

results of their students' placement exams, and advise the students on ways to fill any academic gaps. At Michigan State, physics professor Dan Stump decided on his own to take this a step farther, offering tutorials to help students prepare for Ph.D. candidacy exams.

White mentors also need to acknowledge that their students are black, Hispanic, American Indian, or Asian-American from the start. "If you have a minority student in a lab, the worst thing is to pretend this isn't an issue at all," says Dartmouth University biologist George Langford, who is black. "It's very, very important you recognize who the individual is and recognize he or she has real needs, because minorities come from a different background."

Encouragement is especially important for minori-

ties—because of the difference in power between white professors and minority students, who often perceive that they have less power in society than whites. "A statement made by a white male to a black student can be devastating, while it would not be to a white student," says Langford. "If a white man can begin to understand that, he'll find he has less problems with his students."

Finally, the students aren't the only ones who need encouragement. If white professors are making progress—making an impact on minorities' lives—then they also need to be thanked. "One final issue," says Langford, "is white men have to be told they're making progress on these issues."

—Ann Gibbons

SERVICE

A Guide to Minority Aid From Scientific Societies

Most scientists make their first contact with the wider world of science at their first scientific meeting, sponsored by one of dozens of professional societies. But what do these societies do for the minority students and professors in their midst? Here *Science* offers a guide to the societies that do the most—and the least—for minority students and scientists (see table).

Some new programs match students to mentors and create databases of minority scientists to help place them in jobs or get them invited as speakers. But the more traditional efforts—research opportunities and scholarships—are still going strong.

Most societies focus on college undergraduates or older—the level most professional scientists are comfortable with. For example, one of the leaders in minority outreach, the American Society for Microbiology (ASM), offers a package of support to minority undergrads, including summer research stints, and a

trip to the society's annual meeting. Society members visit minority institutions, and ASM sponsors a free computer bulletin board.

The American Physical Society also targets undergraduates, with the help of an enthusiastic, 20-year-old minority committee. They connect students to mentors and give scholarships, and this year began a new database of minority physicists, providing a list of possible speakers to supplement a traveling lecture program.

Indeed, many societies adopt this simple—and inexpensive—strategy of supporting visiting minority lecturers. The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB), has also begun a comprehensive database filled with information and resumes on all minority members. FASEB sends its members to predominantly minority institutions to lecture, give research advice and help both students and faculty with grant proposals.

One of the few groups aiming at the precollege years is the American Chemical Society (ACS). ACS targets high schoolers and even elementary school students with a diverse selection of research opportunities, educational programs, and grants to community organizations.

On the other end of the spectrum, the Society of Neuroscience focuses on postdoctoral researchers and young professors, offering a package of support to about 30 young neuroscientists, including a trip to the annual meeting—and a mentor when they get there.

In addition, almost all societies offer minority scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students. But several societies offer no programs for minorities: the American Geophysical Union, the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, the American Mathematical Society, the American Society for Information Science and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.

—Karen Fox

Most societies offer mentors and scholarships—but a few leave minority students to sink or swim on their own.

Societal Support: Leading Programs

Society	Scholarships or Research Grants	Summer Research	Mentors	Meeting Travel Grants	Lecture Programs Educational Materials, and Workshops
American Society for Microbiology	undergrad graduate	undergrad	undergrad	undergrad	faculty
American Society for Cell Biology		graduate through faculty		undergrad through faculty	graduate through faculty
American Chemical Society		high school			elementary–high school undergrad, graduate
American Physical Society	undergrad	undergrad		faculty	faculty
Federation of Amer. Societies for Experimental Biology	undergrad graduate			undergrad through faculty	faculty
Society of Neuroscience			undergrad through faculty	undergrad through faculty	