

The BEST program at UNC-Chapel Hill

5-year, \$1.8 million grant from the NIH to expand our career development offerings through TIBBS: Training Initiatives in Biomedical & Biological Sciences



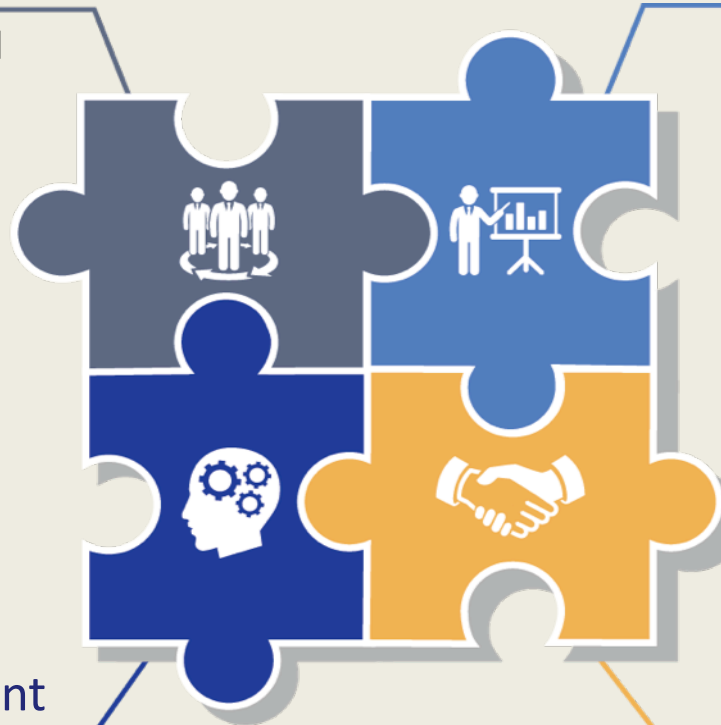
ImPACT: Immersion Program to Advance Career Training

Career Cohorts

- Peer-led, career-focused
- Networking lunches
- Resource sharing

Career Education

- IDP workshops
- Career-specific workshops
- “Career blitz” day
- Postdoc boot camp



Professional Development

- Fellowship writing
- Academic development
- Leadership/professionalism
- Mentoring/teaching

Immersive Learning

- Company site visits
- 1-month internships



Student-led career cohorts:

Topics depend on current student interests



Science Writing
and
Communication



Annual budget of \$2k/cohort:
pizza, travel, etc.
Originally from ImPACT,
now from SOM to continue
BEST-sponsored activities



Science Policy and
Advocacy Group



Academic and
Research
Intensive Careers





Internship program is for all science career paths

- Fully tailored FT or PT 160-hour internship options in:
 - Clinical research organizations (CROs)
 - Regulatory affairs
 - Industry research
 - Science policy
 - Grantwriting
 - Outreach
 - Teaching
 - and more...
- Paid at current stipend rate (partner + institutional funds, NOT PI)
- Students eligible after passing qualifying exams
- 25-30 per year, mostly in summer, ~4:1 students:postdocs
- Staff time to set up internships is minimal; students determine who they are interested in, then staff help make the final match.

Not intended to lead to job offers,
but sometimes does anyway



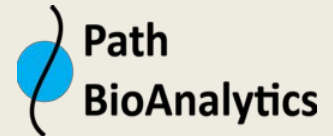
Some of our wide variety of internship partners



