pipeline to increase diversity in the neuroscience workforce. The goal is to increase diversity in the neuroscience workforce via early interventions with underrepresented middle and high school students (grades 6-12). The subcommittee is developing a menu of outreach opportunities to be made available to NINDS staff.
2. DWG “Why” Subcommittee will gather information to understand specifically for neuroscience students or former NINDS trainees “why” individuals decide to leave the biomedical research pipeline. The work of this committee will help to inform future interventions, resources and programs.
3. DWG Resource Subcommittee will create tools and resources to be collated and accessed, towards the goal of making these resources available to all who seek to enhance diversity as a component of their work. Initially, this will seek to create a resource for NINDS Division of Extramural Research but eventually, the scope could be expanded to help the Extramural community (faculty, trainees, academics, and others) as well.

## D&I Strategy – Training and Education across NIH Spotlight

ICs hosted training and education activities in relation to diversity topics. These activities range from sponsoring training on topics such as having a diversity and inclusion module in IC-specific new employee orientation; holding brown bag conversations; organizing presentations from D&I leaders; hosting trainings on D&I topics; and incorporating D&I elements into leadership and supervisory training. Examples of such activities are provided below.

The Clinical Center’s (CC) Office of Workforce Management and Development includes an emphasis on the importance of Diversity Appreciation during new employee appreciation. NIH CC Diversity Appreciation and Communication introduces onboarding CC employees (full time employees, contractors, Intramural Research Training Awardees, Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, volunteers, etc.), and IC employees working in the CC to the CC core competency of Diversity Appreciation and a broad understanding of Diversity, touching on workforce and behavioral/cognitive diversity; focus includes raising awareness of dimensions of diversity, engaging in respectful conversations to explore aspects of participant diversity, and the conditions that allow for meaningful conversations to take place. Cultural competence and bias are discussed from a broad perspective.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) hosted a Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Group (HEDIG) seminar "The New IQ", given by Bruce Stewart, Deputy Director of the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Division at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). This seminar focused on the five habits that lead to inclusive behavior as analyzed from 20 questions on the Employee Evaluation Survey (EVS). The Institute also attended a "train the trainer" event which taught participants to use the Employee Viewpoint Survey questions that focus on issues of inclusion and the five habits (Fair, Open Cooperative, Supportive and Empowering) that lead to inclusive behavior. The goal is to bring back strategies and train supervisors and future supervisors on these five habits and implement change behaviors to accomplish the goal of inclusive behavior.

The National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) invited Linda Brothers from the NIH Office of the Ombudsman to lead participants in a discussion on implicit bias and its impact in the workplace. Two workshops were scheduled, an introductory session in 2014, and a follow-up workshop in July 2015. Participants left with more awareness and understanding of how their unconscious implicit biases can affect the decisions they make within the workplace community, and how an informed awareness of these unconscious biases is the best way to prevent an adverse impact in the workplace.

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) invited Hannah Valantine, M.D., NIH Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity and Senior Investigator, to the NIDCD Advisory Council, to present on Tenure-Track recruitment on diversity and strategies to incorporate throughout the search process. This served as a guide through the various steps to ensure NIDCD identifies, recruits and hires the most qualified staff.

In April 2015, the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (NCDI) held a panel discussion called “Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion: Insights from the Experts”. The panel featured five diversity experts such as, Dr. Hannah Valantine, Ms. Debra Chew, Ms. Kim D’Abreu, Dr. Victoria Plaut, and Dr. Brian Nosek. The conversations offered participants the opportunity to learn about initiatives being implemented by the NIH/OD, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and the chance to learn varying perspectives that revolve around diversity. This event was a collaborative effort that involved NCDI representatives from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the National Institute of Biomedical Imagining and Bioengineering, and the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The Chief Office of Scientific Workforce (COSWD) staff has developed an education module regarding nonconscious bias to increase awareness and provide behavioral strategies to minimize the impact of nonconscious bias. This module incorporates anonymous pre/post assessments and an interactive presentation. COSWD staff trained interested Search Committee Chairs to provide this education to their committees and have begun to provide this education to interested Search Committees for key senior scientific leadership positions. The purpose of this activity is to increase the diversity of the applicant pool and optimize the hiring decision-making processes for the Stadtman search and other scientific searches.

