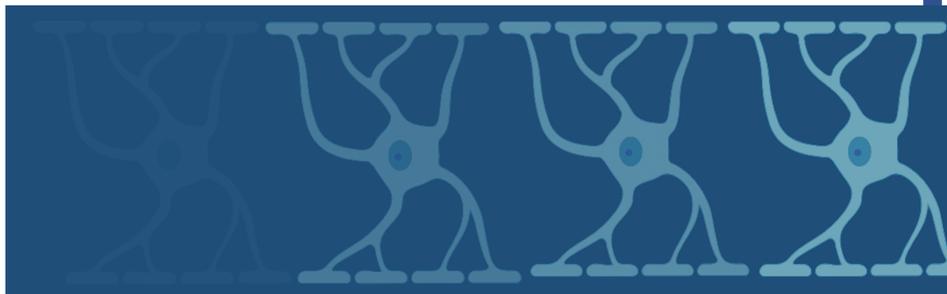




Diversity ● Equity ● Inclusion



## Five pointers to educate, promote diversity and inclusion, and combat racism

- Check out the [UMB Neuroscience Outreach Volunteer Association \(NOVA\)](#). NOVA promotes brain awareness and engages in outreach to local communities including underserved schools with primarily BIPOC students and residents of Spring Grove Psychiatric Hospital.
- [Perspectives Against Racism: educational and socialization efforts at the departmental level](#) by Smith and colleagues at LSU Health Sciences Center provides an adaptable framework that can be implemented in an academic setting at the departmental, center, or institutional level to discuss perspectives against racism beyond didactics and identify mechanisms to implement change.
- In honor of Hispanic and LatinX Heritage month beginning September 15 check out the [SACNAS Biography Project](#)- an online archive of first-person stories by and about Chicano/Hispanic and Native American scientists with advanced degrees in science.
- Listen to this valuable resource in our community. [The Table](#) from the UMB Intercultural Center is a podcast that unpacks questions regarding race, ethnicity, culture, norms and current events. New episodes are released monthly.
- In this Letter in *Science*, Drs. Ilse E. Daehn and Paula L. Croxson address how [Disability innovation strengthens STEM](#) and now is the time to acknowledge individuals with disabilities as strong and innovative contributors to society. By valuing traits such as compassion, empathy, and humility, we can empower all people in STEM, making our field better, not weaker.

## Featured trainees who contribute to diversity and inclusion



**Pedro J. Rodriguez Rivera (he/his/him)**, a PIN student in Dr. Linda Chang's lab, identifies as Puerto Rican and first-generation PhD. As part of Dr. Chang's lab and the Adolescent Brain & Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study at UMB, Pedro works with hundreds of youths from the greater Baltimore region. This includes families from very diverse racial, ethnic and economic backgrounds. His passion for research and experiences early in life, constantly drive Pedro to be a positive impact on every youth and parent he works with. Pedro sets an example for study participants as a person of color enthusiastically engaged in education and science and working towards a doctoral degree. In addition, he makes science fun and engaging while youths participate in research relevant to their age group,

In hopes of inspiring the next generation of scientists. Pedro is most proud of drafting a diversity supplement that was funded by the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) and acceptance into the PIN PhD program.



**Sydney Ashton-Cromwell (she/her/hers)**, a PIN student in the McCarthy lab, identifies as a woman from rural West Virginia and the child of a single, teenage mother that did not complete high school. Sydney engages in outreach efforts to share science and research with children and K-12 students, beginning with the Herpetology Outreach Program in college when she studied garter snakes and now through NOVA where she serves as Brain Awareness Week Chair. To help support students in STEM, she enjoys serving on career panels at UMB and her undergraduate alma mater and as a mentor to undergraduate students through programs such as Cientifico Latino. Before the

pandemic, she volunteered with the new Rural STEM Education program created by postdocs at Johns Hopkins University. She has been active within PIN and UMB at large, especially through the Graduate Student Association where she was recently elected President. In this role she advocates for student needs to the UMB leadership regarding topics like campus safety, mental health support, COVID-19, graduate assistant stipend equity, and health insurance. Sydney hopes to give all students a voice for making change, and she is grateful that students are willing to share their personal struggles and dreams with her. Sydney is most proud of her undergraduate Senior Honors Thesis at James Madison University that introduced her to research and the possibility of graduate school.