An important measure of our postdoctoral program’s success is the ability of postdoctoral fellows to secure positions after they complete their training. Recently our fellows accepted positions at Allen Institute for Brain Science; Amazon; Atavistik Bio; Biogen; Bloomberg; Chinese Academy of Sciences; Complutense University of Madrid; Edhaa Innovations, Mumbai, India; Estée Lauder; Fudan University; Genentech; Geninus, South Korea; Google; ItayAndBiond, Israel; Jackson Laboratory; Karolinska Institute; Known Medicine; Luxo Oncology at Lilly; Merck; Ohalo Genetics; OneThree (cancer+AI); Sygnature Discovery; Tri-Intuitional Therapeutics Discovery Institute; University of North Dakota; Uppsala University; USDA; and Variant Bio.

Postdoctoral Liaison Committee

The Postdoctoral Liaison Committee (PDLC), which is an elected group of postdoctoral fellows who communicate information and ideas between the administration and the postdoctoral community, continues to enhance CSHL’s postdoctoral experience. The PDLC is essentially the voice of the community, and holds regular meetings, and an annual Town Hall with Dr. Bruce Stillman, CSHL President. The current PDLC members are Samantha Cyrill, Nikita Francis, and Jason Lynn.

CSHL endeavors to prepare postdocs to be competitive for the jobs available. It is increasingly becoming CSHL’s role to introduce the diversity of career opportunities available and to provide the tools postdocs need to prepare for these positions. As a result, a number of events were organized with the assistance of the PDLC and other career development groups. In particular, these events wouldn’t be possible without the assistance from Programs Coordinator, Stephanie Franco. This year PDLC organized a DEI Learning Night with a screening and discussion of the film, “Hidden Figures”. They held an anti-racism in STEM Movie Night, and a session on “Life beyond CSHL: Where Are The Postdocs Now?”, featuring former postdoc, Dr. Sonali Bhattacharjee.

The Laboratory also pays special attention to the social needs of the postdoctoral community. The vast majority of CSHL postdocs are not from Long Island or indeed from the USA, and so do not have a built-in social network. To this end, PDLC organizes social activities for the community throughout the year, including an annual postdoc retreat & BBQ, a sugar cookie social to celebrate National Postdoc Appreciation Week, a holiday crawl, ice-cream breaks, Pints & Postdocs, and a spring social.

Bioscience Enterprise Club

The Bioscience Enterprise Club (BEC) disseminates information about non-academic careers to the CSHL postdoc community. Topic areas include biotechnology, intellectual property, law, regulatory affairs and venture capitalism. In 2022 they organized a visit to Biolabs@NYULangone Site Tour and a Coffee & Donuts session with an Astrobiologist.

Academic Career Training

Academic career training includes courses, lectures, and workshops on scientific enrichment, career exploration, and transferable skills, like leadership, mentorship, and communication. This year the series included: the Chalk Talk; Interviewing for Academic Positions; Navigating the International Job Search; and Preparing Research, Diversity and Mentoring, & Teaching Statements. The CSHL faculty did one-on-one reviews of personal statements and CVs, and conducted mock-interviews for those postdocs who were on the job market in 2022.

WiSE and DIAS

There are two affinity groups on campus, largely run by postdocs and students, dedicated to promoting diversity, inclusion and equity in science, WiSE (Women in Science & Engineering) and DIAS (Diversity Initiative for the Advancement of STEM). In addition to hosting prominent women, and underrepresented minority scientists during the weekly CSHL seminar series, the groups held special events throughout the year.

DIAS hosted a DIAS Trainee Chats series where participants could discuss their experiences and challenges; a welcome event for first year graduate students; a session for undergraduates on how to apply to postbaccalaureate and undergraduate research programs; and DEI Learning Night where they screened and discussed the film, “Rez Metal.”

WiSE hosted their annual in-house education retreat (IHER), to foster discussion and self-education about gender-disparity issues in STEM; a tech-to-grad panel discussion where they provided advice to CSHL research technicians on applying to grad programs; their annual real stories of Science Open Mic night; a screening and a DEI Learning Night with a screening and discussion of the film "Jackson"; a session on The Art of Effective Negotiation, presented by COACh; and a panel discussion on Research, Teaching, and Mentorship in Science.

WiSE also conducts a number of outreach activities for local girls who are interested in science. This year they held a coding camp; a brain awareness day with the Girl Scouts; and a fun with DNA session in collaboration BEC & the CSHL Office of Tech Transfer.

The WiSE, DIAS and PDLC affinity groups also held a leadership retreat. The retreat provided an opportunity for affinity groups to hear from CSHL administrators, share feedback and suggestions, talk to each other about activities that could be implemented collaboratively, and to start developing their proposals for institutional funds to run their programming.

CSHL Cancer Center and CSHL Research Operations.

In addition to the career development opportunities organized by the School, there is additional labwide programming for students and postdocs including: the Core Knowledge Series; Writing Resource Center Coffee Chats; the Career Directions series; Biostatistics, Bioinformatics, and Coding and Computational Office Hours; and one-on-one assistance at the Writing Resource Center. CSHL's annual four-week Science Writing Course took take place in November. This course is designed to help researchers at all career stages improve their written communication skills. The Writing Resource Center also held two coffee chats this year: one on communicating with non-expert audiences’ and another on running effective meetings.

CSHL’s frameSHIFT speaker series examines the social and cultural sides of working at an academic research institute like CSHL with the goal of fostering inclusion, empathy, and allyship. In 2022, there were talks from Shane Weeks, a member of the Shinnecock Nation of Southampton; Dr. Mahadeo Sukhai and Ainsley Latour who led a conversation about accessibility in the workplace; and Arielle Rebekah, who spoke about transgender people as members of the workforce.

In 2022, the Lab launched a professional Communication Series. Topics in the series included: CVs & Resumes; Social Media for Scientists; Personal/Lab Websites; and Leveraging LinkedIn for Career Exploration and Scientific Career Transitions.

The Science Alliance

Trainees at CSHL are provided with free membership in a special initiative of the New York Academy of Science (NYAS), the Science Alliance. The Science Alliance for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows is a consortium of universities, teaching hospitals, and independent research facilities in the New York City metro area. The Alliance’s aim is to provide career and professional development monitoring for postdoctoral fellows and graduate students in science and engineering. The NYAS offered a number of in-person and virtual events this year, including Scientists Teaching Science; Science Alliance Leadership Training; Trust in Science: How should Scientists build Credibility and Engage with Society?; How to Effectively Communicate Your Science to Any Audience; Eureka Moments that Changed Science; and a Career Paths Series in which there were five virtual webinars focusing on diverse career paths that graduate and postdoctoral fellows can transition into.

OITE

The NIH Office of Intramural Training & Education (OITE) has opened up their programming to trainees at institutions outside the NIH. Our students and postdocs took advantage of these virtual offerings which include a careers blog, various career workshops, and a series on “Becoming a Resilient Scientist”.