

**Conference on Understanding Interventions
That Encourage Minorities to Pursue Research Careers**

May 10, 2008. Washington, DC

Though African Americans, Latinos, and American Indians are more than 30% of the school-age population, those now graduating with degrees in the natural sciences are still less than 15 percent annually. Along with efforts to address this persistent underrepresentation, it is vital to look through a research lens on strategies that are demonstrably effective. An emerging community of researchers is focused on this topic, especially evidence that can serve as the basis for designing effective interventions in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

The 2nd Annual Conference on Interventions that Encourage Minorities to Pursue Research Careers took place on May 2-4, 2008 in Atlanta. Organized by the Minorities Affairs Committee of the American Society for Cell Biology and a Planning Committee comprising members of the broader research and education communities, the Conference attracted 200 participants, including researchers, sponsors, program designers, evaluators, and policy analysts.

The Conference featured a mix of plenary panels, concurrent mini-symposia, and posters that detailed the knowledge base on interventions (investigative studies on approaches, mentoring, and career choice), as well as professional necessities (funding, collaborations, and publishing). The emphasis on “how to intervene” drew heavily on the literature from the social, behavioral, and economic sciences highlighting methodologies and outcomes in STEM.

Coming a year after a 2007 National Institutes of Health-funded workshop on Understanding Interventions organized by the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC, the 2nd Annual Conference sought to inform policy and practice, while fostering a multidisciplinary community of scholars dedicated to hypothesis-based investigations of what succeeds in recruiting and sustaining underrepresented students along the STEM pathway into the workforce.



**Conference on Understanding Interventions
That Encourage Minorities to Pursue Research Careers**

The program book, including the agenda, abstracts of presentations and other conference details, is posted at www.understandinginterventions.org. The web site will be updated periodically as a portal to and discussion center about interventions targeted to STEM students, educators, and sponsors.

The 2nd Annual Conference was funded by a grant from the National Institutes of General Medical Sciences' Minority Access to Research Careers program to the American Society for Cell Biology. Please see the web site for updates on the 3rd Annual Conference, which will begin to be posted this summer. For more information, please contact Dr. Anthony L. DePass (anthony.depass@liu.edu) or Dr. Daryl E. Chubin (dchubin@aaas.org).