

APA RECEIVES FUNDING FOR MINORITY BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH TALENT PROJECT

Aims to help students of color to enter biomedical careers in psychology

Special to Sentinel-Voice

To reduce the under-representation of minorities in the biomedical field and address the problems minority students encounter in higher education,

the American Psychological Association (APA) Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs (OEMA) has sought and was awarded a \$750,000 grant from the National Institute of General Medical Science (NIGMS) for a three-year project to "increase the number of persons of color in the educational pipeline (post-secondary through graduate school) for biomedical research careers in psychology — especially in the areas of AIDS, stress, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, substance abuse, neuroscience, gerontology, pain and its management, developmental disorders and other issues that involve health and behavior with disproportionately negative impacts on the health and life span of persons of color."

"Opportunities in this field exists and are growing but minority students with talent don't all have access to the educational resources," said psychologist Bertha G. Holliday, Ph.D., who is the Director of OEMA. "Our first goal was to choose those educational institutions that have good research resources and are also interested in serving minorities so they can provide and/or ensure the quality of education

and training for biomedical research careers in psychology. We would then like those chosen institutions to be responsible for identifying, nurturing and affirming minority talent at all levels of the educational pipeline," said Dr. Holliday.

To achieve these goals in the next three years, the project will include the following objectives:

- Establish five multi-institutional Regional Centers of Excellence in the recruitment, retention and training of students of color in biomedical research in psychology, with each center consisting of major research university (University of Maryland, College Park; University of Illinois, Chicago; University of Colorado, Boulder; University of Miami; University of California, Los Angeles) and two minority-serving institutions.
- Implement each Regional Center a specific methodology for strengthening linkages between the major research institution and the minority serving institutions.
- Provide technical assistance (diversity consultation and scientific advisement) to the Regional Centers to boost their psychology faculty and departments to effectively

recruit, retain and train students of color for biomedical research careers in psychology.

• Increase the number of students of color at the project's participating institutions who are interested in pursuing biomedical research careers in psychology and improve these students' rates of retention.

• Disseminate the project's findings, procedures and demonstration models to all of the nation's academic departments of psychology and to other appropriate scientific/professional associations and societies to facilitate more recruitment, retention and training of the nation's future minority biomedical researchers.

Even though psychologists have been involved in helping minority students pursue careers in scientific, technical and professional fields for the last eleven years, said Dr. Holliday, "we have yet to try a systematic national program of multiple recruitment, retention and training strategies. This project is the first to involve a systematic approach that offers institutional excellence, methodology that monitors and evaluates the program's effectiveness and an emphasis on sharing the project's major procedures and

activities with other disciplines and scientific/professional associations."

The American Psychological Association (APA), in Washington, DC, is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and is the world's largest association of psychologists. APA's membership includes

more than 142,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students. Through its divisions in 49 subfields of psychology and affiliations with 58 state, territorial and Canadian provincial associations, APA works to advance psychology as a science, as a profession and as a means of promoting human welfare.

Screening catches colorectal cancer

People over age 50 should talk with their physician about two tests that could sharply reduce the risk of colon or rectal cancer — even if they have no family history of the disease, says a Stanford Medical Center gastroenterologist.

"But first, people who do have a family history of colon or rectal cancer should definitely begin talking with their primary care physician to consider appropriate earlier testing," says Dr. Brian Paaso, a clinical professor of medicine at Stanford who practices at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

"And if blood ever appears in the stool without an obvious cause, that's a warning sign indicating that a medical exam should be scheduled quickly," says Paaso.

Even people who have no family history of colorectal cancer may be at risk of this potentially deadly disease. The American Cancer Society says about 100,000 new cases of colon cancer and 40,000 new cases of rectal cancer are reported annually in the United States. Every year, about 55,000 people die from colon and rectal cancer. Together, the two diseases represent the third leading cause of U.S. cancer deaths in both men and women.

Teen survey on sex information

Teens say they need more information about sex and birth control before they become sexually active.

Want more info

58% Say teens don't have enough information on using different kinds of birth control

45% Say teens don't know enough about where to get birth control

47% Need more information on AIDS prevention; other sexually transmitted diseases

57% Say information on sex, birth control comes too late

Where they get info

Percent who say they get "a lot" of information from:

40% Sex education classes

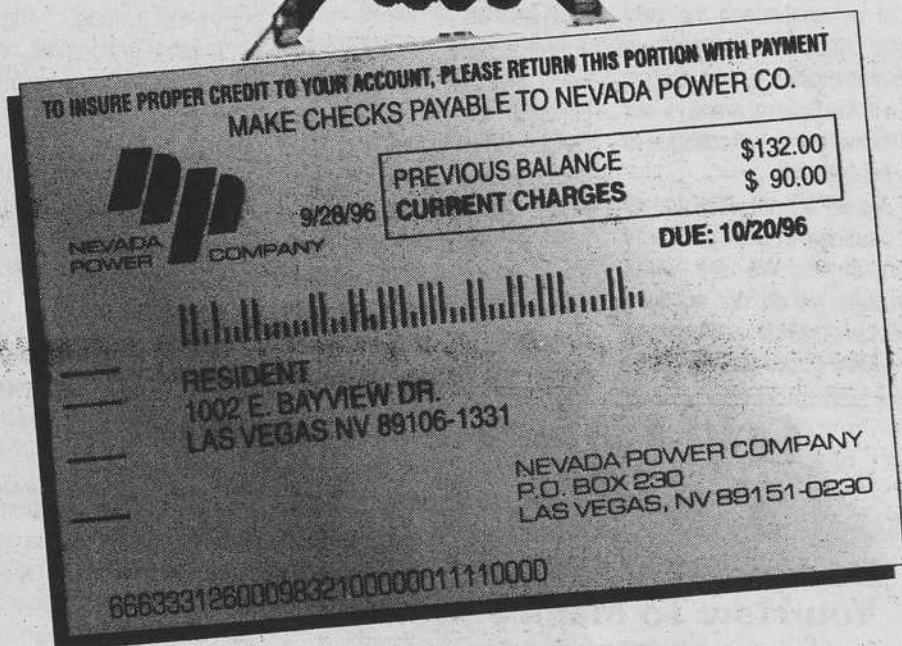
36% Their parents

54% Say sex info they get doesn't relate to situations teens deal with

SOURCE: Princeton Survey Research March telephone survey of 1,510 teens, ages 12-18 for Kaiser Family Foundation

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