



**Dr. Chinonye Nnakwe**

AAAS Fellow

Directorate for Computer & Information Science & Engineering

Division of Computer & Network Systems

***Class of 2015-16***

Chinonye “Chi-Chi” Nnakwe is a molecular biologist and studied the role of epigenetics in DNA damage signaling and cell cycle regulation in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (Baker’s yeast). After completing her graduate work, she became a management consultant for Campbell Alliance and provided strategy services to pharmaceutical and biotech companies.

Chi-Chi was then called to pursue a more personal mission of empowering individuals from underrepresented populations to become the leaders of the future. This passion led her to work for the next four years in the Office of the Provost at the University of Chicago as the inaugural Director of Graduate Diversity Initiatives. In this role, she pursued interventions to increase the representation of scholars from traditionally underrepresented populations in higher education. These interventions included serving as the institutional point of contact for a variety of higher education consortiums, like the GEM Consortium, spearheading campus-wide recruitment initiatives and running the Leadership Alliance summer research early identification program (SR-EIP) for the University. She also fostered partnerships to create multi-institutional initiatives like the SPINES Neuroscience Symposium with the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) and the National Research Mentoring Network-CIC Academic Network (NRMN-CAN) with the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC).

At NSF, Chi-Chi is working with the I-Corps program to increase access to entrepreneurship. She obtained her B. Sc. in Biochemistry with Departmental Distinction from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and her Ph. D. in Pathology from the University of Chicago.