CCR Fellows & Young Investigators Newsletter

Center for Cancer Research
Volume 20, Issue 2 **Spring 2021**

Spring is in the air, and together with the good weather, you, Fellow Reader, can enjoy many new articles that will help you in your career advancement and professional development to continue on the path of a successful scientist! In this edition of the Newsletter we feature tips on transitioning from post-doc to business development, inspiring words of wisdom on leadership, important initiatives available to NCI fellows, and important discussions about diversity and inclusion in Science with successful scientists from NIH and beyond. …And don't forget to check out the flyers at the end of this document for all the ways you can be involved in all the exciting and enriching activities of the CCR-FYI.
I hope you enjoy reading the Spring 2021 Newsletter. – Alida Palmisano (Editor-In-Chief)

(Background image created with BioRender.com and photo by Deb on Unsplash. Personal pictures from Editorial Team and people included in various articles.)

Inside this issue

CCR-FYI Association is supported by the NCI Center for Cancer Training (CCT) and CCR Office of the Director.

Connect with CCR-FYI

Important resources: spotlight

- NIH launched the UNITE initiative on "Ending Structural Racism". Learn more about NIH's efforts, actions, policies, and procedures to increase our transparency on this important issue by visiting the webpage https://www.nih.gov/ending-structural-racism
- On April 30, 2021, NIH held the first Virtual Town Hall on Achieving Racial Equity at NIH. If you were not able to join live you are strongly encouraged to watch the archived video (https://videocast.nih.gov/watch=41953 *NIH only*) to learn about this important effort. Drs. Francis Collins, Treava Hopkins-Laboy, Larry Tabak, Marie Bernard, and Alfred Johnson shared personal stories and experiences with racism, and they described NIH's broad efforts to create a more diverse and equitable workplace at NIH and the institutions NIH funds. Learn how the UNITE initiative (https://www.nih.gov/ending-structural-racism/unite) fits within those efforts.
- Every May during Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month and throughout the year, the NIH office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) celebrates and focus on diversity, inclusion, and leadership to advance the AAPI community. Read AAPI Strategist, Caroline Goon, MS, MBA, in conversation with powerhouses at NIH who are breaking barriers for the AAPI community. https://www.edi.nih.gov/people/sep/aapi/campaigns/aapi-heritage-month-2021/aapi-powerhouses-nih
- Dr. Collins spoke about "Harmonizing the Spiritual and Scientific Worldviews" at First Meeting of the New NIH Religion, Spirituality, and Health Scientific Interest Group (RSH-SIG) (https://videocast.nih.gov/watch=41402)
- NCI's ENRICH Forum: Promoting Inclusion in Oncology Clinical Trials (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiFwyZTnqUo) https://epi.grants.cancer.gov/events/enrich-forum

NATIONAL POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION

Providing a National Voice and Seeking Positive Change

NPA Goals:

- Promote positive change in the postdoctoral experience
- Develop and provide resources that postdoctoral scholars and administrators need for success
- Provide opportunities for the postdoctoral community to connect

Join the NPA:

- Visit www.nationalpostdoc.org
- ***Membership is free for NIH fellows***

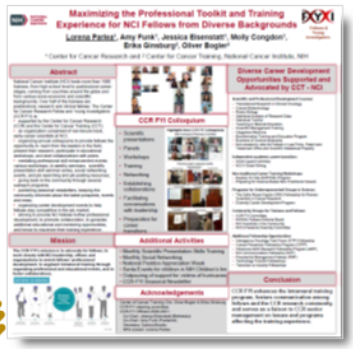
NPA Membership Benefits:

- Leadership and professional development opportunities through volunteer service
- Opportunities to make your voice heard on national postdoctoral issues
- Subscriptions to the NPA e-alerts and The POSTDOCket (quarterly newsletter)
- Reduced meeting registration fees, as well as other discounts
- Access to members-only Web content
- The Elsevier Foundation New Scholars Grant
- Recommendations for postdoctoral policies and practices
- Resources for developing mentoring plans for postdocs
- International postdoc survival guide
- Responsible conduct of research toolkit
- PDA and PDO toolkits

Top Poster Recognized at the 2021 NPA Annual Conference

The National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) selected the CCR-FYI poster as a **winner** at the 2021 Annual Conference, held virtually April 15-16, 2021!!!
Poster session winners were selected based on relevance to NPA goals and dissemination of ideas/information with the potential to **make a significant impact on the postdoc population**.

National Cancer Center/NIH's
"Maximizing the Professional Toolkit and Training Experience for NCI Fellows from Diverse Backgrounds"
by Lorena Parlea, Amy Funk, Jessica Eisenstatt, Molly Congdon, Erika Ginsburg, Oliver Bogler.



Picture a Scientist: Redrawing the Stereotype Through Gender and Ethnic Equality

by: Molly D. Congdon and Dorothy Butler

If you were asked to picture a scientist, what image comes to mind? For many people, the image is a white man in a lab coat, but scientists are a diverse group of individuals. How do we write a new chapter so that the image includes both men and women and people of all ethnicities?

Picture a Scientist is a 2020 documentary that chronicles the challenges of gender equality within many scientific disciplines and tells the story of researchers who are working to bring gender and ethnic equality into these realms. (1) The documentary, by Sharon Shattuck and Ian Cheney, highlights the prevalence of these gender and ethical challenges by showing the real-life stories behind the data. The film focused on the often too common experiences of three women of varying scientific backgrounds and career positions.

- Dr. Nancy Hopkins: biologist and Professor Emerita from MIT
- Dr. Raychelle Burks: chemist and current Associate Professor at American University
- Dr. Jane Willenbring: geologist and current Associate Professor at Stanford

Throughout their careers, these women experienced physical and verbal forms of sexual harassment, as well as other overlooked forms of gender and ethnic discrimination such as reduced laboratory space and lower compensation compared to male colleagues, being overlooked for collaborations or input at meetings, and comments about hair styles and professional appearance.

