



**Notes from the AGEP PROMISE Academy Alliance (APAA)
Annual Meeting with USM Provosts and External Advisory Board
November 20, 2019
William H. Thumel Sr. Business Center, Classroom 221
University of Baltimore**

Introductions and Meeting Overview

The meeting began with a round of introductions.

Presentation and Discussion on APAA-wide activities and Progress Toward Addressing RSV Feedback

- Team needs to improve collaboration while recognizing power differential across universities
- Team needs to generate a chart with Alliance's organizational structure, the division of labor and a timeline project decision-making and work
 - org chart has been created and includes the USM office because they are an integral partner. On the chart, people in blue are the leadership team members.
- Identify a permanent AGEP Alliance project director
 - Hired Robin Cresiski
- Reduce interim AGEP Alliance project director's workload on non-AGEP activities to improve project management and progress –
- Team needs to meet on a regular and frequent basis
 - The Leadership team should meet bi-monthly – Met weekly by phone, this fall went to a bi-weekly system. This group has worked together quite well and has planned a retreat, an activity in August, a few workshops, and found a role for each one of the partners.
 - Subgroups should meet more frequently—No subgroups yet, but will have one on each campus
 - The team of project coordinators should meet at least once a month
- The external advisory board should be engaged more frequently, their expert feedback should be integrated – the external advisory board should touch base on a quarterly basis. We will continue to have the yearly retreat and yearly meeting and will send written information.
- The research does not appear to be novel—KerryAnn has talked with Mark since the time of the review and he is now on board with what was submitted.
- Explore ways to differentiate studies 1 and 2

- Clearly define how candidates will be assessed, particularly in disciplines that may vary significantly in the requirements for “qualification”?
- Provide non-lead research members with more opportunities for professional development and networking
- The personnel who lead the self-study initiatives, and any assessment of the participants and mentors, should be different from the project director and coordinators, who must maintain good working relationships with participants.
- Revise the logic model to create stronger connections between self-study, measurement of processes and assessment—revised model is in the packet with the report and supporting documents.
- There should be a rubric with metrics for identifying postdoctoral scholar candidates, selecting faculty mentors, and evaluating the success of the mentoring relationships.
- The creation of common learning outcomes for postdoctoral scholars across research, teaching, professional skills and career preparation would be valuable to the projects and for participant self-assessment.
- A discussion ensued about the search process and possibility of faculty not having any say in the process. It was mentioned that if faculty does not feel like they are solidly behind the selected person, then the person comes in and faculty does not buy-in. It was explained that as part of the professional development of the post-docs, they spend time on other campuses gaining experiences by doing a variety of things. If a post-doc is on a pathway at a one university, another university could not take them away.
- Evaluation team must attend mandatory evaluator session.
- Plan is that our annual review will be done at retreat and June and November will be the anchor points.
- We are expected to have representation by every team at the Understanding Interventions conference in March of 2020 in Boston.

Update from Evaluation Meeting

- Dr. Carter-Veale attended the AGEP Evaluators Conference, along with two internal evaluators and PIs. During the conference it was suggested that evaluators have two meetings going forward. Publications were a big part of the conference. Mark said when he talked to the hire ups about how people were feeling after the reverse sight visits, he used this group as a group who actually paid attention. Those reports are being used by other AGEP organizations. A more robust external advisory report is being requested. We are expecting to have a better year because our staff is now in place.
- Save the Date March 11-13, 2020 AGEP National Research, we must have representatives from each institution. **NEW** - Evaluators will have a pre-meeting to the national meeting.
- Mark will fund the facilitators, but we must come up with a way to pay for our retreat.

Update and Discussions on Research Projects

KerryAnn O’Meara College Park- Social Science Researcher

- A discussion about revamping the research took place with Mark. One of the things he agreed with was adapting our plan as new circumstances arise. New findings called for a change because the first two studies have changed very little. We are now looking at CVs in an ethnographic study.

