

NIH Fellows Committee Agenda
Thursday, December 4th, 2014
Wilson Hall Third Floor, Building 1
Call-in number: 1 866 772-5230, Passcode: 8168509

1. **Welcome New Members**
2. **Introductions**
3. **November minutes - approval**
 - a. Minutes approved
4. **Remarks (5 Minutes):**
 - a. FelCom Officers
 - Lucie Low, Natalia Chalmers, Anna Sundborger, and Joseph Tiano
 - b. Office of Intramural Training and Education (OITE)
 - Lori Conlan and Shawn Mullen
 - c. Office of Intramural Research (OIR): Charles Dearolf
5. **New Business (40 minutes)**
 - a. NPA liaison election
 - b. Health and Wellness Felcom Position – Kristin Dupre
 - c. Liaison positions – who needs more help?
 - d. PRAT program application information – Carrie House
6. **Subcommittees and Liaison Announcements (10 Minutes)**
7. **Any other business (5 minutes)**

a. Animal Research Advisory Committee	<i>Lara el Touny</i>
b. Career Development Committee	<i>Jennifer Plank & Ben Blehm</i>
c. Child Care Board Liaison	<i>Kristin Dupre & Anastasia Aksyuk</i>
d. Clinical FelCom	<i>Natalia Chalmers & Sid Kerkar</i>
e. Committee on Scientific Conduct & Ethics Liaison	<i>Peter Winter</i>
f. FAES Liaison	<i>Jessica Mann & Ji Yan</i>
g. FARE Committee	<i>Jessica Mann & Patricia Kiesler</i>
h. Graduate Medical Education Committee	<i>Ricardo Correa & Ali Abbas Syed</i>
i. Human Subjects Research Advisory Committee Liaison	<i>Jeanelle Spencer</i>
j. IPRWH Liaison	<i>Ni Hong</i>
k. Medical Executive Committee Liaison	<i>Natalia Chalmers & Sid Kerkar</i>
l. Mentoring	<i>Jessica Pierce & Libby Barksdale</i>
m. National Postdoc Association Liaison	<i>Monica Deshpande & Tara Burke</i>
n. Recreation and Welfare Committee	<i>Tim Petrie</i>
o. Service Outreach Subcommittee	<i>Tilman Rosales, April Killikelly & Douglas Dluzen</i>
p. Social Committee	<i>Anna Sundborger</i>
q. Training Directors Committee Liaison	<i>Andres Canela Rodriguez & Lucie Low</i>
r. Visiting Fellows Committee	<i>David Sanchez-Martin & Jithesh Veetil</i>
s. WALS Committee	<i>Shan He & James Keller</i>
t. Women Scientist Advisors Committee Liaison	<i>Ulrike Klenke and Danielle Friend</i>
u. AFTR Liaison	<i>Arunima Gosh & Soumya Chatterjee</i>

8. Adjournment

FelCom Officers

- Thanks for sending in job descriptions and committee reports
 - o Keep up the good work for next months meeting
- Exciting to have so many people interested in FelCom... six people are running for the NPA liaison position!!!
 - o Everyone bring a friend to next months meeting
- FAES
 - o Are fellows interested in financial help seminars – they would be free (We think. More information to follow)
 - o Examples include: Debt on a Diet: Reducing your debts; Important Papers: What papers should you keep, how long and where should you store them; Budgeting: How to prepare a budget and how to monitor your spending patterns; Raising a Financial Fit Child: How to instill good financial habits to your children; Credit: How to use it and how to determine good credit from bad credit and the value of credit; Credit Report: How to access and interpret your credit report
 - o Other ideas include retirement planning for people far away from retirement and one for international fellows
 - o Show of hands. About 95% of attendees voted in favor of the seminars (with the stipulation that they would be free)
- Visiting fellows committee losing some members so look out for e-mails asking for volunteers
- FelCom holiday party will be in January this year. Currently working out details with FAES.
 - o Email Anna (anna.sundborger@nih.gov) if you want to help out. We need volunteers
 - o And everyone will get roped into selling tickets

