

DEAN'S MESSAGE



Welcome to the new academic year! I especially want to welcome our new graduate students and wish them a smooth transition into their academic home at UIC. For our more “seasoned” graduate students, I hope that the start of the school year is a time of renewed energy as you pursue your research and scholarship.

The Graduate College offers many activities to enhance student experience and career development, and we also work to strengthen program quality and to help create an intellectual and diverse environment. These bi-annual newsletters highlight some of what we do.

Diversity Programs and Awards

During the summer of 2013, we led two programs aimed at increasing the participation and success of underrepresented students in graduate school. The Graduate College has been home to the **Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP)** for 27 years. This program brings talented underrepresented undergraduates from all over the country to UIC to do research with our faculty. Intensive research experiences are coupled with other programming to allow SROP students to get a taste of what graduate school might offer and to inform them how to prepare and apply for graduate school. **Allen J. Bryson**, the Director of Pre-Graduate Programs in the Graduate College directs this highly successful program. A special thank you to the faculty mentors who invest their time to work with these students – the program would not be successful without them.

The Graduate College was awarded the 2012 Educational Testing Service (ETS) / Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) Award for Promoting Success in Graduate Education: From Admissions through Completion. The award is competitive and is given to one graduate school/college annually. The UIC program, **Promoting Success in STEM Graduate Education (PASSAGE) Scholars Program**, will provide underrepresented graduate students in the STEM disciplines ongoing mentoring, professional skills development opportunities, and financial incentives to promote retention and timely degree completion. This summer, six newly admitted PhD students were selected as PASSAGE Scholars. These students focused on getting their PhD research started while living together on campus and participating in weekly workshops with senior students, faculty members and Graduate College staff. **Dr. Lunaire Ford** partnered with **Dr. Aixa Alfonso**, as well as an active faculty advisory committee to create and implement this new program.

This past June, a collaborative proposal from the Graduate College and College of Medicine received an **Ignite Program Award** from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Research. The program **Increasing Diversity in Graduate Biomedical Education** will allow the two colleges and their partners to develop competitive proposals for two interdisciplinary National Institutes of Health/National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIH/NIGMS) R25 grants to fund programs for preparing underrepresented students for, and supporting their success in, graduate programs in the biomedical sciences.

Fellowships and Workshops

The Graduate College is committed to improving graduate student funding, enhancing the graduate student experience, and preparing students for their post-graduate careers. **Marie Khan** is our External Fellowship and Financial Aid Coordinator. In addition to notifying students about external funding opportunities, Marie regularly holds practical workshops on applying for fellowships and consults with individual students by appointment. **Theresa Christenson-Caballero** is our Visiting Assistant Director of Graduate Student Outreach and Career Development. Under her guidance, the Graduate College has greatly expanded its offering of workshops

and events, and we have other exciting events planned for this year. I urge you to take advantage of these opportunities.

New Course on Teaching Instruction

I am very pleased to announce a new course sponsored by the Graduate College entitled **Foundations of College Teaching** (GC 593). This course is the creation of **Dr. John Coumbe-Lilley** (Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition, College of Applied Health Sciences) who came to us last year with a proposal for this course after seeing a need to train graduate students in how to teach effectively. When I first became Dean, Provost Lon Kaufmann requested that the Graduate College become more involved with the teaching assistant experience and teaching instruction for graduate students. I expect that Dr. Coumbe-Lilley’s course, and the instruction provided by the International Teaching Assistantship (ITA) Program, directed by **Vandana Loomba Loebel**, will not only provide valuable training for graduate students, but also improve the education of those undergraduates they teach.

Personnel Notes

Associate Dean **Aixa Alfonso** is returning full-time to the Department of Biological Sciences

inthisissue

Dean's Message	1
Celebrating Research and Mentoring	3
International Teaching Assistants Program ..	5
Summer Research Opportunities Program ...	5
Recruitment Update	6
New Student Orientation	6
PASSAGE Scholars Program.....	7
Ignite Award	7
Outreach and Career Development.....	8
External Funding	9
Annual Doctoral Student Assessments	9
Annual Program Review	10
Foundations of College Teaching.....	10
Graduate Student Council.....	11
Versatile PhD.....	11
Acknowledgements.....	11

to concentrate on her research and mentoring activities. Dr. Alfonso led the Office for Recruitment and Diversity Affairs in the Graduate College for two and a half years as a 50% dean, providing a faculty perspective to reshape the office. Dr. Alfonso initiated a number of important projects during her time in the Graduate College. One of her major accomplishments was catalyzing the acceptance of UIC into the National Name Exchange, a recruitment consortium of fifty-five nationally known universities that annually collect and exchange the names of their talented, underrepresented undergradu-

ate students who are interested in graduate school. She also instituted a series of brown-bag research presentations for fellowship students, and promoted more faculty and program involvement in recruitment efforts. Aixa will be very much missed by the Graduate College.

Dr. Lunaire Ford, former Director of the McNair and Graduate Pathways to Success Programs, and most recently Executive Director for Graduate Diversity and Outreach Initiatives, will now lead the Office for Recruitment and Diversity Affairs as a full-time Assistant Dean.

Graduate College Website

We are undergoing a long overdue website upgrade. Stay tuned for the launch of our new and improved website.

I wish you the very best for this upcoming year!

