

Northwestern University, The Graduate School - Student Life and Multicultural Affairs

## Message from the Chair

Colleagues:

The admission process has come to an end with admitted students accepting and rejecting their offers of admission through midnight on April 15, 2009. It looks as though we will have 19 new URM PhD students in the STEM programs at Northwestern University. Below is the extension of the admission data that were presented at the SECMA breakfast on March 31, 2009. As there is every year, there are great success stories to share as well as disappointments when outstanding students accept admission elsewhere.

The recruitment of URM students is a process that never ends and requires us to be diligent in our ongoing efforts. What can we do in the months ahead?

- Whenever you receive information about an URM prospect, follow up. An e-mail with links to important web sites can be the be-

ginning of a process that ends with the matriculation of the student in one of our PhD programs. One e-mail may not be enough. Do not hesitate to follow up if you are not hearing from the student.

- Have someone in your department designated to do this follow-up. An e-mail template can be developed and used with each student. Some modifications can be made to tailor the e-mail to the student's specific interests.
- Explain the application process with deadlines and requirements. If you reach them early enough in the cycle, you can assist them in presenting the best application possible.
- Develop key contacts at other institutions and send them information about your programs. They work with students far more than we do, and they can encourage



Bruce Lindvall, Ph.D.

their advisees to take a closer look at our programs.

- Write thank you e-mails/letters to faculty who serve as recommenders, especially for the URM applicants.
- Use programs like SROP and REU's to follow up with URM participants.

GEM is an outstanding consortium of universities and companies who are trying to increase URM representation in MS and PhD programs. Last fall we received their database of over 1000 students who had applied for the GEM Fellowship. Please be prepared to follow up with these stu-

- SECMA -  
Science and Engineering  
Committee on Multicultural  
Affairs

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- AGEF -  
Alliance for Graduate Educa-  
tion and the Professoriate

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dents in Fall 2009!

Having a diverse graduate student population is not only the right thing to do for the URM student, it also gives our majority students a much richer experience to be prepared for what lies ahead in their professional careers.

This is not easy work, and we need to be vigilant in all that we do to have even greater success in the year ahead. Think about what you can do to increase the number of URM applicants. We had 131 this year and can improve upon that. What can we do to increase our yield of admitted URM students? We admitted

44 URM applicants, and 19 (43%) accepted the offer of admission. We all need to work together to increase the pool, increase those whom we admit, and ultimately work to increase the yield.

Thanks for all that you do and best wishes in the year ahead. I welcome your thoughts on how we

can improve upon these results!

Bruce A. Lindvall  
 Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies  
 McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science  
 SECMA Chair



### SECMA Admissions Data Spring 2009—Engineering

Program	Total Apps	Domestic Apps	% Domestic	URM Apps	% URM	URM Admits	Matric
Applied Mathematics	79	34	43%	2	6%	0	0
Biomedical Engineering	204	127	62%	13	10%	3	1
Chem. and Biol. Engineering	180	79	44%	7	9%	2	1
Civil and Environmental Eng.	103	16	16%	4	25%	4	3
Elect. Eng. and Comp. Sci.	564	92	16%	6	7%	3	2
Indust. Eng. and Mgmt. Sci.	184	31	17%	6	19%	2	0
Mats. Sci. and Engineering	339	115	34%	8	7%	3	0
Mechanical Engineering	247	65	26%	7	11%	3	1
Technology and Soc. Behavior	31	12	39%	5	42%	0	0
Theoretical and App. Mechanics	14	3	21%	0	0%	0	0
<b>Engineering Total</b>	<b>1945</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>

## SECMA Admissions Data Spring 2009— Science and Math

Program	Total Apps	Domestic Apps	% Domestic	URM Apps	% URM	URM Admits	Matric
IBiS	260	139	53%	11	8%	4	1
Chemistry	467	306	66%	21	7%	12	6
Earth and Planetary Sci.	18	12	67%	1	8%	1	1
IGP	361	183	51%	14	8%	2	0
Mathematics	212	119	56%	6	5%	0	0
NUIN	236	165	70%	12	7%	4	3
Physics and Astronomy	197	100	51%	7	7%	1	0
Statistics	81	13	16%	1	8%	0	0
<b>Science and Math Total</b>	<b>1832</b>	<b>1037</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>

## AGEP Students Cynthia Pierre and Francisco Iacobelli Win Awards



Cynthia Pierre

Cynthia Pierre won \$10,000 from the Dow Sustainability Innovation Challenge for her work to improve the recycling of PET by transforming linear PET to lightly branched PET using an innovative, scalable, mechanochemical process, under the

supervision of Professor John Torkelson.

The Dow Sustainability Challenge is a new initiative to recognize exceptional work by students who are engaged in ongoing scientific, technical or social research to develop innovative, interdisciplinary approaches to meet human needs while also protecting the environment, promoting economic growth and achieving social welfare, now and into the future.

Cynthia will graduate in

December and participate in the June 2009 McCormick hooding ceremony. She has accepted a position at Dow.



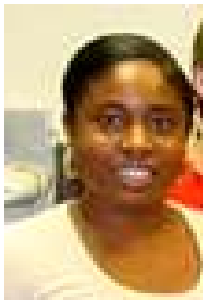
Francisco Iacobelli

Francisco Iacobelli, an AGEP student in Com-

puter Science, was one of 11 graduate students, and 3 from Northwestern, to win a “50 For the Future” talent search award sponsored by the Illinois Technology Foundation. In its third year, these awards seek to honor students who demonstrate top technology talent in the region and have the skills to make significant contributions to the success of Illinois business.

## AGEP a Positive Factor for Graduates

Uchechi Ukaegbu, Ph.D., IBiS  
June 2009 Graduate



sense of community between the minority students and faculty at Northwestern. I encourage new and continuing students to participate in AGEP activities, which will enhance their experience going through their respective rigorous graduate programs."



Rooftop view of Northwestern University

"I was able to attend a major international conference on bioinorganic chemistry (ICBIC) at the University of Vienna, Austria, using travel grants supplied by AGEP. I thank Dr. Cheryl Judice for making this happen. AGEP continues to foster a



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*Northwestern University, The Graduate School  
- Student Life and Multicultural Affairs*

The Graduate School  
633 Clark St.  
Evanston, IL 60208-1113

Penny Warren  
Assistant Dean

Phone: 847-491-8536  
Fax: 847-491-5070  
E-mail: c-judice@northwestern.edu

Newsletter Editor:  
Sarah Benoit  
S-benoit@northwestern.edu

SECMA/AGEP on the Web:

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentlife/multiculturaloffice/secma>

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentlife/multiculturaloffice/agep>

**SECMA**, the Science and Engineering Committee on Multicultural Affairs, is composed of Northwestern faculty members, administrators, and graduate students. SECMA's mission is to recruit and retain a more diverse student population in Science and Engineering graduate programs.

**Chair:** Bruce A. Lindvall, Ph.D.

**Co-Chair:** Robert Holmgren, Ph.D.

The **Midwest Crossroads AGEP** is one of 22 programs nationwide funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The primary goal of AGEP is to increase the number of underrepresented minorities receiving doctoral degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM fields).

**PI:** Lawrence Henschen, Ph.D.

**Director:** Cheryl Judice, Ph.D.

*For more information about SECMA or AGEP activities, contact Cheryl Judice, at c-judice@northwestern.edu.*