Our Journey....
To improve lives and gain knowledge

REPID Program
Research Education Program to Increase Diversity in Health Researchers

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY College of Human Medicine
Fall 2014
Overview

The REPID Program, through support from The National Institutes of Health, and The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NIH-NHLBI), provides a short term research training and enrichment experience for Michigan State University undergraduate/graduate/medical health professional students from underrepresented, minority, and disadvantaged (URMD) backgrounds. The goal is to inspire these students to pursue health related research careers focused on cardiovascular, pulmonary and hematologic disciplines.

Addressing the challenges of healthcare delivery in general and health equity in particular will require full participation from a diverse group of people. It is our collective responsibility to engage the minds, skills and talents of all our students. REPID contributes in spades to this endeavor.

The students have been a great addition to the laboratories of our faculty. Their energy and enthusiasm have been invigorating.

REPID is a wonderful opportunity. Use it to learn about what ignites your passions and what saps your energy. Don't allow self-doubt or concerns about the future distract you and keep you from doing your best. Immerse yourself and be engaged. Be relentless in your curiosity and pursuit of excellence. Above all relax and enjoy the experience.

“It is our collective responsibility to engage the minds, skills and talents of all our students. REPID contributes in spades to this endeavor.”

Francesca C. Dwamena, MD MS FAACH
Acting Chair, Department of Medicine

The REPID Program is designed to increase the number and diversity of researchers in health-related research by providing an inspiring and supportive environment for accomplishment and advancement. Our inspiration is to challenge the existing problem of diversity and health disparities in biomedical/clinical research and clinical practice, and to foster career development for motivated individuals from URMD backgrounds at Michigan State University.

The goal is to inspire these students to pursue health related research careers focused on cardiovascular, pulmonary and hematologic disciplines.

The REPID Program began in 2012 when the first REPID scholar cohort started the program. Each year a new cohort of 16-19 students are selected for the opportunity to receive solid research training and education. The scholars have worked with nationally recognized research mentors. Today, three cohorts of scholars (51) have completed their research training through the REPID program.

Life is best lived as an adventure, and many of our scholars already have success stories to share. Diligent and adventurous REPID alumni have used their skills to open the doors of opportunity in Michigan and across the USA. Hahyung Kim, 2012 Scholar, is a lab manager in Dr. Chen’s research lab at MSU. Robert Frisk, 2013 Scholar, is an assay production chemist for NeoGen Corp., in Lansing, MI. Andres Gonzalez, 2012 Scholar, is working as a Registered Dietician Nutritionist for H-E-B in Bander, Texas. Alexis Terman, 2012 Scholar, while in process of applying to medical school, is working as an Ophthalmic Technician in Boston MA. Paul Garza, 2013 Scholar, worked in rural communities, including a Native American reservation, in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Nallely Trejo, 2012 Scholar, is a public health and prevention specialist III in Texas, involved in an HIV/AIDS research project.

Many more REPID scholars are continuing their studies at MSU and their research work. Several REPID scholars presented their research data at national conferences. Three other scholars have been accepted to medical school at MSU, and others are in the process of applying to graduate and medical schools.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to discover and work with so many brilliant scholars through REPID. I would like to express my gratitude to NIH, MSU, all of our research mentors and the advisory board members; each of whom have played a pivotal role in the success of this program. It is because of your unwavering support that REPID is able to help students from all walks of life to learn and pursue their dreams.

Thank you,

Elahé Crockett, Ph.D. REPID Program Director

Below: Dr. Elahé Crockett, demonstrating use of Lab materials through the on-line class MED-492

After many years in the biomedical research field, I had a vision and the privilege of working with colleagues to conceive, propose, and oversee the development of the REPID program. Funding was secured from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and finally REPID became a reality.

Addressing the challenges of healthcare delivery in general and health equity in particular will require full participation from a diverse group of people. It is our collective responsibility to engage the minds, skills and talents of all our students. REPID contributes in spades to this endeavor.

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“Excellence is to do a common thing in an uncommon way.”
- Booker T. Washington

“Excellence is to do a common thing in an uncommon way.”
- Albert Einstein

“REPID is an example of excellence in action.”

*Thoughts from Advisory Board Member*, Associate Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Karen Klomparens

REPID is a wonderful opportunity for a diverse group of aspiring young scientists to learn the practices and the culture across biomedical and health sciences. The program components, the mentored experiences in laboratories, and the dedication of the faculty are first-rate. The students’ own comments, and more importantly, the outcomes and placements of the students speak for themselves. The outcomes are truly remarkable over this relatively short period of time. Our society becomes more diverse. REPID is an example of excellence in action.