The film further emphasizes the scope of gender and ethnic disparities in the scientific community through the historical perspective of women scientists. For example, in its 120-year history, a Nobel Prize for science (chemistry, medicine, physiology, and physics) has only been awarded in part to women 23 times. In fact, the 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry is the first time that the prize has been granted solely to two female scientists: Drs. Emmanuelle Charpentier and Jennifer A. Doudna for their "development of gene editing technology," more commonly referred to as CRISPR-Cas9. Other disparities include the unequal distribution of laboratory space and pay gap between male and female counterparts holding similar positions. A 2020 survey conducted by the US NSF found a difference an average gender pay gap of $18,000 for individuals who had received their PhD in 2017. (2)

During the week of March 22nd – 26th, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and The Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) sponsored a one-week screening of Picture a Scientist, followed by "Women who lead: a panel discussion" on April 8th to talk about the film. The goals of these events were to help foster an understanding, diverse, and inclusive environment for women scientists within the NIH community. The NIH EDI is not the only organization taking note of this impactful film. Since its release at the 2020 Tribeca Film Festival, free viewings of the film have been offered by several scientific societies to its members. The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) has even made

the film available to the American people by including it in the current season of NOVA.

The April 8th panel featured women scientists at various stages of their careers.

- Elizabeth Murphy, Ph.D.: Chief of the Cardiac Physiology Section in the Cardiovascular Branch at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), NIH
- Nyesha Martinez-Orengo, Ph.D.: Intramural Training Research Award (IRTA) postdoctoral fellow, NIH
- Janine Austin Clayton, MD, FARVO: Associate Director for Research on Women's Health and Director of the Office of Research on Women's Health, NIH
- Gina S. Wei, MD, MPH: Associate Director of the Division of Cardiovascular Sciences (DCVS) at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), NIH

The panel discussion emphasized that many of the issues put forth by the film are experienced by women at the NIH and offered suggestions for ways to solve the issues. Gender and racial equality issues should not be placed on women and marginalized groups to fix. To achieve a more supportive and inclusive culture, we must work together as a society. There is a culture change and a climate change that must occur with the policy changes. The panelists did highlight the work that the NIH has done in the last few years to eliminate sexual harassment and discrimination. (3)

One specific way the panel discussed how to begin shifting the culture is to support women in science and fix the leaky career pipeline. Women scientist should not have to, or feel like, they must choose between a successful career and a successful family life. Both men and women are more likely to leave the scientific workforce when they are first time parents; however, the numbers are higher for women. (4) The fact that both men and women feel that science is an unsupportive place for both a career and family underscores an issue within the scientific field that also accentuates the observed gender disparity. For example, while the NIH has good childcare for its employees, postdocs in the intramural program do not qualify for assistance with childcare. Fixing this loophole would go a long way towards helping this group of fellows and retaining women in science. Additional options such as flexible hours and telework capabilities would help those juggling career and family life. The pandemic this past year has highlighted how challenging managing a career and a family can be on the entire family, but especially for women. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, initial unemployment numbers were equal in February 2020, but as the pandemic progressed, women were more likely to be unemployed than men, comprising approximately 80% of the workforce departures in the fall when schools resumed with remote learning. (5) In fact, studies into the effects of the pandemic have shown that first author publications by women decreased in the initial months of the pandemic and that women scientists have reported spending less time on science due to family responsibilities. (6) Furthermore, many mothers experience a period of reduced productivity when they have young kids. To make the workplace more supportive, do we need to redefine success in science? Can you be an accomplished, contributing leader in your field even if you have a period of reduced publication or grant awards? While things have improved since the women's rights movement,

there are still improvements to be made to make the work environment more friendly for working mothers.

Both the panel and the film emphasized the importance of sponsors, mentors, and allies to achieving equality and an inclusive environment. Having support from a direct supervisor is extremely helpful for an employee at any level. For example, support from a supervisor can remove the stress from the employee and allow them to focus on their pregnancy. Women scientists in leadership positions have a responsibility to give back and support younger women scientists. They can serve as role models that they may not have been lucky enough to have.

While the film was a sobering realization of the work that still needs to be done, change is happening, and people are advocating for equality. The scientists in the film shared both their struggles and triumphs as they pushed back against the people and systems that were discriminating against them. As one of the panelists concluded, "We are not just doing this for ourselves, but for the future." As we struggle to find equality, we will create a more inclusive place where the next generation will instinctively be able to picture themselves as a scientist.

If you have not watched the film and would like to learn more, Picture a Scientist is currently available for streaming through your local PBS station (https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/video/picture-a-scientist/).

References:

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2. Scientists' salary data highlight US$18,000 gender pay gap. Chris Woolston, Nature Career News, January 22, 2019, accessed April 22, 2021. https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-00220-y
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Discovering the Leader Within – A chat with Dr. Ofelia Olivero
(Chief, Intramural Diversity Workforce Branch: Center for Cancer Training)

by: Mary Grace Katusiime

Without a doubt, effective leaders are vital in all spheres of science. They are tasked with casting the vision and culture of organizations, fostering innovation and creativity, managing collaborations and conflict, and eventually are responsible for developing the next generation of leaders. As young scientists, we will be required at certain stages in our careers to lead teams of diverse personalities and talents. However, for most of us, leadership training was not the focus of our formal education. Have you ever thought "I am not a natural born leader – I do not fit the stereotype or role?" When I think of the stereotypical leader, I think of a strong, assertive, and outspoken personality. But what if that is not one's natural disposition? Is it possible to have different personalities, interests, background, and experience and still be an effective leader? What defines an effective leader anyway?

