

# Network of Minority Health Research Investigators (NMRI)



NMRI News Fall 2015



National Institute of  
Diabetes and Digestive  
and Kidney Diseases



## A Message from Dr. Agodoa

**The Network of Minority Health Research Investigators** (NMRI or the Network) was established by the Office of Minority Health Resource Center within the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) in 1999 to address the impact of health disparities on disease in minority populations and to promote the success of minority faculty members. The NMRI continues to

- encourage minority health investigators to conduct research in NIDDK fields of interest, including diabetes, endocrinology, metabolism, digestive diseases, nutrition, kidney, urologic, and hematologic diseases
- promote two-way communication between NMRI and NIDDK members
- recommend strategies to support and advance underrepresented individuals and others in biomedical research
- advance scientific knowledge and contribute to reducing and eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities

The NMRI network of biomedical research investigators also works to strengthen diversity in science through mentoring. The Network's senior members help junior members develop grant applications, navigate the tenure process, and learn to balance faculty commitments. Mentoring occurs during NMRI annual workshops or by email or telephone, with the help of the NMRI Membership Directory to facilitate relationships. Continuing to build the NMRI community will keep adding value to the Network.

The NMRI is proudly supported by the NIDDK, the fifth largest National Institutes of Health (NIH) institute. The NIDDK's mission is to conduct and support medical research and research training, and to improve people's health and quality of life by disseminating science-based information on diabetes and other endocrine and metabolic diseases; digestive diseases, nutritional disorders, and obesity; and kidney, urologic, and hematologic diseases.

The NIDDK supports many efforts to promote diversity and increase the number of underrepresented ethnic groups and individuals with disabilities that it serves, including

- travel and scholarship awards
- high school and undergraduate programs
- diversity and training meetings

The new NIDDK website, [www.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.niddk.nih.gov), has enhanced communication and increased transparency between the Institute and research community. Links to research and funding announcements for scientists, and a list of the NIDDK's upcoming events and meetings, are now easy to find and use.

I invite researchers interested in the NMRI community to connect with us and attend our events—and I encourage all current members to get more involved in the Network. Best wishes for a successful year of research, mentoring, and community!

### **Lawrence Agodoa, M.D., F.A.C.P.**

Director, Office of Minority Health Research Coordination, NIDDK, NIH

## Awards and Accomplishments

The NMRI would like to congratulate the following members on their promotions:

**Emilyn Alejandro, Ph.D.**, is now an Assistant Professor and Visscher Biomedical Scholar in the Department of Integrative Biology and Physiology at the University of Minnesota Medical School. She had been a Hartwell Foundation Fellow in the Division of Metabolism, Endocrinology, and Diabetes at the Brehm Diabetes Center, University of Michigan.

**April P. Carson, Ph.D., M.S.P.H., F.A.H.A.**, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

**Carla M. Davis, M.D.**, is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics with tenure at Baylor College of Medicine, Texas Children's Hospital.

**Patricia Cristine Heyn, Ph.D.**, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, School of Medicine, University of Colorado Denver Anschutz Medical Campus.

**Joseph Larkin III, Ph.D.**, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Cell Science, University of Florida.

**Tatiana Oliveira, M.D.**, is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus – School of Medicine.

**Marina Ramirez-Alvarado, Ph.D.**, is a Full Professor at the Mayo Clinic.

**Jesús Rivera-Nieves, M.D.**, is a Professor of Medicine at the University of California, San Diego, Division of Gastroenterology.

**Marion B. Sewer, Ph.D.**, is a Professor at the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of California, San Diego.

**Fern Webb, Ph.D.**, is an Associate Professor in the College of Medicine Department, Community Health and Family Medicine, University of Florida.