For our REPID graduates and those just entering or wishing to enter the graduate program, a personal note: congratulations and wish for success to all of you.

Your choice of a career in healthcare is important to each of the individuals who you serve and to the larger communities in which you live. A big THANK YOU to the REPID program director, Dr. Elahé Crockett! Her development and nurturing of this program and its students demonstrate excellence in leadership and commitment to providing meaningful opportunities to enhance diversity in the health care sector.

“Your choice in healthcare is important to each of the individuals you serve and to the larger communities in which you live.”

“Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value.”
- Albert Einstein

“It is important to understand issues surrounding health-care equity and delivery to [be able to] address problems in these areas. Thus, it is critical to study such issues and understand the cause of equity issues and ways to improve impartiality in health care delivery by educating and informing the healthcare community. There are a number of barriers for students from minority groups to pursuing a career in research and to gain access to research training. Federal funding to address these problems has diminished over the last several years. It is imperative that institutions of Higher Education consider how best to fill in this gap. The path to reach your goals is not always straight and clear. Keep your eyes open and your goals flexible - opportunities need to be sought with effort and vigor, but may pop up when you least expect.”

Dr. Estelle McGroarty, REPID Advisory Board Member and Assistant VP for Research and Graduate Studies

“Mentor’s are not there to make us ‘happy’. They are there to guide us to the best of their knowledge.”
- Samira DeAndrade

“The practice of evidence-based medicine demands a high level of understanding by the physician of the basic science underlying the diseases they are treating, as well as the mechanisms by which those treatments work (or sometimes don’t). As discoveries in the biosciences accumulate, continued education and research is the only way to derive benefit from this knowledge. The REPID program is a great opportunity for any student with limited research experience to obtain a well-rounded introduction to biomedical laboratory operations and methodology. As they advance, students then have the opportunity to go beyond the intro period and actually discover new knowledge in the field they’ve chosen to pursue. Near the end, writing up their findings and presenting them at a regional scientific meeting provides the same experience that career scientists experience once established. The students should work when other lab members are present, strive to learn from and avoid the temptation to work independently, at least until they have a PhD. It would be difficult for any aspiring student to not benefit from this opportunity.”

Dr. Bruce Uhal, Research Mentor

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Dr. Bruce Uhal, Research Mentor
Dr. Adesuwa B. Olomu,
Chair of the REPID Advisory Board, and a research mentor

Health equity refers to the study of differences in the quality of health and healthcare across different populations. Without education and research, it is impossible to understand, define the extent of the problem and design solutions that can help eliminate inequity. With the focus of the REPID program on minority students, this program is challenging the existing problem of diversity and health disparities in biomedical research and clinical practice.

My research team and clinic has provided an opportunity for the REPID students to study the gap that exists in the cardiovascular care for minority and low income populations.

By participating in the REPID Program the students have moved a step ahead in indicating their interest in research.

The students should continue to pursue their dreams. They should be in contact with their mentors regarding advice and future opportunities.

Dr. Jim Galligan,
Director of Neuroscience Program, research mentor and member of the REPID Advisory Board

“I have had good experiences with REPID students. They are smart, enthusiastic and committed.”

Remember, research is all about creating new knowledge. You must learn to become comfortable with uncertainty. Answers to questions are not always available, you have to develop those answers through your research.”

Dr. Adesuwa B. Olomu,
Chair of the REPID Advisory Board, and a research mentor

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REPID Scholars’ Notable Accomplishments

Kimberly Obey and Miguel Joaquin, 2012 REPID Scholars, were both accepted to the Early Assurance Opportunity (EAO) Program of MSU College of Human Medicine (CHM). Early Assurance gives students the opportunity to apply to CHM in their junior year (or the year prior to completion of their undergraduate degree) at their undergraduate college or university. Applicants who secure acceptance to the College through Early Assurance are able to spend their senior undergraduate year conducting research, participating in Study Abroad, or pursuing other personal or academic interests.

