



RUTGERS.

Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

ANNUAL REPORT | 2018–2019

ENGAGING, CONNECTING,
AND DEVELOPING
THE RUTGERS POSTDOC COMMUNITY

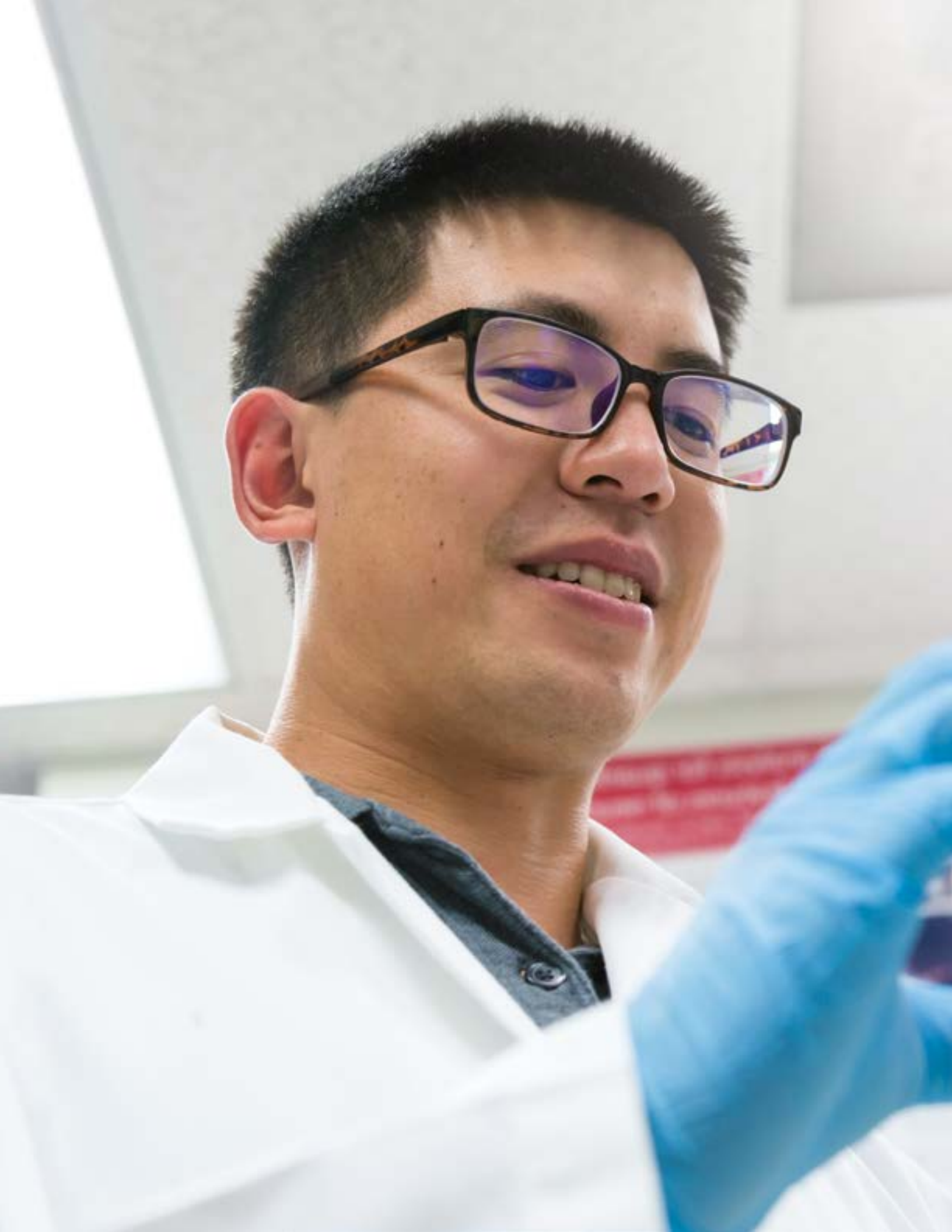


TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-------------|--|-----------|
| I. | YEAR-AT-A-GLANCE | 2 |
| II. | OUR MISSION | 4 |
| III. | ABOUT US..... | 5 |
| | a. Executive Steering Committee..... | 6 |
| | b. Postdoctoral Advisory Council | 7 |
| | c. Institutional Partnerships | 8 |
| IV. | DEMOGRAPHICS OF RUTGERS’ POSTDOCTORAL COMMUNITY | 9 |
| | a. International versus Domestic..... | 9 |
| | b. By University Affiliation | 10 |
| | c. By Geographic Campus Location | 10 |
| | d. By School/Institute | 10 |
| V. | MILESTONES—FIVE STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS..... | 11 |
| | a. Customized High-Quality Programming..... | 11 |
| | b. Comprehensive Services | 13 |
| | c. Effective Assessment..... | 14 |
| | d. Strong Presence and Resources..... | 15 |
| | e. Engagement Beyond Rutgers..... | 17 |
| VI. | MOVING FORWARD..... | 18 |

YEAR AT-A-GLANCE

2018-2019 HIGHLIGHTS



700

POSTDOCS
UNIVERSITYWIDE

5

CO-SPONSORED
EVENTS

20+

COLLABORATIVE
PARTNERSHIPS



EXCEPTIONAL
FACULTY MENTOR

AWARDS

2

COMMITTEES

19

MEMBERS

- EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE
- POSTDOCTORAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

