Dear Microbiology Department,

We are excited to be sending you the first Diversity Committee newsletter of 2021. We hope you will find within this newsletter the information, community, and inspiration necessary to further goals for yourself, your lab, and your department when it comes to equity, diversity, and inclusion. Within this newsletter, students, faculty and staff have compiled ways to find much-needed community during a winter of unresolved racial injustice and a global pandemic, along with education materials to support our community up the hill we climb. We are particularly excited to spotlight our new faculty, who have all contributed statements below! As always, please reach out to the committee with any questions or comments about the contents of this letter.

Diversity committee update:

Patrick Mitchell has joined the Micro Diversity committee….Welcome!!!
The Diversity Committee meets 1-2 times/quarter to discuss events, concerns and ideas about how to make the Micro community a more equitable and supportive environment for everyone. In addition to Patrick joining our group, we would love to have some more voices contributing to our discussions. In particular, another post-doc representative on the committee is needed; in addition interested Micro undergrads and staff are encouraged to consider joining our group. Please email Beth Traxler if interested (btraxler@uw.edu).

Events/Goings on:

Below find news, events, seminars, and gatherings centering on promoting diversity in our UW and Seattle community.

Events at UW:

Inclusive Teaching and Mentoring: A Facilitated Conversation for Department of Microbiology Educators. On November 19th of last quarter many faculty members of our department took part in this two-hour workshop put on by the UW Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The workshop got positive reviews (“interesting, instructive, and productive”) from the majority of participants, according to faculty members of our committee. The session addressed the concept of microaggressions during mentoring and teaching as well as ways to promote more inclusive mentoring and teaching practices. The Diversity Committee endorses this workshop: following discussion at the Diversity Committee and Micro faculty meetings, it was agreed that we will work with CTL to arrange a similar workshop to be offered to other interested folks in the department. Stay tuned for more information!

Over the summer, UW’s Center for Communication, Difference, and Equity alumni instructed a group of UW grads and undergrads, Garfield High students, and community members in the art of podcast production. “Using the interviews that we conducted during our partnership with Northwest African American Museum and learning from guest speakers such as NAAM/Interrupting Privilege participant and media-maker Jenna Hanchard, the group discovered their own storytelling voices, collaborated together to edit the interviews, and tackled audio editing software.” Check out their stories here. A new website is in the works that will feature all interviews and podcasts.
The Center for Communication, Difference, and Equity has continued its Interrupting Privilege project this fall with funding from UW’s Population Health COVID Rapid Response initiative. They are “examining how the “dual pandemics” of racism and COVID-19 are impacting Black communities in Seattle, and how we can serve our communities better using our particular Interrupting Privilege skillset.” You can read more about the project here.

Register by 1/23/2021: Exploration of Race in the Workplace: A Guide for Self-Study (QA002). A Self-paced online course. This new offering has been developed as a self-paced online learning class. After registering, you’ll receive a link to the online class and will have through the end of the quarter to complete it.

- Description: The demographics of our workplace haven’t shifted radically but our perspective has. Recent events, including the surge in the Black Lives Matter movement, have sparked a long overdue reckoning of who we are as a society, expanded consciousness about injustices and inequities, and prompted a real thirst for change. Many no longer wish to be silent but may also feel anxious or uncertain about how to contribute or what to do next.

January 26th -28th: Seminar and Round Table Discussion with Dr. Lydia Villa-Komarof.
- Dr. Villa-Komarof will be giving a MolES seminar on Tuesday, January 26th entitled “Bench, Biotech, and Beyond”. RSVP here for the Round Table, which will allow you attendance to both the seminar and round table: https://tinyurl.com/VillaKomaroffRSVP
- The UW Biomedical Diversity Community (BDC) and Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) are extremely excited to co-host Dr. Lydia Villa-Komaroff for a Q&A session regarding her impressive career path, diversity involvement, and business endeavors. Zoom link: https://washington.zoom.us/j/98754436271

Real Talk Tuesdays
GO-MAP and the Center for Communication, Difference, and Equity (CCDE) join together to organize Real Talk Tuesdays — a safe space to engage in real talk about issues that impact graduate students of color. Topics rotate every discussion and students are welcome to bring the issues they face as POC graduate students. RTT will be hosted virtually on Tuesdays via Zoom from 11:00am-12:30pm. Occurring on these dates during winter quarter:
- February 2
- February 16
- March 2

Register by 1/28/2021: The Challenge of Allyship (Q1750). “Join us for a four-part seminar with facilitated conversations on the challenge of allyship, creating a community of practice, and transforming our hopes, ideas, and good intentions into inclusive and equitable actions and policies. There will be about one hour of pre-work before each session.”

