

# 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

# Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

Our Executive Directors were committed to addressing issues of equity and access in higher education and decided to act. In the Leadership Alliance prospectus, we find these words:

*“Losing minority students all along the pipeline is no longer tolerable. In order to build the reservoir from which to draw on this large national talent pool, we must simply intervene...”*



**Dr. James N. Wyche**  
Executive Director 1992–2003



**Dr. Valerie P. Wilson**  
Executive Director 2003–2011

# Celebrating 25 Years of Training, Mentoring, and Inspiring

**25** years — a quarter of a century — is a significant milestone in the history of an organization. In this annual report, we pause to tell our story, a story of a partnership of diverse institutions united in a vision of equality and a commitment to reduce disparities by creating new research and training opportunities, as well as the stories of our scholars who are transforming the workforce.

There is a quote attributed to Isaac Newton in 1675 that states, *"If I have seen further than others, it is because I have stood on the shoulders of giants."* Because of the tireless efforts and personal sacrifices of the Alliance coordinators, faculty and partners and funders, and my team, we are applauding our Doctoral Scholars who have obtained a PhD (404) or MD-PhD (48) degree. We are congratulating and supporting our alumni of the Summer Research Early Identification Program as 37% (367) are matriculating into doctoral degree programs.

From idea generation to implementation, we are increasing research opportunities for first-year students and leveraging our synergies to amplify training and mentoring activities for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty, administrators and research professionals at each stage of the academic pathway. Through the compelling stories of our Doctoral Scholars featured in this report, I invite you to read about the impact of the Leadership Alliance on forging a community of scholars; inspiring persistence through adversity; developing a research identity; building bridges to new opportunities; mentoring throughout the academic pathway and seizing new opportunities. As evidenced by these stories, we are fulfilling our promise to discover potential, cultivate talent, and populate a workforce reflective of the diverse fabric of our society.

We look forward to the next 25 years with renewed purpose and promise to train, mentor and inspire talented students from diverse backgrounds to become outstanding leaders and role models.

**Medeva Ghee, PhD**  
*Executive Director, The Leadership Alliance*







# Partnerships for Success

On behalf of the Executive Committee, we continue to be proud to support the vision and mission of Leadership Alliance. We join with member institutions in celebrating 25 years of providing opportunities for undergraduates in search of impactful summer research experiences and the expansion of their academic and personal networks. Not only do we applaud the visibility of the Leadership Alliance as a recognized institution throughout higher education and industry networks, we salute the work of the staff led by Dr. Medeva Ghee in positioning the Alliance as a leader among collaborative initiatives focusing on bridging PhD granting and Minority Serving Institutions.

The success of The Leadership Alliance can be measured by the 452 scholars with doctoral degrees and by the number of partnerships between and among institutions created by special Leadership Alliance initiatives, including SYNERGI (Synergistic Network to Enhance Research that Grows Innovation), FYRE (First Year Research Experience) and the LAMI (Leadership Alliance Mellon Initiatives). Each of these programs is designed to enhance research training for undergraduates and strengthen networks among institutions. They accomplish these goals while creating fortified pathways to research careers for underrepresented groups.



People make up our institutions. The Leadership Alliance provides a fertile foundation for the development of sustainable relationships among institutions, campus coordinators, liaisons and faculty representatives. We all benefit from the partnerships and friendships nurtured by the Alliance. We look forward to continuing to support the many initiatives of the Alliance.

**Cynthia Neal Spence, Ph.D.**

*Chair, Executive Committee*

*Associate Professor of Sociology at Spelman College*

*Director of the UNCF/Mellon Programs*



# Tiffany Brannon, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Psychology,  
University of California, Los Angeles



*"That encouragement and those questions that summer...became the questions that formed my honors thesis as an undergraduate, my dissertation when I went on to pursue my master's and my PhD, and now in my job as a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles."*

## Developing a Research Identity

I can tell you a little bit about how I came to be interested personally in the question of "Who am I?" And it actually comes from a very similar, perhaps just as common of a question, but a different question, which is, "Where are you from?" I am actually from Miami, Florida where a very common greeting in Miami is, "Where are you from?" It's very common and expected that you'll say a country of origin. My family members are the descendants of slaves, but I couldn't give them a country outside of the United States that could articulate the roots of my identity. As an undergraduate, I became interested in other disciplines in which scholars had already thought critically about how identity is shaped for African-Americans in the United States, and having to deal with the duality or the two-ness of double consciousness. In 2005, when I was invited to participate in the Leadership Alliance at Stanford University and to conduct research, I got introduced to the field of cultural psychology, and the idea and understanding of how history and institutions and everyday practices shape answers to "Who am I?" in meaningful ways that have implications for motivations and behaviors.

### Did You Know?

**97%** of SREIP participants in 2017 found that the summer program was "very useful" in increasing their self-confidence as researchers.