**Lovoria B. Williams, Ph.D.**, is an Associate Professor at the College of Nursing, Georgia Regents University.

**Greta Berry Winbush, Ph.D.**, is a Full Professor at Central State University, Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

**Regina Sims Wright, Ph.D.**, is an Associate Professor in the University of Delaware's School of Nursing.

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## Member Collaborations

NMRI scholars are encouraged to network and identify opportunities for junior and senior Network members to collaborate. NMRI member **Carlos Isales, M.D.**, can attest the benefits of networking. He is now performing brain scans after forging a partnership with a researcher he met through fellow member **Luis Cubano, Ph.D.** The three were attending a seminar at Universidad Central del Caribe in Puerto Rico earlier this year.

## SAVE THE DATE

NMRI South Regional Workshop  
November 15–16, 2015, New Orleans, LA

NMRI 14th Annual Workshop  
April 21–22, 2016, Bethesda, MD



## NMRI 13th Annual Workshop Sponsors

The NMRI would like to thank the following organizations for sponsoring travel awards to the NMRI 13th Annual Workshop:

- American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases (AASLD)
- American Diabetes Association (ADA)
- American Gastroenterological Association (AGA)
- American Society for Bone and Mineral Research (ASBMR)
- American Society of Nephrology (ASN)
- Endocrine Society

Highlights of the NMRI 13th Annual Workshop on April 16 – 17, 2015, follows. A full meeting summary is available on the NMRI website at <http://nmri.niddk.nih.gov>.

## Report from *the* NMRI 13th Annual Workshop

The NMRI held its 13th Annual Workshop on April 16–17, 2015, at the Bethesda Marriott in Bethesda, MD, drawing participants from across the United States and Puerto Rico. The NMRI Planning Committee charged with organizing the meeting was chaired by NMRI member **Rhonda Bentley-Lewis, M.D., M.B.A., M.M.Sc.**, Harvard Medical School/Massachusetts General Hospital. Workshop attendees ranged from the professor to postdoctoral level, and their research areas included diabetes, obesity, inflammation, health disparities, epidemiology, endocrinology, nephrology, nutrition, and metabolomics.

NIDDK Deputy Director **Gregory Germino, M.D.**, welcomed attendees and emphasized the value of interacting with colleagues

during workshops. He celebrated researchers' successes and underscored the need to tap into the comprehensive expertise of all research communities across the United States to inform research questions and find effective solutions. Dr. Germino noted the April celebration of National Minority Health Month with Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Mathews Burwell and expressed enthusiasm for the addition of Dr. Hannah Valentine as the NIH's first Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity. With Dr. Valentine's assistance, NIH intramural programs are attempting to broaden their recruitment strategies to achieve greater diversity. Despite the uncertain future of research funding, Dr. Germino noted that "passion and outcomes" will drive the research community forward.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

During his presentation on “Leveraging Failure and the Unexpected for Success: Instructive Anecdotes in a Quest to Understand Myocardial Autophagy,” **Dale Abel, M.D., Ph.D.**, University of Iowa, aimed to energize participants’ enthusiasm for biomedical research. He described how research projects could “stretch” young researchers scientifically and reflected on how the NMRI’s emphasis on mentorship, networking, and other principles of collaboration advanced his career. Dr. Abel described the challenges of scaling the academic ladder and highlighted the importance of consulting with senior Network members who could help demystify the academic process.

## CAREER *and* FUNDING STRATEGIES

**Kevin McBryde, M.D.**, NIDDK, NIH, who spoke about “Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-related Research (Program Announcement 12-149),” presented both general and NIDDK-specific instructions regarding the program announcement. Because the NIH seeks to reach a broad and diverse audience with this funding opportunity announcement, candidates can range from a high school student to a faculty member. Dr. McBryde noted that research supplements must be associated with an existing peer-reviewed parent award, such as an R, P, or U award. He encouraged participants to bookmark the website, [www.grants.nih.gov](http://www.grants.nih.gov), for information regarding funding opportunity announcements and application forms, dates, and types.

**Joyce Hunter, Ph.D.**, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), NIH, discussed the institute and its loan repayment program. Dr. Hunter stated that the mission of the NIMHD is to lead scientific research that will improve minority health and eliminate health disparities. The NIMHD’s two congressionally mandated loan repayment programs seek to recruit

and retain qualified health professionals in research careers that focus on minority or other health disparities. Eligibility requirements include a doctorate-level degree, student loan debt greater than or equal to 20 percent of one’s annual salary, U.S. citizenship or permanent residency, and a job outside the federal government. The loan repayment program has supported over 2,000 recipients to date—the largest such program at the NIH.

