

ANNUAL REPORT

COLUMBIA TECHNOLOGY VENTURES

DICE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN
COMMERCIALIZATION &
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SPRING 2021



ABOUT US

According to a study by the National Science Foundation, certain populations remain underrepresented in health-related sciences on a national basis, particularly within the life sciences commercialization and entrepreneurship community. As a result, the amount of venture capital and investment dollars flowing to companies led by members of underrepresented groups is disproportionately low.

Columbia's program for Diversity and Inclusion in Commercialization and Entrepreneurship (DICE) aims to address this problem by providing early-career support to individuals from underrepresented communities who are interested in life sciences commercialization and entrepreneurship.

DICE provides dedicated access, education, networking, and funding opportunities to Columbia graduate students and postdocs from traditionally underrepresented groups who are interested in careers in life science entrepreneurship and commercialization. DICE is administered by Columbia Technology Ventures, the technology transfer office for Columbia University.

OUR PROGRAM

17

**PARTICIPATING
STUDENTS**

12

**DEPARTMENTS
REPRESENTED**

8

**CLASSROOM
SESSIONS**

4

**FIRESIDE
CHATS**

DICE participants worked alongside engineering and business students over seven weeks to learn the fundamentals of life sciences entrepreneurship and the process of bringing a life sciences product from the lab to the market.



EDUCATION & BOOTCAMP

DICE participants completed the Life Science Accelerator Bootcamp, a course designed to give academic investigators an overview of the early development aspects of therapeutic design and commercialization. Assignments sharpened students' communication and teamwork skills.



MENTORSHIP & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Mentorship is a key component of early career development. Through the DICE program, participants were given the opportunity to meet with program sponsors and provided resources to assist in their job searches.



FUNDING SUPPORT

Upon successful completion of the program, DICE participants were each given a one-time stipend of \$1,000 to be used for professional development.

OUR FIRESIDE CHATS

DICE's fireside chats were candid conversations with experienced life science entrepreneurs, industry executives, and venture capitalists from traditionally underrepresented populations. Speakers discussed their career paths, challenges they faced, and their recommendations to DICE participants as they prepare to enter the life sciences industry.



ALYSSA JARVI, PHD | FORESITE CAPITAL

MARCH 19, 2021

Dr. Alyssa Jarvi is part of the investment team at Foresite Capital that evaluates the technological feasibility of healthcare innovations. Dr. Jarvi walked DICE participants through a day in the life of a VC and shared what entrepreneurs should look for when selecting VC partners.



ELIZABETH WAYNE, PHD | CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

MARCH 26, 2021

Dr. Elizabeth Wayne, an advocate for women and minority representation in academia, provided insights into her path from a physics student to faculty member at Carnegie Mellon University. Dr. Wayne highlighted experiences as a woman in science and provided guidance to students interested in a career in academic innovation.



BRYAN WILSON, PHD, MBA | MERCK

APRIL 1, 2021

Dr. Bryan Wilson is a Director in the Medical Affairs group at Merck & Co. and has been recognized for his contributions to promoting diversity in the pharmaceutical industry. Dr. Wilson shared the impact of mentorship on his career trajectory and demonstrated the importance of grit in reaching educational and career goals.



BRENNA RAUW | 12BRIDGE

APRIL 9, 2021

Brenna Rauw is Founder and Managing Director of 12Bridge, a west coast based incubator. Brenna gave an overview of her career trajectory and shared her story of a personal transition while navigating her career in life sciences commercialization.

OUR MENTORS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES



Danielle Capalino, MSPH
Director of J.Gurwin Foundation

Danielle provided office hours to discuss early stage investing and running a philanthropic organization.



Jonathan Friedlander, PhD, MBA
Principal at Digitalis

Dr. Friedlander spoke with DICE participants about entering the VC world after receiving a PhD.

The Vortechs Group, a technology transfer recruiting firm, provided resume review services tailored to DICE participants' career goals.

DICE emailed participants weekly with events, job opportunities, and seminars related to life science entrepreneurship and relevant diversity and inclusion initiatives.

OUR COHORT

Amanda Moy

Biomedical Informatics

Fitsum Petros

Mechanical Engineering

Sandro Luna

Vagelos College of Physicians
and Surgeons

Carla Bertulfo

Biological Sciences

Gretel Pellegrini

Periodontics

Sarah Dillard

School of Social Work

Chelsey Campillo Rodriguez

Biomedical Engineering

Hannah Childs

Biomedical Engineering

Scott Widemon

Radiology

Christopher Bozak

Biomedical Engineering

Jacob Nye

Biomedical Engineering

Sunny Jones

Systems Biology

Daniel Roybal

Pharmacology

Jonathan Pabon

Cell, Molecular, and Biomedical
Studies

Yazmin Feliz

Mechanical and Biomedical
Engineering

Dominique Higgins

Neurosurgery

Nicholas Giangreco

Systems Biology

"As a first-generation student (both high school and college) from a low-income household, the concepts of commercialization and entrepreneurship have often felt inaccessible and unapproachable. The fireside chats with experts of diverse backgrounds made the information relatable and helped me gain invaluable insight on previous paths I have pursued and what I could potentially achieve in the future."

— Amanda Moy, Biomedical Informatics

"DICE has given me invaluable insight into starting a business in the life sciences industry. From learning about securing funding to evaluating market opportunities, thanks to DICE I now have the tools and connections to dive into the entrepreneurial world!" — Chelsey Campillo Rodriguez, Biomedical Engineering

SPONSORS

DIGITALIS COMMONS

Digitalis Commons was founded in 2018 as a non-profit platform to create public-interest technology solutions to complex problems in health. Through the projects and programs it initiates, and the individuals and organizations it partners with, Digitalis Commons strives to build open, frontier-advancing, and scalable solutions that have an outsized impact on health.

Digital Commons believes that openness drives innovation through the distribution and adaptation of knowledge, it builds and supports solutions that can impact the greatest number of people through the intelligent application of institutional infrastructure, expertise, and capital, and it partners with those who embrace industry-disrupting trends and technologies.

J. Gurwin Foundation

The J. Gurwin Foundation was established in 1959 by Joseph Gurwin, a Lithuanian immigrant and prominent Jewish industrialist. Mr. Gurwin came to the United States in 1936, alone, at the age of 16 to continue his studies. In the years that followed, his parents, friends, and relatives perished in the Holocaust. He was the lucky one which motivated him to use his accumulated wealth and leadership positions to help insure that future generations would never meet a similar fate. By supporting Jewish philanthropic causes in the US and abroad, he believed that supporting higher education, advancing tolerance and community would strengthen the bonds that keep us united.

Today, the Foundation continues its commitment to the values established by its founder. Together, Joseph's daughter, Laura Flug, and granddaughter, Danielle Flug Capalino, have focused on extending their reach to undervalued communities, to women's issues and on supporting basic science and early stage technologies in healthcare to advance the vision first established over 60 years ago.

PARTNERS

