



Stony Brook  
University

CENTER FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION  
in the Graduate School

# Newsletter

Fall 2015



CIE Annual Photo Day

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## Year of Community

Dear Friends,

You may recall that 2015 was declared the “Year of Mentoring” in the Center for Inclusive Education. With that declaration, the CIE team worked hard at building and strengthening the many programs and activities focused on mentoring - from growing participation in the Community of Student Mentors program, to setting a strong foundation of communication between mentees and faculty mentors through the newly created IMSD-MERGE Excellence in Mentoring workshop series, and finally, to creating opportunities for CIE scholars to connect with alumni and undergraduates to build new mentoring relationships. We view all of these efforts as opportunities to grow our scholars’ mentoring network exponentially while simultaneously expanding the confidence of mentors and mentees.

The results of our efforts were considerable! The CIE was very fortunate to have been awarded a Presidential Mini-Grant for Departmental Diversity Initiatives to create a video podcast series and hold a mentoring summit this spring. The series will highlight our best practices from the past 15 years of mentoring underrepresented minority PhD scholars. We are so proud that several CIE staff and principal investigators received individual recognition for their commitment to mentoring and support of our community. Beginning this past fall, the CIE has intensified its efforts in mentoring Stony Brook undergraduates in the EOP/AIM program through a pilot program to grow the Turner AIM Mentoring Program (TAMP) in 2015-2016.

The heart of the CIE has always been the powerful sense of community we share. That sense of community, the feeling of ‘coming home’, has made these mentoring relationships even more meaningful

and effective. In thinking about the CIE’s beginnings, I am reminded of a quote from Margaret Meade, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Through the dedicated work of students, faculty and staff, our community has grown exponentially in the last 16 years: a community that started with 33 graduate students in two externally-funded programs has now grown to over 160 undergraduate students, graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in seven externally-funded programs. We started small - knocking on doors, making presentations to faculty, visiting students in their labs, and traveling to other universities to make valuable contacts - all the while gathering ideas for innovative grant proposals. It has been a dream come true to see the fruits of our labors which are evident in the vibrant CIE community that exists today.

Clearly the CIE has been successful in creating an environment in which differences are celebrated and respected. With this in mind, I have decided to declare 2016 the CIE’s “Year of Community”. We will work to expand our collaborations with other programs and offices to create effective programming and unique opportunities to continue to strengthen our community and bring together even more diverse groups in the ultimate hope of improving society - through research, through academics, and through social and public engagement.

As always, I thank you all for your continued efforts and commitment to the mission of the CIE. Happy New Year to you all!

Nina Maung-Gaona, Director

# Is There a Doctor in the House?

Congratulations to all of our CIE Scholars graduating this summer and fall!

**Dex Ann Brown-Grant**, PhD in Molecular & Cellular Pharmacology  
*Dissertation:* Characterization of the Birt-Hogg-Dube Syndrome associated protein Folliculin (FLCN)

**Robert M. Palomino**, PhD in Chemistry  
*Dissertation:* In Situ Characterization of Promoted Rh Nanocatalysts During CO Hydrogenation

**Kenneth A. Pierce**, PhD in Sociology  
*Dissertation:* Mobilization Lessons from Marcus Garvey and the Universal Negro Improvement Association

**Alexis Santana**, PhD in Molecular Genetics & Microbiology  
*Dissertation:* Understanding the Role of NF-kappaB Recognition Sites in RTA Transactivation of Lytic Gene Expression during Murine Gammaherpesvirus 68 Infection

**Chantal Adlam**, MA in Chemistry

**Ana Miron**, MPhil in Hispanic Languages and Literature

**Phil Smith**, MS in Mechanical Engineering

**Edward Turner**, MS in Applied Mathematics and Statistics

## Video Highlighting Pathways to Undergraduate Research



Jinelle Wint, Molecular & Cellular Biology  
AGEP-T FRAME, BD, IMSD-MERGE



Kennelia Mellanson, Biology  
IMSD-MERGE



Daniel Irizarry, Biology  
IMSD-MERGE, BioPREP

This fall, CIE Scholars, Jinelle Wint, Kennelia Mellanson and Daniel Irizarry were filmed for the informational video on pathways to undergraduate research. Wint provided the introduction and conclusion to the video, as well as an explanation of the number of different opportunities there are for SBU undergrads to become engaged in research. Mellanson and Irizarry shared information about their program and how it contributed to their engagement in research. The live video is forthcoming in 2016.

## Congratulations Corner - Alumni Applause

This summer, **Dr. Jose Muñoz** was a Pardee RAND Graduate School Faculty Fellow in Policy Analysis.

**Dr. Elena Machado** published the monograph, *Market Aesthetics: The Purchase of the Past in Caribbean Diasporic Fiction*, with University of Virginia Press in March 2015.

**Dr. Annmarie Cano** was appointed Associate Dean of The Graduate School at Wayne State University in Detroit, MI, where she oversees student services including the PhD Office, Master's and Recruitment Office, Career Services and Admissions.

**Dr. Glenda Trujillo** joined a new Fibrosis Discovery Team at Bristol-Myers Squibb, a pharmaceutical company in Pennington, NJ.

**Dr. Dianne Glave** started a new Coordinator of Diversity Development position at Ingomar United Methodist Church in July.

**Dr. Yamil Velez** accepted an Assistant Professor position at Wesleyan University where he studies how political predispositions and place interact to shape political preferences.

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# Congratulations Corner

AGEP-T & Turner Fellow, **Ariel Negrón** had a first-author publication in the Neuroscience Journal.

**Camillia Monestime** (AGEP-T, BD) received Second Place in the Best Poster Competition at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Zebrafish Meeting on July 17.

**Dr. Cindy Leiton** (AGEP-T Postdoc, Turner) had a first author publication in the Journal of Neurochemistry with **Azeez Aranmolate** (AGEP-T, Turner) as the second author.

In September, **Dr. Alexis Santana** (AGEP, BD, Turner) began a postdoc appointment at NYU in the Department of Dermatology.

IMSD-MERGE Undergraduate Scholar, **Sarah Georges** won a travel award to the SACNAS Conference.

**Jinelle Wint** (AGEP-T, BD, IMSD-MERGE) was featured on [SBU Happenings](#) for her work with high school students in the Science Unplugged program. **Lyl Tomlinson** (AGEP-T, Turner) also gave a Science Unplugged talk.

The CIE welcomed a new graduate assistant, **Rafael Rivera**, who is pursuing his MPH/MBA.

**Daniel Irizarry** (IMSD-MERGE) married Meagan McManus on August 21.

On September 18, Clement Marmorat (REU) proposed to **Jennifer DeLeon** (AGEP-T, Turner). She said “yes”!

IMSD-MERGE Undergraduate Scholars, **Sarah Georges**, **Denise Laspina** and **Kennelia Mellanson** were awarded the Edward Mardovich Scholarship from Undergraduate Biology. **Georges**, **Mellanson** and **Joselin Vargas** presented their abstracts at ABRCMS in November. **Mellanson** won an ABRCMS travel award.

AGEP-T Scholar & Turner Fellow, **Mariana Rius** presented a poster at the SACNAS Conference.

Turner Fellow, **Hollisa Rosa** was published in the Journal of Neuromodulation: Technology at the Neural Interface for her work with spinal cord stimulators at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA.

**Jinelle Wint** participated in the [48-Hour Imagine Science Film Festival Competition](#) and her team won first place.

**Lyl Tomlinson**, **Dr. Cindy Leiton** and Dr. Holly Colognato had a literature review published in the September 2015 edition of Neuropharmacology.

The Department of Energy posted an article about **Dr. Robert Palomino** (AGEP-T Postdoc, Turner) that was originally published by [Brookhaven National Laboratory](#).

**Rob Maloney**, mSI Leader (IMSD-MERGE Biomath Learning Center), was featured on [SBU Happenings](#).

AGEP-T & Turner Fellow, **Crystal Lewis's** paper “Probing Charge Transfer in a Novel Class of Luminescent Perovskite-Based Heterostructures Composed of Quantum Dots Bound to RE-activated Calcium Titanate Phosphors” has been accepted in the journal, Nanoscale.

**Jason Quinones** (AGEP-T, Turner) received the Van der Kloot award for excellence in research by the Department of Pharmacology, which is given to a single student for the best first author publication during the academic year.

Turner Fellow, **Matthew Ford** was married on October 10.

AGEP-T Postdoc, **Dr. Alesha Harris** was featured by [Brookhaven National Laboratory](#) for her work “Tackling Chemistry from Nanoparticles to Neutrinos”.

**Mel Pilar Espailat** (AGEP-T, Turner) was awarded the NRSA F31 grant.

Turner Fellow, **Johnathan Nieves** was published in the International Journal of Cardiology.

# Topic Based Lunches with Senior Leadership - Dr. Kenneth Kaushansky

On Monday, November 2, the Center for Inclusive Education proudly welcomed Kenneth Kaushansky, MD, MACP as the next senior University leader to present in our Topic Based Lunches (TBL) with Senior Leadership series. Dr. Kaushansky, Dean of the School of Medicine and Senior Vice President of Health Sciences at SBU, shared how his professional journey as teacher, clinician and biomedical researcher led to his current administrative role. He titled his talk, "Some Thoughts on the Academic Journey".

