

Perspectives

From the Office of Faculty Development

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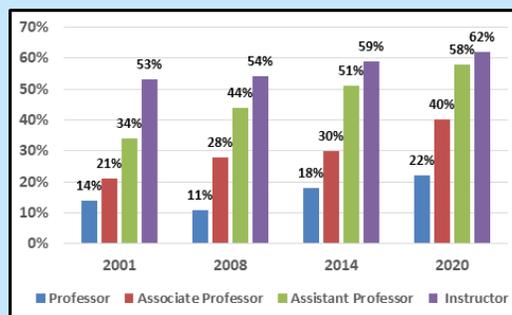


HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
TEACHING HOSPITAL

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Career Development for Women Faculty at BCH – Lessons Learned

The Office of Faculty Development (OFD) at Boston Children’s Hospital is currently celebrating 20 years of successful academic programs, and at the same time, we are embarking on efforts to identify the facilitators and barriers for an even more inclusive academic environment. At the December 2020 OFD Advisory Committee meeting, faculty identified a number of issues for women and faculty who belong to a racial/ethnic population underrepresented in medicine and science (UiM) compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. We subsequently hosted several “listening sessions” and interviews with more than 20 faculty across BCH. The discussions have focused on defining some of the challenges for successful career trajectories and emphasizing the importance of intentionally creating the workforce of the future. The challenges of child care and elder care have disproportionately fallen on women faculty, and the consequences have been outlined in the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine consensus study report, *The Impact of COVID-19 on the Careers of Women in Academic Science, Engineering, and Medicine*, released March 9, 2021 (see p. 3). Many academic health centers have focused on increasing leadership opportunities for women and UiM faculty. At Children’s, we have both progress to celebrate and challenges to address. In promotion, we have made steady progress from 2001 to 2020, but more change is needed at the senior levels.



Percentages of BCH Faculty who are Women, by rank, 2001, 2008, 2014, 2020

While we are heartened that 38% of promotions to Professor in 2019-2020 were women (Associate Professor 43%; Assistant Professor 50%), those successes have only brought us to having 22% of BCH Professors as women. We have lagged in representation of women among our Department Chairs and Division Chiefs. At the same time, Children’s has led the way in making a major investment in early career faculty researchers through the 13 annual OFD/BTREC/CTREC Faculty Development Fellowships which include 4 awards designated for primary care givers of children and elders and/or UiM faculty. The investment of \$15.8 million in the Fellowships has resulted in subsequent funding of the awardees as PIs of \$253.6 million, and a significant number of recipients have been promoted and the majority have continued their careers at BCH. We are heartened that 65% of the 167 fellowships (2002-2019) have been awarded to women. We look forward in future issues to sharing recommendations to address the challenges of faculty, particularly women and UiM faculty.

For good news of an impressive step forward in these efforts, we hope our readers will read and applaud the establishment of the new Sandra L. Fenwick Institute for Pediatric Health Equity and Inclusion and the creation of a new Sandra Labas Fenwick Family Chair in Equity and Inclusion honoring the incumbent Valerie Ward, MD, MPH (p. 5). Please also review the personal story of our talented researcher Dr. Elizabeth Engle (p. 5) and the mentoring tips of HMS Barger awardee Dr. Benjamin Raby (p. 2).



Valerie Ward, MD, MPH



Sandra Fenwick, MPH

Congratulations to Benjamin Raby, MD, CM, MPH, Leila and Irving Perlmutter Professor of Pediatrics and Chief of BCH Division of Pulmonary Medicine, the Boston Children’s HMS 2021 A. Clifford Barger Excellence in Mentoring Award Recipient

Dr. Raby shared his views on how to develop effective mentoring relationships with *Perspectives*.

What have you found are the most important elements in developing a strong mentoring relationship? It all comes down to trust. You can have all the experience in the world and provide great advice and coaching, but if your trainees do not have complete trust in you – that you have their interests at heart and that you will “say it like it is” when necessary – it is very difficult for that person to fully embrace your guidance or approach. This is particularly true when the feedback you need to give is negative or critical. Your mentees will only take it to heart if they know it is coming from the right place.

What advice do you give junior faculty about how to find a good mentor? I always ask three questions: (1) Does this person have a solid track record as a mentor? (Past performance is the best predictor of future performance). (2) Do I truly admire and trust this person? (If not, the relationship will never work). (3) Am I going to enjoy the work I will be doing with this person? (Life is short, do the things you love).

What are the challenges and rewards for mentoring the current generation of trainees? The greatest mentoring challenge today is balancing the competing tensions of quantity vs. quality and of being first vs. being right. Though funding levels are currently at decent levels, there is a lot of competition out there, resulting in ever greater pressure to write more and to write faster. But good training takes time, as does good science. I try to reassure trainees that as long as they maintain high standards and focus on important questions, they only need to maintain a steady and consistent pace of productivity to succeed. The greatest reward for me comes from seeing a trainee overcome a major obstacle that they have viewed as a personal barrier. Whether it is finally getting an essay to work that has failed a dozen times before, having their first paper published despite their anxieties as a writer, or getting their first grant funded after being repeatedly rejected – the look on their face when they know they have faced and conquered a challenge is priceless.