Daniele Calloway and Ijeoma Nnanbu, 2012 REPID scholars, have successfully completed the ABLE program and have started their 1st year of medical education at MSU-CHM. The Advanced Baccalaureate Learning Experience (ABLE) is a year-long enriched academic experience offered each application cycle to an invited group of disadvantaged students who have applied for admission to the College of Human Medicine. Students who successfully complete the minimum requirements of the ABLE Program are offered regular admission to the entering College of Human Medicine class the following year. http://mdadmissions.msu.edu/ABLE/able.php

Kimberly Obey, Miguel Joaquin, Ijeoma Nnanbu, and Danuelle Calloway

Kimberly Obey, Miguel Joaquin, Ijeoma Nnanbu, and Danuelle Calloway

Kimberly Obey, Miguel Joaquin, Ijeoma Nnanbu, and Danuelle Calloway
Rolando Barajas, 2013 REPID Scholar

Rolando Barajas is a senior at Michigan State University and expects to graduate in May 2015. After his REPID experience, Barajas has been able to obtain a research position in Dr. Ashlee Rowe’s venom evolution research laboratory. (More information can be found on their website: www.venomevolution.zoology.msu.edu)

“The REPID program really helped me get ‘my foot in the door’ with research.” Rolando is one of many students that the REPID program has helped gain the necessary skills for biomedical research laboratory work. “With the training I got I am able to perform duties that some undergrads never get a chance to perform, thus leading me to get my current position in Dr. Rowe’s lab.”

As a member of REPID’s second cohort in 2013, Barajas was matched up with a mentor. During his time in the lab he worked on the “Effects of lipopolysaccharide stimulation on receptor expression on epithelial cells” with Dr. Nara Parameswaran.

Barajas spent the Spring of 2014 working at a hospital in Mexico. While there he would travel to different clinics and hospitals to interact with patients, doctors and medical students. Through this experience he was able to learn about local rampant diseases, insurance policies in Mexico, and the overall health-care system.

“Ultimately, [REPID] has sparked my interest in doing research as a career path.”

Gerald Lilly, 2014 REPID Scholar

Gerald Lilly was accepted to the 2014 REPID Cohort. He is a second year MD/MPH student in the College of Human Medicine at Michigan State University. Since his acceptance he has been making the best of the opportunities presented to him. He was awarded an NIH scholarship to attend the NIAID/IDSA Infectious Diseases Research Careers conference 2014 in Bethesda, MD. While attending the meeting he noted that he was the only medical student in attendance. He took advantage of his exposure to the many scientists and doctors at his disposal and absorbed as much knowledge as he could.

Gerald’s work in Dr. Harkema’s research laboratory was also exemplary. His research work focused on the effects of dietary supplementation on silica-induced lung lesions in lupus-prone mice, and his subsequent presentation, was presented at the Mid-SURE Conference with the other REPID scholars. This same research was selected to be presented at the COE (Council for Opportunity in Education)’s 33rd Annual Conference and Annual Student Poster Presentation Exhibition in Washington D.C.

“I am so appreciative of REPID, as it has allowed me the opportunity to do basic science research as a medical student that I wouldn’t otherwise have been able to do.”

“My interest in pursuing a career as a physician scientist has grown significantly through my recent REPID research experiences.”

“The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you”

- BB King
Dominique Garrison is a Junior at Michigan State University. Not only does she major in Microbiology with a premedical track for graduation, she also specializes in Bioethics, Humanities, and Societies, with the ultimate goal of becoming a Pediatric Immunologist. Garrison’s curiosity and desire to enter healthcare came from her father’s illness; he has both forms of COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). The close relationship with her father drove her to finding and pursuing biomedical research. Her journey led her to the REPID program. “Being from an underserved community, my hope is that I can be an Immunologist in Detroit. I understand the necessity for an increase of physicians in the urban healthcare systems. I am working to make a difference.”

The REPID program placed Dominique with mentor Dr. Bryan Copple. “Dr. Copple aimed to give me the wholistic experience of being a researcher.” Dr. Copple helped and guided Dominique through giving her scientific articles and then allowing her to join the presentation and discussion of those articles. Furthermore, he would also invite her to attend seminars with him. In her last years at MSU, she plans to get into the lab “as much as possible” and strengthen her leadership skills so that she may also be a mentor to others. REPID has made a huge impact on my confidence and skills in health/biomedical research.”

