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Researcher Academy Welcomes New Institutional Champions



In February 2024, the *All of Us* Researcher Academy welcomed its third group of Institutional Champions: Florida Atlantic University; Florida International University; Northern Arizona University; San José State University; University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus. This new group of partners expands the academy’s potential impact more broadly across the nation.

Awards will help support faculty and staff use of the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench, which affords researchers unique access to the *All of Us* dataset. Each champion institution will support researchers for a year and can welcome visiting students and faculty from other institutions to participate in research activities.

Like previous awardees, these schools all have a documented commitment to educating underrepresented students and a track record of training researchers underrepresented in the biomedical workforce (see Notice of [NIH’s Interest in Diversity](#)). For example, each has a strong record of support for Hispanic or Latino(a) students. As Institutional Champions, they will have access to training, technical assistance, and peer-to-peer learning, as well as intern, mentor, and faculty scholars programs.

We are honored to welcome these new champions and to support another year of Researcher Academy activities. The academy and other researcher engagement initiatives supported by the *All of Us* Research Program are central to building a diverse community of researchers. To date, there are 10,000+ *All of Us* researchers from all career stages, institution types, backgrounds, and experiences. ■

—[Sula Hood](#) and [Brian Southwell](#), *All of Us* Researcher Academy co-leaders

Academy Announcements.....

- **Promoting Workforce Diversity in Health-Related Research.** *All of Us*, along with more than twenty National Institutes of Health Institutes and Centers, invites grant applications to support research experiences for individuals from diverse backgrounds, from high school to the faculty level. In all cases, the proposed research experience must be an integral part of an approved, ongoing parent award, and it must have the potential to contribute significantly to the career development of the candidate. [Read the full announcement for additional information](#), including application deadlines.
- **Funding Opportunities—*All of Us* Data and Tools.** The National Institutes of Health makes funding available to researchers to advance precision medicine and health equity on the [Funding Opportunities page](#). Advanced search and filter functions have been added, allowing you to tailor results using keywords and quickly match available funding opportunities with your needs. In addition, four new high-risk, high-reward research opportunities are newly available. These opportunities can harness the power of the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench.
- **Latest Episode of “Conversations with *All of Us*” Now Available.** In the latest “Conversations with *All of Us*” podcast episode from *All of Us* New England, Dr. Karriem Watson, Chief Engagement Officer for the *All of Us* Research Program, and Destiny Harden, Clinical Research Coordinator and predoctoral fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital, discuss the importance of meaningful community engagement, where communities are empowered to share their voice. Listen to the episode at JoinAllofUs.org/Conversations.
- **Look for the *All of Us* team at San José State this week!** They will be on campus April 16–18 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm to enroll participants and share information about the *All of Us* Research Program.

Researcher Workbench Updates

The *All of Us* team has made the following enhancements based on feedback:

- Researchers can use the new “variant search” feature in the Cohort Builder to incorporate participant genomic data when building a cohort. Read the article “[Variant Search within the Cohort Builder](#)” to learn more.
- The article “[What Exactly Am I Paying For?](#)” has been updated to include a rough formula to estimate your costs on the Researcher Workbench.
- The [User Support Hub](#) has new articles that dig into issues like customizing Jupyter environments and accessing files in workspace buckets or persistent disks.



HBCU Road Tour Recap: Fisk University and Meharry Medical College

The latest *All of Us* Researcher Academy HBCU Road Tour event was held at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, on February 28. Nearly 70 people attended the hybrid live/virtual event, “Using the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench to Drive Action for Health Equity.” The event highlighted how *All of Us* research can be used to understand and promote health research and support community action for health equity. Fisk University and Meharry Medical College’s Researcher Academy Institutional Champion teams provided updates on their faculty and student research projects.

