



GMaP Region 2

February 2020 Newsletter



GMaP Celebrates Black History Month

By Z’Kera Sims, MPH
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Throughout the course of American history, Black people have played an integral role in advancing cancer research. This is evident through the contributions of influential physician-scientists like Dr. Jane Cooke Wright. Dr. Wright earned a full scholarship to study medicine at New York Medical College. After graduating with honors from an accelerated 3-year program in 1945, she joined her father, Dr. Louis T. Wright, at the Cancer Research Foundation at Harlem Hospital, where they researched chemotherapy treatment modalities. Over the course of her more than 40 year career, [she published more than 100 articles and became the first Black](#)



Dr. Jane Cooke Wright, well-known trailblazer in cancer research.
Photo courtesy of: blackpast.org 2020

[woman President of the New York Cancer Society in 1971.](#) Dr. Wright and her father were champions in the fight for equal rights for Black people in America, especially as it related to patient-centered treatment and equality for medical staff.

Dr. Wright paved the way for today’s leading Black women scientists, such as Dr. Hadiyah-Nicole Green, [one of the first African American women in the nation to earn a Ph.D. in physics.](#) Dr. Green earned her Bachelor’s degree from Alabama A&M University, a Historically Black College or University in Huntsville, Alabama. Dr. Green’s research [lies at the intersection of nanotechnology, immunotherapy, and precision medicine.](#) She is best known for successfully combining laser technology with cancer treatment. Ultimately, her goal is “to change the way cancer is treated.” To achieve this goal, she founded the [Ora Lee Smith Cancer Research Foundation](#), named after her late aunt who passed away from cancer. Dr. Wright and Dr. Green have made significant contributions to the way cancer is studied and treated today. They continue to be trailblazers for other underrepresented individuals in cancer research.

GMaP Region 2 looks forward to continuing to highlight the accom-



Dr. Hadiyah-Nicole Green leads research that explores lasers in cancer treatment.
Photo courtesy of: “What is Hot” 2019

plishments of other underrepresented scientists past and present. As we honor Black History Month, we are reminded of how vital your work is in creating a more diverse pipeline of cancer researchers while striving to eliminate cancer health disparities. As always, GMaP Region 2 is ready to support you in this mission!

What’s Inside?	
Trainee Spotlights	2
Upcoming Events	4
Announcements	5

Trainee Spotlight: Jamie A.G. Hamilton



Jamie A.G. Hamilton is a third-year doctoral student at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Jamie is also a 2020 GMaP Region 2 Travel Awardee!

By Jamie A.G. Hamilton

Q: What is your current field of study? Why did you choose that field of study?

A: My current field of study is cancer biology in which I am studying how chronic inflammation in the context of obesity alters hematopoiesis and leukemogenesis. I chose to study this system because the alarming rise of obesity and the understudied relationship between obesity, hematopoiesis and hematological malignancies.

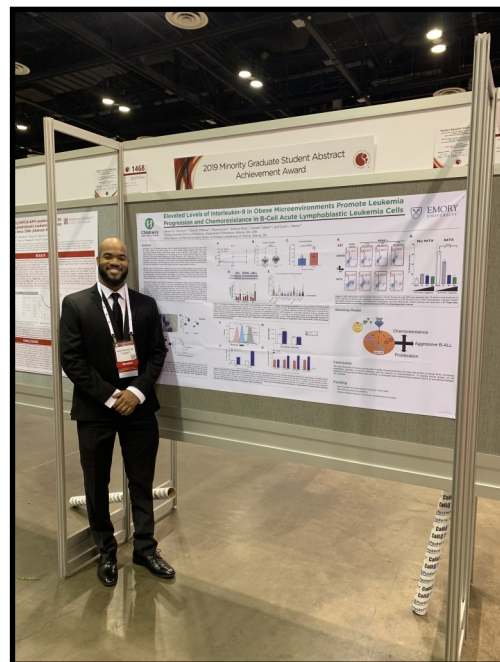
Q: What are some barriers and/or challenges you have had to face as an underrepresented minority in cancer or cancer healthy disparities research?

A: The lack of representation of underrepresented minorities within academia and patient samples are two separate but significant challenges that I have had to face.

Q: How did you overcome these barriers and/or challenges?

A: In order to overcome these challenges, I have been mentoring underrepresented minority undergraduates both inside and outside of the lab. I am currently working towards completing my PhD and eventually I will have my own research lab in order to help change the demographic makeup of academia. With regards to the lack of representation in patient samples, this is a multifaceted problem that occurs at the historical, cultural and systemic level. In order to address this, I have begun to engage my own community by emphasizing the importance of becoming organ donors, donating blood, and getting involved in clinical trials they are eligible for. When I develop my own research lab I would like one component to be the development of a tissue bank situated in underrepresented communities.

Jamie with his mentor, Dr. Curtis J. Henry. Jamie cites mentorship as being integral to his cancer research journey.



Jamie at the 61st American Society of Hematology Annual Meeting & Exposition. Jamie won the 2019 Minority Graduate Student Abstract Achievement Award.

Q: What advice do you have for other underrepresented minorities that hope to obtain an advanced degree?

A: On the academic side of advice, I have found my professors and research mentors to be immensely helpful in the process of both applying and working through graduate school. In addition to this, pursue every research opportunity that comes before you! Every time you step into the lab is a chance to learn, take advantage of it, even if it's not directly related to a field you wish to pursue in the future- the critical thinking skills you develop are invaluable. On the more emotional side of advice, please fight against the voices and belief that you are an imposter. You deserve to be in this space, whether you are applying or pushing through- your thoughts and perspective are an invaluable addition to the scientific world.

