Speaker 1 – Slide 1 (Dr. Ericka Boone): Good Afternoon

I'm Dr. Ericka Boone, the Director NIH Division of Loan Repayment and I am joined by several members of my staff, including Ms. Jigna Gohil (info center), Mr. Omar McCrimmon (comms and outreach). The focus of today's webinar will be to provide you with information on the extramural NIH Loan Repayment Programs, the online application, and important components within the application. For those of you that have attended a webinar in previous years, much of this presentation will be familiar to you (I mean….the grant application process doesn't change much), but even if you are return visitor, or if you are new to learning about the LRPs, today's discussion should give you a more in-depth look at this process. Please be advised that this presentation and webinar will made available on our website for your viewing at a later date. Thank you all for joining us today.

Speaker 1 – Slide 2: This is today's brief outline. Today, we want to brief you on how the NIH LRPs may be able to serve as a lifeline for you to either begin or sustain your research career. Our agenda is broken down into a description of and eligibility requirements the programs, a brief description of the online application portal, a description of major sections of the application and a wrap up with time for Q & A for questions you all submitted prior to today's presentation.

Speaker 1 – Slide 3: While NIH has 27 different Institutes and Centers, with differing research agenda, we have the unified goal of supporting research and training for the next wave of biomedical researchers in this country.

Speaker 1 – Slide 4: I'm sure you all have seen this career path and funding opportunities graphic on the NIH research training website. While most understand the value and importance of T and K mechanisms to career development, many don't understand that LRPs can also be an important component! We'll change that mindset today!

Speaker 1 – Slide 5: I don't have to tell anyone attending this webinar today that many investigators have amassed significant amounts of student loan debt by the time they complete their education and training, which can be a major deterrent to beginning and sustaining a research career. By helping to pay back some or maybe even all of your student loan debt..

Speaker 1 – Slide 6: The NIH LRPs could be just the lifeline you need to continue a productive research career

Speaker 1 – Slide 7: Now let's briefly discuss the programs and eligibility requirements.

Speaker 1 – Slide 8: The NIH LRPs represent a HUMAN capital investment in the future of biomedical research and discovery. Here's our commitment to you….if you commit to performing at least 2 years of NIH mission-critical research, NIH will commit to repaying up to $35K/year of your qualifying educational debt (the amount depends on your debt level). NIH will also pay Federal taxes on this award because receiving it will increase your taxable income. The outcome is tremendous for this country, as we hope to increase the stock of biomedical researchers contributing to the advancement of public health that benefits not only this country, but the world!

Speaker 1 – Slide 9: The extramural Loan Repayment programs are grouped under five broad research areas as seen in this slide.

- The **Clinical Research LRP** is for investigators that are conducting patient-oriented research, which means they generally work with human subjects or utilize materials of human origin in their research, this includes use of blood, tissues, or cognitive phenomenon from human subjects
- The **Pediatric Research LRP** is for investigators conducting research related to conditions or disorders that impact individuals 18 years of age or younger; please note that use of animal models is allowed under the pediatric LRP
- The **Health Disparities Research LRP** is for individuals conducting research on minority and other health disparity populations; these applications are reviewed only by the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, or NIMHD
- Next, the **Contraception and Infertility LRP** is for researchers conducting research on conditions that impact an individuals ability to conceive or bear offspring; please note that these applications are reviewed only by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute on Child Health and Human Development, or NICHD
- Lastly, the **Clinical Research LRP for Individuals from Disadvantaged Backgrounds** is the same as the Clinical Research LRP, except that it is available to researchers that are from verifiable financially-disadvantaged backgrounds; these applications are also reviewed only by the NIMHD

While we have provided a brief description of the programs on this slide, for a more in-depth description of the programs, please visit our website at www.lrp.nih.gov.