“I am working to make a difference”
Dominique Garrison

Holly Semma, 2014 REPID Scholar
Major: Neuroscience

Holly Semma is a Junior at Michigan State University. One of the most notable factors involved with her desire to pursue a career in healthcare is her younger brother, who has autism. “Growing up with a brother with a disability has never been easy, and with recent statistics, his healthcare could hint at a future concern. Most treatment for individuals with autism is focused on behavioral problems. However, this health disparity emphasizes the equal need for the prevention of health conditions by the medical community.” During her Sophomore year at MSU she started the first student organization dedicated to autism awareness, Spartan Spectrum, to promote “education through experience.”

“Becoming involved in research has helped me understand that my undergraduate classes are more than just the grade—they are about knowledge. Knowledge is the waves in my ocean, always growing and changing. It brings freshness and liveliness to our world, through the field of research. With the curiosity of a newborn baby, I’ve been yearning for answers to the many questions I ask myself. I find myself more passionate and driven to find the answers to these questions and contribute to the world of medicine. Through my REPID experience, I was able to actively learn about a common health disparity in the world of autism—Hypertension.”

Holly was matched with mentor Dr. James Galligan and was able to explore “how the auto feedback system is affected by the G-protein signaling mechanism through nerve stimulation in mutated mice.”

“Knowledge is the waves in my ocean, always growing and changing. It brings freshness and liveliness to our world, through the field of research.”

Holly Semma presents her research project at Mid-SURE 2014

Holly poses with her MID-SURE poster and her REPID mentor Dr. Crockett

My desire to be a physician has been reconfirmed—ignited—and for that, I cannot thank REPID enough.”

Holly was nominated to attend the LeaderShape Institute in May of 2014. Following her successful completion of her Summer Research experience with REPID, she will continue to work in Dr. Galligan’s research team as a Research Assistant.

“Realize that everything connects to everything else”
-Leonardo da Vinci

Holly Semma works of her experiment, monitoring the contraction of veins and arteries in Dr. J. Galligan’s Lab
Veronica Tijerina gives a judge an overview of her summer research findings.

Gerald Lilly was accepted to the COE’s (Council for Opportunity in Education) 33rd Annual Conference and Annual Student Poster Presentation Exhibition to present the poster of his work in Dr. Harkema’s Laboratory. Here he proudly displays his poster with Dr. Crockett.

Right: Over 300 students from different institutions across the country participated in 2014 Mid-SURE conference.

Mid-SURE 2014 Breslin Student Events Center July 21, 2014

At the end of the Summer research experience, all REPID Scholars presented their research data and findings at the 2014 Mid-Michigan Symposium for Undergraduate Research Experiences (Mid-SURE). This event provided an opportunity for the scholars to share their research work with their peers, faculty, and external audiences. Mid-SURE symposium is a MSU Undergraduate Research Initiative program that functions to increase opportunities for students to engage in research scholarship, and creative activity.

Abid Ahmad presents his poster at the 2014 Mid-SURE Conference.

Faith Thornton gives a powerpoint presentation about her summer research study in Dr. G. Leinninger’s Lab.

“Education is the most powerful weapon for changing the world”
-A nonymous
Awards

Breslin Cancer Center
Physician Shadowing

REPID Scholars are given additional opportunities for those who are interested in becoming physicians.

“Physician Shadowing”
This course, offered by Dr. Anas Al-Janadi, Chief of Breslin Cancer Center and Dr. Elahé Crockett, REPID Program Director, is developed to give students an opportunity to learn about the physician life and responsibilities at work. Several REPID Scholars have taken this course and enjoyed the experience.

For more information, contact REPID office at; repid@msu.edu

Dr. Elahé Crockett, REPID Program Director, was awarded the 2014 University Excellence in Diversity Award, Individual Award: Sustained Effort toward Excellence in Diversity

Dr. Elahé Crockett displays her award with MSU President, LouAnna K. Simon and Provost June Youatt

Dr. Elahé Crockett was granted this award for her continued effort to create opportunities in research training and education for students from underrepresented minority and disadvantaged backgrounds. She has sustained her efforts for over a decade and the REPID program is very fortunate to have such an advocate at the helm.

