

## **Program Insights Newsletter**

This newsletter includes:

- A new Scientific American blog dedicated to diversity issues in science
- Information about the NIGMS MARC U-STAR program
- NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins' blog, highlighting exciting science, amazing images, and creative researchers

### ***Scientific American* launches Voices blog**

*Scientific American* has recently unveiled the Voices blog, dedicated to exploring and celebrating diversity in science (<http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/voices/>). As described on their website: "Diverse ideas and perspectives benefit science—as studies amply demonstrate—yet progress toward equal representation of minority groups within the scientific community has been frustratingly slow. With that in mind, in July 2014, *Scientific American* launched Voices, a blog in our award-winning network that celebrates eclecticism in research, exploration and communication about science." Blog posts have featured stories on LEGO's new female scientist minifigures set, efforts to enhance Spanish-language science communication, and profiles of notable scientists. Interesting and informative blog posts will continue to be posted, so we encourage you to add this blog to your reading list!

### **Information about the NIGMS MARC U-STAR program**

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) has maintained a longstanding commitment to the research training and development of a strong and diverse biomedical and behavioral research workforce. Through its Division of Training, Workforce Development, and Diversity (TWD), NIGMS funds research training, career development, diversity and capacity-building activities through a variety of programs at the undergraduate, graduate, postdoctoral and faculty levels. One such program is the Maximizing Access to Research Careers Undergraduate Student Training in Academic Research (MARC U-STAR) program. The goal of MARC U-STAR is to increase the nation's pool of students from underrepresented groups who have the research experience and science preparation to matriculate and succeed in biomedical and behavioral Ph.D. programs. In 2013, through the MARC U-STAR program, NIGMS supported 60 institutions across the country and 613 trainees. More information about the program can be found at <http://www.nigms.nih.gov/Training/MARC/Pages/USTARAwards.aspx>.

### **NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins blogs about exciting NIH-supported science**

In other blog news, NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins has been posting some of the most exciting and innovative NIH-supported research on his Director's blog (<http://directorsblog.nih.gov/>). Recent blog

posts have included a description of “nanojuice,” a liquid containing optical dyes in nanoscale carrier molecules that can be used to image the intestines, showing the wave-like muscle contractions that move food through the gut and exposing where blockages occur (<http://directorsblog.nih.gov/2014/07/15/nanojuice-getting-a-real-time-view-of-gi-motility/>). Dr. Collins also profiles highly creative and innovative NIH-supported researchers, such as Dr. Debra Auguste, a researcher using engineering techniques to design drug delivery systems to specifically target one of the most aggressive types of breast cancer (<http://directorsblog.nih.gov/2014/07/08/creative-minds-engineering-targeted-breast-cancer-treatments/>). Some blog posts also highlight breathtaking images and videos, such as this video showing development of the roundworm *C. elegans*, one of biology’s most valuable animal models: <http://directorsblog.nih.gov/2014/06/05/snapshots-of-life-the-dance-of-development/>. There are many more entries celebrating a wide variety of scientific topics, so be sure to visit Dr. Collins’ blog to find out more. You can also follow him on Twitter at @NIHDirector.

*The Enhancing the Diversity of the NIH-Funded Workforce program*

*(<http://commonfund.nih.gov/diversity/index>) is funded through the NIH Common Fund, and managed by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities in partnership with the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.*