

STUDENT SUCCESS!

We are thrilled to announce that not one, not two, but *three* of our students--Taleen Dilanyan '16 (working in Professor Queeney's lab), Meti Aberra '15 (working in Professor Bickar's lab), and Maribel Santos AC'15J (working in Professor Hall's lab)--were selected to participate in HHMI's Exceptional Research Opportunities Program this summer. Only about 100 EXROP scholars are named nationwide each year. This competitive program matches bright science students from underrepresented groups to senior scientists who mentor their research, in an effort to encourage these students to consider future careers in academic sciences. Congratulations to Taleen, Meti, and Maribel as well as their mentors and departments!



President McCartney at the White House Summit on College Opportunity, with (l. to r.) President Clayton Spencer of Bates College and President Biddy Martin of Amherst College, January 2014.

FROM THE CLARK SCIENCE CENTER DIRECTORS' OFFICE

January 2014

CHANGING THE FACE OF SCIENCE

By now, I imagine you heard about President McCartney's visit to the White House this month to attend President Obama's College Opportunity Summit focused on increasing access and success for low-income students in higher education. If you have, then you know that we will be welcoming a cohort or "posse" of ten low-income students from public high schools in New York City who are interested in STEM fields in the fall of 2015.

This new STEM Posse initiative builds on the successes of our outstanding Achieving Excellence in Mathematics, Engineering, and Sciences (AEMES) programs. Through its innovative programming, AEMES has been addressing issues of equity and access by fostering community and opportunity for students who are traditionally underrepresented in the sciences. One essential component of the AEMES initiatives is community building, with faculty, staff, and other Smith science students serving as mentors to our students of promise. With these kinds of mentoring efforts, Smith is changing the face of science by helping our students to launch as scientists (see story at the sidebar).

All around me, I see faculty, staff, and alumnae who recognize the power of mentorship to transform the trajectories for our students' lives, often because we have been convinced of our own potential by a mentor. At the White House summit, when introducing the initiatives launched to increase access and success for low-income youth in higher education, Michelle Obama stated, "These kinds of programs aren't just good for these young people. They're good for all of us." Besides the community and economic impacts, there is another way to think of the "good" of mentoring and it has to do with the benefits to the mentor.

As you may be aware, January is National Mentoring Month, a time to express gratitude to our own mentors and to think about how to "be someone who matters to someone who matters."¹ I am grateful to be part of a community that values mentoring so highly and looks to develop the promise and capacities of every one of our students.

Patty DiBartolo
Faculty Director of the Sciences

¹ National Mentoring Month Campaign, <http://www.nationalmentoringmonth.org/>

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– Michelle Obama, White House Summit



NEW FACULTY HIRE: LISA MANGIAMELE

Over the new few months, we will introduce the individuals who have been hired to join Division III next summer as assistant professors. Lisa Mangiamele has accepted the BIO/NSC animal physiology/systems neuroscience position. Come July, she will be based in Sabin Reed (her lab will be SR 409). Lisa completed her BA at Colgate University (neuroscience) and her PhD at UNC Chapel Hill (biology). Her research base has been Bowdoin College since 2010 (first as a postdoc and this year as a research associate) and her teaching experience has been gained at UNC, Bowdoin, Middlebury,

and SUNY Plattsburgh. As a student, Lisa also did stints at the Marine Biological Lab in Woods Hole, BU Med School’s Center for Behavioral Development, and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama.

Lisa’s research uses experimental approaches (behavioral, neuroanatomical, and molecular) to study the neuroendocrine mechanisms that underlie social behavior and animal communication. As she describes it: “Social animals fine-tune their behavior to match the changing social environment. Individuals make decisions based on information contained in communication signals, cues derived from social context, or from social experiences, and they modify their behavior in ways that promote fitness and survival. Across vertebrates, ... how social information is integrated in the brain to produce context-appropriate behavioral responses is not well understood. To address this issue, my research focuses on understanding how the brain processes social signals and what factors modulate brain systems involved in social decision-making in simple animal models.” Lisa’s research involves goldfish, green treefrogs, and our local North Eastern frog, the spring peeper.

--Margaret Lamb, Administrative Director

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR THE SCIENCES, SUMMER 2014

Right before the college closed for winter break, I forwarded a final copy of the white paper, *The Sciences at Smith: Vision for the Future 2015*, to the President’s and Provost’s offices. Thanks once again to so many of you who provided your valuable feedback. The final copy of the white paper [is here](#). The document is password protected. The password is “science2014”.

One of its major recommendations is to launch a science-wide strategic planning process this summer in which we articulate our future vision for science education at Smith. This spring, I will work with Science Planning Committee to start the process of determining the scope, structure, and inputs for our strategic planning process. **We want your advice!** We have started collecting important readings and reports from experts in science education to help inspire our work. But tell us: what ideas should we explore? Who is the best speaker you’ve heard talk about educating the next generation of female scientists? What is the most influential piece you’ve read on the future of the sciences? Share your exciting and innovative ideas with us so that we can share them as community.

--Patty DiBartolo

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

February 3 rd 2014	Preapplication due from students interested in SURF with CHM department faculty
February 17 th 2014	SURF application due from all students who wish to apply for Science Center funding
February 28 th 2014	Final deadline for SURF supervisor recommendations (requests generated electronically when student makes the SURF application)

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