The Diversity Preview Weekend

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DPW Co-leader
Problem:
Few underrepresented students in Dept. of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Cause: Very few applying
Solution:
A pre-recruitment event

- Bring underrepresented students to preview graduate school
- Planning started in Spring 2016
- First Diversity Preview Weekend held in Spring 2017
DPW aims to increase matriculation to graduate schools

- Close gaps in access
- Empower participants to apply
  - Cornell and other institutions

- Grad Student led initiative
  - Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
  - Entomology
  - School of Integrative Plant Sciences
Our backgrounds are diverse

Recruited students from a variety of underrepresented backgrounds

- Over half of participants are first-gen
- Over 83% are racial minorities

* Participants may identify with more than one race/ethnicity
Four days of workshops, networking, and learning

Grad-School 101 Workshop

How to Interview Workshop and
Four days of workshops, networking, and learning

Tours of Campus and Department Facilities

Personal Statement, Fellowship and CV Workshops
Four days of workshops, networking, and learning

Research Fair and Student Life Talks

Discussion of ethnic and cultural identities in STEM
“I believe I have the skills to succeed in graduate school.”
"I believe I have the skills to succeed in graduate school."
Quotes from attendees

“Just being able to meet diverse students from all backgrounds that were interested in ecology was awesome. “

“I’ll be applying to Cornell for grad school which I hadn’t considered before.”

“I received an NSF GRFP this year and I 100% would not have without the connections I made...!”
Where we are now (DPW 2017-2018)

- 62 attendees from 2017 & 2018
  - 102 total attendees since 2017
  - DPW 2020 delayed due to COVID-19
- 32 have matriculated to graduate degree programs
  - PhD: 20
  - Masters: 9
- 8 to Cornell University
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Drea as a 2018 DPW Participant
DPW at the institutional level

- Primarily graduate student labor for administration, programming, etc.
  - Parallel grad-student led diversity recruitment weekends have emerged
  - Adjacent DPW-like programs may compete for similar funding resources

- Additional institutional-level support is necessary to sustain the program
  - Enables sustainable sources of funding and leadership
  - Made available to broader programs to participate

- DPW co-leaders drafted a proposed for institutionalization
  - Currently waiting for Dean Boor to meet with Deans of the colleges
How can Grad Students advocate for programs like this?

- Request from DGS or GFA for stats on the application, admission, retention, and graduation of students from groups historically underrepresented in your fields

- Draft a joint letter of graduate students/postdocs to department chair and faculty
  - Highlight:
    - The issue and concerns
    - Why it matters
    - Proposed solutions (ie a pre-recruitment weekend)
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Funding sources

The Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology

School of Integrative Plant Science

Department of Entomology

Office of Inclusion and Student Engagement

Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Diversity Programs in Engineering