2

GROUPS

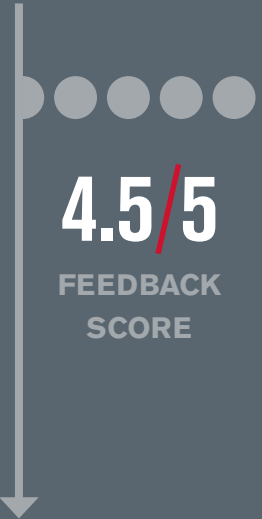
- NYC POSTDOC OFFICE ROUNDTABLE
- BTAA POSTDOC OFFICE GROUP

7

CAREER
DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOPS



131
ATTENDEES



4.5/5

FEEDBACK
SCORE

1,000+

MAILING LIST
SUBSCRIBERS

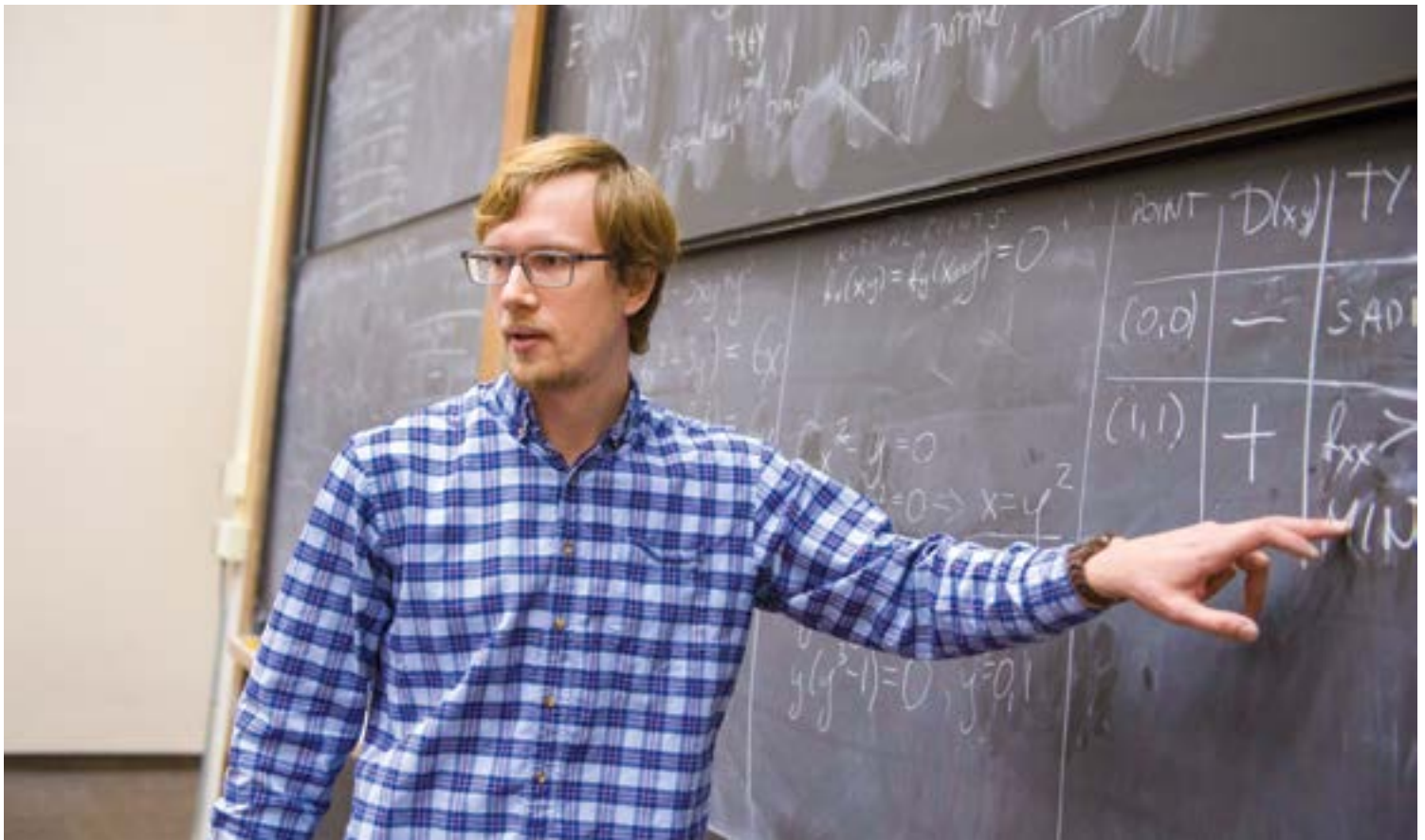
6,741

WEBSITE
SESSIONS/ENGAGED
VISITS

99%

WOULD RECOMMEND
WORKSHOP TO COLLEAGUE





OUR MISSION

Reporting to the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and committed to advancing the university's mission to conduct cutting-edge research and advanced training, the universitywide Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) supports postdoctoral researchers and their faculty mentors by providing central coordination of information and career development opportunities relevant to the postdoctoral community.

ABOUT US

SPECIFICALLY, WE:

- ❖ Act as a main point of contact for nearly 700 postdocs university
- ❖ Help postdocs navigate postdoc life at Rutgers by providing information through Welcome and Information Sessions
- ❖ Connect postdocs and faculty mentors to campus representatives and relevant institutional contacts across the university
- ❖ Host monthly career development workshops
- ❖ Publish weekly newsletter of professional development opportunities offered within and outside of Rutgers;
- ❖ Offer individual career advising sessions to all postdocs interested in defining a career path and navigating their next career steps;
- ❖ Provide opportunities for postdocs and faculty mentors to build community and expand their professional networks

MEET OUR STAFF

Our dedicated team is committed to providing high-quality services and resources to the postdoctoral community and their faculty mentors, and we value the opportunity to help enhance the postdoctoral experience at Rutgers.



