California State University Northridge’s BUILD PODER (Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity; local title: Promoting Opportunities for Diversity in Education and Research) is one of a consortium of 12 NIH programs designed to diversify the U.S. biomedical workforce. The programs are united around the goal of transforming undergraduate research training to bring new, under-represented viewpoints to the table to solve intractable problems such as health disparities and escalating health problems such as obesity and diabetes through our foundation of Critical Race Theory.

CSUN BUILD PODER’s faculty initiatives were developed to optimize student-faculty research experiences and outcomes. BUILD PODER supports faculty in two ways: (1) training for faculty mentors of BUILD PODER students, and (2) training and tangible resources to enhance BUILD PODER faculty research to maintain cutting edge, meaningful research opportunities for our BUILD PODER Trainees (sophomores) and Scholars (juniors, seniors).

Overview of Continuing Initiatives

- BUILD PODER Undergraduate Research Mentors (October 1)
- BUILD PODER Faculty Scholar Academies for Grant-Writing (October 1) (new format!)
- BUILD PODER Pilot Projects (2 or more projects; December 1)
- BUILD PODER Curriculum Initiatives (Ongoing)
- BUILD PODER Speakers and Workshops (Ongoing)

Some NEW initiatives

- HERE Center (Health Equity and Research Education Center): November 2017
- Spring 2018 BUILD PODER Freshman-level GE Course: Public Health for Social Justice

Please watch for new POSSIBLE initiatives including:

- BUILD PODER Research Methods and Statistics Workshops for Faculty
- BUILD PODER Reading Group (8)
- BUILD PODER Writing Group (8)
- Off-Campus Faculty Mentors
Overview of Continuing Initiatives

BUILD PODER Undergraduate Research Mentors: Deadline October 1

With Critical Race Theory as a foundation, BUILD PODER was designed to support faculty awareness of historical and institutional perspectives on racism, with mentoring relationships around issues that BP students face as developing biomedical scientists that may be different from the issues that we, as faculty, addressed while undergraduates. We aspire to help faculty understand the historical, social, and individual influences that give our students meaningful experiential knowledge and a complex, perhaps unfamiliar set of issues to contend with. In this way, we hope to develop institutional support for a community enlightened to support all of our promising students by recognizing their unique circumstances and talents.

Mentors whose projects are: (a) related to the biomedical sciences, broadly defined as research about or influencing health or health-related environments, (b) empirical (in most cases, activities like literature review are part of the process, but cannot be the full experience), (c) varied in research experiences and responsibilities, (d) presentable at a professional conference. All mentors who applied to be in the original BUILD PODER application are eligible to be a BUILD PODER mentor. Mentors who apply subsequently (each Fall semester) will be reviewed and invited to attend training in that year to accept students for the following year.

Each year, mentors are required to attend a BUILD PODER mentor training. In the first year, mentor training is a 16-hour program. Subsequently, 4-hour trainings are designed to develop a deeper, more abstract and historically contextualized understanding of how race/ethnicity and other forms of institutional bias influence student opportunities and outcomes.

Community College mentors are, understandably, often pressed for time. Therefore, an alternative 4-hour session will take place with a BUILD PODER mentor trainer(s) at a time that can be negotiated each year. Whenever possible, it is best when Community College mentors can join our regular mentor training to meet with faculty and better understand our BUILD PODER community.

BUILD PODER Faculty Scholar Academies for Grant-Writing: Deadline: October 1

The NIH Faculty Scholar Academy (NIH FSA) is a way for developing faculty members at any level – beginning to advanced – to improve their grant-writing skills through instruction and coaching. Faculty members can attend training sessions, can be assigned to or choose a faculty PI Coach. All protégés are expected to submit a grant within one year of the end of the attending semester. This year, PI Saetermoe will run several learning/grant writing workshops focused on preparing applications for Pilot Projects and NIH grants.

BUILD PODER Pilot Projects: Deadline: December 1

BUILD PODER Pilot projects are designed to provide pilot data or other support for a developing scholar (or 2 scholars maximum) who intends to write an NIH grant as a direct result of their work. Pilot project proposals request $50,000 for personnel, students, supplies, and other resources to complete a project within one year. Pilot projects are sent to outside reviewers who will review your proposal according to NIH guidelines. Two pilot projects will be funded for 2018-2019 ($50,000 each).
BECAUSE THIS IS A LIMITED CALL, please take seriously the application for pilot projects for 2018-2019. There are 2 pilot projects left for BUILD PODER’s 5-year run. We are requesting further slots.

BUILD PODER Curriculum Initiatives

There are four purposes for the curriculum development initiative, which is one significant method by which BUILD PODER is sustaining our CRT influence at a structural level: (1) developing upper division advanced research methods courses in biomedically-relevant areas, broadly defined, to serve as BUILD PODER advanced courses, (2) developing Public Health for Social Justice courses at pipeline partner community colleges, (3) developing courses that link Critical Race Theory to biomedical topics and careers, and (4) developing courses in health equity and social justice.

BUILD PODER Speakers and Workshops

At any time during the year, BUILD PODER faculty and students can propose speakers and workshops. BUILD PODER also proposes workshops to further institutional and community change.

Some initiatives we would like you to be aware of:

HERE Center (Health Equity and Research Education Center)

The overarching goals of the HERE center are to (1) increase grant activity in the area of health equity, (2) increase interdisciplinary and collaborative research in health equity, (3) increase community engagement and collaboration around health equity using Community Based, Participatory Research (CBPR) and Participatory Action Research (PAR), (4) increase health equity in the San Fernando Valley, and (5) provide a focal point for biomedical research by centralizing campus training and resources for students, faculty, and community members related to health equity research and training. The HERE Center will be home to the offices and laboratories of the university’s cluster hires in health disparities.