Dr. Kaushansky addressed the many avenues associated with a physician/scientist career path by drawing upon his own experiences. During his early career, which he referred to as the "formative years", Dr. Kaushansky worked closely with three mentors who shaped his next steps. "It takes a village of mentors to raise a physician/scientist," said Dr. Kaushansky. Specifically, his mentors guided him to pursue hematology; learn how to grow blood cells in tissue culture; and embrace biochemistry, respectively.

As Dr. Kaushansky progressed in his talk to the research stage of his academic journey, he thoroughly explained the projects he worked on, the teams who were involved, the discoveries that were made and the results that were published. "I like to compare the planning of a research career to baseball, especially for those who are just starting to establish themselves as scientists," said Dr. Kaushansky. "Pursue a 'safe' project that will be publishable, scholarly, productive - like a guaranteed base hit. But, simultaneously pursue a project where you are taking risks - like swinging for the fences." He advised that working on two projects at the same time increases the likelihood of having something to focus on and to report, but trying to take on a little of everything is a guaranteed ticket to mediocrity.

**"It is imperative to have a frank discussion during negotiations and get to the right appointment.... Be open and honest about your desired impact on your science. Come prepared with insightful questions. If your offer isn't sufficient, you and the department will miss out." - Dr. Kaushansky**

In 2010, Dr. Kaushansky accepted his current positions at Stony Brook University, which further marked his career pathway into the administrative realms of academia. He shared some lessons learned since making the transition.

1. Silos are bad. You have to break them down as quickly as possible. When all departments and schools work together, progress can truly be made.
2. Bs recruit Cs and As recruit A+s. It is important to have strong leadership. Surround yourself with people who are smarter than you.
3. The cup is ALWAYS half full. There is no reason to be pessimistic.
4. Obtain multiple perspectives. You will get the best advice when you seek it from various, trusted sources. Only then can you make wise decisions.
5. Sometimes, no decision is worse than the wrong decision. It will benefit you to be willing to acknowledge mistakes and/or change your mind. In medicine, you may have to make decisions based on partial data sets and adjust; so too in academic decision making.
6. Hard work is imperative. You have to devote the time and energy to get the job done well.
7. You can do it all - just not at the same time. Dr. Kaushansky remarked on how fortunate he was to have protected time to do science early in his career, followed by clinical research and now administration. It is important to take on new responsibilities and opportunities, but it is also essential that you feel comfortable with the balance between your obligations throughout your career.

The TBL was moderated by Dr. David Ferguson, Associate Provost for Diversity & Inclusion; Chair, Department of Technology & Society; and Distinguished Service Professor. After Dr. Kaushansky concluded his talk, Dr. Ferguson moderated a Q&A session with the CIE scholars in attendance.



Dr. Kaushansky gives talk to CIE Scholars as part of TBL series



AGEP-T FRAME and Turner Fellow, Emilio Fernandez asked Dr. Kaushansky what strategies he would recommend to remain focused on research without appearing to be someone who is trying to avoid additional responsibilities. To which, Dr. Kaushansky replied, “It is imperative to have a frank discussion during negotiations and get to the right appointment. At the onset, find out the amount of devoted time designated to scholarship. Younger staff should be given more time than senior staff. Be open and honest about your desired impact on your science. Come prepared with insightful questions. If your offer isn’t sufficient, you and the department will miss out.”

Dr. Kaushansky encouraged the CIE scholars to only feel comfortable in their current role when they are on a steep incline or learning curve. “When you get to the flat part of your journey, you may feel that it is time to move on and to seek growth potential,” he said. “Timing can be unpredictable, but do not just move on because a certain number of years have passed.” According to Dr. Kaushansky, transitioning into the administrative role was made easier because of all he learned throughout his physician/scientist career - be open and transparent; bring together smart people; develop collaborations. He encouraged everyone to “seize the great opportunity and potential along the way!”

## Graduate School Preview Day



Left to right: CIE Administrator, Kathryn Piazzola; CIE Scholar Emilie Bouda; CIE Graduate Assistant, Rafael Rivera; prospective students from Hunter College; CIE Director, Nina Maung-Gaona & Hunter College Assistant Program Director, Rex Nobles

The Center for Inclusive Education and The Graduate School hosted the second annual Graduate School Preview Day on Friday, November 20. Over 60 students from various institutions attended the event that focused on “The PhD: A Path to Success”. Presentations were given by our CIE staff, graduate students, postdocs and alumni, as well as Stony Brook faculty. Topics ranged from personal graduate school experiences and “what can you be with a PhD” to the intricacies of pursuing graduate education and the types of funding that exist.

During the networking lunch, attendees were given an opportunity to meet with representatives from Stony Brook for more information about graduate programs and summer research opportunities. “We have found that a personal connection to the program and can make a difference in someone’s decision to pursue graduate education,” said CIE Administrator, Kathryn Piazzola. The day concluded with laboratory tours across campus to provide a unique introduction to the facilities that match the interest of those considering Stony Brook for their graduate pursuits.

We wish to extend our gratitude to all of the volunteers who made the 2015 Graduate School Preview Day a success!



Attendees during the networking lunch with Stony Brook faculty



Left to right: Moderator, Dr. Angel Gonzalez with graduate student and postdoc panel presenters Joe Matarlo, Dr. Dwight McGee, Dominic Moronta, Felicia Jackson & Allison Nesbitt



Yolanda Small (center) with prospective students from CUNY York College

# Writing to Win Workshop

The National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program (NSF GRFP) supports outstanding graduate students in STEM disciplines who are pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees. At this year's Writing to Win workshop, held on Thursday, September 19, over 30 attendees were given the opportunity to hear a panel of experts share information on how to prepare a competitive application for this prestigious and lucrative fellowship. The NSF expects to award 2,000 fellowships this year. Each fellowship provides a three-year annual stipend of \$34,000, along with a \$12,000 allowance for tuition and fees. The fellowship is portable to wherever the recipient pursues his/her graduate education. CIE Scholars Jesse Brizzi and Ashleigh Lussenden also provided one-on-one support to four CIE scholars who submitted GRFP applications.

## *Special thanks to our speakers:*

**Dr. Anne McElroy**, Professor, School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, NSF GRFP Reviewer

**Dr. Miguel Garcia-Diaz**, Associate Professor, Department of Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology, NSF GRFP Reviewer

**Sarah Bannon**, PhD Student, Department of Psychology, NSF GRFP Winner

**Jesse Brizzi**, PhD Student, Department of Computer Science Engineering, NSF GRFP Winner

**Ashleigh Lussenden**, PhD Student, Department of Neurobiology, NSF GRFP Winner

# NRSA Workshop

On Monday, October 5, the CIE hosted "Get Funded! Your roadmap to preparing a winning NIH NRSA Training Grant application". NRSA awards support the training of biomedical, behavioral and clinical researchers through individual pre- and postdoctoral fellowships, and institutional research training grants. This workshop provided valuable information on how to prepare a NRSA application from previous award winners along with their PI's. Participants were also provided with information about the administrative details involved with submitting an application and insight into how the applications are scored.

The event was moderated by Dr. Peter J. Tonge, Professor of Chemistry and, by courtesy, Radiology, co-Director of the Chemical Biology Training Program, Director of Biomolecular Imaging Cluster, and Associate Editor, ACS Infectious Diseases. Doctoral student panelists included Kevin Hauser, Lyl Tomlinson, Mel Pilar Espailat and Hiren Patel. Faculty panelists included Dr. Carlos Simmerling, Dr. Holly Colognato and Dr. Lina Obeid.



NRSA Workshop panelists planning the event



NRSA Workshop panelists sharing tips on how to prepare a winning NIH NRSA Training Grant application

# Summer Writing Boot Camp and Retreat



The second annual "Keep Calm and Write On" Summer Writing Boot Camp launched on June 26 and continued on Friday mornings throughout July. The quiet, structured writing time enabled scholars to work on their dissertations, theses, fellowship applications and/or grant proposals.

New this year, the CIE organized a four-day writing retreat on the Stony Brook Southampton campus in July. This retreat was designed to be an opportunity for graduate students or postdocs to escape their everyday obligations for focused writing time to work on their dissertation, manuscript, proposals or fellowship applications, based upon the success and positive feedback from the weekly boot camp. This "Keep Calm and Write Away" Writing Retreat was held on July 20-24. To kickoff this productive week, five participants and two CIE staff members, enjoyed a two-hour cruise of the Shinnecock Bay aboard the SOMAS Paumanok vessel.

# Annual Welcome Back Luncheon

A little summer rain could not keep us from kicking off the new academic year together on Friday, August 21. CIE Scholars and staff, along with SBU faculty, joined together to reminisce about the summer and enjoy a delicious summer BBQ lunch. It was a great opportunity for the community to connect and welcome our new AGEP-T FRAME, BD, GEM, IMSD-MERGE, IRACDA NY-CAPS and Turner scholars. In anticipation for the start of the new semester, the fall 2015 calendar of events was shared.



# Keeping It Real Series Continues

The “Keeping It Real” series is the Center for Inclusive Education’s forum where scholars can have candid conversations about non-academic issues that impact their lives. The first small group discussion of the new academic year focused on exploring struggles and strategies for personal finance. Participants were joined by Renee Pelletier, Financial Literacy Specialist, who provided tips about tackling debt, creating a budget and resources available to SBU students. The next session, held in November, addressed how to have conversations with family about graduate school. Just in time for Thanksgiving break, scholars shared some of the challenges they have faced in the past and strategies to help effectively communicate in the future.