Karen J. Colley
Dean and Professor of Biochemistry and
Molecular Genetics

GREETINGS FROM THE GRADUATE COLLEGE STAFF!



FRONT ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): Laura Junker, Jacqueline Perry, Karen Colley, Vandana Loebel, Kristina Dzedzic Wright, Dona Williams. MIDDLE ROW: Jim Kollenbroich, Araceli Aguirre, Demetria Ward, Cheryl Johnson, Daisy Little, Francisco Piña, Leah Tubbs, Diane Washington. BACK ROW: Hilda Tapia, Theresa Christenson-Caballero, Lunaire Ford, Kevin Monahan, Jon Art, Allen Bryson. NOT PICTURED: Marie Khan, Steve Kragon, Tanya Murry, Benn Williams.



The Image of Research 2013 First Place Winner: Joshua Albers, New Media Arts, "Threshold"

Each year, the Graduate College hosts events to honor and celebrate student achievement and research, as well as faculty graduate student mentoring activities.

On April 18, 2013, the Graduate College, in collaboration with the University Library, held the 6th annual **Image of Research** exhibit opening and award presentation. Included at the award presentation were the recipients of both the **Annual Graduate College Outstanding Thesis Awards** and the **Graduate Mentoring Awards**.

The Image of Research is an exhibit competition to showcase the breadth and diversity of research at UIC. Created and administered by Kristina Dziedzic Wright since 2008, these "snapshots" of the new forms of knowledge being created by UIC graduate students are meant to encourage visitors to contemplate the nature of research itself. What experiences does one bring to an inquiry, and how do those experiences affect what one learns? What combination of discovery and creation constitute research? How do different disciplines approach research questions?

Each year, students enrolled in a graduate or professional degree program within the Graduate College at UIC are invited to submit an image they created along with a brief précis of how the image relates to the student's overall research. Close to a hundred images are submitted by students, and a multidiscipline jury of faculty and Graduate College staff selects the finalists, and ultimately, the first, second and third place awardees.

The 2013 First Place prize was awarded to **Joshua Albers**, New Media Arts, for his entry "Threshold." Mr. Albers describes a key component of his research as examining how spaces change through construction, habitation, use, and deconstruction.

Second Place was awarded to Khairi Reda, Computer Sciences, for "A Nanoscale Forest Seen Through a Big Lens." Third Place was awarded to Akshay Pandey, Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics, for "Crystals: Clarity in Refraction."

Award winners, finalists, and past years awardees may be viewed at grad.uic.edu/image. The 7th Annual Image of Research competition will

open in November 2013, and the exhibit and awards ceremony will occur in April 2014.

Outstanding Thesis Award

The recipients of the Annual Graduate College Outstanding Thesis Award were honored and presented with their prizes at the Image of Research ceremony. This is a competitive award given to the most outstanding doctoral dissertation or master's thesis in each of the four Graduate Program divisions (Behavioral and Social Science; Engineering, Mathematics and Physical Sciences; Fine Arts and Humanities; and Life Sciences). Each of the four awards includes a monetary prize.

The 2012 awardees were:

- **Georgiann Davis**, Behavioral and Social Sciences, *Gender Players and Gender Prisoners: When Intersex Activism, Medical Authority, and Terminology Collide*
- **James Freitag**, Engineering, Mathematics and Physical Sciences, *Model Theory and Differential Algebraic Geometry*
- **Cynthia Barounis**, Fine Arts and Humanities, *Revolted Men: Queerness, Disability, and the Remaking of American Manhood*
- **Ying He**, Life Sciences, *Epigenetic and post-translational mechanisms in pain: microRNA and phosphorylation*

The 2013 awardees will be announced in December 2013, and will be presented at the April 2014 Image of Research ceremony. A list of past recipients may be viewed at <http://grad.uic.edu/cms/?pid=1000087>.



The Image of Research 2013 Second Place Winner: Khairi Reda, Computer Science "A Nanoscale Forest Seen Through a Big Lens"

Graduate Mentoring Awards

Also at the Image of Research ceremony, the Graduate Mentoring Awards were presented. The Graduate Mentoring Award is designed to encourage and award excellence and innovation in all aspects of graduate mentoring. Each year the Graduate College will provide up to four awards of \$2,000 each.

The recipients for 2013 were:

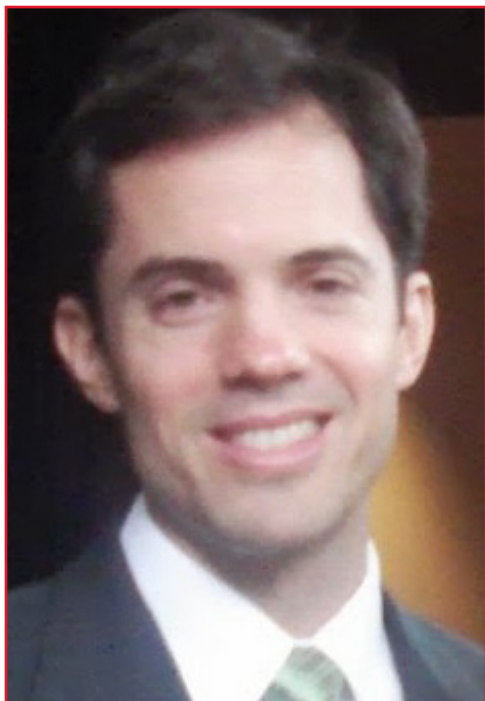
- **Arden Handler**, Professor, Community Health Sciences, School of Public Health
- **Norma A. Lopez-Reyna**, Associate Professor, Special Education, College of Education
- **Leilah Lyons**, Assistant Professor, Computer Science, College of Engineering
- **Kara Morgan Short**, Associate Professor, Hispanic & Italian Studies, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

A list of past recipients may be viewed at <http://grad.uic.edu/cms/?pid=1000192>.

