



*Edward
Alexander
Bouchet*

**Edward A. Bouchet Undergraduate Fellowship
Program
Yale University**

Funded by the Offices of the President and Provost

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Mission Statement

The Edward A. Bouchet Undergraduate Fellowship Program is designed to increase the number of minority students and others with a demonstrated commitment to eradicating racial disparities, who will pursue PhDs and subsequent careers in academia.

Edward A. Bouchet

Biography

Edward Alexander Bouchet was born in 1852 in New Haven, Connecticut. He entered Yale in 1870 and graduated *summa cum laude* in 1874. Bouchet completed a Ph.D. in Experimental Physics at Yale two years later. Bouchet was the first African American to complete a doctoral degree in a U.S. university and the sixth U.S. American to obtain a doctorate in physics. Due to the official racial discrimination and segregation of the time, Bouchet faced great difficulty acquiring employment as a university professor. He eventually taught at the Institute for Colored Youth (ICY) in Philadelphia, maintaining this position for twenty-six years.

For more on Bouchet's academic career see:
Ronald E. Mickens, ed. *Edward A. Bouchet: The First African American Graduate* (NJ: World Scientific, 2002)

Program History

The Edward A. Bouchet Undergraduate Fellowship Program was inaugurated in the 1994-1995 academic year. President Richard C. Levin and Provosts Judith Rodlin and Alison Richard initiated the program with aims of continuing with the efforts of the Mellon Minority (Mays) Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) Program. As such, the mission statement of the Bouchet program is to increase the number of minorities and those committed to eradicating racial disparities at the university teaching level. In contrast to the MMUF Program, however, the Bouchet Fellowship is open to all fields in the Arts and Sciences.

With the aim of honoring the academic aspirations of Edward A. Bouchet, the Bouchet Fellowship Program encourages interest in academic careers among Yale undergraduates. The program seeks to achieve this goal by facilitating mentorship relationships between students and members of the faculty, creating a space where undergraduates can discuss and develop their research with other peers, and providing opportunities for students to engage in research and other academic pursuits during their junior and senior years. Fellows are provided with monies to work on research projects during the academic year (usually paid in monthly installments) along with summer stipends to conduct research during their sophomore and junior years. Additional funding, a maximum of \$500, is also available during the academic year to support travel or other research related expenses. The Bouchet Fellowship Program does not, however, provide a loan repayment program, as is the case with the MMUF Program.

Associate Dean Judith Dozier Hackman served as the Bouchet Program Director and Bouchet Advisory Committee Co-Chair during the program's inception in 1994. Professor Robert Stepto also co-chaired the Bouchet Advisory Committee and helped to guide the design of the new program along with selecting the first round of Bouchet Fellows. Dean of Yale College Richard H. Brodhead and Dean of Graduate School Thomas Appelquist appointed the remainder of the Advisory Committee, which included Assistant Dean Shannon Salinas, Ana Ponder (graduate student coordinator), Professors Richard K. Chang, Cathy Cohen, Antonio C. Lasaga, Manuel Martin-Rodriguez, and Deans Deborah S. Thomas and Kimberly Goff-Crews.¹

In the mid-1990s, the Bouchet and Mellon Mays program came under the same organizational umbrella. Besides differences in fields of eligibility and access to loan repayment funds, fellows in both programs have access to the same research funds, mentorship networks, and group-coordinated activities.

¹ Much of the information on the history of the Bouchet Fellowship Program is obtained from a report on the program written by Associate Dean Judith Dozier Hackman and Assistant Dean Shannon Salinas, December 1995.

Program Requirements

Eligibility

- Open to all fields in the Arts and Sciences
- Candidates may apply without regard to nationality or citizenship status.

Application Procedure

Information Sessions on the Bouchet and Mellon Mays Fellowships will take place at least twice prior to the application deadline. Students interested in applying to either fellowship are especially encouraged to attend.