## D&I Strategy – NIH Programs to Diversify the Research Workforce Spotlight

Many NIH ICs and Offices support diversity in the workforce by supporting funding opportunities such as the following: Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award Individual Predoctoral Fellowship to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research; Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research; Research Supplements to Promote Re-Entry into Biomedical and Behavioral Research Careers.

In addition, as one component of a broad, trans-NIH strategy to address the need to promote diversity in the biomedical research workforce, the Common Fund has established the “Enhancing the Diversity of the NIH-Funded Workforce” program. This program is a national collaborative through which the Diversity Program Consortium, in partnership with the NIH, will develop, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to research training and mentoring, with the goal of engaging individuals from diverse backgrounds and helping them prepare for and succeed in biomedical research careers. It provides the opportunity for transformation of the biomedical research workforce through institution-wide and eventually nationwide implementation of successful training and mentoring strategies.

The long-term goal is to enhance the NIH mission through a more diverse and robust workforce, attracting talented individuals from all population sectors. The Enhancing the Diversity of the NIH-Funded Workforce program consists of three highly integrated initiatives. Through these integrated initiatives, this program will assess which approaches work in various contexts. The three initiatives are: Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity (BUILD); National Research Mentoring Network (NRMN); and Coordination and Evaluation Center (CEC).

## D&I Strategy – NIAID OTD Sponsorship Program Spotlight

The Office of Training and Diversity (OTD) recruits, sponsors, and mentors trainees from underrepresented populations in biomedical research for a variety of Division of Intramural Research training programs. OTD supports these trainees through the OTD Sponsorship Program, which provides funding support in the amount of 50% or more of stipend and health insurance costs, as well as a wide variety of training and professional development opportunities and resources. The OTD Sponsored 40 trainees during FY 2015.

A number of opportunities and resources are available to Sponsored trainees through the OTD. These include chances for trainees to present their science during multi-day meetings; gain experience as members of a Selection Committee; build administrative skills and program development knowledge through detail work; as well as opportunities to mentor peers and act as Ambassadors for the NIAID training experience. OTD also houses NIAID's Fellows Advisory Committee, a subcommittee of which plans and manages NIAID's Annual Fellows Workshop.

## D&I Strategy – NIDDK Leadership Commitment Spotlight

Demonstrated leadership commitment is an important aspect of an organization’s D&I strategy. This past year the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) strengthened this commitment in two ways. On behalf of the Institute Director, Dr. Griffin Rodgers, NIDDK’s Executive Office researches and develops monthly special emphasis group emails. These emails are sent, by the Director, in support for and in recognition of minority/underrepresented populations and also highlight their specific contributions to the sciences. In addition, the NIDDK Executive Office conducted a refresh of its Core Values to include Diversity. The Diversity Core Value is described as: foster inclusion and cultural competence through an environment that is open and welcoming to diverse people, ideas, and perspectives; show respect for others.

# Language Access

To improve access for individuals with limited English proficiency, the NIH has formulated — and is implementing — an agency-wide Language Access Plan (LAP). The goal of the plan is to improve access for eligible Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons to many of the agency’s public programs and activities. The focus of the LAP plan is to provide for communications in the preferred language when a patient has limited English proficiency.

Language Access is integral to the NIH’s commitment to the development of accessible and effective health, science, and medical information for broad public dissemination and is a critical component of NIH’s overall diversity and inclusion efforts.

## Language Access – NIAMS Spotlight

Over the past year, the NIAMS has made great strides in implementing its Language Access Plan as part of NIH’s broader efforts to help ensure that people with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to NIH programs and activities.

The NIAMS operates two clearinghouses, the NIAMS National Information Clearinghouse and the NIH Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases ~ National Resource Center. The clearinghouses have bilingual Spanish/English information specialists who answer public inquiries about bones, joints, muscles, and skin by telephone, mail and email. Additionally, the NIAMS has developed standard responses to inquiries in 14 different languages.

