



EMBRACE

DIVERSITY AT IUPUI | FALL 2015

RESEARCH IN ACTION

Your Life, Your Story, a research-based summer camp at IUPUI, helps young Latinos build resilience. **Read on page 6**



IUPUI



Welcome to the second issue of *Embrace*! While we hoped the IUPUI community would enjoy our new publication, we were not prepared for the overwhelmingly favorable response we've heard since publishing the inaugural issue in January 2015. The magazine immediately made a splash when Chancellor Charles Bantz introduced it at IUPUI's annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dinner, telling a packed audience, "I'm going to embrace this new publication, which tells the story of our diversity efforts on and off campus by putting faces on the work being done."

Frankly, we were concerned about how we would follow such a success. But we think you'll find the stories in this issue engaging and inspiring—further demonstration of the important work being carried out by our students, faculty, staff, and administrators to build and maintain an inclusive campus climate. As always, we want your story ideas and invite you to share with the IUPUI community the creative ways diversity and equity are being enhanced at IUPUI.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Karen Dace". The script is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Karen Dace

Vice Chancellor for Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion



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EMBRACE

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PREPARING THE NEXT **GENERATION** OF

YOUNG INNOVATORS



The Young Innovator's Quest program readies high school students for careers in STEM fields.

Gabriela Figueroa knew from a young age that she wanted to work in the field of medicine, but with a broad range of career paths available within the field, she wasn't sure exactly what she wanted to do. The summer after she graduated from Crispus Attucks Medical Magnet High School in Indianapolis, she had the opportunity to explore her options through the Young Innovator's Quest (YiQ) program, a two-and-a-half-week summer camp that introduces high school students to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Figueroa, now a senior majoring in biology at IUPUI, says that her YiQ experience helped her understand what it means to be a scientist. It also allowed her to see beyond college and envision future career paths.

“I could go into college foreseeing where I wanted to go,” she says.

YiQ is the signature program of Health and Science Innovations (HSI), an Indianapolis-based nonprofit that encourages students, educators, and professionals in health, science, and engineering to become innovators in their fields. The program, which is offered at no cost to participants, launched in 2010 as a pilot project at Butler University. In 2012 IUPUI began hosting the program.

Luis Palacio, a doctoral student in physics at IUPUI, serves as director of programs and research at HSI. He says that YiQ participants benefit from the program in several ways. STEM education helps students sharpen their problem-solving skills—something that they can apply to other areas of their lives. It also helps them develop new skills that they might not have the opportunity to learn elsewhere.

One of the biggest benefits is that the participants are able to explore different STEM fields and learn from professionals about the educational and career opportunities available to them. This exposure helps students figure out early on if they want to pursue STEM in college and beyond.

“Either they discover a passion for STEM, or they decide STEM isn’t for them,” Palacio says.

YiQ activities include seminars with guest speakers who work in STEM fields, visits to companies such as Lilly, Cummins, and Dow Agrosiences, and workshops that feature hands-on activities where students must solve a problem or create something, such as a mobile app. In addition, each student must pitch an idea for a research project to the group, which ranks all the ideas. Students then form teams and work on the top-ranked projects.

At the conclusion of the camp, the students present their research findings. Those who wish to keep working on their projects during the school year can submit a proposal for a budget to continue their research.

Judith Medina, an IUPUI sophomore majoring in biology, is a mentor to YiQ participants. She says that one of the best things about YiQ is that students pick their own research projects in fields that interest them, unlike other programs that require participants to focus on a pre-selected area of study.

“It’s a really good way for kids to explore their options,” she says. “It gives them insight into what they want to do in the future.”

Priyanka Shah, who earned a master’s degree in biomedical engineering from IUPUI, was a project manager for a team of students in the 2014 YiQ cohort who investigated the aging process in the human brain. She says she enjoyed the fresh perspective she got from working with the students, who were enthusiastic and proactive.

“I loved the fact that I was able to interact with such young brains,” she says.

According to Palacio, plans for the future include expanding recruitment efforts and providing a space for students to continue working on their research projects after the summer camp ends. HSI’s long-term goal is to grow the program by replicating the YiQ model in other cities, he says.

Figueroa, who will graduate from IUPUI in December, has remained involved with YiQ throughout college, serving as a mentor for the past three cohorts. Her advice to participants is to take full advantage of all the opportunities the program provides.