Speaker 1 – Slide 10: Now, let's briefly discuss eligibility criteria. All applicants:

- Must have a doctoral level degree. There is an exception for those applying to the contraception and infertility research LRP, where you can have more of an allied health background, like nursing, PT, etc. You do not have to have a terminal degree
- Must be a US citizen or permanent resident
- Must be able to commit to performing at least 20hrs/week of research during the entirety of their LRP contract. So, for example, new LRP awards are for 2 years, thus an individual must be able to conduct research for 20hrs/week for this entire time…not just during summers, etc

- Must have educational debt that is = or greater than 20% of their annual base salary (when I am giving presentations, most attendees look at that requirement and shake their heads because their educational debt is typically much greater than this, unfortunately)
- Must have research funding and salary support for the entirety of their LRP contract. This is because LRPs only provide for loan repayment, thus your research and salary must be covered; also, your funding and salary must be from a non-profit entity…your research nor your salary cannot in any way be supported by a for profit entity; that includes patient medical care, working for a for profit hospital, etc.

Speaker 1 - Slide 11: Now, let's review the types of loans that **DO** and **DO NOT** qualify for NIH loan repayment.

NIH **WILL** repay --
- Educational loans guaranteed by the US Government and from accredited US academic institutions and commercial lenders, including PLUS loans – but only those made to the applicant. PLUS loans made to your parents for your education are not eligible.

Speaker 1: Now that we've covered eligible loans, let's take a look at loans NIH will **NOT** repay. These include:

- Non-educational loans (for example car or mortgage loans)
- Loans that have been converted to a service obligation
- Loans that are delinquent or in default
- Loans from non-US governments or institutions; Last, and VERY IMPORTANT to note…
- Loans consolidated with a spouse or child **WILL NOT** be considered under any circumstances for repayment

Speaker 1 – Slide 12: This is a graphic representation of the application cycle timeline.

- The application cycle timeline is open from Sept 1 – Nov 15th. Please save yourself the agony of applying at the last minute or on the last day. The closer it gets to the deadline day, our offices are bombarded with calls, emails, Tweets and more! Keep in mind, that we receive over half of our submissions on the last few days of the cycle…which could mean that ~20K individuals are interacting with our systems then. I have 5 people that make up the information center, so, if you want your questions answered, contact us, or NIH LRP program officers early!
- All components of the application, including your recommendations and verifications are due by Nov 15th.
- Applications are reviewed between Feb-May; this is important to know because if you have any major events that you need to make us aware of, for example,

moving to a new organization, you should let us know prior to review time. If you let us know after your application is reviewed, your application will be withdrawn from funding consideration as you have made a significant change to your application.

- Between May-June, NIH ICs let us know which applications they would like to consider for funding, so they ask us about your potential contact costs. This is the first time that anyone outside of you and the LRPs knows anything about your debt level. As a matter of fact, we never share the exact amounts with the ICs, we just share what level LRP award you are eligible to receive. So don't think that having less debt, or more debt, has any impact on NIH IC funding decisions
- Final funding decisions are made by early August and first lender payments – because you don't get the money, your loan servicers – are made by November; please remember that we may quarterly payments on your behalf and verifications are required for you to receive subsequent payments

Speaker 1 – Slide 13: Read the notices published for the LRP that you are interested in. The notices are listed on the LRP website

Read the mission and priorities for the NIH Institutes and Centers (or ICs) that you are interested in reviewing your application and reach out to the appropriate NIH Program Officer/ LRP Liaison.

Talk with them about your research and also ask questions about the research and funding priorities for their IC.

Talk to your mentors and recommenders about your interest in the LRPs and ask them to provide supporting information on your behalf

Make sure you have an eRA Commons ID, be sure your password is up to date as you'll need one to submit an LRP application. While you can start your application without a Commons ID, you CANNOT submit your application until you have one.

Contact your lender to get information on your loan amounts.

Speaker 1 – Slide 14: Now Let's discuss the role of colleagues and the LRP Online Application Portal

Speaker 1 – Slide 15: But before we get into the LRP Online Application Portal itself, lets talk about the roles of the people that will be helping you.

Primary Mentor- If you are a mentored applicant, your mentor should have reviewed your research document and signed off before uploading them to your LRP application. Your research mentor may or may not be at your employing institution.

Institutional Business Official- Generally this is someone in grants and contracts office or HR department. Everyone is required to have the employing institution certify research time, funding, U.S. residents status by November 15th deadline.

