

## IN THIS ISSUE

- **New Year, New Opportunities**
- **Academy Announcements**
- **Spotlight**  
Dr. Dorothy Browne,  
Shaw University
- **Career Corner:**  
How to Find a Professional  
Mentor
- **Upcoming Academy Courses**



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## New Year, New Opportunities and Connections



★ Although researchers sometimes receive praise for their individual accomplishments, progress in science has long been a team sport. Mentoring, in particular, can be a vital source of guidance on funding for research and encouragement to develop new analytical skills. In this issue, we continue our focus on mentoring by mapping out steps for identifying your ideal mentor in [Career Corner](#) (p. 7). We also explore how the *All of Us* Researcher Academy and its related efforts are supporting knowledge mobilization and team science.

★ Artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) are one emerging domain of work in which new skills are increasingly important. Yet historically underrepresented communities have not benefited from AI/ML developments at the same pace as other groups. NIH's Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning Consortium to Advance Health Equity and Researcher Diversity (AIM-AHEAD) and RTI International have created a new resource for researchers who want to develop AI/ML skills. The traineeship, which begins this month, will guide participants through an intensive 8-month program in advanced data analysis using the resources of the *All of Us* database and AIM-AHEAD's data science training core.

★ Teamwork is important for 21st century science, but it does not happen without planning and effort. Being intentional about building and maintaining teams can be an important step in growing research capacity at your institution.

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Groups who want to develop their team-building capacity can explore the [National Cancer Institute's Team Science toolkit](#) to learn more.



**In research, funding is always a priority.** In 2024, the Researcher Academy is offering two grant writing courses taught by long-time scientific mentors: Dr. Dorothy Browne (Shaw University) and Dr. Susan Newcomer (previously of NIH).

The first course is ideal for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows who are new to grant writing, as well as faculty who have never written an NIH grant previously. The second provides an even deeper dive into the process for post-doctoral fellows or junior faculty members who are ready to apply for their first NIH grant. See [Upcoming Courses](#) (p. 8) for more information.

Dr. Browne is also featured in this issue's [Spotlight](#) (p. 4). She has mentored students and colleagues for almost four decades, from Shaw University and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to organizations across four states. Her passion for helping students and encouraging equity are palpable to anyone who talks with her.



**Our efforts to build a network of researchers and collaborators connected to *All of Us* have been gratifying.** As we enter 2024, we'll continue to look for ways to encourage collaboration and teaming across this community. Together, we can advance precision medicine. ■

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

## Academy Announcements.....



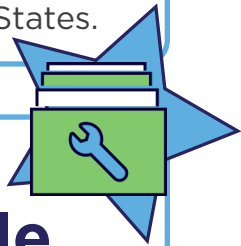
### Save the Date

- **HBCU Road Tour, in partnership with Meharry Medical College and Fisk University in Nashville, TN, February 28, 2024.** This hybrid event is an opportunity for HBCU researchers and students to collaborate, connect, and learn from one another. Participants will hear the newest information about the *All of Us* Research Program, including the Researcher Workbench and the Researcher Academy, and explore how it relates to their work. [Visit this event page](#) for registration updates.
- ***All of Us* Researchers Convention, April 3–4, 2024.** This free, virtual event is open to researchers across all disciplines and career stages. It provides an opportunity for researchers who use *All of Us* data to showcase their work for others who share their interests in precision medicine. [Visit the event page](#) and learn more about [submitting an abstract here](#). Registration is open and the abstract submission deadline is January 19, 2024.
- **Biomedical Researcher Faculty Summit, May 14–18, 2024.** The summit supports researchers from diverse backgrounds, including those from communities that are underrepresented in the biomedical research workforce, who are interested in using the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench. Applicants selected to attend will be accepted into the *All of Us* Biomedical Researcher Scholars Program, a 1-year program that provides networking opportunities, professional development sessions, and research training. Visit the [Biomedical Researcher Faculty Summit page](#) for more information. [Submit applications](#) by February 29, 2024.

## Notables

- **All of Us partners with NIH institutes and centers to promote workforce diversity in genomics, bioinformatics, and bioengineering.** *All of Us*, the National Human Genome Research Institute, and the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering invite grant applications that propose independent research projects within the scientific mission areas of these institutions. The intent is to support early stage and new investigators from diverse backgrounds, including those from groups underrepresented in the health-related sciences. [Learn more and submit grant applications](#) by February 22, 2024.
- **New Training Video.** *All of Us* Scientific Policy Analyst Nichole Holm, PhD, discusses the data use policies that researchers must comply with when presenting or publishing research that uses *All of Us* data. [View the video on YouTube](#).
- **Funding opportunities—All of Us Data and Tools.** The NIH makes funding available to researchers to advance precision medicine and health equity. These opportunities can harness the power of the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench. Visit the [NIH Research Funding Opportunities page](#) for additional funding opportunities from NIH.
- **Dr. Stephen O. Sodeke explains how to build trust with communities that have been historically underrepresented in biomedical research.** Tuskegee University Professor of Bioethics, *All of Us* Resource Access Board Co-Chair, and administrator for the Tuskegee University [Institutional Champion award](#), Dr. Sodeke studies research ethics, population ethics, and community bioethics. In a [new researcher testimonial video](#), Dr. Sodeke discusses the importance of transparency in research.
- **Podcast alert.** On this episode of [The Measure of Everyday Life](#), a popular public radio show hosted by *All of Us* Researcher Academy co-lead Brian Southwell, you can [hear a conversation](#) with Erin Velez and Ruth Heuer of RTI International and Lorelle Espinosa of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation about a new report documenting the experiences of Black and Hispanic science PhD candidates in the United States.

