

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

In 2017, Brown University's IMSD Program received a grant of \$3.3 million for the period 2017 -2022 to fund 12 PhD trainees in the biomedical, public health and related physical sciences. This funding represents renewed and expanded support from the National Institute Health, which recognizes IMSD's accomplishments and promise in the coming years. In the midst of a changing higher education landscape, this is a particularly important and reflective moment for both the university and the program, especially as IMSD reaches a 10-year milestone. Brown's IMSD program strives to strengthen the sciences in the U.S. by ensuring that our workforce composition mirrors the increasing diversity of our nation. Our expansion of IMSD at Brown extends our reach and impact to 21 PhD programs across the university. In doing so, we support greater trainee diversity, and greater interdisciplinary training. This work is not new to Brown. The foundation of IMSD's practices continues to be Brown's investments in diversity and inclusion, and our embrace of scholarly excellence. Supporting these priorities also supports innovation and creativity in an increasingly global world. We look forward to working with all of our colleagues in the coming year.

Andrew G. Campbell, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School
Professor of Medical Science

Elizabeth O. Harrington, Ph.D.
Associate Dean, Office of Graduate &
Postdoctoral Studies
Professor of Medicine

IMSD Congratulates New PhDs 2018

Five IMSD trainees and seniors scholars were conferred the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Brown University's 250th Commencement on May 27, 2018. Congratulations and best wishes to all degree recipients as they continue on their career journeys!

Rafael Gonzalez-Cruz - Ph.D., Biomedical Engineering

Hawasatu Dumbuya - Ph.D., Molecular Pharmacology & Physiology

Eboni Chambers - Ph.D., Pathobiology; Master's in Public Affairs (MPA)

Christine Scaduto - Ph.D., Molecular Biology, Cell Biology and Biochemistry

Torrey Truszkowski - Ph.D., Neuroscience



From left: Rafael Gonzalez-Cruz, Hawasatu Dumbuya, and Eboni Chambers

Save the Dates!

- Training Module- Marketing Yourself for Success- February 28th, March 7th & 14th
- 'The Art of the Chalk Talk: An Interactive Workshop' with Jason Heustis- March 1st
- Graduate Students of Color Reset Series: Mentoring and Advising- March 1st
- Super Monday- March 18th
- "Can We Talk" film workshop- March 22nd
- Graduate Students of Color Reset Series: Maximizing Your Summer- April 4th

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Excellence

Awards

IMSD congratulates the following students on their recent awards:

- Garvin Dodard (Pathobiology) - FASEB MARC Diversity Resources for Enrichment, Access & Mentoring™ (DREAM) Mentored Poster/Platform (Oral) Presenter Travel Award 2017
- Robert Gutierrez (Biomedical Engineering) - 2018 National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP); 2018 Ford Foundation Fellowship
- Jeremy J. Lomax (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology) - 2018 Gilliam Fellowship for Advanced Study from Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI); 2018 NSF GRFP
- Ashleigh Lovette (Behavioral & Social Sciences) - 2018 Mariam K. Chamberlain Dissertation Award, International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
- Arjee Restar (Behavioral & Social Sciences) - 2017 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Health Policy Research Scholarship; 2017-18 Brown University Global Mobility Research Fellowship Award
- Shawn Williams (Molecular Biology, Cell Biology, & Biochemistry) - 2017 Gilliam Fellowship for Advanced Study from HHMI; NSF GRFP Honorable Mention 2017

Publications

Bennett HL, Khoruzhik Y, Hayden D, Huang H, Sanders J, Walsh MB, Biron D, Hart AC. Normal sleep bouts are not essential for *C. elegans* survival and FoxO is important for compensatory changes in sleep. *BMC Neurosci.* 2018 Mar 9;19(1):10. doi: 10.1186/s12868-018-0408-1. PMID: PMC5845181

Funding Opportunities

Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Predoctoral Fellowship (Parent F31)

Application Deadline: F Series Fellowship Deadlines: Apr. 8, Aug. 8, Dec. 8.

Individual National Research Service Awards (Standard)

AIDS Deadlines: Jan. 7, May 7, Sep. 7.