- We want to make everyone aware of biases in context and structures that can disadvantage people and study interventions that can mediate these biases.
- One of the first things we are doing is giving people 10 CVs rather than 2 in order to mirror a real search process. We will have names with social identity, different amounts of publications, etc. There will be an intersectional approach using both race and gender; and we will look at ranking vs threshold hiring conditions.
- Ethnographic project – will take place in the room where the review process happens. We are trying to understand how diversity is facilitated and/or averted and understand what is shaping the decision making. In the end, we hope to have a detailed understanding of those things that disadvantage applicants. Supplemental funds are offered for participants as incentives. The funding can be used at the department's discretion.
- A single-page website will be implemented to share information.
- Help is needed to recruit mechanical engineering faculty in winter and spring to complete a 20 -minute survey (\$50 incentive). Also need help identifying possible searches in Biology and Psychology occurring in 2020/2021

Meeting with Provosts

UMBC, Philip Rous

Introduction

UMBC is committed to continue the legacy of AGEP and NSF supported PROMISE program which is Maryland's nationally recognized program that includes sub-signature activities such as SSI, harvest dinner, dissertation house, etc., across the entire system.

Project Goal

The new project was launched in the later part of 2018 and the initial focus was on diversifying faculty. This focus has not changed, however, following discussions we wanted to make sure our focus also included a state system model because that is what is unique about this project. Our goal is to develop, implement, self-study, evaluate and disseminate to a state level AGEP Alliance model to increase the number of historically underrepresented minority tenure-track faculty in the biomedical sciences.

Process of Shifting Our Focus

Spring 2019 - Formed leadership team and project partners and external evaluators attended AGEP national meeting in May

Summer 2019 – Hosted June retreat and invited potential APAA postdoc candidates to attend information session as part of SSI

State Systems Model

The state system model has 5 parts

1. Onboarding has two pathways (pre-determined conversion pathway APAA and not pre-determined conversion pathway). Our approach is centered on the fellows themselves and providing opportunities for fellows to make a choice on how they might want to move through the pathway.

2. Conversion – it is important to identify with clear information about the promotion pathway. One of the issues you have with these types of programs is the uncertainty (i.e., If I succeed is there really a position?). This interferes with the entire process we have in place. Our postdocs and professors will be converted at UMBC. These are cultural and practice changes that we will have to make across campuses to make this type of pathway work.

UMBC has two models of post-doc conversion for faculty diversity:

- 1) The Provosts Postdoctoral Fellows for Faculty Diversity has been in existence since 2011. This involves an open search; selected candidates are mentored and receive teaching and research experience for two years. Of the 18 fellows supported, 9 have converted to tenure track positions at UMBC, 2 decided not to stay, and others have tenure track at other universities. One thing we did find was that post-doc fellow open searches were most successful in arts, humanities, and social sciences. There was more difficulty in the natural sciences and engineering due to culture, placement of post-docs, and structural differences.
- 2) The College of Natural and Mathematical Science (CNMS) Pre-professoriate Fellows are hired on an existing tenure-track line with full search. After two years, these fellows convert to tenure track. To date, there has been one conversion to tenure track in biology. There are two current fellows in other CNMS departments.

Look Ahead

- Committed to 6 APAA fellows during the 5-year project period
- Three will join us in the Fall of 2020 (all are predetermined)
- Find the lines and pay the professor, supplies, and have money available to remove uncertainty
- Continued leadership for Alliance: Director and Internal and external evaluation

College Park, Mary Ann Ranking & John Bertote

Like UMBC, College Park had a program which already focused on trying to recruit minority postdocs as part of a suite of programs started four years ago. College Park joined a consortium of out of University System of California to do this grant. This is College Park's fourth year in the program. However, we do not have a guarantee of a conversion to tenure track. Although we have had that happen, our programs always complete a national search and there are individual exceptions for special opportunities. What is nice about this is that because we are working in this whole system, the conversion expands the opportunities available pretty dramatically. The presidential post docs are for all fields. We have a lot of opportunities in other areas besides STEM areas.

College Park is taking a post-doc approach. We are part of USC PFP, a very large program. All College Park schools participate, and Michigan and Colorado have joined. We have had more success in humanities than STEM fields. Our participants serve as our recruitment vehicle for this grant. Our program is a two-year program with two one-year appointments. We have reappointed everyone uniformly. Our first fellow--who was already on campus—joined November 1 and is a postdoc in bioengineering. The core partnerships for the program are the School of Engineering, Computer and Natural Sciences, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Office of Faculty Affairs, and Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.

