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Culturally Aware Mentoring

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Mentoring is an important factor in the satisfaction, productivity and persistence of mentees across disciplines yet research shows that the landscape of mentoring is unequal. Mentees from traditionally underrepresented groups (UG) report less access to mentoring and rate the mentoring they do receive lower in quality. Moreover, mentees from UGs more frequently report feeling a sense of isolation in their research environments and pressure to hide their cultural identities while at work. Mentors of these diverse mentees report uncertainty about if and how to broach topics of belonging, diversity and inclusion in their mentoring relationships. In this plenary session, we will explore the concept of culturally aware mentoring. Following a brief introductory presentation, four mentees will share insights gained from their lived experience; how they are navigating their science and cultural identities and how mentoring has played a role in their educational path. Each panelist will address the following questions: •What has worked for you in your mentoring relationship overall? •What did not work so well? •Around the topic of culturally aware mentoring: Have you been able to share salient aspects of cultural identity (-ies) with your mentor and/or your research team members? Why or why not? •What approaches have mentors used to demonstrate their support of you and all of your identities? How have they or could they demonstrate their cultural awareness in this regard?