



## MSU AGEP Community Discusses Advancing Science

EAST LANSING- Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018: Michigan State University hosted its monthly AGEP Community Meeting in room 228 of Erickson Hall. Over 50 participants from the AGEP Community as well as graduate school faculty and staff were in attendance. Steven Thomas, program director of AGEP gave welcoming remarks before giving the floor to moderator, Neco Wilson, a graduate student in the Department of Comparative Medicine and Integrative Biology.

The evening began with Ms. Wilson introducing the AGEP Steering Committee and upcoming events on campus catered to graduate students. After that, announcements were given to the audience that included information on fellowships, and newly scheduled conference dates.

The next phase of the meeting held the Chalk Talk presentations for the night. Jennifer Watts, a graduate student in the Physiology department, gave a presentation titled, "Elucidating the Mechanism of Zika Virus-Induced Birth Defects in Early Embryogenesis". Ms. Watts discussed her current workings with the Zika virus and how she plans to help lower the rate of birth defects that the virus causes. Following her presentation, Alba Lamar, a graduate student in the Teacher Education Program gave a discussion titled, "A Call for Latinx Accession in Education". Ms. Lamar discussed her past experiences working in schools housed in New York City. She then gave an account of how the Latinx Community is marginalized in many school districts and her plan of action for how teachers can help to limit the stigmas associated with minorities and public/charter schooling.

After the final Chalk Talk, the meeting came to a close. Ms. Wilson gave closing remarks and important reminders. When asked his thoughts on the meeting, Juan Castro, a graduate student in the Computer Science and Engineering Department said, "these were two Chalk Talks that I loved listening to. Alba's research really hits home for me, and I am so excited to see the results of Jennifer's hard work".

The AGEP Community continues to be a great support system for minorities in higher education. For more information about the AGEP Community at Michigan State University, contact Steven Thomas ([dehsawn@grd.msu.edu](mailto:dehsawn@grd.msu.edu)) at 517-432-3268.