Research Supervisor- Everyone is required to list a research supervisor. This individual must be associated with your employing institution and have eyes and ears on you. The individual has no role is the application process however they are vital in your award, if funded. This is the individual that will complete your quarterly service verification.

Last but not the least, NIH LRP Liaison or Program Officers at the Institution or Center that will be reviewing your application- Please please please talk to them, they should have heard about you and your LRP application prior to submission. Please discuss your research and ask about the research priority of the Institution or Center. They can tell you the research sweet spot and interest for their institute or center for now and moving forward.

Now that you are aware that there different roles involved in the application process, let's talk about how to start an LRP Application.

Speaker 2 (Jigna) – Slide 16: Thank you Dr. Boone, my name is Jigna Gohil and as Dr. Boone said earlier, I am apart of the information center. On this particular slide, we will take a look at the various ways to access the online login portal. First way via our carousel on the homepage - as you can see the application cycle is open! And it will lead you right to our login page. The second way is to click on the apply tab and then you will see the yellow box that says LRP application systems portal. This particular box is located in various parts of the website. But these are the most convenient ways. I would also like to point out another thing, below the portal login system is the online application system guide in burgundy. Do not forget about this handy resource.

Speaker 2 – Slide 17: This slide indicates the different ways you can access the system. Most of you will use the common ID portal. Please be sure that your password is up to date when attempting to use this method. Another way you can go in is the Open ID, which is a google account credential. You will not be able to submit an application through that option, but you can start one. In order to get through to the final stage of submission, please call the help desk and we will walk you through it.

Speaker 2 – Slide 18: Next, the system will then lead users to the Roles page. Most of you will choose the Applicant role if you are entering the system for the first time. If you are returning user, you will be led back to your dashboard. Either way, this will allow you to start a brand-new application for this cycle.

Speaker 2 – Slide 19: Once you have chosen the applicant role, the system will prompt you select the basic application profile.

Please note, once you have completed the selections on the preselection screen, changing <u>any</u> of components on the slide will cause data loss as well as colleague support documentation deletion. This is because changing these elements in essence changes the type of application that you will be submitting. Please, please, please be aware that you may have to re-do certain sections of your application if you make changes to these components.

Speaker 2 – Slide 20: This is a sample online application status tab for your consideration….in fact it's Dr. Boone's test application. This the default tab you'll see when you open your application. You can click on any tab at the top of the page to navigate between different sections of the application. At the bottom of the screen, you can also track submission of colleague documents.

The tabs at the top of the page include:

Personal Information second tab

Employment and Affiliation tab

Education and Training

Research Information

Colleague Information tab- this is where you enter the research mentor and supervisor we discussed earlier. Next tab is the…

Loan Information- quick note, if you have multiple loans you can combine them as long as it is the same lender, service and loan type. Moving on to the

Funding Information tab- if you have institutional and/or startup funds no additional information is required, if you select grants and awards additional information will be required.

Eligibility tab- this is refilled from when you completed the basic application profile. You will notice the green check box at the top of the page indicating the tab is complete. Last but not the least,

Certify and Submit tab

Once all the tabs are green, please submit! You can double check the status by clicking of the applicant role tab at the top of the page and reviewing the application status in your dashboard.

Now the application is submitted please ensure it is complete!!!!

You must have a minimum for 3 letters of recommendation, if mentored- mentor's submission and institutional business official certification before the deadline.

Your and your colleague's can work on the application at the same time. However, please fill the colleagues tab so they receive all the necessary email notification. Do not forget to provide instructions to your referees for submission that are provided in your welcome email when you start the application.

Speaker 2 – Slide 21: Last year, we updated the process whereby recommenders could submit a letter of recommendation with ease! It was a success. We have made the very same update for mentors this year! The process is simple. First, you supply them with your application tracking code (which you will receive once you start an application) and the link to the mentor submission page. Next, they fill in the tabs, including their contact information, copy and paste in your reference letter, click on the certification boxes and then submit….voila, they are done!