**North Carolina
Biotechnology Center**



**PARION
SCIENCES**





Culture change: increasing faculty buy-in to career training

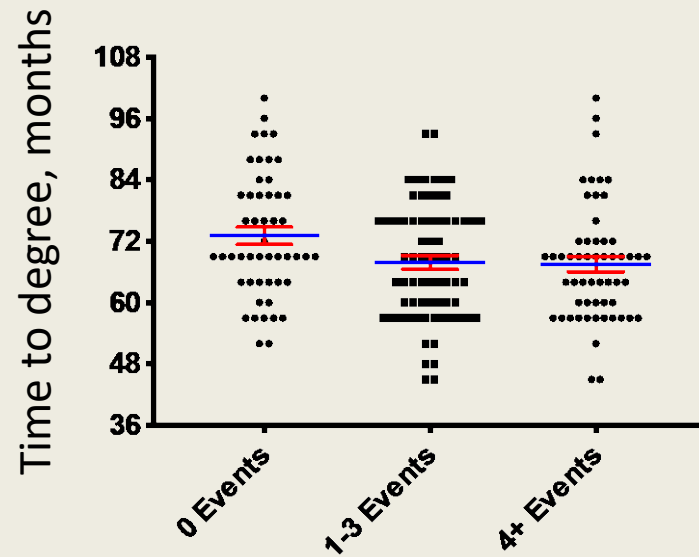
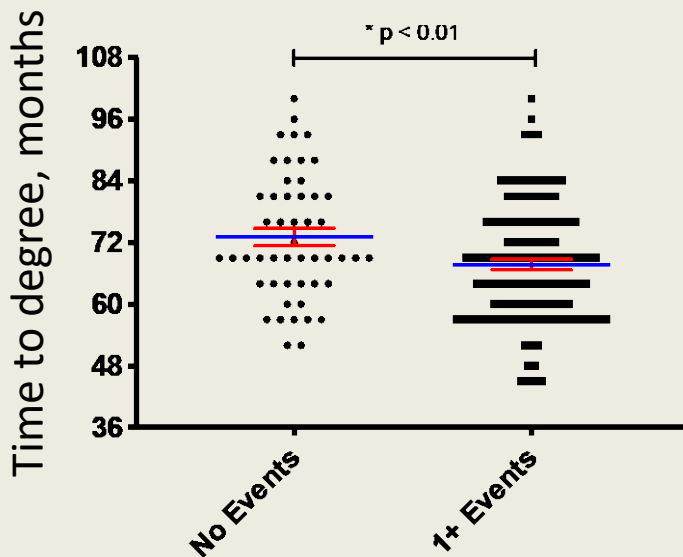
● Addressing faculty resistance to trainees being out of the lab for career training:

- Acknowledge faculty fears about losing trainee productivity in the current hypercompetitive funding climate
- Show the data:
 - Benefits to faculty include improved trainee recruitment, increased trainee motivation, enhanced fellowship and job search success
 - The career landscape for trainees has changed dramatically
 - Trainees are under tremendous mental health pressure; this helps
 - Career training does not steer trainees away from academia
 - Participation in career training does not increase time to graduation or decrease publication productivity
- Faculty can also benefit from career training: mentorship, management skills, grantwriting workshops, etc.

Participation in professional development events does not increase time to graduation

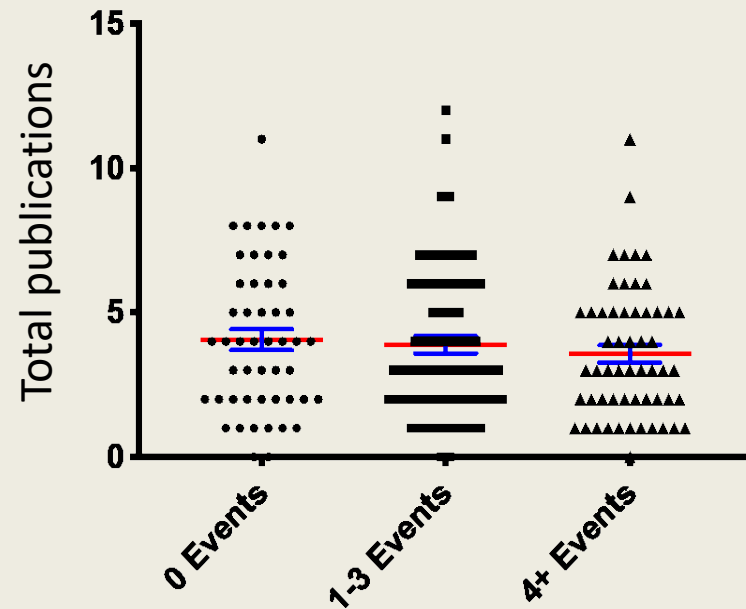
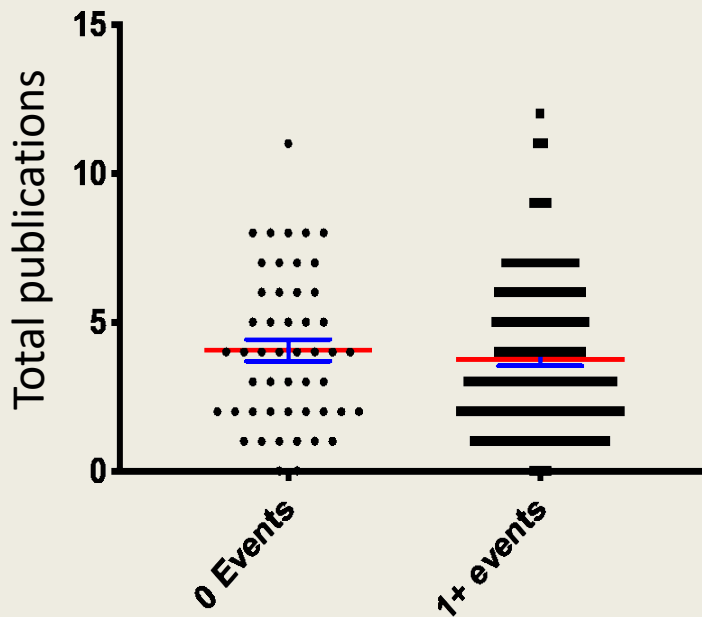
Median time to degree:
Participants: 64 months
Non-participants: 69 months

