



From the first of the AAAS Science and Technology Fellows to attend the CSSP Leadership Development Workshop in December 2018:

*Thank you for the opportunity to attend and participate in the CSSP Winter Leadership Workshop! I found this an incredible and invaluable professional development opportunity for many reasons (for a short, bulleted version, see the end of this message). First, it's always inspiring to see where AAAS STP Fellow alums are now doing, and the talks given by STPF alums Sarah Staton (currently at the US Department of State) on "The Science of Science Communication" and Kenneth Gibbs (currently at the NIH/NIGMS) on "Science By All, For All: A report on Graduate STEM Education for the 21st Century" were truly informative and impactful.*

*Beyond this, the slate of talks given, ranging from open access to election security to frontiers of science were eye-opening and gave me deep insight into the current state of science, policy, and their intersection. The panels were hard-hitting and informative in a friendly way, and I especially appreciated the panel featuring Dr. Holt on scientists and politicians speaking the same language. Beyond this, the committee meetings gave me a chance to hear how current society leadership is thinking about addressing some of the biggest problems in STEM today, from inclusion to funding to communicating with stakeholders, and the sessions on society best practices in terms of management, governance, and related issues were helpful. These are the types of sessions future leaders (like me!) need! There's a wealth of great information out there in existing society leadership, and being able to learn from these individuals is an invaluable and otherwise irreproducible experience.*

*Finally, as with most conferences, the most valuable part was being able to connect and talk with the other attendees, including current president Deborah Bronk; distinguished guests Dr. France Cordova, Dr. Rush Holt, and Dr. Steven Pinker; and informal conversations with nearly all of the other attendees, particularly Sonia Zarate at SACNAS, Malcolm Butler at the Association for Science Teacher Education, and Bethany Johns at AIP, among others. These conversations are leading to an exchange of ideas and the early stages of collaborative relationships. In particular, Drs. Zarate, Butler, and Johns and I talked intensively about inclusion in STEM at all levels, and how we might contribute to advancing inclusion in the academy and with societies.*

*In short, this was an incredible opportunity for me to grow as an emerging leader myself, and I hope for CSSP as well. Thank you again for your gracious invitation to participate!*

*You also asked me how future AAAS STP Fellows might benefit from attending; one, their mere presence allows them to gain insight from some of the leading thinkers and leaders in STEM now. They would especially benefit from the frontiers talks, the sessions on sharing best practices among societies, and the sessions on communicating broadly. More importantly, I think fellows might benefit from structured guidance. I am deeply indebted to Patricia Simmons for her expert guidance as I navigated the conference, and both you and she were incredible in introducing me to other attendees and facilitating connections. This mentorship is of paramount importance for anyone hoping to operate in the science policy space, so continuing this, even in an informal sense, going forward is much appreciated and much recommended.*