Candidates are expected to submit the following by the designated application deadline

- A short application
- Two essays (typed/printed and double-spaced)
- Two letters of recommendation, one of which should be from a classroom instructor at Yale College
- A Writing Sample (limit 10pp. Sample not restricted to your current or intended major/area of interest and can be a piece that describes a previous research experience. Should be a piece of writing that you are proud of.)
- An unofficial copy of applicant's Yale College transcript
- Faculty Mentor Assignment Form (if a mentor has agreed to serve in this capacity)

Selection

A select number of applicants will be invited to interview with the Selection Committee. Four sophomores will be selected and notified of their admission to the program in March. All new fellows must attend an orientation session (date and time will be announced). New Fellows will be expected to engage in research activity during the summer following their admission into the program. There will be no exceptions.

Program Structure

Fellowship Principal

The Edward A. Bouchet Program is a competitive and prestigious fellowship and fellows selected must be prepared to participate in the various activities organized by the Program Director and Coordinator along with conducting their own research and working closely with a faculty mentor.

Through the funds made available by the Bouchet Program it is assumed that fellows will have less need to pursue work study and can instead focus this time on developing their research projects.

Research

Bouchet Fellows are expected to conduct research during their junior and senior years. Specific funds are also earmarked for research during the summer months proceeding junior and senior years.

Mentoring

Mentorship is a central component of the Bouchet Fellowship Program. Fellows are asked to select a faculty member to serve as a mentor for the program during their duration in the fellowship. Fellows should meet with their mentors at least twice a month and update mentors on the progress of their research. Faculty mentors must also approve monthly journals describing developments in fellow's research projects.

Meetings/Workshops

Fellows meet as a group at least twice per month. During these meetings fellows present on summer research, partake in presentations by invited guest speakers, and engage in roundtable discussions concerning different facets of the grad-school preparation process and academia as a whole.

MMUF Regional Conference

Once during the academic year Bouchet fellows will join MMUF fellows from neighboring universities throughout the Northeast. Wesleyan University has thus far been the site of this conference. Themes of the conference have ranged from what type of scholarship graduate students are undertaking to the different phases in an academic career.

Yearly MMUF/Bouchet Conference

During the Spring Semester the Yale MMUF/Bouchet Program coordinates a conference where recognized figures in the academic field, most with connections to the MMUF program, are invited to speak to fellows about their current research and other topics outlined by fellows in preparation for the conference.

Senior Presentations

All fellows are expected to present the culmination of their research by their senior year. Fellows, invited faculty, and other invited guests will be present for this presentation. The Bouchet Fellowship places particular emphasis on the rigorousness of the senior presentations. It is envisioned that seniors could make these same presentations before panels of faculty within their field and in regional and national meetings conducted by their disciplines.

No Loan Repayment

While the Bouchet Fellowship Program is committed to providing fellows with the funding, mentoring, and experience needed to pursue graduate studies, the Fellowship at this point does not offer loan repayment.

Program Calendar

The Calendar below is a sample of the activities coordinated during an academic semester as part of the Fellowship.

Mellon & Bouchet Fellowship Fall 2009 Events Schedule:

September 3: Fun Activity – Kitchen Zinc, 6PM (not sure of the adress)

September 11: Fellows Meeting - Summer Research Presentations - SSS 410 -12:00-2:30 , Lunch will be served.

September 25: Fellows Meeting - Summer Research Presentations - SSS 410 - 12:00-2:30, Lunch will be served.

October 2: M/B Alumni Conference – Reception & Dinner – Master Pitti's House, Stiles College – 5pm Reception, 6pm Dinner

Evening activity - Location TBA - 9:30

October 3: M/B Alumni Conference - Kroon Hall, 195 Prospect Street- 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

October 6: Faculty Mentors Dinner, 6pm Union League Café, 1032 Chapel Street 5:30pm (*for Faculty Mentors and Advisory Committee members only*)

October 23: Conversation on Graduate School Admissions Process - SSS 410- 12:00-2:30, Lunch will be served.

November 7: Graduate Student Writing Workshop - 10:30-3:00 - LC - 3 rooms, Lunch will be served.

December 4: IRT & Hanging Out, SSS 410- 12:00-2:30, Lunch will be served.

December 8: Mellon/Bouchet Information Session - Asian American Cultural Center - 5:30 - 7:00, Dinner will be served.

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