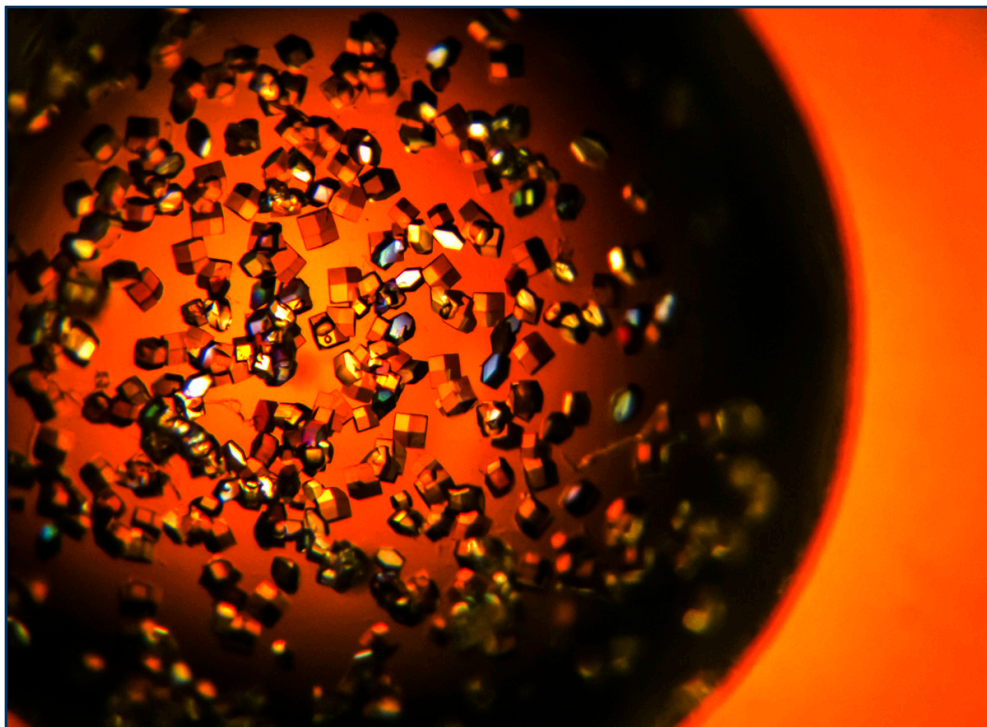
Congrats to former Graduate College GA!

We would also like to extend congratulations to Damian Roqueiro, a PhD student in Bioinformatics in the Department of Bioengineering, who worked as a graduate assistant (GA) at the Graduate College from the Fall 2007 until Fall 2009. Damian successfully defended his dissertation in August and will graduate in December 2013.

Damian's work focused on developing computational methods to study gene regulation.



Newly minted PhD, Dr. Damian Roqueiro is on his way to the Max Planck Institute in Germany.



The Image of Research 2013 Third Place Winner: Akshay Pandey, Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics, "Crystals: Clarity in Refraction"

During his research, Damian approached the problem of gene regulation from three different perspectives: a) developing a probabilistic framework to analyze how transcription factors and microRNAs affect gene expression, b) integrating gene expression and DNA methylation data, and c) delving into the more complex problem of understanding and reliably quantifying chromatin interactions in the nucleus.

Damian's next steps consist in starting as a postdoc at the prestigious Max Planck Institute in Tübingen (Germany). He will join the Machine Learning and Computational Biology Research

Group lead by Prof. Dr. Karsten Borgwardt. Prof. Dr. Borgwardt and his group have been conducting cutting edge research in the area of machine learning and systems biology, developing mathematical models to accurately predict the manifestation of complex traits in an organism based on its genetic makeup.

While Damian was working as a GA in the Graduate College he met Kathleen Moriarty, another GA in the college (who earned a Master of Science in Social Work and a Master of Science in the Teaching of Mathematics). Damian and Kathleen were married two years ago.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Graduate College oversees 102 masters and 62 PhD and professional doctorate programs, conferring over 1800 masters degrees and almost 350 doctoral degrees annually.

The UIC Graduate College is a member of the **Chicago Metropolitan Exchange Program**, which allows PhD students to take advantage of course offerings at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago that are relevant to a student's research, but not available at UIC.

INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS PROGRAM

The International Teaching Assistant Program (ITA) at UIC completed one year under the direction of Vandana Loebel. The past year has brought with it many accomplishments and some changes. With the support of the Graduate College, and in accordance with the State of Illinois Bill 1516, the ITA program successfully implemented the new policy for the Oral English Certification evaluation for UIC's international teaching assistants. More information about the policy and the certification process is available **online**.

In AY 2012-13, the ITA program evaluated over 170 incoming international TAs, half of whom required one or two semesters of the English support course (ESL 401, Communication Strategies for International TAs) to meet the Oral English Certification requirement. Weekly English conversation practice workshops were held in the summer to provide additional support to TAs on conditional status.

