



PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Media Contact:

ASHG Press Office

301-634-7346

press@ashg.org

ASHG Awards First Genetics Education Research Grant to Dr. Bethany Bowling of Northern Kentucky University *ASHG Grant Award to Provide \$10,000 in Funding for Research on Testing the Effectiveness of Various Genetics Education Strategies*

BETHESDA, MD – September 15, 2010 – A local Biology Assistant Professor, Bethany Bowling, PhD, from Northern Kentucky University (NKU), was recently awarded the first genetics education grant from the [American Society of Human Genetics \(ASHG\)](#) under its new Genetics Education Research Program. The primary goal of ASHG's [Genetics Education Research Program \(GERP\)](#) is to promote genetic literacy among teachers and students by supporting research related to genetics education in U.S. schools, grades 7-20.

Dr. Bowling is an Assistant Professor in the Biological Sciences Department at Northern Kentucky University. Her research interests center broadly on biology education and human genetics, and her current research in these topic areas focuses on understanding students' misconceptions and improving instruction and curricula in genetics.



Dr. Bowling will use the grant award funding from ASHG – which consists of \$10,000 distributed over two years – to test the effectiveness of various educational strategies that will help prevent students from developing common misconceptions about genetics.

ASHG has published research on common misconceptions in genetics (see [2008 paper published in GENETICS](#) by K. Shaw et al.) and research on strategies for improving genetics education in the U.S. (see [2009 paper published in the American Journal of Human Genetics](#) by M.J. Dougherty). Accordingly, Dr. Bowling's research will complement the Society's ongoing efforts to modernize the genetics curriculum in the U.S. education system. Specifically, her research will focus on studying large-enrollment undergraduate classes for non-science majors, and thus may eventually have a broader impact on improving genetics instruction in U.S. schools.

Dr. Bowling received her Bachelor's degree from Thomas More College in 2002, and went on to earn her Masters in Science in 2004 and her Doctorate from the University of Cincinnati in 2007. During her tenure as a PhD student at the University of Cincinnati, Bowling was named as one of eight graduate students nationally to receive the K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award from the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) in 2007. This award recognizes academic and civic responsibility and promise as a future leader of higher education.

For more information about ASHG's Genetics Education Research Program, please go to: <http://www.ashg.org/education/gerp.shtml>.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF HUMAN GENETICS

Founded in 1948, the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) is the primary professional membership organization for human genetics specialists worldwide. The nearly 8,000 members of ASHG include researchers, academicians, clinicians, laboratory practice professionals, genetic counselors, nurses and others with a special interest in human genetics. The Society's mission is to serve research scientists, health professionals and the public by providing forums to: (1) share research results through the Annual Meeting and in *The American Journal of Human Genetics (AJHG)*; (2) advance genetic research by advocating for research support; (3) educate future genetics professionals, health care providers, advocates, teachers, students and the general public about all aspects of human genetics; and (4) promote genetic services and support responsible social and scientific policies. For more information about ASHG, please visit <http://www.ashg.org/>.

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