

10th Annual NIH Career Symposium May 11, 2017 Speaker Biosketches

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Mawadda Alnaeeli

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Panel: Sales & Marketing

Where is your highest degree from? University of Rochester,

What is your current role/responsibility?

My current role is focused on the transfer of newly developed products (in this case molecular diagnostics tests based on NGS and Array Technologies) from development to launch through clinical laboratory services. I work with Development, Process Engineering, Quality Assurance, CLIA lab managers, Laboratory Directors, Software and Bioinformatics team leads. I am responsible for leading planning, execution and documentation of test verification and validation to achieve compliance with federal and state regulations of clinical laboratory testing. In addition, we lead assay performance monitoring, root-cause investigations and continuous improvements efforts post launch, among other duties/responsibilities.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Scientific thinking and strong analytical and communication skills are key. However, people skills, curiosity, willingness to, and interest in, expanding your skill set and learning new things, keeping an open mind, genuine desire to helping others are most important.

How did you get your current position?

Applying online to advertised job-listing

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Bioinformatics Classes
Project Management Classes
Team Management Experience
Grant Writing Experience
Clinical Laboratory Experience
Technical Supervisor Certification in Clinical Diagnostics

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Do your home work/research. Talk to people in the field. Build up a broader experience and diversify your skill set. Be patient and maintain a positive mind set.

Nihal Altan-Bonnet

Senior Investigator
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Panel: Non-traditional Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? The Rockefeller University, Cellular Biophysics 1998

What is your current role/responsibility?

Head of Lab
Responsible for setting the research direction; mentor and supervisor to post-docs, graduate students, undergraduate students.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Creativity
Analytical skills
Conceptual skills
Managerial skills

How did you get your current position?

Job-Listing and networking

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$100-125K

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Take as many Science and Mathematics classes as you can in high school, college etc.

Gain research experience in labs as early as you can

This Career path favors self-motivated individuals.

Creativity is a plus

Interdisciplinary interests a plus

Nicholas (Nick) Anthis

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Panel: Science Administration

Where is your highest degree from? University of Oxford, Biochemistry 2009

Other degrees: Texas A&M University

What is your current role/responsibility?

I'm a program officer at University of California Office of the President (UCOP), working primarily with internal research grants to UC faculty. UC comprises 10 campuses, five medical centers, three national laboratories, and other affiliated institutions. UCOP oversees the enter system from its offices in Oakland, CA. Within UCOP, I work in an office called the Research Grants Program Office (RGPO), which supports research throughout UC (and California). Within RGPO, I'm on a team that manages a set of programs called UC Research Initiatives (UCRI). Most of our work in UCRI focuses on supporting multi-campus research projects, with the goal of helping make UC greater than the sum of its parts. We support all areas of research, from arts and humanities to high-energy physics. My portfolio focuses primarily on the environmental and social sciences.

Within UCRI, I work closely with a small team of two other program officers and our program director (all holding PhDs). I also work with our contracts and grants (C&G) staff and other support staff. Across RGPO, we have about 12 PhD-holding program officers in total, and I work with them and the other staff regularly, but generally not daily. My work is similar to the work of program officers at federal funding agencies and nonprofit organizations, though my position is probably not a common one to find at other universities in general (UC is unique in this respect; most universities do not have the resources to run large grant competitions internally).

My job responsibilities can be divided into three parts: (1) Application review, (2) grant management, and (3) other responsibilities.

(1) Application review. My office generally runs about two grant competitions per year, so I'm generally responsible for running two or three peer review panels each year. I draft the request for proposals (RFP), recruit reviewers, assign applications, review submissions to make sure they are complete and meet eligibility criteria, and then I run the panels. After awards are selected, I work closely with our C&G staff to make sure any issues raised by the peer-review panel or other outstanding issues have been resolved. This is probably the most interesting part of the job since it involves thinking about, discussing, and evaluating various scientific ideas.

(2) Grant management. I manage a portfolio of about 40-50 grants. The majority of the day-to-day grant management is done by our C&G staff, and my responsibility is any programmatic issues—i.e. issues with the scope of their work or requested changes. This part of the job can be interesting (I read every progress report, and we fund exciting, cutting-edge work), but it can also be tedious and highly administrative.

(3) Other responsibilities. Other responsibilities might include program evaluation, developing new programs or funding mechanisms, or other projects.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Interpersonal and communication skills are important because I am frequently working with people at many different levels with various different positions: my colleagues, my supervisor, staff, people higher up in UC administration, and professors (reviewers and grantees).

It's also important to be open, adaptable, and resourceful. My degrees are in biochemistry, and my postdoc was in biophysics. Now, I'm our team lead for environmental and social sciences, working with programs that are highly interdisciplinary. I do have projects in my portfolio that involve some molecular biology or physical chemistry, but I don't deal directly with the specific subjects I researched as a graduate student and postdoc.

However, it should probably go without saying that my experience as a graduate student and postdoctoral researcher are still relevant: analytical, problem solving, and communication skills; understanding the practice of science and how to evaluate scientific information. This background helps me evaluate a research proposal broadly, even if not in extreme technical detail (which is why we bring in subject-matter experts to be peer reviewers). The same goes for evaluating a potential reviewer for a panel.

How did you get your current position?

I originally met one of my current colleagues at a reception at a conference; that was where I first learned about the office and that they would be hiring soon. That person then emailed me the job listing when it came out. After that, it was a standard application and interview process. However, if I hadn't been networking, I never would have found out about this job.

How long was your job search?