The ITA program recently held two very successful campus-wide orientations, one for over 300 incoming TAs (domestic and international), and another for international TAs, on August 19 and 20, 2013. These orientations consisted of panels of current TAs, who were nominated by their department for excellence in teaching and are committed to mentoring newly appointed TAs. The panels answered questions and conducted breakout sessions on topics ranging from "Motivating Students" to "Dealing with Cheating." Several keynote speakers included Professor John Coumbe-Lilley (who will be launching his new course for TAs this fall titled, Foundations of College Teaching), and Professor Hua Jin from Biological Sciences. Professor Jin served as a TA for 6 semesters at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and gave a powerful personal account of her journey as an international TA.

ITA HR NEWS

Long-time lecturer, Sarah Gallant left UIC on August 15, 2013. After many years of service teaching ITAs, Sarah will be missed.

The program has hired Katie Sauers, an experienced teacher who has previously served as a TA in the ITA program.

Jennifer Taylor was hired as new full-time lecturer position in the ITA program. Jennifer worked as a TA with the ITA program and recently completed her MA TESOL/Applied Linguistics.

Rachel Coldewey continues as a dedicated teaching assistant.

SUMMER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

The Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) has completed another successful summer. Sponsored by the Graduate College, SROP is designed to introduce university sophomores and juniors to the academic and intellectual rewards of graduate study. The goal of SROP is to increase the number of historically underrepresented students who pursue academic careers by enhancing their preparation for graduate study through intensive research experiences with faculty mentors.

This summer UIC welcomed forty-three undergraduate scholars from institutions such as UIC, DePaul, University of Oklahoma, University of Iowa, University Puerto Rico, Morehouse College, University of Notre Dame, Northeastern Illinois, and University of Illinois-Urbana. SROP scholars spent this summer working one-on-one with UIC faculty mentors to complete a research project of their choosing. The 2013 cohort demonstrated a good blend of research areas including Health Sciences, Humanities, Social Sciences as well as STEM fields.



SROP 2013 participants with director Allen Bryson. Scholars of Steel!!

The SROP Leadership Summit kicked off the summer on the first weekend of the students arriving. Scholars participated in various workshops, seminars and panel discussions that focused on the demands of graduate student life as well as SROP obligations. During the weekly discipline-specific workshops, SROP scholars took part in various activities covering a myriad of topics such as research writing, research presentation skills, literature reviews, team building, data analysis, research ethics, and university resource usage. The discipline-specific workshops were conducted by UIC doctoral students who also served as summer advisors.

In addition, three-fourths of the 2013 SROP cohort took part in the intensive eight-week GRE preparation course. This free course focused on GRE test-taking skill development and diagnostic testing from staff members of KAPLAN. Scholars were also provided with two opportunities to present their research projects. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign held the Illinois Summer Research Symposium (ISRS), which joined the SROP staff and student scholars from the Illinois Urbana campus and UIC for networking and scholarly presentations. The final requirement of the program was for the scholars to present their projects at the SROP 2013 Research Symposium, held

at the Crown Plaza Hotel. UIC faculty, graduate students, administrative staff, family and friends were present to observe the scholars' presentations and offer feedback.

As we enter the fall semester, we are pleased to report that three members of the 2013 SROP cohort will be attending graduate school at UIC. It is our hope is that more from this cohort and previous ones will be applying to UIC for next fall. The Graduate College would like to thank all of our UIC faculty and departmental staff for their continued dedication, mentorship and overall support of SROP.

GRADUATE COLLEGE RECRUITMENT UPDATE

National Name Exchange

The UIC Graduate College participates in the **National Name Exchange**. Founded in 1976, the National Name Exchange is a consortium of fifty-five nationally known universities that annually collect and exchange the names of their talented, underrepresented ethnic minority students who are in their sophomore, junior or senior year of their undergraduate education. The purpose of the Exchange is to ensure that participating universities continue to identify a pool of qualified students who could be recruited to the graduate programs at these institutions. Programs may access data at the Graduate College Recruitment page.

IALHEA African American Research Forum

The goals of the Illinois African American and Latino Higher Education Alliance (IALHEA)

Research Forum are:

- To increase faculty-student research collaborations
- To improve mentor relationships between faculty and students of color
- To help African American, Latino, and other underrepresented students develop good research skills and persevere in their academic careers

This year's event took place on April 5th and included 47 underrepresented minority scholars who presented their research. Besides UIC,



Graduate Student Panel at McNair/MARC/RiSE Visiting Day. At the podium is Gerry Smith, Director of Minority Affairs in the College of Engineering, and part of the planning committee for this event.

presenters from four additional universities participated. Scholars were provided feedback on their presentations, and were able to mingle with UIC students, faculty and staff.

McNair/MARC/RiSE Visiting Day @ UIC

On May 23rd, 52 students from 8 universities across the US visited UIC to learn about our graduate programs. The event was designed

to bring graduating seniors in the McNair, MARC (Minority Access to Research Careers), or RiSE (Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement) programs who are looking to apply for and enroll in graduate school for Fall 2014. This year's event at UIC included a presentation about funding and a student panel with Q & A as well as departmental visits, interaction with UIC graduate students, and campus tours.

