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# BSCP

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CAREERS PROGRAM**

## Call for Abstracts

IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE AND INTERESTED in making a presentation at the 2018 New England Science Symposium (NESS), which will be held on April 8, 2018 (see related article, at right), it's a good idea to start working on your abstract now. Though the deadline for submission is January 4, 2018, the online abstract submission page will go live by the end of September 2017.

Postdocs (research and clinical); medical, dental and graduate students; post-baccalaureates; and college and community college students (particularly African American, Hispanic/Latino and Native American/Alaska Native individuals) involved in biomedical or health-related scientific research are eligible to submit abstracts.

**Abstracts must include:**

1. Name of author(s)
2. Suffixes (if a degree is obtained): BS, MS, PharmD, MD, PhD, MD/PhD, DMD/DDS
3. Contact information: mailing and email addresses, phone numbers
4. Institution, academic level and expected year of graduation/program completion
5. Funding source(s)/research sponsor(s)
6. Research title

7. The abstract (not to exceed 400 words) must demonstrate the scientific problem **and must contain:**
  - Statement of the Problem/Background
  - Research Question/Hypothesis
  - Research Design/Methods Used in the Investigation
  - Results/Summary of the Investigation
  - Interpretation/Conclusion of the Investigation

To submit an abstract or register, go to [www.NewEnglandScienceSymposium.org](http://www.NewEnglandScienceSymposium.org). All abstracts will be reviewed and applicants notified of their acceptance by mid-February.

**NEW AWARD FOR 2018**

The CloudHealth Genomics Translational Research Award for outstanding translational research poster presentation will be added to the roster of awards presented at NESS in 2018.

**2017 AWARD WINNERS**

**Ruth and William Silen, MD Award** for outstanding oral presentations

First Place: Christalyn Rhodes, PhD Candidate, Harvard University

Second Place: Angel Byrd, MD, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

### 17th Annual New England Science Symposium (NESS)

**Date:** Sunday, April 8, 2018

**Location:** The Joseph B. Martin Conference Center at Harvard Medical School

**Purpose:** Established in 2002 to promote careers in biomedical sciences, NESS provides a forum for career development in the sciences, to exchange ideas and to expand their professional networks

**Co-sponsors:** Harvard Medical School Minority Faculty Development Program and Biomedical Science Careers Program (BSCP)

**Keynote Speaker:** George Q. Daley, MD, PhD, dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Caroline Shields Walker Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School

Registration is required, but there is no registration fee. To submit an abstract or to register, go to [www.NewEnglandScienceSymposium.org](http://www.NewEnglandScienceSymposium.org). For more information, contact Rodolfo Ramos at (617) 432-5580 or [Rodolfo\\_Ramos@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:Rodolfo_Ramos@hms.harvard.edu).

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**SPECIAL THANKS TO**

The Massachusetts Medical Society  
 for their support of this newsletter



## 14TH BIENNIAL BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CAREERS STUDENT CONFERENCE

THE 14TH BIENNIAL BIOMEDICAL Science Careers Student Conference will take place on Friday, April 6 and Saturday, April 7, 2018 at The Westin Copley Place Boston. The conference is intended for post-docs (research and clinical); medical, dental and graduate students; post-baccalaureates; college and community college students; and high school seniors and juniors (particularly African American, Hispanic/Latino or American Indian/Alaska Native

students/fellows). The Saturday opening keynote speaker will be Jeffrey Leiden, MD, PhD, chairman, president and CEO of Vertex Pharmaceuticals. Michelle Williams, dean of the faculty, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, will be the lunchtime keynote speaker.

The primary objective of this conference is to provide the students/fellows with an opportunity to network with advisors/role models from the basic and clinical sciences,

medicine, public health, academic administration and biotechnology. These advisors/role models will encourage students to complete advanced studies and provide concrete advice and information on available resources, professional opportunities and career paths in biomedical and other science-related fields. The secondary objective is to enable students to meet, inspire and network with one another.

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## Where Are They Now

### Eydith Comenencia Ortiz, PhD

EYDITH COMENENCIA ORTIZ, PHD, is an associate director in the BioOncology Alliance & Advocacy Relations team at Genentech. "I have the pleasure and privilege of leading engagement with patient advocacy organizations that represent the patient voice," she says. In her role, Eydith drives collaborations with patient advocacy organizations to meet patient needs and help Genentech incorporate the patient voice in drug development and delivery.