“Negotiation: Managing Your Academic Career” was the subject of a presentation by **Ricardo Azziz, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.**, Georgia Regents University. Dr. Azziz explained that successful negotiating begins with understanding the other person’s position, needs, advantages, and disadvantages. To help attendees begin to understand academic politics in the context of negotiation, he discussed the value of three elements—experience, relationships, and a clear professional vision. He described academia as “a matrix framework of relationships with no clear objective” and urged participants to seek role models and develop a network across their organization and beyond. Dr. Azziz also emphasized that leadership is a learned skill-set and continually developing process.

**Fern Webb, Ph.D.**, University of Florida, led an interactive session titled “Biostatistics: All About the Basics.” Dr. Webb dispelled several common misconceptions, including that a single best design exists to answer a given research question, that descriptive or retrospective studies are scientifically useless, and

### How has the NMRI Helped Your Career?

The NMRI was instrumental in helping me attain tenure as a result of learning how to write grants, especially specific aims.

that a randomized controlled trial is always the best option. She noted that study design decisions typically are a compromise between the scientific question, available resources, and reality. Dr. Webb explained the four types of data variables—nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio, or continuous—and elaborated on analysis and evaluation methods as well as basic measures of frequency. She advised researchers to consult with a biostatistician in a study's planning phase prior to beginning data collection.

## NETWORKING LUNCH— ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

During the networking lunch session, participants attended one of nine roundtable discussions, each of which focused on a different career-oriented topic, among them: setting priorities for success, budgeting and managing funds, strategies for successful recruitment, and giving effective presentations. The discussions were led by **Carolyn Tucker, Ph.D.**, University of Florida; **Kevin McBryde, M.D.**, NIDDK; **Marion Sewer, Ph.D.**, University of California, San Diego; **Cherise Harrington, Ph.D., M.P.H.**, George Washington University; **Sylvia Rosas, M.D., M.S.**, Joslin Diabetes Center/Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center; **Mark Lawson, Ph.D.**, University of California, San Diego; **Dale Abel, M.D., Ph.D.**, University of Iowa; **Michael Flessner, M.D., Ph.D.**, NIDDK; **Bessie Young, M.D., M.P.H.**, University of Washington; **Patricia Heyn, Ph.D.**, University of Colorado Denver; and **Senta Georgia, Ph.D.**, Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

How has the NMRI  
Helped Your Career?

The NMRI built my  
confidence. Inspiring!

## MOCK STUDY SECTIONS

Workshop participants attended one of four Mock Study Sections. Each section covered a different type of NIH award: R01/Basic, R01/Clinical, K01/Clinical and Basic, and R03. Each study section was comprised of an NIDDK Scientific Review Officer (SRO) and a Chair. This year's mock study sections were led by SROs **Ann Jerkins, Ph.D.**; **Maria Davila-Bloom, Ph.D.**; **Robert Wellner, Ph.D.**; and **Michele Barnard, Ph.D.** The sections were chaired by **Jose Romero, Ph.D.**, Harvard Medical School; **Susanne Nicholas, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H.**, University of California, Los Angeles; **Senta Georgia, Ph.D.**, Children's Hospital Los Angeles; and **Rhonda Bentley-Lewis, M.D., M.B.A., M.M.Sc.**, Harvard Medical School/Massachusetts General Hospital.

## MENTORING AT *the* NMRI 13TH ANNUAL WORKSHOP

During the 13th Annual Workshop's "Mentor/Mentee Session," junior investigators met with one of several senior investigators willing to serve as mentors. Each mentor hosted a roundtable discussion with his or her mentees, answering questions and offering advice about career- or research-related topics. The session was designed to promote active mentoring relationships between senior and junior members.