Dr. Karriem Watson, Chief Engagement Officer of the *All of Us* Research Program, also addressed the attendees. “We are here as a resource to you,” he reminded everyone. “If we are not providing the appropriate amount of support or resources, please let us know how we can be better, do better. Your success as researchers advancing this work and using the Researcher Workbench is what this is all about. Without you doing the work to ask questions around health disparities, our research will not live up to its full potential.” [Watch the video recording here.](#)

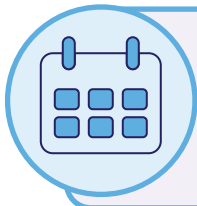


Photos: Al Richmond, Director of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health moderating questions for Institutional Champions, Dr. Leah Alexander from Meharry Medical College, and Dr. Sajid Hussain from Fisk University.

Dr. Alexander and Dr. Hussain led the on-site planning for the event. Dr. Alexander shared how her graduate students will use the Researcher Workbench to formulate their own public health research projects.

Dr. Celestial Jones-Paris, Vanderbilt University, walks participants through the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench.

Fisk undergraduate students Oreoluwa Owoseeni and Rejin Nepal present their research on sleep disparities using the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench.



Save the Date | HBCU Road Tour at Jackson State University

April 23, 2024, Noon–2:00 pm ET. Join us for this hybrid event and panel discussion entitled “From Data to Equity.” [Register here.](#)

Meet the New Institutional Champions

In this issue, we are pleased to shine the spotlight on the Researcher Academy’s newest group of Institutional Champions and introduce the leads from each team. They share what excites them most about being an awardee, what resources and training will add the most value, and how access to the Researcher Workbench and the *All of Us* dataset will help them better address health challenges at the forefront of their research focus.

Florida Atlantic University

Lead: Cheryl A. Krause-Parello, PhD, RN, FAAN



“Our institution currently has researchers working with the *All of Us* dataset. This award will provide additional training and technical assistance that will facilitate building and pulling data for cohorts, coding for data analysis, understanding of social data, further statistical preparation, and moving from cohort to dataset creation to writing and testing code using the *All of Us* sandbox. Particularly beneficial to our team will be peer-to-peer learning and network-building with researchers and students from institutions like ours that are minority-serving. The cross-pollination of ideas will improve the quality and range of questions our researchers will generate to query the diverse data available through *All of Us*.

We plan to hold an internal competition to select five teams to work with the *All of Us* dataset. Preference will be given to teams already working with the data. This selection method will increase the database’s use at Florida Atlantic, but it will also encourage interdisciplinary collaborations across the university, build synergy among teams, and establish an institutional network of researchers—inclusive of faculty members, postdoctoral fellows, and students—who will benefit from the additional tools and technical training available through the Researcher Academy. Finally, our role as an Institutional Champion will help us forge new partnerships within our region and nationally.”

Florida International University

Lead: Mariana Sanchez, PhD, MSW



“We have assembled an exceptional team of early-career researchers to collaborate on this award, including faculty and doctoral students from disciplines such as public health, medicine, social work, biostatistics, and psychology. A multidisciplinary scientific workforce is needed to advance understanding of the complex drivers of health disparities—individuals from diverse backgrounds and life experiences who can bring distinct perspectives to addressing these complex problems.

The most valuable support we will receive from the Research Academy is the chance to learn all that the *All of Us* data has to offer and the ability to receive personal guidance

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from an academy Workbench Coach. This Institutional Champion award will provide an invaluable opportunity to learn how to leverage the *All of Us* data to conduct cutting-edge research in areas like substance use, mental health, and HIV-related health disparities among underrepresented minority populations (e.g., Hispanic/Latinos, sexual gender minorities). We are enthusiastic about this opportunity and hopeful that these efforts might yield health discoveries that can ultimately advance health equity among vulnerable and underserved communities.”

Northern Arizona University

Lead: Laura K. Noll, PhD



“At Northern Arizona University, we are most excited about the opportunity the Institutional Champion award provides to connect promising graduate students with high-impact research opportunities and a community that will empower them to engage in health equity research that benefits underserved communities. Support from the online training and our Researcher Workbench coach will help us maximize our engagement with the *All of Us* dataset and help our students feel connected to the Researcher Academy. We also look forward to meeting with other awardees at the quarterly Faculty Scholar Convening events, which we anticipate will foster interdisciplinary exchange of ideas.