The Center for Inclusive Education | Stony Brook University

## Keeping it Real

**Financial Fitness: Exploring struggles and strategies for personal finance**

Monday, September 21  
12:00 - 1:00 PM  
Graduate School Conference Room  
2401 Computer Science Building  
Lunch will be provided  
RSVP: <http://ow.ly/Sf6pn>

At 12:30 pm, we will be joined by **Renee Pelletier**, Financial Literacy Specialist who will provide tips about:

- Tackling Debt
- Creating a Budget
- Resources Available to SBU Students

For a disability-related accommodation, please call 2-1386



The Center for Inclusive Education | Stony Brook University

## Keeping it Real


with Dr. Sheri Clark

**Family & Cultural Pressures: Conversations about Graduate School**

Wednesday, November 18  
12:00 - 1:00 PM  
Graduate School Conference Room  
2401 Computer Science Building

Stop by, have lunch and discuss some of the challenges of discussing your graduate school career with your family. Get some advice before going home for Thanksgiving break!

RSVP: <http://ow.ly/UA11k>



# K-Series Workshop



On Tuesday, November 10, the CIE hosted the “Find Your Pathway to Independence” workshop which provided information on how to prepare a winning NIH Pathway to Independence (K99/R00) award application. The Pathway to Independence (PI) Award is designed to facilitate a timely transition from a mentored postdoctoral research position to a stable independent research position. The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Markus Seeliger, Assistant Professor in the Department of Pharmacological Sciences and Dr. David Q. Matus, Assistant Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Cell Biology. Dr. Seeliger and Dr. Matus are both previous K99/R00 award winners.

# First Year Mixer at the Hilton Garden Inn

The CIE Program Managers held their second annual First Year Mixer on Monday, November 16 in the cocktail lounge at the Hilton Garden Inn. The First Year Mixer offers new CIE scholars an opportunity to connect with each other and with the CIE staff at the critical mid-point of their first semester at Stony Brook - to strengthen their community connections, share their experiences with fellow graduate students and refresh their minds and spirits in preparation for the last leg of the semester. Turner Program Manager Toni Sperzel said, “It give us an opportunity to remind scholars of the many opportunities for academic and professional development the CIE can offer to support their success.”

# Laptop Loan Program Returns

After a short hiatus, the CIE was delighted to be able to reboot the Laptop Lending Program for the 2015-2016 academic year with 12 current participants. Registered CIE Scholars can apply to borrow Dell or Apple laptops for academic activities, including, but not limited to, course assignments, research projects, and manuscript and dissertation writing. Laptops can be borrowed for up to one academic year and may be renewed beyond the initial contract year, pending equipment demand and availability. Interested CIE Scholars must complete a Laptop Loan Application, demonstrate need and obtain the endorsement of their faculty advisor or graduate program director. Applications will be reviewed by CIE staff and will be assigned to scholars who demonstrate the most need.

# Stony Brook Representatives Attend Annual Conference at Rutgers University



Left to right: Pryor, Guardado, Daily and Rivera at the recruitment table

The 7th Annual Garden State-Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation/Northern New Jersey-Bridges to the Baccalaureate STEM Research Conference was held at Rutgers University on Friday, October 9. This annual conference provides LSAMP participants with critical information on key aspects of pursuing a doctoral degree - from preparing graduate school applications to securing institutional and external funding for the doctorate. After the plenary presentation on "how to apply to graduate school," each of the colleges and universities in attendance was invited to speak on behalf of their respective institution. CIE staff member, Julianna Pryor shared information about the Graduate School and the Center for Inclusive Education at Stony Brook. She and three other Stony Brook representatives then met one-on-one with prospective students during the Graduate Admissions Information Session. Special thanks to Graduate School Records and Admissions Assistant, Brittney Daily; CIE Scholar, Moises Guardado; and CIE Graduate Assistant, Rafael Rivera for their participation in the recruitment portion of the event.

## SREB Annual Institute on Teaching & Mentoring

CIE staff members Dr. Sheri Clark and Karian Wright traveled to Arlington, VA on October 28-31 for the Southern Regional Education Board's Annual Institute on Teaching and Mentoring, which is an annual four-day conference that has become the largest gathering of minority doctoral scholars in the country. The purpose of the Institute is to provide scholars with the skills necessary to succeed in graduate study and to prepare them for success as faculty members at colleges and universities. This conference also provided the opportunity to connect with advanced graduate students to inform them of the postdoctoral training opportunities available through the IRACDA NY-CAPS and AGEP-T FRAME programs. A total of six AGEP-T Fellows attended.

## SACNAS National Conference

This year, the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos & Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) National Conference was held in Washington, DC. CIE staff members Dr. Angel Gonzalez and Kathyne Piazzola attended on behalf of the Center for Inclusive Education. CIE Scholar, Mariana Rius and Dr. Miguel Garcia-Diaz, Associate Professor in the Department of Pharmacology and Director of the Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology Graduate Program, also attended. The conference theme, Interdisciplinary Collaboration: The Role of Diversity in STEM Innovation, and programming were specifically tailored to support undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and career professionals at each transition stage of their career as they move towards positions of science leadership.

## ABRCMS Annual Conference

Now in its fifteenth year, Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) is one of the largest, professional conferences for underrepresented minority students, military veterans, and persons with disabilities to pursue advanced training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). ABRCMS attracts approximately 3,600 individuals, including 1,900 undergraduate and postbaccalaureate students, 400 graduate students and postdoctoral scientists and 1,300 faculty, program directors and administrators. During the four-day conference, over 1,700 students participated in poster and oral presentations in 12 disciplines in the biomedical and behavioral sciences, including mathematics. We are currently in the process of following up with the 142 students at showed interest in pursuing their graduate study at SBU.

### Look Who We Found!

*One of our favorite benefits of attending national conferences is the chance to reconnect with CIE alumni. This year was no exception. We are so proud of all they have accomplished!*



Dr. Sheri Clark, Dr. Jennifer Martinez & Karian Wright at SREB



Kathyne Piazzola, Dr. Michelle Juarez & Dr. Angel Gonzalez at SACNAS



Dr. Wesley Francillon and Kathyne Piazzola at SACNAS



Dr. Angel Gonzalez, Dr. Teresa Shakespeare & Karian Wright at ABRCMS



# CIE Invited for Exclusive Tour of General Electric

Former Stony Brook University Faculty Member, Dr. J. Carlos Rojo currently serves as the Manager of the Semiconductor Technology Laboratory at General Electric's Global Research Center (GRC) located in the town Niskayuna in Schenectady, NY. A longstanding supporter of the Center for Inclusive Education, Dr. Rojo invited the Center for Inclusive Education to bring 13 CIE Scholars to the GRC on December 10 for a personalized tour of several of the exciting research facilities and projects happening at General Electric. The goal of the visit was to provide CIE Scholars with a direct, hands-on opportunity to learn more about research outside of the academy and current training and leadership careers available with General Electric. AGEP-T FRAME Fellow from the Department of Chemistry, Kevin Hauser, shares his thoughts and experiences from the tour in the piece below.

We wish to thank Dr. Rojo and all of the General Electric team members who volunteered their time to meet with our scholars and faculty. Learn more about the exciting research happening at GE's Niskayuna headquarters [here](#).

## Inventing the future of energy and medicine through innovation and diversity: The Global Research Center, General Electric

*—Written by: Kevin Hauser, PhD Candidate, Department of Chemistry (AGEP-T FRAME, BD)*

An unusually warm but still crisp December morning air met out weary faces as we, the CIE, boarded Winston's bus for Albany. There we were to see the other side of the Ivory walls; we were to discover what it was like within one of the great industrial engines in the world, General Electric's Global Research Center (GRC).

After arriving and donning our security badges, our host, Carlos Rojo, presented to us a brief and exciting introduction to the GRC. We then split into two smaller groups, one more centered on biomedical research and the other on materials and energy research. In the biomedical group, my friends and I experienced an incredible, behind-the-scenes peek at what healthcare might look like in 10 years.

We met Paul Fitzgerald, a member of the radiation systems laboratory, who helped design and build the world's first digital x-ray video camera. He also showed us how a computed tomography (CT) scan works and spoke with us about the history and future of CT technology. We also met with Vandana Keskar, a cell biologist, who showed us some of the labs that are innovating future tools for oncology and stem cell research.

Later, we were treated to two short talks on biomedical imaging (Sandeep Gupta) and genetics (Chinappa Kodira), both of which I thought were exciting and inspiring. At the end of the day, GRC technologists, Denise Anderson, Paul Fitzgerald, Sandeep Gupta, Chinnappa Kodira, Jerry Liu and Carlos Rojo, answered our questions about the life, the background, the science, and the culture of diversity at the GRC. The panelists were passionate about the GRC, and it seemed sincere; the culture and science I saw that day suggested to me that the GRC was an awesome place to translate the best science into the best products.



Group photo with Thomas Edison and his quote, "I find out what the world needs, then I proceed to invent it."



CIE group with some GE team members



CIE group during panel discussion



CIE group on their way to General Electric's GRC

# Four CIE Scholars Present for Research Café Series

The signature Research Café series continued this fall with presentations by scholars from various disciplines. Scholars and Stony Brook faculty and staff came to the CIE to listen to research talks given by our featured Researchers of Distinction.