Either 1 year or 2 1/2 years, depending on how you define it

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Est. ~ \$100,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

The most directly useful experience for my current job was being a AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow. During my fellowship, I was placed at the US Agency for International Development (USAID), where I did work that was similar in many ways to what I do now (managing a research grants program; working with a broad, multi-disciplinary portfolio). Being a AAAS S&TP Fellow also involved a pretty comprehensive professional development curriculum, which was useful. Thus, I would encourage you to take advantage of similar classes or other professional development resources that are offered here at NIH or elsewhere.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

For almost any job, you will be evaluated as a person, not just as a list of publications (side note: learn the difference between a CV and a résumé, and how to effectively use the latter). So, while it's important that you do good research and are productive as a postdoc or grad student, it's also important to spend time developing the "soft" skills outside of research that will in fact be more important to your long-term career success.

Take advantage of professional development and training resources available at NIH or elsewhere. Go to conferences and attend social, professional development, and career-oriented sessions. Develop broader professional interests than just what you are currently studying in the lab. Seek out mentors. Seek out non-research opportunities, such as talks and seminars that don't deal directly with research or a detail/rotation at an administrative office at NIH. Find people doing what you're interested in, and reach out for an informational interview. Network like crazy, and do it with a genuine interest in what other people are working on—you never know who or what might turn out to be interesting or useful to you in the future. (And, do these things now, not when you're already looking for a job.) If you're interested in science policy, apply for a AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellowship, but realize that these are very competitive, and it's only one avenue to a non-academic career (and there are also other fellowships at the state and national level).

Caren Aronin

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Panel: Technology Transfer & Intellectual Property

Where is your highest degree from? University of Virginia, Biomedical Engineering 2008

Other degrees: B.S. Chemical Engineering University of Virginia

What is your current role/responsibility?

1) Prosecution of applications in front of USPTO. This can include: a) drafting new applications; b) reviewing patent or scientific references; c) drafting claim amendments; d) preparing and attending interviews with Examiners at the USPTO. 2) Performing a Patent Landscape Analysis - a review of existing patents and applications in view of a client's working product. 3) Performing due diligence of a patent portfolio prior to an acquisition.

What skills make you successful in this job?

A) Technical and scientific expertise in a wide range of technology spaces. B) Concise writing. C) Creativity. D) Multitasking. E) Ability to spot details, details, details.

How did you get your current position?

A current patent agent at WSGR was formerly an NIH postdoc. I had connected with her through LinkedIn for an informational interview by phone. She offered to forward my resume to a partner within WSGR who was looking to hire a new patent agent. I received an interview and was then hired at WSGR.

How long was your job search?

From the start of considering a job in patent law to acquiring an offer it was about 1 year.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Talk to people working in patent law - as an informational interview over the phone. This can give perspective on a) how the current individual transitioned from science to law, b) day to day tasks expected of an agent, c) culture of a particular firm, and d) potentially a job offer.

Silvia Arredondo

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Panel: Staying Close to the Science

Where is your highest degree from? University of Texas at Austin, Chemical Engineering (Biotechnology/Protein Engineering) 2009

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am a scientist investigating the early host-pathogen molecular interactions in the malaria liver stages. I design, perform and analyze experiments and also take part in writing grants. My job sits in between being a postdoc and a PI with enough independence, but still under the direction of a principal investigator. I also oversee a research assistant.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Bench skills, mostly molecular biology and protein biochemistry. Verbal and written communication and presentation skills. Attention to detail, analytical and critical-thinking, organizational, interpersonal, managerial and problem-solving skills. Being a team player. I had been warned about how important managing skills are, but in this position I have truly experienced the importance of both, managing up and down.

How did you get your current position?

By networking. I met my current boss at a scientific meeting. As we discussed his recent research, we started talking about my career and he suggested for me to apply.

How long was your job search?

About 6 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

How did I go from being a chemical engineer to a malaria researcher? When I was finishing my PhD I decided I wanted to contribute my skills towards infectious diseases. I then became a postdoctoral fellow in the Malaria Infection Biology program at NIAID.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Unfortunately, there is only a limited amount of staff scientist positions in academia and research institutes, and I was lucky to get one. However, if this is really what you want to do, I would advise you to look into private and non-profit research institutes and contact PIs directly and also... network! Sometimes these positions are not even advertised so it never hurts to ask.

Prince Awuah

Toxicologist
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Panel: Federal Government

Where is your highest degree from? University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Cellular and Molecular Pathology 2013

What is your current role/responsibility?

Review tobacco product applications
Collaborate on projects
Attend Conferences
Design projects
Sitting on work groups and committees to stay updated on current issues.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Background in Risk assessment is helpful
Knowing how to write and being concise in your writing.
Knowing how to read efficiently, acquire knowledge.
Multitasking

How did you get your current position?

Networking

How long was your job search?

about 2 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

93,000 depending on experience level

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Additional classes or seminars in toxicology and pharmacology are very helpful

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Advanced degrees are important

Learn about regulatory work

Learn and develop a strong toxicology and pharmacology background

Rocio Benabentos

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Panel: Science Administration

Where is your highest degree from? Baylor College of Medicine, Cell and Molecular Biology 2011

What is your current role/responsibility?

My main role is to manage a program that is funded through the HHMI Science Education initiative for Research Universities. This program provides comprehensive support to STEM faculty who want to transform a course that they teach (i.e. Faculty Scholars). I am under the umbrella of the STEM Transformation Institute at Florida International University and, as such, also play service roles to the Institute.

My job responsibilities can be divided into three categories: Administrative, Research, and Teaching. Half of my time is spent in administrative roles such as managing the recruitment and selection process of Faculty Scholars, supporting Scholars in the planning and implementation of their course transformation, organizing meeting and events for the STEM faculty community, or preparing and submitting annual reports. Forty percent of my time is spent on research duties including collecting and analyzing data from Faculty Scholars' classrooms and co-leading a national research project with four other HHMI research universities. Lastly, every semester I teach a seminar course for undergraduate Learning Assistants, who are students that facilitate learning in STEM classrooms.

