Minority Fellowship Program Announces New Fellows

by Jean H. Shin, Interim Director
Minority Affairs Program

The Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) of the American Sociological Association is pleased to introduce the seven new Fellows in Cohort 29. The Advisory Panel of the Program made these recommendations in April from a highly competitive pool of applicants. The seven students selected this spring begin their MFP Fellowship on August 1, 2002. MFP Cohort 29 is comprised of graduate students with much promise in the sociological study of mental health. They will all attend the Annual Meetings in Chicago, where they will receive a day-long orientation.

The Minority Fellowship Program is primarily funded through a training grant from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). In addition to member contributions, donations from Alpha Kappa Delta, Sociologists for Women in Society, the Association of Black Sociologists, the Pacific Sociological Association, the Midwest Sociological Society, and the Southwestern Sociological Association help to make the Program possible.

The new MFP Fellows are:

**W. Azul La Luz Baez**
*Undergraduate Institution:* Western Illinois University
*Graduate Institution:* University of New Mexico

W. Azul La Luz Baez was born in Puerto Rico, but raised in New York City’s Spanish Harlem. He is a PhD student in the Department of Sociology at the University of New Mexico, with concentrations in Medical Sociology and Race and Ethnicity. He is doing ethnographic field research on heroin addicts’ treatment-seeking behaviors in Rio Arriba County, New Mexico, where there is an epidemic of heroin addiction and overdoses. His dissertation will focus on evidence of mental health pathology and inter-generational patterns of heroin use in Latinas and Latinos in Rio Arriba County. He earned two Master of Arts degrees from Western Illinois University at Macomb, IL. One was in Sociology with a focus in Race, Ethnicity and Gender, and the second in Geography with a focus in Urban and Regional Planning. In both Master’s programs, he was inducted into national honors programs—Phi Kappa Phi, and Gamma Theta Epsilon, respectively. His other areas of interest are the mental health status of Latinas and Latinos in enclaves, and Latinas’ epidemiological paradox of health outcomes. He also enjoys teaching which he has done at both the university and community college level. After all these academic accomplishments, La Luz says he is most grateful for having earned a GED. It was the launching pad which allowed him to travel an extremely long distance from the streets of Harlem (where he was a heroin addict and gang member, and from which he only escaped by going to prison) to the halls of academia.

**Jennifer Duette-Goode**
*Undergraduate Institution:* University of Texas-Arlington
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Graduate Institution: Bowling Green State University

Jennifer Duette-Goode received her MS in Social Work from the University of Texas-Arlington in 1998. She began her doctoral work in social psychology and criminology at Bowling Green State University in 2000. She has taught Introduction to Sociology and Social Psychology. As a research assistant, she is currently working on projects examining the nature of adolescent relationships and the role various agents of socialization play in adolescents’ developmental outcomes. Duette-Goode is interested in examining arenas in which African-American youth are able to sustain a strong sense of self, and the social psychological processes that protect and/or enhance African-American self conceptions. In her free time, she enjoys volunteering at various non-profit organizations and has received several community service awards.

Roberta M. Espinoza
Undergraduate Institution: Pomona College
Graduate Institution: University of California-Berkeley

Espinoza earned her BA in Sociology from Pomona College. Last May, she completed her third year in the PhD program in Sociology at the University of California-Berkeley. Espinoza has been a fellow in the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program, the Minority Opportunities through School Transformation (MOST) Enrichment Program, and the Fogarty International Research Training Program in Mexico City. As a PhD student at UC-Berkeley, Espinoza pursues research in the areas of family (with a significant emphasis on Latina/o families), education, and race/ethnicity. She is currently studying how Latina doctoral students negotiate and balance school and family obligations in what she calls the “good daughter dilemma.” Espinoza is currently a Research Associate at the UC-Berkeley Center for Working Families.

LaShaune Johnson
Undergraduate Institution: Wellesley College
Graduate Institution: University of California-Santa Barbara

LaShaune Johnson is currently enrolled in the Sociology graduate program at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her PhD emphasis is in Human Development. During her first year in the Program, she received the Doctoral Scholars Fellowship. She received her BA in Sociology and Medieval/Renaissance Studies from Wellesley College. Her research interests are in life course, cancer survivorship, women's participation in Yoruba-based religious traditions, chronic illness, women of color in managerial positions, the use of emergency rooms for primary health care, and eating disorders. Her extracurricular activities are writing poetry, bowling, Afro-Cuban drumming, and online shopping.

Ethel Gamboa Nicdao
Undergraduate Institution: University of California-Davis
Graduate Institution: University of New Mexico

Nicdao graduated with her BA in Sociology from the University of California-Davis, and MA from California State University-Hayward. While earning her MA, she was the recipient of a Graduate Student Research Grant and a Graduate Equity Fellowship Award. In May 2002, she completed her second year as a Sociology graduate student at the University of New Mexico (UNM). She has worked at UNM’s Center for Alcoholism, Substance Abuse, and Addictions for the past two years and taught Introduction to Sociology,
Sociology of Medical Practice, and Deviant Behavior during the 2001-02 academic year. She is interested in issues of health inequalities among minority groups, especially women of color. Her dissertation research will examine the relationship between cultural identity and mental health issues among Native Americans in the Southwest.

**Tariqah A. Nuriddin**  
*Undergraduate Institution: Hampton University*  
*Graduate Institution: Purdue University*

Nuriddin graduated magna cum laude with a BA in Sociology from Hampton University. During her undergraduate matriculation, she was funded as a NIMH-Career Opportunities in Research (COR) Fellow and began working on research involving exposure to violence and victimization among African-American youth. She notes this unique opportunity as being one of the main factors in preparing her for graduate studies. In May of 2002, she completed her first year of graduate studies in Sociology with a minor in Gerontology at Purdue University. Her research will focus on examining archival data to explore racial differences in the effects of mental health (stress and distress) on mortality.

**Candice Sergeant**  
*Undergraduate Institution: Tufts University*  
*Graduate Institution: University of Maryland*

Sergeant’s main research interests are in the areas of race, ethnic, and socio-economic differences in health, and racism and discrimination and the social psychology of self and identity. She has received several academic awards and has also been involved with various volunteer programs that encourage minority youth to seek out higher education. In 2000, she graduated from Tufts University with a BA in Psychology and then worked as a Senior Research Assistant at the Henry A. Murray Research Center, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University. She is now entering her second year of graduate study at the University of Maryland-College Park, where she is involved with *Aging, Stress and Health Study.*