Dean’s Awards for Excellence in Mentoring for Graduate Students and for Postdoctoral Scholars

About the Awards

Timeline

Nominations open: January 11, 2019
Nominations close: March 31, 2019
Notification: First week of May, 2019
Award ceremony: Date TBA (May, 2019)

Purpose

The purpose of this new award is to recognize graduate students (both master’s and PhD students) and postdoctoral scholars who consistently serve as excellent mentors for their colleagues. This may include other graduate and postdoctoral scholars, staff, and/or undergraduate and high school students visiting from other institutions. These awards are examples of the Graduate Division’s/Office of Postdoctoral Scholars’ efforts to support a mentoring culture that encourages diversity and increases equity in the biomedical, social, and population sciences.

This award intends to recognize the contributions of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars who have formally or informally taken on some of the responsibilities typically held by traditional mentors, supervisors, and sponsors during their training. These forms of mentorship roles often look like the following:

- Traditional mentors: psychological and emotional support, teaching and training, career support, and role modeling.
- Supervisors: setting research goals, assessing baseline levels of knowledge and understanding, providing positive and corrective feedback, evaluating progress, managing conflicts, enforcing consequences and providing support to trainees.
- Sponsors: actively connect to opportunities, advocate for rewards and promotions.

Our award recognizes three areas of mentoring that incorporate some of these aspects, as
well as other areas that are more specific to the leadership roles UCSF graduate students and postdoctoral scholars often take. These areas are as follows and are described more in depth throughout this page:

1. Research mentoring  
2. Career and professional mentoring  
3. Social and inspirational mentoring

Eligibility

The awards are open to:

- All currently enrolled master's and PhD students who are registered at the time of nomination. 
- All postdoctoral scholars who are in a UCSF postdoctoral scholar title code at the time of nomination.

Nomination Procedure

- **Nominations will be accepted from January 10 through March 31, 2019.**  
- Current UCSF staff, faculty, students, and postdoctoral scholars may submit a nomination.  
- Nominations may describe the work that mentors have done with graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, staff, interns, and volunteers, regardless of their affiliation with UCSF.  
- Nominations must be submitted online through the Nomination Form [1]:
  - The ?nominator,? who will be the point of contact for the nomination process, will complete the Nomination Form [1]. The form requires the nominator to describe the mentoring qualities of nominee in at least one of the three award areas described above. (There is a 500 word limit.) Note that the nominator does not have to be the mentee but should be able to describe the mentor?s role with sufficient details.  
  - The nominator can include up to 2 support letters, which should be uploaded and submitted in their entry. These support letters can come from anyone, within or outside of the UCSF community, who can further speak to the qualities described by the nominator and otherwise bolster their entry. (Two-page limit per letter.)

Nomination Information

In their nomination, nominators and supporters will be asked to describe how the nominee took on some of the responsibilities of traditional mentors, supervisors and sponsors (e.g. principal investigators and advisers) as described in the ?purpose? section. In particular, nominations should describe the frequency of the interactions with mentees, the length of the relationship with mentees, and the importance of their impact on the mentee?s professional or educational success. We especially encourage nominators and supporters to describe how the nominee has directly supported diversity and provided access to resources for
underrepresented minorities in the sciences. We recognize that some of the trainees mentored by graduate students and postdoctoral scholars are not directly affiliated with UCSF and we recommend that nominators include details on how the mentor has engaged with these trainees in their letter.

**Award Streams**

In the nomination, the nominator should address mentoring qualities in at least one of the following three streams.

1. **Research mentoring area**
   - The nominee has provided mentoring directly related to a trainee’s scientific learning and research goals.
     - Examples of how the guidance could be provided include: hands-on training in laboratory or analytic techniques; teaching and advice related to experimental design and methodology; help with locating and using informational resources; or guidance on technical writing/presentation skills for manuscripts, talks, posters, grants or fellowship applications. Nominations should particularly emphasize how the mentor has helped the mentee to develop their technical abilities and/or understanding to gain independence in a given area.

2. **Career and professional mentoring area**
   - The nominee has provided mentoring focused on the career or professional development needs of mentee(s), regardless of their graduate or postdoctoral training.
     - Career mentoring involves any support that the nominee may have provided to other trainees to help them assess their career interests, explore a specific career, connect with professionals in that career of interest, or apply to and successfully obtain positions. Careers of interest may include academic and non-academic careers.
     - Professional mentoring may involve developing the professional skills to successfully prepare and position themselves for a career of interest. This may include helping a mentee develop the relevant skills (project management, relationship building, communication, negotiation etc.), or access relevant opportunities (networking, shadowing, trainings, internships, etc.). It may also involve helping the mentee set professional goals, supporting the mentee in meeting goals that help advance their career by keeping them accountable, or by providing constructive feedback.

3. **Social and/or inspirational mentoring area**
   - The nominee has provided indirect or direct guidance to mentees that has positively impacted their ability to persist and succeed in their position.
     - This may involve serving as a role model to inspire and motivate mentees to achieve personal goals, build confidence, choose a career, or persist through obstacles. For example, the mentor may have guided
the mentee through the process of adjusting to UCSF?s work/study environment, understanding and adapting to their lab?s or department?s work environment, or navigating living in San Francisco (and, if applicable, the United States). The nominee may also be a ?go-to? person for mentees when it comes to navigating challenging professional situations or handling conflicts skillfully.

Award

Three graduate students and three postdoctoral scholars will be selected as awardees. Each award recipient will receive a $500 stipend and a certificate.

The awards will be attributed to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars who fit one or several of the following criteria:

- Have taken on some of the responsibilities of traditional mentors, supervisors, and sponsors (e.g. principal investigators and advisers) as described in the ?purpose? section, including with mentees who are not directly affiliated with UCSF.
- Have had frequent interactions with mentees over long periods of time.
- Have had an impact on the mentee?s professional or educational success.
- Have directly supported diversity and provided access to resources for underrepresented minorities in the sciences.

Award Announcement

In the first week of May, 2019, the selected award recipients and nominators will receive an email announcing the award. Awards will be distributed during an official ceremony later in May, during which each award recipient will be introduced by their nominator and recognized by their peers. Those who are not selected to receive the award will also be notified of their nomination and invited to attend the ceremony in recognition of their contribution to UCSF?s mentorship climate.

Award Selection

Six award recipients will be selected by a committee composed of two postdoctoral scholars, two graduate students, one faculty member, and one administrator.

NOMINATE a graduate student or postdoc![1]

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