

4. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PLAN TO ENHANCE DIVERSITY

4A. Overview

Recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities among pre-doctoral trainees - As noted in **Tables 2, 10, and 11**, the leadership and mentors of this training program are committed to enhancing the ethnic and gender diversity of investigators engaged in biomedical research and has been proactive in recruiting qualified applicants from under-represented populations through outreach in student and trainee oriented initiatives (e.g., SIBS, McNair, PREP). Dr. Schroeder, for example, had a McNair scholar in his lab from 2010 to 2012 who is now a graduate student at Fisk University in the Fisk to Vanderbilt PhD program. UAB continues to take aggressive steps to recruit from under-represented groups. For the period 2008-2012, recruiting activities in the participating departments and programs resulted in a total of 665 predoctoral minority applicants (Table 7A). Of these, 107 applicants were offered positions, 44 enrolled, and 39 remain in training. Of the 23 predoctoral trainees supported by this training program in the last five years, one was URM.

Recruitment and retention of underrepresented minorities among post-doctoral trainees. For the period 2007-2011, the years for which data is complete, recruiting activities in the participating departments and programs resulted in a total of 1121 postdoctoral minority applicants (Table 7B), Of these, 179 were offered positions and accepted the offer. Of these, 101 postdoctoral minority trainees are still at UAB. Of the 16 postdoctoral trainees supported by this training program in the last five years of support, six are URM.

Recruitment and retention of women and underrepresented minorities among the mentors - The ITP also seeks to enhance gender equity and to recruit and retain faculty from under-represented groups. We have increased the representation of women among the faculty from 16% in 2006 to 30% in 2012. Three faculty members, Drs. Katz, Lopez and Schroeder (Melendez) (5% of the faculty), are Hispanic-Americans. Office for Equity and Diversity (Louis Dale, PhD, Vice President for Equity and Diversity) – Dr. Dale is responsible for providing effective leadership in the development, coordination, implementation and assessment of a comprehensive array of programs to promote diversity and understanding of differences at UAB. The mission of the OED is to increase, retain and enhance faculty, student and staff diversity at all levels of the University and to ensure equity. Dr. Louis Dale reports directly to the President on matters related to policy and vision and to the Provost on matters related to the management of programs. [Initiatives for faculty recruitment and retention](#) are presented in Appendix E.

Minority Health & Health Disparities Research Center (MHRC): Research, training & career development programs - The University-wide Center assists trainees and investigators from varied disciplines and facilitates minority-related research programs. The program is developing research to include Latino and Asian populations in addition to African Americans.

Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program- The McNair Scholars Program is an academic enrichment program which provides effective preparation for doctoral study to TRIO eligible college students, and students from groups underrepresented in graduate education. The McNair scholars benefit from a strong committed faculty who are experienced in mentoring undergraduates, outstanding research programs and facilities, a full range of support programs and educational enhancement opportunities, and a population of graduate students to serve as role models and mentors.

Post-Baccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP) - A unique, 1-2 year training opportunity for students seeking graduate degrees in biomedical or behavioral science, this program is for students who received their baccalaureate (4-year) degree in the past three years and who are not currently enrolled in graduate school. This program gives instruction, practice and mentoring in research, academic writing, math and test-taking can provide the extra experience students need to gain acceptance into science programs in leading graduate schools. During the PREP training period, students receive a \$21,000 stipend, plus health insurance and tuition for up to 10 credit hours of academic instruction. Based on an individual development plan, students are paired with faculty for hands-on research projects.

NIH Institutional Research and Career Development Award (IRACDA) grant- UAB is one of 15 universities to receive an IRACDA from the NIH. The award enables institutions to combine a traditional mentored, postdoctoral research experience with an opportunity to develop teaching skills through assignments at a

minority-serving institution. UAB partners with Miles and Stillman Colleges to provide postdocs a unique opportunity to get practical mentored teaching experience while expanding their research skills.

UAB Mentored Experiences in Research, Instruction and Teaching Program (MERIT) - UAB has received funding for an NIH sponsored program to support postdocs interested in combining research and teaching experiences. As a partnership with historically black institutions to help developing scientists conduct high-quality research in an academic environment, the long-term objectives of this training mechanism seek to enhance research-oriented teaching at minority-serving institutions, to promote interactions between research-intensive universities such as UAB and minority-serving institutions that lead to collaborations in research and teaching, and to increase the number of well qualified, under-represented minority students entering competitive careers in biomedical research. *After the completion of her training appointment on this grant in 2006, Dr. Christine Sestero became the first appointee to the MERIT program at UAB in which she continued to work with Dr. Chander Raman in the area of inflammation and autoimmunity.*

The Alabama Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (ALSAMP) Program - The ALSAMP strives through its twelve member institutions to increase the quality and quantity of under-represented minority students completing baccalaureate degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. The undergraduate institutions benefit from having their students participate in research experiences with research faculty, while the research institutions have the opportunity to work with, identify and recruit highly qualified minority students seeking to attend graduate school. The Alliance members, -- Historically Black Colleges/Universities (HBCU), majority institutions, public and private institutions, and research and teaching institutions, -- cooperate to maximize learning opportunities and increase the achievement bar for all ALSAMP students. ALSAMP students receive financial support to attend high standing state, private and HBCU institutions and earn academic degrees in the areas of STEM while receiving tutoring, mentoring, career counseling, travel to attend local and national professional conferences, sponsored occasions to interact with peers and professionals in their field of study, summer internship opportunities, social progression experiences and facilitated access to graduate/professional schools.

UASOM Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs - As part of its fundamental commitment to diversity – including the identification, recruitment, retention, and career advisement of minorities and students from underrepresented populations, -- this office works to implement multifaceted approaches to recruitment and retention efforts including:

- Fostering relationships with the local, regional, and national educational institutions to stimulate minority student interest in science, thus increasing the pool of qualified minority applicants;
- Increasing the number of colleges/universities visited and establishing relationships with science and pre-medical advisors;
- Having a presence at conferences on regional and national levels where a large number of minorities (undergraduate, graduate and medical students) are in attendance;
- Coordinating seminars for minority students with emphasis on interviewing skills;
- Coordinating enrichment activities that complement the recruitment and retention process.

Recruitment and retention of individuals with disabilities.

UAB Disability Support Services (DSS) is committed to making UAB programs and services accessible to students with disabilities. To prevent discrimination based on disability in all UAB student programs and services, the primary goal of DSS is to ensure an accessible university environment by working with students, faculty, staff, and community agencies to provide appropriate accommodations. Students that self-identify with a disability are referred to the UAB DSS office. The office will work with the student to formulate a plan for accommodating their disabilities, thus allowing the student to fully participate in our training program. Over the past five years, this T32 has supported one trainee with a disability.