

# AGEP-NC NEWS

## AGEP-NC Alliance A Change Model for Doctoral to Faculty Diversity in STEM

### Research on Mentor Training



The Social Science Research for NC AGEP, conducted by Lisa Merriweather, Associate Professor of Adult Education, UNC Charlotte, is focused on how Alliance program activities impact the culturally responsive mentoring skills, disposition and knowledge of faculty advisors. During this first year, data in the form of surveys, interviews and focus groups have been gathered from STEM doctoral students, and faculty serving as faculty fellows, department chairs, and doctoral program directors. Over 70 students responded to the survey and over 30 participated in interview process in addition to 15 faculty. Data analysis is currently being conducted.

### Model of Change

Changing doctoral programs requires faculty engagement and may involve changing faculty attitudes and practices. This type of change is called “deep change”, and is notoriously hard to accomplish. The AGEP-NC project puts into practice five key strategies for promoting deep change: (1) senior administrative support, (2) collaborative leadership, (3) flexible design and vision tailored to department needs (4) development of faculty awareness and skills, and (5) visible action. The process of “sensemaking”, in which members of the department change their perspectives and understanding, underlies all of the model elements.

The AGEP-NC model is based on research on institutional transformation by Kezar and Eckel (2002). We are pleased to have Adrianna Kezar, author of *How Colleges Change: Understanding, Leading, and Enacting Change*, as a member of the AGEP-NC External Advisory Board.

### Why We Do What We Do

*Diverse teams are the best way to address global challenges with the most innovative solutions. To get the teams we need at the table, students need training in how to work effectively as a team. Our commitment is to provide an environment that supports the development of their unique skills and credentials for innovative problem solving.*

*— Melanie Simpson, AGEP-NC Fellow, Professor and Head, Molecular and Structural Biochemistry, NC State*



First cohort of AGEP-NC Fellows. (2018-2020). Prafulla Regmi, Poultry Science; Eric Laber, Statistics; Johanna Eifenbein, Comparative Biomedical Sciences; Brad Taylor, Applied Ecology; Melanie Simpson, Molecular and Structural Biochemistry; Dave Shultz., Chemistry, N C State.

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