NEW GRADUATE STUDENT ORIENTATION

On August 21, 2013 the Graduate College hosted the New Graduate Student Orientation for incoming students. The Student Center West Thompson room location provided an intimate space for the Orientation and the Resource Fair that followed. Students were able to mingle with one another during breakfast, and they received Graduate College goodies including folders, pens, buttons, and our popular graduate student tote bags. The bags are inscribed with one of our favorite Graduate College quotes by Albert Einstein: "If you knew what you were doing, it wouldn't be called research."

In an effort to support UIC sustainability initiatives, we created an online resource page for student information packets instead of printing out thousands of pages of pamphlets and flyers. Students with smartphones were able to access all of the information instantly and other students can jump online at their convenience to obtain the information.

An estimated 420 Graduate Students attended the orientation. The morning began with a series of icebreakers that gave the students an opportunity to get to know other attendees. Graduate College Dean Karen Colley and UIC

Chancellor Paula Allen Meares provided an inspirational welcome.

Students received information about the history of UIC, the UIC Library, health and wellness resources as well as information about funding, fellowships and financial aid. Current graduate students presented on behalf of the Graduate Student Council, and Graduate Employees Organization, and one of the highlights of the orientation was the very well-received Graduate Student Panel. The panel was made up of Masters and Doctoral students from a variety of disciplines, and backgrounds. Panelists offered advice about navigating student/advisor relationships, the importance of networking as well as being strategic about accomplishing educational and professional goals.

We were also fortunate to have a number of graduate students volunteer to be Graduate Student Ambassadors for the orientation who mingled and met students during the resource fair, offering advice and answering questions.

Following the presentations, students had the opportunity to visit 25 different booths with representatives from various centers, depart-

"If you knew what you were doing, it wouldn't be called research."

--Albert Einstein

ments and organizations on campus. The Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change, various graduate student associations, religious centers, resource centers, offices of Career Services, Sustainability, Business and Financial Services and the Dean of Students, as well as Campus Police, the UIC Bookstore, the Graduate Employees Organization, and the Library all participated in the Graduate Student Resource Fair. The orientation concluded with the option of East or West campus tours. The 2013 New Graduate Student Orientation was a great success and we look forward to seeing all of the new students at future Graduate College programs.

PASSAGE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

In December 2012, the UIC Graduate College won the 2012 Council of Graduate Schools (CGS)/Educational Testing Service (ETS) Award for Innovation in Promoting Success in Graduate Education: From Admission through Completion. The competitive grant award is given to only one graduate institution in the U.S. and Canada each year. The award includes a two-year \$20,000 grant from ETS/CGS along with a \$10,000 campus contribution. The GC's winning proposal was for our program entitled: Promoting Success in STEM Graduate Education (PASSAGE Scholars Program).

The aims of the PASSAGE Scholars Program are to prepare underrepresented minority (URM) students entering UIC in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) graduate programs, and to promote both their retention and timely degree completion. The PASSAGE Scholars Program consists of three phases. Phase one is the summer transition to graduate school program. Phase two includes ongoing mentoring and career development program opportunities. Phase three provides financial incentives for progress and timely degree completion (i.e., qualifying examinations, doctoral candidacy, and dissertation defense). Phase three also includes a \$500 award to pursue postgraduate training and job opportunities.

Our first cohort of six PASSAGE Scholars began Phase one on June 17, 2013. The cohort included academically talented PhD students from underrepresented minority backgrounds in STEM disciplines. The students, faculty research mentors, and departments are as follows: Magdalis Gonzales (Mentor: Dr. Jesus Garcia -Martinez, Physiology and Biophysics), Vanessa Nepomuceno (Mentor: Dr. Michael Federle, Pharmacognosy/Biotechnology), Christopher Perez (Mentor: Dr. Izzet Coskun, Mathematics), Benjamin Richardson (Mentor:



PASSAGE Scholars with Dean Karen Colley and Assistant Dean for Diversity and Recruitment Lunaire Ford

Dr. Pavel Petukhov, Medicinal Chemistry), Braulio Rodriguez (Mentor: Dr. David Stone, Biological Sciences), and Kevin Vissuet (Mentor: Dhruv Mubayi, Mathematics).

The main goal of Phase One was to facilitate the transition of URM STEM PhD students to graduate school by bringing them to campus the summer before they begin their studies. All six incoming graduate students resided in Thomas Beckham Hall for eight weeks. In addition, students enrolled as doctoral students this summer. Students received \$4000 during the summer transition program for living expenses. Four out of the six students completed research rotations in their mentors' laboratories/departments. The two mathematics students read a series of mathematics books and solved equations in preparation for their preliminary examination in the subsequent

year. In addition, all six students participated in an orientation, a behind-the-scenes tour with scientists at the Field Museum, and four workshops led by advanced PhD students and faculty on the culture of graduate school, reading scientific journals, academic writing, and presentation techniques. Phase One ended on August 9, 2013, and participants indicated that the Passage Program was an excellent experience that gave them a jump-start on graduate school. One student submitted a conference paper based on work from this summer and others are already preparing for preliminary examinations.

We would like to thank the members of the UIC PASSAGE Advisory Board for their contribution to the success of the inaugural year of the program. For more information, contact Dr. Lunaire Ford at: (312) 255-0327 or lford@uic.edu.

