4th Annual Presidential Career Symposium
Thursday, February 26, 2015

Move Your Career Forward

Keynote Speaker
Sally J. Rockey, Ph.D.
Deputy Director for Extramural Research, NIH
# Symposium Agenda

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 – 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>1 MC 3rd Floor Conference Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 – 9:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
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<td><strong>Breaking Through to the Next Stage of Your Career</strong></td>
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<td>Chris Taylor</td>
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<td>9:45 – 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<td>10:00 – 10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
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<td>Ethan Dmitrovsky, M.D.</td>
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<td>Mauro Ferrari, Ph.D.</td>
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<td>George Stancel, Ph.D.</td>
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<td>Alicia Monroe, M.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15 – 11:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Keynote Address</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sally J. Rockey, Ph.D.</td>
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<td>Deputy Director for Extramural Research, NIH</td>
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<td><em>Invited and hosted by the Center for Professional Development</em></td>
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<td>&amp; Entrepreneurship, MD Anderson Cancer Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15 – 11:25 a.m.</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:25 – 12:20 p.m.</td>
<td>Breakout Session I</td>
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<td>Management Consulting (Boston Consulting Group)</td>
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<td>Academic Research</td>
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<td>Industry Research</td>
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<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
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<td>Medical Science Liaison</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:20 – 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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*Lunch is provided to registered attendees only*
Symposium Agenda

1:00 – 1:55 p.m. Breakout Session II
Government Research
Industry Research
Scientific Writing
Legal & Intellectual Property
Clinical Operations
WORKSHOP: Making the Right Moves: Transitioning from Postdoc to Faculty

1:55 – 2:05 p.m. Coffee Break

2:05 – 3:00 p.m. Breakout Session III
Teaching
Science Policy
Administration & Project Management
WORKSHOP: CV/Resume Writing Tips
WORKSHOP: Effective Networking

3:00 – 3:15 p.m. Coffee Break

3:15 – 5:15 p.m. Workshops
Negotiating
Jing Zhou, Ph.D.
Schmooze or Lose: Being Effective in Interpersonal Engagement
Mary Mitchell

5:15 – 6:30 p.m. Networking Reception
Exhibitors include: Agilent Technologies, Alliantgroup, BioScience Writers, Fannin Innovation Studio, IRACDA: Institutional Research & Academic Career Development Awards, MD Anderson Center for Professional Development & Entrepreneurship, Nano3D Bioscience, TEVA Oncology, University of Houston Graduate Programs for Health Science Educators, University of Houston Law Center, University of Houston School of Continuing & Professional Studies
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Welcome to the 4th Annual Presidential Career Symposium

Welcome to the 4th Annual Presidential Career Symposium!

On behalf of the organizing institutions of the 2015 Annual Presidential Career Symposium – Move Your Career Forward, we would like to welcome you to this important event.

This symposium continues to be organized by postdoctoral fellows representing Texas Medical Center institutions and provides an opportunity to explore your professional job choices and expand your network. We are supported by a great team of administrators whose expertise has allowed us to grow this symposium over the last 4 years. We would like to thank all the postdoctoral fellows, faculty, and administrators who have worked to put this event together and sustain it throughout the years.

We would especially like to thank our speakers, workshop presenters, and panelists who have graciously given their time and effort to share their experiences with us today. We appreciate their insights and guidance into planning careers in their fields.

Please take advantage of this fantastic opportunity to actively participate in panel discussions and workshops. There are representatives from various companies, institutions, and organizations from the academic, business, public, and private sectors. We encourage you to interact with them and learn about potential positions. We also hope that you take advantage of the resources and networking opportunities available to you at this symposium as you move forward in your various career paths.

In the weeks following the symposium, we will post session summaries on the event website, www.apcstmc.org, which we hope will be helpful to you as you continue your career exploration.

Sincerely,
The Presidential Career Symposium Committee
Workshop Topics

Breaking Through to the Next Stage of Your Career
Chris Taylor
This workshop will focus on understanding the mindset and strategies needed to move on to the next stage of a trainee’s career. Mr. Taylor will provide a look into the concept of one’s “professional DNA” and how it sets the foundation for putting together a comprehensive plan for career growth and advancement.

Making the Right Moves: Transitioning from Postdoc to Faculty
Henry W. Strobel
This workshop is designed to help postdocs think about their short and long term plans in academic careers. Dr. Strobel will discuss opportunities postdocs have to help launch their academic careers. There will be discussion on what key skills postdocs should acquire before transitioning to faculty, as well as tips on the faculty application process and items to look out for when visiting and interviewing at prospective universities.

Effective Networking
Upendra Marathi
This workshop will focus on understanding the personal interactions that are at play as you interact with peers, strangers, and thought leaders in your field. Dr. Marathi will discuss tips for effective networking and situations where networking will come into play.

CV/Resume Writing Tips
Josh Eyler & Nicole Van Den Heuvel
This workshop will provide pointers for developing an impactful CV for academic positions and a resume for other professional positions. Attendees will receive advice from writing experts on the difference between a CV and resume, avoiding common mistakes, and making themselves stand out.

Negotiating
Jing Zhou
This workshop is an introduction to the world of negotiation. Dr. Zhou will discuss how understanding people and their behaviors can build your confidence in negotiations. Learn about basic preparation and strategies for reaching a successful resolution in a negotiation.

Schmooze or Lose: Being Effective in Interpersonal Engagement
Mary Mitchell
This workshop covers how professionalism and manners impact your ability to make an impression at an interview. Ms. Mitchell will discuss how to focus on the communication instead of the content.
Session Topics

Breakout Session I
Management Consulting
Boston Consulting Group

Academic Research
Dongsu Park
Raheem Paxton
Brooke Russell
Susan Schembre

Industry Research
Jennifer McGehee
Anandita Seth
Shikhar Sharma

Entrepreneurship
Mitch Eggers
Glauco Souza
Atul Varadhachary

Medical Science Liaison
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Owen Wilson

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Susan Marriott
Eric Schulze
Ronda Wendler

Legal & Intellectual Property
Mercy Chen
Rachel Gill
Karthika Perumal

Clinical Operations
Jennifer Allensworth
Rachel Atkinson
Jennifer Scull

Breakout Session III
Administration & Project Management
Alison Heller
Francisco Gonzalez
Emily Roarty
Barbara (Gayle) Slaughter

Teaching
Susan Cook
Anjelica Gonzalez
Jokubas Žiburkus

Science Policy
Bita Kash
Stephen Linder
Kirstin Matthews
Opening Remarks

Ethan Dmitrovsky, M.D.
Provost and Executive Vice President
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

Mauro Ferrari, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Houston Methodist Research Institute

Alicia Monroe, M.D.
Provost and Senior Vice President, Academic and Faculty Affairs
Baylor College of Medicine

George M. Stancel, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President, Academic and Research Affairs
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston
Dr. Sally Rockey, National Institutes of Health (NIH) Deputy Director for Extramural Research (DDER), leads the NIH extramural research activities. Her role is to oversee the development and implementation of the critical policies and guidelines central to the successful conduct of NIH supported biomedical research.

Dr. Rockey received her Ph.D. in Entomology from The Ohio State University and has spent the majority of her career in the area of research administration and information technology. In 1986 she joined the US Department of Agriculture, where she soon became the Deputy Administrator of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service. In this role, she oversaw the USDA extramural competitive grants program and served as the Agency’s Chief Information Officer. In 2005, Dr. Rockey moved to the NIH as Deputy to her current position, and she became the DDER in 2008.

Dr. Rockey is active on and leads a number of Federal committees related to science, research administration, and electronic government. She works most closely with other Federal science and university administrators, small businesses, professional societies and the scientific communities here and around the world. She co-chairs the NSTC Committee on Science Research Business Models and serves as the Vice President of the Human Frontiers of Science Program, an international program for life science research support. In 2012 she co-led a groundbreaking effort on the biomedical workforce. Dr. Rockey is a skilled public speaker, giving countless presentations on research administration, workforce and policy. She is the author of the widely read “Rock Talk” blog and has been recognized for her numerous professional accomplishments including receiving the Presidential Rank Award in 2004, the Joseph F. Carrabino Award in 2013, and the AIRI Public Service Award in 2014.
Mary M. Mitchell

Workshop Presenter
President
The Mitchell Organization

Mary M. Mitchell is internationally known in the field of manners. She has lived and worked on five continents authored nine books that have been translated into eleven languages (some of which may surprise you), and has been a regular columnist for two decades. Currently she writes for reuters.com. She has extensive experience in corporate training, including individual coaching, and has been working with postdoctoral programs throughout the country, as well as in the Middle East, for the past ten years. A highly sought-after speaker, she is well-known for her ability to take the stuffiness out of etiquette. Mary is dedicated to helping people become more professional to benefit their careers. A life-long athlete, she pioneered an awareness of the linkage between meditation, physical fitness, and effective social and professional behavior. Since 1989, Mary has delivered the consistent message that social, presentation and communication skills are the keys to personal and professional success. She has developed a program to help scientists deliver their work in their own professional presentation style where they can focus on the communication and not just the content.

Contact Information:
www.themitchellorganization.com
Chris Taylor

Workshop Presenter
Associate Director
Center for Professional Development & Entrepreneurship
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Chris Taylor is the Associate Director for MD Anderson’s Center for Professional Development & Entrepreneurship (CPDE). He is responsible for many aspects of CPDE’s offerings, including curriculum tailored to help researchers and clinicians explore career options and create a strategic plan to reach their long-term career goals. Chris has been a successful entrepreneur in the financial services industry and has held several leadership positions in industry and academia. He brings over 15 years of experience in developing successful professionals across several industries due to his passion for helping people achieve their career aspirations.

