"We have to keep communicating! Find people in the EXITO community who are good at science communication and ask for tips. Don’t be intimidated by learning. Practice on each other within the community. Think of science communication as one of many skills to learn as a scientist."

-Dr. Dora Raymaker (EXITO Research Mentor and Pilot Project Awardee)

Dear EXITO Community,

We have spent a lot of time in this space reflecting on the intersectionality of our unique identities and our role(s) as scholars/researchers/mentors. We are expected to resolve these identities and articulate our academic and professional pursuits in a meaningful way, no matter who we are talking to. This could be during an interview for a potential research placement, in a grant application, or with our family and friends at home.

There is no handbook on how we effectively communicate our research. It becomes another responsibility we take on as researchers. We want to take our time in the community newsletters this spring to highlight some amazing BUILD EXITO community members as we consider how we effectively talk about our research pursuits and results.

We are going to start with BUILD EXITO Pilot Project and RLC lead, Dr. Dora Raymaker who created space and a new avenue for conversations about her research studying autism in the workplace. Last month, Dr. Raymaker conducted a successful Ask Me Anything (AMA) session on Reddit, answering more than 25 of the over 250 questions and comments logged in her one-hour online session. This was the very first science AMA Reddit produced at PSU in conjunction with our partners in University Communications. Through creating this opportunity, Dr. Raymaker was able to engage a broader audience of stakeholders and supporters of her research.

She was also highlighted this week in the Portland Tribune!

We asked Dr. Raymaker a few questions, her insightful responses follow:
Q: What does it mean to “share research with others”?

To me it means presenting information in a way that makes it understandable and useful to a specific audience.

Q: Why is that so hard?

To do this effectively means understanding the audience, including what about the research matters to them. Understanding a community takes work. Communicating technical information is a complex skill. People go to school just to learn technical communications; there’s a lot more to it than many people realize.

Q: What can the EXITO community do to support each other in our efforts to communication about what we are doing as researchers (both at the student and faculty level)?

Foremost, keep communicating! Find people in the EXITO community who are good at science communication and ask for tips. Don’t be intimidated by learning. Practice on each other within the community. Think of science communication as one of many skills to learn as a scientist.

Whew! The application for our next cohort of Scholars is now closed!

Thank you and congratulations to the hard-working EXITO staff, faculty, Scholars, and mentors for another successful recruitment season. We had over 200 applications submitted across the 10 partner sites, which means a lot of thoughtful work ahead of us as we move to the next phase of reviewing applications and interviewing applicants.

Dr. Crespo on Tour!

Dr. Crespo took his spring break a little early to visit BUILD EXITO partners in the Pacific Rim. During his travels he was able to learn about the incredible progress each EXITO site was making and to answer questions, address concerns, and discuss next steps.

If you spot Dr. Crespo during his travels, post your pic to our FB page with #drcrespopacificrimadventure

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I chose to participate inBUILD EXITO
because I believe that there is a need to build a diverse pool of scientific researchers in the U.S., who are not only passionate in the work that they do, but also committed to addressing health problems in their respective communities. BUILD EXITO helps make this happen by providing students opportunities to work with researchers and mentors in their field of interest, as well as giving them tools and resources to succeed in their classes and improve their skills in research.

My goal as a research mentor in the EXITO Program is to improve the research skills of my mentees and to increase their interest in the area of public health and health disparities. With the help of my mentees, I hope to be more efficient in implementing my research and to be able to publish at least one manuscript related to my research.

As a Filipino immigrant and being the first in my family to obtain baccalaureate and graduate degrees in the U.S., I see myself in the faces of many of the EXITO scholars. I hope that my experience as a person of color and a first generation college student who has become a successful public health researcher can be a source of inspiration to those that I mentor.