UW-Affiliated Webinars:
February 9, 2021 6:30 pm The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Impacts of Systemic Racism. Patty Hayes, Director of Public Health — Seattle & King County, discusses the impact of the pandemic on BIPOC communities and what systemic changes need to be made now to avoid long-lasting impact.
MLK Week Video Reflections: In January of 2021, the UW MLK Week work group asked Black students, staff, instructors, and faculty to reflect on the question: “What does MLK Day mean to you in 2021?”

UW-Affiliated meetings:

The UW Professional Staff Organisation’s 4th Annual Diversity Forum
RSVPs are not yet available but will be soon! Email psoboard@uw.edu for more information.

Events in Seattle & Beyond:

SABER Webinars: An initiative in spring 2021 sponsored by the Society for the Advancement of Biology Education Research (SABER) focused on promoting awareness, understanding and commitment to change academic biology environments to be more inclusive.

- Addressing students' basic needs with a culture of caring during the pandemic
  - Sara Goldrick-Rab, PhD, Temple University
  - Thursday, February 4th, 9 am PT
  - Event flyer
  - Zoom Link

- Structural racism, institutional transformation, and diversifying the STEM faculty
  - Kimberly Griffin, PhD, University of Maryland
  - Thursday, February 18th, 9 am PT
  - Event flyer
  - Zoom Link

- The influence of kindness and community in broadening participation
  - Mica Estrada, PhD, UC San Francisco
  - Thursday, March 4th, 9 am PT
  - Event flyer
  - Zoom Link
● Systemic disadvantages for LGBTQ professionals in STEM
  ○ Erin Cech, PhD, University of Michigan
  ○ Thursday, March 18th, 9 am PT
  ○ Event flyer
  ○ Zoom Link

The Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network #LiberatingWebinars Series:

● Abolition, Deinstitutionalization, and Decarceration in the Pandemic
  ○ Monday, 25 January 2021, at 8:00 PM Eastern / 5:00 PM Pacific
  ○ RSVP (registration is free)
  ○ The pandemic has hit hardest and deadliest in institutions including jails and prisons, psych hospitals, nursing homes, group homes, and large-scale developmental disabilities institutions. This webinar will discuss connections between disability justice and abolition, explain deinstitutionalization and decarceration, and explore strategies that advocates and organizers are using to challenge ableism, racism, and other forms of violence arising during the pandemic.

● Surviving Burnout from Ableism & Racism in the Pandemic
  ○ Sunday, 31 January 2021, at 1:00 PM Eastern / 10:00 AM Pacific
  ○ RSVP (registration is free)
  ○ Disabled people in Black, Brown, Indigenous, Asian, and mixed-race communities live and struggle against the trauma of racism and ableism every day. During the pandemic, our communities have witnessed and experienced constant violence - in the medical and psychiatric systems, in the criminal legal system, in the educational systems, and in our own homes, communities, and movements. We are all burned out and far beyond capacity even though we are often on the front lines fighting for justice and freedom. This webinar will discuss what it means to survive burnout from racism and ableism during a global pandemic, and how we can offer care to each other outside of harmful systems.

Spotlight:

New Faculty Give Insights into Diversity:
This quarter we have asked our new faculty hires to share their thoughts on the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in STEM. We asked for thoughts on what makes a good diversity statement, how they plan to promote DEI in their own labs, or personal reflections regarding their own experiences acknowledging and combating the lack of diversity in our community.