OIR

- No new information

OITE

- OITE holiday party is December 9th from 2-4pm in the new FAES terrace in building 10. Look out for e-mails
- Anyone who shows up will get free cookies and if they want a book because OITE is sliming down their inventory

NPA elections

- NIH has an abstract that was just accepted to the NPA annual meeting in Baltimore in March 2015. The newly elected NPA liaison will hopefully be able to attend to represent the NIH fellows
- The six candidates and their statement can be found below at the end of the reports
- Only eligible members can vote (institute rep or committee co-chair)
- Sylvie is the new NPA liaison with an overwhelming majority of the votes
- Congratulations!!!

R&W liaison

- Childcare board heard a talk from an ORS rep from the health and wellness council
- FelCom had never heard of this council and they are not represented on this council

- FelCom wants to incorporate the health and wellness council under the responsibility of the R&W liaison
- We will vote on this issue at the January meeting
 - o On a side note the NIH building a new fitness center

Do any liaisons feel they need another liaison to help them?

- No one came forward
- We will talk more at the next meeting

PRAT program

- Applications are due soon
 - o October PRAT Application submission opens
 - o January 31 PRAT Application receipt deadline
 - o April - May Review of applications
 - o May - June Notification of candidates
 - o September - October PRAT fellowships begin*
- Please e-mail Carrie (carrie.house@nih.gov) for more information or visit the PRAT website
 - o <http://www.nigms.nih.gov/Training/Pages/PRAT.aspx>
- Only open to US citizens and permanent residents
- More information will be available at the next meeting.

NIH federal credit union

- Fellows on a 1099g are having trouble setting up retirement plans and taking out mortgages.
- NIH fellows should have a conversation with the NIH credit union to find the best way to work around this issue

How can FelCom better communicate with the postdoc community?

- The FelCom emails are being sent and received – we cannot force people to read them
- Have the institute reps send a personal email to each new fellow the week they arrive and invite them to the next FelCom meeting?
 - o More on this at the next meeting
- Getting all new fellows to know about FelCom
 - o Sharon Milgram will be having a meeting with the head AO's
 - o One of the topics she will be bringing up is making sure all the AO's tell incoming fellows about FelCom

Next meeting: January 9th, 2015

SUBCOMMITTEE & LIAISON REPORTS

Animal Research Advisory Committee

Lara el Touny (NCI)

The ARAC November meeting was cancelled and the December one has not taken place yet.

Career Development Committee

Ben Blehm (NCI) & Jennifer Plank (NIDDK)

Our next Career Development committee meeting is Dec 4th, 2014 at 3:30 pm in Bldg 50, Rm 3328, 3rd floor library. We had a successful Careers in Science Outreach panel on Nov 18th, and our next panel is Careers in Intelligence, Homeland Security and Defense on Dec 16th at 3pm in Bldg 45, rm E1/E2.

Childcare Board Liaison

Kristin Dupre (NINDS) & Anastasia Aksyuk (NIAMS)

The Strategic Planning/Marketing and Outreach subcommittee to the Child Care Board had their first meeting in November. Kristin Dupre is represented on this committee, and her personal goal is to revise the NIH Postdoc Handbook to include more information about the programs and resources available to fellows regarding family care. The committee went over key steps to accomplish their goals and discussed relevant questions, including, are we getting the results we want, what do we need to know in order to evaluate the Child Care Board's outreach effectiveness/how can we track our efforts, what are the best methods of communication to the NIH community, and how we can show that the Board is so much more than a "wait list". Handouts about the many programs NIH has to offer regarding family care were provided and the committee will review them in order to determine whether or not any improvements can be made. The committee will also go over all of the comments (1,000+) from the Life @NIH Survey and bring up any important trends at the next meeting in January.

Clinical FelCom

Natalia Chalmers (NIDCR) and Sid Kerkar (CC)

No report submitted.