At the "Specific Aim Review with Senior NMRI Members" session, participants could discuss the specific aims of an upcoming grant proposal with a senior NMRI member. Senior members reviewed the specific aims and advised on areas of improvement.

**Arthur Gutierrez-Hartmann, M.D.**, University of Colorado Denver, moderated a "Peer Mentoring" discussion with panelists **Gabriel Gonzalez, Ph.D.**, VA Boston Healthcare System; **Gentzon Hall, M.D., Ph.D.**, Duke University Medical Center; and **Patricia Silveyra, Ph.D., M.S.**, Penn State College of Medicine. Panelists reflected on their experiences and the value of interacting with their peers and colleagues.



## “Peer Mentoring” discussion with panelists



### Marco Cabrera Poster Contest Winners Announced

The 34 posters submitted to the 2015 Dr. Marco Cabrera poster contest represented outstanding research being conducted at a broad range of academic institutions. Each poster was assessed for content, presentation, and the presenter’s response to questions. Awards were presented for exemplary poster presentations in the areas of basic, translational, and clinical science. Congratulations to this year’s winners:



**Basic Science:** **Diana N. Obanda, Ph.D.**, Pennington Biomedical Research Center, for the presentation “Insulin Sensitizing Effects of *Urtica dioica* L. Extract Are Partly Mediated Through Adiponectin Effects on Ceramide Catabolism.”



**Translational Science:** **Chandra L. Jackson, Ph.D., M.S.**, Harvard Medical School Clinical and Translational Science Center, for the presentation “Racial Disparities in Short Sleep Duration by Occupation and Industry: John Henryism in Black Professionals.”



**Clinical Science:** **Amanda M. Fretts, Ph.D., M.P.H.**, University of Washington, for the presentation “Associations of Processed Meat and Unprocessed Red Meat Intake with Short Leukocyte Telomere Length: The Strong Heart Family Study.”

## SCIENTIFIC PRESENTATIONS

Three NMRI members were selected from the submitted abstracts and invited to present their research at the NMRI 13th Annual Workshop. The speakers were



**Princess Imoukhuede, Ph.D.**, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who presented on “Systems Biology and Angiogenesis: Developing Integrative Models of VEGFR1 Activation in Hypoxic Environments.”



**Mukoso Ozieh, M.D.**, Medical University of South Carolina, who presented on “Racial Differences in the Impact of Anemia on Clinical Outcomes in Kidney Transplant Recipients.”



**Greta Winbush, Ph.D.**, Central State University, who presented on “Empowering Patient–Doctor Relationships among Older African American Patients with Diabetes and Hypertension Using Health Empowerment Technology (HET).”

## DINNER ADDRESS

In “Mapping a Path Toward Career Success,” **Joan Reede, M.D., M.S., M.P.H., M.B.A.**, Harvard Medical School, discussed the elements valuable to career development by addressing the critical questions of what, when, where, who, and why. Some of Dr. Reede’s recommendations included

- performing a self-assessment of your gifts, talents, knowledge, skills, interests, passions, and strengths
- contemplating your personal definition of success
- being realistic about assuming additional responsibility, such as joining committees—including knowing when to say “no”
- expanding your network outside your discipline

Dr. Reede underscored that career paths are dynamic and that priorities, interests, and funding environments shift throughout one’s

career. She advised against judging students on the career paths they choose, noting that Ph.D. training can lead to different opportunities for different students.

## INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS

Two parallel workshop sessions at the NMRI 13th Annual Workshop were designed as informal, interactive discussions led by a panel of experts addressing important career development topics for investigators. Participants attended the session of their choice:

“Becoming a Successful Clinical/Translational Researcher: What ‘Progress’ Looks Like at Each Stage,” led by **Matthew Allison, M.D., M.P.H.**, University of California, San Diego; **Glenn Chertow, M.D.**, Stanford University School of Medicine; **Daisy De Leon, Ph.D., M.S.**, Loma Linda University; and **Kwami Osei, M.D.**, The Ohio State University College of Medicine