Chris obtained his BA in Psychology from Wabash College. His career has allowed him to develop several skill sets that have impacted his success including communication & active listening, team building & collaboration, negotiation & conflict resolution, and change management.

Chris believes he has the best job in the world due to the opportunity to provide support and guidance to a community of research and clinical trainees. Chris maintains, “Through my work at MD Anderson, UT-Health, and across the TMC, I hope I can make an impact on every trainee I have the fortunate opportunity to sit down with directly or those who have the chance to attend one of my professional development workshops. While not a scientist or clinician, I admire and can truly appreciate the tremendous work done by our trainees and hope my work here helps to support them as they can continue to grow and advance throughout their careers.”
Dr. Zhou is the Associate Editor of the Journal of Applied Psychology, a top journal in her field, where she was the first person of Chinese origin to be bestowed this professional honor and responsibility. She has been elected to the Fellow status in the American Psychological Association, and in the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

She has published numerous articles and served on the editorial boards of top journals including the Academy of Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, and Journal of Applied Psychology. A leading researcher on creativity and innovation in the workplace, she co-edited (with Christina Shalley) the widely cited Handbook of Organizational Creativity. Her second book, the Oxford Handbook of Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship (co-edited with Christina Shalley and Michael Hitt) is in press at Oxford University Press.

She has taught organizational behavior, leadership, negotiation, creativity and innovation, and global leadership at the undergraduate, MBA, Executive MBA, and Ph.D. levels and in executive education programs, and has received awards for excellence in research and teaching. Her leadership positions in professional associations include Chair of the Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management Track of the Academy of International Business and President of the International Association for Chinese Management Research.

She has done research projects, executive presentations, training, and consulting for companies in construction, energy, financial services, food, health care, information technology, pharmaceutical, retail, and telecommunication industries, and not-for-profits. They include: Alcon Labs, Alibaba, Areva, Baker Hughes, Bell Helicopter, BP, Cooper Industries, GSA/PBS, Memorial Hermann Northwest Hospital, Marathon Oil, Shell, Tenneco, Texas Children’s Hospital, Veritas, WestGeco, and others.
Jennifer Allensworth, Ph.D.

Clinical Studies Coordinator
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Education:
- The University of Texas at Austin, B.S. in Microbiology
- Duke University, Ph.D. in Molecular Pathology

Dr. Allensworth studied microbiology at UT Austin; while there, she joined the lab of Dr. Jon Huibregtse where her first experience in research was studying the link between human papilloma virus and cervical cancer. Through her experience in research there and during an internship at Pfizer, Jennifer decided to continue on to graduate school. She traveled to Duke University, where she earned her Ph.D. in molecular pathology studying mechanisms of therapeutic resistance in inflammatory breast cancer in the lab of Dr. Gayathri Devi. Upon receiving her degree she returned to her hometown of Houston and accepted a postdoctoral position at MD Anderson Cancer Center where she worked in the lab of Dr. Francois Claret identifying novel targets for the translation of new therapeutic approaches for breast cancer. Knowing that she was interested in an alternative career path to academia, she attended last year’s Presidential Career Symposium where she learned about clinical operations and made connections that helped her explore that career path. After a one year postdoc, Jennifer accepted a position as a clinical studies coordinator in the Investigational Cancer Therapeutics department at MD Anderson where she currently works as part of a team to run Phase I clinical trials.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Multi-tasking
- Problem solving
- Painstaking documentation and attention to detail

What I love most about my job: Working with patients- this is something that I had never had the opportunity to do before, and I find interacting with our patients and helping people to be very special and rewarding.

Contact Information:
jallensworth@mdanderson.org
Rachel Atkinson, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Director Medical Affairs
Merck

Education:
- Washburn University, B.A. in Chemistry; B.S. in Biology
- Baylor College of Medicine, Ph.D. in Translational Biology and Molecular Medicine
- University of Texas School of Public Health, M.P.H. in Epidemiology

Dr. Atkinson began her scientific career with a Kansas Biomedical Research Infrastructure Network (KBRIN NIH-funded) research project during her undergraduate studies at Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas. She then studied and received her Ph.D. at Baylor College of Medicine in the Translational Biology and Molecular Medicine program. After completion of her Ph.D., she completed a 2 year National Cancer Institute R25T Postdoctoral Cancer Prevention Fellowship at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center and successfully completed her M.P.H. in epidemiology from the University of Texas School of Public Health. During these training periods at Baylor College of Medicine and MD Anderson, she published several manuscripts in peer-reviewed journals, presented work at national meetings, and was a PI of several grants. After completion of her fellowship at MD Anderson in 2014 she became a Hospital Medical Affairs Director at Merck.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Critical thinking- It is essential that you are an expert at what you are studying
- Independence- Don’t be afraid to follow your own path
- Engaging your relationship with your mentors and peers are very important

What I love most about my job: I don’t have an average workday but I do have an average work month. My day to day activities are never consistent but in general I do the same things within a month. I interact with experts both internally and externally, answering their questions and providing feedback. Traveling and going to conferences always provide excitement and new opportunities

Contact Information:
RLAtkinson@comcast.net
https://www.linkedin.com/pub/rachel-atkinson/70/396/b7a
Lawrence Beck, M.S.

Senior Recruiter
SEMBio

Education:
- Texas Tech University, B.S. in Exercise and Sport Science
- Texas Tech University, M.S. in Sports Management

Lawrence Beck is a recruiter with SEMBio, a Frisco, TX-based firm that specializes in Medical Science Liaison recruitment. He attended Texas Tech University on a path designed to lead him to Sports Management and authored his thesis on the correlation between brand equity and attendance in Major League Baseball. He started his post college career by working in sales for the Texas Tech Hockey Club and the Texas Tornado hockey club, but within a couple of years of working in sales in the sports world, the opportunity to be a recruiter arose and has led to an exciting transition with SEMBio. He has been there for 4 years now. Lawrence is also a Certified Personnel Consultant (CPC) a certification earned through National Association of Personnel Services (NAPS), which provides continued education on best business practices and standards of ethics in recruiting.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Health sciences knowledge
- Writing skills
- Research skills

What I love most about my job: What I love most is when you get the opportunity to place someone in a position that they are truly excited for, and as a result, both the candidate and client come out as winners.
The Boston Consulting Group's (BCG) global reputation as a top management consulting firm derives from more than fifty years of experience helping senior managers discover and achieve their companies' full potential. Our mission is to help our clients achieve a sustainable competitive advantage through the delivery of customized solutions. We strongly believe in working with our clients, not on them. We partner with each client to help set direction, and face organizational and operational challenges head on.

We pride ourselves on our fresh thinking. Our evolving ideas profoundly change the way most businesses think about competition. Many leading business concepts over the past three decades originated with BCG, including experience curve, time-based competition, Segment-of-One® marketing, deconstruction, and trading up. Our recent Collateral Damage publication series has addressed the implications for managers of the ongoing financial crisis.

The Boston Consulting Group offers you an unparalleled opportunity for both personal and professional growth and development. No two experiences are alike and the skills you acquire will position you for success within and outside of BCG.

BCG is staffed by consultants who combine industry experience with acute strategic and analytical skills. They come from a variety of backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of perspective we value. Most assignments involve one or more teams of three to six BCGers; specifically, the typical BCG team is made up of one to two partners, a project manager, and several consultants/associates who work with a similar group of client staff. The standard team combines consultants with relevant technical and industry backgrounds with others who have functional and strategic skills. We also strive to incorporate a mix of seniority and skills to balance the capabilities needed for the project with a sound budget plan. We create value by customizing our approach to complement client capabilities and the issues at hand.
Dawn P. G. Brown, Ph.D.

Oncology Medical Liaison
Eli Lilly and Company

Education:
- Fisk University, B.A. in Biology
- Kelley School of Business, Executive Certificate in Life Sciences
- Indiana University School of Medicine, Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

Dr. Brown currently serves as an Oncology Medical Liaison at Eli Lilly and Company for the Houston, TX area. Her responsibilities include serving as a scientific resource for scientific experts by responding to their research and information needs, as well as providing connections to scientists and resources within and external to Lilly. She assumed this role in 2013. Dr. Brown joined the R&D organization in 2008 as a Postdoctoral Scientist in Integrative Biology. Her research focused on the discovery of novel markers of drug development in the laboratory. Since 2008, she has worked as a Research Scientist in pre-clinical and clinical product development for various therapeutic diseases such as Oncology, Osteoarthritis, Renal Disease and Parasiticides. Dr. Brown earned her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at Indiana University School of Medicine. During her graduate studies, her research focus was Understanding Cisplatin Drug Resistance in Human Ovarian Cancer. Her research efforts have afforded her the publication of multiple peer reviewed articles.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Scientific knowledge (Ph.D. minor – Cancer Biology)
- Communication skills
- Research experience

What I love most about my job: I love the autonomy and diversity in communications to key opinion leaders. I have the opportunity to determine my own schedule. Also, the wealth of knowledge I attain through my interactions with some of the top oncology leaders is very rewarding. Together, these things have afforded me absolute job satisfaction.

Contact Information:
brown.dawn@lilly.com
317-358-9026
Mercy Chen, Ph.D.