IGNITE AWARD

This past June, UIC's Graduate College (GC) and College of Medicine (COM) won the Ignite Program Award from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Research. Entitled "Increasing Diversity in Graduate Biomedical Education," this internal grant will allow the two colleges to develop competitive proposals for two interdisciplinary R25 National Institutes of Health/National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIH/NIGMS) grants: the Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP) and the Initiative for Maximizing Student Development (IMSD) Program. Matching funds bring the six-month award to \$40,000.

Karen Colley, Dean of the Graduate College and Professor, Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics and William Walden, Associate Dean for Diversity & Inclusion and Professor, Microbiology & Immunology are leading this project.

Participating units include the COM Office of Graduate Diversity Programs, the GC, and the Colleges of Engineering, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Medicine. This project will fund the establishment of strategic partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI), which will avail talented students to the vast resources and hands-on experiences available at a tier 1 research intensive institution. The intellectual exchange between UIC and partner institutions will enrich the educational experiences and environments at each institution. The NIH/NIGMS grants would help UIC to bring more highly qualified underrepresented students into biomedical fields for post-baccalaureate training and graduate education with the larger goal of diversifying the nation's biomedical workforce.

GRADUATE COLLEGE HR NEWS

Associate Dean Laura Junker will be on sabbatical during the Fall 2013 Semester, returning in January 2014. Dr. Junker oversees various aspects of graduate education within the humanities, arts, and social sciences. In her absence, Associate Dean Jonathan Art, as well as other staff, will cover Dr. Junker's responsibilities.

Visiting Associate Dean for Diversity and Recruitment Aixa Alfonso will return full-time to the Department of Biology in order to concentrate on research and mentoring activities.

Dr. Lunaire Ford has been appointed as Assistant Dean for Diversity and Recruitment and will oversee the Office of Recruitment and Diversity.

In September, Shannon Reden joined the Graduate College as IT Support Associate.

GRADUATE STUDENT CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The UIC Graduate College offered a record number of programs and events for graduate students during the 2012-13 academic year that persistently emphasized career development as well as academic and personal development. Over the spring and summer terms, students had the chance to attend a variety of workshops, presentations and social programs. Sessions included workshops like: Public Speaking 101, Technical Science Writing, The Mechanics of Abstract Writing, Identity Theft Prevention, GA Taxation Withholding, Access to E-Journals and Bibliographical Databases, Planning for Post-Docs and more. The Graduate College continues to promote opportunities for graduate student community building, networking and social interaction. Monthly coffee hours for graduate students are very popular events on both east and west sides of campus, and student excursions to museums and movies in the park have been well received.

Graduate students at UIC have had the opportunity to participate in a variety of programs and events over the course of the past year. The number and consistency of workshops for students has greatly increased, with a focus in three major areas: career development, academic and personal development, and graduate student outreach. The events have been well attended, and student demands have required repetition of popular seminars. Collaborations with organizations both internal to UIC and outside of the University have allowed us to partner with other units interested in graduate student success, and have laid foundations for future workshops. Program evaluations filled out by students at each event have

been extremely beneficial in highlighting new ways to meet student needs. The following is a brief overview of the past year's activities, and an introduction to some new programs that we will be hosting this term. We are eager to expand on the success of the past year, and look forward to reaching even more students on their journey through graduate education.

In March the Graduate College had the privilege of hosting Dr. Kerry Ann Rockquemore, President of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity for the 2013 Annual Graduate College Speaker Series. Dr. Rockquemore came in for a full day at UIC that included a morning coffee hour with faculty, staff, and students, and a noontime keynote titled "Surviving and Thriving in Academia." She provided an overview of what students could do to be most productive during their graduate and postdoctoral training, and emphasized the importance of making manageable deadlines, writing daily and holding oneself accountable to productivity. In the afternoon Dr. Rockquemore facilitated an intensive workshop for 32 select graduate students on mentoring. In "Mentoring 101," students were able to re-think the mentoring process and map out concrete plans for expanding their mentoring and sponsorship networks. Students wrote enthusiastic and positive reviews about the keynote address and afternoon workshops.

The Graduate College is proud to be one of a select few units at UIC where the entire staff has participated in the UIC Safe Zone Training Program. In the spring, the UIC Gender and Sexuality Center graciously facilitated a Safe Zone training for all of our staff. One of our staff



members was one of four persons on campus to complete the Safe Zone Training Certificate Program for 2013. The Graduate College is proud to be a safe space and a department that continues to advocate for creating a more inclusive environment for all LGBTQ students, staff, faculty and allies on campus.

We have a full schedule of events planned for graduate students this fall. Students will have the opportunity to attend recurring workshops on CV and resume writing, financial planning, graduate student wellness, thesis and dissertation requirements as well as other academic and professional development programs. New sessions will include a social media career enhancement workshop, life/work balance program, new writing workshops, and various roundtable panels revolving around graduate student success and the academic job search.

Check the Graduate College and your email for announcements of events. For any questions or suggestions about Graduate College programs please contact Theresa Christenson-Caballero at tchris1@uic.edu.



UIC graduate students and Graduate College faculty and staff with Dr. Kerry Ann Rockquemore.

EXTERNAL FUNDING FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS



The UIC Graduate College has several administrators who specifically provide fellowship support. As the External Fellowship Coordinator, I work with graduate students pursuing funding opportunities outside of UIC. I provide guidance and resources in navigating the application processes for the U.S. Fulbright Student Program, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, Boren Fellowship, Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship, support through the Social Science Research Council and a host of other awards and agencies. Many fellowships are very discipline- and research- specific, and I regularly meet with students pursuing a variety of funding options.