I sat down with Dr. Ofelia Olivero who recently retired from a prolific 34-year scientific career at the NCI. She is chief of the Intramural Diversity Workforce Branch at the Center for Cancer Training and also responsible for the 'Diversity Career Development Program' (https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/idwb/dcd-program). The DCDP is a leadership development program aimed at empowering talented intramural postdoctoral trainees, including but not limited to those from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, to achieve their full potential at NCI. Dr. Olivero shared valuable insights from her own leadership journey that I and young scientists alike can learn from.

Do you think leaders are born, made or a combination of both?

It is most probably a combination - you are born with leadership potential, but you must learn, develop, and polish your style. I think a lot of people have the qualities to be great leaders, but they do not think they fit the mold that society presents for what a leader should look like. People think that leaders have to be extroverted and outspoken and that is not always true; there are a lot of introverts that are leaders -former US president Obama is an example (https://www.inc.com/john-rampton/23-amazingly-successful-introverts-throughout-history.html). One can be a leader and not have the chance to lead. We are missing a lot of leaders with great characteristics and these individuals are missing the opportunity to contribute because they have in their mind the traditional model. They are not called to take on certain positions because no one thinks of them as leaders.

What are the definitive qualities of a great leader, as it relates to science?

The same qualities of a leader in anything are valid in science: being a great listener – listening to your stakeholders and understanding their needs, the desire to connect with people in an honest and genuine way; to help, support and serve the population they are leading. There is

no mistake that these are qualities that make a great leader. It is said that 'managers do things right, but leaders do the right thing' - leadership is an elevated role. In science, a good leader needs to have a solid scientific career, always learning what is new, and not thinking "I published that paper that made my name famous, now people follow me – I am a leader". You need to keep growing and make others grow. Leaders build leaders. Invite people to your group who are better than you, that moves the science forward. Have a desire to contribute to society. They do not just focus on their career; they focus on the science – those are what makes a good leader. Leaders see beyond today, project where they want to take their group, where they want to go next, and they have a vision.

How did you develop into the leader you have become?

No one trained me for positions of leadership, I had to go with my instincts. I grew, developed, and embraced a style that was true for me. It is easier to lead when you believe in something. My philosophy of leadership was shaped by people. What I wanted to do was to contribute, to listen to the needs of the people I was leading and try to fulfill those needs. In the groups I have led, there were many different opinions and interests; I learned to find the place where everyone is relaxed, more prone to let go of personal interests, and open to find a position of compromise. Somewhere deep down there is a commonality and my role is to look for the commonalities because they lead to creativity and innovation. I found my passion for finding a common ground; I learned that I could get people to go there and then I took that experience with me and have applied the same philosophy over and over again (with adaptations - of course). So, leading by consensus has become my style – I try to please everyone, it's not easy but doable.

How does an early career scientist begin to find their individual leadership style?

You need to explore your passions. There are more opportunities to do this than most young investigators believe. The reason we don't think about these opportunities and are not able to identify them is because our minds are limited to think that the only thing we can do well is pipet and plan experiments. Thinking scientifically, designing, executing, analyzing experiments, and writing papers – these are all essential aspects of our work, but they are also the box we often think we belong to - the classical model of a scientist. However, scientists can do these and so much more. Ask yourself "what do I really like to do?". Make the time to connect with your inner self and discover those things. We lead better in things we feel passionate about. If you feel passionate about helping somewhere go there and do things to lead in that place, you can then take the experience you gain to other places. If you think that you can organize a journal club, that's good, give it a try! You can lead in different spaces: in your laboratory, you can take on the role of leading collaborations, you can lead a discussion groups, lab meetings, summer groups. There are so many opportunities for leadership that are not the classical board room scenario. Find opportunities to explore your own style of leadership, that is how you discover what I like to call "the leader within".

Here's what I have learned from Dr. Olivero: Anyone can be a leader. You do not have to fit the classical mold - you can lead as you. How? –

Find opportunities around you to lead and have the courage to try. You may fail a few times, but those experiences allow you to explore your passions, develop your own leadership style, and discover the leader within.

(https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/resources-trainees/get-involved/fellows-young-investigators-association)

(https://www.training.nih.gov/leadership_training).

NCI Explore On Site (EXPOSE): A Road Map for Science-Based Jobs

by: Rokeya Siddiqui

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) Explore On Site (EXPOSE) is a training program for current NCI postdoctoral fellows who are interested in building a career beyond scientific research. The ultimate goal of the program is to offer the tools and resources required by postdoctoral fellows to search for and determine non-academic career paths that matches their interests, skills, and values. The program also provides opportunities to visit the companies as well as local employers. The EXPOSE program consists of two sections: the first, Business of Science (SciPhD), is a four-day long course, and the second, External Sites Visit (ESV), involve visits to multiple local business sectors. Details for participating in the EXPOSE program can be found at the following link (https://events.cancer.gov/cct/bos/).

Why you may be interested in participating in the EXPOSE program?

During postdoctoral research, most fellows experience intense pressures as they grapple with the decision of their career paths after the postdoctoral fellowship. The intense pressures experienced are often precipitated by the uncertainties surrounding the choice of either academic or industrial careers. The EXPOSE program is targeted at fellows who though interested in pursuing a career outside academia, would want to also continue some aspects of research, leadership/mentorship as well as project management. The EXPOSE program is entirely designed to assist such fellows in understanding science-based careers outside academic research. In addition, program participants will develop and reinforce soft skills such as communication, marketability as well as networking that maximizes their potentials and competitiveness in a business organization.