“Be open to the other students you’ll meet, the mentors who are here to help you, and the speakers,” she says.

Shah, who now works as a project engineer for a Pennsylvania-based nonprofit, agrees.

“YiQ is more than just a summer program,” she says. “Make the most of it.”



PUTTING RESEARCH TO WORK FOR THE COMMUNITY

IUPUI faculty members Silvia Bigatti and Katrina Conrad are translating their research into action with Your Life, Your Story, a summer camp designed to build resilience among Latino youth.

Indianapolis is home to a large and growing Latino community that includes a number of recent immigrants. For many in the community, acculturative stress—the stress that comes from straddling two cultures—is a significant issue, according to Silvia Bigatti, associate professor of social and behavioral sciences in the IU Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health at IUPUI.

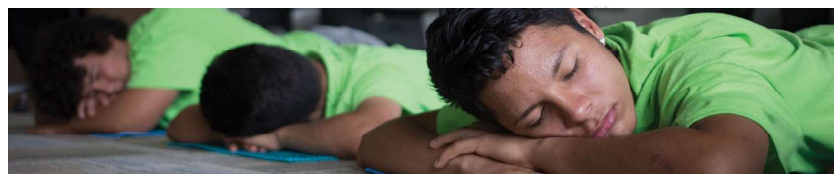
Bigatti's research has shown that this is especially true among young Latinos. She and Katrina Conrad, the Fairbanks School's community research and outreach coordinator, were part of an IUPUI research team that investigated acculturative stress and depressive outcomes in Latino adolescents. Eighty-six Latinos ages 12–19 participated in the study, which was conducted from fall 2012 through summer 2013.

The findings showed that 60 percent of those surveyed had some form of depressive symptoms. In addition, participants who were suffering from moderate levels of acculturative stress were seven times more likely to have depression. Those findings inspired Bigatti and Conrad to

develop an intervention that would decrease depressive symptoms among this population by helping them build their resilience and increase their self-mastery.

“Resilience protects from stress and protects from depression,” Bigatti says. “You can develop it by overcoming adversity, but you also can develop resilience from training. We are trying to train the teens to reconceptualize situations as something that you can overcome and not something that defeats you.”

Bigatti and Conrad decided to partner with the Latino Health Organization and its director, Virna Diaz, to establish a weeklong summer camp as a vehicle for resilience building and self-mastery training. They also worked with the Solutions Center, part of the IUPUI Office of Community Engagement, to identify university partners. IUPUI faculty members Youngbok Hong, associate professor in the IU Herron School of Art and Design, and Monica Medina, clinical associate professor in the IU School of Education, are among the faculty who have contributed their expertise to the project.





The inaugural camp was held in June 2014 with 30 high school students. Called “Your Life, Your Story,” the camp has several components, including resilience-building

exercises, physical activities, and arts activities. IUPUI students serve as mentors to the participants.

The mentorship has proven to be an essential part of the camp—so much so that for the camp’s second year in 2015, Bigatti and Conrad decided to increase the amount of time that mentors and participants spend together.

“The mentors and teens really bonded with each other,” Conrad says.

Although the project is still in its infancy, the results so far are promising. Bigatti and Conrad conducted pre- and post-camp surveys of the participants in the 2014 cohort as well as a follow-up survey six months later. The data showed improvements in resilience and decreases in depression both immediately following the camp and at the six-month mark, which suggests that the program has long-term effects, Bigatti says.

The team also has received lots of positive feedback from those involved with the camp. IUPUI student Manuela Gonzalez, who was a mentor, says that she saw participants grow and change over the course of the week.

“I could tell they were carrying themselves differently, treating others differently, even talking about themselves in a more positive way,” she says. “It is such a fun and life-changing program for both the teens and us as mentors.”

Now that they’ve demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach, Bigatti and Conrad are pursuing new funding opportunities that will allow them to sustain and grow the project. They envision not only increasing the number of participants, but also exploring new ways to expand—for example, by offering a session focusing on the unique needs of females. Eventually they would like to explore using this model to build resilience among other populations, such as adolescents in the foster care system or those in military families.

“Because this is a community-based participatory research project, we want to demonstrate to the community that we don’t just come do our work and leave when the money runs out,” Bigatti says.

“IUPUI is moving very much in that direction—staying committed to the community.”