I want to impress upon students that while it does take forethought and prioritizing, pursuing fellowship funding should be a standard activity for any graduate student. Being recognized for your academic abilities and research endeavors will serve you well long-term, while also providing some immediate financial relief. The Graduate College extends tuition and fee waivers each semester to winners of substantial awards, which further offsets costs and rewards students for their accomplishments. UIC students are viable and often successful contenders for prestigious national awards. In the 2012-2013 academic year almost \$2.9 million in fellowship and grant salaries were earned by proactive students on our campus.

I periodically hold workshops on fellowships and circulate award solicitations, but I also encourage everyone to take the initiative as much as possible. Students owe it to themselves to be cognizant of funding opportunities. To provide some guidance, the Graduate College website offers search engine and fellowship databases, along with specific information on prominent monetary awards. The UIC Graduate College also provides internal mechanisms of support. Our website details full-fledged fellowships like the University Fellowship, Abraham Lincoln Fellowship, and Dean's Scholar Award, which are designed to support students during a variety of points in their academic path. Smaller research grants are also annually awarded along with funding to support conference travel and even an Emergency Grant fund

for students encountering particularly trying personal circumstances. Please make sure to acquaint yourself with our **online resources**.

In addition to aiding in the fellowship process, I handle Board of Trustee tuition and fee waivers, which academic departments have at their disposal to award their students. While they do not provide a stipend, the coverage provided by these waivers is substantial and covers tuition differentials. These are awarded each semester, and students should first contact their program for additional information before applying.

For the 2013-2014 academic year UIC has six NSF GRFP recipients, over 20 Foreign Fulbright fellowship recipients, and other exceptional students holding an NRSA Predoctoral Fellowship, Mellon Foundation Award, Lincoln Park Zoo Fellowship, the Field Museum's Women-in-Science Fellowship, and U.S. Student Fulbright awards for research and teaching in Poland, India, Hungary, and Brazil. As a graduate student, your peers (and future competitors for career-track positions) at UIC and elsewhere are applying for and winning prestigious awards every year. You, too, can gain from pursuing fellowship support, and the Graduate College has the resources to assist you in this process. Best of luck!

Marie Khan

External Fellowship and Financial Aid Coordinator

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Effective the academic year of 2013-2014, all doctoral programs within the Graduate College must conduct annual academic progress reviews for all enrolled doctoral students at least once every academic year. Students who are registered under a doctoral program code are considered doctoral students for the purpose of this policy.

The policy was approved by the Graduate College Executive Committee January 2012. (See the Graduate College website for the **complete policy**, as well as additional information.)

It has long been an accepted best practice that graduate students receive frequent assessments of their progress. Many graduate schools have policies on mandatory assessments, and in fact, many doctoral programs at UIC already have assessments in place containing some or all of the requirements detailed in the policy. The new National Research Council assessment of research doctorate programs will feature a student survey of admitted-to-candidacy students in five disciplines (Chemical Engineering, Economics, English, Microbiology, and Physics). The first question

under "Program Environment" asks "Does your program provide an annual or more frequent assessment of your progress?" and the second, "Do you receive timely feedback on your research?"

Effective annual assessments of students provide the clarity the students need to complete their program more efficiently, and thus, ultimately, reflects on program quality.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are a number of competitive monetary awards funded by the Graduate College, such as the **Dean's Scholar Award**, the **Chancellor's Graduate Research Fellowship** (from an annual gift from the Chancellor's office), the **Provost/Deiss Award**, and the retention/recruitment (2nd) round of the **Abraham Lincoln Fellowship**, as well as the **Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Fellowship** (externally funded by the state), that are intended for current graduate students.

ANNUAL PROGRAM REVIEW

The Graduate College is in the process of launching an annual graduate program review process that will be instructive and supportive rather than punitive. As we evaluate our graduate programs, we aim to strike a balance between societal and student demand for a particular training program, effective use of faculty time and effort, and graduate student contributions to the university's intellectual and teaching environment.

UIC focuses on the needs of our changing society, as well as our local community and the greater Chicago area. At the same time, we recognize that graduate students, in particular doctoral students, are an integral part of the intellectual environment of a Research I university. They substantially contribute to both the teaching and research missions of the university while training for careers inside and outside

of higher education. As we embark on these evaluations and related conversations, we will consider whether administration of the graduate program is an effective use of faculty time, and how the teaching efforts and research visibility of the department may be impacted if graduate student contributions are lost. It is the Graduate College's primary goal to help graduate programs improve, and when appropriate, consolidate to enhance the interdisciplinary nature of research and training.

The review process will include annual collection of data to determine the demand for training in a particular area (application numbers), the perceived program quality (accepted applications, enrollment yield, selectivity), and actual program quality (time to degree, attrition, funding profiles of students, student productivity and outcomes). The numbers will be

compared to programs in similar areas at UIC and its leading competitors. Departments will be asked to participate in this process by providing data and by helping in the selection of appropriate peer programs.