Brief description of the EXPOSE program components

1) Business of Science (SciPhD): Since the program started in 2016, it is a multi-day course that covers various fundamentals and practical skills valued by professional organizations. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, last year this part of EXPOSE turned in a 3–90-minute webinar series that ran over three consecutive days. The entire course is prepared by experienced employees from industries who provide tools and resources to ensure success and competitiveness in the

professional marketplace. Each class covers topics including Marketing Own Brand, Building Effective Team, Advance Communication Techniques for Scientists, Building Network, Leadership, Art of Negotiation as well as Financial Literacy. In addition, each class also provides the framework necessary to understand the scientist's position within the business sector and teaches vocabulary for business-friendly communication. Importantly, the course provides an understanding of how a doctorate degree is viewed by business-minded people and also equips participants with business knowledge. Finally, SciPhD introduces 'FLAMINGO'. FLAMINGO is a career friendly program that works in three way for those who need a job now, those who need help selecting a career and for those who have time, it helps to make a plan of skill development for the future desired job. In this basic flow of work, FLAMINGO helps to find a job and then dissecting the job ads in seven main area such as technical skill, mentoring /leadership, emotional or social interaction among people, creating vision, execution vision, achieving results and financial acumen. Through this process the job analyzing engine generates a formatted targeted resume and it displays the job requirement mapping in real time to allow one to see which aspects are emphasized in the job ad. With that knowledge the applicant can best prepare for interviews and focus on the experience statements to demonstrate why they are uniquely qualified for that job (https://sciphd.com/online-programs).

2) External Site Visit (ESV): Fellows who successfully complete the Business for Science are eligible for ESV registration. ESV give fellows an opportunity to practice their new skills through the direct visits of multiple sectors such as industry, science administration, policy and legislative affairs, consulting and communication (https://mynci.cancer.gov/topics/nci-explore-site-expose-0). Multiple opportunities for direct interactions through site visits allow fellows to listen and learn first-hand about careers from professionals of the representative businesses. Fellows can also learn the culture of the different organizations, schedule tours to the facilities and participate in networking sessions. The ESV program is designed to facilitate networking and information between fellows and employers of the biomedical industries.

Expectation from the training of EXPOSE Program

The webinars, site visits and accompanying preparation facilitates fellows to develop soft skills on a broad scale, raise awareness when interviewing with people in different biotech companies. Importantly, the EXPOSE program improves managerial skills, especially, where negotiation is involved in job applications and interviews. The program also provides skills for preparing excellent and professional resumes.

Reference:

1. https://events.cancer.gov/cct/bos/
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3. https://mynci.cancer.gov/topics/nci-explore-site-expose-0

Valuable lessons learned from a Sallie Rosen Kaplan Fellowship

by: Sachi Horibata

I am incredibly thankful that I received a Sallie Rosen Kaplan (SRK) postdoctoral fellowship (https://www.cancer.gov/grants-training/training/at-nci/srk). This fellowship changed the way I perceive life and helped me learn to better understand myself and others.

First, let me explain about the SRK program. It was established by Mrs. Kaplan, who, due to family responsibilities, was unable to pursue her desired studies despite being accepted into university. As a result, Mrs. Kaplan became committed to women's education, as women in science are more likely to leave science careers than men (Else, H. *Nature*, 2019). Thus, this program was established through a bequest in the name of Mrs. Kaplan to help prepare female postdoctoral fellows transition into independent research careers.

The SRK program consists of a 30-week course in career building skills. It features two day-long workshops and a 2-hour bi-weekly meeting for 14 weeks led by a professional life coach. As part of the program fellows are also offered mentoring opportunities, networking events, personal development and emotional intelligence courses, people and time management workshops, and other valuable skills to learn how to effectively engage in self-promotion to become a competitive candidate and a future leader in STEM fields.

Personally, I found the following four elements of the program to be the most impactful:

1. **Support system: The unique aspect of our cohort was that COVID-19 pandemic hit us when we were on halfway through our program.** The pandemic was incredibly difficult for many of us. Some of us lost loved ones and others felt isolated during the lockdown. The SRK group provided an incredible support system to help us get through this unprecedented time.

2. **Positive traits:** We were tasked with asking several people we encountered at various stages of our life about our superpowers. We inquired about positive traits they observed and made a list of 10 common traits people mentioned. This was rather eye-opening because I had made certain assumptions about what people thought of me, but I never had a chance before to learn what they thought in detail. This was the first time I realized that many people thought that I should become a PI. The most impactful comments were messages from my former students, which solidified my aspiration to become an independent investigator.

3. **Behavioral style:**
Through DiSC, an assessment tool used to improve communication and teamwork assessment, (https://www.discprofile.com/what-is-disc), I learned about the four different behavioral styles people typically have in the workplace. In addition, I got to know more about myself and became more aware of optimal communication methods with other people. I realized that even with good intentions, communication could be

misconstrued, as each one of us has different ways of interpreting things. This exercise allowed me to respond, react, and communicate better. The training also helped equip me with the necessary tools to resolve potential conflicts that could arise due to misunderstanding.

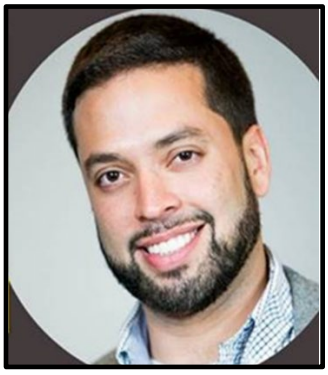
4. **Second mentor:** The program allows you to identify a second mentor who can help you develop personally and professionally. One of the most important things I learned from my second mentor was that I do not have to "sacrifice" spending time with my family for work success. I can have BOTH! That perception alone changed the way I approached things in my life. When my son was still an infant, I decided not to attend a conference. However, my second mentor asked me, "Why not?" I was puzzled at first, and replied that I had an infant. Then she asked me: "Why don't you bring him with you?" And that simple question just opened my eyes: she was right! Why couldn't I take my son with me? I quickly registered for the Keystone conference, and I must say that it was one of the best decisions I have ever made. Not only was I able to present my work, but my son had a great time traveling and meeting other scientists. Many PIs and students approached us to have many meaningful conversations. My second mentor gave me the precious life lesson that to achieve whatever I want I don't need to sacrifice other valuable things outside of work. That may have also contributed to why my son is amiable and a happy child.

