Spotlight: Jory Weintraub

Science Communication Program Director

Jory Weintraub, PhD, currently serves as the Science Communication Program Director and a Senior Lecturing Fellow with Duke Initiative for Science & Society. He teaches graduates as well as undergraduate courses and facilitates science communication workshops for Duke faculty and postdocs. BioCoRE sat down with Jory to learn about communication, COVID, and community.

Jory completed his undergraduate education at the University of California San Diego. In his junior year that he began working in a lab and he found that he loved research. Following graduation, Jory was a research technician for 5 years. It was in this position that he cultivated a passion for training, mentoring, and seeing
the “big picture”. This led him to pursue a PhD in Immunology at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. Throughout his PhD training, Jory gravitated towards teaching assistantships and teaching opportunities. He connected with mentors who shared his values for love of teaching at the UNC Center for Teaching and Learning. When he completed his PhD training, he moved into a postdoc funded by the NSF which focused on outreach, public engagement, and diversity. He credits great mentors, and self-awareness for his success thus far.

Currently his work with Duke Science & Society emphasizes teaching, he holds virtual sessions with leaders in science, science policy and science communication. He also works closely with community-based organizations for science education and outreach. The pivot to virtual forums has enabled him to expand the audience for ‘lunch and learns’ as well as inviting non-local speakers. Recent speakers for this event include Dr. Anthony Fauci, and other internationally known scientists. Attendance for the in-person format averaged 25 people per session; now, it is common to have more than 100 participants in a single session. “If there are any silver linings to the pandemic, it has pushed us to be more creative and innovative with how we do outreach and programming”.

Finally, Jory shares his thoughts on how to combat misinformation. “It’s not going to happen in a single conversation, you have to know that going into it.” He warns against attacking the other person’s views or beliefs. “It is important to not go into it trying to prove anyone wrong. No one will respond well to that.” The principles of good science communication are central to communicating any complex or foreign idea. Using accessible language and relatable examples/illustrations can make a world of difference. “Effective science communication is rooted in understanding the point of view of your audience so that the message you’re sharing will be received and understood.

Ashleigh Rawls
Opportunity: Journal of Emerging Investigators

*Inspiring the next generation of scientists through publication*

Hands-on learning is often seen as the best approach to science education. To that end, kids in middle and high school often perform experiments in their science classes, and some even take part in science fairs. But what do they do with all of that hard work once the class exercise is complete or the science fair ends? Many projects end up in the trash, forgotten, but career scientists would never abandon their work this way. Rather, when they reach the “end” of a project, they publish their work. In the world of professional science, the publish or perish paradigm is pervasive, but many students only begin learning about the publishing process in graduate school. In 2011, a group of Harvard University graduate students, led by Sarah Fankhauser (now an Assistant Professor at Emory University), decided that kids need a more visible outlet for their work and greater mentorship from the scientific community. Through a massive volunteer effort, they started a journal called Journal of Emerging Investigators (JEI) for young aspiring scientists to publish on their classroom or science fair projects. JEI’s mission is to introduce middle- and high-school students to the entirety of the scientific method, going past the execution of experiments to the publication of the results, even if not entirely novel. Today, JEI continues to be managed and run by graduate student and postdoc volunteers from all over the United States, unsurprising when you consider the professional development and outreach experience afforded to volunteers by reviewing or editing the manuscripts of young scientists. Since its inception ten years ago, JEI has grown both as a journal, publishing 134 manuscripts and receiving over 365 submissions in 2020, and as a non-profit, expanding outreach and STEM education initiatives. All the students who publish manuscripts through JEI get quality mentorship from the scientific community and more hands-on experience with the scientific method, giving them an edge in the college admissions process and empowering them to pursue science as a career.

*Claire E. Otero*
Prioritizing You

This is a friendly reminder that you are human, and many months have been spent enduring social unrest, political upheaval, and a catastrophic epidemic. Remembering to take care of yourself may seem unimportant compared to these large looming presences, but that is the furthest thing from the truth.

