Training Challenges: Diversity in a Very White State

And I don’t mean the snow...

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Why Diversity?

• NIH: Diverse biomedical workforce
• University: More role models
• Enriches training
• Training experience in a diverse environment seeds more diversity
• Developing more diverse neuroscientists improves science, policy, business and teaching
Racial and Ethnic Minorities as % of Total

Demographics

- Vermont (2010 census)
  - 94% white
  - 1.6% Multiracial
  - 1.5% Hispanic
  - 1.3% Asian
  - 0.9% African American
  - 0.3% Native American
  - 0.002% Pacific Islander
- Total pop: 626,011

- University of Vermont
  - 81.3% white
  - 2.5% Multiracial
  - 4.1% Hispanic/Latino
  - 2.8% Asian
  - 1.3% African American
  - 0.3% Native American
  - 0.02% Pacific Islander
- Total pop: 12,723
Approaches for Enhancing Diversity

• Attend national research meetings for minority students (SACNAS; ABRCMS)
• Teach in a summer neuroscience program for minority students (SPINES)
• Have a summer undergrad research program (SNURF)
• Retrain the selection process to those who are qualified- not those who “are the best”
• Eliminate subconscious bias
• Care about the success of all your students
Profile of UVM NGP

- Number of current students = 24
  - Average GPA: 3.43
  - Average GRE: Q 154 (690) V156 (540) W 4.4
  - Retention rate: 93%
  - PhD completion rate: 88%
  - 13 PhD’s awarded since program started in ‘06
  - Average time to PhD: 5.1 yrs
Where have PhDs gone?

• 2 MD PhDs finishing medical school
• 1 MD PhD starting residency in Psychiatry
• 1 Assistant Professor, teaching track at UVM
• Postdoctoral research at:
  – UCLA
  – UCSF
  – UC Merced
  – Dartmouth University
  – University of Washington
  – Harvard
  – NIEHS
UVM NGP: Current Students
UVM NGP Diversity

• 24 students
  • 12 male; 12 female
  • 2 foreign (Russia and Pakistan)
  • 2 Muslim
  • 4 (16.7%) Hispanic American
  • 1 (4%) African American
  • 1 (4%) Asian American
• 21% URM
• UVM grad = 5.6% URM

• Arkansas
• So. California (4)
• Florida
• Massachusetts
• Michigan
• Minnesota
• New Hampshire
• New Jersey
• New York
• Vermont
• Washington