The SRK fellowship encourages fellows to develop several basic life skills, regardless of their background or professional stage. I hope that many other female trainees can take advantage of this program to re-discover themselves and become an effective self-advocate. And what is in store for me after the SRK program? I will soon start a new chapter of my life as a tenure-track assistant professor at my dream university!

The Transition from Postdoc to Business Development: An interview with Dr. Ernesto P. Chanona

by: Sarwat Naz

Dr. Ernesto P. Chanona was a former postdoctoral fellow at the Laboratory of Integrative Cancer Immunology, working with Dr. Giorgio Trinchieri at the National Cancer Institute until 2018. He then transitioned to the office of Biohealth and Life Science at the Maryland Department of Commerce. Currently, he holds the Director of Business Development position at CSSi Life Sciences. I first enjoyed listening to Dr. Chanona at a career spotlight event organized by the National Institute of Aging (NIA) Training Office. He took a bold and different approach to make his first transition. His narration captured my attention and inspired me to find out more about his current role and get an overview of landing a Life Science business development career. I decided to cover his story for the CCR-FYI newsletter and further network with him. It was a pleasure to speak with Ernesto. I believe this interview will provide insider tips to the readers exploring different roles a Ph.D. can pursue in the business side of science and highlighting some critical skills to develop while working at the bench.



Can you briefly tell me when and why you decided to move away from the bench? Was there one event that crystalized that decision?

I had spent almost three years in my postdoc doing immunology research. I had a good mentor and a supportive lab environment, but my projects were unlikely to yield a *Cell*, *Science* or *Nature* paper, so I felt I needed to look outside academia for my next steps. I also realized that I was not happy performing benchwork. I preferred writing the manuscripts and presenting the work to my colleagues. So, I decided to contact the NCI Office of Workforce Planning and Development (NCI/OWPD). It was, by far, my best decision. The OWPD office paired me with mentors who helped me rediscover myself. Briefly, I learned that my personality is best suited for a people-facing role, and that my technical strengths were not in alignment with my personal strengths. I took part in their management courses which were a game-changer, and they helped me prepare for my next step.

How did you prepare for a career away from the bench?

There was no formal preparation. To begin with, I decided to learn more about Maryland's (MD) biotech sector. I conducted an online search for networking events and I started attending them in April of 2018.

How did you land your first job at the Maryland Department of Commerce?

I decided to attend a networking event where the Maryland Technology Council presented a lifetime achievement award to the NIH Director Dr. Francis Collins. The registration fee for the event was $500 so I wrote to the event organizer and asked if I could volunteer and help organize the event. The organizer responded that they are fully staffed and that they did not need any

volunteers but, instead, offered me a free ticket. It was my first networking event, and I was undecided about what to expect.

Interestingly, I was seated at the table with high-level NIH directors! It was an incredible feeling. At the event, I also met the former Deputy Secretary of Commerce for the State of Maryland, Ben Wu. He invited me to another networking event at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). Two days later, at the Technology Transfer Summit at NIST, I met the former Director of the Office of BioHealth and Life Sciences. I discussed my interests in joining the biotech sector in Baltimore with him. In response, he told me that he was hiring at Commerce, and asked if I would be interested in exploring the role further. After three interviews, I was offered a job and I started working there in June of 2018.

Briefly, could you describe your role at the MD Department of Commerce?

The Maryland Department of Commerce's primary focus is to attract companies to the region and to help local companies grow their businesses. They foster this by offering the companies economic incentives, creating partnerships with industry stakeholders, finding talent and external funding. At the time, I led the Maryland Department of Commerce's business development efforts that catered to biotechnology companies' recruitment, expansion, and export activities. I organized the Maryland Innovation and Technology Series initiative, that promoted business relationships between local companies and the NIH. I also contributed to the Department of Commerce's international trade efforts in life sciences. I worked with international clients to help them understand the US market and helped them establish a company in Maryland.

Can you briefly describe your current role at CSSi Life science?

CSSi LifeSciences is a global, innovative Contract Research Organization (CRO) and consulting group specializing in advancing drugs and medical device technologies from discovery to commercialization. As Director of Business Development, my job at CSSi is to maintain the pipeline of opportunities for the company by developing close professional and scientific relationships with medical thought leaders, incubators, economic development agencies, scientific investigators, investor groups, and international government agencies. Through these partnerships, I find early-stage companies that are in need of our regulatory consulting services. I also assist CSSi in conducting educational activities for international trade organizations and incubator partners, and I represent the company at business development activities, trade shows, conferences, and scientific meetings. I help our team identify and assess the commercial attractiveness and economic feasibility of development opportunities. I also contribute my expertise to product development and to the dissemination of the company's services by staying abreast of new clients, funding developments, new programs and partner/competitor landscape analysis.

Can you describe your typical workday at CSSi and how you manage your time?

I have a very good work-life balance. I work primarily from home. The company is permanently virtual, which is a good thing. I supervise two managers and we use Salesforce to keep up with my schedule, clients and our

relationships with our partners. I learned Salesforce while working in the Department of Commerce, and I use it extensively in my job. The majority of my day is taken up by meetings with new clients and learning about their technologies. A smaller part of my job involves developing internal processes to help the company run more efficiently, and to contribute to our marketing efforts by developing content for our website, flyers and promotional activities.

What are the critical skill sets that help to succeed in the Business Development (BD) role?

Business development is about building relationships. To do so, in the biotech world, it is necessary to understand the client's technology by asking meaningful questions that convey my interest. Being able to understand the client's needs and translating those needs to services that the company offers is also important. Often, due to the expensive nature of consulting, appeasing a client's fear is also necessary. So, emotional intelligence, empathy and compassion are other key skills necessary to be successful.