## La Marr Jurelle Bruce, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of American Studies  
Faculty Affiliate in African American Studies,  
Theatre and Performance Studies, and Women's Studies  
University of Maryland, College Park

*"There were wonderfully curated social events and experiences that invited and prompted scholars to participate in critical conversation and to build caring community."*



## Forging a Community of Scholars

I want to mention three other features that distinguished the Leadership Alliance from other programs and fellowships in which I participated. First, the Leadership Alliance emphasized sociality alongside intellectual rigor. There were these wonderfully curated social events and experiences that invited and prompted scholars to participate in critical conversation and to build caring community. Second, the Leadership Alliance granted me, a humanities scholar, the opportunity to be in conversation with natural and social scientists; those interdisciplinary conversations informed the project that I produced that summer: a study of representations of HIV/AIDS, masculinity, and sexuality in popular culture in South Africa and the United States. Most importantly, though, the Leadership Alliance was a model of encouragement, affirmation and enthusiastic care.

### Did You Know?

**92%** of Humanities and Social Sciences students in 2017 found that participating in the Leadership Alliance Mellon Initiative was "very useful" in becoming part of a learning community.



# Teresa Ramirez, Ph.D.

Genetics and Education Fellow

*"I got a PhD in Molecular Pharmacology and Physiology, and yes, I am a Latina scientist straight out of Compton that made it to an Ivy League School."*



## Inspiring Persistence through Adversity

I still recall the year 2010. A year that was challenging. It was my third year of grad school. When a professor told me that I was one of the nicest students in the program, but that I didn't have the skills that were needed to be in a PhD program. It was very hurtful. I needed to express my hurt to someone else I could trust. The first people that came to mind were, of course, my mentors at the Leadership Alliance. When I talked to them, I felt comfortable and they listened to me and they said, "Teresa, you're here for a purpose. We have your back, and we're going to make sure that you graduate," and that's what I needed to hear. I completed my doctoral program thanks to the Leadership Alliance family that gave me that support that I needed.

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THE LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE

### Did You Know?

**45%** of STEM SREIP alumni have matriculated into or completed PhD programs at a Leadership Alliance institution.





## Juan Carrillo, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Education,  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

*"Through my Leadership Alliance experience I was able to internalize the idea that I would be able to cross bridges of access and privilege."*

### Building Bridges of Access

While I was a fellow at Columbia a friend says, "Whatever you want in New York City, it's on me. Where do you want to eat? Five stars?" So, we go to this Indian restaurant somewhere by midtown Manhattan, and when I walked in, there was a cobra snake, dancing. And I said, "A cobra? What's a cobra doing in the middle of a restaurant?" It was the first time I ate Indian food. The way I took in that drink, the way I took in that meat, the way I took in that snake view, it was just powerful. The thematic core of something as simple as eating Indian food for the first time, as tipping for the first time is that, in that moment, I was able to internalize the idea that I would be able to cross bridges of access and privilege. So today as a professor at UNC-Chapel Hill, my research, my mentorship, my teaching, the way I think about the world, the way I work within the world is connected with that dialogue between the privileges that I'm afforded and my time growing up in Compton.

#### Did You Know?

**51%** of our SREIP participants receive Pell grants to support their undergraduate studies.

## Scharri Walker, Ph.D.

Chair, Biology Department, Tougaloo College

*"If you look at the fabric of what other people call my success, you will undoubtedly see the golden sparkles of the Leadership Alliance."*



### Mentoring throughout the Career Pathway

**T**hrough contacts and relationships, the Leadership Alliance helped me to obtain a graduate internship at a pharmaceutical company, Eli Lilly and Company, in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Lord knew I needed it and the Leadership Alliance became my lifeline to help me through that third year of my PhD program in the department of Pharmacology-Toxicology. I had just called my mom and told her, "Look. It's over. I'm done. I will go work at a fast food restaurant." And I meant it. But the Leadership Alliance had invested too much in me and they would not allow that. It was during that graduate internship that I met some of the greatest mentors. Those individuals began to speak life to me, to pour wisdom into me. They were the living, breathing examples of what I wanted to become. And they reminded me that, "Girl, if we can do it, you definitely can do it too." It is because of them and other great mentors like Dr. Valerie Wilson and Dr. Medeva Ghee, that I stand here today as Dr. Scharri Ezell Walker, pediatric cancer researcher, tenure track faculty, and most recently, Chair of the Biology Department at Tougaloo College.

#### Did You Know?

We mentor faculty too. The Alliance offers grant-writing coaching groups for faculty from Minority-Serving Institutions.



## Marcus Jones, Ph.D.

Senior Manager, R&D Planning, Strategy & Operations (R&D PSO)  
R&D Technologies, Platforms & Operations (R&D TPO)  
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals Inc.