Look Ahead

Our commitment is to bring aboard six participants. We have already brought in first and are anticipating two more. We usually get about 60 to 70 applicants. College Park applied for and received NSF supplemental grant for Program Coordinator and money for research under KerryAnn O'Meara.

Towson – Melanie Perreault (David and Cindy)

Towson is no longer categorized as a Public Undergraduate Institution (PUI). Towson offers workshops for the fellows to help them understand what it means to work in an undergraduate institution. Towson has not had many post-docs. However, our interest has been a history of working with post-doc fellows from Hopkins and University of Maryland to come and be adjuncts. Cyndy Ghent has been running a program for post-docs where they come to campus for two semesters and learn about being hired as an adjunct. When we got the call to join the collaboration, we saw it as an opportunity to help APAA fellows experience what it is like to be a faculty member at a PUI. Positive feedback from site visit confirmed that what we are contributing is powerful. Towson is also waiting hear back from NSF about supplement grant.

Look Ahead

Workshops spring and fall all about research at a PUI.

Salisbury University – Karen Olmstead

Salisbury is using biomedical in its most broad sense and has brought on first teaching APAA fellow and initiated mentoring. A faculty learning community has been launched which is dedicated to best practices in undergraduate research mentoring at a PUI. Led by the Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities, our focus is skillsets for postdocs. We have over 20 faculty from across the university participating, including APAA fellow are engaged.

Look Ahead

- Applied for NSF supplement for project coordinator
- Still working on Solidifying conversion process
- Conduct a workshop for USM postdocs and early career faculty on mentoring undergraduate researchers
- Review institutional hiring/retention practices
- Work with Towson University to develop plan to build USM repository of APAA fellows

University of Maryland, Baltimore – Bruce Jarrell (Erin & Jenn)

The School of Medicine and the School of Pharmacy along with the Graduate School Post Baccalaureate program (STARS program) has been involved since 2002. First year was spent developing partnerships with the School of Medicine and Pharmacy. We are continuing to work closely with postdocs and grad students. The Writing Center has taken on a role as well. We are in the process of identifying potential APAA fellows and developing a model or models in both of our schools. We were able to bring on a new person who will be the PROMISE coordinator.

In the upcoming year we will bring on our first APAA fellows from the School of Medicine. Possible alignment with T32 in Vaccinology. We are working with Robin in establishing active recruitment and looking for best practices. The Writing Center is working on workshops that focus on scholarly writing both in-person and online courses to develop their work. We are thinking about ways to expand to a larger cohort.

This summer we had post-doc preview day to meet with people who could potentially become APAA post-doc fellows.

Recruitment

Robin Cresiski

It is important that as we are striving for a system model that we develop some continuous and consistent methods for the way we are doing things. One of the things that leadership is tasked with is making sure we are hitting our year-to-year goals and capturing the goals that are successful. As we are figuring out models and how they are working, we need to see if we can help other institutions replicate it.

Question: How do we highlight the work of fellows across the system of Maryland?

Comment – The University of Maryland System is very attractive, so a more unified recruitment process may be useful. If we can align that system and allow people to get to know what some of the options, they can pursue early on.

Comment – I do not recall seeing anything about recruiting within the system. It would be a great place to draw from at the very beginning. During SSI, as we are putting together our pool of candidates, there is recruiting from within and from across the country. Also, looking at our undergraduates who have gone elsewhere and inviting them back. In the very start up phases, the first real advertising is happening through the program. At college park, we are just getting started, so cannot really say what we have done.

Comment – Provosts need to be sensitive to department's interest and allowing them to have ownership, you don't want them to have a feeling that someone is being hoisted on them. Let the department use their pool too!

We are trying to help departments have a more diverse pool (Janet).

Workshops are open to all, across the entire system, the idea of creating a robust professional development and mentoring network is open across the system.