Any tips to share for fellows interested in applying for business development roles in the coming year?

Network, Network, Network! I cannot emphasize the importance of networking can play in finding your next job. But you have to be efficient in your approach to networking. I believe there is no point in having zillion LinkedIn connections if you're not using them. I say that you put your "Network to Work." When you talk to someone, let them know that you are looking for a job. Also, let the person know that you are acquainted with other members in their network. That way, you appear to be less of a stranger to them. They are more willing to trust you and help you find a job if they know you're friends with their friends. If you get a chance to organize an event or drive an initiative, make sure to discuss these achievements, as these skills are often unperceived by people in the industry. Such exposure also helps you gain project management, partnership building, and people management skills. Talk to people, attend networking events, join organizations, and follow their events such as Women in Bio, Maryland Tech Council, BioHealth Innovation, and TEDCO. Read *Nature Biotechnology* to identify companies that are growing and likely hiring, and contact them directly. Finally, please read the book "Career Opportunities in Biotechnology and Drug Development" by Toby Freedman to learn the different types of jobs for Ph.D.'s in the biotech sector.

Finally, for people interested in entering the world of life science business development after their Ph.D., where should one start?

In my opinion, PhDs interested in landing a career in the business side of science must first understand the life cycle of the drug development process. At the various step of this process, scientists can get involved as business developers. So, begin by identifying what role they want to play in this process. There are multiple options, such as working at startups, contract research organization, and regulatory affairs. Once you get that clarity, network with people in a similar position. I would be happy to make an introduction to the right person in my network, once the goal is clear.

History of Women in Science – Nobel Laureates Part 8

by: Molly D. Congdon

The *Women in Science: Nobel Laureates* series highlights the life, career, and contributions of incredible women scientists who have made enormous contributions in the fields of chemistry, medicine, physiology, and physics. In this edition, we highlight the discoveries of Irène Joliot-Curie and Rosalyn Yalow. The work accomplished by these women was not only vital to advancing the fields of chemistry, radiology, and nuclear physics, but also to improving and saving the lives of millions of people around the world through the development of tailored medical tools and treatments.

Irène Joliot-Curie

Irène Curie was the daughter of Pierre (1903 Nobel Prize in Physics) and Marie Curie (1903 Nobel Prize in Physics, 1911 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, see 2020 Spring FYI Newsletter.

Irène Curie was born in Paris, France on September 12, 1897. She was the eldest of two daughters; her younger sister, Eve, was born in 1904. Tragedy struck their family in 1906 when her father was hit and killed by a carriage.

During her youth, Irène was a shy child who craved her mother's attention. Her grandfather, Eugène Curie, a retired medical doctor who lived with the family following the death of his wife, was her best friend. He also served as her first teacher - introducing her to the sciences, renown authors, poetry, and politics. Upon the death of her grandfather in 1910, her mother began instructing Irène and Eve each morning before spending her day in the laboratory. Marie Curie also encouraged her daughters to partake in a variety of physical activities such as hiking, skiing, swimming, and horse riding.

Marie Curie and her colleagues at the Sorbonne were dissatisfied with the quality of education available to children in Paris. As a result, they decided to educate their own children on their areas of expertise. During this time, Irène was educated by numerous prestigious academics: Marie Curie (Nobel Laureate) taught physics, Jean Bapitiste Perrin (Nobel Prize in Physics, 1926) taught chemistry, and French physicist Paul Langevin taught mathematics. This informal school lasted for only two years due to the high demand of their parents' time and workloads. During the early 1910s, Irène continued to learn under her mother's tutelage and from books as she traveled around Europe. These travels included a trip to Sweden to witness her mother's acceptance of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1911. In 1913, Irène finally returned to Paris and began formal education at the Collège Sévigné.

In 1914, World War I was raging in Europe. To aid France's efforts to oppose invading Germany, Marie Curie established mobile radiology units with the goal of diagnosing injuries and locating shrapnel in soldiers. During this time, Irène was working towards her degree at Sorbonne. She enrolled in nursing courses and was soon teaching radiology to nurses selected to work in her mother's mobile radiology units. Irène left her sheltered

academic life behind and worked alongside her mother in field hospitals. Her maturity, mental strength, and fortitude shined during these difficult times. After the war, Irène received a military medal from the French Government.

She returned to academics, completing her studies in mathematics and physics at Sorbonne. Afterwards, Irène joined her mother's laboratory in the Radium Institute. Most researchers at the time were women, since the many of the men had fought and died in World War I. In the lab, Irène faced jealousy and animosity from the more experienced scientists due to her status as Marie Curie's daughter; her mother would frequently leave her in charge when she was ill or traveling. Irène would not let her co-workers deter her from her research. In 1925, Irène was awarded her Doctor of Science from the University of Paris for her thesis on the alpha radiation of polonium.

Like her mother, research was paramount in Irène's life. At the request of her mother, Irène trained a new lab member, Frédéric Joliot, in the proper handling of radioactive material. They enjoyed each other's company and married in 1926, both adopting the Joliot-Curie surname. In 1928, they began signing their work jointly. Together they made a formidable team. Irène focused on chemical aspects of their research, while Frédéric focused on physics.

In the early 1930s, the Joliot-Curies came close to being the first to identify the positron and neutron; however, misinterpretation of the data cost them the discoveries. In 1934, they were finally able to secure their place in scientific history when they noticed that aluminum foil emitted positrons after being blasted with alpha-particles. Furthermore, they noticed that this effect continued after the exposure to alpha-particles ceased. For the first time, radioactive atoms had been synthesized. This work is summarized in their 1934 paper "Production artificielle d'éléments radioactifs. Preuve chimique de la transmutation des éléments". Irène and Frédéric were awarded the 1935 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, "in recognition of their synthesis of new radioactive elements."