*"The Leadership Alliance is not just an organization, it's not just a scholarship, but we're all one big family. And we're all here to support and serve one another."*

## Seizing New Opportunities

**T**he Leadership Alliance is not just an organization, it's not just a scholarship, but we're all one big family. And we're all here to support and serve one another. My moment in the Leadership Alliance started in 1999, when I was coming from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on the banks of the Mississippi River, and used to a slower pace. So, when I got off the plane in New York, I thought to myself, "Where am I?" I almost wanted to just go back home because these city folk would push you out of the way. I wondered what I had gotten myself into. That summer, the Leadership Alliance, through my research mentor, really prepared me by giving me the tools to be able to evolve and to take advantage of new opportunities. The Leadership Alliance has opened other doors that I would never had access to. It helped me to adapt to different situations. As a result I went from New York to Washington D.C. I took a chance and went to California to work at a startup. Not only did I come back to New York, but I had the courage to transition from bench research to program management.

### Did You Know?

Doctoral Scholars are seizing workforce opportunities in the academic (57%), public (13%), and private, nonprofit, and other sectors (30%).



## Leadership Alliance Programs

foster intellectual and professional growth along every stage of the academic and career paths. The training and mentoring begin for first-year students during the academic year with workshops that build key academic skills and introduce students to research pathways. Opportunities continue during the summer with the First-Year Research Experience (FYRE), which enables first-year students to conduct research in the Summer Research Early Identification Program (SR-EIP). Undergraduates of every stage and in every discipline participate the SR-EIP and present their research at the Leadership Alliance National Symposium (LANS).

For our Doctoral Scholars, junior faculty, postdocs, and graduate students, LANS is also an opportunity for mentoring and professional development in our Career Development Workshop and Grant Writing Coaching Groups, where they build skills and meet mentors that help them bring a truly diverse and representative research workforce into being. Leadership Alliance alumni mentor and inspire undergraduates beyond LANS during the academic year through our Speaker Series where they share their stories of becoming researchers and of transforming the research workforce.

## FYRE

Through FYRE, first-year students from Alliance Minority-Serving Institutions participate in the SR-EIP. In addition to the research and professional development activities of SR-EIP, these students participate in activities geared toward someone just completing their first year of college.



## Academic Year Workshops

Students build collaborative learning skills and learn about research pathways in *Collaborative Learning* and *What is Research?*





### SR-EIP

More than 300 undergraduates conduct research at 20+ host institutions from

across the Leadership Alliance Consortium. In addition to STEM research, SREIP provides research opportunities in the humanities and social sciences through the Leadership Alliance Mellon Initiative.

### Speaker Series

Leadership Alliance alumni travel to Alliance institutions to speak



to and mentor undergraduates just starting on their research journeys.

### Grant Writing Coaching @ LANS

Junior faculty come together to work with grant writing coaches and form



peer editing groups to continue working on their grant writing skills throughout the academic year.

### Research Presentation and Professional Development

Doctoral Scholars, graduate students, and more than 400 undergraduates come together at the Leadership Alliance National Symposium to network and participate in career development activities. The undergraduates attending LANS cap off their summer research experiences by presenting their research,



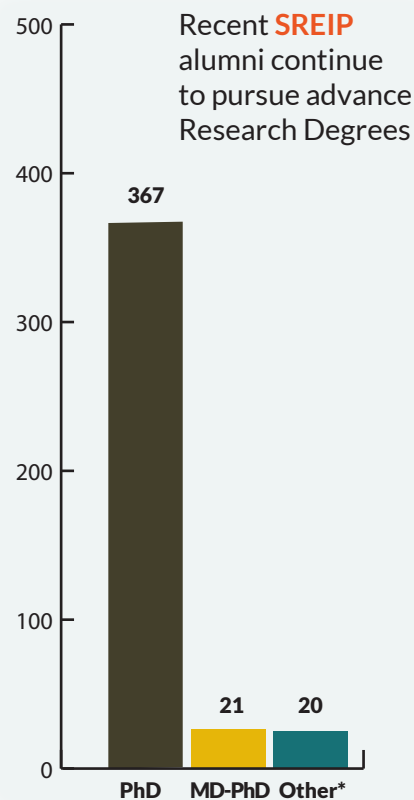
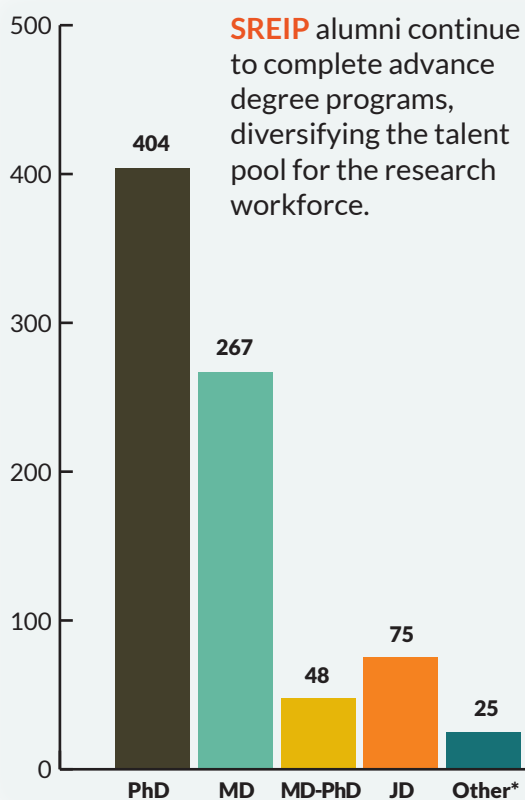
building presentation and career skills, and networking with Leadership Alliance alumni and mentors.



