

# I<sup>3</sup> : Inclusion, Innovation & Inspiration

Issue 4 | Summer 2018/Fall 2018

Diversity News

## A Message from the Director

Welcome to the Fall 2018 issue of the I<sup>3</sup> Newsletter. We are committed to building a more inclusive community at UB and are excited to share with you the interdisciplinary programs and activities our office has coordinated throughout the year.

One event that stands is the annual CLIMB UP for summer research. We are excited to have celebrated the 10th summer this year! This program has been an excellent pipeline program giving students the opportunity to see what graduate and professional programs UB has to offer.

We hope you enjoy this issue! We are proud of our students and faculty mentors, and excited to share with you their accomplishments.

Thank you for your support!  
Margarita L. Dubocovich, PhD

## A look inside this issue...

**UB** University at Buffalo  
Initiative for Maximizing Student Development (IMSD)

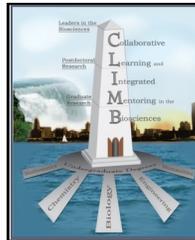
The **Initiative for Maximizing Student Development (IMSD)** welcomed a new cohort of students. Learn more about the success of our IMSD scholars!

IMSD@UB

**UB** University at Buffalo  
Institute for Strategic Enhancement of Educational Diversity (iSEED)

The **Institute for Strategic Enhancement of Educational Diversity (iSEED)** introduces new Scientific Workforce Coordinator!

iSEED



Learn about what **Collaborative Learning and Integrated Mentoring in Biosciences (CLIMB) Program** alumni are up to!

CLIMB

## Office of Inclusion and Cultural Enhancement

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## Program Staff

**Margarita L. Dubocovich, PhD**  
*SUNY Distinguished Professor*  
Senior Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion  
Director of CLIMB Program;  
Co-Director of iSEED Program.

**Joanna Barthelemy, PhD**  
CLIMB/IMSD Senior Coordinator

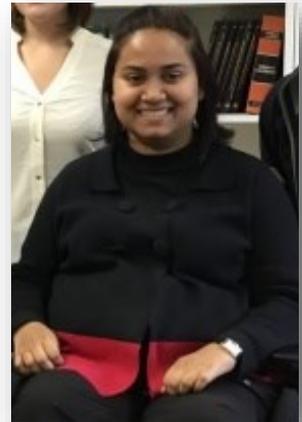
**Jordan Hall**  
iSEED Coordinator

**Anyango Kamina, PhD**  
iSEED Scientific Workforce Specialist

Announcements

# Inclusion of Individuals with Disabilities Workshop

Farzana Ali, MD Candidate class of 2020, facilitated a workshop entitled "Inclusion of Individuals with Disabilities in Healthcare and Biomedical Research". Farzana provided participants with valuable information regarding the guidelines for inclusion on individuals with disabilities in healthcare and biomedical research. This workshop was interactive and consisted of analysis of case studies which highlighted the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in both health professional and biomedical research settings. Dynamic discussion of the case studies lead to group awareness of the offices on campus at UB dedicated to supporting departments and programs to promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all healthcare professions and biomedical research. If you are interested in attending a workshop like this please visit: <https://medicine.buffalo.edu/oiace.html>.



# Diversity and Inclusion Fellowship Award



This opportunity is offered to candidates accepted into the UB medical school whose individual life experiences and perspectives will enhance our community through inclusive excellence.

The 2018 recipient is Kiana Saade. Kiana graduated with a BS in Biomedical Sciences from the University at Buffalo in May 2018. She will be beginning medical school this fall. Kiana's interest in becoming a doctor has been present since her childhood, however she attributes her reaffirmed and strengthened passion for medicine to her adulthood experiences. She envisions herself working to provide medical aid to refugees with an overarching goal of providing medical care to patients around the world.

Visit our website <https://medicine.buffalo.edu/oiace/awards/diversity-inclusion.html> for past recipients or information on how to apply for this fellowship

# Award of Excellence for Promoting Inclusion and Cultural Diversity

The Office of Inclusion and Cultural Enhancement (OIACE) recognizes students, faculty, and staff in the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (Jacobs School) for their work in creating a welcoming climate of respect and inclusiveness.