The NIAMS has many health education publications on the topics of bones, joints, muscles, and skin that are available free of charge through our two clearinghouses and the NIAMS website.  A number of these publications are written in four foreign languages – Spanish, Chinese (Mandarin), Korean and Vietnamese. In addition, the NIAMS has several audio publications in Spanish and Chinese for people with limited literacy and sight limitations.

The NIAMS’ foreign language materials are easily accessible through our Asian-language publications landing page and Spanish-language website. Visits to our NIAMS Spanish-language pages have continued to increase, often comprising 50 percent of traffic to the website. To meet this high demand, the NIAMS launched an updated Spanish-language website in September that features quick and easy navigation tools, information on participating in clinical research studies, and a responsive design that makes the site easier to read on mobile devices.

The NIAMS exhibits at national conferences of researchers and health professionals, voluntary organizations, and NIAMS Coalition groups throughout the year to distribute materials and provide information to conference attendees.  Some of these events reach minority and special populations or health professionals who work on their behalf. In addition, the NIAMS exhibits at local community health events in the greater Washington, D.C., area.

The NIAMS is continuing the effort to reach a broader population by publicizing information through social media, specifically Facebook, Twitter, and Google+. The NIAMS regularly posts messages in Spanish, as well as links to Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese publications on these media platforms. Its YouTube channel features a growing collection of multimedia resources, including patient videos, Research Briefs, and LabTV videos featuring NIAMS scientists. They have added Spanish subtitles to the patient videos and placed them in the clinical trials section of our new Spanish-language website to enhance participation among Hispanics/Latinos in clinical research.

## Language Access – ORS Spotlight

The NIH Office of Research Services, (ORS) in coordination with the NIH Clinical Center, installed Cyracom ‘over the phone’ interpretation systems at the NIH Gateway Center and the Commercial Vehicle Inspection Facility to help those with limited English proficiency get answers to their questions in their native languages once entering the campus. The Cyracom system is already being utilized at the West Drive Patient/Patient Visitor Entrance. Cyracom 800 number codes have also been provided to the Division of Immigration Services and the Division of Personnel Security and Access Control to help with employee populations that may need translations services at their respective customer service sites.

## Language Access – OCPL Spotlight

The Office of the Director, Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL) is currently developing a Spanish-language information resource to complement its highly popular health information service. It will offer a variety of vetted health information resources in Spanish, focusing on authoritative, research-based, consumer information written in plain language. The website will feature materials from NIH-sponsored education and awareness campaigns—also in Spanish. An 'Ask Carla' feature will provide Spanish-speaking populations with a health navigator, who will provide tailored responses to commonly asked health questions in the Latino community, as well as correlated NIH health resources. Translated articles from NIH News in Health will also be featured on the site. OCPL is working to optimize successful searching utilizing a number of approaches and strategies. NIH News in Health is already accessible monthly to public health workers, community centers, aging centers, voluntary health organizations, physicians, and hospitals.

# Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

NIH’s Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion has been on a journey of change – to become the best equal employment opportunity practice in government. In FY 2015, EDI took many positive steps in fulfilling this goal by being a more proactive, purposeful, and customer-oriented office. The accomplishments highlighted below reflect efforts in actualizing EDI’s vision of making NIH the premier place for diverse talent to work and discover.

## Overall Office Developments

### Customer Service

EDI’s customer service model is designed to assist each NIH Institute and Center in its efforts to develop and execute comprehensive diversity and inclusion strategies. The four tenets of the model are as follows:

1. Quarterly IC Meetings: The EDI Director and Deputy Director meet quarterly with each ICs Executive Officer and relevant staff
2. Active Communication: All EDI employees commit to actively engaging with customers
3. Standard Reporting: EDI provides ICs with demographic workforce reports; EEO complaints data; and training reports depicting the percentage of employees trained on EDI topics
4. Technical Team: Each IC has a ‘technical team’ of EDI staff assigned to work with them. This team of experts is comprised of an EDI Manager, IC Liaison, Formal Complaints Specialist, Data Analyst, and Diversity and Inclusion Strategist

This year, the Technical Teams and MD-715 were integrated into the Quarterly IC meetings providing NIH leadership with consistent access to staff who can support their organization’s diversity and inclusion efforts. The Portfolio Strategist for People with Disabilities attended EO meetings in 2015 to share information and strategies in relation to the MD-715 focus area of the recruitment and retention of people with disabilities and future EO meetings will incorporate the other portfolio strategists.

