



The BWH Post(Doc)

Fall/Winter 2018

BRIGHAM HEALTH
 PostDoctoral Association

BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION

IN THIS ISSUE

BWH Celebrates National Postdoc Appreciation Week

by Deepak Bhare, Ph.D.

Since 2009, the third week of September each year is celebrated as the “National Postdoc Appreciation Week” (NPAW) to recognize the significant contributions made by postdoctoral scholars to research and discovery in the United States. The 9th Annual NPAW took place this year from September 17-21 and was celebrated by hosting a series of events all through the week in lieu of a single event to engage our postdoc community better. The week kicked off with an Ice Cream Social event where we had our senior leadership from the Brigham Research Institute and the Brigham Research Administration scooped out ice creams for our postdoc community. This was followed by a special recognition of the members of the Postdoc Leadership Council (PLC), the governing body of the BWH postdoctoral association, for their dedication to improving the quality of the postdoc experience. On September 18, the senior leadership of our hospital interacted with postdocs to discuss the needs of the community, such as the necessary support for the career advancement of postdoctoral scholars at the Brigham, and to highlight some of the key resources that were available to the research community such as funding opportunities and platforms to showcase our research. Members of the PLC hosted a Meet-n-Greet session on Wednesday, wherein the postdoc community had an opportunity to meet with the PLC members and learn more about their role and activities. This session led to three new recruits in our PLC and several others expressed their interest in being a part of the council. The NPAW celebrations ended with a wine & cheese social event co-hosted with the Harvard Medical School Postdoctoral Association on September 20. This event provided an opportunity for our postdoc community to engage with fellow HMS postdocs to celebrate the efforts that we all put in towards advancing science in the United States. Snapshots from these events are available on our [Facebook page](#). We look forward to maintaining this tradition of honoring and celebrating postdocs here at BWH.

Editorial Team: Ashley Ogawa-Wong, Ph.D.; Yashini Govender, Ph.D.; Brian Sansbury, Ph.D.; Deepak Bhare, Ph.D.; Abhijeet Sonawane, Ph.D.; Sannie Culbertson, Ph.D.; Rafik Boudra, Ph.D.; Jasneet Khalsa, Ph.D.

Interested in joining the editorial team or becoming a contributor? Do you have a question, comment, or ideas for our next issue? Let us know!

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NPAW Celebration

Page 1

Break into Industry

Page 2

Need insights on breaking into the biotech industry? Find out what companies look for during candidate screening and key factors to highlight in your C.V. so recruiters move you to the next step.

Mentoring Award Recipient Bios



Page 3

Faculty Director Q&A

Page 3

The Office for Research Careers hired a new Faculty Director. What does this mean for postdocs?

Is It Time for Your ACC?

Page 4

Find out how you can take charge of your career by completing the ACC.

Survey Results

Page 4

Last Spring, the Advocacy Committee conducted a survey to shed light on the critical issues facing BWH postdocs. We report some of the results and what the PLC is doing to address these concerns.

Upcoming Events

Page 4

Breaking into the Biotech Industry, Part 1: Candidate Screening

by Elizabeth Wu

Scismic recently released a job matching platform, **Scismic Job Seeker**. While designing Job Seeker, we received input from hiring decision makers representing **20 biotech companies** to build a platform that serves their needs. Below, we share our market research on key factors that hiring teams look for in scientific candidates, and factors that are not critical during the **resume and phone screening** process.

Overview of the candidate evaluation process*



*This is a generalized overview. While most companies follow a similar process, some may use different evaluation methods.

Key factors in screening, in no particular order



Lab techniques & research fields

- ✓ Candidates need to know enough of the required skills and research fields to get through screening.
- ✓ Skills are a key factor in screening, however, selection depends on the company and role. For example, at one biotech startup, hiring managers only consider candidates who meet all technical requirements because they do not have manpower to train new hires. Meanwhile, another biotech startup adapts the role to fit competent candidates and their current skills.

Tip: Highlight your techniques in a skills section in your CV and list the techniques you used under each position. It's okay to repeat your skills under the position and the skills section.



Experience (how much and where)

- ✓ Recruiters and hiring managers look at whether your research experience was gained in academia or industry.
- ✓ Your degree might be a requisite for some roles and will help in preliminary screening, however, your student years are not included in recruiters' definition of years of experience
- ✓ Do not be discouraged if you don't have industry experience. There are still roles for you in industry.



Project leadership experience

- ✓ Have you been the key decision maker and driver of a research project? Highlight your contributions and how they moved the field forward.
- ✓ Not all roles require project leadership experience.



Publications & presentations

- ✓ Most hiring managers we asked would **not** screen out candidates based on publication record alone.
- ✓ Research articles, patents, and reviews are key factors considered during screening.
- ✓ Most hiring managers polled also want to see your manuscripts under review, theses, posters, and presentations at conferences.

