

**ADVANCE at Brown  
Interim Report  
August - October 2008  
Submitted Nov. 3, 2008**

**Significant Accomplishments**

The ADVANCE program at Brown seeks to increase the retention and advancement of women faculty in science and engineering by facilitating the path to career success for all faculty members. Our work this year has resulted in the implementation of faculty development programs that promote access for women faculty and success for all Brown faculty. The Research Opportunities Coordinator continued to assist faculty with identifying sources for funding. We launched peer mentoring groups and the first round of our Leadership program. We continued with the third round of our Career Development Awards. Lectures from two high-profile Visiting Scholars gave us visibility on campus and opportunities to work with department chairs and targeted groups of junior women faculty. We continue to work on the design of our one-on-one mentoring program in partnership with the offices of the Provost and Deans of the Faculty and BioMedical Division. We are cultivating a home at Brown for a national “Earth Science Women’s Network.”

**1. Department chair training sessions**

In keeping with the Brown ADVANCE program’s focus on faculty development as one tool for enhancing equitable work environments for women and men, two sessions for department chairs were held this fall. Dr. Virginia Valian (author of *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women* and Director of Hunter College’s Gender Equity Project) spent a day on campus in September 2008. In addition to her public lecture, she led a session for department and search chairs: “Recruitment and Retention Guidelines that Enhance Diversity in Faculty Searches.”

Joan C. Williams (author of *Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflict and What to do About It*) presented a session for department chairs and members of the Dean of the Faculty’s office entitled, “Stealing the Best Talent in an Era of Tight Budgets,” focusing on the importance of work/life balance policies in the recruitment and retention of faculty.

**2. Peer Mentoring Groups**

Dr. Semahat Demir, NSF Biomedical Engineering Program Director, presented a talk on the positive outcomes of peer-mentoring for women in biomedical engineering in the spring of 2008.

As a result, the ADVANCE program at Brown is sponsoring three peer mentoring groups for women scientists this fall: Women Professors in the Physical Sciences; Women Professors in the Biological Sciences; Mid-Career Women in the Biological and Physical Sciences. Groups have between 8 and 12 participants each. The ADVANCE office sponsors these groups by providing logistical support, “Getting Started Guidelines,” contacts for University resources and speakers, and consultation as needed.

### **3. Career Development Awards**

The third round of Requests for Proposals for ADVANCE Career Development Awards closed on October 31. Career Development Awards help faculty access senior colleagues at other institutions who can serve as collaborators, role models, and sponsors. This year we received 24 proposals, up from 19 last year, and 9 the first year. Our past 16 awards have funded plans to develop international collaborations, and brought in scholars to give departmental talks and meet with awardees’ colleagues and students.

### **4. Leadership Program**

RFPs for a first round of Leadership Awards have been issued to tenured and tenure-track women faculty in the sciences and engineering at Brown. We have created three award categories: Advancing Leaders at Brown; Scientific Leadership; and Leadership Development. Advancing Leaders Awards pair women faculty with a Brown administrator with whom they can collaborate on a special project. These awards give women scientists who are interested in pursuing an administrative career in higher education opportunities to discover what administrative work entails, to learn about the process of decision-making at various levels in the university, and to build their own leadership skills by providing teaching release time or funding for lab or research support. Scientific Leadership Awards provide assistance for women scientists and engineers to take on a leadership role (such as becoming president or vice president of a scientific society or professional organization, or assuming editorship of a journal) in their field without jeopardizing their own research. Leadership Development Awards provide women science and engineering faculty with the means to attend Academic Administration Training or Leadership Programs provided by other institutions (HERS Institutes, Leadership Excellence for Academic Diversity program at University of Washington, et al). Proposals for the Advancing Leaders program are due on November 30<sup>th</sup>; proposals for the other two programs will be accepted on a rolling basis.

## **5. Visiting Scholars**

Dr. Virginia Valian spent Friday, September 12 on campus. In addition to her lecture, “Why So Slow?” (attended by an audience of 95 people) and the department chair training session, she led women faculty from the Medical School in a discussion of “Effectiveness in Influencing Decisions.” Dr. Valian led 15 women assistant and associate professors from all disciplines in a discussion of ways to address hidden/subtle bias; getting promoted from associate to full professor; and ways in which the demands on faculty members’ time – research, service, teaching and mentoring – are gendered, and how to prioritize. She also talked with 20+ female undergraduate and graduate students about “Making Smart Choices as a Young Woman in the Sciences”.

Joan C. Williams delivered “Double Standards, Double Binds, and Double Jeopardy: Solutions on an Individual and Institutional Level” to an audience of 34 people on Tuesday, October 14. Professor Williams also spoke with women Medical School faculty about generational differences between women scientists; with department chairs about recruitment and retention strategies; and with a small group of women faculty about “Four Patterns of Gender Bias and How to Handle Each”.

## **6. One on one peer mentoring programs**

We are actively working with the Provost, Dean of the Faculty, and Dean of Biological and Medical Sciences to implement an “opt out” mentoring program for all new tenure track faculty members at the University. The Brown Faculty Mentoring Program offers tenure-track faculty members the opportunity to form a mentoring relationship with a senior faculty member *from a different department, but the same field*. Mentors and “Mentees” are “matched” based on responses to a short questionnaire. ADVANCE Managing Director Susan Overton will work with Associate Deans of the Faculty, Biology, and Public Health to provide ongoing support and training for mentors and mentees to sustain these mentoring relationships. Suggested discussion topics for mentors and mentees will include teaching and research; preparation for tenure; choosing committee and service assignments; attending conferences and joining professional associations; the campus environment for faculty who are members of under-represented groups; and work/family balance.

