

## **Breakout Session Title: Streamlining physician-scientist training: would it promote diversity?**

**Session Leaders:** Patrick Hu, MD, PhD, David Stoltz, MD, PhD & Skip Brass, MD, PhD

**Major Themes:** Access to mentoring/role models and access to what is needed to be successful

### **1) What are the major obstacles to diversity at different stages in physician-scientist training?**

- Unfamiliarity of career path, especially early on (disproportionately affects underrepresented/disadvantaged); lack of role models
- Cultural stereotypes - “Why do you want to be a scientist too – just be a doctor”
- Premed advisors are “scary” – do not provide important (or provide inaccurate) advising re: physician-scientist pathway opportunities
- Increase perception of commitment without needing to do post-bac, etc.
- Access to research opportunities: Strong applicants tend to have 1 early, consistent lab experience
- Financial barriers – MCAT prep, travel, clothes to interview, etc.
- Unsure that people are aware of multiple entry points

### **2) How can we streamline training without compromising quality?**

- Lengthening of publication process (preprints, perceived importance of IF, perceived need for PSTP success, supervisor’s needs) has lengthened training duration.
- Awareness of expectations for MD/PhD students (especially from thesis advisors) vs PhD candidates
- Encourage earlier submission of K awards (ensure that review panels are more representative of physician-scientist careers)

### **3) Would highlighting non-academic physician-scientist career pathways improve diversity?**

- MD/PhD programs need to incorporate more instruction in this area (the blind can’t lead the blind)
- Some PSTPs incorporate industry input
- Industry needs/wants more diverse representation

### **4) What kind of outreach should our community be doing to improve diversity in the trainee pool?**

- APSA panels, interviewing, the application process – APSA is very committed in this area
- Interesting that while MSTP graduates may reflect more of a 50/50 split in terms of male/female, the PSTP medicine applicants are closer to 25%. This area needs to be addressed.