**July**

**Celest Uche Okoli**  
*Materials Science & Engineering*

'Doped carbon nanotube as electrode material for energy conversion and storage systems'



**November**

**Azeez Aranmolate**  
*Molecular & Cellular Biology*

'The Role of Dystrophin in Myelination of the Central Nervous System'



**September**

**Lyl Tomlinson**  
*Neurobiology & Behavior*

'The Effects of Voluntary Exercise on Oligodendrocytes and Myelin in Developing Animals'



**December**

**Felicia Jackson**  
*Clinical Psychology*

'Unpredictability: The role of unpredictability in the etiology and maintenance of anxiety disorders'

## Summer Lunches with CIE Scholars

Director, Nina Maung-Gaona and Program Manager, Toni Sperzel invited CIE Scholars to an annual lunch to discuss their experiences and the ways in which the CIE can better support them during their degree pursuit. As in years past, insights shared will be used when planning future programs and activities.



## Women in Science and Engineering Lecture

CIE Postdoctoral Associate, Dr. Sheri Clark was a guest lecturer for the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) program on Thursday, September 17. WISE seeks to increase the number of women in science, math and engineering fields through outreach, recruitment and retention efforts. WISE enables undergraduate women to work closely with peers and faculty to form friendships and to achieve a solid background in their field. Dr. Clark's lecture was titled "Navigating Barriers and Bridges to Academic and Career Success". She discussed the psychological literature examining the barriers that women experience when pursuing STEM degrees and careers and ways to overcome these barriers.

## CIE Staff Attends SUNY STEM



CIE Scholar, Emilio Fernandez presenting his poster during the session

In October, CIE team members attended the SUNY STEM Conference held in Albany, NY. This conference brings together experts to present the best means to increase the enthusiasm of diverse students for STEM disciplines and professions, as well as provide programs that demonstrate success in increasing access, retention and graduation of diverse student populations in STEM majors. Dr. Angel Gonzalez and Dr. Sheri Clark presented posters that were co-created by CIE and SBU colleagues, respectively. CIE Scholar, Emilio Fernandez also presented his research during the poster session. CIE Director, Nina Maung-Gaona reflected upon the keynote address given by Dr. Freeman A Hrabowski, III, President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. "Dr. Hrabowski came to Stony Brook in 2002 for the CIE ribbon cutting ceremony," she said. "It was particularly meaningful to hear his talk on building pathways and partnerships in STEM."

# Postdoc Spotlight / Postdoc Appreciation Week



IRACDA NY-CAPS Scholars, Dr. Taylor Schoberle and Dr. Dominique Williams with Program Manager, Karian Wright

Karian Wright and AGEP-T FRAME Scholar & Turner Fellow, Jennifer DeLeon.

The SBU Postdoc Spotlight is an annual event hosted by the Office for the Integration of Research, Education and Professional Development (IREP) as part of the National Postdoc Association Postdoc Appreciation Week. “There is a stereotype that postdocs are an invisible labor force that do important work,” said Dr. Nancy S. Goroff, Professor and Associate Provost for Integration of Research, Education and Professional Development. “We want you to know that we appreciate you and celebrate your research and innovation at Stony Brook.”

Presenters were given the opportunity to practice their research talks with the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science. “The communication training the postdocs received will aid them in becoming the next generation of innovators, leaders, teachers and advocates,” said Dr. Kathleen Flint Ehm, Director, IREP & Office of Postdoctoral Affairs. The Alan Alda Center was established in 2009 within Stony Brook’s School of Journalism, in collaboration with Brookhaven National Laboratory and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, with the goal of training scientists to communicate more effectively with the public.

This was Dr. Schoberle’s second time presenting her research in the SBU Postdoc Spotlight. “The most

challenging part is having only eight minutes to explain everything,” said Dr. Schoberle. “I could spend eight minutes just giving background. Thankfully, since the talk is supposed to be for a general audience, it helps not to worry about including data.” When comparing the two experiences, she explained that giving research talks becomes easier with each opportunity. “I really enjoyed the competitive aspect of the event this year - it was fun to be challenged by it,” she said. “Overall, it has been a very worthwhile experience and I would encourage other postdocs to get involved - even if it is just to attend and show support for the presenters,” said Dr. Schoberle.

When reflecting upon her first SBU Postdoc Spotlight experience, Dr. Williams said the coaching and helpful feedback she received from Dr. Ehm and the coordinators of the Alan Alda Center was beneficial and will assist her career as a scientist and teacher.

“Presenting was a wonderful opportunity for me to get out of my comfort zone, receive training and share my research to a general audience.” - Dr. Williams

The presentations were followed by an appreciation luncheon and career panel event with Dr. Nadine Dalrymple, Science Grant Writer, The College of New Jersey; Dr. Yaihara Fortis-Santiago, Director, Science Alliance, New York Academy of Sciences; and Dr. Ann Hobbs, Software Engineer, Renaissance Technologies. The three panelists shared their professional journeys and provided insight into pursuing alternative career paths. “Be relentlessly curious,” said Dr. Hobbs. To which Dr. Yaihara added, “Do not self-exclude. Go for what you like and at your best capacity.”

The SBU Postdoc Spotlight was a perfect opportunity to glimpse into the exciting research going on at Stony Brook. We encourage you to mark your calendar for next year’s spotlight which will take place September 19-23, 2016 and plan to get involved.

## Practical Professional Skills Series



The panel was moderated by Dr. Nancy Goroff, Professor and Associate Provost for Integration of Research, Education & Professional Development (*right*)

Group at TIAA CREF Financial Services, Renee Pelletier, Senior Financial Advisor and Financial Literacy and Default Management Specialist in the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarship Services and Barry Soloway, President, Tax Consultant and Senior Partner at the Soloway Agency. We look forward to hosting two additional workshops during the spring semester: “Dealing with Difficult People” and “Achieving Work/Life Balance.”

The first workshop in our second annual Practical Professional Skills Series, titled “Financial Fitness for Postdocs and Graduate students,” was held on Monday, December 14. The focus of this first seminar was to address the financial challenges faced by graduate students and postdocs and to provide meaningful information and guidance for dealing with those challenges and setting the foundation for a sound financial future. Financial specialists covered a broad range of topics including budgeting, saving, student loans, debt management, retirement planning and general tax issues related to fellowships, scholarships, international taxes and more. Our specialists included Stephen Baumeister, Senior Financial Consultant for the Field Consulting

# Year of Mentoring Highlights

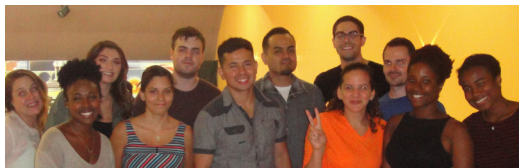
In the Fall 2014 Newsletter, CIE Director, Nina Maung-Gaona declared 2015 to be the “Year of Mentoring”. We are excited to share with you some of the highlights from our programs and activities, as well as recognition received for our work in the Center for Inclusive Education.

## CIE Receives Presidential Mini-Grant Award

The Center for Inclusive Education was awarded a Presidential Mini-Grant for Departmental Diversity Initiative for our proposal - “Mentoring African American Male PhD Scholars in STEM: Lessons learned from 15 years of community support through the Center for Inclusive Education”. As part of the project, we will be releasing a web-based video miniseries in the new year and hosting an on-campus Mentoring Summit during Black History Month 2016. We look forward to sharing with you the successful mentoring relationships of African American male alumni of Stony Brook University doctoral STEM programs and celebrate the successful academic and career outcomes resulting from their mentoring experiences as CIE scholars.



Program Manager, Toni Sperzel (*right*) along with other mini-grant recipients were recognized by President Stanley at the University Awards Dinner held on Tuesday, October 6.



## Community of Student Mentors Fall Kickoff Event

CSM Mentors and Mentees joined together to network and build community at the annual Fall Kickoff Event held at the AMF Smithtown Lanes on Saturday, September 19.

## Turner/AIM Mentors Program Developments

Active since the late nineties, the Turner/AIM Mentors Program (TAMP) received this year a considerable funding commitment from the Educational Opportunity Program, Advancement on Individual Merit (EOP/AIM) to boost program participation and opportunities for support of participating scholars.

The goal of the TAMP program is twofold: to provide academic peer mentoring support throughout EOP/AIM scholars' undergraduate career path; and to provide Turner Fellows with an opportunity to serve the Stony Brook undergraduate community by sharing their knowledge and experiences in pursuit of doctoral study with TAMP scholars thinking about graduate study. Turner Fellows in their first and second years of doctoral study are paired with TAMP juniors and seniors to serve as peer mentors while these students explore the possibility of graduate study. In turn, these TAMP juniors and seniors serve as peer mentors for TAMP freshman and sophomores, offering community and guidance throughout their early college years. The result is a thread of peer mentoring support from an EOP/AIM student's first academic semester, through graduation to support successful degree completion.

New to this year the TAMP program is providing mentors and mentees with comprehensive participant training, as well as several group events throughout the year to bring the community together with our CIE Community of Student Mentors participants. In addition, TAMP mentors and mentees are being offered semesterly incentives for participation. On December 1, the CIE and the EOP/AIM program co-hosted a kickoff and mentor/mentee training for this year's TAMP participants. Over 15 of our 23 participants were able to attend.