The Joliot-Curie's had two children: Hélène, born in 1927, and Pierre, born in 1932. Both children followed their family's scientific footsteps. Hélène became a professor of nuclear physics, while Pierre became a professor of biochemistry. Upon winning the Nobel Prize, Irène focused on establishing a better work-life balance, easing back on her workload to spend more time with her children. She didn't want them craving her attention as she had with her mother.

> "Without the love of research, mere knowledge and intelligence cannot make a scientist." - Irène Joliot-Curie

Irène was appointed as a lecturer at the University of Paris in 1932 and promoted to Professor in the Faculty of Science in 1937. She remained active in the lab studying the effects of neutrons on heavy elements, work which helped lead to the discovery of uranium fission. In 1946, she became the Director of the Radium Institute. For six years, she served as the Commissioner of Atomic Energy, helping to establish the first French atomic stockpile in 1948. Irène was also involved in the planning of the nuclear physics center at Orsay, but construction was incomplete at the time of her death.

Throughout her career, Irène took an active role in the social and intellectual advancement of women. She was a member of the Comité National de l'Union des Femmes Françaises and of the World Peace Council. In 1936 Irène was selected as the Undersecretary of State for Scientific Research where she advocated for state funding for scientific research. The Joliot-Curies were also politically active and worked to combat fascism and Nazism. As the world approached the beginning of World War II, the Joliot-Curies began locking their documents in a vault, worried their research would be confiscated by the military.

During her lifetime, Joliot-Curie participated in several foreign academies and scientific societies. Her Contributions to science were acknowledged with honorary degrees from several universities. At the young age of 58, Irène Joliot-Curie died on March 17, 1956 from leukemia. Like her mother, Irène was exposed to high levels of radiation, from her parents work on radioactive materials and contamination of their personal effects, to x-ray exposure during the war, and her own research.

Rosalyn Yalow

Rosalyn Sussman was born on July 19, 1921 in the South Bronx borough of New York, New York, USA. Her father, Simon Sussman, was born in the heavily Eastern European immigrant section of the Lower East Side of New York, while her mother Clara Zipper immigrated to the U.S. from Germany when she was 4 years old. Although both of her parents didn't finish high school, Rosalyn and her older brother Alexander didn't let their family's disadvantages stop them from pursuing their dreams. As a child, she was stubborn and focused. She was an avid reader, even before beginning kindergarten; together Rosalyn and her brother would take weekly trips to the Public Library.

Her interest in science began in her 7th grade chemistry class at Walton High School. Upon graduation she attended Hunter College, a competitive, free women's college that is now part of the City University of New York college system. There, with the teachings of Drs. Herbert N. Otis and Duane Roller, her interests shifted to physics, specifically nuclear physics. As a young female scientist in the 1930s, Rosalyn was living in the heyday of nuclear physics. Marie Curie was a role model for aspiring female scientists. Radioisotopes had recently been discovered and artificially created. Nuclear fission had just been discovered. The potential applications of these scientific achievements were both terrifying (nuclear warfare) and inspiring (medical imaging and treatment, and other peaceful applications).

Rosalyn was excited about pursuing a career in physics; however, her family would have preferred her to follow a more traditional path studying education to become a schoolteacher. Rosalyn would not let the societal pressures and discrimination deter her, although it was unlikely for a woman in physics to be accepted into graduate school or receive financial aid. With the encouragement of her professors, she became Hunter College's first physics major in 1941. She even graduated early with honors. After graduation, she obtained a part time secretary position with Dr. Rudolf Schoenheimer, a biochemist at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. This position was supposed to provide her an alternative way to access the graduate courses,

however she was required to study stenography as well. Shortly after starting the position, Rosalyn was offered a physics teaching assistantship at the University of Illinois.

Rosalyn encountered a completely different academic environment upon arriving at the University of Illinois. She was the only woman in the 400 members of the College of Engineering and the first woman since 1917. While she was congratulated on the achievement by the Dean, it was evident that the military draft of young men, even before the entrance of the U.S. into World War II, had facilitated her acceptance into the graduate program. Again, Rosalyn did not let this observation deter her from succeeding. Since the physics major was new to Hunger College when she graduated, her physics courses were minimal compared to her fellow graduate student classmates. As a result, Rosalyn audited two undergraduate courses and took three graduate courses, in addition to her teaching assistant responsibilities. Like most first-year graduate students, she had no teaching experience and shadowed a young instructor to learn how to effectively teach.

On December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor was attacked, and the U.S. entered World War II. Young men filled the campus preparing for training in their respective military branches. More importantly, the Physics Department lost many faculty members to secret scientific work at unknown locations. Through the early 1940s, Rosalyn was a busy woman juggling her teaching load, courses, and research. In 1943, she married Aaron Yalow, a fellow physics graduate student she met on her first day of graduate school. As a result, her responsibilities expanded to include domestic responsibilities, such as housekeeping during a period of wartime shortages and rationing. Rosalyn earned a master's degree in 1942 and her Ph.D. in Nuclear Physics in 1945 under the guidance of Dr. Maurice Goldhaber. His wife, distinguished physicists Dr. Gertrude Goldhaber, supported and encouraged Rosalyn to follow her dreams.

Rosalyn accepted an assistant engineer position as the Federal telecommunications Laboratory and returned to New York alone in 1945. By the end of the year, Aaron had joined her in the city working in medical physics at Montefiore Hospital. In 1946, Rosalyn's laboratory left New York. She returned to Hunter College to teach physics to veterans as part of a pre-engineering program, but it was soon evident that the full-time teaching position was not enough to fill her time. As a result, she volunteered in the laboratory of Dr. Edith Quimby, a medical physicist at the College of Physicians and Surgeons. This opportunity allowed Rosalyn to gain research experience in the medical application of radioisotopes and, through networking, obtain a part time consultant position with Dr. Bernard Roswit at the Bronx Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital. At the VA hospital, Rosalyn established the Radioisotope Service and initiated numerous research projects with Dr. Roswit and other physicians in various clinical fields. The work led to eight publications, a small grant to Dr. Roswit, and departmental support from the VA as part of a Radioisotope Services plan across several hospitals. Rosalyn retained her teaching position at Hunter until 1950, when she joined the VA full time.

