

WAVES OF CHANGE OCEANS OF OPPORTUNITY

October 11–13, 2012



Pursuing Higher Degrees:

Applying for and Being Accepted to Graduate School

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Agenda and Goals

- Who We Are
- Why Pursue Graduate School
- Writing a Personal Statement
- Letters of Recommendation
- The Application Process
- Finding the Right Fit – Program, Location, Mentor
- Funding Opportunities



Who We Are

- Kay - education and work experience
- Fara - education and work experience
- Oklahoma Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation
 - Funded by the National Science Foundation
 - Supports minority students majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines
 - Main goals include research experiences and graduate school preparation
 - Currently, 50-60 scholars at OSU; ~200 scholars state-wide
 - Since 2009, ~52% of graduates have attended graduate school

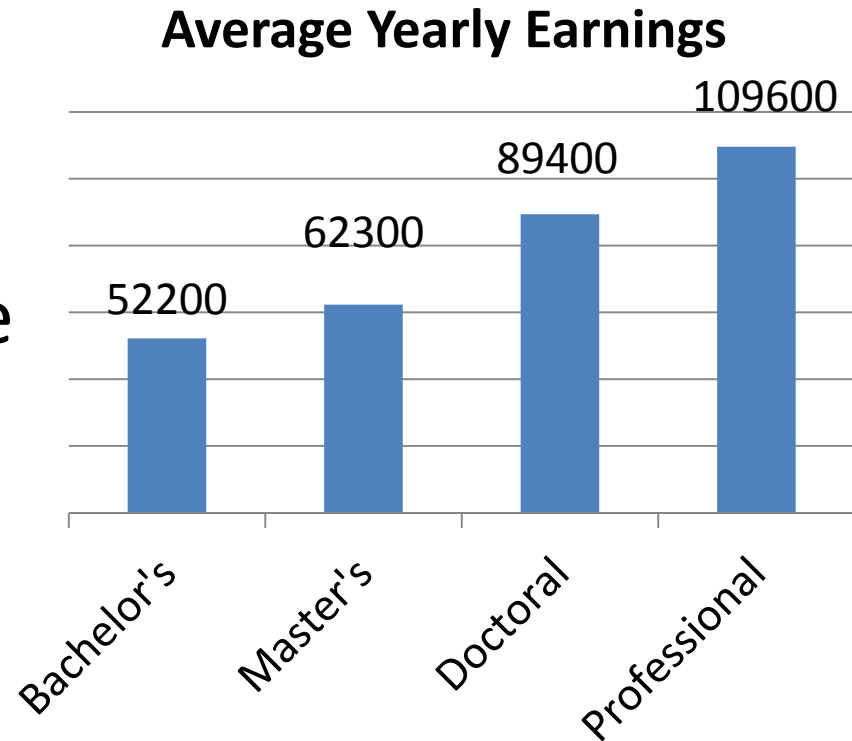


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Why Pursue Graduate School

- Greater Earning Potential
- The Bachelor's degree is no longer "good enough"