NEW BUILD PODER Freshman-level GE Course: Public Health for Social Justice

Designed as a sustainable gateway course for BUILD PODER, Public Health for Social Justice course, freshmen and sophomores learn about the root causes of health disparities, how health is influenced by neighborhoods, families, schools, and workplaces, and how their individual behavior influences their short-term and long-term health outcomes. Students will also understand how they can become involved in producing health equity through careers in research and health advocacy in fields like psychology, anthropology, biology, biochemistry, social work, journalism, bioengineering, health sciences, nursing, and community advocacy. Can be taken for General Education Social Science credit.
Please watch for new POSSIBLE initiatives including (based on carry-over approval):

**BUILD PODER Research Methods and Statistics Workshops for Faculty**

A common barrier to faculty project development is the need for foundational support. We will enlist a professor who can teach basic statistics and research methods to faculty who are trained in qualitative or other analytic perspectives or who need a refresher and support for project development, implementation, and data analysis. The instructor will be commissioned to teach two courses per year in a format most palatable to its participants. One course will be in research methods, the other in statistics, and will take into account the developing needs of interested faculty members whose input will be solicited in advance.

**BUILD PODER Reading Group (8)**

The reading group will be composed, each semester, of 4 faculty members and PI Saetermoe, who will read common sources that will challenge dysconsciousness in many forms. For example, the group will start with a simple book for teachers, “We Can’t Teach What We Don’t’ Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools.” The book takes the reader through the influences of colonialism and its modern-day incarnation through the lens of a White educator who draws insights about communities of color through action and research. The dysconsciousness of White educators can be challenged with community support and collective problem-solving to enhance the awareness of the experiences of students of color. Each semester, a group of 4 faculty members will come together around readings that challenge current assumptions about “other” groups.

**BUILD PODER Writing Group (8)**

The writing group will be composed, each semester, of 4 faculty members who will meet weekly goals for writing through collective support and problem-solving as well as concentrated and committed writing times for accountability. The writing group will meet with Saetermoe weekly for purposes of the development of Individualized Development Plans for publication and grant-writing with a theoretical and methodological foundation. The writing group will meet for one hour each week to discuss progress and group accountability and will meet for 2 hours each week for concentrated writing. Each IDP will include specific, individualized goals for each faculty member.

**Off-Campus Faculty Mentors (6)**

As faculty members develop the skills to write manuscripts and grants, they often require specific guidance and editing from mentors in their field. In order to improve the quality of manuscripts and grant proposals, we will provide $2,000 for 6 off-campus mentors who will read manuscripts and proposals, will make design suggestions, and will support scholars with a specific Individualized Development Plan for the academic year.
Positions we may be searching for:

Postdoctoral Researcher (full-time)

We are requesting a postdoctoral researcher to support our write-up of local data regarding the RL initiatives including mentor training, pilot projects, Faculty Scholar Academy, community college initiatives, and to begin to, when appropriate, draw upon the consortium data resources around support for faculty mentors. We plan to make a national call for a postdoctoral student who would spend 1-2 years working for 32 hours per week with BUILD PODER on initiatives that lead to the dissemination of the multiple quantitative and qualitative datasets, meeting with our group and attending functions to learn about the program, then, later, working with the group to identify the most meaningful papers and outlets for our work. For eight hours per week, the postdoctoral researcher will advance her or his own career goals through independent or other collaborative research that follows on from prior work.

Employment Opportunity: HERE Center Administrator (full-time)

12-month administrative coordinator who will manage faculty and student initiatives in the Center including the Student Researcher Incubator, connecting biomedical programs on campus together as well as with campus services that will enhance their experience. In addition, the HERE Center Administrator will coordinate faculty training initiatives in the HERE Center including speakers, workshops, conferences, specific skills-building initiatives on and off campus, keep a calendar and coordinate meetings and communications for HERE Center activities. The administrator will coordinate with community partners to ensure two-way access and communication between CSUN researchers and community partners.

Employment Opportunity: Research Methods and Statistics Workshops Instructor (2 course reassignments)

Please see above under possible initiatives, top of page 5.
Dear Colleagues,

Thank you so much for taking the time to learn more about the faculty initiatives offered by our NIH-sponsored BUILD PODER program at California State University, Northridge.

We have many familiar initiatives such as: (a) mentoring undergraduate students in biomedical majors, (b) pilot projects, (c) a new format – writing intensives -- for our Faculty Scholar Academy, (d) opportunities to write curriculum and (e) to invite speakers or workshops to campus.

We are waiting on a carry-over request for new initiatives, described here in the event that we can gauge interest. New initiatives, potential new employment opportunities, lots of information in the attachment here! If the proposed activities are approved, there will be more information soon!

I want to thank each and every one of you who is involved in BUILD PODER! We have over 130 students and over 100 mentors, 4 community college partnerships and a budding new center with cluster hires and exciting new initiatives. Our students tell us over and over again how they are growing, how they BELONG, and how they are ready for their future in biomedical science.

Please be ready to sign up for annual mentor training in the Fall and Spring semesters and PLEASE RECRUIT your new colleagues to become mentors in BUILD PODER!

I am available for questions or concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me.

Most sincerely grateful,

Carrie Saetermoe, PI, PD, NIH CSUN BUILD PODER