Pat Tillman Foundation - Tillman Military Scholarships

Application Deadline: February 28, 2019

Thermo Fisher Scientific Antibody Scholarship Program

Application Deadline: May 20, 2019

Sigma Xi - Grants-in-Aid

Application Deadline: March 15, 2019

Department of Justice - NJ Graduate Research Fellowship in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

Application Deadline: April 17, 2019

PhRMA Foundation – Predoctoral Fellowships

Application Deadline: September 1, 2019

Alumni Spotlights

Our IMSD program recognizes the achievements of our alumni. In this issue, we provide an update on Drs. **Hawasatu Dumbuya ('17)** and **Ayed Allawzi ('16)**.



Hawasatu Dumbuya

My graduate school experience was challenging but self-rewarding. I owe my achievements to the Molecular Pharmacology & Physiology program, Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies, and IMSD. IMSD provided me opportunities to grow as a professional and a community of amazing, similar-minded individuals. I gained extensive experience in working in a team setting to deliver class/module instructions, and I strongly believe that these experiences helped me improve my soft skills, such as communication, teamwork and problem solving, which are skills that I use every day in my current position. My advisor, Dr. Elena Oancea, gave me a significant degree of intellectual freedom. Towards the end of my Ph.D., I wanted my next step to be away from the bench, to expand my background as a cell biologist, while carrying out multidisciplinary research projects in a collaborative environment. For these reasons, I sought industrial research positions. After learning about L'Oreal and their research that directly contributed to their innovation pipeline, it appealed to me. I currently lead the USA Clinical Innovation team efforts on developing novel concepts, methods and protocols for clinical evaluations of actives for photoprotection and pigmentation. Every time, the in vitro and/or formulations labs have a new active for photoprotection or pigmentation, such as sunscreens or whitening agents, I am responsible to review the in vitro dossier of the active to understand its molecular mechanism of action, and then to lead the clinical research studies to evaluate for efficacy.



Ayed Allawzi

I am currently a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Eva Grayck, M.D. at the University of Colorado. Our research focuses on elucidating underlying mechanisms by which extracellular antioxidant defenses protect against acute lung injury, pulmonary hypertension, and pulmonary fibrosis. My path to my current position and research areas were primarily due to being an IMSD graduate student in the Molecular Pharmacology, Physiology & Biotechnology Department. It is ubiquitously known that across Brown's BioMed division that all departments are highly interdisciplinary and diverse. Additionally, I was highly driven to perform my graduate studies in an environment that emphasized translational science. Those two factors were significant driving forces for me to attend Brown. Upon entering graduate school, the IMSD program was a program that not only in part financially supported my stay at Brown but had a far-reaching impact across all departments regardless of representation status. My career path today is primarily due to IMSD as a program and the mentors I have gained throughout my stay at Brown. I was recently awarded an AHA Postdoctoral Fellowship which will allow me to spend more time carving out future research areas. My advice to current graduate students would be to take part in as many modules and activities the IMSD program offers. I would also highly recommend fostering mentoring relationships that will last after graduation. I have been lucky to have diverse individual mentors who have continued to support my career. The IMSD program is not only a support mechanism, but a highly cultured and rich environment that all graduate students should take an active part in.

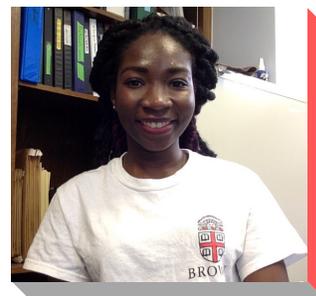
Community

Welcome New Students!

Blessing Akodundu

Molecular Pharmacology and Physiology

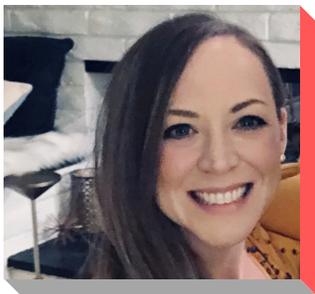
When my favorite songs come on, I can't keep still...I dance a lot.



Jayd Blankenship

Cognitive, Linguistic & Psychological Sciences

After buying a sailboat on Craigslist a couple of years ago, I learned how to sail by watching YouTube videos and reading sailing books.



Tariq Brown

Neuroscience

I would like to have dinner with Chef Marcus Samuelsson because he would probably cook it himself, and I could pick his brains about how to become a better chef and any cooking tips and tricks he has.



Kelvin DeLeon

Neuroscience

I would have dinner with my late father and converse about my growth as a neuroscientist.