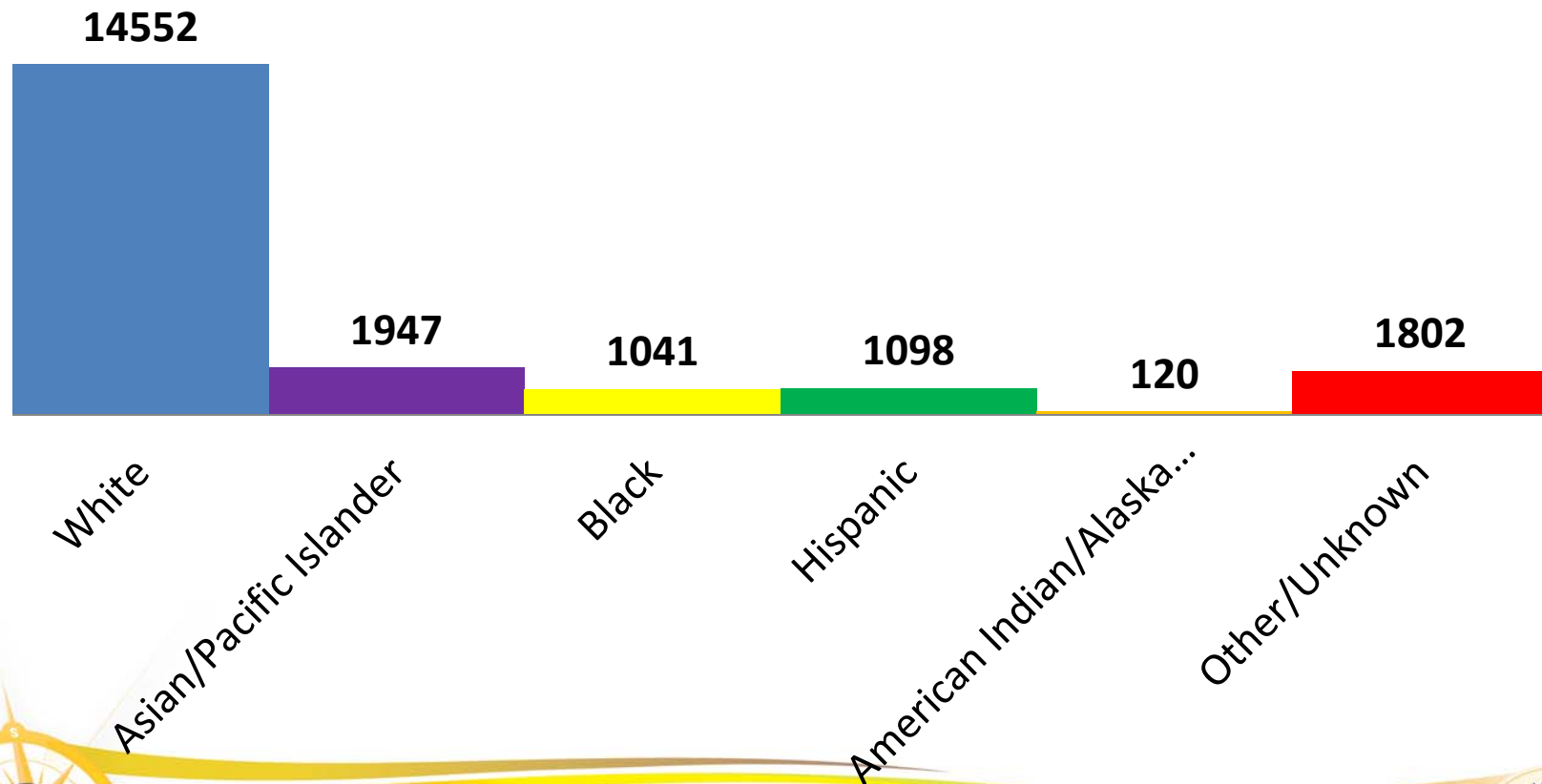


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Why Grad School – The Need for More Mentors

Science and Engineering Doctorates Awarded in 2009



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Writing a Personal Statement

- Grammar
- ***Tell your story.....***
- Have multiple people read statements
- Writing ***process - grammar***
- Reuse but also tailor
- Always proofread once more before submitting – GRAMMAR, headings, etc.



Letters of Recommendation – Who to Ask

- High rank vs. close relationship
- Different aspects of you
 - Research abilities and experiences
 - Academic Year Assistantships
 - Classes
 - **Internships**
 - Leadership skills
 - Academics
 - Work ethic and other skills
- Have an “emergency” recommender



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Letters of Recommendation – How to Ask

- Ask, but find someone else if:
 - They are busy or don't have time
 - Don't feel comfortable
 - They are hesitant for any reason
- Provide a copy of recommender format/topics
- Provide a copy of your resume
- Provide a deadline
 - Give yourself a time buffer



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The Application Process

- Application Deadlines
 - One to be considered
 - One to be accepted
 - One for full financial consideration
- Minimum GPA
 - One to apply
 - One to be considered
 - One to be accepted



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Finding the Right Fit

- Your goals and interests vs. the program
- Possible mentors and advisors*
- Location
- Community
- Costs
- Financial aid and funding sources*



Finding the Right Mentor

Professional AND Personal Match

You will need someone who:

- Guides and advises
 - Right level of supervision
- Supports and challenges
 - Right balance of “push” and “nurture”



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Funding Opportunities

Types

- Grants
- Fellowships
- Scholarships
- Assistantships
- Loans

Places to Find

- Government
(NSF, NIH, DOD, Tribal)
- Organizations
(Ford, Sloan, Gates*)
- Industry
- Campus Specific



Review

- Personal Statement – Writing Process
- Letters of Recommendation – Who and How
- Application Process – Deadlines and GPA's
- The Right Fit – What to Consider
- Funding Opportunities - Resources



Get Started

- Keep organized
 - Make lists / spreadsheets
 - Create files
 - Use a tote box, binder, file cabinet...
- Included in today's handouts:
 - Helpful tip sheets
 - Samples / templates
- Sample “tool box” available for inspection



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Questions?

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