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The MS PHD'S case study Minority Students Pursuing Higher Degrees of Success in Earth System Science (MS PHD'S) Initiative was launched in 2003 as part of the final JGOFS Ocean Science Meeting. Since its inception, student leadership has played a key role in the design and success of MS PHD'S activities. Each year, from among past MS PHD'S PDP participants, five individuals are provided with additional student leadership and mentoring experiences as a result of becoming a MS PHD'S Dream Team member. The Team is comprised of a dynamic group of MS PHD'S alumni that are committed to the MS PHD'S vision and academic advancement of the newest MSPHD'S cohort. Leadership experiences gained as MS PHD'S Dream Team members serve to further prepare MS PHD'S alumni as future leaders in the Geosciences community. MS PHD'S has also provided opportunities for MS PHD'S alumni to serve as MS PHD'S PDP coordinators, staff members and becoming mentors after their doctoral degrees completion. To date more than 100 undergraduate students have participated in MS PHD'S activities.