REPID is the reason that I am where I am with my research progression today. I am very glad that I found the REPID program. It provides a special opportunity for under-represented students, like me, to gain experience in biomedical research field. With the basic research skills I learned though the MED-492 course, I felt confident and ready to take the next step into the summer hands-on research experience when I walked into my mentor’s laboratory. The continuing support I received throughout and after the program from the REPID Director, Dr. Crockett, and Dr. Galligan, my research lab mentor, has enhanced my research experience to a whole new level. The REPID summer research was my first experience within a laboratory and doing research

REPID Advisory Board
Chair: Adesuwa Olomu, M.D., Department of Medicine
Co-Chair: Estelle McGroarty, Ph.D., Assistant VP for Research and Graduate Studies
Elahé Crockett, Ph.D., M.S., Director of REPID Program, Dept. of Medicine

Members:
Margaret I. Aguwa, D.O., M.P.H., F.A.C.O.F.P., Associate Dean for Community Outreach and Clinical Research, College of Osteopathic Medicine
Jerry Caldwell, Ph.D., Director of the Charles Drew Scholar Program
Judith Brown Clarke, Ph.D., Diversity Director of BEACON: Center for the Study of Evolution in Action
James Galligan, Ph.D., Co-Chair of Dept. of Pharm/Tox, Director of the Neuroscience Program
Paullette Granberry Russell, J.D., Senior Advisor to the President for Diversity and Director, Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives
Houria I. Hassouna, M.D., B.Ch., Ph.D., Carl and Elsa Rehberg Research Professor, Professor of Medicine and Director of Special Coagulation Center
Karen Klopman, Ph.D., Dean of the Graduate School
Terry Viau, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Support Services, College of Nursing
Korine Wawrzynski, Ph.D., Director for Undergraduate Research

REPID is one of the best programs that provides a true hands-on research experience. I am proud to say “I am a REPID scholar!”

- Mary Lian, September 2014

Update: Mary is working in Dr. Galligan’s Lab as a Research Assistant. She also helps 2014 REPID scholar, Holly Semma, while in Dr. Galligan’s Lab. Mary is planning to attend medical school.

 Scholar Breakdown (2012-2014)
51 REPID Scholars
42 Undergraduates
2 Masters in Public Health
2 Lifelong Education
4 Medical candidates

"A child miseducated is a child lost.””
- John F. Kennedy

“Character is doing the right thing when nobody is looking”
- J.C. Wells
Dr. Crockett and Dr. Olomu have taught me a great deal about placing my best effort forward at all times. I am very fortunate to have been fostered by the REPID community.

I send my thanks and best wishes to everyone in the REPID community.

-Alexis Therman, 2012 REPID Scholar, Aug 2014

“I am very thankful for the people I have met through this program and will always be thankful to Dr. Crockett for helping me into the medical research field.”

-Angel Trevino, 2012 REPID Scholar, Aug 2014

“Wonderfully illustrated by the people we meet.”

REPID Scholars 2013 at Round-Table discussion group gathering (L to R): Above left: Mary Lian and Yingli He, Above right: Brittany Childs, Angel Trevino, Melissa Chavez, Violeta Nieves, Paul Garza, and Rplando Barajas. Below left: Brian Harvey, Alyssa Meachum, Nashwa Khogali, Cierra Coe, Huei-min Ni, and Kyrah Holland. Below right: Dr. Elahe Crockett (Program Director), and Neco Wilson, 2012 REPID Scholar, displaying her certificate of research training accomplishment at the REPID Award and Certificate reception.

“Everyone you will ever meet knows something you don’t”

-Bill Nye

“Our lives are storybooks that we write for ourselves;”

“Wonderfully illustrated by the people we meet.”

“We must use time creatively - and forever realize that the time is always hope to do great things.”

-Martin Luther King
Watch us soar...

Shanice Akoto - Shanice is working to finish her research project of examining the Effects of Serotonin on the Rho family proteins in Dr. Kadroske's Laboratory (a continuation of her research as she started with REPID).

Mohamed Askar - Mohamed worked in Dr. Hassouna's laboratory to help coordinate a research project titled "C-Reactive Protein, Fibrinogen, and Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate as Clinical Markers of Health."

Dannelle Calloway - Dannelle is entering her 1st year of MSU-College of Human Medicine (class of 2019).

Anthony Ferrantelli - Anthony is a senior at MSU, and working as a Certified Nursing Assistant.

Andie Gonzalez - Andie currently works as a Registered Dietician Nutritionist. Andie will enter the Doctoral Program at Our Lady of the Lake University in Texas during the Fall 2014.

Hahyung Kim - Hahyung works as a Lab Manager/Professional Aide in Dr. Chen's research laboratory, at MSU.

Alba Leone - Alba is working at the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) as a Professional Aide in the Anatomy Lab. During the summer of 2014 she also taught in the Vetward Program (Enrichment Summer Program) at the CVM.