Committee on Scientific Conduct and Ethics

Peter Winter (NIBIB)

The CSCE meeting on Friday Nov. 21st included a discussion of the 2015 'Authorship/Collaboration' cases. This included a number of previously suggested modifications and additional edits suggested during the meeting. The CSCE also discussed updates to the 'Responsible Conduct in Research' training program which appears to be on track for debut in early 2015. Additional topics of discussion included, potential use of 'Authorship Prenups' to resolve/avoid authorship disputes, a discussion of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors and their guidelines for authorship (<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>) and potential distribution of a 'Welcome to my Lab' letter for PI's to help define expectations for members of research labs. Melissa Colbert of OIR also introduced Pat Weitzel, who will be working with her on a number of issues during the next year, to the CSCE.

FAES Liaison

Jessica Mann (NIAID) and Jia Yan (NIAAA)

No report submitted.

FARE Committee

Jessica Mann (NIAID) & Patricia Kiesler (NIAID)

No report submitted.

Graduate Medical Education Committee

Ricardo Correa (NICHD) & Ali Abbas Syed (NCI)

No report submitted.

Human Subjects Research Advisory Committee

Jeanelle Spencer (NCI)

No report submitted.

IPRWH Liaison

Ni Hong (NIDDK)

No report submitted.

Medical Executive Committee

Natalia Chalmers (CC) and Sid Kerkar (CC)

No report submitted.

Mentoring Committee

Libby Barksdale (NICHD) and Jessica Pierce (NIDDK)

Nothing to report.

NPA Liaison

Up for Election. Report by Lucie Low (NCCAM).

We have had a Felcom abstract accepted for the 2015 NPA meeting at U Maryland (Baltimore) from March 13-15. Abstract below:

Title: The Fellows' Committee at NIH: bringing together a diverse population of researchers.

The Fellows' Committee (FelCom) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is an organization dedicated to 3000 fellows, spread across 23 institutes in the intramural program of the NIH. Representing the needs of a diverse population, and articulating fellows' concerns to the NIH administration across this large program, is FelCom's job. We strive to disseminate information and address aspects of NIH that may affect fellows, and to work with intramural NIH leadership to optimize the postdoc experience. To achieve this, every institute appoints one basic and one clinical representative to FelCom, and we have 50 actively engaged members. The work of FelCom is supported by eight subcommittees and fifteen liaison

positions. Subcommittee focus areas include: career development, service and outreach, and coordinating the annual NIH-wide Fellows Awards for Research Excellence (FARE) which this year distributed nearly \$250,000 in travel awards to intramural postdocs. Elected liaisons make contributions on high-level NIH-wide committees such as those for animal research, childcare, research ethics, and more. FelCom works closely with two NIH groups - the Office of Intramural Training & Education, and the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences, to offer the best training and educational resources to postdocs on campus.

FelCom can serve as a model for other large institutions with both basic and clinical scientists seeking to create an active, sustainable, well-integrated postdoc association to assure Fellows receive the best possible experience during their training periods.

Recreation and Welfare Committee

Timothy Petrie (NICHD)

No report submitted.

Service and Outreach Subcommittee *Tilman Rosales (NHLBI), April Killikelly (VRC), Douglas Dluzen (NIA-Baltimore)*

Committee Members (bold indicates present): Abramowitz, Lara (NIH/NIDDK); Adikaram, Poorni (NIH/NIDDK); Bossert, Adam (NIH/VRC); **Crotti-Espinoza, Luciana (USUHS)**; Forcinito, Patricia (NIH/NIDCR); Irvin, Veronica (NIH/OD); Knosp, Wendy (NIH/NIDCR); Negbenbor, Nicole (NIH/NHLBI); Singh, Parmit (NIH/NICHD); Vrentas, Catherine (NIH/NIAID); Rashid Gazi; Jenny Kim; Yan, Jia (NIH/NIAAA); Lepone, Lauren (NIH/NCI); Parrow, Nermi (NIH/NIDDK); **Dluzen, Douglas (NIA/IRP)**; Shukan, Evan (NIH/NINDS); **Chen, Shu-Hui (NIH/NIAID)**; **Cathcart, Andrea (NIAID)**; **Lepone, Lauren (NCI)**; **Alvarado, Luigi (NIH/NHLBI)**

A few things that were brought up during the last meeting:

Baltimore Fellows!! If you are in the Baltimore area and would like to be part of SOS or are just interested in outreach, please contact Doug Dluzen (co-chair) at douglas.dluzen@nih.gov. A group is getting organized to start meeting in Baltimore and volunteer in the area.