Licensing Associate
Baylor College of Medicine

Education:
- University of California, Los Angeles, B.S. in Biochemistry
- Baylor College of Medicine, Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology

Dr. Chen joined the Baylor Licensing Group in 2011. Previously, she held a position as a contracts associate in the Office of Sponsored Programs at Baylor College of Medicine. There she was in charge of reviewing and negotiating a variety of research-related contracts with industry as well as other non-profit organizations. She received a B.S. in Biochemistry from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a Ph.D. in Molecular and Cellular Biology from Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. Chen completed an internship in the BLG Internship Program in 2006. She is an active member in the Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) and the Licensing Executives Society (LES).

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Analytical skills
- Skills in managing various projects independently
- Skills in self-education

What I love most about my job: I like the fact that I can interface between the academic and the commercial aspects. My science background is useful in learning about cutting-edge technologies. At the same time, I have a hand in shepherding potential life-saving technologies into the market place.

Contact Information:
mschen@bcm.edu
Susan W. Cook, Ph.D.

Professor of Biology
Joint Admission Medical Program Faculty Director
Houston Baptist University

Education:
- University of Texas at Arlington, B.S. in Biology
- Baylor College of Medicine, Ph.D. in Microbiology

Dr. Cook attended a local state university after graduating from high school. She loved "small stuff" and UTA offered a microbiology specialization within their biology major. The first year seemed a rehash of high school biology, but by the time she got to Immunology and Virology, she loved it. In one of her chemistry classes, a young female instructor would teach the class while making occasional comments about her life. Dr. Cook realized at that time that she could become a college professor too. Before entering graduate school in 1980, she worked as a technician at UT Southwestern for a few years.

At Baylor, she entered the lab of Dr. Vernon Knight, a pulmonary specialist who studied influenza virus pathogenesis. In 1984, Dr. Cook became a postdoctoral fellow for Dr. Hull studying bacterial pathogenesis. In 1992, she was able to obtain that long sought after college professor appointment at Houston Baptist University.

Dr. Cook is active in committee work such as reaccreditation activities, mentorship and advising of students, and instruction. She also took the position of Director of the Health Professions Program at HBU. In this job, she was responsible for helping students to bridge the gap between professional school and their undergraduate institution.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Ability to read the literature
- Ability to perform experiments in molecular biology
- Ability to give talks and seminars

What I love most about my job: Our students are wonderful. I love interacting with them.

Contact Information:
scook@hbu.edu
CPT Stephen Crimmins, Ph.D.

Chief, Department of Clinical Investigation – Bench Lab
William Beaumont Army Medical Center (U.S. Army)

Education:
- University of Georgia, B.S.
- University of Alabama at Birmingham, Ph.D. in Neuroscience

Dr. Crimmins entered graduate school in 2002 in UAB’s Department of Neuroscience. He graduated in 2007 and spent 9 months as a postdoc in the Neuropathology division at UAB. He left academia in 2008 and was commissioned into the Army as a Biochemist in 2010. From 2010 to 2013 he was stationed in Landstuhl, Germany where he was the Chief of the Micro and Molecular Biology Division at the Public Health Command Region-Europe. During that assignment he managed an accredited food testing laboratory that serviced Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. He also designed and implemented a high throughput vector-borne disease testing laboratory that became the first in the Army to be registered under an internationally recognized ISO 9001 Quality Management System. In 2013 he took an assignment in the Department of Clinical Investigation at the William Beaumont Army Medical Center in El Paso, Texas where he currently works. Dr. Crimmins runs a research laboratory that provides research services and education to the medical residents and staff at the hospital. Their research interests encompass a broad range of areas including, but not limited to, infectious diseases, traumatic brain injury, cancer, and gastroparesis.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Scientific training
- Writing
- Critical thinking

What I love most about my job: I am challenged daily to use my scientific training to improve the quality of life, health, and safety of Soldiers and their families. My work has a higher mission focus to which I am proud to contribute.
Sara Cullinan, Ph.D.

Deputy Editor
American Journal of Human Genetics

Education:
• Northwestern University, B.A. in Biological Sciences
• University of Pennsylvania, Ph.D. in Cell and Molecular Biology

Dr. Cullinan is the Deputy Editor of the American Journal of Human Genetics. In this role, she oversees the day-to-day goings on at the Journal, which includes the assessment of submitted manuscripts and management of the peer review process, as well as interactions with the production staff. Her graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania and postdoctoral training at the Whitehead Institute focused on the mechanisms underlying intracellular stress signaling pathways. Upon completion of her laboratory training, she entered the world of scientific publishing as an editor at Cell Press. During her time there, she worked on several journals, and served as Chief Editor of Trends in Biochemical Sciences. She has organized several scientific symposia and career development workshops.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
• Critical thinking
• Communication; written and oral
• Time management

What I love most about my job: I feel very fortunate to be able to work with a diverse group of scientists, helping them to improve their papers and communicate their results to their colleagues. I enjoy the intellectual freedom the job offers, and I relish the opportunity to think about many different broad scientific questions.

Contact Information:
scullinan@ajhg.net
www.linkedin.com/in/saracullinan
Mitch D. Eggers, Ph.D., M.B.A.

President and CEO
Adient Medical Inc.

Education:
- Texas A&M University, B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering
- Rice University, M.B.A

Dr. Eggers founded and currently serves as the CEO of a medical device company developing the first absorbable vascular filter for the prevention of pulmonary embolism. He has 28 years of experience developing biomedical devices and founding startups including Genometrix (first electronic DNA chip in collaboration with MIT and BCM), GenVault (first automated dry-state DNA archiving system) and Adient Medical. Collectively he has secured $30M in top-tier venture capital, $22M in government-sponsored research, $10M in corporate partnerships, and $5M in angel financings for his inventions protected by over 30 issued patents. His technology resides in numerous products commercialized by small and large companies that have included General Electric, Motorola, Beckman-Coulter, and Sigma.
Mitch was awarded the top prize in Surgery and Bioengineering at the 2011 AMA Research Symposium for his absorbable filter research and subsequently, the 2014 Michael E. DeBakey Life Science Award for the life science company with the highest potential. Previously at GenVault, he was awarded the Red Herring Top 100 most innovative companies.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Engineering School: solving problems in a systematic, engineering manner
- Business School: managing a business

What I love most about my job: Developing novel biomedical products that can make a lasting difference in the world. Independent research and development in a fast-paced, small company environment. Collaborating with leading physicians and scientists from multiple disciplines.

Contact Information:
mitch.eggers@adientmedical.com
Joshua R. Eyler, Ph.D.

Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Adjunct Associate Professor of Humanities
Rice University

Education:
- Gettysburg College, B.A. in English
- University of Connecticut, M.A. in Medieval Studies
- University of Connecticut, Ph.D. in Medieval Studies

Dr. Eyler received his Ph.D. in Medieval Studies from the University of Connecticut in 2006, after which he moved to a position as Assistant Professor in the English department at Columbus State University in Georgia. Although he was approved for tenure at CSU, his love for teaching and his desire to work with instructors from many different disciplines led him to the field of faculty development and to George Mason University, where he served as an Associate Director of the Center for Teaching and Faculty Excellence from 2011-2013. In August of 2013, he came to Rice to take the position of Director of the CTE. He has published broadly on medieval literature, and his eclectic research interests include the biological basis of learning, Chaucer, and disability studies. His current projects include the book How Human Beings Learn: A New Paradigm for Teaching in Higher Education, which is under contract with the University of Nebraska Press.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Critical analysis
- Collaboration and Compromise
- Improvisation

What I love most about my job: There is nothing I like more than working with faculty, postdocs, graduate students, and undergraduates from many different disciplines to support and improve teaching and learning.

Contact Information:
jeyler@rice.edu
Twitter: @joshua_r_eyler
Rachel Gill, Ph.D.

Patent Examiner
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Education:
- Washington University in St. Louis, B.A. in Biology
- University of Alabama at Birmingham, M.S. in Forensic Science
- University of Alabama at Birmingham, Ph.D. in Cell Biology

Dr. Gill graduated from Washington University with a degree in biology, after which she spent almost ten years affiliated with the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She was not only active in biomedical research, but various student government and enrichment activities. After graduating in 2011 with her Ph.D. in Cell Biology, focusing on viral signaling pathways, she did a short postdoc at the National Institutes of Health, furthering her research into viral immunology. Dr. Gill accepted her current position as a Patent Examiner in the Viral Immunology Art Unit at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in 2012.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Scientific writing
- Organizational skills
- Public speaking

What I love most about my job: Every day, I learn something new, and it keeps me fresh and on my toes. Reading and writing about science is something I've always enjoyed, and that is obviously a major part of this job.

Contact Information:
rachel.gill@uspto.gov
www.linkedin.com/in/rachelbgill
Anjelica Gonzalez, Ph.D.

Donna L. Dubinsky Assistant Professor of Biomedical Engineering
Yale University

Education:
- Utah State University, B.S. in Irrigational Engineering
- Baylor College of Medicine, Ph.D. in Computational Biology

Dr. Gonzalez currently serves as Dubinsky Assistant Professor of Biomedical Engineering at Yale University. Anjelica attended Utah State University with the hopes of obtaining a B.S. in Irrigational Engineering. In the summer of her junior year Anjelica attended the Baylor College of Medicine Summer Medical and Research Training (SMART) Program, where, for the first time she was able to apply the mathematics and physics fundamentals from her engineering courses to biological systems. This was such an enlightening and rewarding experience that Anjelica continued on to Baylor College of Medicine to pursue a Ph.D. in Computational Biology. Following her graduation, Anjelica served a fellowship at Texas Children’s Hospital, was subsequently hired at Yale University as an Associate Research Scientist, and transitioned to Assistant Professor in 2009. To date, Anjelica’s research has been acknowledged by the National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, and The Hartwell Foundation. Anjelica was named as one of NBC’s “10 Latino Innovators” and has published in the New York Times. Her efforts in education at Yale were recognized with the 2013-2014 Provost’s Teaching Prize, and her contribution to Yale was recently recognized with an appointment to the endowed Donna L. Dubinsky chair.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Communication
- Management
- Task-switching

What I love most about my job: I have an extreme passion for science. I love it in all forms, including exploration, discovery and dissemination. The job of a professor is to engage with science in all three of these phases, and to do so with people who are equally as enthusiastic about learning. What could be better?