Factors that are **not critical** in candidate screening

1. *Management experience in academia.* Highlighting achievements and strengths gained will be useful in the interview.
2. *Some types of publications and presentations.* Most hiring managers polled do not consider manuscripts or reviews in preparation, white papers, teaching experience, or invited seminars during screening.
3. *Impact factor, number of publications, and alma mater reputation.*

We hope this helps you decide which areas to focus on in your professional development, and in building your CV!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you're looking for an industry job, complete your candidate profile on Scismic Job Seeker at www.scismic.com. Scismic Job Seeker's matching algorithm takes into account the criteria that hiring managers and recruiters identified as key factors during the screening process. We have biotech companies on Scismic that are waiting to hear from you. [Sign up today!](#)

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2018 Postdoctoral Scholar Award for Excellence in Mentoring!

THE POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN MENTORING IS PRESENTED EVERY YEAR TO TWO POSTDOCS WHO HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT THROUGH THEIR MENTORSHIP. NEW THIS YEAR, THE WINNERS EACH RECEIVED \$1000 TRAVEL GRANTS SPONSORED BY THE BRIGHAM RESEARCH INSTITUTE (BRI) AND THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH CAREERS (ORC). THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2018 AWARD ARE SAYEDA YASMIN-KARIM, M.D., PH.D. AND JASNEET KHALSA, PH.D. THEY ARE TAKING THEIR MENTORING ONE STEP FURTHER BY SERVING AS THE CO-DIRECTORS OF THE 2018-19 MENTORING CIRCLES PROGRAM. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED DEDICATION TO MENTORING AND IMPROVING THE DEVELOPMENT OF POSTDOCS



Jasneet Khalsa, Ph.D. I am an immunologist by training with a keen interest in tumor immunotherapy. I joined the Center for Stem Cell Therapeutics and Imaging, Department of Neurosurgery at BWH in 2017 after obtaining my Ph.D. in immunobiology at National Institute of Immunology, India. My current research focuses on understanding the body's immune response to a growing brain tumor and to utilize that information to further immune-cell based therapies for Glioblastoma. I have a strong interest in teaching and mentoring, and I would like to thank BRI for the BWH Postdoc Mentoring Award in 2018 that encouraged me to join the Mentoring Circles Program as a co-director. The \$1000 travel grant has enabled me to attend an international conference on cancer immunotherapy. Mentoring is like having a confidante or a coach who can help make better decisions at various stages of one's career based on his/her experience. It is not about giving an answer to the mentee but instead to challenge and train the mentee to think through the problems that would eventually help the mentee expand his/her horizons. Mentoring has helped me hone my interpersonal and communication skills and it has expanded my network. Mentoring has been a fulfilling experience as it has given me a chance to reflect upon myself and the has provided satisfaction in paying it forward.



Sayeda Yasmin-Karim, M.D., Ph.D. I am a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Radiation Oncology at BWH, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, and Harvard Medical School. My current research interests include enhancement of the anti-tumor immunity using different nanomaterials, biological agents, and radiation. I believe mentoring helps junior colleagues to facilitate their performance more efficiently. The Mentoring Circles Program (MCP) gives both the mentees and mentors a great level of satisfaction and benefit by sharing their thoughts and I am very happy to be a part of this since 2016. I believe mentors are also able to increase their confidence due to their frequent interaction with mentees. Sometimes mentors become one of the most influential person in someone's life and it can be a game changing experience. I am fortunate to have mentors at various stages in my career and their guidance helped in my professional growth. I'd like to mention Dr. Larry Smith from Sloan Kettering, Dr. Michael King from Cornell University, Dr. YiFen Lee from University of Rochester, Dr. Wilfred Ngwa with whom I am currently working, who influenced me in various ways on my current career path. I am still connected with my previous mentors and grateful to them. I believe mentorship does not mean a teacher-student or boss-subordinate relationship, it is just a pathway of advising, directing, and motivating junior colleagues, peers, or even sometimes peer-mentors. Anyone who likes to devote some time to give guidance to their peers or juniors toward their personal (psycho-social) and professional growth can be a mentor. I would like to appreciate BRI for the organizing the BWH Postdoc Mentoring Award program and very happy to earn this in 2018. I am thankful to my colleagues who nominated me for this.

Laura Fredenburgh, MD - Faculty Director of the ORC

by Sannie Culbertson, Ph.D.

This past fall, the Brigham Research Institute (BRI) appointed Laura Fredenburgh, MD, as the new Faculty Director of the Office of Research Careers (ORC). Her mission, and the overall goal of the ORC, is to support the BWH research community across the academic continuum. They seek to do so by providing a variety of resources which include supporting career and professional development, encouraging professional responsibility, and improving training experiences. More specifically, Dr. Fredenburgh has particular focus on enhancing the career guidance and mentoring services offered to postdoctoral fellows and junior faculty at BWH so they can advance their career development paths, navigate challenging transitions, and overcome potential hurdles in the process.



Laura Fredenburgh, M.D.