If you are a CIE scholar interested in serving as a peer mentor to an undergraduate TAMP student, you can contact Program Manager [Toni Sperzel](#) in the CIE for more information.



## CIE September Monthly Social Emphasized Mentoring Programs

In conjunction with the start of a new academic year, the CIE recruits scholars to participate in the CSM program. This year, volunteers were recruited for the TAMP program as well. Our September Social was focused on “mentoring” to celebrate the existing mentor/mentee relationships within the community and to generate awareness about the two programs.

## CSM Spotlight: Allison Nesbitt and Carrie Mongle



For the past 15 years, the Center for Inclusive Education's Community of Student Mentors (CSM) Program has provided new CIE Scholars with the opportunity to build peer-mentoring relationships with advanced graduate students in their program or similar fields of study. This semester we caught up with Turner & AGEP-T FRAME Fellows, Allison Nesbitt and Carrie Mongle, who have been paired through the CSM as Mentor and Mentee (respectively) since 2012. They shared their thoughts on the value of the CSM Program.

**“There is some advice for surviving graduate school that can only come from more advanced students that have gone through it already. Some of the most important and helpful advice I have received has come from these meetings, like navigating grants and institutional policies and procedures.”**

The rewards of this program for participants are numerous; offering scholars the opportunity to connect and develop one-on-one relationships with other CIE Scholars outside of the lab and department environments. “I have enjoyed getting to know the mentees in a more relaxed environment, being able to share my experiences and help them work through any academic or research issues,” said Allison. The sentiment is mutually shared by Carrie. “The CSM program has offered me an opportunity to build a friendship with my mentor that extends beyond the lab. Knowing that our conversations are confidential gives us the opportunity to explore solutions for difficulties we might be otherwise hesitant to discuss.”

Just what types of issues do our mentors and mentees help one another navigate? The focus of the CSM program is to support scholar's academic advancement and program success, but challenges to that success can run the gamut from academic, social, to family concerns. Carrie shared with us that she recently learned that half of the

material needed for her dissertation data collection has become unavailable for the next three years. “Allison was the first person I went to, not to fix the problem, but because she has become such a close friend and voice of reason throughout this experience. In graduate school, you don't always need someone who can fix the problem; just someone that can sympathize with it.”

A core component of the CSM program is the comprehensive mentor and mentee training that coordinator Dr. Angel Gonzalez oversees each year. These trainings assist participants not only in their CSM peer-mentoring relationship, but provide them with skills they can incorporate into their other mentoring relationships with faculty and students. “In the mentor training, I learned better ways to communicate, to be flexible when mentoring and to establish expectations for the relationship at the beginning,” noted Allison. “I have used some of this information with undergraduates who have worked with me on my dissertation and I will apply the techniques when I have a faculty position.” For more information on the CSM program or to sign up to participate please contact the CIE at [CIE\\_graduateschool@stonybrook.edu](mailto:CIE_graduateschool@stonybrook.edu).

## Speaker Series - “Making Connections for Success in Science”



In keeping with the “Year of Mentoring”, the CIE invited Susan Kauzlarich, PhD to speak to CIE scholars about “Making Connections for Success in Science” for the summer edition of the CIE Speaker Series. Dr. Kauzlarich is a Distinguished Professor of Chemistry at the University of California-Davis and the recipient of the 2008 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Math and Engineering Mentoring. Dr. Kauzlarich's talk explored three tips on how to approach graduate school by drawing upon her own experiences as a graduate student and now department chair.

“First and foremost, it is imperative to really research your graduate advisor,” said Dr. Kauzlarich. “Don't just base your decision off who you like.” There is limitless value to the connections made along the path to the PhD and mentors have

the potential to truly shape the type of researcher, teacher and advisor a young scientist will become.

1. *Graduate school should involve working on interesting stuff - interesting to you and other people.* Find something you love and talk to anyone and everyone you can about your work. People are very important and the time you spend out of the lab can be inspiring as well. Mentors can be found in unexpected places, so keeping yourself open will increase your likelihood of making the right connections.
2. *Graduate school can serve as preparation for a job doing this interesting stuff.* Mentors and advisors who help you get a job in the end are important; their understanding of your research and work ethic will help them make strong recommendations on your behalf. Remember to also take the time and effort to introduce yourself to people because the world of science is really small - you never know when you will see them again or need them for something.
3. *Finally, none of this is possible unless you retain your sanity throughout graduate school.* Find your balance and try your best to be “normal”. It will open you up to new ideas and renewed approaches, but it will also make you a better scientist and mentee.

# CIE Speaker Series Welcomes Alumnus



This fall, the CIE had the privilege of welcoming back former AGEP Fellow and Turner Postdoctoral Trainee, Dr. Marvin Jaime-Vasquez, as part of our Speaker Series. Dr. Jaime-Vasquez gave his talk, “Finding Success From Possibilities”, about his unique career path as a researcher and an entrepreneur, and exactly how he came to find himself pursuing these two, unique endeavors.

Dr. Jaime-Vasquez completed his PhD in Materials Science and Engineering at Stony Brook University in 2002. Currently, he is a physicist at the United States Army Research, Development and Engineering Command (RDECOM), Communications Electronics Research, Development and Engineering Center (CERDEC), Night Vision and Electronic Sensors Directorate. He is also the President of Sabor de mi Tierra Distributor, Inc. and CEO of Bakery Products by Genesis, Inc., a wholesale bakery located in Bay Shore, NY.

Throughout his academic and career journey, Dr. Jaime-Vasquez has learned that immediately accessible resources can increase possibilities and foster higher chances for success. “You have to start with your goals and vision,” he said. “And then you can focus on how your training and the tools made available to you will help achieve both short- and long-term goals.” Ultimately, it is important to know where you are going. If you don’t know where you are going, you won’t get there and will potentially become distracted by all the possibilities in your path.

After sharing some insight into his current research and work, Dr. Jaime-Vasquez explained how he came to find himself as an entrepreneur.

“I never thought I would own a bakery, but I saw an opportunity,” he said. “I knew I could do it. If you have an idea and you believe in it, you have to fight for it.” When he made the leap into entrepreneurship, there were most definitely risks involved. “I knew that it would be worth it in the end and that I was capable of overcoming any obstacles that would be in my way because I had a new vision,” he said. Dr. Jaime-Vasquez reminisced about a piece of advice that stuck with him when he attended a CSTEP conference many years ago - “a set back is a set-up for a comeback.” Using this mantra, he approached both careers with determination and confidence. He concluded his talk by encouraging the CIE scholars in attendance to continue to pursue their goals and vision, but to remain open to the new possibilities that may exist on their journey.

## Dr. Jaime-Vasquez’s tips for a successful career trajectory:

- Find or create a possibility (you may have to invent one)
- Sustain hard work and a positive attitude
- Live by good ethics (people will trust you and want to work with you)
- Use self-attributes
- Use training (your analytical and problem-solving skills train you to be an expert in your area)
- Seek collaboration

# Dr. Marvin Jaime-Vasquez Wins Stony Brook University “40 Under 40” Award



For the second year in a row the CIE is proud to have another one of our alumni joining the ranks of Stony Brook’s 40 Under 40 award recipients. We extend our sincere congratulations to Dr. Marvin Jaime-Vasquez on his selection as a 2015 recipient of the award. The 40 Under 40 program, established in 2014 by the Office of Alumni Relations, aims to celebrate Stony Brook’s brightest, most innovative and entrepreneurial-spirited young graduates from all fields of study. Dr. Jaime-Vasquez joins fellow CIE alumni Dr. Arthur James Goff III and Dr. Mireya Mayor who were recognized as part of the 2014 inaugural recipients. Dr. Vasquez and the other awardees will be recognized on January 26, 2016 at the Edison Ballroom in New York City. See the whole list of 2015 recipients and sign up to attend the awards ceremony on the Office of Alumni Relations [website](#).

# Stony Brook University Hosts GEM Grad Lab



Attendee meeting with a BNL representative, Dr. Eric Huey, during the networking lunch

Stony Brook University was proud to host the 2015 GEM Grad Lab on Friday, October 23. The event was designed to inform and motivate students from underrepresented groups in STEM fields to understand the importance of a graduate degree. All STEM undergraduates (particularly juniors and seniors) and master's students considering pursuing a PhD were invited to attend.

Stony Brook University has been an active member of the National GEM Consortium and the NY-metro area GEM alliance since 2010. Each year, NYC-metro institution (comprised of Stony Brook University, Columbia University, City College, and the New Jersey Institute of Technology) hosts the GRAD Lab and alliance members bring their graduate-degree interested scholars to attend. 2015 marked the first time that Stony Brook has hosted the GRAD Lab, and we were fortunate to have over 40 prospective students in attendance.

The event was kicked-off with a poll to gauge how many attendees were interested in pursuing their PhDs, versus an immediate industry position after obtaining a bachelor's degree. While the numbers were high in favor of continuing education, moderator,

Marcus A. Huggans, PhD, Senior Director, External Relations at The National GEM Consortium, made it clear that he hoped they would improve by the conclusion of their time together. Dr. Huggans spent time sharing the positive outcomes of pursuing a PhD. "I want you to know that this is a chance for you to have an extreme makeover in your life," said Dr. Huggans. He encouraged attendees not to ask "why PhD?", but rather "why not?"

