**Statement on Diversity and Inclusion**

It is a simple fact that women and minoritized scientists do not get a fair shot at the same opportunities of their well-to-do white male peers. Gender bias leads to gender gaps in STEM fields.1 As an obvious example of this, while more women earn undergraduate degrees than men, 84% of science and engineering jobs in the US are occupied by white or Asian males (https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2017/nsf17310/data.cfm). Additionally, women and minorities do not get equal pay for equal work. The STEM salary gap between men and women is almost $16,000 per year and around $13,000 per year between black and white men (US Census Bureau, <https://www.wired.com/brandlab/2015/05/5-numbers-explain-stem-diversity-matters-us/)>. Tragically, it has been demonstrated that STEM fields and academia can be hostile work environments for women.2,3 These truths are devastating. I know I cannot fix these issues on a large scale (yet), but there are things I can do to prevent bias and discrimination and promote diversity. It has been shown that video interventions can be effective at reducing bias4, and this can be implemented for all new hires. Both men and women managers are more likely to hire men and pay them more due to unconscious bias; the first step to fix this is to understand that there is a bias and to actively plan against it. Another step that can help is to remove gender and race identifiers on applications. In group meetings and discussions, I ensure there is equity and forums to speak without being discouraged or interrupted. I am always conscious that I “don’t be that dude” (https://tenureshewrote.wordpress.com/2013/09/26/dont-be-that-dude-handy-tips-for-the-male-academic/) and importantly, make sure others around me aren’t that dude either. Easy things to accomplish like gender and race balance in speaker lineups can help show young scientists that anyone can reach high levels in science. As a testament to this, anytime I have had the ability to I have asked equal or more women to speak in the session I planned (Ecological Society of America meeting, Three Rivers Evolution Event conference).

I strongly encourage outreach to underrepresented groups in order to increase the number of minoritized applicants to STEM fields. I have followed through on this by going to primarily minority middle school classrooms to attract kids to science. In the future, I plan to continue this and to work with my former colleagues to bring events like the NAACP ACT-SO competitions to my institution. Also, possibly more importantly, is retaining people once they are in the pipeline. As I mentioned in my teaching statement, innovation stems from diversity. There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that diverse teams outperform high ability teams.5 It can only benefit a work environment to have people with different perspectives and backgrounds. This is not just a platitude; it is a priority anywhere I work.

**References:**

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