## Publication, Presentation, and Poster Checklist for Researchers Now Available.



This handy checklist includes a list of *All of Us* policies that researchers must comply with. Use it as a handy reference while working on posters, presentations, or articles that use *All of Us* data. You can [download the checklist here](#).

# Spotlight.....

## Dr. Dorothy Browne, Shaw University



When Dr. Dorothy Browne graduated from Bennett College, one of only two all-female Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the country, a career in research was not part of her plan. But her interest in political action work led her to apply for a position as a research assistant at a local university that was being threatened with a lawsuit for its unwillingness to hire African Americans in the role. Dr. Browne’s qualifications and undergraduate studies in statistical and research methods and sociology led to a job offer.

The position was not “glamorous,” but it piqued her interest in research. “I was fascinated by the research process and how it could be used to test one’s suppositions and hypotheses,” she says. This inspired her to pursue master’s and doctoral degrees at the University of Pittsburgh and Harvard University. She counts the establishment of the Jackson State University School of Public Health, where she was the Inaugural Dean, among her most significant achievements—it is the only accredited School of Public Health at an HBCU. Today,

**“ I learned that I enjoy mentoring; I’m good at it. And it is essential in the professional development of those in early-career stages.**

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Dr. Browne is an adjunct professor at the University of North Carolina (UNC) and a Senior Research Scientist at Shaw University, where her current interests include the social determinants of health outcomes and health disparities.

Mentorship has played a pivotal role throughout Dr. Browne’s work. “When I began my academic career at Carolina,” she says, “the institution was starting to have people of color in academic positions, but the environment was still ‘chilly’ for many and devoid of any diversity.” Arden Miller, chair of the Department of Maternal and Child Health and a former president of the American Public Health Association, embraced Dr. Browne and became her mentor. She recalls, “Arden taught me and others about the importance of advocating for health equity long before others understood the words.”

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Mentorship enabled Dr. Browne to craft a fulfilling academic career at UNC, which led to many internal and external collaborations. But it also motivated her to mentor the next generation of researchers. One of Dr. Browne’s mentors once asked, “Can you play it forward?” In doing so, she says, “I learned that I enjoy mentoring; I’m good at it. And it is essential in the professional development of those in early-career stages.” Her best advice: “Gain exposure to research early. Volunteer to work with a faculty member engaged in public health research. Try to acquire an internship during college or in the summer and seek out a mentor.”

When it comes to the *All of Us* Research Program, Dr. Browne acknowledges the tremendous potential it has to impact health and medical research. “The *All of Us* dataset can change approaches to health by examining biomarkers associated with the early stages of the disease,” she says. “Identifying these early markers can revolutionize early detection and lead to disease prevention strategies.”

Access to the Researcher Workbench can be a game changer too, especially for students at Researcher Academy Institutional Champion campuses. They are gaining practical experience using analytical tools and learning to code. “Students also speak to the fact that they are gaining experience in examining and understanding

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**Students also speak to the fact that they are gaining experience in examining and understanding real-life problems such as diabetes and obesity.**

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real-life problems such as diabetes and obesity,” Browne says. “This exposure stimulates students to build careers in which these real-life problems are addressed as a researcher or practitioner.”

According to Dr. Browne, the role HBCUs can play by actively engaging with *All of Us* on multiple levels cannot be understated. “HBCUs have long-standing relationships with diverse communities based on trust and familiarity.” They can effectively communicate the importance of participating in *All of Us* and potentially reduce the mistrust, fear, and suspicion that often exists in communities with misgivings about research they see as not benefiting them. She notes, “Getting African Americans to participate could provide the program with valuable data that reflects the genetic, environmental, and lifestyle diversity within these communities and increase the inclusivity of a group that is often excluded from such studies, leading to more personalized and effective health interventions and solutions.”

The value is equally significant when HBCU faculty, staff, and students work with the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench. Research opportunities open up for them to use the diverse dataset to facilitate studies

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**Students who have hands-on research experiences and demonstrated interest and expertise in mental health, genomics, public health, and data science are more competitive in the admissions process than students who don't.**



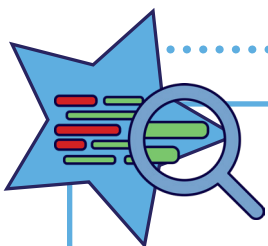
focused area, engaging in *All of Us*-related research could strengthen their application. “Students who have hands-on research experiences and demonstrated interest and expertise in mental health, genomics, public health, and data science are more competitive in the admissions process than students who don't,” Browne notes.