**“Graduate school has the potential to change you and the trajectory of your family; and create nurturing neighborhoods, flourishing cities, productive states, outstanding nations and a wonderful world.” - Dr. Huggans**

The next session was presented by Renetta Garrison Tull, PhD, Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education & Postdoctoral Affairs at UMBC. Dr. Tull elaborated on the steps involved with applying to graduate school - prepare, research, connect/network, adhere to application guidelines and follow-up. "When you look at graduate school, do not just look at the institution," said Dr. Tull. "You have to consider the department and the program." During the networking lunch that followed, attendees were able to connect with representatives from Columbia University, Brookhaven National Laboratory and the Center for Inclusive Education.

Eric Huey, PhD, Process Engineer at Intel Corporation, presented the next session on "How to Fund Graduate School". He shared his personal journey of securing full-funding. "Your first fellowship opens

doors for more," he said. "By the time I completed my graduate studies, I had accumulated \$300,000 in total funding." While this may seem like an unattainable goal, Dr. Huey assured attendees that it is possible. "Networking is very important; connections can help you find funding opportunities," he said. "Do your research, follow-up, make personal connections and network, network, network."

A networking lunch with recruitment representatives from Stony Brook's Center for Inclusive Education, Columbia University's College of Engineering, Brookhaven National Laboratory and the Career Center provided participants with the opportunity to learn more about graduate study and research opportunities in their specific fields of interest.

The GEM Grad Lab concluded with a panel presentation by Daphne Meza, AGEP-T FRAME, Bridge to the Doctorate, Turner and GEM Fellow, and Celest Okoli, AGEP-T FRAME, Turner and GEM Fellow. Moderated by Angela Vara-McCann, Marketing & Recruitment Specialist at Columbia University, Meza and Okoli briefly shared their academic journeys and answered questions from the audience.

Dr. Huggans returned to the stage for closing remarks and to conduct another poll of the audience. He was encouraged to see that the number of attendees now considering a PhD increased from the first poll at the start of the event. "We will not give up until everyone understands the value of a PhD and that GEM can be the fellowship that makes the difference in the pursuit of your dreams," he said.

*The GEM Grad Lab was co-sponsored by Columbia Engineering, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Stony Brook College of Engineering & Applied Sciences, the Career Center, Office of Brookhaven Affairs, CSTEP, EOP/AIM, LSAMP and WISE.*

## Trip to Brookhaven National Laboratory

GEM Grad Lab attendees were given the opportunity to travel to Brookhaven National Laboratory on Friday to participate in lab tours. Director, Nina Maung-Gaona and Program Manager, Toni Sperzel joined the group to learn more about the innovative research opportunities that exist in our community. The tour was coordinated by Terrence Buck who is responsible for coordination of the GEM Fellowship at Brookhaven National Laboratory.



**Search #GEMGradLab on Twitter and Facebook to review the live updates posted throughout the event.**

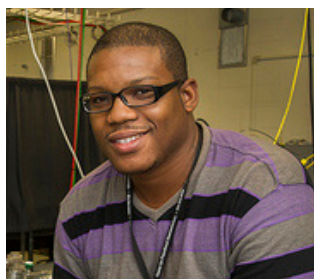
# Welcome New AGEP-T FRAME Postdoctoral Fellows



**Alesha Harris, PhD** is a chemistry PhD graduate from the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas. While at BNL, Dr. Harris will provide support for the design, implementation, deployment and characterization of scintillator detector through chemical synthesis and spectroscopic measurements. She will focus on the detector development that orchestrates a variety of metal-doped liquid scintillators for neutrino searches. She expects to develop strong analytical skills using X-Ray Fluorescence, Liquid Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry, Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry, Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy, Ultraviolet Spectrometer, Fluorescence Emission, Light-Yield Coincidence Photomultiplier Tube, 2-M System, Low Background Counting; and to improve her skills on the Flow Cytometer and the Inductively Coupled Mass Spectrometer.



**Terry Dwight McGee, PhD** is a native of Georgia. He obtained his BS and MS in Chemistry from Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University. He continued his studies at the University of Florida, where he was a NSF Bridge to Doctorate Fellow and received his PhD in Physical Chemistry. As a postdoctoral associate at Stony Brook University, working with Dr. Robert Rizzo in the Department of Applied Mathematics and Statistics, Dr. McGee's research is centered on molecular recognition and developing computational approaches to drug design. More specifically, he is designing and developing small-molecule-fusion inhibitors that will aid in treating those living with the HIV virus.



**Robert Palomino, PhD** earned his BS in Chemistry from St. John's University. During his undergraduate years, he was accepted into the NIH Initiative for Minority Student Development (IMSD) research program. Additionally, he was involved in a summer REU at Georgetown University where he researched Cu-base organometallic catalysts for hydrocarbon functionalization, which led to a publication. Dr. Palomino earned his PhD from Stony Brook University where he was awarded the New York State funded Dr. W. Burghardt Turner Fellowship and subsequently a NSF GRFP Fellowship. He is now working with Dr. Jose Rodriguez at Brookhaven National Laboratory on synchrotron-based studies of CO<sub>2</sub> hydrogenation catalysts towards alcohol synthesis.

# Welcome New AGEP-T FRAME Graduate Fellows

- **Alejandra Castano**, PhD candidate in Chemistry
- **Oluwakayode Ekwunife-Orakwue**, PhD candidate in Technology & Society
- **Moises Guardado**, PhD student in Genetics
- **Jeannette Marine**, PhD candidate in Chemistry
- **Joe Matarlo**, PhD candidate in Biochemistry & Structural Biology
- **Ariel Negron**, PhD candidate in Neuroscience
- **Melissa Sims**, PhD candidate in Geosciences



AGEP-T Executive Committee Members & Fellows at the External Advisory Board Meeting on October 9.

# College Teaching Seminar Series



Speaker, Dr. Barbara Houtz presenting at the Scientists Teaching Science Workshop on October 21.

The 2015-2016 College Teaching Seminar Series began on Wednesday, October 21 with a Scientists Teaching Science workshop which provided an introduction to the best practices in teaching in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The series continued with additional seminars covering topics such as building a fool-proof syllabus, measuring student progress and selecting and developing course materials. The fall series will conclude with communicating science workshops on improvisation for scientists and distilling your message. The series will return in the spring semester with additional seminars.



# Welcome New IRACDA NY-CAPS Postdoctoral Scholars



**Emmanuel Asare, PhD** is originally from Ghana, West Africa. He earned his BS in Biology from Clarkson University at Potsdam. During his first semester, he volunteered to work on a research project in the lab of Dr. James Schulte. Dr. Schulte's research focused on mutation rates in DNA to determine evolution times of various lizards and snakes. Dr. Asare earned his PhD in Genetics at Stony Brook University where he was a LSAMP Bridge to Doctorate Fellow and AGEP-T FRAME Fellow. As an IRACDA NY-CAPS Scholar, Dr. Asare will work in the lab of Dr. Eckard Wimmer where he will explore the localization of viral and host proteins during the life cycle of poliovirus infection.



**Angela Miguez, PhD** earned her BS in Chemistry with a minor in mathematical science from the University of North Florida and obtained her PhD in Chemistry from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Currently, she is a NY-CAPS Scholar in the lab of Dr. Carlos Simmerling in the Laufer Center for Physical and Quantitative Biology at Stony Brook University. In a broad sense, the Simmerling group is interested in using simulation to study the dynamics of biomolecular systems. Specifically, Dr. Miguez' research will focus on using molecular dynamics simulations to understand the fundamental processes behind protein-DNA recognition.



**Dominique Williams, PhD** earned her BS in Chemistry from Virginia Commonwealth University and her PhD in Chemistry at Georgia State University. Dr. Williams is currently a NY-CAPS Scholar at Stony Brook University working under Dr. Elizabeth Boon in the Department of Chemistry where she is studying the mechanism of signaling pathways that have been linked to the modulation of bacterial biofilms. The goal of her research is to use biochemical and molecular methods to investigate NO-dependent cyclic di-GMP signaling and the regulatory action of signaling proteins in the regulation of biofilms. Dr. Williams' studies could lead to novel strategies for the prevention and/or treatment of antibiotic-resistant bacterial biofilms.

## The 2015 National IRACDA Conference

The 2015 National IRACDA Conference - Waves of Change: Research, Teaching, and Diversity - was held on June 14-16 at the Catamaran Resort Hotel in San Diego, CA. NY-CAPS Scholars, Drs. Sarah Alaei, Elizabeth Atkinson, William Gillis, Javier Monzón, Marianne Moore, Jillian Nissen, Taylor Schoberle and Dominique Williams attended, along with Stony Brook staff and faculty, Nina Maung-Gaona (Co-PI) and Karian Wright (Program Manager), Dr. Jorge Benach (PI) and Catherine Scott (SBU Faculty Center). Representatives from our partner institutions also attended the conference, Dr. Candice Foley and Nina Leonhardt (Suffolk County Community College) and Dr. Louise Hainline (Brooklyn College).



The NY-CAPS program boasted the most posters represented in the poster session. Dr. Marianne Moore's poster was selected as the best bioinformatics and computational biology poster, which was acknowledged at the closing ceremony. One of the judges noted that her poster titled "Host defense peptide diversity in bats: implications for resistance to White-Nose Syndrome" provided a well thought-out and organized presentation of her work that clearly demonstrated the project's theory, method, outcomes and next steps.