No difference based on participation in many events vs fewer events



Total of 131 graduations in first 2 years of BEST award
68 students participated in at least one event; 63 participated in none
Includes students in both longer and shorter (e.g., chemistry, pharmacy) PhD programs
Anyone who didn't finish with a PhD was removed from these data

Participation in professional development events does not decrease publications

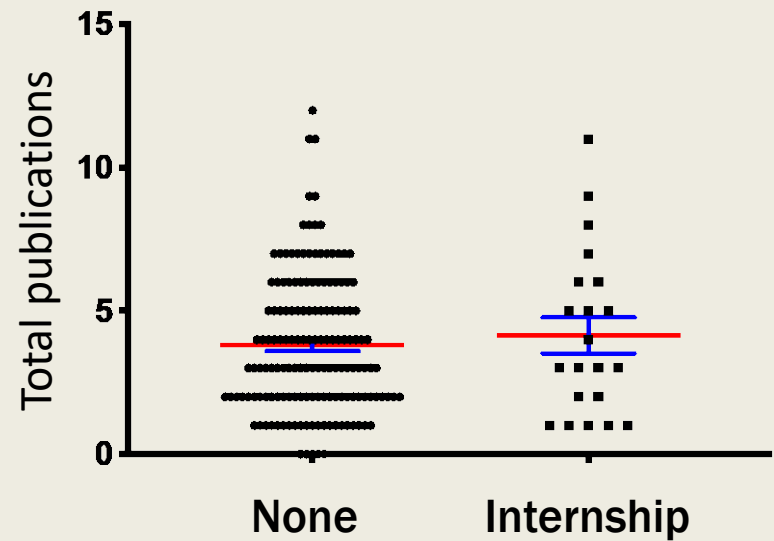
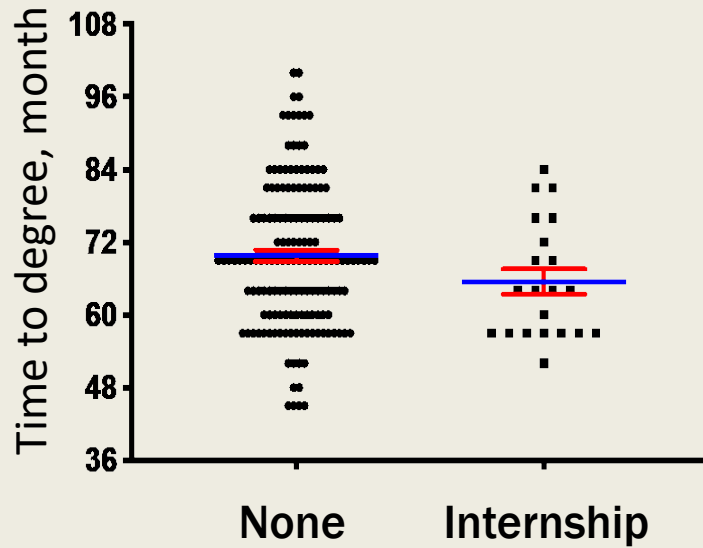


Same analyses run on first-author publications, weighted first-authorships;
review vs research, etc.:

Same results no matter what – no difference.



Internships do not decrease productivity



No internships without PI approval, may cause some bias in terms of who applies.
90% of applicants are selected for internships; non-selected students mainly too early.