Moreover, this award will allow graduate students and faculty to receive advanced training in data analytics and access to more representative health data, which they can use to present at conferences and publish papers. We hope this will serve as a health equity research model for other students and faculty from similar backgrounds. Doctoral student involvement in this award may also prepare them to submit F31 applications and apply for postdoctoral fellowships at other sites using the *All of Us* dataset.”

San José State University

Lead: Zachary McNiece, PhD, MA



“Our institution is an up-and-coming contributor to research in the heart of Silicon Valley. Accessing this groundbreaking dataset will improve our ability to contribute to health equity in research by playing to pre-existing institutional strengths in health and data sciences. As a Hispanic Serving Institution with a sizeable first-generation student population, we find many of our students are experimenting with research for the first time. For this reason, the Institutional Champion Award’s provision for student training and collaboration resonated with our institution’s commitment to student research opportunities.

The Researcher Academy’s “train the trainer” style resources have so far been invaluable to our institutional team. These robust and comprehensive resources have helped us develop a curriculum and build institutional capacity to use the *All of Us* dataset. We are delivering our materials in a variety of ways to provide scaffolded support to stakeholders. For example, the faculty and student learning community we have established with our award’s support is a significant avenue for sharing knowledge and building interprofessional collaboration.”

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University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Lead: Christopher Johansen, PhD, MPH



“As *All of Us* Research Ambassadors, we’ve promoted the robust dataset available on the Researcher Workbench for researchers for the past 2 years. Our researchers are keen on leveraging the *All of Us* data, and this Institutional Champion award will equip them with the resources to analyze it effectively.

We are most excited about R training in data wrangling and analysis, along with accessing other resources offered by the Research Academy. We anticipate that the training will be instrumental in helping us achieve our project milestones effectively. Additionally, we look forward to networking with other Institutional Champions.”

University of Puerto Rico, Medical Sciences Center

Lead: Kyle Melín, PharmD, MSc, BCPS, AE-C



“Despite the unique opportunities the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench provides to investigators interested in Hispanic health, use of the platform has been low by investigators at our institution. Through this program and our Institutional Champion award, we hope to create new opportunities for student investigators to use the Researcher Workbench and demonstrate to our research colleagues how the Workbench can be used to answer their own research questions related to Hispanic health.

Our students and faculty are primarily of Hispanic background. The *All of Us* Research Program provides us with a unique opportunity to perform research that is inclusive of diverse communities and that can ultimately lead to real-world benefits for Hispanic communities.” ■

RStudio and SAS Studio are now available on the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench.



RStudio's point and-click interface and suite of tools, including a variable explorer, an R Markdown editor, a debugger, and an R terminal, make it easier for researchers to use R in the Researcher Workbench.



SAS Studio also has a point-and-click interface and allows users to perform powerful statistical analyses and data visualizations with *All of Us* data. Making SAS Studio available could bring more social scientists and public health experts to the platform because they often have higher proficiency with SAS as a programming language than R or Python. Bringing more researchers to the platform is essential to furthering research that can advance precision medicine.



Learn more about [using RStudio](#) and [using SAS Studio](#) on the User Support Hub.

Securing a Job in Research

Securing a job in research can be a competitive and challenging process. However, with the right approach and preparation, you can increase your chances of success. This article and the next will explore five ways to strategically position yourself to secure a job in research. To begin, let's focus on the first two essential steps.