The STEM Transformation Institute is a very collaborative environment, and I work with research faculty and other program Directors in different projects. For example, I work closely with the Learning Assistant program and, besides teaching a section of their seminar, I help with facilitating workshops, assisting in recruitment, and serving as a departmental liaison for Biology. Also, I mentor a group of 4-6 undergrads every semester – who support the research projects within my program.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Organizational skills and communication skills are key to being successful in a science administration position like mine. A large portion of my work involves handling many parallel small projects, so project management is an important element of the job. I was surprised at the volume of email communication my position demands, which has required me to develop good email organization habits. Also, my job requires an element of adaptability and resourcefulness – as urgent tasks can come up unpredictably and I might have to problem-solve issues that I am not familiar with. For example, I never expected that I would be involved in conducting research away from the bench. I've had to learn how to code and further develop my statistical skills, which has been an exciting part of my position and has allowed me to continue my involvement in the education research scientific community. Finally, most of the projects I am involved with are a team effort so communication and interpersonal skills are essential for the success of those projects.

How did you get your current position?

I was bound by location to Miami, Florida because of my spouse's career. However, I was in Washington DC during my job search so the distance made the process a bit more challenging. I started looking for a job in science administration a year before my move was scheduled. I did not have prior connections to the area, so I had to rely on my current network to find scientists working in Miami. During my postdoc, I had done a couple dozen informational interviews so I reached out to that network to ask for connections in the area. I was able to connect with a few people in Miami and talk with them over the phone. One of them was a graduate student in my current institute and he connected me to his PI (i.e. my current supervisor). I was fortunate that a few positions were opening up right when I was scheduled to move – and my background was a good fit. I was able to find out about the position even before it was posted. Informational interviews definitely work!

How long was your job search?

10 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$55,000-65,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

For my position, my prior experience in government was a plus. I did my postdoc at NIH and worked at NSF for a year as an AAAS S&T Policy Fellow. Government grants are a large source of funding in STEM education programs, so my experience with the government system was very helpful (e.g. knowledge of funding programs and of grant review mechanism). As a postdoc, I

was also able to take advantage of many of the opportunities at NIH (e.g. teaching experiences, mentoring, workshops, leadership opportunities) that helped me develop other necessary skills. I was very fortunate to be able to do a detail with OITE during my last year as a postdoc. This experience helped me realize that I liked science administration and helped me further develop skills that have helped me succeed in my position (e.g. communication, management).

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Science administration is a very diverse field and there are many paths to get started. I think that getting that “entry-level” position to transition away from the bench can be challenging, but there are ways to make it easier. In my case, doing many informational interviews helped me narrow-down the field that I was mostly interested in (i.e. STEM education administration) and the different options available (e.g. higher education institutions, industry, non-for-profit). Also, it helped me realize what were the skills/experiences that might be valuable and seek opportunities that would demonstrate that I have developed those skills or experiences. In the end, the people that I connected with through informational interviews (most of which I never met in person) helped me get connections in Miami that led to my current position. Some people transition to science education administration through a DBER (discipline-based education research) postdoctoral position that in turn could position them to a tenure-track faculty or a non-tenure track administrative position. This particular path is becoming more popular and is something that I hadn’t realized before I was in this field.

Hadley Bergstrom

Assistant Professor of Psychological Science
Vassar College
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Panel: Teaching Intensive Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? George Mason University, Psychology 2009

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am an Assistant Professor of Psychological Science and Program in Neuroscience and Behavior at Vassar College. I teach 2 credit hours/semester. So far, this has consisted of 2 lecture-based courses in one semester and one lab-based course in another semester. A significant portion of my day entails prepping for class. As a part of teaching, I hold office hours 4 hours/week. I also spend time advising students (15-20) on their curricular and career goals. I also attend various meetings related to departmental and college service. Finally, I spend a significant part of each day conducting research. This might entail either running experiments in the lab, writing, meeting with students regarding research (lab meetings) or data analysis.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Skills such as organization and time-management have turned out to be critical. Probably the most surprising aspect of the job, especially coming from a research-intensive postdoc, was the amount of interpersonal interaction and relationships that require attention and maintenance. At the NIH, most of my time was spent in solitary running experiments. At Vassar, from day 1, I was thrust into a socially intensive environment in which I interacted with a variety of people from students, to faculty, to staff on a continual basis throughout the day. The ability to successfully manage many different social relationships was a surprising required skillset for the job.

How did you get your current position?

I heavily utilized a website called "wiki psychology jobs (<http://psychjobsearch.wikidot.com/>)." It is continuously updated with currently posts from job seekers in the field. It was incredibly inclusive and helpful. I also used "Indeed.com." It is also very good.

How long was your job search?

2 years

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$75,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

For a teaching intensive job, teaching experience is quite helpful. Although not required, there is no doubt that teaching a full course prior to a faculty position will help in the transition. The ability to juggle many different chores on a day-to-day basis has also been helpful. On any given day, I might be prepping for a class, teaching a class, advising a student, attending a meeting, helping with an experiment, writing an IACUC protocol, etc. The ability to flexibly switch between tasks is important to success.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Publish high quality papers. Publish more high quality papers. Get some teaching experience. Figure out if you like teaching. Figure out if you like interacting with students. If all checks-out, you will be in a competitive position for a faculty position at an undergraduate institution like Vassar.

Rebecca Berman

Staff Scientist
NIMH/NIH
bermanr@mail.nih.gov

Panel: Staying Close to the Science

Where is your highest degree from? University of Pittsburgh, Neuroscience

What is your current role/responsibility?

My job is a mix of hands-on science / bench work, administrative tasks, and mentoring. For me, it is the sweet spot - I still get to do experiments and be part of the everyday details and execution of a project, but also have the broader perspective of other work in our lab, collaborations, and the opportunity to mentor younger scientists.

What skills make you successful in this job?

I continue to need strong experimental skills, but communication and time-management/juggling skills have also become more essential, in order to balance multiple scientific & administrative projects.