“How to Thrive as a Basic/Translational Science Researcher: From Postdoc to Principal

Investigator,” led by **Lynda Brown, Ph.D.**, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University; **Courtney Houchen, M.D.**, University of Oklahoma Health Science Center; **Manuel Miranda-Arango, Ph.D.**, University of Texas; and **Marion Sewer, Ph.D.**, University of California, San Diego

## ROLE of SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES and PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Workshop participants heard about the roles and activities of scientific societies and professional organizations that are important to the work of the NMRI:

**Gyongyi Szabo, M.D., Ph.D.**, stated that the **AASLD’s** Liver Research Fund has provided more than \$12.5 million to support liver research and advanced hepatology training since 2008. Dr. Szabo envisioned future AASLD platforms to emphasize diversity issues, gender differences, and increased understanding of underrepresented populations and health care disparities with regard to liver diseases.

**Tamara Darsow, Ph.D.**, said the prevalence of diabetes has been increasing over time, with the disease having a disparate impact on demographic subpopulations. If trends continue, one in three adults and one in two members of high-risk minority populations in the United States will have diabetes by the year 2050. Dr. Darsow remarked that the **ADA** has supported nearly 4,500 independent research projects and invested more than \$700 million in diabetes research.

**Jonathan Himmelfarb, M.D., FASN**, noted the tremendous racial and ethnic disparities that exist with kidney disease, particularly end-stage kidney disease, which requires dialysis. The **ASN** strives to catalyze work on changing the racial and ethnic disparities in kidney disease and developing improved treatments. The primary approach to attacking the issue of kidney disease is through research that informs public policy,

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investigates social factors, or explores health services and health care delivery.

**Roberto Fajardo, Ph.D.**, from the **ASBMR**, explained that low-energy fragility fractures related to type 2 diabetes are a major problem in the United States and around the world, with the risks of fracture significantly greater in minority populations. Dr. Fajardo highlighted that the first symposium on the relationship between diabetes and skeletal health was held at the ASBMR’s 2014 annual meeting.

**Lewis Roberts, M.D., Ph.D.**, from the **AGA**, acknowledged the late Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr., who went to great lengths to seek racial equality and justice in the United States, particularly in health care. Dr. Watkins was the first African American to graduate from the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, the first Chief Resident in Surgery at The Johns Hopkins Hospital, and the first person to insert an implantable cardioverter defibrillator in a patient. Dr. Roberts called him an outstanding role model who left a strong legacy.

**Mark Lawson, Ph.D.**, remarked that the **Endocrine Society** recently reassessed its activities and purpose in part to increase its efforts to support investigators—especially younger investigators and trainees. The Society’s Minority Affairs Committee and the Trainee and Career Development Core Committee have been involved in improving the Society’s assessment of membership demographics and ensuring the field remains vibrant. Dr. Lawson invited attendees to join the committees.



Leonor Corsino, M.D., M.H.S.

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## News from *the* NMRI Oversight Committee

At the NMRI 13th Annual Workshop, **Leonor Corsino, M.D., M.H.S.**, 2014–2015 Oversight Committee Chair, reported on the committee's recent accomplishments. The committee began several initiatives this year such as

- increasing visibility with partner associations
- securing foundation funding to supplement NIDDK support for the 13th Annual Workshop
- establishing a long-term collaboration with the ASN, which sponsored 15 fellows to attend the workshop
- forming partnerships with foundations to disseminate information about the NMRI

Ongoing NMRI challenges and opportunities include recruitment, senior-member retention, mentoring, additional partnerships with societies and foundations, and ensuring a sustainable budget and support. Dr. Corsino introduced **Luis Cubano, Ph.D.**, Universidad Central del Caribe, as the 2015–2016 Oversight Committee Chair.