Towards this end, Dr. Fredenburgh and the ORC are working with the Postdoctoral Association (PDA) to strengthen resources and develop programs to augment the career and professional development of the BWH research fellows. The ORC supports the Mentoring Circles Program, an organization specifically designed to pair junior postdocs with senior ones to gather, share advice, and together advance their career goals. They also annually sponsor travel grants for two Postdoctoral Scholar Awards for Excellence in Mentoring, an award that recognizes efforts in mentoring others in research projects and/or career development. Finally, the ORC promotes the Postdoc Business Card Program, a program which provides 500 business cards to postdocs.

Recently, a collaborative effort between the ORC and the PDA has led to the Career Development Seminar Series by Propel Careers that will start this February; this three session career development series will focus on verbal and written communication skills, networking, and interviewing.

Continued on [page 4...](#)

Have You Completed Your ACC?

by Rafik Boudra, Ph.D.

A postdoc experience can often be a long and lonely journey where you may see yourself pretty frustrated and confused as you plan your next career step. To ease out this process, Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) established the Annual Career Conference (ACC) review. This review presents an opportunity for all BWH postdoctoral fellows to review research progress, career perspectives, and other topics related to their experience in the lab with their advisor. The goal of this process is to customize the lab experience toward the fellow's professional development plans in order to get the most out of the time spent as a fellow at the Brigham. From career choices between academia or industry, to the best strategy to adopt to get your research published quickly in your target journal, to future grant proposals, or to everyday lab life issues, almost any subject can be brought up during this private interview with your advisor.

The review should take place each year at your work anniversary and starts with the postdoctoral fellow filling the ACC form with information about last year goals, achievements, progress, and professional activities other than research, as well as setting up new goals for the upcoming year. Your advisor will then review and comment on the form with you, e.g. by discussing the reasons why a given project turned out to be a dead-end or how to build upon recent success to get the most out of the next year. Other topics covered by the ACC may include mentoring, teaching, conferences attendance, or salary advancement, but remember that the discussion should be open to other subjects or concerns raised by you or your mentor. The third and final step of the ACC review involves a review committee composed of two to three faculty members, appointed by your hospital department, that will give critical remarks about your CV and how to refine it to best suit your goals. It is also the time to bring up any issue you couldn't discuss with your boss, as they will not be present. Finally, the review committee members can help or provide contacts with their network and get involved in the fellow's research, bringing their expertise and research material to the project, and fostering collaboration among the community.

As postdocs, we know how much time is precious, and we often like to spend a majority of our working hours advancing our research and getting our data published as quickly as possible in a high impact journal. Regardless, these few hours of reflection and discussion about what your goals are may put your career on the right track and save plenty of time on the route toward your full professional achievement. Besides, the ACC is not only highly recommended, it is required for all postdocs among the BWH. Download the form from the BWH Postdoctoral Association website by following [this link](#), and start thinking about your future!

...Continued from [page 3](#)

Dr. Fredenburgh and the ORC are continuing to work diligently to provide additional opportunities to and sponsor events for BWH postdocs which include grant writing, preparing CVs and biosketches, mentoring and leadership abilities, and job search skills. She has also stated her desire to meet with the PLC on a regular basis to provide advice, gain insight into the needs of the BWH postdoc community, and continue collaborative efforts with the PDA.

Dr. Fredenburgh is passionate about the goals of the ORC and believes she has the mentoring and career development expertise to contribute greatly to the success of the BWH community. Indeed, she has the track record to support her knowledge. Along with the responsibilities of as Faculty Director of the ORC, Dr. Fredenburgh also trains medical students, residents, and fellows in pulmonary pathophysiology while caring for critically ill patients in the medical Intensive Care Unit at BWH. Further, she is a mentor to students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty in her basic/translational research lab. She has enabled her mentees to publish original research and to successfully compete for awards, grants, residencies, and academic and industry jobs. Finally, each summer, Dr. Fredenburgh acts as a mentor to undergraduates who are committed to advancing the health of Native American Communities through the Four Directions Summer Research Program; she states this role has been one of her most rewarding.

On behalf of the PDA and the entire BWH postdoc community, we are excited to welcome Dr. Fredenburgh to her new position and look forward to working with her to continue to improve the training experience for all postdocs at BWH.

SURVEY RESULTS

61.6%

Respondents who felt their career development was not at all, a little bit, or somewhat supported.

81.8%

Respondents who are interested in more career development opportunities.

WHAT NOW ?

Due to the overwhelming interest in career development, the PLC is working with the BRI to develop a seminar series as well as career panels throughout the year. Check our calendar and Facebook page for updates!

UPCOMING EVENTS

New Year Social

Celebrate the New Year with your fellow postdocs.

Time and date TBA

“Career Tuesday” Seminar Series

How can you communicate your skills in a way that looks desirable to employers? Join Lauren Celano from Propel Careers in this monthly seminar series.

February 19, March 12, April 16 at 4-5:30 pm

Location TBA

[Click for more info & registration](#)

Career Panel Sessions

BWH alumni share their experiences transitioning from postdoc to academia or industry.

Spring 2019, time and dates TBA

For more info, contact [Yashini Govender](#).

MCP End of Year Celebration

Date and time TBA

Check our [calendar](#) for updates!

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