Luigi brought some information for Best Buddies: <http://www.bestbuddies.org/find-a-program/north-america/washington-dc>. This is a worldwide organization that pairs up students, workers, etc with mentally-ill senior citizens, usually of lower income. They have several houses in the DMV, and one can be as involved as one wants to be. It can be as simple as hanging out for a couple hours a week to running a marathon with them.

Past Events:

- **Food and Friends.** From their webpage “The mission of Food & Friends is to foster a community caring for men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS, cancer and other life-challenging illnesses by preparing and delivering specialized meals and groceries in conjunction with nutrition counseling.” There is much to do and you can help in many ways: food preparation, turkey box and holiday meal delivery (see link for more specifics)

<http://www.foodandfriends.org/site/pp.asp?c=ckLSI8NNIdJ2G&b=7736037&msource=TDON14>.

Future events/Planning updates:

- **Gift wrapping this weekend!!** We are gift wrapping at the Montgomery Mall to help two CFC charities. If you can't join us this weekend, there are many slots available for other days. Please see link for available spots
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f094caeaf2ca02-20142>.
- **DC Central Kitchen. Meal preparation on Dec. 13th.** We were able to fill all our slots through our own mailing group and the USUHS. There was no need to advertise to NIH-Felcom. Tilman Rosales is looking into the possibility of getting more slots.
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- **Judges needed for the Montgomery Count Science Fair.** The Science Fair will be held on **Saturday, March 14, 2015** at the FDA White Oak Campus. All judges **MUST** register, even if you have judged before. Furthermore, there is a deadline due to **security procedures** required by the FDA. Deadline for Judge Registration is **February 13, 2015**. Please go to <http://sciencemontgomery.org> to register as a Category Judge and/or to obtain more information about the fair and the judging process.

Social Committee

Anna Sundborger (NIDDK)

Holiday party to be held in JANUARY (to kick those new year blues) ! Volunteers needed !
Contact Anna !

Training Directors Committee *Andres Canela Rodriguez (NCI) and Lucie Low (NCCAM)*

In the last Postdoctoral Subcommittee (PS) of the Training Directors Committee (TDC) on November 12th, 2014, Dr. Jackie Lavigne, Dr. David Robinson, Dr. Jonathan Wiest and Dr. Wendy Fibison will be invited to an upcoming Scientific Directors meeting to give a presentation in the IDPs and the documents developed with input from the Training Directors. Dr. Lori Conlan will follow-up to discussion of intramural trainees applying for the F32 NRSA. In addition to difference in stipend, there are concerns about paying for travel and insurance (especially for family coverage) with NRSA allowance. Finally the NAS Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy is going to release the 2014 report soon (NAS COSEPUP - <http://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/COSEPUP/Postdoc-2011/index.htm>), and the National Postdoctoral Association has released its institutional policy survey <http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/27-news-items/front-page-news/898-the-national-postdoctoral-association-releases-report-from-its-institutional-policy-survey>

In the last Training Directors Committee (TDC) on November 20th, 2014 Dr. Hannah A. Valentine, Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity presented her Strategies for Scientific Workforce Diversity (focus on Postdoctoral and early career investigators). Diversity is essential for good science increasing excellence, creativity and innovation, broadening scope of inquiry, narrowing the health gap and ensuring fairness. The problem is underrepresentation, there is gender gap in academic medicine and the racial diversity in the population is not reflected in the NIH-funded research workforce. A working group of the