## IRACDA NY-CAPS Advances Five Postdocs into the Professoriate

**Tracy Callender, PhD** (Cohort 1) accepted a full-time assistant professor faculty position at LIU-Post in the Department of Biology.

**William Gillis, PhD** (Cohort 1) accepted a tenure-track position in the biology department at SUNY Old Westbury.

**Gretchen López-Hernandez, PhD** (Cohort 1) accepted an assistant professorship in the Department of Physiology at Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences.

**Javier Monzón, PhD** (Cohort 2) accepted a tenure-track position at Pepperdine University.

**Marianne Moore, PhD** (Cohort 2) accepted a tenure-track position at Arizona State University where she will be an Assistant Professor in Animal Ecology.

# Welcoming the 2015 Turner Fellowship Cohort

This year the Turner Program welcomed 19 incoming fellows from 14 academic programs who accepted offers from the Turner Fellowship program and joined Stony Brook in the fall 2015 semester.

- **Olga Bonilla**, PhD in Hispanic Languages & Literature
- **Kevin Chavez**, MD
- **Michael Cochran**, PhD in Physics & Astronomy
- **Matthew Ford**, PhD in History
- **Jordan Franklin**, MFA in Creative Writing & Literature
- **Rosa Hollisa**, MD
- **Sirena Ibrahim**, PhD in Social & Health Psychology
- **Jonathan Macagba**, PhD in Cultural Analysis & Theory
- **Tonie Mckenzie**, MD
- **Brittany Miller**, PhD in Social & Health Psychology
- **Megan Mladinch**, PhD in Molecular & Cellular Biology
- **Camilia Monestine**, PhD in Neuroscience
- **Remy Oukaour**, PhD in Computer Science
- **Lauren Petruzzo**, PhD in Interdepartmental Anthropology
- **Charles Shugert**, PhD in Physics & Astronomy
- **Jayson Smith**, PhD in Genetics
- **Yalile Suriel**, PhD in History
- **Jinnette Tolentine Collado**, PhD in Chemistry
- **Howard Treadwell-Smith**, PhD in Linguistics

## Turner Welcome Dinner

The CIE community and SBU staff and faculty introduced the new Turner Fellows on Friday, September 25 at the Hilton Garden Inn. Special guests, Joyce, Mitchell and Sylvia Turner, extended a warm welcome into the Turner “family”. Dean Taber started the evening with welcoming remarks, followed by an overview of the CIE and announcement of the new Turner Fellows by Nina Maung-Gaona. Once all inductees were standing in the front of the room, Maung-Gaona invited current and former Turner Fellows to rise from their seats to show the strength of the community. She encouraged all Turner Fellows to get to know one another and to rely on the strengths that exist among them. Mitchell Turner then shared a special tribute to his father, Dr. W. Burghardt Turner, from whom the prestigious fellowship received its name. *2015 would have marked the 100th birthday of Dr. W. Burghardt Turner.* Mitchell reminisced about his father’s life experiences and accomplishments, and charged the scholars to keep up their hard work. The speeches concluded with remarks from Program Manager, Toni Sperzel.



## Turner Fellowship Program Announces the New Dr. David L. Ferguson Merit Award

The success of the Turner Fellowship program has long been recognized by the SUNY office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI) who has on multiple occasions cited that Stony Brook University’s Graduate Diversity Fellowship Program graduates the largest number of doctoral degree recipients than any of the other SUNY campuses. This year, that recognition was bolstered by an increased financial commitment by ODEI to grow the number of underrepresented scholars pursuing their doctoral degrees here at Stony Brook.

To that end, this fall the Dean of the Graduate School announced a new recruitment funding award out of the Turner Fellowship Program that will take effect this spring. The David L. Ferguson Merit Award is a one time, \$3,000 award that will be granted to Turner Fellowship nominees who were not selected as fellowship recipients but who received strong reviews by the Turner Advisory Committee. Recipients of the Ferguson Merit award would have the opportunity to We also apply for other Turner funding, such as research grants and conference travel support during the academic year in which they are recipients and will automatically be considered for the Turner Dissertation Fellowship upon advancement to candidacy.

**Congratulations to the fall 2015 applicants to Stony Brook University who were selected to receive the inaugural round of Ferguson Merit Awards.**

**Gisele Blain De Dios**

*PhD in Hispanic Languages & Literature*

**Ana Paula Delgado**

*PhD in Genetics*

**Natali Greco**

*PhD in Chemistry*

**Donald Hendrix**

*PhD in Geosciences*

**Adrian Hurtado**

*PhD in Materials Science & Engineering*

**Natalia Navas**

*PhD in Sociology*

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# Turner Dissertation Fellowship

In December, the Turner program awarded six advanced doctoral scholars Turner Dissertation Fellowships. This award recognizes the academic and research achievements of underrepresented PhD students not previously supported by the Turner Fellowship, providing one to two years of fellowship funding to assist in their timely completion of the dissertation and receipt of the PhD. Congratulations to all six of this year's recipients and welcome to the Turner Fellowship family.

**Nicole Calma**, PhD in Psychology  
**Alejandra Castano**, PhD in Chemistry  
**Sara Cernadas-Martin**, PhD in Marine and Atmospheric Sciences  
**Elizabeth Coston**, PhD in Sociology  
**Hewan Girma**, PhD in Sociology  
**Joe Matarlo**, PhD in Biochemistry and Structural Biology

## Alumni Spotlight: Krystal Grant, PhD

"Because of the Turner Fellowship, I had the qualifications to participate and the vision to share." Over the Thanksgiving Break, the CIE received this heartfelt message from Turner alumna Dr. Krystal Grant. Dr. Grant received her PhD in music composition at Stony Brook University in 2012. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Music Composition at Lancaster Bible College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The following is an excerpt from her recent email highlighting the ways in which her Stony Brook experience is influencing her work in being a mentor and educator at her current institution.



*I wanted to share with you last week's experience that caused me to deeply reflect on the meaning of the Turner Fellowship. On November 11 and 12 I was invited to speak at the school where I teach during the faculty-led symposium on the topic, "Race in the Church and America." On both days, I spoke of the Turner Fellowship. In my Wednesday talk, I related my experience of being an African-American studying and teaching music on college campuses across two decades. I shared the story of Dr. Turner, of his being named for W.E.B. DuBois, of his abandoning his dissertation to take care of his family, and of his diversifying the coursework in history at Stony Brook. I described my first day of instructing college students as a teaching assistant. I admitted that while I am changing the face of my campus's faculty, I am not yet mentoring students.*

*On Thursday, I served as one of six faculty members on a panel that addressed questions students submitted anonymously via text message and an online form. Besides contributing to the discussion on media literacy and on building relationships across difference, I responded first to the question about whether affirmative action is still needed. I said that I would not have gone to graduate school without it. I described how the state of New York decided to fund underrepresented students and how the Turner Fellowship manifested that decision. I explained how the definition of underrepresented was expanded to include not only race, allowing for the recruitment and retention of students with other kinds of difference, such as disability and mental illness. I noted the phrase that reverberated throughout my time at Stony Brook: 'diversify the professoriate.' I added, 'specifically in the United States so that the faculty on every campus is reflective of our population.'*

*When I was in residence at Stony Brook University, I attended three or four CIE events per year and took advantage of extra opportunities such as the dissertation writing workshop and the summer research grant. I gained inspiration and camaraderie from other fellows and empathy from the staff. Yet, the speeches from the deans were what I remembered as I prepared to speak at this event. Although I teach at a small school, I am honored to have been a significant part of helping a thousand undergraduates wrestle with the presence of racism. During my talk, I paid particular attention to making sure that I gave my students time and space to reflect on their own experiences. The panel discussion clarified terms, promoted actions, and modeled civil dialogue. Thank you for your work at the Center for Inclusive Education. In large and small ways, you have each enabled me to be where I am today.*

**Dr. Grant's talk as part of the "Race and Church in American" symposium at Lancaster Bible College is available [online](#).**

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2015 marked the arrival of our second cohort of IMSD-MERGE Scholars. IMSD-MERGE aims to increase the number of underrepresented students completing highly productive biological and biomedical science degrees at Stony Brook University, and prepare them for seamless advancement into successful research careers.

## Welcome New IMSD-MERGE Undergraduate Scholars



*In order left to right:*

**Darwin Carbajal**, Biochemistry (minor in Bioengineering) - Advisor: Dr. Gabor Balazsi

**Daniel Irizarry**, Biology (specialization in Developmental Genetics) - Advisor: Dr. Jennie Williams

**Kennelia Mellanson**, Biology (minor in Bioengineering) - Advisor: Ellen Li

**Joselin Vargas**, Biochemistry - Advisor: Gerardo Mackenzie

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## Welcome New IMSD-MERGE Graduate Scholars



*In order left to right:*

**Emilie Bouda**, Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology

**Ana Paula Delgado**, Genetics

**Anthony Stapon**, Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology

**Jinnette Tolentino Collado**, Chemistry

**Tanya Victor**, Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology

## Entering Mentoring Workshop Series Launched

The first annual IMSD-MERGE Entering Mentoring workshop series was held in three sessions on July 13, 15 and 17. Adapted from the “Entering Mentoring Seminar”, developed by the Wisconsin Program for Scientific Teaching in Collaboration with The Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the workshops addressed intellectual, technical, personal growth and interpersonal issues that were identified as concerns by research mentors. Participants included undergraduate and graduate IMSD-MERGE Scholars and their advisors. Presenters shared information and facilitated discussions about communication skills, listening abilities and mentoring capacities.