Contact Information:
Anjelica.gonzalez@yale.edu
203-436-2971
Francisco Gonzalez, Ph.D.

Senior Project Manager
Selah Genomics (an EKF Diagnostics Company)

Education:
- Simon Bolivar University, B.S., M.S. in Chemistry
- Baylor University, Ph.D. in Chemistry/Biochemistry

Dr. Gonzalez worked as a chemist for the Venezuelan Oil Company conducting research in heavy oil catalytic cracking and refining projects while an undergraduate at Simon Bolivar University. In 1998, he moved to Procter and Gamble as a research scientist within the Feminine Care Department. There he was primarily involved in establishing the main research lab including test development/validation, QC/QA and consumer complaint systems, and technical support for Latin-American Manufacturing Plants. In 2000, he moved to Texas to pursue a Ph.D. in Chemistry/Biochemistry focusing on enzymology and protein purification sciences. In 2005, Dr. Gonzalez moved to South Carolina to conduct research in Alzheimer's disease at USC where he focused on the identification and characterization of Amyloid-beta assembly species and their effect on cell inflammatory responses. During this time he helped establish the Biomedical Engineering Program and managed their core facility for research/teaching purposes. In 2013, he started with Selah Genomics as a Lab Manager and was recently promoted to Senior Project Manager to define project plans, timelines and work assignments, lead validation of clinical assays, develop marketing material, and ensure GLP/CAP/CLIA regulatory compliance.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Work effectively in a team-oriented environment while maintaining a leadership approach
- Troubleshoot to accomplish tasks in a timely manner and under regulatory compliance
- Use scientific and managerial background to lead projects to a final product

What I love most about my job: It gives me the opportunity to apply my knowledge and experience in a team environment where listening, designing, and planning is as important as leading and producing. I enjoy the fact that I can still teach and spend time in the lab while leading projects to a final commercial product.

Contact Information:
Francisco.Gonzalez@selahgenomics.com
Alison Heller, Ph.D.

Project Manager, Center for Cancer Immunology Research
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Education:
- Fairfield University, B.S. in Biology
- Albert Einstein College of Medicine, M.S. in Biomedical Sciences
- Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Ph.D. in Biochemistry

Dr. Heller is currently a Project Manager at MD Anderson Cancer Center, where she is the strategic and tactical project lead for the Center for Cancer Immunology Research. In this role, she manages and facilitates collaboration across large, multi-institutional grants (e.g. SU2C). Other roles in this position include Program Manager for the University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Immunology Program as well as the SU2C-AACR-CRI Dream Team Project Manager.

Prior to joining academia, Dr. Heller worked for several years in the pharmaceutical industry in NYC and CA, most recently as the Director of Medical Communications at Pharmacyclics in Sunnyvale, CA. In this role she led the cross-functional Global Publications Team to generate external medical communication strategies in order to educate and prepare the medical and healthcare communities for product launch. Dr. Heller also worked at Genentech/Roche in Global Medical Affairs where she led publication strategy and execution for marketed molecules in the cardiometabolism and infectious diseases franchises. She began her career at Pfizer Oncology in Global Medical Affairs where she developed and implemented medical communications tools to support the launch of new oncology products as well as other oncology assets in Clinical Development.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Building and maintaining effective relationships
- Managing and facilitating collaborations across large, multi-institutional grants
- Multi-tasking among projects of competing priority

What I love most about my job: Every day is different, since I am always working on at least 2 to 3 major projects at a given time, and each project introduces me to new people in the field as well as new scientific topics and therapeutic areas

Contact Information:
alison.sikora@gmail.com
Bita Kash, Ph.D., M.B.A., F.A.C.H.E.

Director, NSF Center for Health Organization Transformation (CHOT)
Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Healthcare Management (JHM)
Assistant Professor, Texas A&M University’s School of Public Health

Education:
- University of Missouri Columbia, B.S. in Environmental Design
- The Citadel, M.B.A.
- Texas A&M University Health Science Center, Ph.D. in Health Services Research

Dr. Kash has been the Director of the Center for Health Organization Transformation (CHOT) since April 2014. The CHOT is an industry-university cooperative research center (I/UCRC) funded by the National Science Foundation and health organizations to conduct research supporting major management, clinical, and information technology innovations in healthcare. As Director and PI of CHOT, Dr. Kash conducts research to support the implementation of evidence-based transformational strategies within healthcare organizations. Dr. Kash's research model relies on the knowledge and experience of healthcare leaders to guide academic research. This cooperative model ensures that the research is both meaningful and applicable to the healthcare industry and provides immediate decision support for CHOT's Industry Members, such Texas Children's Hospital, the American Society of Anesthesiologists, and Studer Group. Dr. Kash's areas of research include organizational capacity for change, implementation of new innovative models of care in primary care and surgical settings, and healthcare strategic planning and management. Her most recent research project focuses on examining elements of integrated primary provider networks as potential sources of competitive advantage using resource based theory (RBT).

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Rigorous academic research approach to addressing questions about access, quality and cost in the healthcare setting
- Statistical methods and research methodology training and understanding
- Research proposal development

What I love most about my job: Working in a fast-paced, collaborative environment. As the NSF CHOT center director, I am able to apply my management training and skills while working as a health services researcher on the most industry relevant topics.

Contact Information:
bakash@srph.tamhsc.edu
Stephen Linder, Ph.D.

Associate Director
Institute for Health Policy
University of Texas School of Public Health

Education:
- The University of Massachusetts at Boston, B.A. in Politics
- The University of Iowa, M.A. in Political Science
- The University of Iowa, Ph.D. in Political Science

Dr. Linder is a Professor in Management, Policy and Community Health and Director of the Institute for Health Policy at the UT School of Public Health. He was the Chancellor’s Health Fellow in Public Health for 2014. He completed his doctoral degree in Political Science at the University of Iowa and served on the faculties of UCLA and Tulane before coming to UT in 1984. He was elected to the Kenneth I. Shine Academy for Health Science Education in 2013 and has won school, UT system, and state-wide teaching awards. Dr. Linder is currently PI on three projects: the Health of Houston Survey and Research Into Action, funded by private foundations, and the Cumulative Risk Assessment, supported by the US EPA. His current research interests include: policy studies, environmental policy, cumulative risk, and climate change.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Critical and Analytical Thinking
- Public Speaking
- Technical writing

What I love most about my job: Teaching and mentoring students, writing and collaborative research are my favorite things. I design my courses to challenge myself as well as the students, and no two are ever exactly alike. Group creativity is energizing, whether in the classroom or on a research project.

Contact Information:
stephen.h.linder@uth.tmc.edu
Upendra Marathi, Ph.D., M.B.A.

Senior Vice President
PLx Pharma, LLC

Education:
- Loyola University, B.S. in Biology
- Loyola University, Ph.D. in Pharmacology
- Rice University, M.B.A. in Finance/Entrepreneurship

Dr. Marathi is a Senior Vice President at PLx Pharma Inc. where he has led the development of three novel pain and cardiovascular drugs. One product has recently been approved by the FDA. He has helped raise over $50 million in equity financing, and has been awarded approximately $3.5 million in translational research grants. He was previously with BCM Technologies, the venture subsidiary and incubator for the Baylor College of Medicine, where he was involved in the founding and launch of several biotechnology companies. Prior to BCMT, Dr. Marathi was a postdoctoral fellow at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, and he earned a Ph.D. in Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics from Loyola University. He has over 20 years of drug development experience in increasing the safety and efficacy of approved cancer and pain products. Dr. Marathi has served on the Faculty of the Jones School of Management at Rice University, co-teaching the Venture Capital Course. He has recently started a novel life science entrepreneurship course, Bioventure Creation, for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- How ask the right question; Treat every scientific, clinical and business problem as an experiment by controlling as many variables as possible
- Importance of team work; ability to lead and function within a team
- How to speak and write effectively
- Humility

What I love most about my job: The people around us are extraordinarily important, and the corporate goals that aim to make major impacts upon public health.

Contact Information:
marathi@plxpharma
713-842-1249 x202
Susan Marriott, Ph.D.

President and Owner, BioScience Writers, LLC
Professor, Baylor College of Medicine

Education:
- Iowa State University, B.S. in Microbiology
- Kansas State University, Ph.D. in Virology

Dr. Marriott joined the BCM faculty in 1991 where she is currently a Professor of Molecular Virology and Microbiology. She has authored successful research proposals funded by the NIH, NSF, and American Cancer Society. Together with her graduate students and post-docs, she has published over 60 book chapters and original scientific reports, and has spoken at numerous national and international research conferences. Dr. Marriott has served on the editorial board of research journals and reviewed grants for a variety of government and private funding agencies.