Finally, actively using the *All of Us* Researcher Workbench can afford HBCUs the opportunity to collaborate with other institutions, including those with more robust research infrastructures in place.

This could lead to developing a network of individuals who might work together on grants using *All of Us* data to advance research. Dr. Browne points out that “such collaborations are encouraged by many funding agencies and can enhance the reputations of the collaborators and their institutions.” ■

and investigations relevant to their own communities. Faculty can preliminarily access data needed to inform research plans for the acquisition of NIH- or related funding. For HBCU students planning to attend graduate school in a research-

**In February 2024, Dr. Browne will be teaching two Researcher Academy courses on grant writing for National Institutes of Health funding. See [Upcoming Courses](#) (p. 8) for details and registration information.**



## Researcher Workbench Grew Significantly in 2023

Since its launch in May 2020, the Researcher Workbench has supported a vibrant research community. In 2023, the platform saw remarkable growth. Explore the data at [ResearchAllofUs.org](https://ResearchAllofUs.org)



## How to Find a Professional Mentor

In the [last installment of Career Corner](#), we explored how a professional mentor can be valuable to your career development journey. Now it's time to learn how to find the ideal mentor for you. Here are five steps to help you get started:

- 1 Determine your goals.** Before seeking a mentor, identify and outline your career goals and what you hope to gain from the mentoring relationship. This will help you find someone who aligns with your objectives, and it can help guide your initial conversations with them.
- 2 Research potential mentors.** Start by creating a list of professionals in your field of interest who have the experience, knowledge, and skills you admire. Consider attending industry events, joining professional associations, or using online resources like LinkedIn to find potential mentors.
- 3 Reach out.** Once you have identified potential mentors, reach out to them in a thoughtful and professional manner. Explain why you are interested in their guidance and how you believe they can help you. Be specific about what you hope to learn or achieve through the mentoring relationship. You should also set expectations in the initial conversation, including the time commitment involved. This provides your potential mentor with the information they need to consider your request.
- 4 Establish a connection.** If a mentor agrees to meet with you, take the opportunity to establish a genuine connection. Be prepared with specific questions or topics to discuss and be respectful of their time. You can consider asking them to meet you for coffee or lunch to provide a neutral, relaxed place to converse.
- 5 Maintain the relationship.** After you find a mentor, it is important to actively nurture the relationship. Keep in touch regularly by scheduling periodic meetings or check-ins. Share updates on your progress, challenges, and successes. Show genuine interest and appreciation for their guidance and support. Remember that mentoring is a two-way street, so be open to providing support and assistance to your mentor when appropriate.

**Finding a professional mentor may take time and effort, so be patient and persistent in your search. It will pay off!**





**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
<b>Writing Your First National Institutes of Health Grant</b> This course is ideal for graduate students and post-docs who are new to grant writing and are focused on NIH funding mechanisms.	Dr. Dorothy Browne and Dr. Susan Newcomer	Learn about the NIH and its various branches and funding mechanisms. After completing this course, you'll understand the components of the NIH grant application and take away common-sense rules for preparing a grant application. <i>Live virtual course.</i>	February 6 and February 13, 2024  1-4 pm ET
<b>Advanced Grant Writing for National Institutes of Health Applications</b> This course is ideal for researchers ready to apply for their first NIH grant—typically post-doc or junior faculty researchers in their first 7 years of completing their advanced degree.	Dr. Dorothy Browne and Dr. Susan Newcomer	Dive deeper into the process for writing competitive NIH grant applications. You'll learn about the details and locations of required application information, the peer review process and how individuals are selected for peer review panels, what the criteria are for reviewing applications, and actions you can take when an application is not funded. <i>Live virtual course.</i>	February 20 and February 27, 2024  1-5 pm ET
<b>Introduction to Publishing Health Data in Academic Journals</b> This course is ideal for undergraduate or graduate students interested in publishing their research for the first time.	Dr. Vabren Watts	A short course series helping to guide participants in the academy with their career paths and informing them of requirements and opportunities that are essential for their success in STEM or STEM-related research. <i>Live virtual course.</i>	April 2024
<b>Stress Management for Health Researchers Using All of Us Data</b> This course is ideal for everyone.	Dr. TJ Exford	This series will include 30-minute mindfulness sessions for a combined 2.5-hour segment. These sessions will be wellness intermissions. Allowing the sessions to flow within a 30-minute timeframe creates a space to retain the attention and intention of participants. <i>Live virtual course.</i>	April 2024

## About the All of Us Researcher Academy

The [All of Us Researcher Academy](#)  is a comprehensive program that provides training and technical assistance for researchers 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 resources are available at no cost to all registered researchers based on availability. The academy also supports peer-to-peer learning and network-building among researchers from institutions that are underrepresented in the biomedical workforce. The All of Us Researcher Academy supports researchers using All of Us data to explore questions about health and wellbeing.

Currently, the All of Us Researcher Academy is engaging with students, faculty, and post-docs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). HBCUs are institutions described in section 4(b) of Executive Order 14041, incorporating by reference the institutions listed in 34 C.F.R. 608.2].

## All of Us Researcher Academy Partners



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

[Allofus.nih.gov](https://allofus.nih.gov)

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