How did you get your current position?

old-fashioned combination of good timing, networking, and the development of sustained scientific relationships.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Seek out multiple mentors, whether formally or informally; stay in touch with labs where the work interests you.

Chris Case

Senior Scientific Administrator
Leidos Biomedical Research
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Panel: Regulatory Affairs & Science Management

Where is your highest degree from? Yale University, Microbiology 2011

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am a Senior Scientific Administrator for the Vaccine Clinical Materials Program Directorate at Leidos Biomed. I manage a large scientific subcontract portfolio in support of the Vaccine Research Center/NIAID. In addition, I manage multiple scientific projects under contracts issued by the Federal Government to Leidos Biomed. I work as a member of several teams focused on getting products from the bench to the clinic, including bench scientists, contract manufacturers, contract research organizations, consultants and regulatory affairs specialists. I also work with Subcontracts Administrators and Contracting Officers to help manage science performed through contractual relationships.

What skills make you successful in this job?

The skills required to be successful in this job include an ability to manage multiple tasks and prioritize tasks in a fast paced environment. Managing different personalities is critical as each Subcontractor has a different mode of operation and performs most effectively under different circumstances. Likewise, managing each client/stakeholder requires understanding how they perceive success and effective communication.

How did you get your current position?

I received my job by responding to a job-listing. That said, the process of networking and performing informational interviews helped me to hone my approach to the job search, including what listings to respond to and how to respond.

How long was your job search?

6 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

While my bench training laid the foundation, I believe that my experiences away from the bench are what ultimately allowed me to secure my current position. These activities included managing grants while a graduate student and participating in part-time consulting activities through Center for Advancing Innovation (CAI) as a post-doc.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Look for any opportunity to approach science in ways that don't involve being at the bench. Most companies are looking for individuals who have experience beyond their actual bench performance. Seek out opportunities while you are still doing your post-doc, graduate, undergraduate work to hone your 'away from the bench' skills (e.g. project management). If your mentor is open to the possibility, look for side activities that show your other capabilities.

Lee-Jah Chang

Director, Global Clinical Sciences
Sanofi Pasteur
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Panel: Options for Clinicians

Where is your highest degree from? Northwestern Feinberg School of Medicine, Medicine 2007

Other degrees: Northwestern BA in Biology/Physiology

What is your current role/responsibility?

Since joining Sanofi Pasteur in 2013, I have been a Clinical Team Leader (CTL) for multiple vaccine development programs in various stages of development. Currently, I am the CTL for 6 clinical programs from preclinical to Phase 3 development including such pathogens as influenza, meningococcus, pneumococcus, and HSV.

As a CTL I am responsible for the clinical trial design, site selection/preparation, subject enrollment, study conduct, data review, safety analysis, and analysis of results. I write and review study protocols, investigator brochures, statistical analysis plans, and other study documents. I provide strategic and scientific input to clinical development plans, study protocols, and target product profiles across multiple different vaccine franchises. I collaborate with the regulatory department team members for strategic planning and study result discussions to be held with regulatory authorities around the world. I participate and present at investigators meetings for clinical trials, scientific advisory boards, and joint steering committees. I may be asked to provide clinical assessment and advice for the company's investment of other external company's programs. Moreover, I present and represent Sanofi Pasteur with external collaborators such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the National Institutes of Health.

What skills make you successful in this job?

- Time management
- Prioritization and multitasking skills
- Teamwork
- Leadership skills
- Ability to synthesize large amounts of information
- Teaching skills
- Writing ability
- Presentation and speaking ability

How did you get your current position?

I applied to multiple pharmaceutical companies online and also sent my CV to any contacts within the pharmaceutical world. My current job was found after one of the Primary Investigators on a vaccine study I ran at the NIH sent my CV to one of his contacts at Sanofi Pasteur. The Clinical department happened to be interviewing for a CTL position, and my application was moved to the top by the recruiter helping me to secure an onsite interview after I had an initial Skype interview with the recruiter.

How long was your job search? 6 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path? The range is very large, between 130,000-180,000 I would estimate.

Any other experiences that led to your success?: Selecting a clinical research track for my allergy and immunology fellowship research experience was probably the most important deciding factor in my career path into industry. The two Vaccine Research Center trials I ran at the NIH helped to build a foundation to quickly grow into the CTL role at Sanofi Pasteur. Understanding the operational aspects helps when I was learning the strategic decision making part of my job. My background in basic sciences also allowed me to be able to tackle preclinical programs dealing with animal and cell models prior to a vaccine candidate entering humans.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path? Gain clinical trial/study experience as early as possible. A background in basic science will help you as well with understanding preclinical development programs. Networking with people in the industry is also critical as the pharma world is small and sometimes niche-y. If you are able to establish yourself in a field, you will be highly sought after given most doctors do not pursue this career path.

Jue Chen

Program Officer
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
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Panel: Federal Government

Where is your highest degree from? Emory, Pharmacology 2011

What is your current role/responsibility?

As a program officer, my primary responsibility is to guide applicants through their grant applications. I talk to applicants before they submit applications and after their grants are reviewed. I also oversee progress of funded grants. Another aspect of this job is to evaluate the outcome of a research program. I also need to stay up to date on scientific discoveries in relevant field and be aware of emerging new scientific area.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Scientific background, critical analysis and communication skills.

How did you get your current position?

I did a detail in the extramural program to find out whether I would like this job. It turned out that I loved it. So I applied for similar jobs during my detail and got the current job.

How long was your job search?

8 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

75K

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I served on the FelCom committee and taught a class at the FAES. I also helped to organize two past NIH Postdoc Career Symposium. Through these activities, I expanded my network and became interested in working as a science administrator. Then I started information interview and applied for detail positions.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Talk to people who're doing your dream jobs and learn more about those jobs and how to get there.

Dietrich Conze

Director of Pharmaceutical Development
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Panel: Regulatory Affairs & Science Management

Where is your highest degree from? University of Vermont, Cell and Molecular Biology 2001

Other degrees: BA, Bucknell University

What is your current role/responsibility?