Ijeoma Nnanabu - Ijeoma is entering her 1st year of MSU-College of Human Medicine (class of 2019).

Kimberly Obey - Kimberly is entering her 1st year of MSU-College of Human Medicine and has just attended her “White Coat Ceremony” (class of 2018).

Miguel Joaquin - Miguel is a 2nd year Medical Student in the College of Human Medicine.

“Don’t wait until you’ve reached your goal to be proud of yourself...”

“Wheresoever you go, go with all your heart”

-Anonymous

Rolando Barajas - Rolando is currently working as an undergraduate Research Assistant in Dr. Ashlee Rowe’s venom evolution research laboratory. He also participated in a Study Abroad to Mexico in the Spring of 2014 where he traveled to various hospitals and clinics.

Paul Garza - Paul is currently a student at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health pursuing a MPH in Public Health Administration and Policy.

Nashwa Khogali - Nashwa is in her 1st year of medical residency in radiology. She was awarded an Honorable Mention for the Paul Alan Wetter Award for Best Multi-Specialty Scientific Paper. The Society of Laparoendoscopic Surgeons (SLS) conference 2014, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Violeta Neives - Violetta was admitted to a dietetic internship at the University of Texas Hospital. She will become a registered dietician (RD) upon the successful completion of the RD exam.

Mary Lian - Mary is working as a Research Assistant in Dr. Galligan’s Lab (a continuation of her research as she started with REPID). She is planning to attend medical school.

Huei-Min Ni - Huei-min is finishing up her pre-requisite courses and then applying for the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Wayne State University.

Mia Cook - Mia is working as a behavioral therapist for children with autism. She will be applying for Occupational Therapy school upon completion of her pre-requisite courses and is exploring the possibility of doing research on Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Robert Frisk - Robert is employed as an ELISA production chemist for Neogen Corporation.

Yingli He - Yingli worked as a Research Assistant in Dr. Venu Gangur’s food allergy and immunology laboratory. She has taken the pharmacy entrance exam (PCAT) and is applying to pharmacy schools.

Angel Trevino - Angel has been continuing his research on the ozone in Dr. Harkema's Laboratory.
Nallely Trejo is working as a Public Health and Prevention Specialist for the Department of State Health Services in Texas. Currently she is leading the collection of data from various public and private medical facilities throughout Texas for an HIV/AIDS research project being conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Nallely is one of the few data collectors that is able to conduct interviews in English and Spanish.

"When I was a REPID scholar, one of my long term goals was to work for the CDC, and have an influence in people's health at a national level. I am happy to say that my current collaboration with the CDC has an impact nationwide. Texas recently got recognized for our excellent job reviewing our project's guidance for medical record abstractions, and I was one of the two persons who took part in the review and editing process. This is a task that was not part of my job description, and I volunteered to do. Thanks to my training and experience as a REPID scholar, I felt confident I could go the extra mile and have a greater impact in the health of our country."

Andie Gonzalez is currently a Registered Dietician Nutritionist for H-E-B. She has just been accepted into a Doctoral Program of Leadership Studies through Our Lady of the Lake University in Texas and plans to start classes in the Fall of 2014. "REPID was a blessing in disguise. This opportunity opened up so many opportunities that helped build my interest in research and science. Throughout the program, and even after, they provided me with the skills and experiences that I needed to be successful. They gave me, a non-traditional Latina student, the ability to explore the area of science. It is because of them that I was able to accomplish a number of things throughout my career. I am forever grateful for this opportunity that was given to me."

Paul Garza is currently attending the University of Minnesota School of Public Health where he is pursuing a MPH in Public Health Administration and Policy. After the completion of the REPID program, Paul has worked in rural communities, such as a Native American reservation in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (U.P.). He worked as a liaison to migrant families, helping them seek access to educational, health, legal, and other social services. He is also the first to give a full assessment on the status of migrant activity in the U.P. With his new experiences, Paul is moving to improve early-childhood preventative healthcare education in rural and urban communities. "It is for this reason that I want to focus on research over the next few years that will apply data-driven methods to help families reach their full potential."

Alba Leone was a 50-year-old International Graduate and Life-long Education student. She had been knocking on many doors looking for an opportunity to get into a laboratory to do research, to no avail. "The REPID program opened that door for me. Dr. Crockett matched me with a research mentor who could best utilize my education and experience. Dr. Mohan-kumar, my mentor made the doors to the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) open. I'm deeply grateful to the REPID Program, I can't thank Dr. Crockett enough, she gave me the opportunity to be part of the first REPID cohort, even though I was not the typical applicant."

