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NSF Grant to Fund August Conference for Minority Faculty

Winthrop University

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NSF Grant to Fund August Conference for Minority Faculty

Quick Facts

- The conference will be held Aug 12-14 in Chantilly, Va.
- Attending the conference will be 50 junior and senior faculty members from public and private institutions who have been awarded National Science Foundation grants.



Takita Sumter

ROCK HILL, S.C. - A **\$100,750 National Science Foundation grant** will allow **Takita Sumter**, associate professor of chemistry at Winthrop University, and the **American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB)** to hold a workshop on the barriers and challenges faced by minority biochemists and molecular biologists when establishing and sustaining externally funded research programs.

The conference, entitled “**A Comprehensive Assessment of the Barriers, Needs, and Challenges Facing Underrepresented Minority Faculty in Biochemistry and Molecular and Cellular Biology**,” will be held Aug 12-14 in Chantilly, Va. The effort is one of the major goals of the ASBMB Minority Affairs Committee on which Sumter has served for the past few years. Sumter is the conference chair and other conference organizers are: Sonia Flores, University Of Colorado-Denver; Craig Cameron, Pennsylvania State University; Squire Booker, Pennsylvania State University; and Regina Stevens-Truss, Kalamazoo College.

Attending the conference will be 50 junior and senior faculty members from public and private institutions who have been awarded National Science Foundation grants. This latest grant will pay for their travel, lodging and conference costs for the 2 ½-day event.

“This is a way for us to network and to compare each other’s experiences,” said Sumter, a native of Columbia, S.C. Consultants working with the event will compile conference findings. The Minority Affairs Committee hopes to ultimately draft national recommendations to assist federal agencies and academic institutions in identifying the needs of those who have historically been underrepresented in life science disciplines.

Sumter won an NSF grant in 2006 to investigate at Winthrop how proteins can be chemically modified in efforts to control cell growth and signaling and recently received an Academic Research Enhancement Award from the National Institutes of Health. She is passionate about science education both locally and nationally. At Winthrop, she devotes a significant amount of her time to teaching students both in the classroom and the research laboratory.

The abstract and other information regarding this award will soon be publicly available via the [National Science Foundation Award Abstracts database](#) and at <http://www.Research.gov>. For more information, contact Sumter at 803/323-4991 or at sumtert@winthrop.edu.

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