

Diversity Statement

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Since 2021, I am volunteering as a team lead for the [Graduate Applications International Network \(GAIN\)](#). The main aim of GAIN is to build a pipeline connecting aspiring economists from African countries with leading graduate schools worldwide. We offer qualified applicants a combination of educational webinars, personalized mentoring, and targeted financial assistance to overcome the many barriers to accessing graduate education from a low-income country. Our webinars and mentors guide participants through the graduate school application process, reducing admissions' significant information barriers. The financial support provided by our organization helps participants cover the costs of applying (including testing and application fees), which are often prohibitive for students from low-income countries.

As [Bayer and Rouse \(2016\)](#) write, “[t]he economics profession includes disproportionately few women and members of historically underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups, relative both to the overall population and to other academic disciplines. This underrepresentation within the field of economics is present at the undergraduate level, continues into the ranks of the academy, and is barely improving over time. It likely hampers the discipline, constraining the range of issues addressed and limiting our collective ability to understand familiar issues from new and innovative perspectives.”

As a team leader for the GAIN network, I actively strive to increase diversity in the economics profession. At GAIN, I am responsible for leading a team of ten volunteers to manage all mentee-related aspects of our program. This includes all steps from selecting mentees to deciding on offers: application screening, support in preparing applications, standardized testing, securing fee waivers for GAIN mentees, and submitting applications through GAIN. In the current application cycle (admission in fall 2023), GAIN supports 80 mentees (out of 140 applicants to the mentoring program). As a team lead, I am also responsible for contributing to the overall development of the foundation. For instance, I am closely involved in the process of securing future funding by co-developing grant applications. Moreover, I am deeply involved in the (impact) evaluation of our organization's different components. I look forward to continue working closely with the GAIN network in the future and passing on my knowledge about the application process to students from underrepresented backgrounds. I also look forward to promoting inclusivity through my future research and teaching projects. Finally, I seek to help students from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups navigate through the various support programs that have started in recent years (e.g., the [Research In Colors Foundation](#) and the [Sadie Collective](#), or university-based programs like the [MIT/Harvard Application Assistance and Mentoring Program](#), Duke's [Economics Graduate Mentorship Program](#), and the [Applicant Mentoring Programme](#) in the UK). Linked to my own predoctoral research experience, I also hope to guide students in their applications to the [Kabir Banerjee Predoctoral Fellowship](#) by The Weiss Fund.

References

Bayer, Amanda, and Cecilia Elena Rouse. “Diversity in the economics profession: A new attack on an old problem.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 30.4 (2016): 221-42. APA