**YVONNE
GONZALEZ**

Director, Mentoring and
Career Development



**ITZAMARIE
CHÉVERE-TORRES, PHD**

Director, Office of
Postdoctoral Affairs



**CARMEN R.
CASTRO**

Senior Program
Coordinator



**LYNNE
FRUMKIN**

Special Programs
Assistant

EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

The **Executive Steering Committee (ESC)** is chaired by Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Barbara A. Lee. The committee is comprised of senior administrators who were instrumental in the establishment of Rutgers University's first universitywide office for postdoctoral researchers. The committee meets biannually and provides high-level oversight of the office and makes decisions and recommendations aimed at enhancing the postdoctoral experience at Rutgers.

EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

BARBARA A. LEE, PH.D. (CHAIR)

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

JEROME J. KUKOR, PH.D.

Dean, School of Graduate Studies

CAROL S. LUTZ, PH.D.

Associate Professor, Microbiology,
Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics;
Assistant Dean for Curriculum,
School of Graduate Studies

JAMES H. MILLONIG, PH.D.

Senior Associate Dean, School of Graduate
Studies; Associate Professor, Department
of Neuroscience and Cell Biology,
Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

KATHLEEN W. SCOTTO, PH.D.

Vice Chancellor for Research, Rutgers
Biomedical and Health Sciences;
Vice Dean, School of Graduate Studies

KAREN R. STUBAUS, PH.D.

Vice President for Academic Affairs

POSTDOCTORAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Chaired by the Director of the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, Dr. Itzamarie Chévere-Torres, the Postdoctoral Advisory Council (PAC) is a universitywide group of faculty, staff, and postdocs who have an interest in improving the culture, experience, and professional development of postdocs at the university. The PAC meets biannually and makes recommendations for the consideration of the Executive Steering Committee.

POSTDOCTORAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

JANET ALDER, PH.D.

Associate Professor, Department of Neuroscience & Cell Biology, SGS Dean's Office; iJOBS Program Executive Co-Director

ANDREW BAKER, PH.D.

Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy School of Arts and Sciences Rutgers University–New Brunswick

CSANAD GURDON, PH.D.

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Plant Biology President, Rutgers Postdoctoral Association Rutgers University–New Brunswick

ELLEN TOWNES-ANDERSON, PH.D.

Professor of Pharmacology, Physiology, and Neuroscience Associate Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Science Director of Research Development and Initiatives New Jersey Medical School–RBHS

LI CAI, PH.D.

Associate Professor, Biomedical Engineering School of Engineering Rutgers University–New Brunswick

DOROTHY HODGSON, PH.D.

Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, School of Graduate Studies Professor, Department of Anthropology School of Arts and Sciences Rutgers University–New Brunswick

TRACY G. ANTHONY, PH.D.

Associate Professor, Department of Nutritional Sciences School of Environmental and Biological Sciences Rutgers University–New Brunswick

PAUL COPELAND, PH.D.

Director of Research Development, Office of Research and Economic Development Rutgers University–New Brunswick

URMI OTIV

Director, Rutgers Global–International Student and Scholar Services Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

DOREEN BADHEKA, PH.D.

Program Director for Special Projects School of Graduate Studies–Newark Adviser, Newark Postdoctoral Association

MONICA DRISCOLL, PH.D.

Distinguished Professor, Department of Molecular Biology & Biochemistry School of Arts and Sciences Rutgers University–New Brunswick

KIRSTEN VANMEENEN, PH.D.

Assistant Dean for Sponsored Programs and Research Space Faculty of Arts and Sciences Rutgers University–Newark

RAMAZAN GUNGOR, PH.D.

Postdoctoral Associate in Charge of Professional Development School of Graduate Studies, Rutgers University–New Brunswick

EXCEPTIONAL FACULTY MENTOR AWARD

These exceptional faculty mentors, nominated by postdocs in their labs, are recognized for having a positive impact and making a real difference in the lives of their postdoc trainees and lab members. In 2018, **Dr. Paul Copeland** and **Dr. Teresa Wood** were the recipients of the Exceptional Faculty Mentor Award.



Dr. Paul Copeland



Dr. Teresa Wood

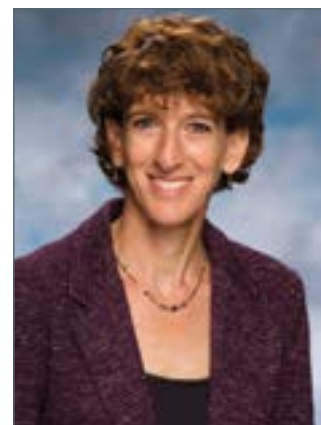
INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The **Office of Postdoctoral Affairs** partners with various units and programs across the university to provide comprehensive programming and resources to our diverse postdoctoral community.

POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION (PDA)

The OPA Director serves as an advisor to Rutgers Postdoctoral Association (PDA), and partners with the PDA to enrich the experiences of postdocs by building a stronger and more cohesive postdoctoral community across all departments and campuses at Rutgers.

