PARTICIPANTS

Miranda Cook, B.S. (Appalachian State University)
Mentor: Jamie Ard, MD
“Safety outcomes of high intensity medical weight loss treatments on severely obese older adults”

Matthew Lawson, B.S. (Lee University)
Mentors: Hosam Shaltout, PhD
“Intracerebroventricular Infusion of Angiotensin-(1-7) Improves Baroreflex Sensitivity in 4 Month Old Antenatally Exposed Betamethasone Sheep”

Sierra Marable, B.S. (Valdosta State University)
Mentor: Colin Bishop, PhD
“Neurocognitive Health Literacy Knowledge Change among Adults with T2DM”

Alex Rodriguez, B.S. (Carnegie Mellon University)
Mentor: Waldemar Debinski, MD, PhD
Tumor-targeted Immune Checkpoint Inhibition in a Tri-valent Recombinant

Mara Ramirez Ruiz, B.S. (University of Puerto Rico)
Mentor: David Mount, PsyD, MA
(Poster Title)

Ayana Stukes, B.S. (Virginia Polytech Institute State University)
Mentor: Capri Foy, PhD
(Poster Title)

We wish to our appreciation to the mentors for their outstanding contributions to the success of the program and the students for their participation.
The WFSM Post-baccalaureate Research Education (PREP) Scholars Program opportunity is funded by the NIGMS and was created in August of 2001 to provide 1-2 years of research, coursework and GRE preparation to students under-represented in seeking the PhD for careers in research in the biomedical sciences. Drs. Debra Diz and TanYa Gwathmey-Williams are the directors of the program. Trainees accepted into the program select research mentors from a wide range of topic areas for their research intensive experience. There are journal clubs and other enrichment activities provided throughout the year.

SUMMARY OF OUR SUCCESS
54 trainees have entered graduate programs (28 PhD and 18 Master’s) with a 93% retention rate, 10 entered professional schools (100% retention), 4 are technicians, and 5 are teaching math or science. The majority of these participants were African American. The PREP pipeline contributed ~25% of the minority students in biomedical sciences graduate program over the past 9 years and over this time period, the percentage of under-represented minority students rose from less than 5% to 16-20%. Fifteen students have already completed the PhD, with another 4-6 scheduled for completion of their PhD in 2015; two already hold assistant professor positions. Six new students entered the program in August, 2014.

PATRICIA PHELPS, PhD
CEO, GeeksNTaps

Dr. Patricia Phelps is the founder and CEO of Geeks-N-Taps, an event and science outreach company focused on the science of beer. A scientist by training, Pat’s career has included positions in the biotech industry, academia, government, and non-profits. Pat’s career has included serving as the lead educator for the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History’s Genome: Unlocking Life’s Code exhibit, Founder of North Carolina DNA Day, and recipient of multiple patents and government, state and non-profit grant awards. Pat founded the University of North Carolina's Science, Training and Diversity Office where she directed NIH IMSD and PREP training programs and summer research opportunities for undergraduate and high school students. Pat also served as the Director of the NIH Graduate Partnerships Program and the NIH Academy, a health disparities training program. One of Pat’s most rewarding career experiences has been mentoring young scientists in the various career options and paths available to them. Pat is a North Carolina native.