

## *Healthcare Disparities in Tribal Communities Summer Internship Program* *National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke*

### **BACKGROUND**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recognizes that enhancing diversity in the biomedical research workforce is critical to improve our capacity to address and eliminate health disparities.

Native American, African American and Latino peoples make up approximately 35 percent of the U.S. population, but according to the 2017 National Science Foundation Survey of Earned Doctorates, only 14 percent of graduates in biomedicine and 12 percent in neuroscience are from these backgrounds. Currently, no Native Americans hold leadership positions at the NIH and there is only one Native American tenured investigator. The National Institutes of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) seeks to diversify the national scientific workforce by expanding the recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups in neuroscience through the NINDS Summer Internship Program.

### **NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF NEUROLOGICAL DISORDERS AND STROKE SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (SIP)**

NINDS is one of 27 Institutes and Centers that make up the National Institutes of Health. The mission of NINDS is to seek fundamental knowledge about the brain and nervous system and to use that knowledge to reduce the burden of neurological disease.

The NINDS Healthcare Disparities in Tribal Communities (HDTIC) Summer Internship Program (SIP) is a student research training program in brain and nervous system research. The program focuses on neurological disorders and health disparities and seeks to provide research experiences and career development opportunities for Native American students, along with students from other underrepresented communities. During the application process, students must demonstrate a background and interest in Native American issues and healthcare disparities. Interns will work with mentors in the NINDS Division of Intramural Research, where they will be immersed in exploring basic, translational, and clinical research. In addition to performing full-time research, summer interns will work closely with the NINDS SIP staff, meeting weekly to assess their progress and work toward goals. Interns also engage in professional development activities including:

- *Career Symposium*: Prominent Neuroscientists and individuals in all stages of their careers are invited to speak with fellows to discuss their career paths and provide advice
- *Journal Club Lectures*: NINDS partners with Dorothy Castille, Ph.D., Program Director at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), to provide interns with a weekly discussion on various scientific topics
- *Poster Day*: Interns develop scientific posters and present on a variety of topics ranging from missed diagnoses to approaches to increasing Native American Enrollment in Clinical Studies at the NIH
- *Museum of the American Indian Generation-Indigenous Networking Reception*: Interns attend an opportunity fair where they meet with high-level American-Indian researchers and American Indian stakeholders who share potential career opportunities for students

The program runs from eight to 10 weeks in the summer. The program offers Native American and traditionally underrepresented students the ability to learn critical thinking and scientific skills that can bolster their interest and academic performance in the sciences. The hope is for SIP graduates to return to their communities and serve as role models for other students interested in pursuing a research career.

## SIP RECRUITMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NINDS has developed relationships with underrepresented communities, particularly Native American tribes such as: Oglala Lakota Sioux, Rosebud Sioux, Navajo Dine, Pueblo of Jemez, Seneca, Pauma Band of Luisiano, Pueblo of Laguna, Yakima, Pisacataway Conoy, Lumbee, and Blackfoot. Over 70 interns have participated in the program. Program alumni have continued their post-graduate education, returned to the NIH for post-baccalaureate training, and pursued careers in the scientific workforce.

## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Research shows that to accelerate scientific innovation, a robust and diverse scientific workforce that brings different perspectives and creativity is needed. Private sector support makes a critical difference in the SIP, ensuring that the program continues the vital work of encouraging students from diverse backgrounds to pursue a career in biomedical research, specifically in neuroscience. Funding will be used to cover housing expenses for interns, and sponsors will receive the following recognition and benefits.



*NINDS SIP Interns with  
Kansas Congresswoman Sharice Davids*

|                             |          |   |
|-----------------------------|----------|---|
| <b>Platinum Sponsorship</b> | \$50,000 | Picture with the 2020 NINDS SIP Intern Class<br>Podium Recognition at the SIP “Poster Day”<br>Recognition in the FNIH E-Newsletter<br>Exclusive Social Media Mention<br>Name Recognition on FNIH Webpage<br>Recognition in FNIH Annual Report |
| <b>Gold Sponsorship</b>     | \$25,000 | Podium Recognition at the SIP “Poster Day”<br>Recognition in the FNIH E-Newsletter<br>Social Media Mention<br>Name Recognition on FNIH Webpage<br>Recognition in FNIH Annual Report   |
| <b>Silver Sponsorship</b>   | \$10,000 | Social Media Mention<br>Name Recognition on FNIH Webpage<br>Recognition in FNIH Annual Report   |
| <b>Bronze Sponsorship</b>   | \$5,000  | Name Recognition on FNIH Webpage<br>Recognition in FNIH Annual Report   |

To learn more about how you can support the NINDS Healthcare Disparities in Tribal Communities Summer Internship Program, please contact:

Joanne Morse  
 Senior Development Officer  
 Foundation for the National Institutes of Health  
 11400 Rockville Pike, Suite 600  
 North Bethesda, MD 20852  
 (301) 827-7364  
 jmorse@fnih.org