In April 2018 the PDA hosted its annual Postdoc Symposium. Led by PDA President, Csanad Guron, the event brought together a broad group of panelists from different careers who shared about their job experiences and gave the 100+ postdocs in attendance advice on how to prepare for the next step in their careers. The PDA also announced Janet Alder as the recipient of the **2018 Martha Soto Leadership Award**, which is presented to individuals “who make significant contributions to improving postdoc life at Rutgers.”



Janet Alder

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborative partnerships are key to providing postdocs with greater access to the larger Rutgers network and initiatives that can enhance their professional development and overall experience. Our partnerships include the following Rutgers units:

- Center for Teaching Advancement and Assessment Research (CTAAR)
- iJOBS Program
- Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
 - INSPIRE Program
- NRMN-CAN
- Office of Graduate Student External Grants and Fellowships | GradFund
- Office of Postdoctoral Affairs - Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS)
- Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
 - Rutgers Connection Network Mentoring Program (RCN)
 - OASIS Leadership and Professional Development Program
- Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED)
- Office of STEM Education – School of Arts and Sciences
- Rutgers Global–International Student and Scholar Services
- School of Graduate Studies
 - Dr. Doreen Badheka, Program Director for Special Projects in the Health Science Campus in Newark, is a key partner in supporting the career advancement activities and community development efforts of both graduate students and postdocs at RBHS–Newark.
- University Communications and Marketing
- University Human Resources

This past year, we established some new collaborations with:

- Office for the Promotion of Women in Science, Engineering, and Math (SciWomen) - SciWomen works to advance gender and racial equity by providing resources and support for engagement and success in the sciences.
- Young Women in Bio (YWIB) – YWIB empowers today’s girls to become tomorrow’s leaders, helping them effect positive change through science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

DEMOGRAPHICS

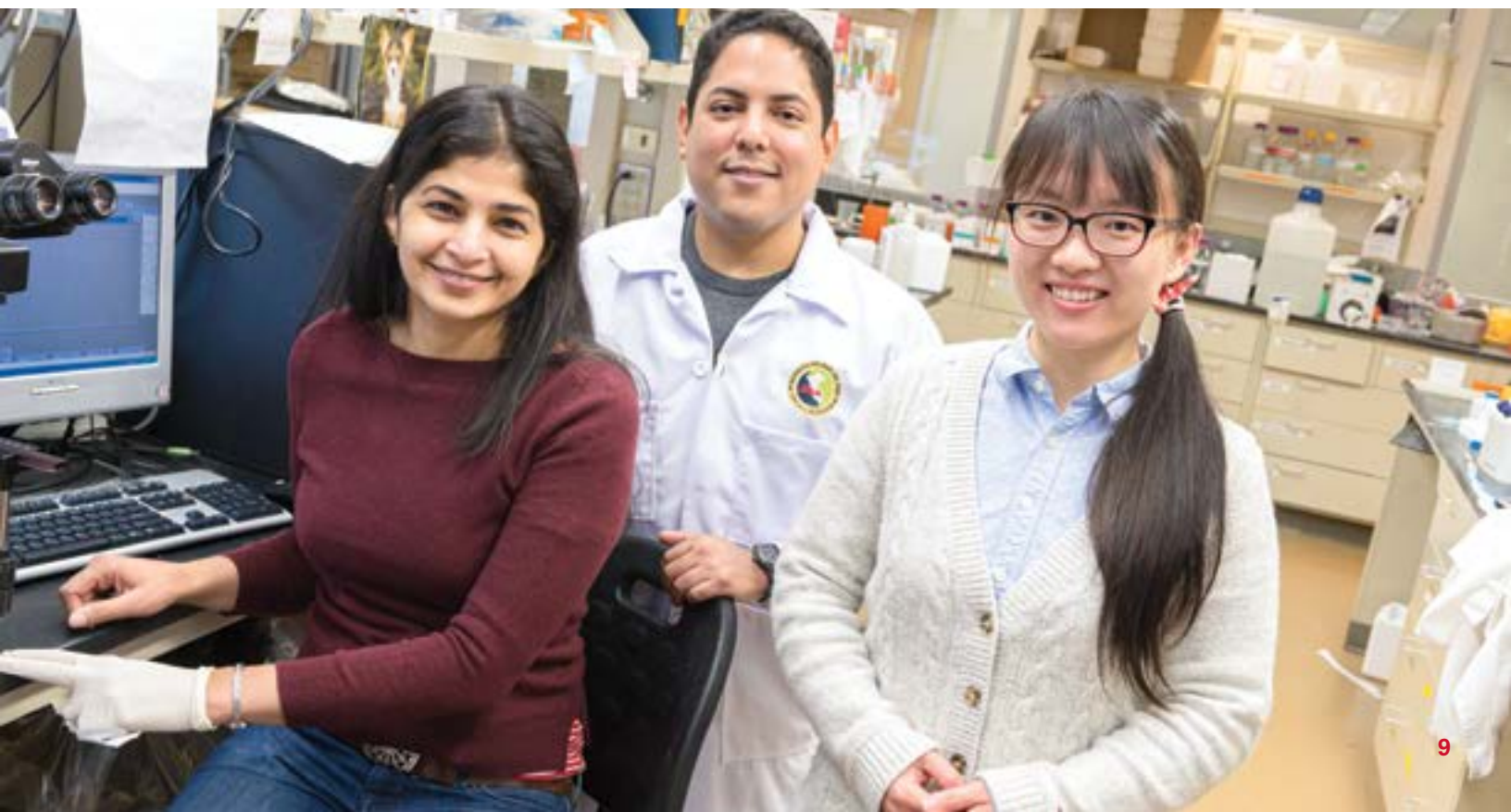
POSTDOC COMMUNITY

UNIVERSITYWIDE

Rutgers is proud to be home to a vibrant and growing community of nearly 700 postdocs! The postdoctoral community at Rutgers is a diverse one, representing STEM, Biomedical, Social Sciences, and Humanities fields. As of August 6, 2019, Rutgers University had a total of 693 postdocs. This number includes those in the university titles of Postdoctoral Associates and Postdoctoral Fellows.