- 1 First, it is crucial to develop a strong academic background.** Research positions often require advanced degrees, so pursuing higher education in your field of interest is essential. This could involve obtaining a master's or doctoral degree in a relevant discipline. Focus on building a solid foundation of knowledge and skills through coursework, internships, and research projects. Take advantage of research opportunities offered by your college or university and actively engage with faculty and researchers in your chosen field. Demonstrating a strong academic history and a passion for research will make you a more attractive candidate to potential employers.
- 2 Second, networking plays a vital role in securing a job in research.** Attend conferences, workshops, and seminars in your field to connect with professionals and researchers. Engage in discussions, ask questions, and share your own work to make valuable connections. Building a network of contacts can lead to potential job opportunities and collaborations in the future. Consider joining professional organizations and online communities related to your research interests. These platforms provide networking opportunities as well as access to resources and job postings specific to your field.

By focusing on developing a strong academic background and actively networking, you will create a solid foundation for securing a job in research. These two steps are critical in demonstrating your commitment to research and establishing connections within the research community. In the next issue of *Connections*, Summer 2024, we will explore the remaining three essentials.



Freda Green is a Senior Talent Acquisition Partner at RTI International supporting Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) efforts and serves on the EDIB Leadership Council. Freda co-leads RTI's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) engagement program, RTI MOVE (Momentum, Opportunity, Value, and Exhilaration). She has 10+ years of experience leading talent departments for companies in the non-governmental organizations and biotechnology sectors. She is an HBCU advocate and a proud alumna of Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University. **Connect with Freda on [LinkedIn](#) or via [email](#).**

Upcoming Academy Courses

Register for these 2024 [tuition-free courses](#):

Course	Instructors	Overview	Date
Mindfulness Practices for Health Researchers This course is ideal for everyone.	Dr. TJ Exford U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Research and Development	This course will lead participants through a progression of mindfulness exercises in which they will reflect on life-giving and life-taking experiences as health researchers. This series of wellness sessions will allow participants to place space between themselves and their reactions. <i>Live virtual course.</i>	April 22–25, 2024 5:15–5:45 pm ET
Introduction to Literature Searching to Support All of Us Data Analysis This course is ideal for undergraduate or graduate students new to literature searching or interested in improving their skills.	Mariel Christian, Mark Howell, and Frances Ramsey RTI International, Library and Information Services	This course will introduce researchers to effective strategies for identifying appropriate literature to answer their research questions. The focus will be on defining your research question, providing an overview of databases—both free and fee-based, planning and structuring literature searches relevant to <i>All of Us</i> database variables, and organizing the resulting literature. <i>Live virtual course.</i>	May 21, 2024 Noon–4:00 pm ET
Ethical, Legal, and Social Implications of Genetic Research for All of Us This course is ideal for everyone.	Dr. Altovise Ewing, Genentech	This short course will introduce individuals to the ethical, legal, and social implications (ELSI) of genetics research. Scholars will be guided through an immersive and experiential learning encounter designed to advance their knowledge, capability and competency to address ELSI in genetics research. This course will also enhance scholars' abilities to curate solutions to address the long-standing inequities and disparities that perpetually marginalize minoritized and underrepresented populations of color in genetics research, medicine, and science. <i>Live virtual course.</i>	June 19, June 27, July 10, and July 18, 2024 5:00–6:30 pm ET

All of Us Researcher Academy

The [All of Us Researcher Academy](#) is a comprehensive program that provides training and technical assistance for researchers who are conducting research with the [All of Us Researcher Workbench](#)—the cloud-based analytics platform where registered researchers can access data from *All of Us* participants. The academy also supports peer-to-peer learning and network-building among researchers and students.

The academy is dedicated to providing support to institutions that have a documented historical mission or historical commitment to training underrepresented students. Currently, the *All of Us* Researcher Academy resources are free for students, faculty, and post-docs at institutions with a track record of training researchers underrepresented in the biomedical workforce. See the Notice of [NIH's Interest in Diversity](#) for examples of groups that have been shown to be underrepresented in the biomedical research workforce.

All of Us Researcher Academy Partners



Community - Campus Partnerships for Health
 Advancing Health Equity & Social Justice Through Partnerships for 25 Years

AllofUs.nih.gov

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