Evidence of decreasing program demand, increased student attrition, and/or increasing time to degree is a cause for concern and will warrant additional investigation and discussion. The Graduate College is committed to helping departments provide the best possible training for our graduate students. With this in mind, Graduate College staff will work with each program to strengthen their recruitment of excellent and diverse students, improve the retention of students, and achieve reasonable time to degree, while providing graduate students with general professional development and career services.

FOUNDATIONS IN COLLEGE TEACHING

This fall **John Coumbe-Lilley**, PhD, Director of Undergraduate Studies in Kinesiology and Nutrition, leads a new course for graduate teaching assistants and graduate students seeking preparation to teach at an institution of higher education following their studies. This course, offered through the Graduate College is in response to a need expressed by Provost Lon Kaufmann and Graduate College Dean Karen C. Colley. Dr. Coumbe-Lilley developed the course individually, and presented it to the Graduate College.

The course, **Foundations in College Teaching** (GC 593), blends scholarship with experiential learning. Students will be introduced to teaching, learning and assessment in traditional and online classes and should be able to apply best practices to designing, delivering and evaluating a college course with confidence in teaching a diverse student population.

This is an innovative course and leads students

to start a teaching portfolio, which is becoming a hiring requirement by many colleges. Recent trends in hiring in higher education show that new faculty hires should have teaching experience. Many college instructors have no experience when applying for jobs. This course seeks to provide current UIC teaching assistants with the knowledge, skills and capabilities to enhance their present work and prepare for life after graduation. Following the successful delivery of this class and feedback from course members, a second course that serves as a supervised practicum is being developed to provide motivated students with guidance throughout an advanced teaching experience.

The one section offered in Fall 2013 quickly filled with a waiting list. The course will be offered again Spring 2014 with the idea that it will be offered each semester if warranted by demand. In addition, Dean Colley and Dr. Coumbe-Lilley are discussing the possibility of a second practicum course.



John Coumbe-Lilley, PhD

DID YOU KNOW?

An **Emergency Grant** process administered by the Graduate College exists for students who encounter expenses that are both unexpected and create an acute situation.

The Graduate College provides limited funds for **student presenters** of research or scholarly work at an academic meeting or conference.

GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

The UIC Graduate Student Council (GSC) is the governing graduate student body consisting of representatives from all degree-granting programs in the Graduate College.

GSC has four primary goals:

- Support graduate students by hosting academic seminars and workshops
- Encourage students to apply for conferences by supplying travel awards
- Bring students together with various social events and project awards
- Represent students in many different committees and meetings throughout the year

GSC representatives are graduate students that serve as liaisons to their departments and fellow students, providing timely information about services and resources available at UIC, such as project and travel awards, community service projects, and campus programs. GSC reps also share information about social events and campus wide projects, such as the GSC Bowling Social Event and ongoing projects with the Chancellor Committees. GSC reps also receive the added benefit of being able to experience fellowship with students across a variety of academic disciplines, adding to the richness of their graduate school experience.

Participation in GSC is a vital way for graduate students to gain valuable information and

experiences to enhance their graduate career. If you're interested in becoming a GSC rep for the 2013-14 academic year, talk with your department's Director of Graduate Studies.

Last year, the GSC made concerted efforts to collaborate with the UIC Office of the Dean of Students and the Graduate College as well as with other student organizations to provide opportunities for personal and professional growth and to advocate on behalf of all graduate students at UIC.

Want to know what GSC has planned for 2013-14? Learn more by following us on Facebook or check out the GSC blog at <http://uicgsc.wordpress.com/>.

THE VERSATILE PHD

For a number of years, PhD recipients have been facing increasing competition for dwindling academic positions, especially tenure-track appointments. While the severity of this situation varies somewhat by discipline, the fact is that there are continuing to be less tenure-track positions available in all fields.

The Graduate College at UIC is a subscriber to an online resource called The Versatile PhD. While the resource is mainly intended for PhD students, the subscription allows anyone with a valid UIC netid (graduate and undergraduate students, postdocs, faculty, staff, and alumni for up to one year after graduation) to access the premium content.

Originally intended for PhD students in the Humanities and Social Sciences, the site has recently expanded to STEM disciplines, and will continue to develop. User suggestions often lead to enhancements.

One of the goals of the site is to help PhD students expand their outlook to think of careers related to their degree that are outside of academia. However, the Versatile PhD is more than a website. Besides providing information on options other than academic careers, there are job listings and other relevant information. In addition, you will be able to network with others, participate in panel discussions, and access various materials written by other PhDs

with established and varied non-academic careers.

The Versatile PhD site is completely confidential. There is no identifying information reported to others or to UIC. In addition, neither UIC nor the UIC Graduate College will track (other than overall counts) or identify users.

To access the premium content on the site login is required through the link provided on the **Graduate College Versatile PhD page**.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTRIBUTORS

Allen Bryson
Theresa Christenson-Caballero
Karen Colley
John Coumbe-Lilley
Lunaire Ford
Marie Khan
Steve Kragon
Vandana Loomba Loebel
Francisco Piña
Benn Williams
Denise Yates
UIC Graduate Student Council

DESIGN

Kristina Dziedzic Wright

CONTACT US

The Graduate College is located on the 6th floor of University Hall. Room 606, our main office, is open from 8:30 a.m. until 4:45 p.m.

phone: (312) 413-2550
fax: (312) 413-0185
email: gradcoll@uic.edu

mailing address:
601 S. Morgan St (MC 192)
Chicago, IL 60607-7106