In 2001 Dr. Marriott, co-founded BioScience Writers, LLC, to provide editing and writing services that help clients in the global scientific community convey a compelling and impactful story. By building personal relationships with each client, BioScience Writers provides customized editing and writing solutions with rapid turnaround, bringing peace of mind to scientists who face highly competitive and high impact writing needs. BSW also presents instructional scientific writing workshops to academic institutions, scientific organizations, and biotech and pharm industries around the world. Dr. Marriott was invited to speak at the national Council of Scientific Editors meeting about the use of outsourced language polishing services by publishers.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Critical thinking
- Perseverance
- Optimism

What I love most about my job: I enjoy helping scientists achieve their funding and publishing goals, helping get good science get the recognition it deserves, providing alternative scientific career opportunities, and entrepreneurship.

Contact Information:
sjm bcm@gmail.com
https://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=21143602
Diana Martinez, M.P.H, Ph.D.

Epidemiology Program Manager
Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services (HCPHES)

Education:
- University of Puerto Rico, B.S. in Chemistry
- University of Texas Health Science Center, M.P.H.
- University of Texas Health Science Center, Ph.D.

Dr. Martinez has 24 years of experience in the field of Public Health. She provides programmatic oversight, technical expertise, and personnel supervision for the HCPHES Epidemiology Program. HCPHES is a local health department of a large urban area, Harris County, Texas, servicing a population of approximately 2.1 million. As Program Manager, Dr. Martinez is directly involved in disease surveillance, analysis of large datasets and report writing. She is responsible for ensuring appropriate/timely response of the Epidemiology Program to public health emergencies and large scale outbreak investigations. She has been directly involved in many investigations and has held leadership roles in coordination with different agencies to successfully control the outbreak and manage its effects to Harris County residents.

Dr. Martinez started as Senior Epidemiologist for HCPHES. In that capacity she was the lead epidemiologist for the majority of investigations as she was the only epidemiologist under the chief epidemiologist in a then very small program. As the program grew so did her responsibilities. She trained and supervised a growing number of staff epidemiologists being hired in the program. She was also involved in mentoring student interns and volunteers that came through the program. In the last three years she became the Epidemiology Program Manager.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Scientific writing experience
- Advanced analytical skills
- Understanding epidemiological study designs

What I love most about my job: Actively working on investigations of emerging infectious diseases. I have been involved in disease investigations and programmatic issues surrounding SARS, H1N1, MERS CoV, and most recently, EV D68 and EVD. One of my favorite activities is mentoring future epidemiologists.

Contact Information:
dmartinez@hcfphes.org
713-439-6164
Kirstin R.W. Matthews, Ph.D.

Fellow in Science and Technology Policy
Rice University’s Baker Institute for Public Policy

Education:
- The University of Texas at Austin, B.A. in Biochemistry
- The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Ph.D. in Molecular Biology

Dr. Matthews is a fellow in science and technology policy at the Baker Institute. She is also a lecturer in the Wiess School of Natural Sciences and the Department of BioSciences and an adjunct lecturer in the Department of Sociology at Rice University. Matthews manages the activities of the Baker Institute Science and Technology Policy Program, which include overseeing events, conducting policy research, and writing policy publications. Her research focuses on the intersection between traditional biomedical research and public policy, which she publishes both through the Baker Institute and in peer-reviewed journals. Current projects include the Baker Institute International Stem Cell Policy Program, the Civic Scientist Lecture Series and Outreach Program, and policy studies in research and development funding.

Dr. Matthews came to Rice University as a postdoctoral research associate in the Department of Physics and Astronomy and a research assistant at the Baker Institute in 2003. From 2004 to 2006, Matthews was also the project director for the task force Access to Health Care in Texas: Challenges of the Uninsured and Underinsured. The task force released the report “Code Red: The Health of Texas” in April 2006, followed by an update, “Code Red 2008,” in March 2008.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Thinking independently
- Public speaking
- Writing clearly

What I love most about my job: I love having the ability to choose my project and who I want to work with. I get to collaborate a lot with other research and love to learn from them in the process. Only rarely am I forced to work with someone, most often I’m allowed to decide who I want to partner with.

Contact Information:
krwm@rice.edu
Twitter: @stpolicy
Jennifer McGehee, Ph.D.

Scientist, Biologics Research
Janssen, Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson

Education:
• St. Mary’s University, B.S. in Chemistry
• University of Texas at Houston GSBS, Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Biophysics

Dr. McGehee obtained a B.S. in Chemistry at St. Mary’s University in San Antonio in 2005. As a graduate student at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, she joined the lab of Dr. Vasanthi Jayaraman. Her dissertation titled, "AMPA Receptor Allosterism: Measurement of the Conformational Changes in the Ligand Binding Domain of a Functional Receptor," led to a Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Biophysics in 2010. As a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Theodore G. Wensel’s lab at Baylor College of Medicine, Jennifer used a biophysical approach to correlate the structure and function of membrane proteins, specifically TRP channels. During Jennifer’s time as a postdoctoral fellow, she improved her leadership and communication skills by becoming President of the Postdoctoral Association and a part time professor at Houston Community College. She recently began her career in biotechnology at Johnson & Johnson. As a scientist in the assay development group in Biologics Research at Janssen, she evaluates, characterizes, and validates the mechanism of action of therapeutic candidates using a variety of cellular, biochemical, and pharmacological methods. She also establishes new technologies to meet project needs. Dr. McGehee continues her passion for teaching by mentoring co-ops at Janssen.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
• Creativity
• Scientific literacy and reasoning
• Collaboration/teamwork

What I love most about my job: I enjoy challenging projects! I believe I bring a different perspective because of my multidisciplinary training. Some people try to solve problems with their current skill set or with the technology we have in-house. I like coming up with new or improved methods to solve problems. I am constantly learning new techniques and evaluating new technology.

Contact Information:
https://www.linkedin.com/in/jmcgehee2121
Dongsu Park, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Baylor College of Medicine

Education:
- Kyungpook National University, B.S. in Molecular Biology
- Kyungpook National University, M.S. in Immunology
- Baylor College of Medicine, Ph.D. in Immunology

Dr. Park completed his Ph.D. in Immunology at Baylor College of Medicine in 2007 with Professor David M. Spencer, where he studied the mechanisms of dendritic cell survival in the context of developing a cancer vaccine as well as the pharmacological regulation of Wnt signaling in stem cells. This work has been recognized with fellowship awards from the American Cancer Society and The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Afterwards he was a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. David Scadden’s lab at the Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School, where he investigated the lifespan of bone forming cells and the in vivo identity, dynamics, and function of their stem cells. To address these questions, he developed a new strategy to pulse-label osteolineage cells and to track them in living animals using genetic lineage-tracing animal models and live-animal imaging technology. In 2012, he was awarded the “NIH Pathway to Independence Award (K01)” to pursue his independent research.

Dr. Park now aims to address fundamental questions about the identity and function of mesenchymal/skeletal stem cells in the context of skeletal tissue regeneration in vivo and to explore the clinical relevance of these cells in degenerative and malignant bone diseases. The approaches involve genetic lineage-tracing models along with live animal imaging technology.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- A unique technical innovation or improvement
- Scientific writing skills
- How to develop successful collaborations

What I love most about my job: I am excited about pursuing new research areas, and I would relish the opportunity to contribute to the research of other groups in a cooperative environment at the cutting edge of mesenchymal and skeletal biology. I am particularly pleased about mentoring students and young scientists.

Contact Information:
donksu.park@bcm.edu
Raheem Paxton, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
University of North Texas Health Science Center
School of Public Health

**Education:**
- Morehouse College, B.S. in Psychology
- Kansas State University, M.S. in Exercise Psychology
- University of South Carolina, Ph.D. in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

Dr. Paxton received his doctorate in Public health and pursued two competitive postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (Houston, TX). His research is centered on the development of theory-based physical activity and dietary intervention for minority cancer survivors. In addition, his work involves using advanced statistical approaches such as covariance and mixture modeling as well as data mining.

Dr. Paxton maintains “I can honestly say that my career path was not planned and I did not set out to be an academic researcher. Perhaps it was the path of least resistance; one, which was guided only by fate. That being said, academic researchers have the best jobs in the world. On a good day, I get to laugh, play, and daydream. Daydream about my work, where I want to take it, and what I want to do with it. The life of interacting with study participants, analyzing data, and daydreaming about perfect case scenarios is one that I have grown to love. This passion and continued quest for knowledge keeps me engaged and constantly seeking more.”

**Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:**
- Data analysis
- Scientific writing
- Knowing how to pick your battles

**What I love most about my job:** What I love about my job is that I don’t punch a clock, I have unlimited freedom, and I get to be of service in the work that I do. In the process of being of service to the community, I’m often blessed with positive words of encouragement.

**Contact Information:**
raheem.paxton@unthsc.edu
https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Raheem_Paxton/
Karthika Perumal, Ph.D., J.D.

Education:
- Anna University, B.Tech.
- Baylor College of Medicine, Ph.D.
- University of Houston Law Center, J.D.

Dr. Perumal is an associate in Dentons' Intellectual Property and Technology practice in the Houston office, focusing on intellectual property law, including patents, copyrights and trademarks, as well as the licensing, transfer, acquisition, and distribution of various technologies. Her experience includes technology areas such as biology, chemistry, biotechnology, biomedical devices, and surgical procedures. Prior to joining Dentons, Dr. Perumal was an associate at Bracewell & Giuliani LLP in Houston, and the Associate Director for the Center for Technology Development at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas. During her ten years with UTMB, she developed commercialization strategies for over 65 technologies, including multi-party collaboration agreements, sponsored research agreements, material transfer agreements, options, and licensing transactions. She participated in structuring and financing six start-up companies for various pharmaceutical, medical device and medical informatics products. As part of her scientific training, Karthika was also involved in biological research projects and has published several articles in peer reviewed journals.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Effective written communication
- Promoting ideas and personal brand through publications
- Organizing materials that you read and review

What I love most about my job: I love working with my clients in developing successful strategies to manage innovation, which is at the intersection of law, business, and technology. Every day I get an opportunity to work with amazingly smart people and advise them on navigating this ecosystem and maximizing the potential of their innovation.