As students, we are faced with many deadlines from the never-ending supply of homework and exams that can lead us to push ourselves to meet these goals then leave us feeling burnt out and exhausted. In a time when we are already pushed to the edge, this can be overwhelming. I’m not here to tell you everything will be okay or that this time will pass soon. I am here to tell you that focusing on getting through today is enough.

There are resources available to help you, and they were made to be used. I personally enjoyed the Koru Mindfulness class and frequently use Duke Cares which offers 24/7 telehealth services for quick appointments anytime I need them. These free student services are accompanied by many other options that may better suit your needs. Your best is enough. I hope you take care of you.

Angela Rivera

Course: Introduction to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism of Biology

Ray Allen (he/him/his), 6th year, Biology, DCSB, McClay Lab designed a course for graduate students that provides principle understanding for anti-racism and equity in STEM. Introduction to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism of Biology is 1.5 credits and will be offered again next spring semester.

(Interview cont’d. next page)
Interview with Ray Allen

How is the course taught?

The course is taught in three parts: Introduction, Theory and History of DEI in Biology, Contemporary Issues and Efforts, and Personal and Professional Development for students. Class typically begins with a mini lecture which instigates grounded discussion, students review assigned reading/ podcasts/ videos and move into a group discussion led by peers.

Developing the Course?

“In 2019, I and two other students became interested in developing a foundational course for DEI. While it is beneficial to speak informally about these issues, there is a lot of disconnect and lack of sustainability in the ‘whisper network’. Initially it was brushed aside, following the murder of George Floyd and BLM protests of summer 2020 administration became interested in supporting the course and addressing racism in the academy. Without the protests of 2020, I don’t think it would’ve happened. “

What do you hope students gain from taking the course?

Ideally, I want students to learn something that they never considered before and incorporate that into their daily thought. I also want students to be aware that no matter what work or research they pursue, inclusion diversity and equity is important. We don’t live in a vacuum. I hope they take the lessons learned in the course and share with their respective departments, programs, and communities. I hope the value of diversity equity and inclusion are taught for generations to come.

Ashleigh Rawls

“I’m of the idea that in order to study DEI, you must also study how biology has been exclusionary, not diverse, homogenous (overwhelmingly white) and inequitable.”

- Ray Allen

twitter: @ray_l_allen
At the CoRE is a newsletter intended to highlight the accomplishments of Duke's BioCoRE Scholars as they progress through their graduate careers. The newsletter also intends to highlight community efforts towards diversity, equity, and inclusion on Duke's campus and in the Triangle. This publication is student-driven from conception to circulation.

**Upcoming Events**

Congratulations to BioCoRE Scholars Grace Beggs (Biochemistry) and Rossie Clark (Cell Biology) who will be defending this month!

**MARCH 17 • 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**
**Using Peer Feedback Effectively.**
Topics of this workshop include understanding students' history with peer feedback and social dynamics, choosing and articulating the feedback task, setting expectations, and assigning groups.

**MARCH 17 • 1:30 PM**
BioCoRE Scholar Defense: Grace Beggs (Biochemistry)

**MARCH 22 • 10:00 AM**
BioCoRE Scholar Defense: Rossie Clark Cotton (Cell Biology)

**MARCH 18 • 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM**
**Teaching and Mentoring Diverse Learners**
In this interactive workshop, Assistant Dean Francisco Ramos, Ph.D. will help us consider strategies to make us more effective teachers and mentors in supporting our students.

**MARCH 31 • 6:00 PM - 6:30 PM**
**Navigating Healthcare Panel Discussion**
LGBTQ+ Spring Workshop Series, all SOM and DUSON members invited to attend.

**ONGOING**

**Search for the Silver Lining Contest**
"The Search for the Silver Lining Contest aims to empower Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) creators to explore image-based storytelling by providing them with photographic equipment, photography-based education, and technical product training."