In an effort to continuously improve the customer experience, the office started using a customer service survey as an evaluation measure in FY 2015. Of those who responded to the survey, 90% found the solution or service provided by the EDI staff member to be ‘useful’ or ‘very useful.’ In response to the question, ‘how would you rate your overall customer service experience,’ 87% of respondents said ‘better than expected’ or ‘as expected.’ In FY 2015, EDI secured contract services to conduct an organizational assessment and program evaluation next year, following up on the organizational assessment done three years ago.

### The EDI Experiment – Investing in Our Employees

Within EDI, the office has been conducting its own “experiment.” EDI appreciates that in order to be successful in implementing solid strategies it has to stay laser-focused on helping its own employees develop their skills, leverage their strengths, accelerate their expertise, and advance their careers. By doing so, the result is an improved customer experience for the people EDI serves. The core belief is that a better-trained EDI employee makes a better consultant to NIH. Investments in employee engagement support the office’s efforts to deliver optimal customer service, achieve better outcomes, and set an example for utilizing effective inclusion strategies. The office has implemented a variety of activities aimed at providing all of the staff with a dynamic work experience and a place to thrive.

In terms of staff development for FY 2015, EDI sponsored employee participation in NIH mid-level and federal executive leadership development programs, arranged for executive coaches for managers, and provided each staff member with an individual training fund. The office sponsored in-house corporate training on topics such as critical thinking and decision making, interpersonal skills, generational differences, and barrier analysis. EDI held group mentoring with NIH leaders through brown bag lunch sessions. A priority for FY 2015 was for all EDI staff to complete Crucial Conversations training so that each EDI member is equipped with the tools to engage in high-stakes conversations, transform anger and hurt feelings into powerful dialogue, and make it safe to talk about difficult subjects.

Staff was also developed respective to their portfolio areas. The EEO counselors and complaints specialists were trained on mediation, dismissing Federal EEO complaints without fear of reversal; and EEO in relation to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and pregnant employees. Data analysts were trained on SPSS; the diversity and inclusion strategists were trained on unconscious bias; and the administrative management team was trained on vital records, NIH Executive Secretariat procedures, property management, and managing purchase cards.

To enhance team-building and office cohesion, EDI hosted an all-staff collaboration day and a staff retreat. Additionally, EDI’s shared office spaces were renovated to create new collaborative workspaces which include whiteboard walls, a chat space, and an idea room. EDI ran an eight-week health and wellness challenge, held an internal award ceremony, and held a recognition event for the administrative management team. Two EDI divisions, Resolutions and Equity Division and Diversity and Inclusion Division, also hosted their own internal retreats.

### Infrastructure

Driven by the desire to be a customer-centric organization, EDI has taken steps to be a more efficient, resourceful, and high-performing office. The Administrative Management Team (AMT) has been at the center of this effort, managing office developments while maintaining an exemplary level of customer service. AMT oversaw renovations, construction and repairs after ceiling and water breaks in both EDI office spaces with minimal disruption to EDI’s customers. All AMT staff members gained access to the NIH Interpreter Request Portal. This ensured that each division is equipped to provide prompt Sign Language Interpreters and/or Computer Aided Real Time Transcribing Services for EDI’s hearing impaired customers.

In terms of other administrative developments, EDI established a contract request system within the EDI Contracts Workspace. This allows for tracking of new activities, progress, issues, and modifications of EDI contracts. EDI also acquired Entellitrak – a case management system that will be used by EDI’s future reasonable accommodations program.

