

Success!

Fall 2010



Consortium on
High Achievement
and Success

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Message from the Chair

I remember joining colleagues on a cold January day at Trinity College some ten years ago. The topic, a familiar one to higher education, was the persistent challenge at selective liberal arts colleges of supporting students of color in their quest for excellence. Ten years later it is rewarding to know that, from that day-long conference, a consortium was born and remains viable and active today. The work of CHAS has spread across our campuses and has, in one way or another, touched the lives of students, faculty, administrators and

support staff. As we launch our online newsletter, that reach is evident in academic research, programs and resources on several campuses.

It is also encouraging to know that institutional representatives to the Consortium do a spectacular job of translating CHAS membership into concrete academic and student life initiatives. For example, we conducted our second campus climate survey last fall and schools are using this data to develop responses and support networks on campus. We

have awarded close to \$120,000 in faculty grants to promote scholarship and classroom pedagogies that benefit all students in a multicultural context. In sum, we rely upon these collective and collaborative strategies across institutions to move us in directions of building structurally sound support systems for underrepresented and all students. That is really the core of our mission.

My colleagues at Vassar and on other campuses value the role of CHAS in being a catalyst for several institutional initiatives. Colleagues on the Steering Board also share great optimism in what the next decade has in store for CHAS.

Edward Pittman
Chair, CHAS Steering Board
Associate Dean of the College
for Campus Life and Diversity,
Vassar College

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 21, 2011 at Wheaton College
Biannual Representatives Meeting

June 3, 2011 at Smith College
STEM Faculty Forum

June 17, 2011 at Oberlin College
Biannual Representatives Meeting

June 18, 2011 at Oberlin College
Fostering Civic, Intercultural, and Ethical Learning



CHAS Faculty Grants Highlight Assoc. Prof. William Church

ROLE MODELS IN THE SCIENCES

The importance of role models in the academic success of students from under-represented groups (URG) in the sciences was the focus of a CHAS workshop several years ago. Following that workshop, a proposal was submitted to develop and distribute to undergraduate faculty a software package of scientists from under-represented groups that had made significant contributions to their respective fields. This article describes the development of the software package and the implementation of a web-based update/expansion capability on the CHAS website.

One way to increase the exposure of undergraduate students to successful scientists from under-represented groups is to highlight those scientists' work at an appropriate time in the course. Perhaps the most widely used (and misused) technology in the college lecture hall today is the PowerPoint presentation. Just about every professor has used it at some level of sophistication. But to use it properly requires a significant time investment. Unfortunately, time is a commodity that most faculty find hard to come by. A PowerPoint presentation on prominent scientists from URG in the fields of Chemistry, Biology, Neuroscience, Physics, Mathematics, Engineering and Computer Science was developed to allow faculty to easily and quickly incorporate information on URG scientists into daily lectures. Utilizing the hyperlink and action button features of the PowerPoint software, Web pages of selected scientists are coupled to course topics. By providing this material in a PowerPoint format, faculty are able to incorporate all or any of the content into their lectures with only a small time



**Dr. Beth A. Brown,
Astrophysicist**

commitment required.

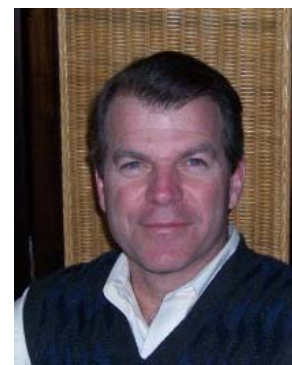
Information for the original version of the program was obtained from a variety of sources, including personal communication with prominent URG scientists; national professional organizations of URG scientists (i.e.

National Society of Black Engineers, National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers), and professional scientific organizations' committees associated with URG (i.e. Committee on Minority Affairs, American Chemical Society; Minority Neuroscience Fellowship Program, Society for Neuroscience). Additionally, the Internet was utilized to identify other scientists from URG appropriate for the project.

Individual scientists can be identified by selection of the appropriate action buttons and a brief description of the field of study engaged in. This is then available to the instructor to "cut and paste" into their own PowerPoint lecture presentation. Alternatively, the program can be run simultaneously with the lecture presentation and be accessed at the instructor's discretion. The program can be periodically updated easily to accommodate new Web addresses and new scientists, as well as sub-disciplines of the various sciences listed on the opening slide. In an effort to facilitate this process and generate the most comprehensive and useful program, CHAS has incorporated the presentation onto their homepage with the ability of users to download the program and appropriate instructions. The site also allows for the submission of URG scientists for inclusion into the 2010 edition of the program.

William H. Church, Ph.D.

Spotlight on Faculty Grants



In 2005, Dr. William Church, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Neuroscience at Trinity College, was awarded a CHAS Pedagogy Grant for his proposal: *Role Models In The Natural Sciences*.

The resulting Power Point document was made available to CHAS faculty, who can also contribute information on scientists of color to the growing document. Please access the pedagogical tool and instructions for its use at:

<http://org.trincoll.edu/chas/sciencerolemodels.htm>



Resource Sharing and Networking

We are all busy and constantly bombarded with more information than we can even browse through. The purpose of this section is for all readers to share information and links that may be of interest to those working on diversity, inclusiveness, and academic achievement. We encourage you to share with our readership links that you find useful and updates on events and accomplishments. Please send links, event information, and professional and institutional recognition received to kidan.kassahun@trincoll.edu by March 30, 2011.