As Director of Pharmaceutical Development, I manage the preclinical and clinical development of the drugs, food ingredients, and dietary supplements in ChromaDex's pipeline. My responsibilities include designing preclinical and clinical studies, writing reports and applications to the FDA and other regulatory agencies worldwide, meeting with the regulatory agencies to discuss our development paths, and assisting our manufacturing team in the manufacturing, chemistry, and control of our pipeline. I am also a consultant who provides strategic scientific advice and regulatory assistance to external clients that develop drugs, food ingredients and dietary supplements.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Knowledge of the regulatory paths for foods, dietary supplements, and drugs is essential. Other very important skills include creative and critical thinking, managing time effectively, presenting and communicating data and ideas clearly through writing and verbal presentations, and working with a team. The importance of having strong writing skills surprised me because every day I interact with people all over the world and from all walks of life, and to get anything done in a timely manner, you must be able to communicate your thoughts and ideas clearly, effectively, and efficiently.

How did you get your current position?

Networking

How long was your job search?

2 years

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$70,000/year

Any other experiences that led to your success?

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Developing drugs is a long, expensive, and sometimes difficult process. It can be exciting at times, but you will need patience and perseverance. Consulting, can be slow like drug development, but can also be fast-paced and exciting. In both jobs, you need to be a creative thinker and able to take on the unknown because you never know what type of work you will do.

Archana Dhasarathy

Assistant Professor
University of North Dakota
archana.dhasarathy@med.und.edu

Panel: Transitioning from postdoc to faculty

Where is your highest degree from? Texas A&M University, Genetics/ Biochemistry 2004

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am the principal investigator of an NIH- funded laboratory. My duties are primarily research, but I also teach undergraduate, graduate and medical students. I also participate as a committee member on 12 student thesis/ dissertation committees. I organize and run a group across campus for researchers with interest in epigenetics.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Molecular biology/ biochemistry bench skills, Networking, Management, Critical thinking, Public speaking, Relationship building.

How did you get your current position?

I have the classic two-body problem! I spoke to many people when I was looking for a job, and this helped as I was forwarded an email from someone else at NIH. This email was for my current position, but the deadline was already passed. Nevertheless I called them and asked if it was ok to apply, and they said sure. So I did, and it turned out they also had a similar position that my spouse could fill.

How long was your job search?

Almost a year

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

~\$ 80,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

First, I had a marvelous research experience at NIEHS, and my field (epigenetics) was the reason I got this job. But besides that, I improved my writing skills by contributing to the Environmental Factor (NIEHS newsletter), and I gained valuable teaching experience by volunteering in the NIH Summer Internship Program, and I taught classes at North Carolina Central University. NIEHS, Duke and UNC sponsored a Lab management training program, which I also attended, that taught me a lot about how to manage a lab.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Publish, publish, publish! Attend meetings, network and cast a wide net. Your reference letters matter.

Gabriel Eichler

Founder and Managing Director
Oak Health Partners
gabriel@oakhealthpartners.com

Panel: Consulting, BD & Equity Research

Where is your highest degree from? Boston University, Bioinformatics 2008

Other degrees: University of Pennsylvania

What is your current role/responsibility?

I founded and run a healthcare strategy consulting firm focused on digital health, precision medicine and big data analytics. I oversee all marketing, business development, contracting, legal and client operations

What skills make you successful in this job?

- Strong interpersonal communication skills
- Strong client-facing knowhow and comfort
- Adept at thinking on your feet, admitting when you don't know something, and learning things quickly.
- Experience working with various life science and industry stakeholders.
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Self-motivation

How did you get your current position?

- Sheer determination
- Networking - (its your insurance policy and it's how you'll find your next job no matter where you want to go!)
- Willing to take a risk and invest in myself

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$150,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

- Learning how businesses large and small operate.
- Spending time with lot of people in my space - business leaders, scientists, lawyers, financiers. Get to know how these different people and roles think about the world and the industry.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

- Spend time with people who teach you things.
- Develop rich experiences by getting involved in challenging domains.
- Branch out- see things that make you uncomfortable but help you grow.
- Don't be afraid to fail - just be sure you learn in the process.
- Collect stories along the way during your journey - stories are the best way of communicating your history experiences, passion and capabilities.

Greg Frank

Director, Infectious Disease Policy
Biotechnology Innovation Organization
gmfrank@gmail.com

Panel: Science Policy & Advocacy

Where is your highest degree from? University of Pittsburgh, Immunology 2009

What is your current role/responsibility?

I lead BIO's policy and advocacy efforts related to combating the threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and also work on policy and advocacy related to immunization. I engage closely with our member companies and the broader vaccine and AMR stakeholder communities to develop and shape policies that impact vaccines and antimicrobial medicines.

What skills make you successful in this job?

I work at BIO as the Director, Infectious Disease Policy. Networking and being able to build strong working relationships is probably the most important skill to have. A large portion of my time is spent engaging with member companies and the stakeholder community to identify consensus on key issues. With that in mind, it is important to be able to communicate to a variety of audiences, both orally and in writing. Having strong organizational, critical thinking, and problem solving skills are also very helpful in this (and any!) policy job.

How did you get your current position?

Networking. I helped out with the 2013 Career Symposium and held an informational interview with one of the speakers on the policy careers panel. This led to me obtaining a short-term science policy fellowship at the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB). The network I continued to expand was instrumental in helping me get my previous job as well as my current position with BIO.

How long was your job search?

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

It is time consuming, and sometimes feels like you are running in place, but I can't stress how important networking is. Having an established relationship you can leverage when on the search often is what gets your foot in the door. These jobs really value communication and relationships!

