

# HISTPconnections

Volume 2, Issue 1 • Summer 2008

## 2008 Summer Training Institute Highlights

### Inside this issue:

<b>The Future of HIV Prevention: Fellows Present Their Pilot Studies</b>	2
<b>Experts Demystify the Grant Review/Funding Process</b>	2
<b>Valuable Guidance: Scientific Advisory Board Meets</b>	2
<b>Building Relationships, Making Connections: My Time at the 2008 International AIDS Conference</b>	3
<b>The New HISTP Logo: "Newton's Fourth Law of Mentorship"</b>	3

*"I thought the Training Institute was a wonderful experience. I learned a lot, but most of all I was inspired."*

*- Vera Lopez, HISTP Fellow*



Dr. Cynthia Gómez speaks about her journey to becoming what she refers to as an "accidental scientist."

This June we welcomed the first and second cohorts of training fellows, their primary and secondary mentors, members of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), and the Executive Board to the 2008 HISTP Summer Training Institute at Columbia University School of Social Work (CUSSW) in New York City. The week-long institute began with an overview of the program structure and components, with an emphasis on the innovative elements which make the HISTP unique.

During this year's training institute, a number of research scholars were invited to share their expertise with participants. Here are some highlights of the

week's activities:

- Dr. Carrie Randall of the Medical University of South Carolina led a workshop on grant writing with emphasis on applying for R03, R21, and R01 grants.
- Dr. Gloria Miele from the New York State Psychiatric Institute presented a model for ethical decision-making related to HIV & AIDS. In keeping with our innovative distance-learning paradigm, this workshop was made possible through a web-based technology, which allowed Dr. Miele to lead the workshop over the phone and through an interactive slide presentation.
- Dr. Scarlett Bellamy from the University of Pennsylvania led a workshop on statistical meth-

ods for small sample studies.

- Dr. Susan Witte, Associate Director of the Social Intervention Group and Associate Professor at CUSSW, led a workshop on Institutional Review Boards (IRBs), answering questions specifically about how to navigate Columbia's IRB in submitting protocols.
- Fellows and mentors had the opportunity to attend a cross-core meeting at the HIV Center, which featured Dr. Alex Carballo-Diéguez, Executive Board member of the HISTP and Associate Director of the HIV Center. Dr. Carballo-Diéguez and colleagues presented updates on several innovative studies examining microbicide acceptability. The HISTP

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Dr. Cynthia Gómez Delivers Inspiring Keynote

The HISTP was honored to have Dr. Cynthia Gomez, Director of the Health Equity Initiative and Professor at San Francisco State University, as well as primary mentor to Dr. Rita Melendez, deliver the keynote address at the Institute Luncheon. Dr. Gomez is a committed and gifted HIV prevention scientist and mentor whose work focuses largely on cultural

determinants of health behaviors and achieving health equity through research, community collaboration, and faculty support and development. During the keynote, Dr. Gomez openly discussed her own career trajectory, from her childhood spent in Ecuador and Puerto Rico, traversing challenges and barriers during her graduate work, experiencing

the exhilaration and frustrations of community-based clinical work, to finding success within academia and in her own funded research. The keynote address contained wonderful perspective, humor, integrity, and a dedication to the field that will undoubtedly make a long-lasting impact on all who attended. Thank you, Cynthia, for a wonderful presentation!

## The 2008 HISTP Summer Training Institute 2008 Summer Training Institute Highlights, Continued

(Continued from page 1)

continues to benefit from collaboration with the HIV Center.

- Dr. Rafael Díaz, Professor and Director of San Francisco State University's Cesar E. Chavez Institute, facilitated a discussion on Racial and Ethnic Minority Mentoring and Research Experiences later in the week. Audience members included the first and second cohorts of fellows and mentors, executive board members, and other invited guests such as Dr. David Stoff, National Institute of Mental Health project officer for the HISTP, and Dr. Geraldine Downey, Vice Provost for Diversity Initiatives at Columbia Uni-

versity. After the discussion, Institute participants, Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) and Executive Board members, and other Columbia faculty were invited to a reception to close the fourth day of the Institute.

- Drs. Vicki Lens and Marianne Yoshioka from Columbia University's School of Social Work led a workshop on qualitative analysis, with the different approaches and software packages that are available for this methodology.

The week's activities provided ample training opportunities for participants, and we would like to acknowledge and thank everyone who contributed to the success of the Institute.

### The Future of HIV Prevention: Fellows Present Their Pilot Studies

Always a favorite event of our training fellows, the second day of the training institute was dedicated to pilot presentations. Each fellow was given time to present his or her pilot proposal, and receive valuable feedback from primary and secondary mentors, Executive Board staff, other training fellows, and Columbia faculty and research scholars. A broad spectrum of research top-

ics and populations of interest were discussed during this year's presentations, including: West Indian men who have sex with men; African American and Latina adolescent girls and women; women who have experienced intimate partner violence; women in transitional housing; delinquent adolescent girls; Chinese immigrant men; and female sex workers in Peru.

### Experts Demystify the Grant Review/Funding Process

The grant review/funding panel featured senior researchers with extensive research and grant review experience. Panelists included Dr. David Stoff, the HISTP Project Officer from the National Institute on Mental Health; Dr. Allen Zweben, HISTP Executive Board member and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Research at Columbia University School of Social Work; Dr. Faye Belgrave, primary mentor to Dr. Rosalie Co-

rona and Professor and Director of the Center for Cultural Experiences in Prevention at Virginia Commonwealth University; and Dr. Mark Roosa, primary mentor to Dr. Vera Lopez and Cowden Distinguished Professor at Arizona State University. Dr. Nabila El-Bassel moderated the panel discussion, which covered such topics as funding climates and issues related to the presentation of culturally relevant research for funding and review.