Monica Guo (she/her)
Increasing demographic diversity significantly increases scientific progress, although the contributions made by underrepresented minorities often have been devalued or discounted (Hofstra et al, 2020). To ensure that the careers of talented minority scientists do not end prematurely, we must make sure their innovations are adopted and rewarded. As a new faculty member, I will espouse this principle in my lab by creating a working environment where ALL members of the team will feel heard and included. I hope this will make being in the lab more fun, but also more productive because a respectful team dynamic is important for trust and collaboration. Science is challenging and we are human, with different strengths, struggles, and beliefs. I think creating an environment where we can trust each other to provide and accept criticism will be critical to identify
and overcome any obstacles ahead. Leading a research team is an honor and I strive to provide good mentorship for the next generation of diverse scientists. I am looking forward to working and learning from you all.

**Alex Meeske**

Diversity statements, whether written as part of a job application or as a declaration of institutional principles, ask us to reflect on how diversity and bias have affected us and those in our professional sphere. They are an exercise in empathy. During my faculty job search, I found that writing a diversity statement made me consider the numerous privileges that I’ve had as a cis het white male in academia. It made me ask myself what I can do to make science more supportive of those less privileged than myself. Problems like racism and sexism seem so huge, but we often have more power to make change than we realize. As a first generation college graduate, I’ve experienced feelings like imposter syndrome, both early in my academic career and to this day! As a PI I’m making a commitment to listen to the people in my group and check in regularly about individual development, scientific progress, and how supported they feel. I’ve had mentors that supported me not just as a trainee, but as a person with a life outside academia. I hope to pay that forward to the scientists in the UW community.

**Patrick Mitchell**

Years from now when I look back on my first days as a PI, I’ll have a lot of good memories. But I suspect that my thoughts will inevitably turn to the insurrection of the U.S. Capitol building. I will remember a confederate flag flying inside the “the People’s House.” I will remember a violent mob fed by lies, and fueled by racism, bigotry, and hate attempting to subvert our democracy. And I’ll think about the astounding privilege afforded to rioters who stormed the Capitol building, who erected a noose, who killed an officer of the Capitol police … who were allowed to just walk away. I’ll think about the stark contrast of how BLM protestors were treated just months before.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives are critical to address the many inadequacies and gross injustices that permeate this country, our scientific community, and even our Department. As a PI, my primary responsibility is the success and well-being of my trainees and other trainees in the Department. What this means to me is that in addition to fostering scientific excellence, I am also committed to fostering an inclusive, safe, and equitable work environment. I hope to achieve this through open dialogue, and by continuing my own education to better combat racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other institutionalized and systemic oppressions. And I will recognize my own shortcomings. I also commit to doing my part to ensure that DEI issues are actively addressed by the Department. As a part of this commitment, I am pleased to be joining the Diversity committee to participate in the good work already being done by its members. My door is always open, and I welcome you to let me know how I/we can do better.

**Spotlight:**

**It Pays to be Diverse: NIH Grant Diversity Supplements**

UW has many diversity-specific awards for lab members who meet each award’s specific criteria. Several of those opportunities are highlighted here. On top of those, did you know that the NIH will provide Additional funds to your lab as supplements to parent awards through Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research? These administrative supplements are meant to “enhance the diversity of the research workforce by recruiting and supporting students, postdoctorates, and eligible investigators from diverse backgrounds, including those from groups that have been shown to be underrepresented in health-related research.” This supplement opportunity is also available to help fund researchers who are or
become disabled and need additional support to accommodate their disability. We have briefly summarized these supplements below but highly encourage you to check out the link above for yourself.

**Reasoning:** Based on research from the NSF, there is still inequality in the availability of educational and research opportunities for certain groups. These diversity supplements are meant to provide support for labs aiming to break down these barriers and build diverse teams. Furthermore, diversification of laboratory groups will benefit American science and further the goals of the NIH as described below:

“Research shows that diverse teams working together and capitalizing on innovative ideas and distinct perspectives outperform homogenous teams. Scientists and trainees from diverse backgrounds and life experiences bring different perspectives, creativity, and individual enterprise to address complex scientific problems. There are many benefits that flow from a diverse NIH-supported scientific workforce, including: fostering scientific innovation, enhancing global competitiveness, contributing to robust learning environments, improving the quality of the research, advancing the likelihood that underserved or health disparity populations participate in, and benefit from health research, and enhancing public trust”

**Funding Amount:** “Application budgets are limited to no more than the amount of the current parent award, and must reflect the actual needs of the proposed project… less than $5,000 to more than $100,000 depending on the career level of the candidate.”