Nicholas Drachman

Physics

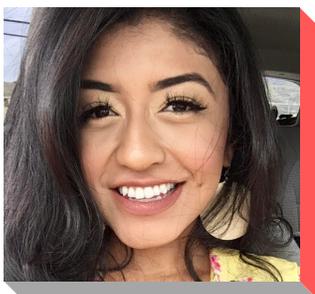
If I could have dinner with any person, living or dead, it would probably be Richard Feynman. Not only was he one of the most brilliant physicists of all time, based on the stories told about him and his own writings, he was surely the most entertaining physicist of all time.



Kristen Fregoso

Molecular Pharmacology & Physiology

If I could have dinner with someone, then it would be Rosalind Franklin because she was able to overcome sexism and continue pursuing her passion in science.



Jeremy Horrell

Molecular Biology, Cell Biology & Biochemistry

My favorite word is *veritas*, Latin for "truth." It is what I strive for each and every day.



Jazlyn Nketia

Cognitive, Linguistic, and Psychological Sciences

I worked in an African American/African Diaspora Art Gallery for 4 years. I worked on worked to develop their library and hosted events alongside other coworkers. I got to meet many inspirational artists, performers and community leaders. The gallery name is The Driskell Center at the University of Maryland, College Park.



Leslie Pedraza

Molecular Biology, Cell Biology, & Biochemistry

One of my favorite words is "Aurora" because the dawn and the Northern Lights are some of the most beautiful views.



Amanda Ruiz

Pathobiology

If I could have dinner with any person, I would choose to have dinner with Sonia Sotomayor. She greatly inspires me as a Latina, a New Yorker, and an academic. I recently started reading her autobiography, *My Beloved World*.



Collaboration

Happenings

2018 in Review



Clockwise from top left: Drs. Cherie Butts, Monica Stephens, Jeniffer Concepcion-Acevedo, and Sofiya Alhassan

Women of Color in STEM: Panel & Networking Event

On May 2nd, 2018, the IMSD Program co-hosted four successful women scientists for a discussion of their career paths. The panelists included: i) Dr. Cherie Butts, Associate Medical Director in Clinical Development at Biogen, ii) Dr. Monica Stephens, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Math, Spelman College, iii) Dr. Jeniffer Concepcion-Acevedo, Microbiologist, Health Communicator, Global Health, Food Safety, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and iv) Dr. Sofiya Alhassan, Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology, University of Massachusetts School of Public Health. Each were generous in describing their respective successes, challenges, and advice of their career journeys. The discussion panel was followed with a reception which fostered networking and continued conversation.

Brown University Graduate Program Preview Day

On October 28-29, 2018, IMSD, the Graduate School and over 15 departments across campus hosted the annual diversity preview day on campus. This day serves as an opportunity for prospective PhD students to visit Brown and learn more about available opportunities - academically, professionally and socially. Through the one and half day long programming students are able to meet with faculty to learn about research, speak with current PhD candidates about their journey and learn about all the resources Brown offers for academic fulfillment. Through panels, shared meals, department visits, poster presentations and lab tours the schedule allows for all of those participating- faculty, current and prospective students alike- to learn from one another and understand what each brings to the Brown University community. As the program has grown and changed, we have been able to include more students from various colleges and universities across the country, and we have even expanded the program to incorporate a schedule for Humanities and Social Science departments. Although the day began on a small scale with only a few students visiting from a short list of partner institutions, over the past three years we have been able to expand the number of participating students and grow the schedule to make it as beneficial for all those who visit us at Brown. We look forward to improving this event so that it can continue to be a beneficial and landmark event on Brown's campus that offers prospective graduate students of color an unparalleled opportunity to familiarize and gain valuable knowledge about Brown's priorities when it comes to PhD education, recruitment and support graduate students of color. ~ Maija Hallsmith



The IMSD program at Brown titled "Advancing the culture of PhD learning and scholarship in Biology and Health Sciences" provides research training support for students in underrepresented groups to significantly increase the participation of these groups within the fields of biomedical and behavioral research. The program is funded by grant R25GM083270 from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health since April 2008.

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PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

- St. John's University, New York, NY
- York College of the City, University of New York (CUNY), Queens, NY
- North Carolina A & T State University, Greensboro, NC
- The College of Mount Saint Vincent, Bronx, NY
- Morgan State University, Baltimore, MD