Trainee Spotlight: Aldenise P. Ewing



Aldenise P. Ewing is a T32 Applied Postdoctoral Fellow in the Behavioral Oncology Training Program at Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida.

has had to be the most challenging—yet rewarding.

Q: How did you overcome these barriers and/or challenges?

A: Faith. Family. Mentors. I was very fortunate to receive the Gates Millennium Scholarship in high school. I had no idea at the time that I applied, but that one application is what set the ball moving towards where I am today. Many thanks to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and United Negro College Fund that covered ten years of my education and planted the seed for me to ultimately pursue a PhD.

Q: What advice do you have for others underrepresented minorities that hope to obtain an advanced degree?

A: Serve first and apply to everything. I believe that volunteering and service are the two best ways to learn more about your passion and allow you to network to meet potential mentors. After exposing yourself to as many opportunities as possible,



Aldenise hits a grand slam at the 2018 USA vs Canada Border Battle Tournament in Kitchener, Canada. Outside of work, she is a softball force to be reckoned with!

ask questions! Seek advice from someone who is working in a field that interests you. Ask them reasons why they chose their field and where they see their field heading in the future. If the future of the field interests you, determine the educational plan and advanced degree that would place you in an ideal position to succeed.

By Aldenise P. Ewing, PhD, MPH, CPH

Q: What is your current field of study? Why did you choose that field of study?

A: My passion is to reduce and eliminate health inequities. My bachelors, MPH and PhD are all in Public Health. Although I believe “public health” chose me—it was as early as undergrad that I found the field of public health to offer the greatest opportunity for meeting the greatest need for the largest number of people (population health).

Q: What are some barriers and/or challenges you have had to face as an underrepresented minority in cancer or cancer healthy disparities research?

A: As a first-generation college graduate, I knew little to nothing about pursuing higher education let alone careers involving research or a PhD. Although I was supported by family, navigating my educational journey

Aldenise and her colleagues promote colorectal cancer screening at a local wellness fair. She believes community engagement experience is key when carving out a career path.



Upcoming Events



4th Annual Cancer Disparities Symposium
Friday, March 6, 2020
Case Western Reserve University

Click on each picture to learn more!
Interested in more opportunities like these?

Join our listserv by emailing
[**gmap.region2@moffitt.org**](mailto:gmap.region2@moffitt.org)



International Cancer Education Conference
Using Cancer Education to Address Social Determinants of Health

14-16 October 2020 • College Park, Maryland, USA

AFROTECH™ : HEALTH

[GET TICKETS](#) **APRIL 24, 2020**
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

NIH NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE www.cancer.gov

NCI CRCHD Professional Development Workshop and Mock Review

SAVE THE DATE
June 8–9, 2020

No weblink available at this time. More information to come!
Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and Conference Center

Save the dates: **2020**
June 7-19

Tribal Researchers' Cancer Control Fellowship Program



INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR Professional Development

UT THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

Transdisciplinary Community-Based Participatory Research Training Workshop (Thursday, June 11 - Saturday, June 13, 2020)

NIH National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities

NIMHD Health Disparities Research Institute
August 3-7, 2020



AACR Educational Workshops and Professional Development Opportunities
Varying Dates & Locations



Brain Expansion Scholastic Training

ASPO American Society of Preventive Oncology
Cancer Disparities Special Interest Group

AACR ANNUAL MEETING 2020

April 24 - 29, 2020
San Diego Convention Center
San Diego, California

Announcements

Join the Precision Community

University of Kansas researchers from GMaP Region 3 are conducting a study to identify strategies to support community-based cancer care providers in delivering guideline-recommended targeted cancer therapy. Investigators will conduct brief, one-time interviews with oncology providers and administrators at sites in select parts of the region to better understand successes and challenges of delivering targeted therapy and identify best practices and needs of physicians, pathologists and cancer programs in providing high-quality care. Through the study, KU investigators will also help cancer programs identify how well they are delivering targeted cancer therapy using new measures developed to capture

the newer guideline-recommended targeted treatments not currently captured in other reporting systems. The study will be the first to identify how state-of-the-art targeted cancer therapy can be implemented successfully in community oncology. Non-academic oncologists from large and small, urban and rural practices are invited to participate. **Watch your mail for an invitation to participate or email Dr. Shellie Ellis at precisioncommunity@kumc.edu.**



**Precision
Community**



GMaP Region 2 TRAVEL AWARDS ARE AVAILABLE!

GMaP Region 2 is offering travel awards to Early Stage Investigators and Trainees to support career development related to cancer research or cancer health disparities research. This scholarship will provide reimbursement (e.g. registration, airfare, hotel, etc.) for ESI's or Trainees to present research at conferences and attend skills workshops/trainings. Applicants must be located in a GMaP Region 2 state/territory, be a trainee or Early Stage Investigator (ESI) and submit a complete application.

Welcome to GMaP Region 2!

The Geographic Management of Cancer Health Disparities Program (GMaP) — consists of 7 regions and engages more than 1,200 disparities researchers, diversity trainees, and community health educators — employs a systematic and comprehensive strategy for building networks for the support and efficient management of cancer and cancer health disparities (CHD) research, training and infrastructure. **GMaP Region 2** is comprised of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia,

Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Puerto Rico and is based at Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida. GMaP provides enhanced access to career development resources, such as job openings, travel/scholarship funding, grant writing workshops, connections to the Training Navigator at the National Cancer Institute, and so much more! For more information or to stay connected, please contact us!

Don't forget to follow us on social media!



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