Useful Links

www.reducingstereotypethreat.org/

Although dated (2009), the information provided is very useful for those wishing to become familiar with the Stereotype Threat research and frameworks.

www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/08/10/gaps

Interesting discussion related to academic achievement gap.

www.agi.harvard.edu/

The achievement gap initiative at Harvard, including information on K-16.

www.host-collegeboard.com/advocacy/accessanddiversity/?affiliateId=rdr&bannerId=diversitycollaborative

A College Board site with current and interesting diversity related readings.

<http://diverseeducation.com/home.html> A very interesting and useful site.



Faculty Forum hosted by Bates College

On June 25, 2010, fifty humanities faculty and writing centers professionals gathered to discuss student success in writing. The conference was covered in the Bates campus paper: <http://home.bates.edu/views/2010/07/07/chas-bates/>

The conference opened with a presentation on stereotype threat from Valerie Purdie-Vaughns, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Columbia University. Heather Linkvist, lecturer in Anthropology at Bates, presented on "Varieties of Academic Engagement" and was followed by a student panel on expectations about college writing. Panelists included international students and first generation college students, and they spoke to the feedback that is most valuable, the importance of not assuming students don't need an explanation of what is expected, and the value of bringing students into a private space to discuss their writing.

After lunch Tiane Donahue, Director of the Institute for Writing and Rhetoric, spoke about the place of U.S. students in the world. She discussed the internationalized and globalized context in which students are writing and suggested that American students will face marginalization if we don't rethink our "supposed linguistic dominance".

Lucas Wilson, Associate Professor of African American Studies

& Economics and Director of Academic Development at Mount Holyoke College, presented the outcomes of his CHAS funded pedagogy project, "Collaborative Research Project for Economics 306: Political Economy of Race in the United States." This approach to structuring the teaching of research methods and writings has students working collaboratively, and they "go from strangers to co-authors" as they prepare a publishable paper. This approach allows faculty to "reimagine our work in the classroom as scholarship."

A faculty panel on "Strategies for Student Success in Writing" was composed of Elizabeth Eames, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Sue Houchins, Associate Professor of African American Studies at Bates. It was facilitated by Hillory Oakes, Director of Writing & Lecturer in Writing at Bates College. The conference closed with a session designed to allow an exchange of ideas among conference participants. It was facilitated by Lavina Dhingra, Professor of English at Bates College.

The next CHAS faculty forum will invite STEM faculty to Smith College on June 3, 2011.

10 Years of the Black and Latino Males Conference!



2009 Conference at Skidmore College



It all began in 2001 at the University of the South, the first host of an annual CHAS meeting that supports the leadership and academic achievement of black and Latino male students. CHAS was launched the previous year, and the founding members made one exception from their focus on institutional change. While the work of CHAS is to remove institutional obstacles to success, and the focus is firmly on the shortcomings of our programs and practices (not on perceived shortcomings of students), the relative isolation of male students of color on elite liberal arts

campuses was also an institutional obstacle to success and satisfaction. It was decided that one student conference would be added to our roster of meetings. Ten years later, this conference has grown to be a vital network of support for many students who can establish a vision of how they fit into a larger world, beyond the limits of their campus. Many students maintain the connections they make at the meeting throughout college and into their professional lives. Some return to present as alumni, and testify to the positive impact the annual

meeting had on their undergraduate experience. The conference went from Sewanee to Middlebury to Haverford to Vassar to Trinity to Williams to Swarthmore to Bucknell to Skidmore, growing in size every year. Over 100 participants were at Skidmore in 2009, and the impact of this event was also felt at Clark University in November of 2010, where speakers and workshop leaders addressed the theme of "Moving Forward and Reaching Out: Individual Success and Community Engagement."



Consortium on High Achievement and Success

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Message From the Director

We are pleased to share with you the first edition of the Consortium on High Achievement and Success Newsletter. Developed by our members, the goal of this bi-annual publication is to disseminate the work of member schools within CHAS and throughout the higher education community.

Each issue will feature:

- The work of a faculty member who has completed a project funded by the CHAS Pedagogy Grants on creating inclusive classrooms
- The work of a CHAS member campus in the area of improving campus climate
- Reports on recent CHAS events, and a schedule of upcoming opportunities
- Resources for pursuing the creation of inclusive learning environments

CHAS members have collaborated over the past ten years to develop learning environments that allow all students to reach their potential. We hope that the newsletter will serve as a resource for other schools and organizations that share this goal.

Sincerely,
Kidan Kassahun
Director of CHAS



**Institutional representatives to CHAS from left:
Raisa Williams, Haverford, Garikai Campbell, Swarthmore,
Sue Layden, Skidmore**

Founded in 2000, The Consortium on High Achievement and Success (CHAS) is composed of 26 select liberal arts colleges and small universities dedicated to promoting high achievement, leadership and personal satisfaction of students on member campuses, with a focus on promoting success among students of color. CHAS develops programs to support the whole student academically, socially and culturally. CHAS is supported by its members and is hosted by Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut.

