The Molecular Structure of Melanin – Shared by All Humans

Accelerating Life Science Discovery through Initiatives in Diversity

Keystone Symposia has a rich history of serving the scientific community by organizing conferences involving cutting-edge research and ideal venues for collaborative inquiry. Further, it has been a catalyst for change within the broader scientific community, connecting scientists within and across disciplines. Keystone Symposia’s vision for inclusion and diversity flows from this perspective. The focus of our diversity initiatives is on scientists, students, graduate students, post-docs, fellows, trainees and new investigators who are US citizens or permanent residents and members of a visible ethnic minority in the life sciences. This definition of diversity aligns us with the NSF, NIH and the broader US life sciences community.

Initially established as UCLA Symposia in 1972, the nonprofit organization relocated to Colorado in the 1990s, and a name change ensued thereafter. In 2009, Keystone Symposia marked the 25th anniversary of holding the first “open” international meeting on AIDS (M. Gottlieb, J. Groopman).

The Keystone Symposia Model of Diversity

• Forwards-looking and future-focused.
• Richly resourced and ambitious.
• Continually seeks creative input and suggestions from the scientific community.
• Makes a contribution to society.

Diversity Initiative Objectives & Purposes

1. Enhance participation by scientists who are members of visible ethnic minority groups (American Indian/Alaska Native; African-American; Hispanic or Latino; and Pacific Islander) at Keystone Symposia and in the broader life sciences community.
2. Bring a broader and even richer perspective to life sciences at the level of “bench research.”
3. Make a contribution to the society at large through our efforts and initiatives to increase diversity in biomedical research in the context of our increasingly diverse domestic citizenry and the global context of disease.

Organizational Structure

Board of Directors: A 19-member body comprised of world-renowned scientists.

Scientific Advisory Board: A 60-plus-member body comprised of academic and industry scientists from across the United States and other nations.

Diversity Advisory Committee: A body of established, prominent life scientists.

Senior-Level Leadership: Dr. Laina King manages Keystone Symposia’s diversity initiatives as its Director of Diversity in Life Science Programs and Co-Mentor of the Fellows Program.

Highlights of Keystone Symposia’s Diversity Initiatives

1. Keystone Symposia Underrepresented Minority (URM) Scholarships – awards which help defray the cost of attending Keystone Symposia meetings, funded in part with the help of an NIH MARC (Minority Access to Research Careers) Ancillary Training grant received in March 2010 as well as corporate support from Amgen.
2. Keystone Symposia ABRCMS Awards – scholarships to attend Keystone Symposia meetings for attendees at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students.
3. Keystone Symposia Fellows Program – a unique program allowing several outstanding early-career scientists to shadow the Keystone Symposia program development process.
4. Peer-to-Peer Program – an effort to connect URM scientists at Keystone Symposia meetings.
5. URM Network Database – an evolving tool that, when completed, will enable URM early-career scientists to connect with other URM scientists nationally, as well as with majority-culture scientists who have a recognized track record of positioning and mentoring URM scientists. Contact lainak@keystonesymposia.org for more information.
6. Outreach – to academic institutions and their research training programs.

How You Can Help

• Indicate your gender/ethnicity when registering or updating your Keystone Symposia account information. Without this information, we cannot keep individuals apprised of relevant new initiatives and programs.
• Mentor underrepresented minority scientists in your labs and programs and encourage their participation at professional meetings.
• Take advantage of NIH Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research (PA-08-190).
• Share NIH opportunities for new investigators – such as Loan Repayment Programs and post-doctoral training programs at NIH – with junior colleagues. A wealth of information is available at: www.training.nih.gov/postdoctoral/pdopps.asp.
• Realize that not everyone has the benefit of early exposure to research experience or strong K-12 education – so get involved in your community.
• Volunteer to be a mentor for early-career scientists at a Keystone Symposia conference.

Visit: www.keystonesymposia.org/diversity
Contact: lainak@keystonesymposia.org