ASA Welcomes MFP Cohort 35

The American Sociological Association and the Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) are pleased to introduce the four new Fellows who comprise MFP Cohort 35. ASA’s MFP Advisory Panel met this spring in Washington, DC, to review the applications of a highly competitive pool of applicants. Cohort 35 consists of PhD candidates with strong research interests in the sociology of mental health and mental illness, race and ethnicity, and the discipline in general. This introduction of MFP Cohort 35 kicks off a slate of activities celebrating the 35th anniversary of MFP. Activities start with a special session at the 2008 ASA Annual Meeting in Boston honoring the founding of MFP in 1974 and a series of forthcoming articles in *Footnotes* that will reflect the diverse voices and contributions by those connected to MFP through the past four decades.

The new MFP Fellows will officially begin their training on August 1. They will travel to the 2008 Annual Meeting, where they will attend a day-long orientation, starting with attendance at an event honoring the career of mental health researcher Leonard I. Pearlin. This will be followed by presentation of a brief history of the ASA and a series of presentations by sociologists (including several former MFP Fellows) with expertise in mental health, medical sociology, and race and ethnicity. During the remainder of their time in Boston, Fellows will participate in numerous regular sessions and workshops, attend MFP-sponsored events, and get to know sociologists with similar research interests.

The Minority Fellowship Program is funded primarily through a T-32 training grant provided by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), with recent co-funding by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). MFP is also supported by generous contributions from Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD), Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS), the Midwest Sociological Society (MSS), the Association of Black Sociologists (ABS), the Southwestern Sociological Association (SWSA), and ASA Council, as well as contributions from individual ASA members.

Below are listed the new MFP Fellows.

**Louis Edgar Esparza**  
*(AKD General Fellow)*

*Undergraduate Institution: Tufts University*  
*Graduate Institution: Stony Brook University*

Louis received his BA from Tufts University in 2003, where he was an Omidyar Scholar at the University College of Citizenship and Public Service and finished a double-major in Sociology and Peace & Justice Studies. He received his MA at Stony Brook University in 2006, where he is also a PhD candidate specializing in social movements and human rights. He is currently conducting fieldwork investigating the determinants of high-risk activism in the contemporary human rights movement in Bogota, Colombia. His previous work has appeared in *Sociological Forum*, and he has a forthcoming publication in *Societies Without Borders*. During his graduate tenure, Louis has received a National Science Foundation Summer Fellowship, a W. Burghardt Turner Fellowship, numerous grants to conduct fieldwork, and in 2006 secured funding from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science to co-organize a conference on “Globalization & Japan.” Along with his advisor, Michael Schwartz, Louis has taught social movements at the graduate level and his syllabi appear in the ASA Teaching Resources Center materials on...
Peace, War & Social Conflict as well as the forthcoming Collective Behavior and Social Movements. He was a student editor of ASA’s *Contexts* magazine and former chair of the ASA Student Forum Advisory Board. Louis currently sits on the executive boards of Sociologists Without Borders, U.S. Collection Humanitarian Corps, and the Tufts Progressive Alumni Network. He won the 2007 Campus Advocacy Award for his service to the university. Louis was born in Morningside Heights, NY, and was raised in Queens, NY, and Paterson, NJ.

*Marcus Anthony Hunter  
(MSS/ABS General Fellow)*

*Undergraduate Institution:* Columbia University  
*Graduate Institution:* Northwestern University

Born in Newark, NJ, and raised in Philadelphia, PA, Marcus is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at Northwestern University. After receiving his BA in History-Sociology and African American Studies from Columbia University, Marcus spent two years in Philadelphia as an English teacher in the public school system. Currently, Marcus is in the early research stages of his dissertation project, which is a revisit of W.E.B. DuBois’ sociological classic *The Philadelphia Negro.* In this project, he is examining the political, cultural, and social factors that have led to the racial, socio-economic, and demographic shifts over time in the 7th Ward neighborhood specifically and the city of Philadelphia more generally.

*Dawne M. Mouzon  
(NIMH Fellow)*

*Undergraduate Institution:* Rutgers University-New Brunswick  
*Graduate Institution:* Rutgers University-New Brunswick

Dawne received her BA from Rutgers University, where she completed a double major in Psychology and Africana Studies and a minor in Spanish. After her sophomore year, she participated in Project L/EARN, an NIMH-funded research methods training program for minority undergraduates at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research. Under the direction of an accomplished demography mentor, she completed a senior honors thesis examining racial differences in breast cancer screening knowledge, attitudes, and compliance, a paper that was eventually published in the *Journal of the National Medical Association.* After completing an MPH in epidemiology in 2004, Dawne worked full-time for three years as a research associate at an urban medical school, where she co-authored four peer-reviewed articles. She later returned to her roots at Rutgers University to study medical sociology and has also served as a course instructor for Project L/EARN for four years. Dawne maintains broad interests in race/gender, mental
health, and the family. She recently finished her doctoral coursework and is working on projects assessing whether marriage provides similar mental and physical health benefits for African Americans and whites, the role of partner homogamy and perceived mate availability on mental health outcomes, and the effects of race and gender ideology on marital quality.

Robert Peterson  
(NIMH Fellow)

Undergraduate Institution: Morehouse College  
Graduate Institution: Case Western Reserve University

Robert is a PhD student in the Department of Sociology at Case Western Reserve University. As an undergraduate, Robert was a recipient of an NIMH Career Opportunities in Research Education and Training Program (NIMH-COR) grant that provided intensive sociological research experience focused on the impact of HIV/AIDS in the black community. In addition to subsidizing field research in Cape Town, South Africa, the grant experience fueled his commitment to do research on marginalized groups. At Case, Robert’s scholarly focus includes: mental health and medical sociology; HIV/AIDS; race, class, and gender inequality; masculinities and men’s health; and social and health policy. His interest in medical sociology developed as he became cognizant of the deleterious health outcomes and inequities among disenfranchised groups such as the poor, as well as racial, ethnic, and sexual minorities. His dissertation topic will focus on the attitudes and actions of decision makers on HIV/AIDS mobilization efforts; societal sentiment; and experiences of persons living with the disease. Robert is engaged in culturally relative sociological inquiry with both academic and applied implications. In addition to receiving the 2007 Ruth Barber Moon Award for Academic Excellence and Promise at Case Western Reserve University, his article on HIV disclosure and the stress paradigm is currently part of the edited volume *Let’s Talk About Black Sexualities: Sex and Power in America*, under review at Rutgers University Press. Outside of his graduate studies, Robert enjoys serving as a volunteer mentor for poor black male youth in the Cleveland area and keeping up with news and current events while playing with his new German Shepherd Patrick.

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