Contact Information:
Karthika.perumal@dentons.com
https://www.linkedin.com/in/kperumal
Emily Roarty, Ph.D.

Scientific Manager
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Education:
- Auburn University, B.S. in Molecular Biology
- University of Alabama at Birmingham, Ph.D. in Cell Biology

Dr. Roarty obtained her Ph.D. at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in the laboratory of Dr. Etty (Tika) Benveniste, where she studied aberrant receptor tyrosine kinase signaling in Glioblastoma Multiforme. She then completed her postdoctoral fellowship under the mentorship of Dr. Isaiah J. Fidler, at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, investigating molecular mechanisms underlying brain metastases. Currently, Dr. Roarty manages the grants, contracts and scientific collaborations, including the Lung Cancer and HPV Moon Shot programs, for the Department of Thoracic, Head and Neck Medical Oncology at MD Anderson Cancer Center. She has expertise in scientific writing, proposal and budget development, and pre- and post-award administration. In the last three years, Dr. Roarty has helped garner more than $25,000,000 in peer-reviewed research funding for the department.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Problem solving skills/Resourcefulness
- Tenacity
- Project development

What I love most about my job: I am fortunate to work in a unique position which leans on my basic scientific background and allows me to simultaneously learn about and work on exciting, multidisciplinary clinical and translational cancer research projects. I also scratch things off my “to-do list” which contributes to my daily job satisfaction.

Contact Information:
ecbrantley@mdanderson.org
JoyAnn Phillips Rohan, Ph.D.

Program Manager II
Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc.

Education:
- Spelman College, B.S. in Biology
- Baylor College of Medicine, Ph.D. in Molecular and Cellular Biology

Dr. Rohan excelled in math and science and pursued a Bachelor of Science degree in biology at Spelman College. After college, she continued her training in the sciences and earned a Ph.D. in molecular and cellular biology at Baylor College of Medicine. Since then, she has served as a postdoctoral fellow for programs focused on complementary alternative medicine (Morgan State University) and minority health and health disparities (Georgetown University). She served as a project manager for the Clinical Assay Development Program in the Division of Cancer Treatment and Diagnosis at the National Cancer Institute and currently serves as a program manager for the Molecular Characterization Laboratory at Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc. Dr. Rohan has over ten years of experience and training in cancer/molecular biology research and over four years of experience in cancer research project management for NCI and extramural communities. JoyAnn lives in Maryland with her husband and new baby girl. She enjoys salsa dancing, DIY activities and hosting small social gatherings.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Pro-active planning/risk mitigation/problem-solving
- Scientific knowledge and know-how
- Multi-tasking

What I love most about my job: I enjoy being engaged in groundbreaking scientific research and collaborative efforts while not directly working at the bench.

Contact Information:
jphillipsrohan@gmail.com
Brooke Russell, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Texas A&M Health Science Center Institute of Biosciences and Technology
Vice President, ECM Technologies, LLC

Education:
- Louisiana State University B.Sc. in Microbiology
- Texas A&M Health Science Center Ph.D. in Medical Sciences

Dr. Russell quickly realized as a senior graduate student that she did not want the traditional academic career. As a post-doc, she started working towards an entrepreneurial path. Currently she is focused on research to build on the idea of combining protein biochemistry with biomaterial science and harnessing the strength of each discipline to translate these findings into commercial success. Though she is a young investigator, she has surrounded herself with experienced business individuals and scientists to guide her entrepreneurial development. Dr. Russell’s involvement with ECM Technologies, a start-up biotech company, under the mentorship of Dr. Magnus Höök who has extensive entrepreneurial experience, is in sync with her research efforts as a professor. She’s responsible for traditional professor duties, such as grants and papers, and in addition, handles the day-to-day activities of ECMT (IP, accounting, fundraising, grants, and industry partnerships). Ideally, she would gain enough experience as an entrepreneur to successfully repeat the process either in an academic or industry setting.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Time-management
- Project planning
- Scientific writing

What I love most about my job: I love telling an exciting scientific discovery. I get to do that in several very different ways by interacting with audiences ranging from grant reviewers, manuscript editors, intellectual property attorneys, angel investors, licensing associates, and industry partners. They’re all interested in different things, but the scientific discovery is the same.

Contact Information:
brooke.hageman.russell@gmail.com
Susan Schembre, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Education:
- University of Rhode Island, B.S. in Civil Engineering
- University of Rhode Island, M.S. in Nutrition and Food Sciences
- University of Rhode Island, Ph.D. in Nutrition and Food Sciences

Dr. Schembre’s career path is unlike many of her colleagues. After obtaining her bachelor’s degree in civil engineering, she worked as an environmental engineer for 3 years. She left vowing to never complete another timesheet for the rest of her life. There wasn’t much about her first real job that she enjoyed; something that shouldn’t have surprised her since she didn’t enjoy much of the coursework required in her undergraduate program. She took a 2-year hiatus of soul searching, funded through waitressing, before returning to her alma mater for a graduate degree in nutrition. She got bit by the research bug shortly after realizing there was so much about nutrition and the pathways to obesity that were unknown and that there was very little truth to be found on the topic through popular health and fitness magazines. She went on to obtain her Ph.D., focusing on the cognitive and psychological determinants of obesity followed by 3 years of postdoc training at the University of Hawaii Cancer Center and the University of Southern California before landing a coveted tenure-track assistant professor position at one of the top cancer centers in the country.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Constructively using criticism
- Working as well collaboratively as independently
- Self-promotion

What I love most about my job: Working in collaborative, multidisciplinary teams to do cutting edge science.

Contact Information:
sschembre@mdanderson.org
Eric Schulze, Ph.D.

Co-Founder/Creative Director
Smithsonian Digital Studios Host
Smithsonian Enterprises, thirst. Creative, The Periodic Table

Education:
- Loyola University New Orleans, B.S. in Biological Sciences
- University of Southern California, Ph.D. in Genetic, Molecular, and Cellular Biology

Dr. Schulze is a molecular biologist, speechwriter, online television show host, entrepreneur, and educator. He often consults on how science is represented and communicated on the small and large screen. Currently, Dr. Schulze is on detail with the National Science Foundation as the STEM Coordinator for the United States Government Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) Goal of producing one million STEM graduates and 100,000 STEM educators within ten years.

Dr. Schulze also speaks and writes often about the scientific nature of creativity as well as how science is branded and communicated. He hosts @SmithsonianMag's first-ever Digital Studios' produced television show, @AskSmithsonian.

Love food? Dr. Schulze hosts and writes for #ThePeriodicTable, a traveling sciencey supper series he co-created where he designs, a chef cooks, and you eat. He lectures about the implications of emerging evidence as to the scientific nature of creativity, food, cuisine, the arts, and science itself. It's #STEM all the way down for him.

Catch Dr. Schulze nerding out in print, online, TV, and live-performances. His work/ideas/nerdery/gingerness has been featured by The Smithsonian, The Washingtonian, Worn, PBS, National Academies of Science, NASA, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, ReBoot America, 1776dc, The National Science Foundation, and others.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- How *not* to approach the job market
- How to think, not what to think
- How to communicate beyond science

What I love most about my job: I get paid to learn, to create, to discover talent, and to educate. I help make the world smarter and more creative every day. Science is a gateway drug to a life of never having to say "you're finished with learning."

Contact Information:
eric.schulze@thirstdc.com
about.me/SciencEric
Twitter: @SciencEric
Jennifer Scull, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor
Assistant Director DNA Diagnostics Lab, BCM MGL
Baylor College of Medicine

Education:
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, B.S. in Nutrition and Food Sciences
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Ph.D. in Molecular and Cellular Pathology

Dr. Scull began a 2 year fellowship in Clinical Molecular Genetics at Vanderbilt University after the completion of her Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina. During the course of her fellowship, she reviewed test results from a variety of platforms, reviewed the literature and generated clinical reports. As a fellow, she was responsible for resident didactics, new test development, and process improvement. Coming from a research lab, she also had to become familiar with the various regulatory bodies that oversee clinical laboratory operations, such as CAP and CLIA. Following her fellowship, she sat for the American Board of Medical Genetics board exams. She is currently employed at BCM as an assistant director of the DNA Diagnostics Laboratory, where she reviews a variety of tests on multiple platforms, as well as manages the DNA extraction core, which is responsible for processing ~3000 samples per month.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Project management
- Critical review of literature
- Assay design

What I love most about my job: I really love impacting patient care on a daily basis and interacting with the ordering physicians and genetic counselors.

Contact Information:
scull@bcm.edu
Anandita Seth, Ph.D.

Process Development Scientist
Lonza Houston

Education:
- All India Institute of Medical Sciences, B.Sc. (Hons.) in Human Biology
- All India Institute of Medical Sciences, M.Sc. in Biochemistry
- University of Massachusetts, Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology

Dr. Seth has been working at Lonza Houston as a Process Development Scientist, since 2012. Her major role is to establish analytical tools for viral based gene therapy products. This includes developing or transferring assays for biotech companies that have their product in the manufacturing pipeline. She is also working in the research group where they are working towards innovating and improving bioprocesses for adeno-associated virus production. Before joining Lonza she worked for a start-up company in Houston for 4 years, working on stem cell therapy projects.

