



American Society of Hematology
Helping hematologists conquer blood diseases worldwide

A horizontal band of a microscopic image showing various types of blood cells, including red blood cells and white blood cells, stained with hematoxylin and eosin (H&E).

Diversity and Inclusion in Hematology

ASH - an evolving story.



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ASH in 2003

What can we do to improve the diversity of the field?

Diversity 2003-2010

- Established a volunteer lead body dedicated to diversity
 - Focused on racial and ethnic groups that have been shown to be underrepresented in health-related sciences in North America
- Designed the Minority Recruitment Initiative dedicated to recruiting and retaining underrepresented minority scientists in our field
 - Recruiting trainees to hematology
 - Medical Student and Graduate Student Awards
 - Retaining academicians by supporting advancement
 - Post Doctoral Fellow Awards – in partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Amos Medical Faculty Development Program



Program Design

- Consideration for the 'levers' that influence decision making
- Program design included
 - Research under leaders in the field
 - Mentorship
 - Financial support
 - Career development



What We Learned

- Financial support is vital
 - How can we continue to provide meaningful support
- Experiences have impact
 - Trainees need to know you will be there for them
- Mentorship is meaningful
 - How can we strengthen the current mentorship model
- Community is needed
 - How can we build a supportive community



Ann – A Serendipitous Success Story

- An ambitious undifferentiated medical student applies to the medical student program on a whim
 - Wanted to visit Atlanta for the summer and ‘this gig paid’
 - Got matched with a rising star in the field
- Inspired enough to ask if she could ‘do it again’ and we found a way to “Yes”
- A quiet 8 years passed... she was pursuing her fellowship in the field
- Mentor supported her application to the capstone award program - success!
- In 2017 staff recruited her to into volunteer leadership





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2011 - Turning Point

We dream of a day when our programs are no longer needed.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are terms that have become so well-known that they are often used interchangeably — however they manifest in different ways:

- **Diversity is the WHO and the WHAT:** who's sitting around that table, who's being recruited, who's being promoted, and what we're tracking regarding characteristics and identities of gender and ethnicity.
- **Inclusion, on the other hand, is the WHY and the HOW:** Inclusion is the behaviors that welcome and embrace diversity. Understanding why this is important and determining how we embrace and galvanize diverse voices and identities.

“Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance.”



ASH – Inclusion 2011-Present

- Leadership pivots from discrete programs to an unbroken longitudinal pathway of programs to strengthen financial support and increase the opportunity for experiences
 - Restructure medical student award program
 - Resident award added
 - Graduate Student and Fellow awards expanded
- The Society establishes a dedicated (staffed) department to focus on strengthening mentorship and building community.



ASH – Inclusion 2011-Present

- Leadership identifies inclusion opportunities for program alumni to enhance existing career development activities
 - Support navigating engagement in the Society
 - Increase exposure in the field
 - Create opportunities for collaboration
- Leadership shifts focus to strategic inclusion in all Society activities
 - Honorific award recognizing efforts in diversity and inclusion
 - Increased representation on committees
 - Invited speakers (Scientific and Educational) and program faculty



What We Are Learning

- Strengthening Programming
 - Flexibility increases opportunity to participate
 - Requests for subsequent experiences are on the rise
 - Program alumni are applying for other ASH programs
 - Too early to measure success of efforts
- Strategic Inclusion
 - Information gaps are a barrier
 - It is time to move from informal to purposeful





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2019 – Looking Forward

What dreams may come.

ASH – 2019 and Beyond

- Purposeful Strategic Inclusion
 - Getting to know Society membership
 - Refining the data we collect to reflect comprehensive and global terms
 - A campaign to encourage self declarations
 - Operationalizing inclusion efforts
 - Examining our award programs and processes for bias
- Program Improvement
 - Creating Competitive Advantage - layering coveted ‘experiences’ in to programs
- Measuring Impact of Improvements



Ann 2.0 – Not So Serendipitous

- An ambitious undifferentiated medical student applies for our medical student program looking to strengthen her CV
 - Gets matched with a rising star in the field
- She and her mentor are encouraged to submit an application to dedicate a year to research through a second medical student award
- Reminded of an upcoming deadline, she applies for research funds during her residency to conduct a short research project
- She submits her abstract to ASH
- She is invited to participate as a junior member of the relevant guidelines panel.



Ann 2.0 – Not So Serendipitous

- As her residency progresses, her career development mentor and contacts from the guideline panel support next steps in applying for fellowships
 - She applies for an ASH fellowship award and with her award money in hand negotiates her next move
- She and her mentor develop a plan for navigating participation in the Society, including
 - Serving on a study section for a junior ASH program
 - Engaging in review of meeting abstracts
 - Serving on a scientific committee and moderating a scientific session
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QUESTIONS?



The one thing that I would say mean the most to me is the relationships and networking I was able to obtain. There are people who we call the giants in the field who are actually there ...developing a professional and personal relationship with trainees who otherwise wouldn't have access."



"What I have learned and continue to learn from my mentor through our conversations about research, academic life, working as a clinician, and even work-life balance, has far exceeded my expectations."



"Most important to me is that my research addresses care for patients with sickle cell disease, a population that experiences disparity in healthcare...I see my research as a contribution to a larger body of work to help sickle cell patients live longer, more fulfilled lives as adults."

