

How Is The URM Mentorship Program Structured?

ATS URM mentorship is a 2-year long program that begins in May each year at the annual ATS International Conference (IC). A new cohort is onboarded every year. In advance of the ATS IC, mentees are assigned to a “mentee liaison,” typically a senior ATS member. Mentee liaisons are assigned based on liaison/mentee interests (e.g., clinical practice, medical education, research, scholarship, or work-life balance). There is a kick-off meeting/reception at the ATS IC where mentees attending the conference will get a chance to meet their liaisons as well as other members of the HEDC. Over the course of the year, the HEDC organizes webinars, online trainings, and other online sessions that touch on issues unique or specific to the URM mentees. The HEDC also periodically provides virtual “office hours” where the mentees can touch base with their liaisons, as well as virtual networking sessions where they can collaborate on projects or simply catch up with each other.



Learn more about the
ATS URM Program



Please contact the HEDC at hedc@thoracic.org if you need more information. The ATS point of contact is **Mr. Courtney L. White**, staff liaison to the Health Equity and Diversity Committee.

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Underrepresented in Medicine (URM) Mentorship Program

The Health Equity and Diversity Committee (HEDC) ATS URM Mentorship program is a component of the society-wide ATS Mentoring Program—facilitated throughout all 14 ATS Assemblies—that is designed to connect early to mid-career professionals with senior members. The intent of all ATS mentorship programs is to create a supportive community for career development and networking. The URM Mentorship program is sponsored and overseen by the ATS HEDC and is aimed at ATS members who are senior fellows, post-doctoral fellows, or junior faculty, and who identify as a member of a group that is under-represented (URM) in medicine.

Why URM Mentoring at the ATS?

Organizations that have a variety of experiences and viewpoints represented are shown to have more long-term success. And specialty medical societies such as the ATS ought to have a membership and leadership makeup representative of the general audience they are trying to serve. To that end, the ATS's URM Mentorship Program was created by the HEDC in 2021 to help address the unique needs of those early-career ATS members who identify as being URM. The 2021 pilot program consisted of formal activities, guidance by HEDC members, as well as peer and group mentoring, and the format remains the same.



Benefits to Participants

- Improve skillset needed for leadership development
- Career advancement and networking
- Increase personal growth and help to reduce stress and burnout
- Gain knowledge of and exposure to ATS activities and opportunities
- Psychological benefits of being heard, seen, and acknowledged
- Gain tools to combat isolation, microaggressions, prejudices, unconscious bias and lack of support
- Helps innovation in research and clinical practice
- Connect to peers and explore opportunities for collaborations
- Provides longitudinal interaction with ATS liaisons

Benefits to the ATS

- Recognizes emerging leaders from various backgrounds
- Increases innovation in pulmonary, critical care and sleep
- Provides diversity support for early career URM members
- Provides a national forum for equitable listening



One in-person URM mentorship meeting

is planned for each ATS International Conference. However, all other meetings (webinars, training sessions, etc.) will be held virtually along with the office hours and collaboration sessions. It is expected that there will be approximately one formal didactic session per quarter; one optional 'office hour' session per month; and mentee networking sessions as requested by the mentees. The ultimate goal is for URM mentees to gain practical insights on networking, tips on career advancement, how to deal with obstacles faced in academia, the manuscripts and grants review process, and curriculum development. URM mentee will also receive periodic contact from the assigned HEDC mentee liaison between formal meetings.