Dr. Seth was a postdoctoral fellow at Emory University identifying the role of fucosylation in cell signaling during development. For her Ph.D. thesis, she studied axon guidance and midline patterning using zebrafish as a model system.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Gathering information
- How to think and ask the right questions
- Time management

What I love most about my job: I love my job because of the novelty of projects and the variety of challenges each project brings. I like the fact that you learn about cutting edge gene therapy products and you work alongside people to get their research to the clinical trials and eventually to the patients.

Contact Information:
anandita.seth@lonza.com
Shikhar Sharma, Ph.D.

Senior Scientist
Pfizer Inc.

Education:
- Indian Institute of Technology, B.Tech. and M.Tech. in Biochemical Engineering & Biotechnology
- University of Southern California, Ph.D. in Genetic, Molecular and Cellular Biology

Dr. Sharma is a Senior Scientist in the epigenetics group in the Oncology Research Unit at Pfizer. In his current role, he is leading early-stage epigenetics drug discovery projects, enabling their progress in the oncology R&D pipeline. Dr. Sharma received his Ph.D. from the University of Southern California, working under the mentorship of Dr. Peter Jones. He previously completed his B.Tech. and M.Tech. degrees from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Delhi, India. After graduate school, he joined the Translational Development division of Celgene Corporation, where he was responsible for clinical development of an epigenetic drug, Azacitidine, working towards identification of patient stratification strategies and rational drug combinations. He has been involved in epigenetics research for over 9 years, and his work has led to key discoveries in the field which have both increased the understanding of the role of epigenetics in cancer and identified potential anti-cancer therapeutic targets. He has received several awards for his research work, including the ‘Major Advance’ recognition in clinical cancer research by ASCO in 2012 and Larry Kedes Award at USC in 2010. He has also served as a reviewer for Elsevier, a scientific advisor for Guidepoint Global, and as an invited speaker at several international scientific conferences.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Ability to conceive, design and pursue independent scientific research
- Understanding of strengths/drawbacks of various research methods and designs
- Working with a diverse set of team; team-building and leadership skills

What I love most about my job: The thing I love the most about my job is the ability to work on projects which can potentially translate into effective therapies for millions of cancer patients presently suffering from this debilitating disease. This opportunity to pursue my passion for science for such a meaningful cause provides for a highly satisfying professional experience.

Contact Information:
https://www.linkedin.com/in/shikharsharma
Barbara (Gayle) Slaughter, Ph.D.

Senior Associate Dean of Graduate Education and Diversity, Professor
Baylor College of Medicine

Education:
- Northwestern State University of Louisiana, B.S. in Chemistry
- Iowa State University, Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Biophysics

Dr. Slaughter has a B.S. in chemistry (Northwestern State University of Louisiana) and a Ph.D. in biochemistry/biophysics (Iowa State University). Her postdoc at Baylor College of Medicine was supported by an NIH NRSA fellowship. A NIH New Investigator Award and NIH R01 grant led to promotion to non-tenure track assistant professor of Molecular and Cellular Biology. She is a tenured professor and Senior Associate Dean of Graduate Education and Diversity. She was a speaker for a Serona Symposium and two Gordon Conferences. She served as a reviewer for 12 journals, on the Texas Affiliate of the American Heart Association, NIH and NSF research study sections and many review panels for programs to promote diversity. She developed/directed the acclaimed SMART Program, the IMSD program with 100 under-represented Ph.D. alumni and an IRACDA postdoc research/teaching program, funded by $28M from national and local foundations, the DOD, the NSF and the NIH. She received BCM’s top education award, MCB’s first service/education award and the U.S. Presidential PAESMEM Award for mentoring, and she served as Chair of the GREAT Group and as a leader for national organizations. She has given 500 talks, including 30 for national conferences on science and careers.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Project design, implementation and completion
- Grant and report writing
- Presentation skills

What I love most about my job: I love to help developing scientists create and enact plans to overcome obstacles and succeed in challenging careers. I’ve been involved in program direction for over 25 years, and have seen Ph.D.’s awarded to 101 under-represented students, students become full professors and young faculty become international leaders.

Contact Information:
gaylas@bcm.edu
Glauco R. Souza, Ph.D.

President
Nano3D Biosciences

Education:
- George Washington University, B.S. in Chemistry
- George Washington University, M.S. and Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry

Dr. Souza is the President, CSO, and co-founder of Nano3D Biosciences, Inc. (n3D). He has led the commercialization and development of n3D’s magnetic 3D bioprinting and magnetic levitation technologies. Prior to co-founding n3D, Dr. Souza was an Odyssey Scholar at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. During his work at MD Anderson, he applied a multidisciplinary approach to developing nanotechnology tools for tissue targeted imaging, gene delivery, and tissue engineering. Towards the end of his Odyssey Scholarship, in collaboration with Drs. Tom Killian and Rob Raphael from Rice University, the genesis of magnetic 3D bioprinting and levitation took place. Now, his mission is to advance the commercialization of magnetic 3D bioprinting and 3D cell culturing into a routine laboratory tool that will measurably improve the drug discovery process, cancer research, and regenerative medicine. Results using n3D’s technologies have been reported in various scientific journals, including Nature, Nature Nanotechnology, Nature Protocols, and Nature Reviews Cancer. Recently, Dr. Souza was an invited speaker at TEDx Houston, where he shared his thoughts and experience on resonating aspects between science, levitating cells, friendship, and sports as key ingredients for scientific discovery and the entrepreneurial process. He is also one of the inventors in all six patent applications related to n3D’s technologies, and his research has been funded by grants from National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Defense (DOD), National Institute of Health (NIH), Center for Advancement of Science in Space (CASIS), and State of Texas Emerging Technology Fund (TETF).

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Presentation skills
- Writing papers and grants
- Analytical thinking

What I love most about my job: Watching n3D’s technology solve people’s problems, inventing, and interacting with people.

Contact Information:
gsouza@n3dbio.com
https://www.linkedin.com/pub/glauco-r-souza/7/254/aa6
Loren Stagg, Ph.D.

Medical Science Liaison
Novartis Oncology

Education:
- Louisiana College, B.S. in Biology and Chemistry
- Rice University, Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Cell Biology

Dr. Stagg is relatively new to industry and the medical science liaison (MSL) role; less than two years out of academia. His research background is based primarily in protein biophysics with his most recent academic research as a postdoctoral fellow at UT MD Anderson Cancer Center (2009-2013). Dr. Stagg transitioned to industry with a short stint in clinical education (oncology) in 2013.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Knowledge base
- Collaboration
- Presentation skills

What I love most about my job: The MSL role is extremely cross-functional and requires as much focus on inward (with colleagues) and outward-facing relationships as the need to focus on job-specific knowledge (disease states, mechanisms of action, common clinical practice, emerging data, etc.).

Contact Information:
lorenstagg@gmail.com
Henry W. Strobel, Ph.D.

Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Distinguished Teaching Professor
The University of Texas Medical School at Houston

Education:
- College of Charleston, B.S. in Chemistry
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Ph.D. in Chemistry

Dr. Strobel is Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and a Distinguished Teaching Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at UT Health. He received his Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill in 1969. After a two-year fellowship and appointment at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor as Instructor, he moved to the Medical School at Houston in 1972. Since then, he has been involved in many academic activities. He established several important programs at the medical school, including the freshman retreat, which is now known as the Henry W. Strobel Freshman Retreat. Dr. Strobel is also responsible for the development of many of the school’s international electives; the most important international program he initiated is an annual Medical Student elective to Beijing, China. Based on his significant contributions both in research and teaching, Dr. Strobel has received several prestigious awards, including the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences McGovern Outstanding Teacher Award, the UT - Houston President’s Scholar Award for Excellence in Teaching, the TIAA/CREF Distinguished Medical Educator Award and the Regents Outstanding Teaching Award. He is a speaker on ethical reasoning and critical thinking in the annual Responsible Conduct in Research course for postdoctoral fellows.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Organizational skills to meet research or professional and personal goals
- Listening skills to identify the wisdom of the group
- Advocacy skills for the importance of academics in life

What I love most about my job: I most enjoy being present for faculty, fellows and student colleagues in the university. Teaching is one avenue for being present. Mentoring/advising has a similar appeal for me in that it serves as a means for assisting decision-making in professional life. I enjoy affirming the wisdom accumulated from life experiences.

Contact Information:
henry.w.strobel@uth.tmc.edu
Nicole Van Den Heuvel

Director, Center for Career Development
Rice University

Education:
- Rice University, B.A. in French Literature

Ms. Van Den Heuvel, a Rice alumna, is the Director for the Center for Career Development and brings over twenty years of industry experience. Prior to assuming the current Director role, she worked at Rice’s Jones Graduate School of Business as Associate Director of Career Management, counseling and advising MBA students on career planning and development. She has an extensive business background in public, private and not-for-profit organizations having worked for the Chubb Group of Insurance Companies for more than 14 years in Houston, Washington, D.C. and Montreal, Canada. She brings across-the-board expertise in career counseling, leadership training, recruiting, and human resources. Van Den Heuvel also brings an international perspective to CCD, as she speaks French, Spanish, and German and has lived throughout Europe. She continues to actively contribute to the Houston and Rice alumni community through her community service and fundraising activities.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Communication
- Networking
- Team building

What I love most about my job: We in the Center for Career Development have the ability to have a positive impact on students’ outcomes, both during Rice and at post-graduation. Our mission is to educate our students and alumni on career and graduate school options and to give them not only the resources to develop lifelong career skills, but also the confidence to pursue them.