**Shirley Blanchard, Ph.D.**, presented some results of the 2014 NMRI evaluation. Dr. Blanchard noted the evaluation data support the NMRI program. She explained that the expectations the NMRI has of its members are

- (1) consistent reporting of publications, presentations, grants, and promotions via the online questionnaire at [www.scgcorp.com/NMRIQuestionnaire](http://www.scgcorp.com/NMRIQuestionnaire)
- (2) completing post-program evaluations
- (3) recruiting at least one member per year
- (4) contacting at least one organization or society to request support of NMRI

Dr. Blanchard also elaborated on the proposed NMRI Fellowship and presented a list of possible requirements, three of which would need to be met to attain "Fellow" status.



## The NMRI on the Web

The NMRI website contains a number of resources for members, including the following:

NMRI workshops and meetings are announced at [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/Pages/default.aspx). Please visit this site for additional information about future meetings and access to past meeting reports, presentations, and other resources.

Career development resources for junior investigators, including NIH grant application writing tips, peer review processes, and additional minority programs, are available at [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-member-resources/Pages/nmri-member-resources.aspx](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-member-resources/Pages/nmri-member-resources.aspx).

The 2014 NMRI Membership Directory is available at [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-membership/Documents/NMRI%202014%20Directory\\_FINAL\\_508\\_01.pdf](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-membership/Documents/NMRI%202014%20Directory_FINAL_508_01.pdf).

A request form for mentors and mentees is available at [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/mentor-program/Pages/mentor-program.aspx](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/mentor-program/Pages/mentor-program.aspx).

The NMRI Member Questionnaire is available at [www.scgcorp.com/NMRIQuestionnaire](http://www.scgcorp.com/NMRIQuestionnaire). The questionnaire provides the Oversight Committee with insight into member research interests, publications, grants, and promotions. Members are encouraged to complete the questionnaire annually to provide feedback on NMRI services and to update publications and awards. Results of previous questionnaires are available at [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-membership/questionnaire/Pages/nmri-questionnaire.aspx](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-membership/questionnaire/Pages/nmri-questionnaire.aspx).

Previously published NMRI newsletters are available at [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-newsletters/Pages/nmri-newsletters.aspx](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-newsletters/Pages/nmri-newsletters.aspx).

## NMRI Frequently Asked Questions

### Who is eligible for NMRI membership?

NMRI membership is available only to investigators who are

- (1) at the postgraduate doctoral level or higher
- (2) interested in minority health research, including individuals from traditionally underserved communities (African American, Hispanic American, American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islanders)
- (3) conducting research in diabetes; endocrinology; metabolism; nutrition; or digestive, kidney, urologic, or hematologic diseases
- (4) U.S. citizens or individuals with permanent resident status

Medical students from underrepresented minority groups are welcome to attend NMRI meetings if they are conducting research in one of the NIDDK mission areas noted above.

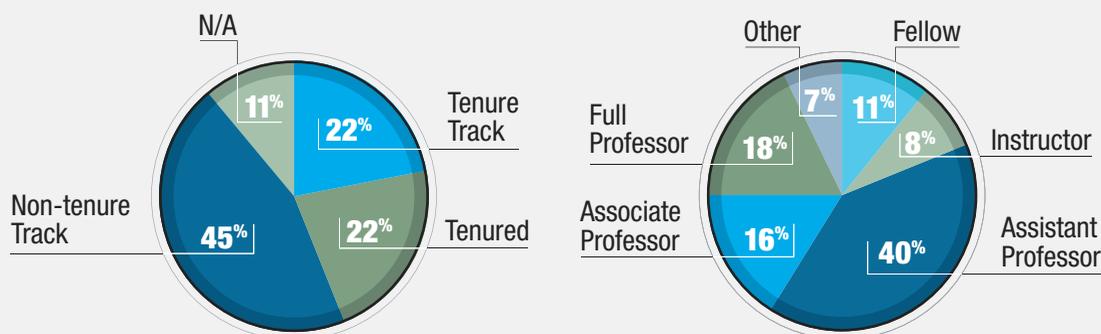
### How do I apply for membership?

Individuals who qualify should apply for membership on the NMRI website. Please visit [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/Pages/default.aspx) and click the “Criteria Form” link located in the Additional Links section near the bottom right-hand side of the page.