### Career Development Workshop @ LANS

Graduate students and postdocs convene at LANS to network, build job market skills, and meet "Professional Career Mentors."

# Impacting the Workforce



\*Other includes DDS, DVM, DDIV degrees

## Program Outcomes: **Doctoral Scholars**

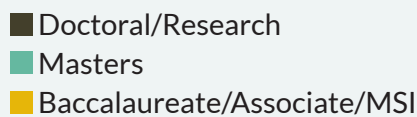
Our Doctoral Scholars are leaders across all fields and employment sectors.



## Program Outcomes: **Doctoral Scholars in Higher Ed**

Our Doctoral Scholars are Faculty and Administrators at Diverse Institutions of Higher Educations

**Employment by Carnegie Classification Institution Type**



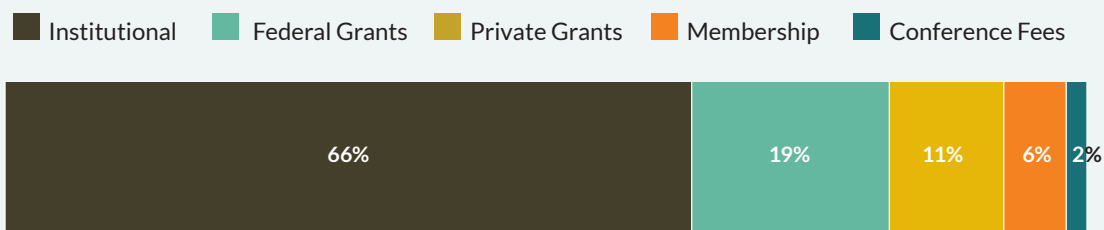


# Financial Updates

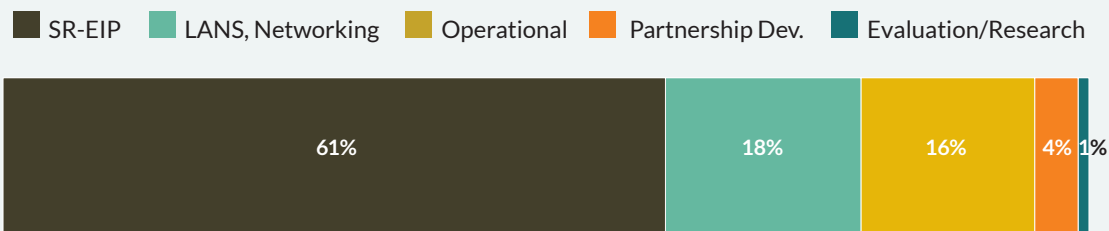
## Fiscal Year 2017

Funding for Alliance programs is provided through institutional resources and membership fees, grant awards from federal agencies and private foundations, private gifts and conference fees. Expenditures focus predominantly on programming for undergraduates and continued professional development and networking for graduate student and Doctoral Scholar alumni, partnership development, evaluation and operations

### FY 17 Alliance Revenue (\$3,843,417)



### FY 17 Alliance Expenditures (\$2,820,676)



## MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

Brooklyn College	Morehouse College	University of Miami
Brown University	Morgan State University	University of Pennsylvania
Chaminade University of Honolulu	New York University	University of Puerto Rico
Claflin University	North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University	University of South Florida
Columbia University	Princeton University	University of Virginia
Cornell University	Spelman College	Washington University in St. Louis
Dartmouth College	Stanford University	Xavier University of Louisiana
Dillard University	Tougaloo College	Vanderbilt University
Harvard University	Tufts University	Yale University
Heritage University	University of Chicago	<b>ASSOCIATE MEMBER</b>
Howard University	University of Colorado Boulder	Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research
Hunter College	University of Maryland, Baltimore County	
Johns Hopkins University		
Montana State University –Bozeman		

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Box 1963, Providence, RI 02912 | 401-863-1474 | [www.theleadershipalliance.org](http://www.theleadershipalliance.org)