Contact Information:
nvdh@rice.edu
http://www.linkedin.com/in/NicoleVanDenHeuvel
Atul Varadhachary, Ph.D.

Managing Partner
Fannin Innovation Studio

Education:
- University of Bombay, M.D.
- Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, Ph.D. in Physiology

Dr. Varadhachary is a Managing Partner at Fannin Innovation Studio (formerly AlphaDev, LLC.), Houston’s leading early-stage life sciences development group. Fannin helps commercialize innovative technology originating in the Texas Medical Center and elsewhere. They work closely with innovators, co-founding and actively managing startups and providing support including seed funding and space. Dr. Varadhachary brings over two decades of experience in life sciences and healthcare in both corporate and entrepreneurial settings. Before Fannin, he served as President of U.S. Operations at Reliance Life Sciences (RLS), part of the Reliance Group, India’s largest private sector enterprise with over $70 billion in annual revenues. He served for nine years as President and COO of Agennix, Inc., a late-stage biotechnology company, where he led advancement of Agennix’s lead molecule from preclinical studies into pivotal Phase 3 human studies and helped lead a successful sale of the company. Dr. Varadhachary also served as Senior Engagement Manager at the global management consulting firm, McKinsey & Co.

He received his medical training at the University of Bombay. He earned a Ph.D. in Physiology followed by a postdoctoral fellowship in Biological Chemistry, both from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, where he also served as a member of the Medical School Council and as founding President of the Johns Hopkins Postdoctoral Association.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Ability to structure and problem-solve in a variety of settings
- Creative and adaptive research to identify resources, references, etc.
- Working and collaborating with cross-functional teams

What I love most about my job: I love seeing and going deep into the broad range of exciting and transformative fundamental research taking place at the Texas Medical Center, and having the opportunity to help translate it into something that can help people.

Contact Information:
atul@fannininnovation.com
https://www.linkedin.com/in/varadhachary
Ronda Wendler

Program Manager, External Communications
MD Anderson Cancer Center

Education:
- University of Houston, B.A. in Radio/Television/Film
- University of Houston, M.A. in Communications

Ms. Wendler joined the communications staff at The University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston after graduation, where she published articles and wrote new releases highlighting science and research breakthroughs at the university. Later she became public relations director at Shriners Hospital for Children where she produced publications, handled media relations and coordinated community outreach events. She served as website editor for Texas Heart Institute and for 14 years was managing editor of Texas Medical Center News. Today, she is a program manager for external communications at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, where she helps write and edit Conquest, the hospital’s award winning quarterly magazine, as well as a twice-monthly online newsletter for physicians and a blog for patients. With more than 25 years’ experience in the communications field, she has won more than 75 awards from various organizations including the Houston Press Club, Public Relations Society of America, Harris County Medical Society, and Women in Communications.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- News and feature writing and editing
- Interviewing
- Associated Press style

What I love most about my job: Meeting and interviewing the physicians and scientists who contribute research that results in new therapies for patients is such a privilege – there’s nothing that interests me more. I am honored to be entrusted with conveying their accomplishments to the public. Interacting with nurses, pharmacists, physical and occupational therapists and other health professionals whose patients are their number one priority is humbling. But what touches me most is when a patient calls, writes or messages to let me know that something I wrote helped them in some way.

Contact Information:
rwendler@mdanderson.org
https://www.linkedin.com/pub/ronda-wendler/15/808/600
Owen Wilson, Ph.D.

Associate Director of Immunology MSLs
UCB

Education:
• Rice University, Ph.D. in Biomedical Engineering

Dr. Wilson attended Rice University, where he earned a Ph.D. degree in Biomedical Engineering. After working on various neurophysiology projects at the UT Health Science Center in Houston, he joined the faculty of Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine, pursuing research in pulmonary physiology. In 2004, Dr. Wilson left academia to join Abbot Laboratories. In 2006, he joined Roche as a medical science liaison (MSL) manager. From there, he moved to UCB as the Associate Director of Immunology MSLs in 2008.
Virginia Wotring, Ph.D.

Pharmacology Discipline Lead, Senior Scientist
Universities Space Research Association

Education:
- Florida State University, B.S. in Chemistry/Biochemistry
- Saint Louis University, Ph.D. in Pharmacological and Physiological Science

Dr. Wotring received her B.S. in Chemistry/Biochemistry where she learned how molecules interact with each other. However, this gave her no idea of what to do. She worked as a technician in a biology lab where she learned about ion channels and decided to apply for graduate school to study them. Her project was on drug mechanisms of action on ligand-gated ion channels in the brain and spinal cord, but her coursework included all of human physiology and pharmacology – not just neuro, which turned out to be highly advantageous later. For her postdoc, she chose to learn about molecular biology, which was a gap in her education. She taught and gave seminars every time she was asked. When searching for a faculty position became discouraging, she widened her search to include government positions. When Johnson Space Center needed a pharmacologist, she applied even though she knew nothing about spaceflight. Now she uses her broad background in physiology and pharmacology to ensure that medications will be safe and effective on NASA missions. Each summer she mentors interns at JSC. She has been a guest lecturer at universities and has adjunct appointments at UTMB Pharmacology and Toxicology as well as UH Health and Human Performance. In 2012, her book Space Pharmacology was published by Springer.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Writing
- Teamwork
- Integrating knowledge from seemingly disparate areas

What I love most about my job: In my job I am presented with scientific problems well outside the typical realm, which forces me to think about physiology in new and different ways every day.

Contact Information:
virginia.e.wotring@nasa.gov
Jokubas Žiburkus, Ph.D.

Associate Professor
University of Houston, Department of Biology and Biochemistry

Education:
- Hillsdale College, B.S. in Biology
- Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, Ph.D. in Neuroscience

Dr. Žiburkus was awarded an academic scholarship at Hillsdale College in Michigan after completing high school in 1990. After obtaining his B.S. in Biology with minors in Chemistry and Psychology, he pursued Neuroscience. His graduate work concentrated on synaptic plasticity and development of excitation and inhibition in the visual sensory circuits using neuroanatomy and neurophysiology. During his first postdoctoral fellowship at Johns Hopkins University’s Mind/Brain Institute, he performed a series of important experiments that led to significant insights on neuromodulation of synaptic plasticity in the visual cortex. During his second postdoctoral position at George Mason University, he pioneered some of the most advanced electrophysiological studies on the inhibitory and excitatory cell interactions during experimental seizures. He has been investigating various epilepsy models for thirteen years and has published highly cited work on both synaptic plasticity and seizure dynamics. The primary goal of his research is to improve the understanding and treatment options of catastrophic epilepsies. Dr. Žiburkus is also a dedicated teacher and mentor, and in 2014, he was the recipient of the Teaching Excellence Award at the University of Houston (UH). At UH, he trains and leads a diverse group of postdoctoral fellows, graduate and undergraduate students.

Most useful skill set(s) acquired from academia:
- Completely independent problem solving and critical thinking
- Grant and manuscript reviewing skills
- Leadership and adaptability

What I love most about my job: Freedom of thinking in pursuit of unknown and exploring original informed predictions.

Contact Information:
jziburkus@uh.edu
Exhibitors

Agilent Technologies
http://www.agilent.com

Alliantgroup
www.alliantgroup.com

BioScience Writers
www.biosciencewriters.com

Fannin Innovation Studio
www.fannininnovation.com

The Institutional Research and Academic Career Development Award (IRACDA)
www.bcm.edu/education/schools/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/diversity//iracda/

MD Anderson Center for Professional Development & Entrepreneurship
www.mdanderson.org/cpde

Nano3D Biosciences
www.n3dbio.com

TEVA Oncology
www.tevausa.com/Oncology.aspx

University of Houston Graduate Programs for Health Science Educators
medical.coe.uh.edu

University of Houston Law Center
www.law.uh.edu

University of Houston School of Continuing & Professional Studies
scps.uh.edu/cs
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The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

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The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

Dr. Nancy McNeil
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

Dr. Jack Byrne
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

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The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

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The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

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The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

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The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

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Texas A&M Health Science Center
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The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

**Ms. Veronica Paniagua**  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

**Ms. Jessica Rodriguez**  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

**Mr. Chris Taylor**  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center

**Dr. Robert Tillman**  
The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
Institutional Postdoctoral Association Information

The 4th Annual Presidential Career Symposium was collectively organized by the Postdoctoral Associations from the following Texas Medical Center institutions:

**MD Anderson Cancer Center**
Website: www.mdanderson.org/postdoctoralassociation
Contact: postdoctoralassociation@mdanderson.org
LinkedIn: http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=4420426
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/83955564561/

**Baylor College of Medicine**
Website: https://www.bcm.edu/education/schools/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/postdoctoral-association
Contact: bomben@bcm.edu Legler@bcm.edu
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/BCMPDA

**Houston Methodist Research Institute**
Website: http://www.houstonmethodist.org/methodist-academy-trainee-association

**The University of Texas Health Science Center (UT Health)**
Website: http://www.uth.tmc.edu/pda/PDA_Website
Contact: ms.opa@uth.tmc.edu

**Texas A&M Health Science Center**
Website: http://medicine.tamhsc.edu/postdoc/
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/TAMHSC.PDA
Contact: tamu.hsc.pda@gmail.com postdocaffairs@tamhsc.edu

**Rice University**
Website: http://graduate.rice.edu/postdocs
Contact: katec@rice.edu

**Texas Children’s Hospital**
Contact: pda@texaschildren.org
Presidential Career Symposium Committee

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Jared Gilliam, Ph.D.
Dimpy Shah, M.D., Ph.D.

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