STAFF PROFILE



KIM NGUYEN

Kim Nguyen has devoted her career to creating a pipeline from high school to college for underrepresented minority students who want to study science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). During her 30+ years as a university administrator, including 14 years at the Purdue University School of Science at IUPUI, Nguyen has seen firsthand the challenges of increasing the participation of underrepresented minority students in STEM at the college level.

In 2006, she became the founding director of operations for IUPUI’s Urban Center for the Advancement of STEM Education (UCASE), a partnership between the School of Science and the IU School of Education. UCASE focuses on preparing highly qualified K–12 STEM teachers from diverse backgrounds to teach in urban schools.

“We have graduated and put into classrooms around the state more than 200 highly qualified math and science teachers,” she says.

Nguyen also serves as co-director of the Louis Stokes Midwest Center of Excellence, a partnership among IUPUI, Chicago State University, and Argonne National Laboratory that helps Midwestern universities share best practices for recruiting and retaining underrepresented minority students in STEM fields. The center, which was launched in 2012 with a \$2.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation, is the first of its kind in the country.

For Nguyen, knowing she’s making a difference in students’ lives is what keeps her motivated, despite the challenges.

“Student success is the reason why I’m staying and working on this initiative,” she says.

A LEGACY *of* PROGRESS

During his 12 years as IUPUI chancellor, Charles Bantz was committed to improving the campus climate for diversity.



In 2006, just a few years into his tenure as IUPUI chancellor, Charles Bantz faced a difficult situation. In November of that year, leaders of IUPUI's Black Student Union (BSU) presented the administration with a list of concerns about the state of diversity on campus, calling for swift action to address the issues.

Bantz and the administration worked with the BSU to understand their concerns and identify ways to improve the campus climate for diversity. This led to a number of changes, including the establishment of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the creation of the campus Multicultural Center to engage all cultural communities.

According to Bantz, the situation was challenging but productive. The BSU's campaign brought attention to the need for change at IUPUI and spurred the administration to action, ultimately leading to a positive outcome. The dialogue also generated rapport that Bantz sustained throughout his tenure.

"We made a lot of progress during that period," he says.

Bantz was able to navigate the situation because almost immediately upon assuming the role of chancellor in 2003, he made it a high priority to strengthen the diversity of the campus community. Under his leadership, IUPUI has made great strides in many measures of diversity, including increased enrollment and graduation of underrepresented minorities and diversification of the faculty.

Bantz, who stepped down as chancellor in August 2015, says it is imperative for all universities to actively advance diversity—and particularly so for IUPUI, where more than 90 percent of the student population is from Indiana, which is less diverse than many other U.S. states.

Bantz's commitment to diversity is evident to the campus community, says Karen Dace, vice chancellor for diversity, equity and inclusion at IUPUI.

"He knows what he's talking about, and he believes it," Dace says. "When he addresses an audience, you can tell he's speaking from the heart."

Dace points to Bantz's active participation in the Chancellor's Diversity Cabinet as an indicator of his level of commitment to embracing diversity.

"A lot of campuses have a diversity board or committee, and they meet without the president or chancellor," she says. "Chancellor Bantz actually convenes the committee, and he participates in it."

After stepping down as chancellor in August, Bantz began a yearlong leave from IUPUI. He'll return in 2016 as a faculty member in the School of Liberal Arts, teaching and researching organizational communication.

Veteran IU leader Nasser Paydar assumed the role of chancellor upon Bantz's departure. As executive vice chancellor, Paydar led the development of a new strategic plan that commits IUPUI to promoting an inclusive campus climate.

"I'd love to see us recognized as a leader in demonstrating that we can successfully bring together diverse students, faculty, and staff."

—Charles Bantz



Paydar brings the experience, expertise, and commitment to continue progress at IUPUI. As Bantz returns to his roots as a teacher and researcher, he is eager to see his successor lead the way as the campus builds on progress made over the past 12 years.

"I think the key thing is to be consistent and persistent in working at improving our success in this area," Bantz says. "You really have to keep focused on it, and you have to be consistent about it being a priority. You can't just work on it once a year."

Bantz believes that IUPUI will eventually become a model for other universities working to strengthen diversity on their campuses.

"I'd love to see us recognized as a leader in demonstrating that we can successfully bring together diverse students, faculty, and staff and increase the success of everyone," he says.

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

IUPUI has made strides in expanding support of the LGBTQ community on campus.



