Discovery Fellows Program Welcomes Newest Cohort

Fri, 2018/11/02 - 6:15am

At the annual Discovery Fellows Fall Workshop and Reception on October 15, the Graduate Division and University Development and Alumni Relations welcomed the 27 newest Discovery Fellows as the program enters its sixth year.

The afternoon featured a welcome and orientation session for the newest Discovery Fellows, followed by an informal lunch and a communications workshop for all current Fellows. A reception for Fellows, faculty, University leadership, and the program’s founding donor rounded out the event. Discovery Fellows are PhD candidates in the basic sciences who have been selected to serve as ambassadors for UCSF’s basic science education programs.

This year's lively workshop was led by Bri McWhorter, founder and CEO of Activate to Captivate. Drawing on her training as an actor, McWhorter had students explore the
techniques that accomplished public speakers use to craft dynamic and compelling presentations, and to overcome self-consciousness. McWhorter has helped many UC students and faculty members, as well as leaders in business and academia, sharpen their skills in public speaking, networking, and interviewing.

Later, Discovery Fellows program founding donor Sir Michael Moritz offered remarks at the workshop's conclusion before joining students for refreshments and conversation at the reception. See a video of Moritz and his wife Harriet Heyman [1] sharing the story of what inspired them to establish the Discovery Fellows Program.

The Discovery Fellows [2] program was established in 2013 with a generous gift of $30 million from Sir Michael Moritz and Harriet Heyman to the UCSF Graduate Division to ensure the future of PhD education programs in the basic sciences. Through additional gifts from Moritz and Heyman as well as over 1,200 other donors, the fund is now at over $80 million has become the largest endowed program for PhD students in the history of the 10-campus University of California. This endowment provides support for all basic science PhD students at UCSF. The subset of advanced students chosen as Discovery Fellows serve as ambassadors for UCSF’s basic sciences programs, with the hope that they will become outspoken advocates for the importance of the innovative research going on at UCSF.

Since the program’s inception, there have been a total of 180 Discovery Fellows from 10 basic science PhD programs, including 75 current fellows. Program alumni [3] now numbering over 76 have gone on to a variety of positions in academia and industry research.

Congratulations to these 27 students who were named Discovery Fellows in fall 2018:

Ryan Boileau, Developmental and Stem Cell Biology
Marcus Chin, Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacogenomics
Daniel Clark, Oral and Craniofacial Sciences
Shizhong Dai, Chemistry and Chemical Biology
Susanna Elledge, Chemistry and Chemical Biology
Parinaz Fozouni, Biomedical Sciences
Muryam Gourdet, Tetrad
Hannah Graham, Neuroscience
Joe Hiatt, Biomedical Sciences
Austin Hsu, Biomedical Sciences
Lay Kodama, Neuroscience
Alexis Krup, Biomedical Sciences
Greyson Lewis, Biophysics
Anna Lipkin, Neuroscience
Christopher Mathy, Bioengineering
Priya Mohindra, Bioengineering
Lila Neahring, Developmental and Stem Cell Biology
Carlos Nowotny, Tetrad
Ramiro Patino, Biomedical Sciences
Jonathan Schor, Neuroscience
Charles Schurman, Bioengineering
Taylor Skokan, Tetrad
Sara Sunshine, Biomedical Sciences
Serena Tamura, Pharmaceutical Sciences and Pharmacogenomics
Kristine Trotta, Tetrad
Kaitlyn Tsai