## Heads-Up Summer Sessions

Orientation for the summer Heads-Up program was held on Monday, August 3, followed by eight sessions throughout the month of August.

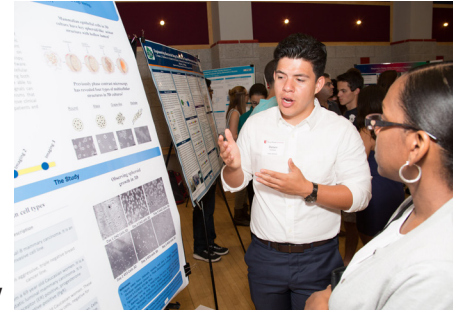
Heads-Up is a rigorous two-week program to prepare incoming IMSD-MERGE Scholars for the first year of coursework and laboratory rotations. Scholars are exposed to not only course syllabi and expectations, but also have the opportunity to complete practice questions and scientific exercises that mimic the work they will experience in the semester ahead.



# REU & IMSD-MERGE Research Symposium & Closing Ceremony

Over 150 people attended the 2015 Undergraduate Summer Research Symposium held on Friday, August 7.

REU: Nanotechnology for Health, Energy & the Environment and IMSD-MERGE summer interns, along with students from the Pharmacology ASPET, BioPREP, Explorations in STEM, iGEM, OEDG Geo prep, REU: Biomedical Informatics, REU: Exploring the Chemistry of Energy Applications, Living Systems and Supramolecular Assemblies (ExCELS) and SUNY Brain programs, presented posters and shared their accomplishments from their respective programs. Poster presentations were given in the morning, followed by lunch and a closing ceremony where they received certificates of achievement.



Darwin Carbajal presenting his research



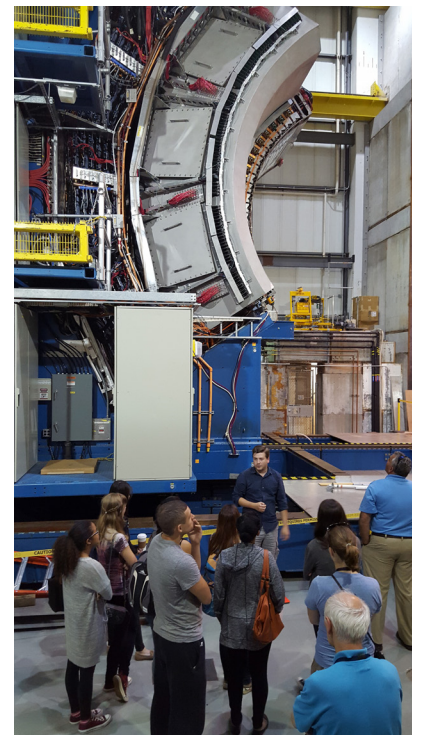
REU interns with CIE Director, Nina Maung Gaona; CIE Administrative Assistant, Donna Scala; Program Manager, Kathyne Piazzola & PI, Dr. Gary Halada



IMSD-MERGE Scholars with CIE Director, Nina Maung-Gaona; Program Manager, Dr. Angel Gonzalez & PI, Dr. J. Peter Gergen

## Facilities tour of Brookhaven National Laboratory

On Friday July 24, the REU and IMSD-MERGE interns, along with Program Managers Kathyne Piazzola and Dr. Angel Gonzalez and Principal Investigator Gay Halada, participated in a day-long tour of the many research facilities at Brookhaven National Laboratory, such as the NSLS II and the Center for Functional Nanomaterials.



# Information Videos in Chinese are Now Live

The CIE has always been a proponent of expanding your horizons and taking on new, exciting opportunities to contribute to the betterment of your surroundings. With this in mind, in 2015 CIE Administrative Assistant, Donna Scala began a year-long project in collaboration with the Graduate School to develop a series of topic-based recruitment videos to assist the University's graduate degree programs in their overseas China recruitment efforts.

As of November 9, the complete 30-minute video and topic segments of the Stony Brook Information Videos in Chinese were finalized and hosted on the [Graduate School website](#) (under "Prospective Students" tab) and the [Stony Brook University YouTube channel](#).

For the last ten years, the Graduate School has been sending a team of faculty to various cities in China to interview a select number of Chinese applicants to our doctoral programs. To support that effort, this video series was created with the intention of answering some commonly asked questions by prospective students. Current Stony Brook University graduate students that came from China share their personal experiences and advice on a range of topics such as housing, weather, recreation, research opportunities and the overall PhD experience.

"This video series comes at a critical time for Stony Brook's doctoral recruitment in China," noted Dean Charles Taber. "As interest in Stony Brook as a premier research institution increases, we are faced with funding challenges that limit our ability to travel and meet with prospective students abroad. The videos will allow us to strengthen our virtual relationships with prospective students without adding substantial costs to our recruitment budget. Combined with our expanding YouTube library of academic videos being produced by graduate programs such as Linguistics, the China Recruitment Video Series is helping to solidify Stony Brook's video online presence."

While the CIE's involvement in this project has officially ended, the Graduate School plans to develop future video series for domestic applicants and possible international applications from other countries as well.



The CIE would like to extend special appreciation to Zifei Wu, Graduate Student in the Department of Theatre Arts, for her work editing the video series.

# CIE Director Nina Maung-Gaona Receives Chancellor's Award for Professional Service



Maung-Gaona with her award



President Stanley and Maung-Gaona take a selfie

CIE Director and Assistant Dean for Diversity & Inclusion, Nina Maung-Gaona had the honor of receiving this year's SUNY Chancellor's award for Excellence in Professional Service at the University Awards Dinner hosted by the Office of the President on October 6. The award recognizes individuals who serve as professional role models for a University system in the pursuit of excellence. It also acknowledges the recipient's accomplishments in transcending the normal definition of excellence by repeatedly seeking to improve herself, her campuses, and ultimately, SUNY. "There is no one who better exemplifies the pursuit of excellence within and beyond their job description than Stony Brook University's Director of the Center for Inclusive Education, Nina Maung-Gaona," said Associate Provost for Diversity, Dr. David L. Ferguson. In her fourteen years of full-time service to the institution, she has transcended the normal definitions of excellence; affecting change for the betterment of herself, her team, her programs, her campus and the State University of New York system in the fields of diversity and inclusion. "Since her hiring as NSF SUNY AGEP Alliance Program Coordinator in 2000, Nina has taken one externally-funded program and grown it into the Center for Inclusive Education, which is now home to seven externally-funded diversity-focused programs directly supporting underrepresented undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral campus scholars" noted Dr. Ferguson. "What sets her apart as a leader of distinction is her foresight into the future needs of underrepresented scholars and her willingness to always be re-evaluating, assessing and adapting to those changing needs."

# IMSD Principal Investigator Dr. J. Peter Gergen Receives Chancellor's Award in Faculty Service



The CIE was delighted to celebrate the additional awarding of the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service to IMSD-MERGE Principal Investigator and Professor of Biochemistry and Cell Biology, Dr. J. Peter Gergen. This award recognizes full-time teaching, tenured, or tenure-track faculty who have demonstrated throughout their career consistent, superior service to their campus and/or the SUNY system, as well as contributions to local regional, state, national or global communities. Faculty recipients must show outstanding achievement and skill in providing leadership; outreach; or other extraordinary service to the University, community or the nominee's professional organization.

Dr. Gergen joined Stony Brook University in 1989 and has had a highly successful scientific career; having mentored six postdoctoral researchers, 18 graduate students, 79 undergraduate students, 26 high school students with close to 60 scientific publications. In addition to his scientific research and student mentoring, Dr. Gergen has held numerous administrative/ leadership positions such as Associate Dean of the Graduate School and Director of the Genetics Graduate Program. He currently serves as Director of Undergraduate Biology where he oversees the teaching of undergraduate courses required for both the biology and the biochemistry majors as well as the lab series required for introductory biology. "Dr. Gergen is a force of nature on the Stony Brook University campus. His astounding record of service makes him an ideal candidate for the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service," said CIE Director, Nina Maung-Gaona. "He is truly deserving of this recognition."

# HHM Awards Given to CIE Staff & Scholars

The 2015 Hispanic Heritage Month concluded with the 26th Annual Closing Celebration and Award Ceremony on Thursday, November 5. The CIE reserved tables at the event to join together and celebrate our very own staff and scholars who were honored for their professional and academic achievements. CIE Postdoctoral Associate, Dr. Angel I. Gonzalez received the Faculty/Staff Recognition Award; AGEP-T FRAME & Turner Fellow, Emilio Fernandez received the Rafaela Luna Abreu Scholarship; and AGEP-T FRAME & Turner Fellow, Jason Quinones received the Academic Award. All three recipients exemplify the Hispanic Heritage Month mission statement of "Honoring our Heritage, Building our Future". Congratulations on these well-deserved awards!



Award recipients Dr. Angel Gonzalez, Emilio Fernandez & Jason Quinones



Scan the QR code to access the links referenced throughout the newsletter.

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[www.stonybrook.edu/cie](http://www.stonybrook.edu/cie)

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THE CENTER FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IS A DIVISION OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL AND AFFILIATED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY IN THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND APPLIED SCIENCES.

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