**Benjamin Raby, MD,
CM, MPH**

Pediatric Health Equity Grant Awardees

MSO Pediatric Health Equity Grant

Hiu-fai Fong, MD, MSHP, HMS Instructor in Pediatrics, BCH Division of General Pediatrics

The Boston Children’s Hospital Office of Health Equity and Inclusion, Office of Faculty Development and Medical Staff Organization (MSO) are pleased to announce the 2021-2022 awardee of the MSO Pediatric Health Equity Grant, Hiu-fai Fong, MD, MSHP, for her grant proposal entitled, “Cultural and contextual adaptation of measures of mental health engagement for diverse caregivers of sexually abused children.”



**Hiu-fai Fong, MD,
MSHP**

ICCTR/Harvard Catalyst Pediatric Health Equity Clinical Research Grant

Elise Schlissel Tremblay, MD, MPH, HMS Instructor in Pediatrics, BCH Division of Endocrinology

The Boston Children’s Hospital Office of Health Equity and Inclusion, Office of Faculty Development and Institutional Centers for Clinical and Translational Research (ICCTR) are pleased to announce the 2021-2022 awardee of the Pediatric Health Equity Clinical Research Grant (ICCTR/Harvard Catalyst), Elise Schlissel Tremblay, MD, MPH for her grant proposal entitled, “Disparities in Personal Medical Device Use and Outcomes in Type 1 Diabetes.”



**Elise Schlissel
Tremblay, MD,
MPH**

Wellness Tips by Faculty for Faculty – by Emily Jean Davidson, MD, MPH, HMS Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, BCH Divisions of General Pediatrics and Developmental Medicine

Seasonal Transitions and Wellness

As we transition to a very welcome spring, *Perspectives* consulted with Emily Jean Davidson, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics in the BCH Divisions of General Pediatrics and Developmental Medicine and Registered Yoga Teacher, about how to adopt seasonal changes into an at-home yoga and meditation practice. Dr. Davidson has spearheaded several yoga programs at Boston Children’s, including sessions for patients and patient families held in the Hale Family Center for Families and Martha Eliot Health Center (and now by Zoom).

How might an at-home practice bring springtime into a yoga session? Are there any specific yoga poses that might acknowledge the gifts of spring?

When it is cold outside during the winter, we tend to hunch our shoulders up and forward. This is exacerbated by stress and by more time spent in front of computers especially for this past year during the Covid-19 pandemic. As it gets warmer, yoga offers a chance to reset mind and body. Vigorous sequences like sun salutations can be energizing and strengthening after a long winter. Twisting poses also help improve mobility and feel great for the back. Inversions can bring a change of perspective which is useful moving into a new season. If you have never tried yoga, check out Grokker (BCH sign-up at <http://web2.tch.harvard.edu/cultureworks/mainpageS3174P28.html>) for some great introductory videos (e.g. 30-Minute Vinyasa Flow: Exploring Sun-Salutations with Jason Bowman). If you want to try a gentle chair yoga class, the Family Wellness Program offers two chair yoga classes weekly (<http://web2.tch.harvard.edu/hhw/mainpageS3004P7.html>) and a brief 20-minute stretch and relax class on Mondays and Fridays.

In a few sentences, what does “wellness” mean to you?

To me, wellness is doing my best to incorporate practices and habits that support both mental and physical wellbeing. For my own wellbeing, I meditate, take yoga classes from my favorite teachers, and spend time with family and friends. Wellness is also self-compassion and being present with what is – whether that is difficult or wonderful.

Dr. Davidson teaching remotely via the BCH Seacrest Center



The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) Release Report on Women’s Careers and Impact of COVID-19

The NASEM Committee on Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine (CWSEM) has released a report on *The Impact of COVID-19 on the Careers of Women in Academic Science, Engineering, and Medicine*; a panel presented the report’s findings on March 9. The report can be downloaded as a PDF at the website: <https://www.nap.edu/read/26061/chapter/1>. Introductory comments emphasize the disruptions to both scientific research and women’s careers: “The spring of 2020 marked a change in how almost everyone conducted their personal and professional lives, both within science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine (STEMM) and beyond. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted global scientific conferences and individual laboratories and required people to find space in their homes from which to work. It blurred the boundaries between work and non-work, infusing ambiguity into everyday activities. While adaptations that allowed people to connect became more common, the evidence available at the end of 2020 suggests that the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic endangered the engagement, experience, and retention of women in academic STEMM, and may roll back some of the achievement gains made by women in the academy to date.” A video of the 3/9/21 panel discussion on the report’s findings can be seen at <https://vimeo.com/522407964>; panelists include: Eve J. Higginbotham (NAM) (Chair), Vice Dean of Inclusion and Diversity, Senior Fellow in the Leonard Davis Institute of Health, and Professor of Ophthalmology, University of Pennsylvania; Reshma Jagsi, Newman Family Professor and Deputy Chair in the Department of Radiation Oncology and Director of the Center for Bioethics and Social Sciences in Medicine, University of Michigan; Erick C. Jones, George and Elizabeth Pickett Endowed Professor and Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the College of Engineering, University of Texas at Arlington.