Since 2013, the Award of Excellence for Promoting Inclusion and Cultural Diversity has recognized individuals whose actions, example, and efforts contribute to a diverse, respectful environment at UB and in the Western New York Community. A diverse and inclusive campus community enhances excellence in research and academic medicine by broadening and strengthening teaching, learning, and scholarship.

This award, presented during the Jacobs School Annual Faculty and Staff Recognition Awards ceremony, is given to recipients in the following categories: medical students or students in the MD/PhD program; medical residents; doctoral students; clinical or basic sciences faculty and staff.

This year the Community Service Award was also presented to Dr. Satpal Singh for his exceptional service

and dedication to providing outreach to diverse communities.

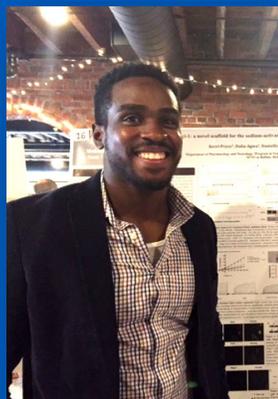
Visit our website <https://medicine.buffalo.edu/oiace/awards.html> for past recipients or information on how to nominate someone for the award.



**The 2018 recipients were:**  
**Dr. Supriya D. Mahajan (Faculty)**  
**Danielle Abramo-Balling (Staff)**  
**Megan Wilson-Crowley (Staff)**  
**Dr. David Abramowitz (Resident)**  
**Moudi Hubeishly (MSTP Student)**  
**Mohamed Sharif (Doctoral Student)**

The IMSD@UB is a program that *develops student talents, promotes the professional growth of PhD students, and enhances intellectual and cultural diversity in the biomedical and behavioral sciences* at UB. The IMSD@UB began in 2012 with the support of the National Institutes of Health.

## First IMSD scholars graduate



### Congratulations Dr. Kerri D. Pryce!

Kerri received a BS degree in Biological Science from City University of New York, Medgar Evers College, Brooklyn, NY, in 2011. Kerri joined the PhD program in Pharmacology and Toxicology and the laboratory of Dr. Arin Bhattacharjee in Fall 2013. His PhD thesis project examined the functional regulation of ion channels in dorsal root ganglion neurons by Magi-1 and their implications in pain signaling.

Kerri has accepted a postdoctoral position in the laboratory of Dr. Venetia Zachariou at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, NY.



### Congratulations Dr. Amaris Borges Muñoz!

Amaris received a BS degree in Chemistry from the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey, Cayey, Puerto Rico, in 2013. Amaris joined the PhD program in Chemistry and the laboratory of Dr. Luis Colon in Fall 2013. Her PhD thesis project focused on development and evaluation of new stationary phases for liquid and supercritical fluid chromatography, with the goal of achieving more hydrolytically stable structures with different moieties attached at the surface that can serve as a platform for further functionalization.

Amaris has accepted a Research Investigator II position at Bristol-Myers Squibb in Boston, MA.

## IMSD Student Receives F99/K00 Award



**Jennifer Martin**  
PhD Student  
Pharmacology &  
Toxicology

### Congratulations Jennifer Martin!

Jennifer received a prestigious NIH Blueprint Diversity Specialized Predoctoral to Postdoctoral Advancement in Neuroscience award. The award supports career development for outstanding graduate students who are interested in neuroscience research. This two-phase award will facilitate completion of the doctoral dissertation and transition of talented graduate students to strong neuroscience research postdoctoral positions. Additionally, will provide career development opportunities relevant to their long-term career goal of becoming independent neuroscience researchers will be provided.

Jennifer is a PhD student in the pharmacology and toxicology program and an IMSD scholar. Jennifer's mentor is David Dietz, PhD.

Jennifer's research will focus on transcriptomic changes in glial cells in the prefrontal cortex following heroin self-administration, an animal model of addiction, using RNA sequencing.