Originally from Puerto Rico, Ortiz graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Puerto Rico with a degree in biology. She received a PhD in neuroscience from the Tufts University Sackler School of Graduate Biomedical Sciences in 2012. Eydith became actively involved with BSCP during her time at Tufts, attending conferences as a participant and panelist and presenting at the New England Science Symposium. She was awarded a Hope Scholarship and was selected to give a speech on behalf of BSCP students at the 2011 Evening of Hope.

When she was in graduate school, a future in academic research looked very appealing. Then Eydith developed "a terrible allergy" to rodents, which made continuing to work in the lab impossible. Eydith credits BSCP with helping her figure out what to do next.

"Through BSCP I learned that there were many things that I could do with my PhD degree. At a difficult crossroads for me, the program helped me to see the world of opportunities out there for scientists that want to pursue careers outside of the lab," she says. Eydith found mentors from industry and had informational interviews with pharmaceutical companies that exposed her to the variety of functions that exist within industry. "It gave me a great sense of whether I could see myself in industry and what careers outside of the lab I could pursue," she says.

Among the companies that Eydith interviewed with was Cambridge-based Biogen, which became her first employer after she graduated. Eydith started in Regulatory Affairs. "As part of the Regulatory Affairs team, I was able to learn about the drug development process and all of the work that goes into obtaining regulatory approval for a new therapy." Eydith also did a six-month rotation in Biogen's Public Policy & Government Affairs team, in Washington, DC, where she learned about health and science policy. "It was an eye-opening experience. I learned that policy developments have a direct impact on drug development and the ability to bring new therapies to patients," and about patient advocacy organizations and the importance of partnering with them to meet patient needs.



EYDITH COMENENCIA ORTIZ, PHD

"Patient Advocacy Organizations play a critical role in ensuring that all stakeholders in the health care system — policy makers, regulators, industry, etc. — understand patient needs and perspectives."

After completing her rotation, Eydith joined the Public Policy & Government Affairs team as a senior policy analyst, and later transitioned to patient advocacy. "Biogen was a great company to start my career in industry... I learned about the different ways that you can leverage a scientific background to impact patients' lives."

Eydith left Biogen in 2016 to work at a small biotech company in California, leading

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## 14TH BIENNIAL BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE

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BSCP is expecting over 1,000 applications from students/fellows. Two hundred fifty volunteer physicians, scientists, academicians, community leaders, industry leaders and senior administrators will serve as advisors and panelists. Currently, 35 former BSCP students have signed on to return in 2018 as advisors, the highest

number yet. In 2016, 28 previous BSCP students returned to serve as student advisors.

The matching of the students/fellows with advisors is based specifically on the academic and career interests described in students' four-page applications. Lise D. Kaye, executive director, BSCP, and Hollie Borek DeSilva, program manager, read and

review each application carefully to match attendees with mentors.

There is no registration fee, but pre-registration is required. **The application deadline is February 5, 2018; for high school students it is December 13, 2017.** To request an application, please forward your academic level and preferred postal mailing address to [lise\\_kaye@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:lise_kaye@hms.harvard.edu). ■

## Where Are They Now

### Kenneth Maynard, PhD, FAHA

MOVING TO THE CAMBRIDGE OFFICE of Takeda Pharmaceuticals in late 2016 was a homecoming of sorts for Kenneth Maynard, PhD, FAHA. The neuroscientist was born in Trinidad and Tobago and received his BSc, MSc, and PhD at University College, University of London. But he came to Boston in 1991 to do his first postdoctoral fellowship, working under Michael Moskowitz, MD, at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and Harvard Medical School (HMS). And he describes his first stint in Boston — nearly 10 years — as seminal to his career.

At Harvard, Maynard met a couple of other underrepresented minority students and together they recognized there was no forum for students like them. They formed the Minority Biomedical Scientists of Harvard. At the same time, Joan Y. Reede, MD, MPH, MS, MBA, was birthing BSCP. Maynard was introduced to Reede, who asked his group to bring poster presentations to the first Biomedical Development Career Conference.

Instead of a poster, Maynard submitted an R21 grant application, hoping to have it reviewed. Molecular biologist Lydia Villa-Komaroff, PhD, who was at the conference as a participant and panelist, critiqued the application. "That critique directly led me on a path that took me from a postdoc to a faculty member," Maynard states. In 1995 he became an instructor at HMS and MGH. By the time he left five years later

to join Aventis Pharmaceuticals in New Jersey, he was an assistant professor.

"It was a transformational moment in my life that led me to leave academia and embark on a career in industry," Maynard says, adding that the transition involved "my faith journey." When Aventis first approached him, he was very happy with his work and life in general. But, he says, "I always wanted my research to be applied. Today people would use the word *translational*."