Small Group Discussions

Recruitment and Application Process (Wendy, John and Damani)

- Uniformity - We have a unified initiative, but with five different approaches, so uniformity is a challenge
- Recruitment & Marketing – We need a branding type of effort that we can all use on our campuses while at the same time allow for some individualization for each of our efforts. Recruitment efforts strategies should be ongoing. A more targeted strategy is looking at societies in our state. For example, we are surrounded by four HBCUs, there are science agencies in our areas, and databases of postdocs of underrepresented minorities in fields

that are on target for this program. We should investigate these areas for targeted recruiting. We should be proactive and go after these people.

- Common Application Process – We all have such different approaches; the big question is how to create a common application. What might work is an interest/pre-application (example: you seem to be interested in this...here is what Towson can do). What we are missing is an actual web presence, one that is more like what Vanderbilt has which includes information about how you apply, information about the overarching project, what it is and links out to the individual schools. It was suggested that there could be a common piece that is asked on every single application that could tie us together.
- Information Sharing and Referral System - We need to come up with a way to refer mismatched people to the right organization. We do not have a way to share information. Instead of placing onus on the student for placement. A suggestion was made to create a repository of interested mentors (create a bar or training mentorship and diversity training) and someone to manage that repository.

Onboarding and Professional Development (Yarazeth, Quizy, guy)

- A discussion took place about dividing the plan and how year one and year two will look.
 - Year one is when we will do campus visits (investigation year/where you want to land). Each fellow will visit for a whole day at each of the five campuses. The program coordinator will work with fellows to put together an itinerary that will include meetings with deans, faculty mentors, and other interested parties.
 - Year two would be a guest speaker kind of visit to the campuses to give opportunity to gain teaching experience because fellows will already have one year of professional development experience. It was suggested that the order be reversed and that the first year be for presentations during the first and second semesters and the visit could possibly include a seminar. It was also mentioned that if a fellow has some inclination towards being at a specific university, make note of this and visit that campus last so that the fellow can do their presentation there.
- Professional Development – it was noted that one of the things missing in professional development is community building. This should be built into professional development. Each fellow should have a mentor at each of the five campuses (a point of contact who will be a part of the visit). Professional Development Plan includes attending SSI in August with sessions just for post-docs to attend; September – attend post-docs research symposium; October, December, February, April and June – one workshop per institution that will be offered for in person attendance or WebEx. November, January, March, May and July meetings with post-docs, fellow’s community meeting, and virtual meeting without us. It was suggested that maybe in January do in-person meeting and the others can be virtual.
- Last, each institution hosts a workshop and another institution act as co-host of something. Think about workshops. We think we can manage some campus visits for two current fellows this spring.

Conversion to tenure-track position: role of PI team and role of APAA Fellow

- One of the things this group talked about was how to prepare folks for the transition with some sort of performance evaluations for all our fellows that align with individual

development plans. It is also important that mentors be trained in a wholistic way. Perhaps inviting mentors to UM for training, another at Salisbury and, perhaps one at UMB targeting folks who will probably be mentors to our APAA. We need to break down traditional concepts of who is best. If we do not address this area, we are concerned that faculty who are making the decision will be working from old models. We are going to have to really dig into this and do some broader education of the faculty themselves.

- Workshops - What are the core skillsets we need our postdocs to have? We should have a core list of skillsets that fellows will need to demonstrate, and we should provide the workshops to help them achieve that series of skillsets. A lot of the process up to the conversion process can be a top down process. This is highly faculty driven so we need to work on that. We need to shift the culture of the department by fostering buy-in. We should at least have a set of best practices. We do not want fellows to go through conversion process and not be successful in a tenure track position. In summary, we need good support, good mentoring, and clear and shared expectations up to the dean's level. It was suggested that we find some way of incentivizing the process for departments.

Reflections from External Advisory Board

The External Advisory Board offered the following in response to questions.