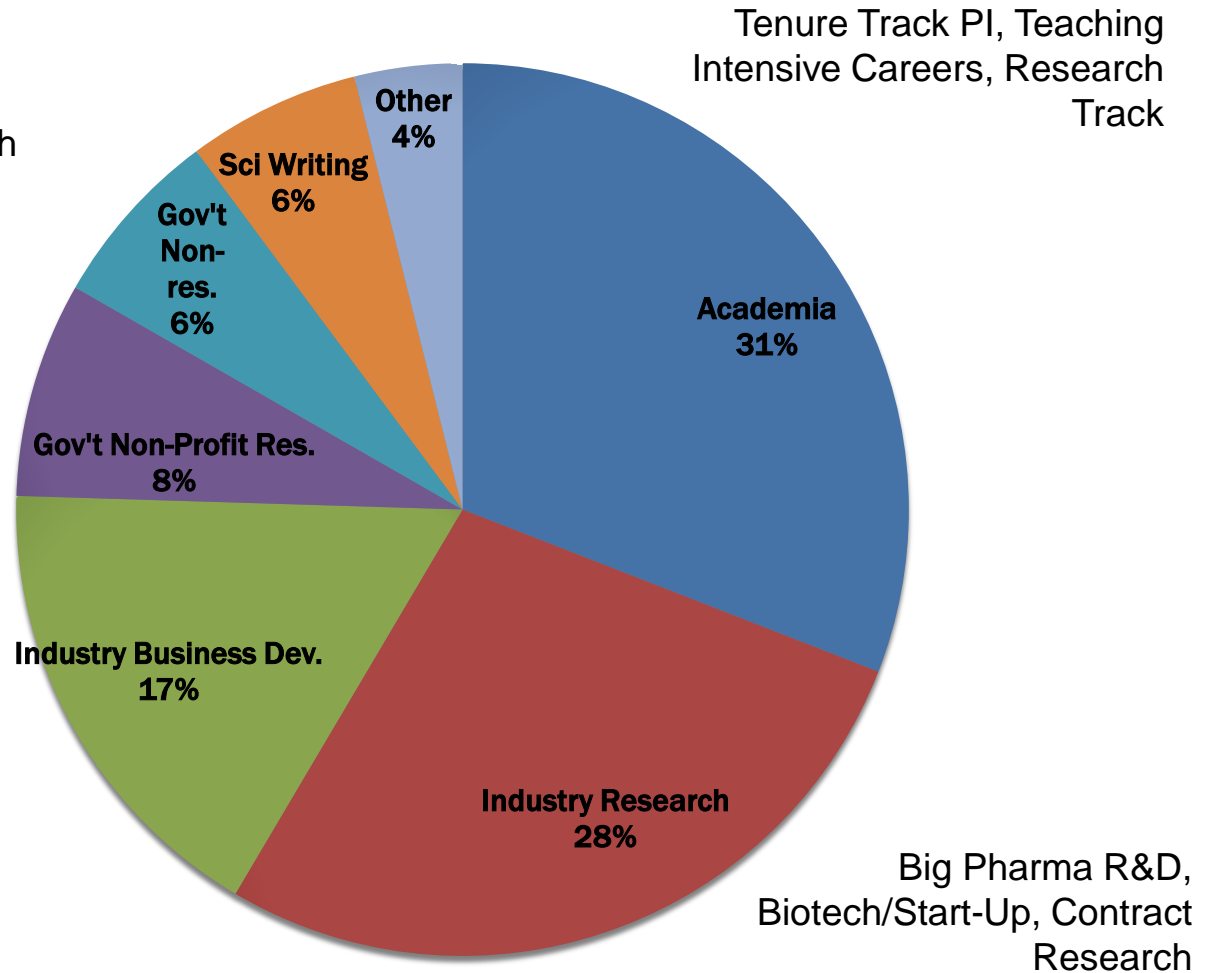
Internship is the most time-intensive career training activity of our program;
would expect negative effects to appear here if anywhere; doesn't happen.

Interactive tool: tracking UNC trainee career placement

NIH Grant Manager,
Regulatory Affairs,
Science Policy, Outreach

PI or Staff
Scientist at NIH

Entrepreneur/CEO,
Consulting, IP/Tech
Transfer,
Manager/Director, MSL





ImPACT team



**Patrick Brandt, PhD, ImPACT Director
Co-PI ImPACT Program**



Beka Layton, PhD, TIBBS Director



**Patrick Brennwald, PhD, Professor
PI ImPACT Program**



**Jean Cook, PhD, Professor & Associate Dean
Co-PI ImPACT Program**