**Eligibility:** Individuals submitting the supplement must be “a PD/PI on an active grant or cooperative agreement, and the research proposed in the supplement must be accomplished within the competitive segment of the active award.” This includes any or all of the PDs/PIs on parent awards that include multiple PDs/PIs, as well as subproject directors on multi-component research grants.

“A parent award may support more than one individual on a supplement; however, each request must be strongly justified and include assurances that each candidate will receive appropriate mentoring.” The supplement is intended to fund individuals from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in health-related sciences, individuals with disabilities, and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, as described in the linked document above.

**Getting educated and taking action:**
We would like to highlight the following educational content for this fall quarter. For a more exhaustive list of UW resources related to promoting diversity and inclusion, please visit our website or the websites listed in the Resource Round-up below.

**Quick actions anyone can take:**
- Donate to UW Community Aid, a trust-based, community-funded mutual aid program for BIPOC, LGBTQ+, disabled, undocumented and/or first generation UW students.
To donate or contribute, you can send funds to:
- Cashapp: $UWCommunityAID
- Venmo: UWCommunityaid

- Check out the UW Libraries’ MLK Resources
- In honor of Martin Luther King Jr. day, UW Libraries encourages you to explore resources within our collections and across campus that reflect Dr. King’s work and collective efforts to combat racism, inequality and injustice in our community and beyond.

- Check out the website of Academics for Black Survival and Wellness (A4BL), a personal and professional development initiative for Non-Black academics to honor the toll of racial trauma on Black people, resist anti-Blackness and white supremacy, and facilitate accountability and collective action. The website also includes archived wellness initiatives and workshops for Black scientists specifically addressing the healing of racial trauma.

Suggested reads for winter:
Read Cell Press’ new Diversity Statement

The False Promise of Anti-Racist Books: This Atlantic article argues that “the absence of concrete economic and legislative changes, consciousness raising through anti-racist reading is mere filibustering” and that “the answer to ‘What did you do?’ would seem to be far more material for race relations than ‘What have you read?’”

The current issue of Med from Cells Press has published several articles at the intersection of race, the current pandemic, and science that are all worth a read:

The System Is Why There Are Not More Like Me
“I am a formerly incarcerated person with three felony convictions, sentenced to 10 years in prison. I was told by the prosecutor that I had no hope for change. I am now an endocrinologist, scientist, and faculty at Howard University College of Medicine…”

Diversity, Race, and Health
“The events of 2020 threw into stark relief the long-standing inequities in healthcare and the disproportionate toll they exert on communities of color…”

The Role of Diverse Populations in US Clinical Trials
Why Calls to Diversify Trial Populations Fall Short

Suggested to watch this winter:
Explore the impact of the FBI on Martin Luther King’s works and legacy in the new documentary MLK/FBI, streaming on Amazon Prime

Check out videos and other content generated during this month’s Black Queer Town Hall in STEM
Day 1: The science of gender identity and sexuality, overcoming adversity, increasing representation, and making STEM safe for everyone.

Day 2: Highlighting Black Queer excellence in STEM with fantastic talks by Dr. Avery Posey, Dr. Donita Brady, and Dr. Derek Applewhite.

Day 3: Cutting-edge science by Black, queer scientists Dr. Melanie McReynolds, Dr. Manu Platt, and Dr. Craig Cameron, and a special discussion with Dr. Jaimie Stewart on her journey as a Black, queer woman in STEM.

Day 4: Standing strong with queer scientists of color. Join us for a discussion with Icon Award winner Dr. Chanda Prescod-Weinstein, sessions with from Champion of Champions awardees, Dr. Eduardo Cotilla-Sanchez and Dr. Anthony Ocampo, as well as the founders of blackinchem.com, Samantha Mensah and Devin Swiner

Suggested for staff:
The UW Professional Staff Organisation’s 4th Annual Diversity Forum on March 3rd
RSVPs are not yet available but will be soon! Email psoboard@uw.edu for more information.

