

**HIV INTERVENTION
SCIENCE TRAINING
PROGRAM
FOR RACIAL/ETHNIC
MINORITY
INVESTIGATORS**

C O N N E C T I O N S

SUMMER 2007



Nabila El-Bassel



Elwin Wu



Aimee Campbell

Drs. El-Bassel and Wu received a 3-year grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to establish a training program aimed at increasing racial and ethnic minority (REM) investigators conducting HIV intervention and HIV-related health disparities research. The HIV Intervention Science Training Program for Racial/Ethnic Minority Investigators (HISTP) is located at Columbia University School of Social Work (CUSSW) within the Social Intervention Group (SIG), and will include collaboration with other prominent Columbia Centers, including the HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, Columbia Center for Homelessness Prevention Studies, and Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning.

In addition to El-Bassel, Wu and colleagues at Columbia University, HISTP is supported by a network of leading HIV scientific advisors and mentors across the country. The advisors and mentors are actively involved in the development of the program and in the direct training

and support of the trainees.

REM populations are disproportionately represented amongst those living with HIV/AIDS, yet REM scientists trained as HIV/AIDS researchers are vastly under-represented. HISTP's mission is to facilitate the growth and development of a cadre of REM scientists who will focus their research on HIV-related health disparities in HIV/AIDS and co-occurring mental health disorders. HISTP promotes REM scientists to increase contributions to the empirical knowledge base on the design of contextually and culturally congruent interventions, through training, mentoring, and networking with a collective of senior REM scientists.

Specifically, four trainees per year will be selected over the next three years to receive intensive and specialized mentorship, including pilot funding and access to a multitude of resources and expert consultation. The first cohort of trainees will be announced in August, 2007 with a training institute scheduled for the Fall.

GETTING TO KNOW HISTP: OUR PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Aimee Campbell was selected in May, 2007 to coordinate the HISTP. She received her MS in Social Work from Columbia in 2003 and has been with SIG for four years as a Project Director for two NIDA Clinical Trials Network-funded national multi-site studies. "Women and Trauma" examines interventions for women with co-morbid substance dependence and post traumatic stress disorder and "Safer Sex for Women" is testing a gender specific HIV preven-

tion intervention for women in community-based drug treatment. Ms. Campbell has been involved in intervention research for over 10 years, previously at the University of Washington School of Social Work. She is also pursuing a doctorate in Social Work at CUSSW, with a focus on behavioral interventions for women with substance use disorders. Contact Ms. Campbell at 212-851-2417 or histp@columbia.edu if you have questions regarding HISTP.

HISTP EXECUTIVE BOARD



Carol Caton



Alex Carballo-Dieguez



Denise Hien



Allen Zweben

The HISTP Executive Board was brought together in June, 2007 to provide leadership and oversight to the program. In addition to Dr. Nabila El-Bassel, Dr. Elwin Wu and Ms. Aimee Campbell, the Board is comprised of Dr. Carol Caton of the Columbia Center on Homelessness Prevention, Dr. Alex Carballo-Dieguez of the HIV Center at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, Dr. Denise Hien of the CUSSW Social Intervention Group, and Dr. Allen Zweben of CUSSW. HISTP is in good hands with this committed and distinguished Executive Board. The Board meets bi-weekly and is charged with operations oversight, including recruitment, candidate selection criteria, training mechanisms, program monitoring, data collection, and resource identification.

“...the diversity of science is dependent on the quality of mentored research, because this experience is a key to attracting underrepresented groups to science.”

Pfund et al., 2006

Please take a moment to meet each of the Executive Board Members:

Alex Carballo-Dieguez, PhD: Dr. Carballo-Dieguez is a Research Scientist at the HIV Center and Professor in Clinical Psychology, Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University. His research is focused on sexual risk behaviors of men who have sex with men, especially men of Latino descent, as well as HIV prevention in couples with mixed serostatus, issues related to partner notification of HIV status, and, for over 10 years, the study of microbicide acceptability.

Carol Caton, PhD: Dr. Caton is the Director of the Columbia Center for Homelessness Prevention Studies. She is a Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences (in Psychiatry) and a Research Scientist at the New York State Psychiatric Institute. Dr. Caton has conducted NIH-funded research on

homelessness and severe mental illness for over 25 years, including community studies of people with schizophrenia and their offspring, runaway and homeless youth, risk and protective factors for homelessness, and service innovation to engage patients with psychosis and drug use comorbidity in treatment programs. Dr. Caton also collaborates extensively with city and state advisory boards and commissions on homelessness.

Denise Hien, PhD: Dr. Hien is a clinical psychologist and senior research scientist at the CUSSW Social Intervention Group. She is also the Director of the Women’s Health Project at St. Luke’s/Roosevelt Hospital, a clinical program for women with trauma and substance abuse histories. She has done extensive research with women who have comorbid post traumatic stress and substance use disorders. Dr. Hien is currently examining a combined behavioral and medication intervention for women with alcohol dependence and PTSD funded through NIAAA.

