

**Albert Avila, PhD, Deputy Director, ORTDD;
Director, Office of Diversity and Health Disparities (ODHD), NIDA**

Dr. Albert Avila is currently the Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Office of Diversity and Health Disparities (ODHD) and Deputy Director of the NIDA Office of Research Training (ORT). As the ODHD Director he oversees the health disparities and diversity outreach efforts for NIDA and provides guidance to NIDA leadership on matters pertaining to diversity, equity and inclusivity as they relate to the substance use and addiction workforce. His primary goal for the ODHD is to increase the number of independently funded underrepresented scientists conducting addiction research through internal and extramural research and professional development opportunities. As the NIDA ORT Deputy Director, he ensures that the training and career development opportunities are addressing the needs of the substance use and addiction community at all career stages. Dr. Avila received his undergraduate degrees in psychobiology and English Literature from UCLA and his doctorate degree in Pharmacology from Georgetown University studying the effects of cocaine, withdrawal, and stress on the neuroimmune system. Following postdoctoral training in pain neurotransmission at the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR), he became an Intramural Training Director, leading training programs for pre- and post-doctoral scientists in NIDCR. Prior to joining NIDA, Dr. Avila was a Program Officer for NIDCR directing extramural research training and career development research programs. At NIDA, Dr. Avila served as a Program Officer in the Division of Basic Neuroscience and Behavioral Research for five years and managed a research grant portfolio in the area of neuroimmunology, psychopharmacology, and HIV as they relate to drug abuse. In addition, he managed a robust research training and career development grant portfolio for early-career investigators. At NIDA, Dr. Avila works to equip NIDA trainees and early-stage investigators with the tools, resources, and support necessary to successfully transition to independent research careers.