In FY 2015, EDI staffed the Women’s Portfolio Strategist position and the Access and Equity Branch Chief position. The office also coordinated internal details for two team members to act as Division Director for the Diversity and Inclusion Division and the Resolutions and Equity Division.

## EDI Services to NIH

### Guidance

The Guidance team is frequently called upon to develop and deliver customized guidance on EEO rights and responsibilities to the NIH community. In FY 2015, some examples of guidance provided included: compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act; taking and retaining interview notes; developing settlement agreements; and religious expression in the workplace. Additionally, the team published online toolkits on the fair selection process and NIH’s voluntary leave transfer program (VLTP).

### Strategy

In FY 2015, the Strategy team continued to evolve NIH’s MD-715 process to better meet customer needs. EDI updated the template provided for reporting and ICs responded positively to the new format of the MD-715 Call for Accomplishments and Planned Activities. Customers appreciated the more holistic approach to gathering information, the one-on-one consultation, and shift to MD-715 being used as a tool for year-round planning and communicating results rather than a one time a year report.

This year, the team also launched the MD-715 Technical Assistance Group (TAG). TAG is comprised of MD-715 points of contact throughout the NIH community. It is a platform to build and exchange knowledge, encourage collaboration, and enhance engagement between EDI and its MD-715 customers. TAG seeks to empower its members with the tools needed to build a model equal employment opportunity program at NIH. Participant feedback on TAG was very positive, and participants’ comments reflect that they found the information, resources, and meetings valuable.

The Strategy team also worked to benchmark and strengthen alignments and partnerships with NIH and other federal agency colleagues on diversity and inclusion. Examples of this include collaborating with the Office of Human Resources and participating with their Trans-NIH Recruitment Forum, engaging with Chief Office for Scientific Workforce Diversity to learn more about the Office of Personnel Management’s new Inclusion Quotient, and benchmarking with the National Science Foundation.

### Special Emphasis Portfolios

Each EDI Special Emphasis Portfolio is led by a principal strategist who engages in a wide-range of activities and efforts to support their constituency groups. For FY 2015, the Portfolio Strategists worked to establish their respective engagement committees, analyze workforce data, and develop toolkits for the three MD-715 corporate focus areas. The Portfolios Strategists’ additional accomplishments span from organizing and hosting awareness, mentoring, and career advancement programs; interfacing with professional organizations in the community; supporting employee resource groups; and educating the NIH on information and strategies related to constituency groups. A few examples of these successes are:

* Partnering with NIH’s Asian Pacific American Organization to host an EDI Empowerment Seminar on communication skills.
* Collaborating with the Office of Human Resources’ Corporate Recruitment Unit to assist with recruiting NIH Summer Internship Program and Recent Graduate Pathways candidates.
* Launching SafeZone – a three-module course that seeks to promote NIH community awareness and education about the needs and concerns of people who identify as sexual and gender minorities.
* Establishing regional chapters of the Women of Color Research Network in North Carolina and Baltimore.
* Securing an American Indian scientist to be featured on LabTV. These videos serve as an excellent recruitment tool and encourage young people to think about pursuing careers in the science.
* Engaging in a social media campaign for Black History Month showcasing little known Black history facts, as well as, photos of Blacks who have made significant contributions to politics, science and education.
* Empowering the ICs by sharing strategies to employ, develop, and retain people with disabilities.

### Training

EDI offers in-person EEO Compliance Training for Managers and Supervisors and EEO Compliance Training for Employees and has core online training modules for NoFEAR Act and Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH). These courses have supported NIH’s efforts to meet its goal of 100% compliance with the biennial requirement for NoFEAR and POSH training.

This year, EDI has worked to expand its training portfolio and has added Civil Treatment/Prevention of Workplace Harassment training for both managers/supervisors and employees. The office also launched SafeZone Training - a three-module course that seeks to promote NIH community awareness and education about the needs and concerns of people who identify as sexual and gender minorities. EDI also maintained its presence at bi-weekly new Employee Orientation sessions – serving as a resource for new employees to learn about diversity and inclusion resources at NIH.