Allen Zweben, DSW: Dr. Zweben is the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Research at CUSSW. He has expertise in a variety of areas related to addiction medicine, including motivational interviewing, cognitive-behavioral therapy, twelve-step facilitation, HIV-risk reduction strategies, couples and family treatment, patient-treatment matching, medications development, and outcome measurement. His research and publications have focused primarily on innovative assessment and treatment approaches for substance using populations.

Pfund, C., Pribbenow, C. M., Branchaw, J., Lauffer, S. M., & Handelsman, J. (2006). The merits of training mentors. *Science*, 311, 473-474.

hisp@columbia.edu

HISTP CENTER PARTNERS

Center for Homelessness Prevention Studies (CHPS) at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health is the only center in the U.S. to focus exclusively on research to understand and prevent the significant problem of homelessness. Headed by Drs. Carol Caton and Ezra Susser, CHPS is comprised of 75 leading faculty, junior faculty and other researchers to study prevention and intervention with homeless populations, including individuals with mental health issues or impacted by HIV/AIDS. Visit CHPS website at <http://cchps.columbia.edu/>

Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning (CCNMTL) was established in 1999 with the mission to enhance teaching and learning through the purposeful use of new media with content driven by expert faculty input. Under the direction of Dr. Frank Moretti, CCNMTL is committed to building partnerships within the University to extend the capacity of learning and curriculum development. Visit CCNMTL website for more information at <http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/>

HIV Center for Clinical and Behavioral Studies at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and Columbia University has received continuous NIMH funding since 1987 to conduct research and outreach to communities affected by HIV/AIDS. The Center has trained many new researchers in HIV intervention science and has world renowned HIV/AIDS researchers on staff. To learn more about the wide ranging activities at the HIV Center visit the website at <http://www.hivcenternyc.org>

Social Intervention Group (SIG) at Columbia University School of Social Work has conducted research since 1990 on the co-occurring problems of HIV transmission, substance abuse, and intimate partner violence. SIG is pursuing the translation and dissemination of evidence-based interventions to more effectively place them in the hands of community-based organizations that support individuals most vulnerable to drugs, intimate partner violence, and HIV/AIDS. To read more about SIG, visit <http://www.socialwork.columbia.edu/sig/>

MENTORSHIP SUPPORT AT-A-DISTANCE

One component unique to HISTP is mentorship support at-a-distance. Half of the trainees selected for the program will come from institutions outside the New York City area. Each trainee will have a "local" mentor with whom they are currently working in their home institution and they will also be connected with a leading HIV prevention intervention scientist or mental health expert from Columbia University. HISTP will use state of the art technology, under the direction of the Columbia Center for New Media Teaching and Learning, to facilitate distance mentoring. HISTP intends to utilize video for con-

ferencing and training, facilitating trainee and mentor communication and feedback, and accessing statistical expertise via asynchronous "chat" features, all through a unified web interface. If mentoring expertise is not hampered by geographic obstacles, it will allow promising researchers to remain working in less populated or underserved communities while accessing needed resources from other institutions. It is hoped that the evaluation of this innovative approach will benefit the HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention research community, as well as REM mentoring more generally.

Distance Learning Highlights

- Distance mentoring via web-based interface
- Online statistical consultation and workshop podcasts
- Online HIV prevention and intervention resource library

Scientific Advisory Board

Margarita Alegria, PhD
Harvard Medical School

Guillermo Bernal, PhD
University of Puerto Rico

Olveen Carrasquillo, MD
Columbia University Medical Center

Rafael Diaz, PhD, MSW
San Francisco State University

Margaret Dolcini, PhD
Oregon State University

Larry Icard, PhD
Temple University

Ann O'Leary, PhD
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Karina Walters, PhD
University of Washington

Gina Wingood, MPH, ScD
Emory University

Gail Wyatt, PhD
University of California Los Angeles

HISTP STAFF

Nabila El-Bassel

Director

Elwin Wu

Co-Director

Aimee Campbell

Program Coordinator

The HIV Intervention Science Training Program for Racial/Ethnic Minority Investigators aims to facilitate the growth and development of a cadre of racial/ethnic minority (REM) scientists who will focus their research upon disparities in HIV/AIDS and co-occurring mental health disorders. We seek to promote REM scientists to increase contributions to the empirical knowledge base on the design of contextually and culturally congruent interventions, through training, mentoring, and interdisciplinary networking with senior REM scientists in the fields of HIV/AIDS, health disparities, and mental health and substance co-morbidities. Moreover, the mentoring process will be evaluated to understand the integral elements of successful mentoring of REM scientists.

IMPORTANT 2007 DATES

- **August 3:** Final Application Materials Due
- **August 20:** First Trainee Cohort Announced
- **September 7:** First SIG Research Clinic for the 2007-08 Academic Year
- **October 15-19:** Fall Training Institute at Columbia University
- **October 19:** Scientific Advisory Board Meeting in New York City

HIV INTERVENTION SCIENCE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR RACIAL/ETHNIC MINORITY INVESTIGATORS

Columbia University School of Social Work
1255 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, NY 10027