Prioritizing mental health and well-being at The Scripps Research Institute

Justin Wang, Scripps Research Institute
Science advocacy case study
Supported by the ASBMB Advocacy Training Program

Overview

Wang wanted to know what steps could be taken to support student well-being at his institution. He decided to foster discussion in a town hall setting to identify initiatives that Scripps could pursue.

Activities

- Researched mental health issues in the graduate student community.
- Hosted a town hall for graduate students, providing a platform for them to share their experiences and suggestions for institutional improvement.
- Distributed notes from the event with all graduate students and campus offices that provide counseling and psychological services, graduate program administration, and career and professional development services.

Results

- Attracted 30 in-person and virtual participants.
- Counseling office’s open-house events may resume in light of feedback.
- Graduate student council revised its annual student survey to inquire about student well-being and mental health.

About the advocate

Justin Wang, a Ph.D. candidate at Scripps Research in La Jolla, California, studies how to inhibit cancer growth and metastasis by exploiting transfer RNA synthetases. He was a member of the 2023 cohort of the ASBMB Advocacy Training Program to, in his words, “gain the skills and know-how to improve research culture through policy and translate scientific findings into impactful policy changes.” He served as president of the Graduate Student Council at Scripps and advocates for a more equitable and inclusive environment for trainees of all backgrounds.

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