News from the Archives, by Alina Morris, MLIS

Fresh air and sunshine were so widely considered essential treatment for disease in the 19th and early 20th centuries that hospital ward design, including Boston Children's, incorporated open air spaces, like these sun porches.



Nurses and patients on ward 5 lower sun porch, Boston Children's Hospital, 1920



Patients on sun porch, Boston Children's Hospital, 1920.

Update from the Medical Library, by Chloe Rotman, MLIS

As of March 1st, 2021 the point of care tool **DynaMed** is available to Boston Children's clinicians. DynaMed delivers accurate and current information with evidence-based content for high quality decision making. Clinicians can use DynaMed in addition to or in lieu of other point of care tools like UpToDate.

The easily readable bullet point outline design of DynaMed and transparent evidence grades make it easy to quickly and accurately gather the necessary information in order to provide optimal care for our patients. DynaMed has the features that clinicians expect from their point of care tool, including the ability to claim Continuing Medical Education credits (CME) and Maintenance of Certification credits (MOC) while using the product, and the ability to use the app off-network once a profile has been made.

Check on the library's class calendar for brief introductions to DynaMed, to help you set up accounts and get the most of the features. As always, if none of the scheduled class times suit you're schedule we're happy to set up meetings at your convenience.

Update from the Office of Health Equity and Inclusion

The Office of Health Equity and Inclusion is currently scheduling the Bystander to Upstander Workshop: Inclusive Workplace Training for Departments and Divisions across the hospital. Please contact healthequity@childrens.harvard.edu to schedule a workshop for your area.

The Office of Health Equity and Inclusion, in conjunction with the Rainbow Consortium for Sexuality and Gender Diversity and LGBTQ & Friends, observed LGBTQ Health Awareness Month throughout March 2021. Programs included a special Health Care Disparities Research Working Group, open SafeZone training sessions, and four Grand Rounds lectures with speakers: Stephen M. Rosenthal, MD; Alex Keuroghlian, MD, MPH; Efren J. Flores, MD; Frances Grimstad, MD, MS; Vaz Zavaletta, MD, PhD; Carol Barnewolt, MD; Xavier L. Guadalupe-Diaz, PhD.

My Boston Children's Story: Research Passions, Growth, and Positive Mentors

By Elizabeth Engle, MD, Professor of Neurology and Ophthalmology

Following pediatric residency at Hopkins and a year of neuropathology at MGH, I came to BCH for training in neurology. One late January evening as the senior resident on the 9N service, I admitted a toddler with congenital paralytic strabismus. His poorly understood disorder segregated in his extended family as a dominant trait. I was fascinated by the newly emerging human genome project, and this toddler became the proband for my future career. Following residency, I overcame my limited research experience by spending another five years mapping his inherited disorder and learning genetics, first in Lou Kunkel's and then in Alan Beggs' lab. Both these men were amazing mentors who believed in me – and it is my hope that all trainees and early faculty make it their goal to find the same. Later, as a PI myself, I continue to learn and grow the lab in new directions by bringing in talented people who enrich our environment and expand our expertise. With my mother as a strong role-model, I did not expect sexism to impede my career as a physician-scientist and, when I felt I might have encountered it, I think I simply side-stepped and then continued forward, staying focused on my science. I am now grateful to my younger women colleagues who have recently opened my eyes to irrefutable data and personal stories of microaggressions, biases, and exclusions. I encourage young faculty to identify their passion, find allies, connect with mentors, and create an environment in which we all strive together for the best science and for equity.



Elizabeth Engle, MD

Valerie Ward, MD, MPH, Named the Sandra Labas Fenwick Family Chair in Equity and Inclusion

On March 30, 2021, Dr. Kevin B. Churchwell, MD, announced that the Boston Children's Board of Trustees approved the creation of the Sandra L. Fenwick Institute for Pediatric Health Equity and Inclusion. "The Institute will include the Sandra Labas Fenwick Family Chair in Equity and Inclusion. This chair will be an integral part of the Institute as we honor Sandi's legacy and embrace this timely opportunity to make lasting change in her name. The Chair has been funded through the generous support of Sandi and her husband Geoff. I am pleased to announce that **Valerie L. Ward, MD, MPH** – our Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer, and a Pediatric Radiologist – will hold the Chair. With this endowed chair, Dr. Ward will continue to advance the work across Boston Children's to innovate on health equity research, inclusive leadership and career development initiatives, and interventions aimed to improve pediatric health equity."

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Valerie Ward, MD, MPH