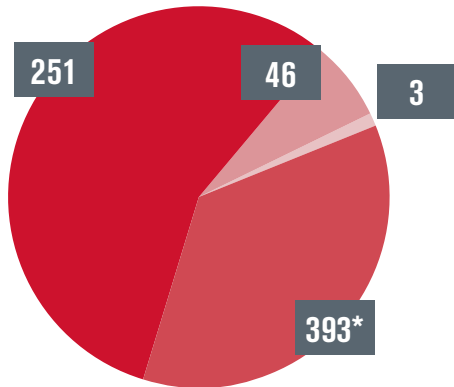
INTERNATIONAL VS. DOMESTIC

The postdoc community at Rutgers is diverse in many ways. As of August 6, 2019, nearly half of the postdoc population was international (46%), as defined by those holding J1, H-1B, F1 and other nonimmigrant visas. 54% were considered domestic, classified as either US citizens or green card holders.



RUTGERS POSTDOCS

BY UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

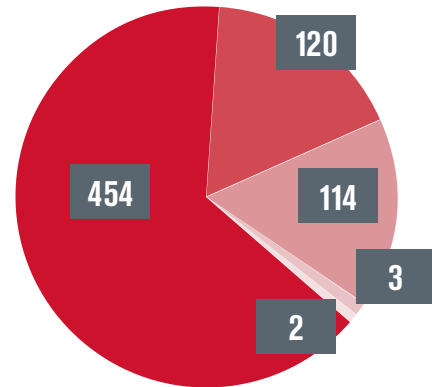


- RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEW BRUNSWICK
- RUTGERS BIOMEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES*
- RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK
- RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-CAMDEN

The majority of postdocs (393) were part of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS), while Rutgers University–New Brunswick was home to the second largest group (251), followed by: Rutgers University–Newark (46) and Rutgers University–Camden (3).