### Meet our IMSD Scholars

Rasheen Powell: Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences



**Rasheen Powell** is a PhD student in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology. He entered the program in Fall 2016. Rasheen received a BS in Pharmacology and Toxicology and BA in Chemistry from the University at Buffalo in 2016. Rasheen works in the laboratory of Dr. Arin Bhattacharjee in the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

#### **Q. Why did you choose to pursue a PhD?**

Being an independent researcher has been my dream job since I was young. Being at the forefront of human knowledge and understanding coupled with the ability to discover phenomena that have been previously unknown and/or overlooked has kept me in science since high school. Obtaining a PhD is my golden ticket to my dream profession.

#### **Q. Why type of research are you involved in?**

My research focus revolves around chronic inflammatory pain. I am attempting to characterize the contribution of endocytosis during chronic inflammatory pain development and if this pathway is a valid target for pharmacological manipulation.

#### **Q. What has been the most beneficial aspect of the IMSD program?**

One of the most beneficial aspects of the IMSD program is the sense of community among the other members. I frequently see, and talk to other IMSD scholars and am reassured I am not alone in my endeavors.

#### **Q. What has been your biggest challenge in graduate school?**

Without a doubt; work-life balance. Having to juggle the demands of graduate school with the responsibilities of day-to-day life took a while to get used to. Neither are too difficult on their own, however, concurrently is a different story altogether.

#### **Q. Any advice for new PhD students?**

"What you do in lab is important, what you do outside of lab is equally as important" Don't let the stresses of lab detract you from enjoying your free time. Enjoying your down time is critical for cultivating creative ideas that may help solve a problem you may face in lab.

#### **Q. What is one thing you like about being at UB?**

I appreciate the consistency that UB provides. Being a large institution, it runs more like a small city than a university. So I rarely have to wonder if facilities will be closed during a snow storm, or if on-campus services will be suspended for an unforeseen reason. Just as surely the sun will rise, UB will be open.

#### **Q. What is the reason you came to UB?**

I have lived in Buffalo nearly my entire life, and the UB campus has played a large part in my scholastic development during my high school years. Coming to UB for undergraduate then graduate school has felt like a natural transition for myself. The price point also helps.

#### **Q: Is there an accomplishment you are most proud of since the start of your PhD training?**

I think my personal crowning achievement involved contacting a researcher and requesting plasmids from one of their recently published studies. I learned a lot about sharing of knowledge in science and also the tremendous amount of paperwork necessary to ship a piece of DNA-soaked paper in between institutions.

### Meet our IMSD Scholars

Nahyr Dauphin Lopez: Department of Chemistry, College of Arts and Sciences



**Nahyr Lopez Dauphin** is a PhD student in the Department of Chemistry. She received a BS in Chemistry from the University of Puerto Rico at Cayey in 2017 and entered the PhD program Fall 2017. Nahyr works in the laboratory of Dr. Luis Colon in the College of Arts and Sciences.

**Q. Why did you choose to pursue a PhD?**

I chose to pursue a PhD because it gives me the opportunity to contribute to the scientific community throughout my entire career.

**Q. What type of research are you involved in?**

Currently, I am involved in column technology, analytical separations and material sciences.

**Q. What about your research excites you?**

My research allows me to improve, teach and learn about problems in the scientific field.

**Q. What has been the most beneficial aspect of the IMSD program?**

The most beneficial aspect of the IMSD program is talking to peers about graduate school struggles.

**Q. What has been your biggest challenge in graduate school?**

My biggest challenge in grad school is TIME MANAGEMENT!

**Q. Do you have any advice for new PhD students?**

The best piece of advice I can give new to PhD students is failing is that part of succeeding.

**Q. What is one thing you like about being at UB?**

UB offers the possibility of studying and conducting research in a collaborative environment.

**Q. What is the reason you came to UB?**

I chose UB because I was granted the opportunity to study in the research areas that excite me.

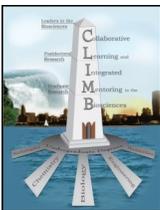
**Q. Is there an accomplishment you are most proud of since you started your PhD training?**

I recently finished all the required coursework for my program with satisfactory grades.