Suggested for faculty:
Consider uploading your diversity statement to your lab website, or making a section of your lab’s website to showcase ongoing diversity and inclusion initiatives. For an example, check out the Reniere Lab’s new page here!

If you are planning on publishing in a Cell Press journal, consider including a diversity statement: Cell’s publisher invites statements in papers about studies’ diversity and inclusion efforts

Suggested for educators:
Check out Project Biodiversify, A repository of teaching materials and methods aimed at enhancing human diversity and inclusivity in biology courses.
Become a role model: this project needs your help compiling high quality research examples done by amazing biologists from under-represented or marginalized groups, a process that will take you 15 to 20 minutes.

Explore Teaching Materials to Diversify & Humanize Biology: Project Biodiversify provides ready-to-use examples of research concepts that highlight a diverse set of biologists from many walks of life.

Explore highlighted scientist role models with your students

Suggested for postdocs:
Check out Breaking Down Diversity Statements, which “explores just what faculty candidates include in their statements.” Vanderbilt, UC Davis, UNC Chapel Hill, and Penn also have recommendations.

Suggested for students:
Contact graduate students Lyndsey Moore (lyndseym@uw.edu) and Monica Cesinger (cesinger@uw.edu) to participate in the graduate student content-club!

Consider becoming an Outreaching Grad with GO-MAP, facilitating recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups at UW. Graduate students of color interested in becoming an OG may apply online. For more information, please contact Carolyn Jackson at cwj@uw.edu.

Suggested for parents:
Check out Raising Race Conscious Children, a resource to support adults who are trying to talk about race with young children. “The goals of these conversations are to dismantle the color-blind framework and prepare young people to work toward racial justice. If we commit to collectively trying to talk about race with young children, we can lean on one another for support as we, together, envision a world where we actively challenge racism each and every day. Many of the blog’s posts are geared toward White people but a community of guest bloggers represent diverse backgrounds and the strategies discussed may be helpful for all.”

UW Resource Round-up:

Keeping our community accountable

School of Medicine Allies
Allies are faculty and staff who provide trainees with support during conflict with mentors and lab mates, assistance in navigating institutional barriers to success, and connection with institutional and community services. Allies stand in solidarity with trainees, so they don’t have to face challenges alone. For more information contact Sharona Gordon (seg@uw.edu) or (Allies4SOM@uw.edu). Drop in hours are available BY Zoom ever week:
Wednesdays, 3-4 pm  [Zoom Link]
Thursdays, 11 am – 12 pm  [Zoom Link]

**Report bias at UW:** Report all incidents of bias or suspected bias using the UW's bias reporting tool, which was created in partnership with the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, the Office of Student Life and the president's Race & Equity Initiative.

**Office of the Ombud:** an absolutely confidential mediation process to discuss literally any challenging situation, consider options, and develop a plan for the future.

**UW Compliance and Risk Services:** Professional services and thought leadership in substantive and structural compliance, risk financing, risk consulting, and claim and litigation management to all University of Washington academic and administrative units.

**UCIRO:** The University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office (UCIRO) investigates complaints that a University employee has violated the University’s non-discrimination and/or non-retaliation policies.

**Office of the ADA Coordinator:** consults and assists members of the University of Washington community with concerns or inquiries regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

**Title IX Investigation Office:** responsible for investigating complaints that a University student engaged in conduct that violates any of the sexual misconduct provisions of the Student Conduct Code, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, indecent exposure, relationship violence, stalking, and domestic violence.

**Student Legal Services:** an on-campus law office that provides a safe and confidential space for all UW-Seattle and Bothell students who have legal questions or concerns. They offer free 40-minute consultations on a broad range of issues.

### Centers for support

**UW Food pantry:** provides UW students, staff, and faculty with supplemental, shelf-stable groceries and seasonal fresh produce for no cost. Anyone with a Husky ID is eligible to receive support.