Yevgeniy Gindin

Research Scientist, Bioinformatics
Gilead Sciences
yev@gindin.us

Panel: Research & Development

Where is your highest degree from? Boston University, Bioinformatics 2014

Other degrees: BA, Computer Science, GWU; BS, Biology, SU

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am a bioinformatics scientist supporting clinical development programs. My responsibilities include analysis, integration and interpretation of genome-scale data collected in a clinical trial setting to aid in patient stratification and biomarker selection. A major part of my work is active participation in cross-functional teams that include clinical research, biomarker sciences, biometrics, clinical development and research biology.

What skills make you successful in this job?

It is essential to be able to communicate complex information in an accurate and concise way with an audience-driven focus. Project management skills are a must since most of the work is accomplished in a team setting. Technical skills are, of course, important as well and these include computer science, statistics and biology as applied to large-scale data analysis.

How did you get your current position?

I was contacted by a talent acquisition specialist who thought that my background matched the position that she was trying to fill.

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I had a terrific graduate mentor (Paul Meltzer) who helped me with my writing, presentation, and critical thinking skills. I coordinated the weekly graduate student speaker series on NIH campus, which was a great introduction on how to coordinate a complex process.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Take an active interest in developing your non-technical skills. Having the ability to effectively deliver your message will set you apart and ensure your continued success.

Jahda Hill

Scientific Director
Dudnyk
jahda.hill@gmail.com

Panel: Sales & Marketing

Where is your highest degree from? University of Maryland, Cell Biology and Molecular Genetics 2010

What is your current role/responsibility?

As a scientific director at a healthcare marketing agency, my responsibilities are diverse. I ensure that content generated by copywriters, art directors, and account executives is scientifically accurate. I ensure that team members, all of whom are non-scientists, are well versed in the disease state and features of our clients' products, including drug efficacy, safety, and mechanism of action. I also have regular client contact, providing a scientific rationale for the projects we create, and discussing brand strategy.

What skills make you successful in this job?

The most important skill in my position is effective oral communication. I regularly present to coworkers and clients, and my experiences presenting my own research and teaching undergraduates prepared me for my current responsibilities. Effective written communication is also important, as a big part of my job is reviewing things that others have written and providing feedback.

How did you get your current position?

I found my position on LinkedIn.

How long was your job search?

4 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$75,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Because my job is to help non-scientists understand difficult scientific and clinical concepts, my teaching experiences have been the most important. This includes serving as a TA during grad school, mentoring summer interns in the lab, and leading a journal club for summer interns at NIH. I also found the Scientists teaching science class to be useful.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Hone your presentation skills and polish up your resumes.

Yang Huang

Senior Associate, Equity Research
Citi Research
yanghuangnj@gmail.com

Panel: Consulting, BD & Equity Research

Where is your highest degree from? Rutgers University, Computer Science 2001

Other degrees: Nanjing University

What is your current role/responsibility?

There are mainly 3 parts of my daily job: conduct ad hoc research projects for my analyst or clients; write investment notes and perform financial modeling; communicate with clients on our investment thesis

What skills make you successful in this job?

Communication, communication and communication. I just can not emphasize its importance enough. Writing, financial modeling, information finding, analytics are all going to be needed in my daily work. Attention to details is also essential in my line of work.

How did you get your current position?

Networking is very important, which allows me to gain deep understanding of what a particular job is about. Though I did not find my current job through networking, my former colleague at RBC did. I found my consulting gig through networking indirectly.

How long was your job search?

About half a year for ER and at least a year for consulting

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$100K

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Training in scientific analysis, financial modeling and analysis, and business experience gained through volunteering projects, organizational skills learned through founding a consulting club at NIH

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Improve communication skills (written and oral), Learn basic accounting and financial modeling, gain business knowledge using every possible opportunity, and network really hard.

Nicole Hunt

Senior Medical Writer
CITIZENSHIP, LLC
nicoled.hunt@yahoo.com

Panel: Writing & Communication

Where is your highest degree from? Tulane University, Molecular and Cellular Biology, Neuroscience 2005

Other degrees: B.S. from Xavier University of Louisiana

What is your current role/responsibility?

I'm starting a freelance writing business.

What skills make you successful in this job?

- Paying attention to details.
- Finding inconsistencies.
- Ability to work with cross-functional groups (clinicians, statisticians, safety, project managers, protocol leads, regulatory, etc.)

How did you get your current position?

- Networking
- Job-listings
- Recruiters

How long was your job search?

For my first job in the pharmaceutical industry, it took 7 months to receive a competitive offer.

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$80,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

- Predoctoral Fellow, NIH Intramural Research Training Award
- Mentors/wise counsel
- Refusing to believe what others told me, "I could not do"

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Stay determined and highlight your transferrable skills (skills that you currently have which can be used as a scientific writer).

B. Ian Hutchins

Data scientist
Office of Portfolio Analysis, DPCPSI, OD, NIH
bruce.hutchins@nih.gov

Panel: Federal Government

Where is your highest degree from? University of Wisconsin-Madison, Neuroscience 2009

What is your current role/responsibility?

My duties as a data scientist fall into three categories: conducting trans-NIH portfolio analysis, methodology and tool development, and training. Analyses in my office normally come in response to a request from senior leadership, or arise from collaborations with staff at the other NIH Institutes or Centers. These analyses often focus on identifying scientific overlap or gaps between grant portfolios, modeling the effects of potential policy changes, or characterizing research productivity. As I engage with these, I use a variety of approaches like text mining, statistical modeling, machine learning, and bibliometrics.

Part of my duties involve generating new analytical approaches to enhance our capabilities. One great example is the development of the Relative Citation Ratio, which is an article-level measure of a paper's scientific influence. When I moved away from the bench in 2013, NIH databases were primarily tracking publication counts and Impact Factors arising from NIH funding. I wanted to develop a way for scientists to get appropriate credit for publishing great work in lower-profile venues, because reliance on journal prestige in research evaluation has caused a lot of problems in biomedicine. I served as team lead within the office for the project to develop the Relative Citation Ratio methodology, and we launched a publically accessible database (iCite) to help reduce the reliance on journal-level metrics in research assessment. The Open Mike blog and NIGMS Feedback Loop have some good examples of analyses using the Relative Citation Ratio for supporting decision-making at NIH. I'm serving in a similar capacity for other tool development efforts that are ongoing.