## CLIMB UP celebrates 10th Anniversary

Summer 2018 marked the 10th summer for the CLIMB UP for Summer Research. Since 2009, CLIMB UP has experienced exponential growth. The first cohort consisted of 3 scholars and this summer we hosted 22 scholars!. CLIMB UP has hosted a total of 205 students at UB, of which # have come to UB for graduate and professional degree programs. We would like to especially thank our phenomenal group of UB faculty who take the time to mentor CLIMB UP students each summer. Your dedication to the next generation of scientists is the driving force behind our program, and we are so very grateful. We look forward to many more summers to come!

## CLIMB Program News



The Collaborative Learning and Integrated Mentoring in the Biosciences (CLIMB) Program at UB provides professional development for students to not only learn, but apply, the essential skills of a professional scientist. This training will help students choose the best research opportunities, write outstanding fellowships and grants, craft publications, confidently present their work, and ultimately, find the best jobs.

## Welcome Incoming IMSD & iSEED Scholars

**Roy Cineus**, BS, University at Buffalo

*Pursuing PhD in Chemistry*

**Lorin Miller**, MA, University at Buffalo

*Pursuing PhD in Biostatistics*

**Sophie Tchir**, BS, Florida International University

*Pursuing PhD in Biomedical Sciences*

**Haley Parker**, BS, Niagara University

*Pursuing PhD in Biomedical Sciences*

**Melany Garcia**, BS, California State University, Long Beach

*Pursuing PhD in Cancer Sciences*

**Gloria Aidoo-Frimpong**, MPH, Ohio University

*Pursuing PhD in Community Health and Health Behavior*



Incoming students listed from left to right in column on left  
Not shown: **Lars Paulson**, BS, Oregon State University and **Kelsey Sommers**, BS, University at Buffalo

## CLIMB scholars earn awards at 2018 Experimental Biology meeting

We are excited to announce Lakeisha Lewter, iSEED/IMSD scholar from the neuroscience program, was awarded 1st place for her presentation titled "Behavioral Effects of  $\alpha 2/\alpha 3$  Subtype-Selective GABAA Receptor Positive Allosteric Modulators" in the ASPET Behavioral Pharmacology Division. Grant Glatfelter, a CLIMB scholar in the pharmacology and toxicology program, won 2nd place for his poster titled "Carbamate Insecticide Carbaryl Targets Melatonin Receptors and Modulates Circadian Rhythms" and Anthony Jones, IMSD scholar from the neuroscience program, won 3rd place for his poster titled "Carbamate Insecticides Bind to a Novel Allosteric Site on hMT1 Melatonin Receptors", both from the APSET Neurotoxicology Division.

***Congratulations Lakeisha, Grant, and Anthony!***

## CLIMB UP Alumnae Enter UB Medical Class of 2022!



Congratulations and best wishes to:

**Aswad Jackson, 2016**

**Justin Harvey, 2017**



## iSEED Program News



University at Buffalo

Institute for Strategic Enhancement of Educational Diversity (iSEED)

The Institute for Strategic Enhancement of Educational Diversity (iSEED) is a university-wide institute that promotes building a culturally and intellectually diverse and academically inclusive community of graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty and staff. The iSEED is focused on excellence in education, engagement in research, mentoring and enhancement of professional development central to the UB mission.

### Welcome to Anyango Kamina, PhD



Dr. Anyango Kamina is our new iSEED Scientific Workforce Specialist. Dr. Anyango Kamina is a Kenyan American who calls Oneonta, NY her hometown since 2008. She received her BSc. in Biochemistry and Cell and Molecular Biology from SUNY College at Oneonta in 2011. She then received her Ph.D. in Microbiology and Immunology from the University at Buffalo in 2017. Her research focus was on ribosome biogenesis in *Trypanosoma brucei*, the causative agent of African sleeping sickness.

Dr. Kamina is food and fitness enthusiast. Dr. Kamina looks forward to working with everyone in the iSEED/CLIMB community!