**UW Childcare Assistance:** The Childcare Assistance Program (formerly known as Student Parent Resource Center) is designed to assist UW Seattle Campus students in covering the costs of licensed childcare for their children (ages birth – 12 years old) while enrolled in an eligible program of study.

**Undocumented Student Resources:** provides support services for undocumented students throughout the various stages of their Husky Experience.
Leadership without Borders: provides leadership development resources, meeting space, artwork, a textbook lending library, and an atmosphere designed to provide both aspiration and inspirational aspects for multi-ethnic, multi-identity, and multi-national communities.

Q-center: professionally-supported resource, advocacy, and mentoring center for queer students and concerns at the University of Washington. It provides consulting for various departments on campus with regards to bolstering safety and respect for queer students, and also coordinates numerous programs, social organizations, and educational initiatives.

Native and tribal relations: centralized collection of the Native-focused resources available on the University of Washington’s campus in Seattle

Disability resources for students: request accommodations and/or auxiliary aids due to a disability or temporary health condition.

Student Veteran Life: centralized services and programming that supports student veterans and their dependents in their academic endeavors.

UW Latino Center for Health: Travel grants available here! Performs and aggregates community-engaged research to promote impactful improvements in the health and well-being of Latinx communities in Washington state, regionally, and nationally.

Women’s center: organization where women and men collaborate to build a culture of gender equity campus-wide, locally, and globally. The center emphasizes supporting girls and womxn who are first-generation to higher education, returning or non-traditional students, and aspiring leaders on their academic and career paths.

UW DC center: UW’s Disability and d/Deaf Cultural center hosts events and workshops focusing on social justice and activism, as well as a space where students can study, organize, rest, or hang out with fellow students and other community members.

UW Ethnic and Cultural Center: the largest college cultural center in the nation, offering guidance to individuals and organizations, opportunities which aim to enhance leadership development, and a series of dynamic discussions, workshops and presentations which help students explore contemporary issues of social justice and change.

The UW ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change: a campus and national resource for best practices in academic leadership development, cultural change and policy transformation, and increasing the advancement and number of women faculty in STEM fields.
the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity Instructional Center: promotes the academic achievement, retention and successful graduation of under-represented minority, first-generation college and economically disadvantaged students and to improve their chances of gaining admission to graduate and professional schools.

The Washington Institute for the Study of Inequality and Race (WISIR) is an interdisciplinary research center at the University of Washington dedicated to bringing the tools of critical theory and contemporary social science to the analysis of social, economic, and political inequality along lines of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class.

The Indigenous Wellness Institute National Center for Excellence has a mission to marshal community, tribal, academic, and governmental resources toward innovative, culture-centered interdisciplinary, collaborative social and behavioral research and education.

The CCDE (Center for Communication, Difference, and Equity) strives to be a space where our community of students, faculty, staff, and alumni gather to promote greater equity. Through research collaborations, networking opportunities, action-oriented classes, mentorship programs, and community events we engage in dialogue to think critically about race and its intersections, to interrupt privilege, and ultimately to change the structures of power around us.

Affinity/allyship groups

UW SACNAS: The mission of SACNAS is to encourage Chicano/Latino and Native American students to pursue graduate education and obtain the advanced degrees necessary for science research, leadership, and teaching careers at all levels. This is the link to the UW Chapter.

GO-MAP: Works with graduate students, faculty and staff to strengthen and maintain campus diversity while enhancing academic opportunities for graduate students of color and encouraging scholarship and research that explores cultural diversity.

The AISC: a University of Washington Inter-Tribal organization which exists to promote Native culture, education and Native students’ interests, needs and welfare.

Black Student Commission: provides students of Black/African heritage with a cohesive community at the University of Washington, while creating and maintaining a positive environment with resources for the students to achieve academic success.

La Raza: promotes the empowerment of and education about the diverse intersecting identities within the Latinx/Chicanx community at UW. La Raza’s constituent organizations are UW Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) that work toward the empowerment of Latinx & Chicanx communities.
SARJE: Scientists Advocating for Representation, Justice and Equity is a UW Student RSO with the mission to “engage our local scientific community in the work of promoting racial and social justice to improve outcomes for people of color, women, and other marginalized people in science and promote a diverse future for our field.”