And once the letter is submitted, the mentor will see a confirmation code on their next screen…AND they (as well as you) will receive an email notification within 48 hours after they submit their letters.

I'd like to stress that if you are a mentored applicant, one of your required recommendations must be from your mentor… They will receive an email DIRECTLY from DLR with clear instructions on how to provide their letter of recommendation for your application

Also, once a letter is submitted you can track it via your application status page

Speaker 1 – Slide 22: No matter how many times I present on the LRPs, one thing remains the same…People sit through my presentations and smile and nod but what you really want to know is How do I get the money???

Speaker 1- Slide 23: Let's take a detour from discussing the sections of the application and talk about building your research documents.

If you were building your dream home, you would need a blueprint that provides detailed information on how you would attempt to accomplish all aspects of this build. Inspectors utilize your blueprint to ensure you are building the house to correct specifications and timelines. Along with the blueprint, you also need the help of contractors (for example, plumbers, electricians, etc), because you are not an expert in all areas of building homes.

Now let's equate the building of this home to the building of your research career…

What would you need? Well if you are going to be doing research you're going to need funding. So your blueprint would be considered your funding application. But who is this application for?

A different kind of inspector – this would be an application reviewer. Now who will be your helpers? Your mentors and other supporters. They're going to serve as individuals that are going

to help fill in the gaps and fill in holes for you, teach you news things, and help you toward building your research career.

Speaker 1 – Slide 24: Now let's talk about The Application Major Sections…

- **Personal Statement** – include information regarding your previous research training experience, how you developed your scientific interests, background and accomplishments; short and long-term career goals
- **Proposed Research Plans** – Describe planned research activities, specific roles/responsibilities over next 2 years – *include timelines and tables…it helps reviewers to have your plan listed in a consolidated manner*
- **Training and Mentoring (for mentored applicants)/Career Development Plan (for independent applicants)** – What skills, etc do you need to acquire along your path to independent researcher (e.g., training and professional development opportunities; grantmanship workshops, conference attendance, etc) – *include timelines*
- **Research Environment** – here applicants should describe your institution's scientific environment and how it will contribute to the probability of your success during the course of an LRP award

If you're a Renewal Applicant, you will also include a statement about your **Research Accomplishments**. Describe your research accomplishments and emphasize the progress made toward the achievement of your specific aims as described in your research plan. Explain any significant changes to the specific aims and any new directions including changes to the specific aims that may have occurred during the LRP Award(s) period.

Speaker 1 – Slide 25: Reviewers evaluate an applicant's potential to succeed in an independent research career by rating:

- Applicant's previous training and research experience
- Applicant's commitment to a research career
- Strength and quality of letters of recommendation
- Quality and appropriateness of the research environment to prepare applicant
- Research progress (*for Renewal applications only)*

Speaker 1 – Slide 26: Now I'm going to be quiet and hand it over to Omar McCrimmon.
Speaker 3 (Omar): Hi everyone, This is Omar, we're going to take a look at handy resources that you should review before you submit your application

Speaker 3- Slide 27: The first one is the Eligibility and Programs tab. This where you can find all program and eligibility information.

1. Data and Reports tab is where you can find all types of data about the programs including average award amount, awards by degree type, funding levels, and much more
2. Contact and Engage tab is where you'll find the contact information for each NIH LRP Program Officer as well as each institutes research priorities

3. LRP Ambassador Program is where you can find the directory of past and present LRP awardees. LRP Ambassadors are waiting to hear from as they can be a helpful resource to guide you through the process.
4. Lastly, the Online Application Guide is available to download 24hrs/7days a week. The guide breaks down components of the application so that you can be ready to submit a competitive application

Speaker 3 – Slide 28: Here's a snapshot of the LRP Data Dashboard that I mentioned earlier. As you can see, you can get a ton of statistics and trend data on the dashboard- And this information is downloadable.

Speaker 3 – Slide 29: Just an FYI that we will have Q&A sessions leading up to the application cycle closing so feel free to bring any and every question to the table. Dates are TBD.

Speaker 2 – Slide 30: Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any additional questions. Thank you for joining us (See contact us slide)