### Resolutions

The Resolution and Equity team works to provide unbiased counsel to individuals who seek to resolve workplace conflict. In addition to processing complaints of discrimination, this team has been successful in encouraging the NIH to take a more proactive approach in managing workplace issues by offering the Alternative Dispute Resolution Process during the formal stage of the EEO complaints process. The team provides monthly and quarterly reports on case updates so leadership is aware of the status of complaints activities. In FY 2015, the Resolution and Equity team partnered with the Data Analytics team to begin trend analysis on historical EEO complaints data. They also updated EEO postings to reflect the recent change in Title VII protections from the Baldwin v. Foxx ruling.

Note: NIH EEO complaints trends information is available in the executive summary.

### Data

In FY 2015, the Data Analytics team has had many successes in translating workforce data into meaningful information the NIH can use to make decisions on equity, diversity, and inclusion strategies. As a baseline, the team provided NIH-wide and IC specific demographic workforce reports stratified by race, ethnicity, sex and disability status. In addition, this year, the team provided 144 ad-hoc reports to the NIH community. These reports include items such as demographic analysis of NIH’s extramural leadership and principal investigators; preliminary salary analysis for four scientific positions; preliminary retention analysis; analysis of settlements from NIH EEO cases; and demographic analysis on NIH’s Employee Viewpoint Survey results, and OHR’s exit survey results.

In an effort to offer a more nuanced understanding of NIH workforce data, EDI’s Data Analytics team led the Trans-NIH Gap Analysis Workgroup that completed scientific workforce categorization of NIH’s workforce. Defining the scientific workforce was a negotiated process with NIH stakeholders and the end categorization stratifies the NIH workforce into infrastructure, scientific, and health and research related positions. This categorization is significant as it allows the agency to more accurately analyze NIH’s workforce to identify gaps and opportunities for equal employment opportunity. This information was approved by NIH leadership and the team has drafted a Scientific Workforce Categorization nVision report for all NIH use.

An ongoing project for Data Analytics has been examining applicant flow data. FY 2015 accomplishments in this area include conducting analysis on FY 2014 USAJobs applicant flow data and developed processes for USAJOBS applicant tracking and analysis. Furthermore, the team analyzed the 2014 Earl Stadtman applicants and developed a new application flow collection system for Earl Stadtman applicants. The Data Analytics team also collaborated with the Office of Human Resources to assess an off-the-shelf system for collecting Title 42 applicant flow data.

The team continuously works to ensure NIH workforce data is as accurate and as useful as possible. This year, they have reduced production time for the bi-annual workforce data reports from 45 days to 14 days. The team has also convened a committee to assess and review the newly developed data access policy which outlines guidelines on access to sensitive EEO workforce data.

### Online Presence

In addition to direct services the office provides to the NIH community, EDI has taken steps to establish a more informative, accessible, useful, and interactive online presence for its customers. At the end of the last fiscal year, the office launched its [new website](http://edi.nih.gov/), complemented by [Twitter](http://twitter.com/nih_edi), [YouTube](http://youtube.com/edistandard), and [Instagram](http://instagram.com/nih_edi) accounts. EDI has received much positive feedback about site from visitors throughout NIH and other agencies. The office has also gotten requests from offices across NIH and other agencies to consult on the website development process.

EDI’s online presence is designed to educate and engage NIH customers and the broader community. In addition to programmatic updates, in FY 2015, new content to the website included [a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](http://edi.nih.gov/people/sep/blacks/heritage), the [Profiles Project](http://edi.nih.gov/people/sep/hispanics/profiles) which highlights NIH’s Hispanic and Latino employees, [toolkits](http://edi.nih.gov/consulting/guidance/toolkits) for managers and employees, and a [diversity calendar](http://edi.nih.gov/more/calendar). Additionally, this year the office increased visibility of EDI’s social media pages by featuring items such as Black History Month, Women’s History Month, and Public Service Recognition Week campaigns and information on opportunities for internships and employment at NIH.