Finally, I engage in training in order to facilitate portfolio analysis efforts that are going on at other NIH Institutes and Centers. In this role, I teach classes and hold hands-on workshops in data acquisition, text mining, and bibliometrics. My day-to-day schedule varies quite a bit. Sometimes I'm involved in quick-turnaround analyses, and sometimes I'm working on longer-horizon efforts like methodology development. These are punctuated with meetings to discuss new and ongoing analyses, or hosting training sessions.

What skills make you successful in this job?

A big part of the necessary skills for my job are general scientific training: an analytical mindset, familiarity with statistical approaches, and knowledge of the NIH funding process. The communication skills that I learned in my scientific training are essential as well, including writing, data visualization, and public speaking. For the tool development aspect of my position, knowing the basics of programming are also necessary (for example, in Python or R). Many of the highly talented analysts in our office don't have a programming background, though, so that's not a strict requirement.

Being curious, taking initiative, and being able to work independently are huge assets in positions like mine. The ability to identify important, unsolved problems and develop an implementation plan to solve them is crucial. Working well on a team is essential, which includes being open to build a body of work and troubleshoot collaboratively. The particular skill sets needed over the course of a project often shift over time, so having a positive attitude when transitioning leadership of a longer-term project is very important.

How did you get your current position?

I spent a lot of time conducting informational interviews and networking, and in the end I saw a call for a detailee on the OITE Postdoc newsletter and did a three-month detail in the office. My main task involved a lot of time-consuming manual curation, but I also had the opportunity to offer ideas and contribute to problem solving at our staff meetings. A position opened up as I was ending my detail, and I was hired full time as a contractor through Kelly Services. I later transitioned to a full-time federal employee position.

How long was your job search?

About a year.

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$80,000 - \$95,000 per year in the DC area.

Any other experiences that led to your success?

My graduate and postdoctoral advisors (Kate Kalil and Susan Wray) invested a lot in my professional development, helping me to learn a lot of the "soft" skills that have played a huge part in my career. In addition, I was part of the NIGMS PRAT program while I was an intramural postdoc, and they really pushed me out of my comfort zone to network and cultivate career opportunities. Participating in the NIH Science Policy Discussion Group gave me exposure to a variety of career paths, and valuable leadership experience.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Explore career paths that others have followed and keep an eye out for opportunities. There are a lot of people at NIH involved in analysis work either as their main duty or as a secondary responsibility. Be sure to introduce yourself to someone and ask some questions at each conference or event. Don't be discouraged if someone doesn't reply quickly to a networking message, and be sure to follow up a week later if that happens (it's not personal!). Job searches can be frustrating; it's good to be pursuing multiple opportunities at once in case one falls through.

Tijana Jovanovic-Talisman

Assistant Professor, Molecular Medicine
Beckman Research Institute, City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center
ttalisman@coh.org

Panel: Non-traditional Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? Columbia University, Chemistry 2005

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am applying quantitative super-resolution imaging techniques to advance cancer research. In this context I mentor my research group, which consists of two postdocs, two graduate students, summer students (seasonally), and rotation students. I teach graduate courses, participate in various committees, and engage in collaborative research with faculty across our institution and at other institutions.

What skills make you successful in this job?

The ability to rapidly and productively integrate the literature knowledge base, expertise in biochemistry and biophysical methods, communication skills, time management, writing, and the ability to delegate tasks when necessary.

How did you get your current position?

Through collaborative research.

How long was your job search?

A few months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

80k-90k

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I have a diverse and therefore unique technical skill set and completed two high risk/high reward projects as a postdoc, which led to impactful publications.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Matching your background and skill set with the needs of the institution is extremely important. While this may increase the time you spend searching positions, a match is essential not only for landing the job but also for being successful and happy at it.

Matthew Kelley

Senior Investigator
NIDCD/NIH
kelleymt@nidcd.nih.gov

Panel: Ten-Years Later

Where is your highest degree from? University of Virginia, Neuroscience 1993

Other degrees: BA from Cornell University

What is your current role/responsibility?

As a Senior Investigator I am responsible for the overall direction of the research that is conducted in my laboratory. I meet with Fellows and other members of the laboratory to discuss ongoing and future research projects. I am also responsible for helping to prepare manuscripts for publication. In addition, I help Fellows and other members of the laboratory with career planning. Finally, I serve as an Editor or reviewer for several scientific journals and I perform administrative services for both the NIDCD and the NIH, such as serving on committees and organizing our seminar series.

What skills make you successful in this job?

A thorough understanding of the current state of the science in the fields of inner ear biology, development and regeneration as well as the ability to generate specific hypotheses about outstanding questions in the field of inner ear biology. I also need to be able to design experiments that will test the hypotheses that we generate. Finally, I need to have strong interpersonal skills as I need to be able to interact with approximately 10 different people within the laboratory. I had no training in personnel management before starting a laboratory, so this aspect of my job was a surprise.

How did you get your current position?

I saw a job listing in Science magazine and submitted an application.

How long was your job search?

For my current job, only a few months. For my first independent position, about 1.5 years

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$80,000 to \$100,000 depending on location

Any other experiences that led to your success?

As a post-doc I identified an under represented area of research. This allowed me to begin my career with minimal competition from existing laboratories.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

When thinking about beginning a new laboratory, it's important to identify a research area that is unique, especially from the research of your previous mentors.

Michael Kim

Physics Teacher
Wootton High School
Michael_T_Kim@mcpsmd.org

Panel: Science Education & Outreach

Where is your highest degree from? University of Southern California, Neuroscience 2005

What is your current role/responsibility?