## **7. Collaborations with the Office of Women in Medicine**

ADVANCE Visiting Scholars have provided important opportunities for the ADVANCE program to reach women in Brown's Medical School. Dr. Shelley Cyr is a member of the ADVANCE Steering Committee and Associate Dean/Director of the Office of Women in Medicine. OWM sponsored breakfast talks with Virginia Valian and Joan Williams; attendance was 70 and 35, respectively. This has given the ADVANCE office visibility with women and deans in the Medical School, and resulted in informal consultations with Medical School and Public Health faculty members.

#### **8. Earth Sciences Women's Network**

New-to-Brown Assistant Professor of Geological Sciences and Environmental Studies

Meredith Hastings started an Earth Sciences Women's Network (ESWN) through her own contacts; membership on the listserv is currently 600+. ESWN will convene officially for the first time at a national conference in December; ADVANCE at Brown is contributing financial support for their workshop, "Building Scientific Leadership Skills for Success in Scientific Organizations" ([www.joss.ucar.edu/joss\\_psg/meetings/Meetings\\_2008/eswn\\_workshop](http://www.joss.ucar.edu/joss_psg/meetings/Meetings_2008/eswn_workshop)). Our hope is that ESWN will find an organizational home at Brown, with assistance from the ADVANCE office.

#### **9. Outreach**

Managing Director Susan Overton conducted a series of outreach meetings. She met individually with 8 of 14 STEM department chairs and with representatives from 3 additional STEM departments. She met with both Associate Deans of the Faculty, the Dean of the College for Science Education, the Associate Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the Associate Dean of Biology, and the Associate Dean for Public Health to discuss departmental issues that the ADVANCE program might help to address, and initiatives (mentoring programs) currently under way. Susan consulted with ADVANCE program directors at the University of Washington and the University of Colorado about department chair training and faculty leadership development, and made other contacts and inquiries (regarding interactive theatre as a faculty training tool) with ADVANCE colleagues through the NSF-provided listserv.

#### **Areas of Difficulty/Resistance**

The ADVANCE Steering Committee began actively addressing concerns about dual career faculty hires at Brown. We invited Associate Provost for Institutional Diversity Brenda Allen to

meet with the Steering Committee to clarify the University's policy on dual career hiring. Dr. Allen stated that Brown has a protocol that is used often but not always when dual career issues arise, but that there is no formal policy or procedure. Because of the informality of the process, the University has at times been unable to act quickly enough to put an offer in place for both partners of a faculty couple. Steering Committee members suggested to Dr. Allen that the University take a proactive approach to dual career issues with faculty hires by providing candidates with a statement of Brown's protocol; e.g., an information sheet would provide candidates with contact information for a University representative (perhaps someone in the office of the Dean of the Faculty) who can begin the process of negotiating an offer for a competitive candidate's partner.

Joan Williams' visit to Brown in October included a session with the Dean and an Associate Dean of the Faculty, and department chairs to examine ways in which Brown's "family friendly" policies can be used as recruitment tools in a competitive academic job market. Williams urged the Dean of the Faculty to put into place concrete practices and policies that support and guide faculty search chairs in addressing this issue.

### **Best Idea Yet**

A novel aspect of the ADVANCE program at Brown is the Leadership Program that we launched this fall (see #4 above). The Scientific Leadership Awards are designed to assist and encourage mid-career women to take on formal roles in professional associations and/or as editors of journals at a critical juncture in their academic careers. By providing formal structures for on- and off-campus leadership collaborations through our Leadership Support and Advancing Leaders Award programs, the ADVANCE program at Brown promotes women's accomplishments and enhances their leadership abilities. These Leadership programs are unique contributions to NSF ADVANCE goals: they increase women faculty members' exposure to senior colleagues at Brown and inter/nationally, raising the profiles of women as academic leaders.

### **Project Evaluation Update**

In her second-year monitoring report (a qualitative analysis), External Evaluator Janet Billson found that the Brown ADVANCE program is on target to achieve its goals, and that the

University community has a general understanding of our focus on faculty promotion and development practices as they impact women and men (rather than as an institutional tool to increase recruitment of women faculty in the STEM fields). The report suggests that we continue to

- communicate our mission in the context of institutional climate and diversity initiatives, thereby increasing our visibility;
- position ourselves as key players in policy review (childcare, dual career hiring, tenure and promotion);
- access and develop leadership sessions for department chairs;
- help departments and divisions systematize faculty mentoring programs;
- gather and publicize institutional research (on faculty teaching and advising loads, utilization of parental leaves and tenure clock relief provisions, et al);
- include women faculty in the School of Medicine in our programming and initiatives;
- partner with University administrators and existing programs that demonstrate Brown's commitment to women scientists and leaders.

Dr. Billson has issued (via the ADVANCE website) a faculty survey for all tenured and tenure track faculty members in the physical and biological sciences to measure perceptions of work environments and advancement opportunities. The survey deadline was September 30, 2008; once analyzed, results will be used to further inform ADVANCE program initiatives.