Advisory Committee to the Director was charged to review NIH's efforts in workforce diversity and to make recommendations: NIH building infrastructure leading diversity, national research mentoring network and coordination and evaluation center. The figure of the Chief officer for scientific workforce diversity was created to coordinate the diversity program across NIH and to evaluate all programs. The near-term strategic goals at the intramural program are: (1) establish a hub for innovation in scientific workforce, (2) create climates of inclusion and sense of belonging for scientific workforce, and (3) assemble an interdisciplinary and diverse team to define an agenda for diversity. The initial focus will be expanding diversity in the IRP (tenure, tenure track, staff clinicians/scientist and postdocs) though diversifying candidates pools and in collaboration with OITE. She presented as an example Stanford's DARE program as a successful program to consider for implementation at NIH. There was a discussion in how to increase the diversity of the pool of applicants when the pool is limited and how to identify and evaluate diversity inside our institutes when race and ethnicity is sensitive data under protected policies. Next, Dr. Brenda Hanning presented the recommended revisions of the Training Directors Committee Charter. In summary it is added as function of the TDC to advocate on behalf of trainees, collectively, to address their professional and personal development; OITE staff members are now invited to attend meetings and vote, and there will be a new subcommittee named Diversity and Inclusiveness Subcommittee. These revisions were approved by the TDC.

Visiting Fellows Committee

David Sanchez-Martin (NCI) & Jithesh Veetil (NIAAA)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Looking for an opportunity to gain valuable leadership experience? Interested in issues that concern visiting fellows? Wanting an opportunity to develop highly valued transferable skills while at the same time helping out your fellow colleagues? Then join the Visiting Fellows Committee!

The activities that the Visiting Fellows Committee (VFC), a sub-committee of the NIH Fellows Committee (FelCom), currently engages in include:

- Writing and publishing the VFC **Newsletter**.
- Organizing the **Science Voices from Home** short talks.
- Organizing the VFC **Brown Bag** seminars.
- Maintaining the VFC webpage resource, and collaborating with the **Country Support Groups**.
- Organizing the bi-annual **International Opportunities Expo** which showcases opportunities for scientists all over the world, as well as other events.
- Building a strong international community through social events coordinated with the FelCom Social Sub-Committee.
- Open to any other idea that can benefit the Visiting Fellows!

If you are interested in any of these activities, have new ideas or just want to come and see what we do, please consider attending our next meeting on December 8th at 4 pm in Conference Room #9 in Building 31, C6 (6th floor C wing).

Co-chair position opening:

In addition, the Visiting Fellows Committee (VFC), a sub-committee of the NIH Fellows Committee (FelCom), is seeking submissions for the soon to be vacant VFC co-chair position. All interested and highly motivated visiting fellows or FelCom members/IC representatives are encouraged to apply for

this position. This Co-Chair position is an excellent opportunity for a visiting fellow to gain valuable leadership experience, as well as further develop the transferable skills that are highly desired by employers in both academic and non-academic settings. It is also an opportunity to work with a group of highly motivated colleagues in developing programs and pursuing activities that provide visiting fellows with resources for career exploration and skill development, as well as addressing issues that visiting fellows face.

As a VFC Co-Chair you would take a lead role in developing the yearly agenda of the committee and work closely with the individual organizers of the various VFC activities to meet the committee's objectives. You would also be presiding over monthly VFC meetings as well as working with the larger NIH Fellows Committee.

Interested? We are currently looking for a motivated individual who works well in a team environment, but is looking to develop their leadership skills. Prospective candidates should be creative, attentive to detail, and have good communication and organizational skills. Interested Visiting Fellows should submit their name for consideration to either Dr. David Sanchez-Martin (david.sanchezmartin@nih.gov) or Dr. Jithesh Veetil (velichamthotuj@mail.nih.gov). Please provide a brief bio and statement of interest in serving as a VFC Co-Chair by Close of Business on January 9th, 2015.