### Whom do I contact with questions about the NMRI?

Direct your questions or comments to NIDDK Program Officer Ms. Winnie Martinez, who oversees the NMRI, at [martinezw@mail.nih.gov](mailto:martinezw@mail.nih.gov).

## Snapshot of NMRI Members



Members are encouraged to complete the NMRI Member Questionnaire at [www.scgcorp.com/NMRIQuestionnaire](http://www.scgcorp.com/NMRIQuestionnaire). Please also report promotions, publications, and successful grant awards to Ms. Winnie Martinez, NIDDK, at [martinezw@mail.nih.gov](mailto:martinezw@mail.nih.gov).

## Does the NMRI have a website with more information?

The NMRI maintains and frequently updates its website at [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/Pages/default.aspx). The website contains information about the NMRI, including meeting announcements, NIDDK funding opportunities, the NMRI Membership Directory, and summary reports from past NMRI meetings. NMRI members also can access the NMRI Questionnaire on the website.

## How can I find a mentor if I am an NMRI member?

The NMRI Oversight Committee, which created the NMRI Mentor Program, maintains a list of NMRI members who have volunteered to serve as mentors. The biographies and research interests of NMRI members are listed in the NMRI Membership Directory available at [www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-membership/Documents/NMRI%202014%20Directory\\_FINAL\\_508\\_01.pdf](http://www.niddk.nih.gov/research-funding/process/diversity/network-minority-research-investigators/nmri-membership/Documents/NMRI%202014%20Directory_FINAL_508_01.pdf).

## How do I sign up to be a mentor if I am an NMRI member?

If you are a member and would like to volunteer as a mentor, go to the NMRI website and click the “NMRI Mentor/Mentee Program” link located in the menu on the left to find instructions on how to become a mentor.

Members are encouraged to complete the NMRI Member Questionnaire at [www.scgcorp.com/NMRIQuestionnaire](http://www.scgcorp.com/NMRIQuestionnaire). Please also report promotions, publications, and successful grant awards to Ms. Winnie Martinez, NIDDK, at [martinezw@mail.nih.gov](mailto:martinezw@mail.nih.gov).

## Do I need to be a NMRI Member to attend a Workshop?

No. NMRI Workshops are open meetings.

## Do I need to be a NMRI Member to be eligible for a Travel Award?

Yes. To be eligible for the NMRI Travel Award, you must meet membership eligibility:

- at the postgraduate doctoral level or higher
- interested in minority health research, including individuals from traditionally underserved
- communities (African American, Hispanic American, American Indian, Alaska Native,
- Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islanders)
- conducting research in diabetes; endocrinology; metabolism; nutrition; or digestive,
- kidney, urologic, or hematologic diseases
- U.S. citizens or individuals with permanent resident status

### Why did you attend the NMRI 13th Annual Workshop?

To foster mentoring relationships and improve skills by learning from top researchers and leaders.

## NMRI 13th Annual Workshop Poster Abstracts

**Irene O. Aninye:** Identification of Three Amino Acid Residues that Confer DNA-binding Specificity of Thyroid Hormone Receptor Isoforms

**Tiffany R. Beckman:** Brain Activation by Food Cues Varies with Choice of Visual Stimulus in Obese American Indian Women

**Rotonya Carr:** Ceramide Synthase May Regulate Hepatic Perilipin 2 and Lipid Metabolism in Experimental Alcoholic Hepatic Steatosis

**Ayotunde Dokun:** A Molecular Mechanism Involved in Poor Perfusion Recovery in Diabetes; Role of Impaired Regulation of miR29a on Ischemia

**Tolulope Falaiye:** Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease Transition

**Amanda M. Fretts:** Associations of Processed Meat and Unprocessed Red Meat Intake with Short Leukocyte Telomere Length: The Strong Heart Family Study

**Gabriel Gonzalez:** Oncocytes of Deep Esophageal Glands Share Markers of Ductal Epithelium, Suggesting a Role in Re-epithelialization of the Esophagus with Reflux Disease and Barrett's