*includes 250 external pharmacy postdocs

BY GEOGRAPHIC CAMPUS LOCATION

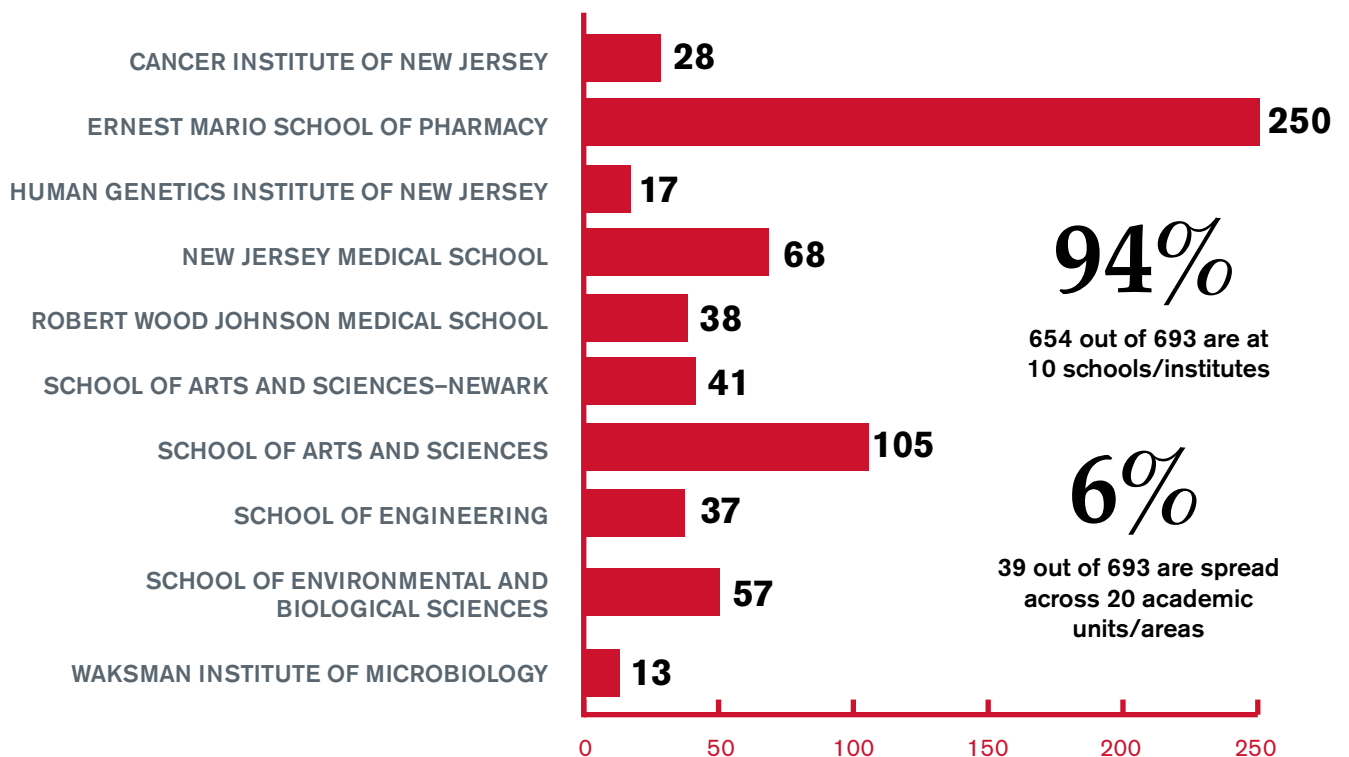


- BUSCH CAMPUS
- NEW BRUNSWICK CAMPUS*
- NEWARK CAMPUS
- CAMDEN CAMPUS
- OFF-CAMPUS

Geographically, a majority of postdocs (454) were located on the Busch Campus in Piscataway, followed by New Brunswick (120), Newark (114), Camden (3), and Off Campus (2).

*New Brunswick Campus includes the Cook/Douglass and College Avenue campuses

BY SCHOOL/INSTITUTE



94%

654 out of 693 are at 10 schools/institutes

6%

39 out of 693 are spread across 20 academic units/areas

MILESTONES

FIVE STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

We aim to make Rutgers recognized as a **top “university of choice”** for prospective faculty, postdocs, and postdoc recruiters. During our second year, we continued to develop the OPA based on the following five strategic areas of focus.

I. Customized High-Quality Programming

MONTHLY CAREER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

In its second year, the OPA continued to offer career development workshops at least once a month, open to all postdocs, universitywide.

These workshops served postdocs interested in strengthening their skills, in areas such as grant writing, job exploration, mentoring, networking, and science communication.

These workshops were also an opportunity to connect with other postdocs that shared similar interests, to increase their networks, and expand their knowledge on skills needed to succeed and prepare them for their next career steps.

In Spring 2018, we partnered with faculty members, Dr. Nicholas Ponzio and Professor

David Dannenfelser to facilitate a workshop entitled “Improvisational Techniques for Effective Communication,” open to all postdocs and faculty.

All of our monthly workshops are designed to meet the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) core competencies for postdocs and are customized to meet the development needs of our Rutgers postdoc community. Relevant topics we covered this year include writing personal statements and scientific specific aims for grant applications, maintaining effective communication and aligning expectations with your PI (Mentoring Up), personal branding, and preparing for academic jobs, among others.

“I learned a lot about how to write more clearly and what reviewers are looking for”

Grant Writing Workshop

Customized High-Quality Programming (Cont'd)

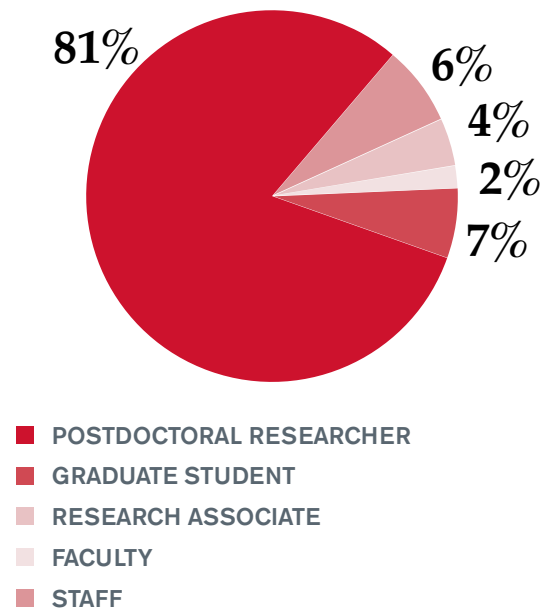
WORKSHOPS' ATTENDANCE AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Monthly workshops and events experienced an increase in attendance during our second year (131 attendees). Our workshops attracted the interest of not only postdoctoral researchers, but also graduate students, faculty, and staff (Figure A).

"I have become a more rounded researcher, with increased self-awareness about work-life balance and increased confidence in my ability to move ahead on my career path."

RCN Mentoring Program

FIGURE A | JOB TITLE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA



RUTGERS CONNECTION NETWORK (RCN) MENTORING PROGRAM

In AY 2017–2018, Rutgers University piloted the participation of postdocs in the Rutgers Connection Network (RCN) Mentoring Program. The program pairs postdocs interested in academic jobs with faculty mentors outside of their departments and engages them in a year-long experience of monthly mentoring meetings, activities to network and build mentoring skills, and tools to facilitate effective mentoring beyond the department. This program empowers postdoc mentees to be the “drivers” of their career and mentoring partnership. Participants experience self-assessment and goal-setting activities that help them define success and clarify their

future priorities. The program evaluation indicated that postdocs report the most improvement and benefit of all the mentee participants. Postdocs consistently reported higher-than-average responses of growth and development in their mentoring skills, and 100% of postdoc participants reported they would highly recommend the program to a colleague. Based on this positive feedback, this year’s 2018–2019 RCN Mentoring Program accepted seven postdoctoral researchers universitywide to participate, representing different STEM and biomedical research fields, who were matched with faculty mentors outside of their departments.

"This workshop helped me think of creative strategies for my personal brand."

Personal Branding

II. Comprehensive Services

WELCOME LETTERS & ORIENTATION

Welcome Letters are sent monthly to new postdocs in an effort to welcome them when they arrive and encourage them to attend an upcoming Welcome & Information session to learn more about the services and resources provided by our office.

