

SBM’s “Monica L. Baskin Diversity Institute for Emerging Leaders”

About Dr. Baskin:

Dr. Monica Baskin is a Professor with tenure in the Division of Preventive Medicine and is the Vice Chair for Culture and Diversity in the Department of Medicine in the School of Medicine at The University of Alabama and Birmingham (UAB). Her contributions to education in behavioral medicine, health disparities, and culture are impressive. Nationally recognized as a behavioral scientist, Dr. Baskin has had a significant impact in reducing health disparities in obesity treatment and cancer control among African Americans living in the Deep South. Based on her expertise in community-based participatory research on dietary and exercise behavior in underserved minority populations, she has been invited to serve as an expert advisor by the Institute of Medicine, the American Heart Association, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Dr. Baskin has also held numerous university, local, state, and national leadership positions over the course of her career. She has led efforts on health equity and health in-all-policies in a county-wide partnership of over 100 agencies including the local health department, United Way, and a local philanthropic organization. This work led to Dr. Baskin being selected as part of the first cohort of the RWJF Culture of Health Leaders (CoHL) program. This 3-year program was designed to better prepare a cadre of passionate leaders to work across diverse sectors to promote a culture of health. In addition, in 2017, she was named the inaugural Vice Chair for Culture and Diversity in the UAB Department of Medicine. As the only PhD, behavioral scientist, and under-represented minority in the senior leadership of this department of nearly 400 faculty and 1200 staff, Dr. Baskin has already had a tremendous impact on expanding opportunities for behavioral medicine in the context of the education, research, and clinical missions of the UAB academic medical center.

Dr. Baskin has been an active member of SBM since 2003 and became a fellow in 2017. Over the course of Dr. Baskin’s involvement with SBM, she had served as a member of multiple Special Interest Groups (SIGs) including Health Equity, Cancer, Women’s Health, Child and Family Health, and Obesity and Eating Disorders and has participated on the Membership Council. She has also served in multiple leadership roles for the society including: Membership Council Chair (2013-2015), Member Delegate (2015-2018), Nomination Committee member (2015), Fellow Selection Subcommittee member (2017), and Chair of the Diversity Leadership Pipeline Working Group (2017-2019), President-Elect (2019), and President (2020). Currently, Dr. Baskin a member of the Mid-Career Leadership Institute Steering Committee (2015-present), member of the Development Committee (2018-present), chair of the Nominating Committee (2021-22) and Past President (2021-22). Dr. Baskin’s Diversity Leadership Pipeline Working Group recommended the creation of SBM’s Diversity Institute for Emerging Leaders, putting forward a detailed proposal on institute goals, content, and much more. Dr. Baskin spoke at the institute’s inaugural workshop in spring 2021. Additionally, as part of her SBM presidency, Dr. Baskin identified a 2021 Annual Meeting theme focused on inclusion; among many inclusive efforts present at the meeting was a slate of keynote speakers who were all African American. The equity-focused theme of the 2021 Annual Meeting was an exemplar of her continual work to ensure that SBM is a professional organization that recognizes, values, and supports the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

During her presidency, Dr. Baskin also commissioned and helped create a virtual issue of *Translational Behavioral Medicine* focused on health equity research.

Overall, experience in leadership and mentoring for improving health equity are among Dr. Baskin’s most prominent strengths. Dr. Baskin’s work with minority scientists has been recognized locally in Alabama and on a national level as well. At UAB, her leadership in health equity, culture, and diversity has been acknowledged by her selection as the first Vice Chair of Culture and Diversity in the Department of

Medicine. Dr. Baskin's national advocacy of culture and diversity in science makes her especially valuable. She has an ability to positively influence and motivate minority clinicians, educators, and scientists building careers in behavioral medicine. Furthermore, she has demonstrated exceptional experience in providing high level coaching in diversity for senior scientists, educators, clinicians, and leaders in behavioral medicine that will broaden the reach and capacity to support minority students, post-doctoral fellows, and junior faculty members. For example, she has intentionally guided the development of Dr. Courtney Bonner. Through her mentorship, Dr. Bonner has served SBM in multiple roles, including as the Chairperson for the Diversity Institute. In addition, Dr. Baskin's leadership has contributed to SBM being a safe space for members of color to develop and grow.

Dr. Baskin's accomplishments as a scientist, educator, and leader in the field of behavioral medicine, and her service to SBM and its members, are most deserving of this recognition.