**Gentzon Hall:** Addition of Genome-wide Linkage Analysis Is Superior to Whole-exome Sequencing Alone for Identification of Novel Genetic Causes of Hereditary Kidney Diseases

**Rasheeda K. Hall:** Utilization of Acute Care Among Patients with End-stage Renal Disease Discharged Home from Skilled Nursing Facilities

**Titilayo O. Ilori:** Oxidative Balance Score and Chronic Kidney Disease

**Princess Imoukhuede:** Systems Biology and Angiogenesis: Developing Integrative Models of VEGFR1 Activation in Hypoxic Environments

**Arvin Iracheta-Vellve:** Innate Immune Activation of Hepatocyte Mitochondrial Apoptosis Promotes Fibrogenesis

**Chandra L. Jackson:** Racial Disparities in Short Sleep Duration by Occupation and Industry: John Henryism in Black Professionals

**Xiqian Lan:** APOL1 Risk Variants Induced Inflammatory Cytokines Cause Kidney Cells Injury

**Zeenat Lila:** DNA Modification in Diabetics and Obese Persons: Detection of Carboxymethyl-2'-Deoxycytidine (CMdC) in Biological Sample

**Tesfaye B. Mersha:** Use and Misuse of Race Information in Genomic and Health Disparities Research

**Nia S. Mitchell:** Determining the Effectiveness of a Low-cost National Weight Loss Program over Seven Years: A Completers' Analysis

**Diana N. Obanda:** Insulin Sensitizing Effects of *Urtica dioica* L. Extract Are Partly Mediated Through Adiponectin Effects on Ceramide Catabolism

**Tatiana Oliveira:** Incidence of Epilepsy in Adults with Cerebral Palsy and Secondary Health Outcomes—A Review and Proposed Feasibility Study

**Abdul Oseini:** Allelic Distribution of SNPs Relevant to Hepatitis B and C Viral Infection Among Minnesota's Somali Population

**Mukoso N. Ozieh:** Racial Differences in the Impact of Anemia on Clinical Outcomes in Kidney Transplant Recipients

Why did you attend  
the NMRI 13th Annual  
Workshop?

To meet other young  
investigators, learn about  
others' work, network, and  
find mentors.

**Ariana R. Pichardo-Lowden:** It Is Not the Providers, It Is the System: Diabetes Management in an Acute Hospital Setting

**Fatima Rivas:** Colloidal Acid, a Potent 11- $\beta$  Hydroxysteroid Dehydrogenase 1 Inhibitor

**Aisha L. Siebert:** Parasitoid Venoms and Mechanisms of Regulation of Sorbitol in Human Kidney

**Patricia Silveyra:** Sex Differences in the Expression of Lung Inflammatory Mediators in Response to Acute Ozone Exposure

**Omar T. Sims:** An Assessment of Alcohol Use Recency Among Patients Considering Hepatitis C Treatment

**April J. Stull:** Blueberry Bioactives Improve Endothelial Function in Adults with Metabolic Syndrome

**Karen Tabb:** Prevalence of Diabetes and Depression: A Systematic Review of Studies Published Including Women in the United States

**Heather P. Tarleton:** A Comprehensive Assessment of Cardio-metabolic Health Among Cancer Survivors

**Crystal C. Tyson:** The Dash Diet Enhances Nocturnal Blood Pressure Decline in Moderate Chronic Kidney Disease: Results of a Pilot Feeding Study

**Francisco Villarreal:** Double Blind Placebo Controlled Trial on the Effects of Dark Chocolate (DC) on Exercise Capacity and Metabolic Control Endpoints in Sedentary Older Subjects

**Joni S. Williams:** Patient-centered Care, Diabetes Self-care, Glycemic Control, and Quality of Life in Adults with Type 2 Diabetes

**Greta Winbush:** Empowering Patient-Doctor Relationships Among Older African American Patients with Diabetes and Hypertension Using Health Empowerment Technology (HET)

**Bessie Young:** Risk Factors for Rapid Renal Function Decline Among African Americans: The Jackson Heart Study (JHS)





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