In our second year, the office facilitated a total of **six Welcome & Information sessions for fifteen postdoctoral researchers**. During these sessions, postdocs met with office staff members, Itzamarie and Carmen to review frequently asked questions and university resources for postdocs. Each postdoc received a Postdoctoral Information Guide with information relevant to their reporting campus and job title. The Postdoctoral Information Guide is available online through our website and can serve as a tool to orient prospective postdocs.

Postdoctoral researchers in Newark are also able to take advantage of this service. Dr. Doreen Badheka, Director of Special Projects at the School of Graduate Studies, Health Science Campus in Newark facilitates these sessions.

INDIVIDUAL ADVISING SESSIONS

In addition to our monthly career development workshops, we also offered individual career advising sessions. Facilitated by Dr. Chévere-Torres in Piscataway/New Brunswick and Dr. Badheka in Newark, these sessions provide an opportunity for postdocs to explore and address their specific questions related to their future career aspirations.

During its second year, the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs offered a total of **eight individual career advising sessions**. The majority of the sessions were focused on reviewing and critiquing individual CV/resumes and cover letters for job applications, advising on job interview preparation, and helping to define and strategize a career path and plan.

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

In an effort to broaden career development services to all of our postdocs at Rutgers, we partnered with the School of Graduate Studies Dean's Office to:

- **extend** the National Postdoctoral Association institutional membership to all postdocs at Rutgers universitywide, and;
- **sponsor a joint membership** to host Versatile PhD, a digital platform designed to help PhDs students and postdocs learn more about the career opportunities that exist outside the tenure track.

III. Effective Assessment

WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS

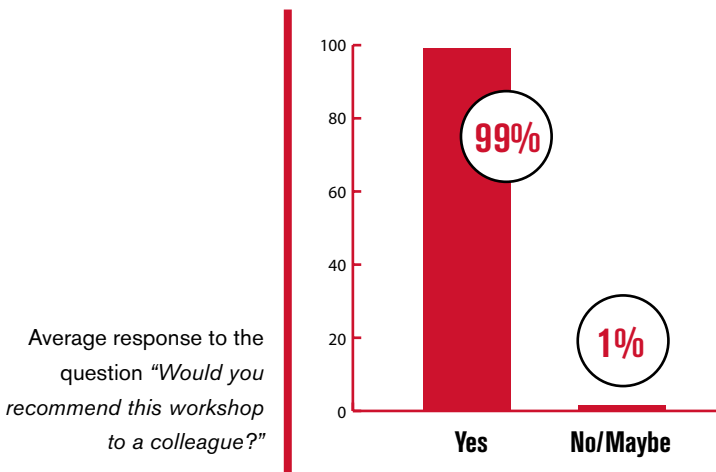
Workshop evaluations are a way for us to continually assess the perceived quality and level of interest of our career development offerings for postdocs. Feedback from workshop attendees helps us modify future offerings, when needed, to ensure we are meeting the evolving needs of the postdoc community.

“Overall, this workshop met my expectations.”



Average response from all post-workshop evaluations, ranging from 1-5 (disagree-agree).

“Would you recommend this workshop to a colleague?”



“I really enjoyed the experience and have been able to attain a few of my goals this year in regards to getting papers out and increasing my writing production. I also have gained a secondary mentor in the process!”

IV. Strong Presence and Resources

OPA WEBSITE

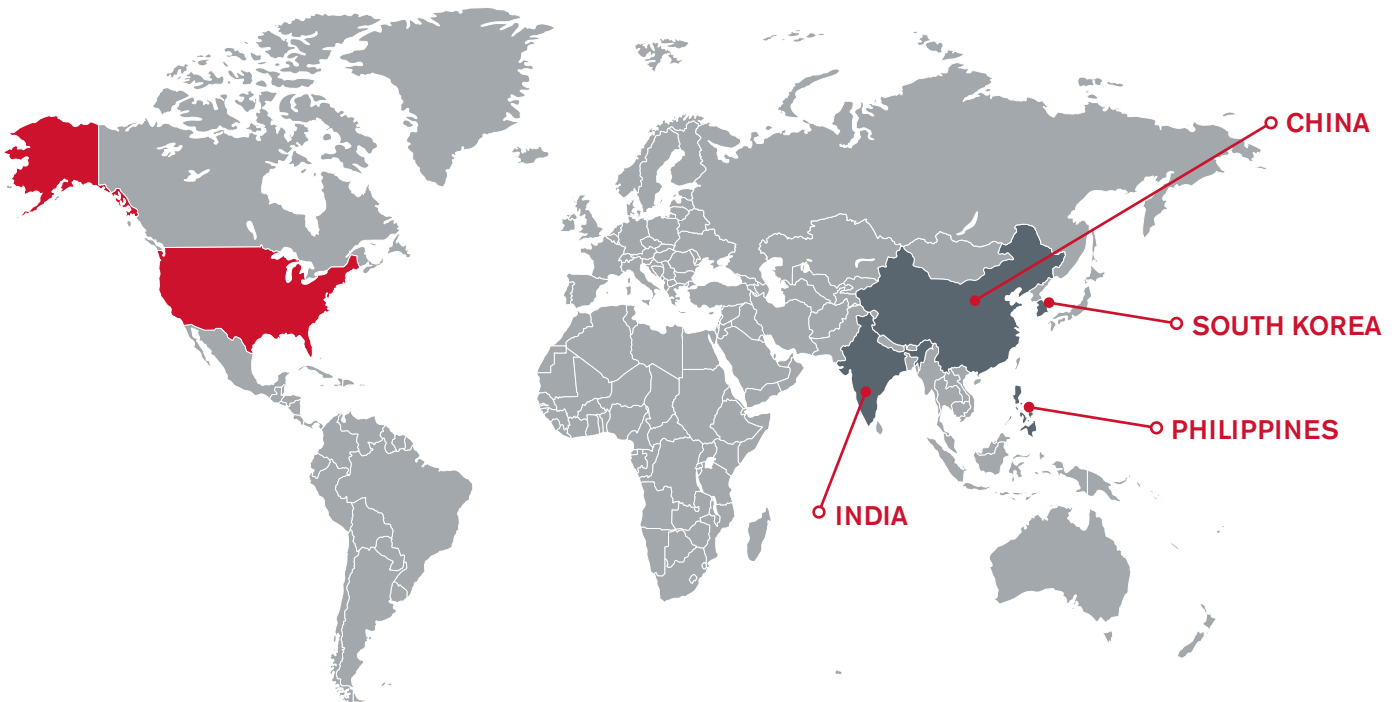
The **Office of Postdoctoral Affairs** website is our main platform for communication and information-sharing with our postdoctoral community, faculty, and administrators. It is also a place to feature resources, career development tools, and upcoming workshops and events. In May 2018, we added a “Fellowships” section to our website, which offers a collection of internal and external resources for postdocs to search through fellowship and grant opportunities.