WALS Committee

Pere Puigbo Avalos (NCBI) and Nermi Parrow (NIDDK)

WALS December schedule:

Dec 3 Shiriki Kumanyika University of Pennsylvania Research directions for solving the obesity epidemic in high risk populations

Dec 10 John Mekalanos Harvard Medical University The extraordinary bacterial Type VI secretion machine

Dec 17 No WALS lecture—Christmas break

Dec 24 No WALS lecture—Christmas break

Nominations for the 2015-2016 season are being accepted until December 31, 2014. If fellow nominees are chosen, the WALS subcommittee in conjunction with the nominator, host the speaker for the day. This is a great opportunity for fellows to potentially meet and network with prominent scientists in their field. Nominations can be made at <http://research.nhgri.nih.gov/Events/WALS>.

Women Scientist Advisors Committee *Ulrike Klenke (NINDS) and Danielle Friend (NIDDK)*

We have nothing to report since the last WSA meeting held on October 31st, however we would like to remind everyone that Dr. Y. Peng Loh, section chief of NICHD's Section on Cellular Neurobiology, will give the Fall seminar in the Anita B. Roberts Lecture Series: Distinguished Women Scientists at NIH. Dr. Loh's talk, "Neurotrophic Factor α -1: A Key Regulator of Neuroprotection, Depression and Cancer Metastasis" will be held on Thursday, December 11th at 3:30 in Lipsett Amphitheater, Bldg 10. The series is sponsored by the NIH Women Scientist

Advisors Committee and Office of Research on Women's Health, and highlights outstanding research achievements of women scientists in the Intramural Research Program at the NIH.

The seminar series is dedicated to the memory of Anita B. Roberts, chief of NCI's Laboratory of Cell Regulation and Carcinogenesis from 1995 to 2006, honoring her role as an exceptional mentor and scientist. Prior to her death in May 2006, she spent 30 years at the NIH performing pioneering work on transforming growth factor beta and its role in wound healing, carcinogenesis and autoimmune disease. The lecture is open to all and will be followed by a question and answer session and light refreshments.

The next WSA meeting is January 30th, 2015.

NIEHS-North Carolina

Kristin Gabor and Deirdre Robinson

NIEHS fellows have re-established the ELITE (Enhancing Local Industry Transitions through Exploration) Program and new visits are currently being planned.

Individual Development Plans and Exit interview are going to be enhanced to encourage more participation between fellows and PIs.

Dr. Zeldin's request for scientific photos by all divisions yielded 51 photos.

NCI Shady Grove

Jessica Petrick

-The NCI Division of Cancer Control and Genetics (DCEG) has been actively developing their social media sites. On LinkedIn, DCEG has an open group and a closed group, which is specifically designed to serve as a place for former alums to connect and post jobs for current fellows. On Twitter, the group posts NCI findings, career development opportunities, and job listings.

-We want to highlight this for two reasons 1) for any fellows that have an interest in population sciences and are interested in following the DCEG twitter account or networking through the open LinkedIn group and 2) if fellows want to encourage their own Offices of Education (or other relevant resource) to develop accounts similar to these for fellow networking.

-LinkedIn: NCI Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics (OPEN) and NCI DCEG Staff and Alumni (CLOSED)

-Twitter: @NCIEpiTraining

PRAT Fellows

Carrie House

Carrie will be telling Felcom about PRAT program application information.

Elections – NPA liaison

Karlie Sharma

As a graduate student, I served as the representative for Baylor College of Medicine on the Student Affairs Committee for the Texas Medical Center. I enjoyed my time as the Baylor representative as it allowed me to interact with graduate and medical students from other institutes and to enact new medical center wide policies that helped my fellow students at Baylor as well as forwarded the goals of students in the medical center as a whole. I am particularly interested in becoming the NPA Liaison as this will be similar to the work I enjoyed on the Student Affairs Committee, except on a much larger scale. I am also eager to learn more about working with others outside the NIH system as well as helping to strengthen connections between the NPA and NIH.

