

Women in Biomedical Careers



NIH Updates on Women in Science **News for You to Use!**

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Volume 1, Issue 7 (December 2008)

NIH Updates on Women in Science is brought to you by the [NIH Working Group on Women in Biomedical Careers](#). We encourage you to forward this e-newsletter to colleagues who may find it of interest.

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NIH Releases Meeting Proceedings of the National Leadership Workshop on Mentoring Women in Biomedical Careers

On November 27–28, 2007 the Office of Research on Women’s Health coordinated efforts with the NIH Working Group on Women in Biomedical Careers for the National Leadership Workshop on Mentoring Women in Biomedical Careers. Hard copies of the Meeting Proceedings are now available by request (e-mail womeninscience@nih.gov). An electronic version will be available online by February 1, 2009. The workshop had over 500 registrants from government, academia, industry, and other organizations, and resulted in a variety of themes, recommendations and best practices on mentoring.

[National Leadership Workshop on Mentoring Women in Biomedical Careers](#)

NIH Announces Linda S. Birnbaum, Ph.D., D.A.B.T., A.T.S., as New Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

On December 3rd, Dr. Raynard S. Kingston, Acting NIH Director, announced the appointment of Linda S. Birnbaum, Ph.D., D.A.B.T., A.T.S., as Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. For the last 16 years, Dr. Birnbaum has served as a senior advisor at the Environmental Protection Agency as Director of the Experimental Toxicology Division. With this appointment, the number of female NIH Institute and Center Directors rose to seven. For the first time more than one quarter of the NIH’s twenty-seven Institutes and Centers are led women.

[Read More](#)

Although gender parity exists among M.D. and Ph.D. degree recipients in the sciences, there is a paucity of women applicants for NIH grants in late doctoral and early faculty years

An article in *Science* reports that at the beginning of the career pipeline for biomedical scientists in U.S. medical schools and universities, men and women are approximately equally represented in M.D. and Ph.D. degree recipients. However, there is a disproportionate attrition rate from women among senior faculty. In 2005, 49 percent of the 6,368 Ph.D.s in the biological sciences were awarded to women. However, women made up only 25 percent of associate professors and 17 percent of full professors in 2005. This study looks at the participation of men and women in various NIH funding programs as an indicator of success at various career stages. The NIH Office of Extramural Research (OER) provides data on its funding mechanisms on its [website](#).

[The Gender Gap in NIH Grant Applications \(*Science*\)](#)

[Data on the participation of women in NIH funding mechanisms from OER](#)

[Information on sex/gender in the biomedical science workforce from OER](#)

Reports highlight a lack of minorities pursuing the sciences in higher education and at the highest level of civil servants

The *Collaborative for Enhancing Diversity in Science* released the outcome of the Leadership Retreat on the Role of Professional Associations and Scientific Societies. The goals of the retreat were to study the levels of participation in science and engineering fields and the barriers to diversity in these fields, and to develop recommendations. These recommendations included the incorporation of diversity goals into the strategic plans of organizations and working to improve the collection and evaluation of empirical data on underrepresented minorities.

Similarly, *Science* reported that the latest *Survey of Earned Doctorates* by the National Science Foundation showed that U.S. institutions granted a record 31,801 science and engineering doctorates in 2007. Although there are rising numbers of women and minorities receiving doctorates, faculty in science and engineering fields are not more diverse.

Finally, an article in the *Washington Post* reported the paucity of minorities in the upper levels of the government, citing a new report by the Government Accountability Office that says that the representation of women and people of color in the senior corps of civil

servants grew overall between October 2000 and September 2007, but not in all agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services.

[Enhancing Diversity in Science - Retreat Report](#)

[Survey of Earned Doctorates \(NSF\)](#)

[Data Point \(Science\)](#)

[Washington Post Sees Room for Improvement in Representation of Minorities in Top Government Positions](#)

Underrepresentation of women in executive positions and the wage gap at universities continue

A Carnegie Mellon University [study](#) has concluded that, although there are fewer women in executive positions, those at the top out-earn their male counterparts. The study examined 16,000 executives over 14 years and found that women at the top of the business world earn slightly more on average than men and are promoted at the same rate, although women are less likely to get to upper-level positions.

However, according to new data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which recently released their annual report on employees in post-secondary institutions in the United States, gaps in pay between women and men faculty, when controlling for rank and institution type, are relatively narrow but are smallest at for-profit institutions.

[Are There Glass Ceilings for Female Executives? \(pdf\)](#)

[Employees in Postsecondary Institutions, Fall 2007, and Salaries of Full-Time Instructional Faculty 2007-08 \(NCES Report\)](#)

Women who are perceived as confident in job interviews are also seen as lacking social skills

A new study from three psychologists at Rutgers University shows that the job interview process disadvantages very assertive women. The researchers had volunteers rate the qualifications of various job applicants for managerial position based on videotaped interviews; the applicants, played by actors, stressed either leadership skills or ability to work as a team. When volunteers were asked to rate each candidate on competence, social skill and overall “hirability,” women who projected confidence and emphasized

their qualities as a leader were seen as lacking in social skills while men who acted the same way were rated most socially skilled and most hireable.

Competent Yet Out in the Cold: Shifting Criteria for Hiring Reflect Backlash Toward Agentic Women ([Psychology of Women Quarterly](#)) ([Abstract Only](#))

[News article in the Philadelphia Inquirer](#)

The “glass cliff” - the phenomenon in which women are more likely than men to be appointed to leadership positions – is associated with increased risk of failure and criticism

A recent article in *The Leadership Quarterly* explores the so-called “glass cliff” phenomenon, whereby women are more likely to be in leadership positions involved in management of organizations units that are in crisis, and are therefore more susceptible to increased risk of failure and criticism. The authors from the [Glass Cliff research group](#) present three experimental studies and conclude that the results indicate that women are being selected ahead of an equally qualified man when the organization’s performance was declining rather than improving.

[Study Explores the "Glass Cliff"](#)

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