In the second year of the office’s establishment, our strategic growth of the website helped us increase our presence both nationally and worldwide. The website continued to attract new visitors (86.5% new users vs. 13.5% returning users). Of its 6,741 active sessions (engaged visits) **worldwide**, **the United States** led the list of the top five countries with the most active sessions, followed by **India, South Korea, China, and Philippines**. **Nationally**, **New Jersey** led the list of the top five states with most active sessions, followed by **New York, Virginia, California, and Pennsylvania**.

NEWSLETTER

The OPA’s weekly newsletter serves as the main source of regular communication between the Office and the postdoctoral community. The newsletter informs postdocs of upcoming events and opportunities available to improve their training, expand their networks, and further develop their careers. It is a resource for the 1,000+ postdocs, faculty and administrators subscribed to our mailing list.

We received almost daily requests from institutional and regional partners wanting to share their resources and job opportunities with our postdoc community.



“I am grateful how much personal history panelists shared. I will use all the knowledge I gained today to get my next positions.”



*“It was EXTREMELY informative,
interactive and well structured.”*

Grant Writing Workshop



V. ENGAGEMENT BEYOND RUTGERS

2018 STEMPEERS CONFERENCE

In August 2018, the OPA co-sponsored the second annual conference STEMPeers, a full-day career development symposium aimed at helping STEM graduate students and postdocs to network and receive career advice from experienced STEM professionals with multicultural backgrounds. This event was hosted at New York University, and Dr. Chévere-Torres, the director of the office served as a panelist and moderator for the 'Careers in Academia' panel.

2018 YOUNG WOMEN IN BIO (YWIB) RUTGERS EVENT

In October 2018, the OPA co-sponsored—for a second consecutive year—the Young Women in Bio (YWIB) Rutgers event at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. This event, the largest YWIB event ever in the United States or Canada, was organized and executed by Dr. Janet Alder, Associate Professor of Neuroscience and Cell Biology at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and SGS Dean's Office.

The goal of this event was to introduce female New Jersey high school students to science careers while facilitating hands-on life science experiments. 261 high school girls had the opportunity to network with a diverse group of women professionals in STEM careers.

NEW YORK CITY POSTDOCTORAL OFFICES ROUNDTABLE: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY'S MEDICAL CAMPUS

In June 2018, Dr. Itzamarie Chévere-Torres participated in the New York City Postdoctoral Offices Roundtable, an annual meeting for all administrators and staff of postdoc offices within the New York City area. The goal is to share best practices regarding career development and resources for the postdoc community.

BIG TEN ACADEMIC ALLIANCE (BTAA) POSTDOC OFFICES' ADMINISTRATORS GROUP

At the regional level, the OPA director served as a contact person/liaison to our Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) counterparts to share information and best practices about policies, compliance and/or administration related to postdoctoral affairs. For this reason, in June 2018, the director spearheaded the inauguration of the BTAA Postdoctoral Offices' leadership group which hosted bi-monthly meetings as a platform to discuss career development and mentoring best practices for postdocs. The BTAA Postdoc Office's administrators have continued to meet ever since.

CONCLUSION

MOVING FORWARD

As we look ahead to our third year as an office, we marvel at the endless opportunities here at Rutgers, and at all of the many faculty and staff members that enthusiastically partner with us to leverage these opportunities for postdocs. Rutgers is a premier destination for all, including postdocs, who come for advanced research training and leave with advanced knowledge and skills for career success. We strive for excellence and look forward to providing an even higher standard of career-development opportunities in year three. We aim to expand our reach so that more postdocs and their faculty mentors can benefit from our services. To do this, we will broaden our communications and increase collaborations with key stakeholders universitywide. We are always looking for new ways to improve the postdoctoral experience here at Rutgers, and we encourage you to reach out to our office to share your ideas.





Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Nelson Biological Laboratories
604 Allison Road, Suite D-350
Piscataway, NJ 08854-8000

(848) 445-1800

opa@oq.rutgers.edu

<http://postdocs.rutgers.edu>