

CASE STUDY

NIMBioS, SAMSI & the Sloan Foundation Partner to Showcase Excellence by Minority Mathematicians

Promoting Diversity, Broadening Participation

NIMBioS aspires to enhance the cadre of researchers capable of interdisciplinary efforts across mathematics and biology. As part of this goal, NIMBioS is committed to promoting diversity, including addressing the problem of under-represented minority groups in mathematics. In 2016, NIMBioS and the Statistical and Applied Mathematical Sciences Institute (SAMSI) partnered to co-organize the Blackwell-Tapia Conference and Awards Ceremony. The Blackwell-Tapia Prize honors two seminal figures who inspired a generation of African-American, Native American and Latino/Latina mathematicians. The biennial conference showcases mathematical excellence by minority researchers and awards a prize to a mathematician who has contributed significantly to research in his or her area of expertise and has contributed significantly to addressing the problem of underrepresentation in the mathematical sciences. The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation awarded a \$26,364 grant to NIMBioS for the event.

Inspiring the Next Generation

The 2016 recipient of the Blackwell-Tapia Prize was Dr. Mariel Vazquez, a professor of mathematics and microbiology at the University of California, Davis. In a moving acceptance speech, Vazquez spoke of how she felt the honor profoundly as an immigrant from Mexico who came to the United States "with stars in her eyes." She urged the audience to recognize and help all of the starry-eyed students to also follow their dreams. Researchers from every career stage attended the event, with high numbers of graduate students and early career faculty, making networking and mentoring key conference activities. At NIMBioS, we recognize that having a competitive edge in the STEM workforce means embracing shifting demographics, and so we aim to provide multiple opportunities for cultivating mentorships and expanding networks.



Dr. Mariel Vazquez and Dr. Richard Tapia

FAST FACTS

- David Blackwell was the first African-American member of the National Academy of Science. Richard Tapia won the National Medal of Science in 2010.
- In 2014, 3.7% of PhD's in mathematics were awarded to Hispanics and 2.1% to Black or African Americans, according to the American Mathematical Society's Annual Survey.
- Since its founding in 2008, NIMBioS has actively engaged participants from diverse backgrounds, with a record of above average levels of minority representation in NIMBioS events for doctoral recipients in the biological and mathematical sciences.

For more information, visit: www.nimbios.org/blackwell-tapia



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