The company offered him the job four times before he accepted. Finally, Maynard recalls, "My wife said to me, 'Ken, I think someone is trying to tell you something and you're not willing to listen.'" Maynard took a week off and prayed about his choices. And he has never doubted that he made the right one. "The sense in the academic world was that pharma wasn't doing it right," he says. "I decided to join pharma to do it right from the inside." For the first two years he was at Aventis, Maynard maintained a lab at MGH to continue work on his American Heart Association grant, the result of the application he submitted after his first BSCP conference.

Maynard says his 14 years at Aventis were evenly divided among central nervous system discovery (CNS), CNS clinical development and external innovation on therapeutic aging. He joined Takeda in Chicago in 2014 largely because, he says, he was looking for a global company with



KENNETH MAYNARD, PHD, FAHA

significant commitment to CNS R&D "where I could have more impact." Though his wife and then 10-year-old daughter did not want to leave New Jersey, Maynard says he was once again driven by his faith to make the change, and "It's been a great move." Initially he was a Global Program Leader, heading teams in clinical development of central nervous system therapeutics. In early 2016 the head of his unit asked him to work on a portfolio strategy for central nervous system products, with the aim of making Takeda a global leader in CNS R&D. Currently, he is the head of Global Patient Safety Evaluation (GPSE) Compliance, Standards & Training and GPSE Business Partners Relations.

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## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

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Third Place: Carlos Stahlhut, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

**Ruth and William Silen, MD Award for outstanding poster presentations in the category Cellular Biology, Neuroscience, Biochemistry, or Physiology**

First Place: Chinaemere Igwebuike, MD/PhD Candidate, Boston University School of Medicine

Second Place: Amanda Vo, PhD Candidate, Boston University

Third Place (1): Hawasatu Dumbuya, PhD Candidate, Brown University

Third Place (2): Breanna Titchen, College Student, Gettysburg College

**Ruth and William Silen, MD Award for outstanding poster presentations in the category Microbiology, Immunology, Genetics, or Molecular Biology**

First Place: Tung Nguyen, College Student, Brown University

Second Place: Adrija Darsha, College Student, Brown University

Third Place: Leeza Santiago Millán, College Student, University of Puerto Rico Humacao

**Ruth and William Silen, MD Award for outstanding poster presentations**



2017 AWARD WINNERS

**in the categories of Public Health, Epidemiology, or Biostatistics; Bioinformatics, Physics, Chemistry, or Engineering; and Clinical or Social Science (including Translational Research)**

First Place: Eva Ingram, MD Candidate, Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University

Second Place: Brittini Moore, Post-baccalaureate, National Cancer Institute (Pepperdine University, 2016)

Third Place: Carl Streed, MD, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Brigham and Women's Hospital

**Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center Award for outstanding cancer-related oral presentation**

Kasia Kready, College Student, Dartmouth College

**Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center Award for outstanding cancer-related poster presentation**

Matthew McGoldrick, College Student, University of Notre Dame

**Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research Postdoctoral Awards for outstanding scientific posters presented by postdoctoral participants**

First Place: Breann Brown, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Second Place: Valeria Ramdin, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Northeastern University

Third Place: Jasdave Chahal, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

**The Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Department of Neonatology Award for outstanding neonatal-perinatal research poster presentation**

Sarah Bhattacharjee, College Student, University of California Berkeley

**Asclepius Laboratories Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine Award for outstanding stem cell and regenerative medicine poster presentation**

Kihyun Lee, PhD Candidate, Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences ■

## EYDITH COMENENCIA ORTIZ, PHD

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Community Engagement & Partnership. The move was a great career boost and brought her closer to family. In spring 2017 she moved to the Alliance & Advocacy Relations team at Genentech. "I jumped at the opportunity to join Genentech, and I am very excited to grow my career here," she says.

Even though she's 3,000 miles away, Eydith remains connected to BSCP. "BSCP has had a profound impact on my career and my life. I am deeply grateful for the opportunities that I've had thanks to BSCP, and the meaningful connections that I've made through the program," she says. "I am strongly committed to supporting BSCP's work to ensure that the next generation of minority scientists have the same or better opportunities than the ones that I've had." ■

## KENNETH MAYNARD, PHD, FAHA

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Throughout his career, Maynard says he has attended BSCP events "for whatever Joan and Lise wanted me to do. That experience [his first conference] had an early and significant impact on my career." Returning as a mentor initially struck him as giving back. But he soon learned, "You gain a lot more than you give." ■

## SAVE THE DATES

**Evening of Hope  
Spring 2018**

### Reminder

Please remember to update your contact information at [www.bscp.org](http://www.bscp.org).

Click on "Contact Information/Submit Resume" and enter your information in the appropriate window.