### CLIMB UP for Summer Research at UB



We welcomed 22 students to our CLIMB UP Summer Research Program. iSEED helped fund twelve (12) of the CLIMB UP students to conduct research and present on their findings during a 10-week summer research experience.

iSEED students participating in CLIMB-UP came to us from all over the United States including Puerto Rico, Texas, and California.

The CLIMB UP Summer Research offers hands-on research with UB faculty mentors, along with lectures and workshops for professional development over a 10-week period.

### iSEED scholar awarded NIH Research Supplement to Promote Diversity



#### Congratulations, Jamal Williams!

Jamal is the recipient of a NIH Research Supplement to Promote Diversity from the National Institute on Aging for work he will be completing with his mentor Zhen Yan, PhD. For this award, Jamal will be investigating potential epigenetic factors leading to synaptic and cognitive deficits in Alzheimer's disease using a mouse model system.

Jamal is a PhD student in the Neuroscience program and iSEED scholar.

## Announcements

Our CLIMB scholars accomplish many great things throughout their PhD careers. Their work garners awards, accepted abstracts, publications and opportunities to present their work at national conferences in their field.

### **Steven Lewis, Pathology and Anatomical Sciences.**

Steven gave an oral presentation at Experimental Biology 2018 in San Diego, CA in April on "Building a Hybrid Gross Anatomy: Integration of Virtual and Cadaveric Models."

**Paige Daniels, Microbiology.** Paige presented a poster at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Buffalo Conference on Microbial Pathogenesis meeting in May 2018 in Buffalo, NY on "Turnover of Variant Surface Glycoprotein in African Trypanosomes". She won 2nd place for the Witebsky Center Poster Award.

**John Davis, Molecular Pharmacology & Cancer Therapeutics.** John gave a poster presentation at the RNA 2018 Meeting in May 2018 at the University of California, Berkeley on "LncRNA MEG3 functions as a tumor suppressor in prostate cancer" for which he won a travel award.

**Emily Sekera, Chemistry.** Emily presented at the American Society for Mass Spectrometry (ASMS) Annual Conference June 2017 in Indianapolis, Indiana on "Quantitation of Stercobilin in the Fecal Material of Timothy Syndrome Mice as a Putative Biomarker for Autism." She will be presenting at the International Mass Spectrometry Conference in Florence, Italy in August 2018, "Fecal Metabolomics of a Mouse Model of Autism ." She is an author on a paper recently published in *Metabolomics*.

**Taylor Glausen, Microbiology and Immunology.** Taylor presented a poster at both the American Society for Neurochemistry in Riverdale, CA in March 2018 and the 30th Annual Buffalo Conference on Microbial Pathogenesis in Buffalo, NY in May 2018, "Identification of *Toxoplasma gondii* Genes that Induce Seizures."

**Alexandria Trujillo, Pharmacology and Toxicology.** Alexandria presented a poster at the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology 2018 Annual Conference in Honolulu, HI in May 2018, "Should Genomic Expression Constructs be Employed when Developing Post-Transcriptional Silencing Agents for Gene Therapies?" She also attended the March for Science SIGNS (Science | Government, Institutions & Society) Summit in Chicago, IL in July 2018.

**Lauren Shepard, Biomedical Engineering.** Lauren presented an oral presentation at the SPIE Medical Imaging meeting in Houston, TX in February 2018 on "CT investigation of patient-specific phantoms with coronary artery disease"

**Lauren Rodriguez, Psychology.** Lauren presented at the Research Society on Alcoholism's (RSA) Annual Scientific Meeting in June 2018 in San Diego, CA on "Interpersonal Goal Orientations on Alcohol Use Outcomes in Young Adults ."

**Jennifer Martin, Pharmacology and Toxicology.** Jennifer received a travel award to present a talk and poster entitled "Drebrin mediates opiate-induced behavioral and structural plasticity in the NAc" at the International Behavioral Neuroscience Society in June 2018 in Boca Raton, FL.

## EOPIM Welcomes Two New Scholars!



### **Congratulations Jazmine and Patrick!**

Jazmine Baylor,  
Junior, BS in  
Biology  
Tugalo College

Patrick Comerford  
Junior, BS in  
Biochemistry  
Canisius College