- 1-3. The first three questions were pooled together. It was commented whether the recruitment pool is sufficient to get the kinds of applicants you seek and are there enough applicants to meet the general strategic plan? What will the impact be in managing the shift in strategic outcomes? Specifically, how are successes or failures being defined? How is failure defined by the NSF? We should be clear on how the program will be evaluated. Things that might be missing in the overall model include: faculty culture change, is it engaging in changing culture, is it system wide and have faculty accepted buy-in? Understanding two paths can be confusing, from a post-doc's perspective, do they really no what this means? The organizational chart shows that post-docs can end up being somewhere else, how is that articulated? How do post-docs end up at another campus? You guarantee them a slot but what does that really mean? We should articulate the mechanism of how these two paths work. The other thing with this model is that we are really talking about a small number. Are you going to make a dent in that faculty system-wide? What is the model that is going to make a lasting impact? There is a need in the model to understand this.
- 4-8. There is a need for a component to address how faculty will be trained and how search committees will be trained before the search so there is buy-in with a more centralized approach to this agreed upon standard of what constitutes a good candidate. Each campus having its own standards might be difficult. Understanding success and hiring practices, who are you comparing this too? Who is this group of 16 going to be compared to? Research projects (internal and external) are not clear whether faculty education component and the cultural component is being evaluated. Is there an assessment to show that this change is being made? Is there a tool for this? There have been success and failures in multiple models. Dissemination needs to be defined more broadly because there are different audiences for what you are doing. There should still be a narrative story about how this alliance came to be with an eye towards adaptation and replication by any respective state system. One of the thoughts we had is that it

maybe the vehicle of obtaining knowledge and understanding practices that can be returned to the program and institution in respects to demonstration. Let NSF know we have an important voice as the ultimate consumers of this type of service. There is a way to connect it back. There may be some value in just focusing on the predetermined faculty and have some ground rules. The experience of the postdoc themselves is evaluated at the entrance and exit interviews.

**Some work waited because of Wendy's dual role as interim director and internal evaluator – didn't want to confuse people/ seeing her as director and not internal evaluator. The preview day we showed the model. Monitoring where the fellow's heads are during the process, you need to pull whatever you can out of them experientially. This underscores the need for some comparison group who are not getting this. What happens when the postdoc in the pre-determined program decides that they like the other programs/institutions, but there is no spot there?

Feedback/Questions in Other Areas

- Quarterly Board Meetings – the board will meet via phone quarterly. In addition, the board can meet with leadership and evaluators either before those calls or during those calls.
- Internal and External Evaluators (page 4 in the appendix, logic model) - You have different roles of what you need to do. It is not clear how this is coordinated. The semi-weekly structure of regular time clearly delineates who is doing what, however, make sure it is written so that it is obvious to others.
- There is verbal buy-in from provosts, will there actually be an agreement? Does it start at top and work its way down? There must be acceptance within the department so that faculty do not feel imposed upon.

Janet – someone from the system office realized that there needs to be something in place.

- If the success of the alliance is going to be the way NSF determines, you have to have the other kinds of measures which taken together represent culture change (i.e., Yes, it is benefiting this number of fellows). Capture human infrastructure. Are there validated tools to measure faculty attitude on hiring practices? Measuring attitude change would be good. System-wide tools.
- For the quarterly conversation have a different focus, may be something you want us to react to.

Janet - thinking about information volume – for you to really get the feel we were not sure what to give you going forward. As we were preparing for this meeting, we were thinking about whether we should give you questions. In the future what would you like?

The format of questions helped us focus our conversation.

- Present this alliance to another state system to show what you have done to catalyze change. The goal is to get adapted beyond the Maryland system. How could APLU play

a role? Proactive conversations are helpful and if we are off track, this would be the right time for us to get back on track.

We are hoping that this shapes some of our continuing activities with the idea that we want to become a state model and what we need to do to achieve that. We already have a minimum level of activities that we already offer for these types of homing exercises. We need something that makes sense across the institutions because without it there is nothing impressive to share with another system. This conversation will continue as part of the briefing calls.

Recap of Day and Most Immediate Issues We Need to Address

Shaping year Two

- Tenure and Promotion criteria is something that we know that as we get to the point of conversion, we will have to start talking to faculty about this.
- Boiler plate description that is system-wide, so candidates know what they are getting themselves into. Our system office is interested in getting involved with that, too.

Next Steps

- Leadership team calls weekly