In July 1950, Dr. Solomon Berson joined the VA's Radioisotope Services and they began a 22-year partnership, learning from and pushing each other to be better. They investigated the use of radioisotopes to determine blood volume,

calculate the kinetics of iodine metabolism, and diagnose thyroid disease. Expanding their work to incorporate serum proteins, they focused on easily obtainable Insulin and the kinetics of its disappearance from circulation in treated patients. By injecting volunteers with insulin labeled with radioactive iodine, they were able to measure circulating levels of insulin in serum. Believing in their work, Drs. Yalow and Benson even acted as volunteers for their own studies. From their observations, they deduced that patients were developing antibodies to insulin. This work was the birth of radioimmunoassays. In 1977, Rosalyn was jointly awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine "for the development of radioimmunoassays of peptide hormones." She was awarded the prize for her work with Dr. Solomon Berson, who died in 1972, and shared the award with Drs. Roger Guillemin and Andrew V. Schally. Due to the accuracy of their radioimmunoassay, Drs. Yalow and Berson were able to determine that type 2 diabetes is the result of the body's inefficient use of insulin and not a deficit. Since its discovery, radioimmunoassays have expanded to encompass a multitude of drugs, enzymes, proteins, vitamins, and viruses.

Rosalyn overcame gender discrimination as well as a disadvantaged background to excel and improve the lives of countless individuals. "The trouble with discrimination is not discrimination per se, but rather that the people who are discriminated against think of themselves as second-class," she stated. Her medical training was from masters in the field instead of a formal institution which forced her to learn by applying her scientific knowledge. This experience led her to foster a laboratory environment focused on both research techniques and philosophy. Rosalyn also enjoyed her relationships with the young investigators or 'professional children' in her laboratory. Preferring to maintain personal interactions and supervise herself, she maintained a smaller research group over the years. In respect for her colleague Dr. Berson and to acknowledge his contribution to the VA Service, Rosalyn requested that her laboratory be titled the Solomon A. Berson Research Laboratory.

Outside of the lab, Rosalyn was a strong believer that women could have it all: a successful career in science and a family.

> "The only difference between men and women in science is that the women have the babies. This makes it more difficult for women in science, but… it is merely another challenge to be overcome." - **Rosalyn Yalow**

She and Aaron had two children: Benjamin and Elanna. To balance work and life, the Yalow's hired sleep-in help while their children were young. As the children grew, they transitioned to part-time help and decreased the time as they became more adept at balancing work, house chores, and life. Benjamin pursued a career in computer programing and Elanna studied Educational Psychology.

Rosalyn Yalow was a true New Yorker. She spent her entire life in New York, except for the 3.5 years she was a graduate student at the University of Illinois. She joined the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine faculty as a research professor in 1968 and became the Chief of Nuclear Medicine Service at the VA hospital in 1970. From 1979 to 1985, Rosalyn was a faculty member at Yeshiva University and held the position of Distinguished Professor in the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She left the university after six years, accepting the position

of Solomon A. Berson Distinguished Professor at the Mt. Sinai School of Medicine. She was a member of the National Academy of Sciences. Her contributions to science were recognized with five honorary doctorates and numerous awards including the National Medal of Science in 1988. Rosalyn died on May 30th, 2011.

The awarding of the 2020 Nobel Prize in Chemistry is monumental. For the first time in the 120-year history of the Nobel Prizes, a prize has been jointly granted solely to two female scientists. As Doudna stated "It's great for especially younger women to see this and to see that women's work can be recognized, as much as men's." The prize is also a significant achievement for basic research. As Charpentier stated in her 2018 Kavli Autobiography, "The CRISPR-Cas9 discovery is a very good example why basic science is fundamentally important. Without the deep understanding of its basic mechanisms, we would not have been able to develop it into the innovative technology it is today."

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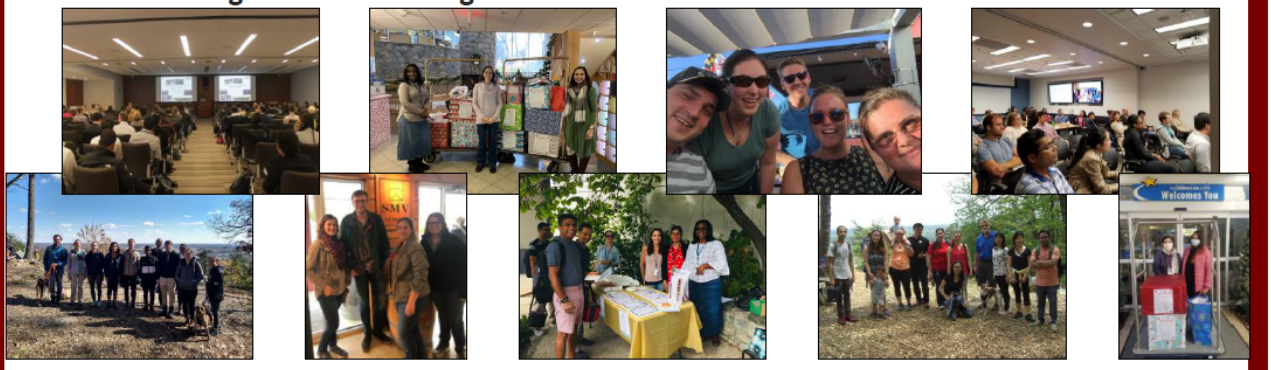

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Questions? Contact: marygrace.katusiime@nih.gov and wangw20@mail.nih.gov

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