IUPUI is a very different place today than it was 10 years ago when Anthony Masseria, chair of the LGBT Faculty and Staff Council, joined the staff.

“LGBTQ people were all but invisible,” recalls Masseria, who is a student assessment specialist at the IU School of Medicine.

The increased visibility of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community on the IUPUI campus has proven positive for LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff. The 2014 IUPUI Campus Climate Survey estimated that 14 percent of IUPUI undergraduate students and eight percent of faculty and staff identify as LGBTQ.

Anne Mitchell, an instructor in the Department of Sociology and the advisor to IUPUI’s LGBTQ Student Alliance, says that college is the first time that many LGBTQ students are able to be out, making visibility of others in the community even more important. Mitchell says that some LGBTQ students have told her that the

most helpful thing for them is knowing that there are out queer people on campus.

In October, as IUPUI celebrates LGBT Heritage Month, the Student Alliance will make the community even more visible by displaying pictures of LGBTQ-identified students, faculty, and staff in the Campus Center.

“It is powerful to see the community on display,” Mitchell says. “Being able to walk through the Campus Center and see IUPUI’s LGBTQ individuals will mark a significant moment in the lives of many students, faculty, and staff on this campus.”

Lo Ray, a sophomore and member of the LGBTQ Student Alliance executive board, is pleased with IUPUI’s efforts to engage the LGBTQ community.

“I think IUPUI does a good job of giving us a space to use our ideas and have events that interest us,” Ray says.

One of those events is the annual Harvey Milk Dinner, which celebrates the legacy of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay person to hold public office. In 2014 the campus hosted its fifth annual dinner, which featured a performance by Lea DeLaria, the first openly gay comedian to appear on late-night television and star

of the Netflix series *Orange Is the New Black*. With more than 300 students, faculty, staff, and community members in attendance, DeLaria spoke about the importance of visibility in the community.

“The last Harvey Milk Dinner was the first event on this campus that was for queer people rather than about queer people,” Mitchell says. “I think this is the shift the LGBTQ community is going through at IUPUI: What are we doing for us rather than about us?”

One thing the community is doing, in collaboration with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, is working to make the campus more accessible to LGBTQ students. IUPUI recently created a new director-level position that will focus exclusively on supporting LGBTQ students. The LGBTQ student services director will be charged with creating a safe space and providing resources for students as well as developing programs about and for the LGBTQ community to improve student success.

“The path from invisibility to creating a director position to support LGBTQ students is an example of an increase in IUPUI’s commitment to diversity,” Mitchell says. “This also includes the establishment of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Multicultural Center, which currently houses and supports the Student Alliance.”

Masseria agrees that IUPUI administrators have shown a commitment to engaging the LGBTQ community.

“Campus leadership engages us in conversations surrounding diversity and inclusion because our leaders recognize that the LGBTQ community also overlaps into other underrepresented groups, such as people of color, veterans, and people with disabilities,” he says. “Most importantly, they are talking to us in order to understand what our experiences are on campus and how to improve the climate.”



And Masseria and other members of the LGBTQ community are able to engage in those conversations because of their willingness to be visible in an environment that is welcoming and affirming.

FACULTY PROFILE



TAMIKA ZAPOLSKI

Tamika Zapolski is dedicated to translating her research on substance abuse among youth into the tools needed to sustain healthy communities.

“A lot of kids are stressed out, and some turn to alcohol and drugs to deal with stress,” says Zapolski, an assistant professor of psychology in the Purdue University School of Science at IUPUI. “I believe we can find better options for them to help cope with the stressors they experience.”

After months of working with community partners in Indianapolis and years of research, Zapolski has developed an intervention program that will launch in an Indianapolis high school this fall. By teaching distress tolerance, emotion regulation, mindfulness, and interpersonal effectiveness, the nine-week program aims to decrease students’ likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors, not only with respect to substance use, but also to other life challenges they face.

“From talking to youth, I’ve found that (intervention) programs are impactful in their lives, whether related to drug use or not,” Zapolski says. “I want to provide tools for teachers and community centers to help empower students they work with.”

Zapolski, who joined the IUPUI faculty in 2013, teaches both undergraduate and graduate psychology courses. Her favorite part of the job is building a relationship between IUPUI and the community.

“The best times of my day are when I’m in the community working alongside different organizations and the youth,” she says.



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FULLFILLING *the* **PROMISE**