Since her completion of the REPID program, Alba was able to secure a position at Michigan State University with the Anatomy Lab at the CVM. She has also taught in summer enhancement programs for the CVM.

Huei-min Ni is currently taking classes through Wayne State University (WSU). She has some pre-requisite courses to complete so that she can apply for the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at WSU. She will be shadowing physical therapists and volunteering at their office to gain some practical experience before she applies for the Program. While taking classes, Huei-min has also been assisting Dr. Crockett with the responsibilities for REPID.
“Education is not the learning of facts. It’s rather the training of the mind to think.”  -Albert Einstein

“The REPID Program has given me the opportunity to participate in a research laboratory on campus which has completely changed my academic views. While working in the lab I have learned many new things.

In the Fall, I am excited to tackle the “hard” science classes because I can apply what I have learned through the summer research experience- see science in action!

Being a Science major gives students the opportunity to explore so many pathways for their future and the opportunity to experience them. Some students need a little help in order to gain these experiences, REPID gave me those experiences. REPID's influence allowed me to find what I was passionate about and what career pathway to take.

In the future, I will work hard to find treatments or even cures for deadly diseases, like glioblastoma and other brain cancers.”

-Abid Ahmad

I’m extremely thankful to have seen how biomedical research works, and how much of a team effort it is. I’m thankful to REPID for have given me that opportunity. I feel so confident in my future as a healthcare professional, and writing about my experience of my medical school application!

-Melanie Jamel, Aug 2014

Conducting research over the summer has been a rewarding experience. I greatly enjoyed the various hands-on research activities I did, such as harvesting tissue from animal specimens and performing Western blots. Having this experience has allowed me to gain exposure to the field of research, which will useful in my future endeavors.

-Ron Roseman Jr., Aug 2014

2014 REPID Scholars & Mentors

Abid Ahmad
Major: Genometrics & Molecular Genetics
Mentor: Dr. Julia Busik (Physiology Dept.)

Vihn Dang
Major: BioMed Lab Science
Mentor: Dr. Bruce Uhal (Physiology Dept.)

Sarai Garcia
Major: Nursing
Mentor: Dr. Won Song (Food Sci & Nutrition)

Dominique Garrison
Major: Microbiology
Mentor: Dr. Bryan Copple (Pharm & Tox Dept.)

Melanie Jamel
Major: Human Biology
Mentor: Dr. Ade Olomu (Dept. of Medicine)

Cassandra LaMarche
Major: Physiology
Mentor: Dr. Stephanie Watts (Pharm & Tox Dept.)

Gerald Lilly
Major: Medicine
Mentor: Dr. Jack Harkema (Pathobio & Diagnostic)

Alana Page
Major: Neuroscience
Mentors: Dr. P.S. & Sheba MohanKumar (Pathobio & Diagnostic)

Holly Semma
Major: Neuroscience
Mentor: Dr. James Galligan (Pharm & Tox Dept.)

Faith Thornton
Major: Human Biology
Mentor: Dr. Gina Leinninger (Physiology Dept.)

Veronica Tijerina
Major: MS in Public Health
Mentor: Dr. K. Rosenman (Dept. of Medicine)

Reynier Urdaneta-Moreno
Major: BioMed Lab Sci
Mentor: Dr. Bryan Copple (Pharm & Tox Dept.)

Hasib Yousufzai
Major: Biomechanical Engineering
Mentor: Dr. Julia Busik & Dr. Denis Proshlyakov (Physiology & Chem. Dept.)

“I learned several laboratory techniques, but more importantly, I also learned how to think like a scientist.”

-Abid Ahmad

Evita Moody
Major: Physiology
Mentor: Dr. Kathy Gallo (Physiology Dept.)

Ron Roseman Jr.
Major: Physiology
Mentor: Dr. Mark Kadrofske (Ped Dept.)

Melanie Jamel
Major: Human Biology
Mentor: Dr. Ade Olomu (Dept. of Medicine)

Cassandra LaMarche
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Rushing through the swirling stream of life we study the nature of what we are. Our persistent study of life is more than whimsical curiosity. For countless generations we try to keep the little flame of life burning in ourselves and those around us. And for generations to come we will never stop trying to keep the flame burning because we are alive, we are a part of life.