### Valuable Guidance: Scientific Advisory Board Meets

Members of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) met to discuss issues pertaining to program structure, evaluation mechanisms and constructs, and activities in the year ahead. Board members provided valuable input, feedback, and recommendations. Dr. Ann O'Leary, Senior Behavioral Scientist at the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention; Dr. Rafael Díaz, Professor and Director of San Francisco State University's Cesar E. Chavez Institute; Dr. Larry Icard, Director of Temple University's Center for Intervention and Practice Research; and Dr. Peggy Dolcini, Associate Professor at Oregon State University, College of Health and Human Services participated in the meeting.



Dr. Rosalie Corona, HISTP fellow, presents her pilot, "An HIV Prevention Program for Latina Mothers and their Daughters."

**"I feel I learned so much from listening to the comments for my own project and also from the conversations from other people's projects."**

- Rose Corona, HISTP Fellow



Dr. David Stoff, NIMH project officer for the HISTP, gives a presentation on grant review and funding prior to the panel discussion.



Jessica Adams-Skinner and Michele Rountree, HISTP fellows, greet Dr. Rafael Díaz, HISTP Scientific Advisory Board member, during the reception.

## Building Relationships, Making Connections: My Time at the 2008 International AIDS Conference

by Roberto Orellana, HISTP Fellow

Attending the International AIDS Conference in Mexico City was a great opportunity to hear about the intervention research being conducted around the world. I was interested in learning more about how the epidemic is affecting indigenous populations in the Americas and the interventions being tested in those communities.

I was pleased to see a large contingency of Mayan women and men from Guatemala present at the conference. I attended most of their presentations and was able to meet and network with them. Being originally from Guatemala I was especially happy to see them in Mexico and hope to establish future working relationships from the connections I made.

I had a great time presenting my work from the Peruvian Amazon and hearing my colleagues from Peru presenting their groundbreaking work on the use of technology for data collection in urban and rural areas (e.g. use of hand-held computers, cell phones, internet, videos, etc). There was a lot of interest in our work with indigenous communities, especially from neighboring Bolivia, Brazil and Ecuador. Researchers from those countries were interested in collaborating on projects across borders and connected me with their funders in NYC.

This was my first International AIDS Conference. It was such a good professional and personal experience, and I plan to attend others in the future. I hope to see all the HISTP fellows at the next International AIDS conference in Vienna, 2010.



Roberto Orellana presents his pilot study at the 2008 Summer Training Institute.

## The New HISTP Logo: “Newton’s Fourth Law of Mentorship”

As many of you may have noticed during this year’s Summer Training Institute, the HISTP unveiled a new program logo. It was challenging to choose a logo that captured the program’s essence in a single, simplified image. We are delighted with the final result, however, and feel that some explanation of the logo’s conceptualization and development is warranted for those who were not directly involved in its creation.

### What is it?

The image is based on an object often referred to as Newton’s Cradle. The mechanism consists of several metal spheres that are suspended on wires from a rectangular frame. When one of the spheres is lifted and allowed to fall, its momentum and energy is transferred down the line so that the sphere on the opposite end is lifted to the same height as the original. That sphere then falls back and continues the motion so that the movement repeats and perpetuates itself.

### What Does It Represent?

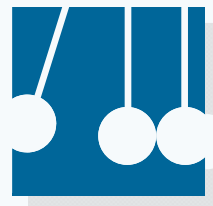
Newton’s Cradle was chosen because we believe it captures the vision of the HISTP. Like Newton’s Cradle, our program participants are aided through the efforts and support of those that are already working in the field. Each fellow’s energy and momentum is transferred to the next, and feeds into the forward motion. Not only does each fellow attain greater goals, but we hope that he or she in turn mentors another developing researcher. By perpetuating this motion, new generations of racial and ethnic minority researchers committed to mentorship are nurtured. This is the vision of our program, illustrated, we hope, by Newton’s Cradle – our goal is to grow a cadre of racial and ethnic minority researchers who are dedicated to perpetuating the forward motion that mentoring sustains.

**If you would like to provide feedback on the new logo, please feel free to access our website and let us know what you think.**

<http://histp.ccnmtl.columbia.edu>

**“My first International AIDS Conference... was such a good professional and personal experience.”**

**- Roberto Orellana,  
HISTP Fellow**



Our new program logo, based on Newton’s Cradle, exemplifies Newton’s newly-discovered fourth law—individuals that are supported through mentorship will tend to become mentors themselves.

## HISTP STAFF

**Nabila El-Bassel**

**Director**

**Elwin Wu**

**Co-Director**

**Aimee Campbell**

**Program Coordinator**

**Gina Espinoza**

**Operations Coordinator**

The HIV Intervention Science Training Program for Racial/Ethnic Minority New 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.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Spring 2008: HISTP fellows, Drs. Tricia Bent-Goodley and Rita Melendez, are awarded tenure at their respective Universities**
- **Summer 2008: 2nd cohort of fellows begins work on their pilot studies**
- **Visit us online for the latest HISTP news and announcements**



**HIV INTERVENTION SCIENCE TRAINING PROGRAM**  
Columbia University School of Social Work  
1255 Amsterdam Avenue  
New York, NY 10027  
Phone: 212-851-2417  
Fax: 212-851-2126  
E-mail: [histp@columbia.edu](mailto:histp@columbia.edu)