This session shares a diverse group of researchers’ astrobiology experiences and explores topics such as institutional support, student interest, and models for sustaining or expanding opportunities for diversity in the field.

Chair: Leigh Arino de la Rubia
Todd Gary

8:00 a.m. Cavosie A. J. *  
*Impact* of the NAI-MIRS Program on Astrobiology Research at a Minority Institution: Connecting Univ. of Puerto Rico to South Africa to Univ. of Wisconsin to NASA [#5422]
This abstract describes the outcome of the research and student-related activities at the University of Puerto Rico that resulted from the NAI-MIRS award I received in 2009.

8:15 a.m. Melchiorre E. B. * Lopez A. Velasquez C. M.
Stable Isotope Astrobiology at Hispanic Serving Institutions: Si Se Puede! [#5366]
A “crawl-walk-run” strategy has been used to create a strong, sustainable program in stable isotope geochemistry with an emphasis on astrobiology. The result was the creation of a vibrant program addressing the record of early life on Earth.

8:30 a.m. Misra P. * Garcia R. Mahaffy P. R.
An organic contaminant database and library has been developed for use with the Sample Analysis at Mars (SAM) instrumentation utilizing laboratory-based Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry measurements of pyrolyzed and baked material samples.

8:45 a.m. Mendez A. *
Studying Planetary Habitability After a NASA Astrobiology Institute MIRS Sabbatical [#5606]
The NASA Astrobiology Institute Minority Institution Research Support (NAI-MIRS) opened an opportunity for professors and students to study planetary habitability at the University of Puerto Rico.

9:00 a.m. Walter D. K. *
Diversity in Astrobiology: Surviving Financial, Institutional and Technical Extremes [#5486]
We discuss the development of an astrobiology program at an undergraduate institution, South Carolina State University, a HBCU in a rural setting. Included are successes and barriers to developing curriculum, research and outreach programs.

9:15 a.m. Tariq M. A. * Shishodia S. Ramesh G. T. Sodipe A. Jejelowo O. Pourmand N.
DNA Repair Genes Expression Analysis of Acute Dose Charge Particle Radiation [#5363]
This study will present gene expression changes induced by positively charged particle in four categories i.e. 0 Gy, 0.1 Gy, 1.0 Gy and 2.0 Gy in nine different DNA repair genes from testes of mouse using qPCR analysis.
9:30 a.m.  Bueno J. E.  * Gonzalez W. A.  Moreno A. N.  Sarmiento G. A.
**Astrobiology Program in Colombia: A New Educational Tool**  [#5380]
In search of answers to the educational paradigms, in action to educate and inspire students in science and technology, and if each activity where the word education is relevant to define each process that human beings develops in interaction with knowledge.

9:45 a.m.  McCoy K. B.  * Derecho I.  Dallal F.  Venkateswaran K.  Mogul R.
**Student Perspectives to Conducting Astrobiology Research at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions**  [#5603]
The student-centered challenges, concerns, and benefits to conducting astrobiological research at minority-serving primarily undergraduate institutions will be discussed in this session.

10:00 a.m.  BREAK