Salina Gairhe

I would like to be an advocate for the best interest of many PhDs who are sucked into a black hole called “postdoc”. I have been a post doc for 3 years in academic setting. There I had my share of ups and down from trying to navigate my way to independent faculty position. I scored very high for science part of my grant but low for being junior ending up taking second post doc here at NIH. Still the hope to establish my own lab someday continues. I see the same enthusiasm in many new doctoral candidates that I had when I first got my pre-doc grant funded. The same hope that they are the next line in the science text book which generation next is going to read and continue the science exploration. It is kind of frustrating that when we are the smartest and most educated among others why our path to independence is impossible before 40s, even that is, granted we are extremely lucky. After joining postdoc here at NIH, although issues of lab closing down and marking full stop to the many people’s career is less. Opportunity to grow beyond the “postdoc” is murky. Since, I have experienced post-doctorial hurdles from both academic and non-academic side, I think I could give my voice for the postdoctoral issues and concern both at national and NIH levels. Therefore I would like to be a link between the NIH community and the NPA.

Sylvie Mullins Raver

I believe that the position of FelCom liaison to the National Postdoctoral Association poses an excellent opportunity for me and that I am uniquely qualified for the position. As a recent (~ 5 month) postdoc at the National Institute on Aging located in Baltimore, I am eager to get involved in FelCom and to interact more directly with the scientific community at the main NIH campus in Bethesda. During my graduate study at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, I served as a founding member of the Student Training Committee for the Program in Neuroscience. Our mission was to advocate on behalf of the students, to serve as a liaison between the academic administration, the faculty, and the students, and to play an active role both in shaping the future of the Program in Neuroscience and in the scientific and career development of its students. I want to continue to contribute to the professional training and career development of myself and my peers during my postdoc, and feel that I would thus be ideally suited to serve as the liaison between FelCom and the NPA given my past committee experiences and my passion for promoting the successful transition of postdoctoral fellows to fulfilling careers beyond the NIH.

Christopher McNabb

Many postdoctoral fellows are facing considerable challenges including the current state of the job market and the outdated perception that academia is the only viable career pathway for a scientific postdoc. My interest in the National Postdoctoral Association is due to the organization's unique ability to address and rectify these issues and others which impact the quality of life and career trajectories of all postdocs working in the US. During the pursuit of my PhD, I was elected by my peers for 3 consecutive years to serve as their representative in the University of Texas at Arlington's Graduate Association of Psychology Students. In this role, I arranged regular meetings to compile the concerns of the graduate psychology students and then attended faculty meetings where I relayed those concerns and advocated on behalf of the graduate students. This position granted me a broader perspective of the policies governing our role as trainees and the opportunity to directly engage in efforts to update those policies, both of which were valuable experiences that I feel have prepared me for the role of NIH's representative to the National Postdoctoral Association.

Michelle Sallin

I am interested in filling the role of liaison for the NIH to the National Postdoctoral Association because of (1) my interest in policy, and (2) my interest in being involved in changes to postdoctoral training. I am interested in pursuing a career in policy, and this opportunity provides access to an organization involved in changing policies for postdoctoral training. This is extremely important in the life sciences where we are faced with a supply of highly educated and skilled individuals that exceeds the demand for traditional principal investigator positions. I would like to be involved in changing the postdoctoral training experience to include training and opportunities for positions beyond principal investigator. Great strides have been made to improve training of postdoctoral fellows, and still improvements can be made. I would like to be apart of the organization to further train and prepare postdoctoral fellows for all career opportunities.

Carol Taylor-Burds

As a postdoc in my 5th year at NIH I am well aware of the financial and professional burdens placed on postdoctoral fellows. To ensure that fellows have the training and funding opportunities necessary to succeed, I think it is essential for postdoctorate fellows to have the NPA to help initiate and facilitate discussion and awareness of these issues. As a graduate student at the University of Vermont I served on the Graduate Student Senate where we advocated for better health insurance options for graduate students. Here at the NIH I have spent several years involved in the science policy discussion group and I served on the 2014 OITE's Career Symposium organizing committee. I would welcome the chance to join FelCom as the NIH/NPA liaison in order to help ensure a continued dialog between the NPA and NIH.