AP Physics C teacher, Homeroom Coordinator, AP Testing Coordinator

What skills make you successful in this job?

Basic computer skills (hardware and software). There are only an IT specialist in our school. There are many times I had to fix our own computers. The number one skill is the working knowledge of many computer programs (Office, Adobe, and Audio/Visual). I make all of my lessons digitally and share them with my colleagues. I make videos of certain lessons and post them for the students.

How did you get your current position?

Both network and job listing

How long was your job search?

1 month

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$56,455

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I loved teaching as a TA. To keep myself "valuable," I got certified in all three disciplines (bio, chem, and physics).

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Enter this job with your eyes wide open. Your co-workers can be petty. The kids will grind on you. Your boss can be a micromanager. There will be many papers that you will have to grade. You will feel swamped. However, you will make a positive impact on a child's life. As a scientist, you will help them to see what is real science.

Yeong Sang Kim

Technical Application Scientist
BioLegend
cisoid21@gmail.com

Panel: Sales & Marketing

Where is your highest degree from? PhD from Yonsei University, Chemistry

What is your current role/responsibility?

Technical support for new products and applications, scientific meetings and shows, marketing, business development, account management

What skills make you successful in this job?

Scientific background/knowledge
Organizational skills
Presentation skills
Time management
Self-motivated
Networking skills
Ability to work in a dynamic team environments

How did you get your current position?

Job ad on LinkedIn, followed by application and interview

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Research experience in NIH (Visiting Fellow/Research Fellow)

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Be flexible and don't be afraid to jump ship! There are always multiple ways.

Marijke Koppenol-Raab

Biomedical Life Scientist
Leidos, supporting CDMRP
mkoppenolraab@gmail.com

Panel: Federal Government

Where is your highest degree from? Johns Hopkins University, Biology 2013

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am a Biomedical Life Scientist with Leidos supporting the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs (CDMRP). As part of a collaborative team I support the planning, organization, and management of the Programmatic Review process which recommends applications of high scientific merit for funding by the CDMRP. This includes recruiting scientists, clinicians, and consumers to serve on the programmatic panel, planning and organizing the programmatic review, performing program evaluation tasks, and reviewing the technical reports submitted by funded investigators for progress, accuracy, and compliance.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Time management, the ability to juggle multiple projects/tasks, good communication skills, problem-solving skills, and attention to detail are all important for this position. Being able to work as part of a team is critical, since this position is part of a collaborative effort between the CDMRP program office, support contractors, and the scientists and consumers that serve on the review panels. Good writing skills are a plus, since we generate meeting reports for the meetings we support. I think the problem-solving skills surprised me the most. As a support contractor we do everything we can to meet the needs of the customer, and that can require some creative solutions.

How did you get your current position?

Networking. A friend and former colleague working in this position gave my resume to the hiring manager.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

If you're interested in transitioning away from the bench, look for opportunities where you can gain some experience outside of the lab. Go to career development events and set up informational interviews with people in the jobs you're interested in. Get a detail position if possible.

Catherine K. Kuo

Associate Professor

University of Rochester, Departments of Biomedical Engineering and Orthopaedics

catherine.k.kuo@rochester.edu

Panel: Ten-Years Later

Where is your highest degree from? University of Michigan, PhD in Biomaterials, Macromolecular Science and Engineering

Other degrees: Postdoctoral fellowship at NIH, BSE in Materials Science and Engineering

What is your current role/responsibility?

Research, Teaching (undergraduate and graduate courses), Advising (undergraduate and graduate students), Service at department and university levels, Service for scientific community.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Writing, speaking, communicating, managing people, teaching, multi-tasking, budgeting, ... multi-tasking!

How did you get your current position?

Applications and interviews.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Be a good colleague and mentor, be resilient, and be mentor-able! Remember why you love science.

Julia Louie

Exhibition Designer
National Museum of Natural History
julialouie@gmail.com

Panel: Science Education & Outreach

Where is your highest degree from? George Washington University, Museum Studies 2008

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am an exhibition designer at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. Currently, I am a member of the exhibition development team working on putting together an exhibition on zoonotic infectious diseases called Outbreak: Epidemics in a Connected World. My main responsibility is to develop the visual and experiential presentation of the exhibition content through exhibit architecture, space layout, graphic design, and media experiences. This means that I develop the "look and feel" of the exhibition; plan the spatial arrangement of all exhibition elements (objects and specimens, models and props, interactives, graphic panels, audiovisual elements, etc.); and detail out how physical elements need to be constructed and installed. The designer role is essentially a communicator. First, the designer plans how content is being communicated with the visitors. Second, the designer creates drawings that conveys how this will happen—with renderings of what the exhibition will look like to the team and other stakeholders, and detailed construction drawings for the team who will actually be building the exhibition and putting it together.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Being able to communicate visually (with CAD drawing, graphic design, and/or sketching or hand-drawing) is probably the most critical skill to meeting the basic requirements of the job. Problem-solving and creative thinking skills are important for being a good exhibition designer. It's also important to be able to keep the big picture in mind while also being detail-oriented.

How did you get your current position?

I'd set up notifications for designer positions at Smithsonian museums on USAJobs.

Any other experiences that led to your success?

My experience with using and teaching design software was a major factor in getting the job. Now that I am in the role, I draw heavily on my experiences working as an exhibition designer at the National Geographic Museum. Visiting other exhibitions and museums is also very helpful as it is useful to have a sense of what's been done before, how it was done, and how well it worked—sort of like conducting a literature review.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

I recommend learning more about exhibition development through volunteering, internships, networking and/or doing informational interviews. I also recommend trying to gain some experience with design software such as Vectorworks, AutoCAD, or the Adobe Creative Suite programs. There are several Masters programs for Exhibition Design and most require submitting a portfolio.

Dana Mahadeo

Director, Senior Counsel Intellectual Property
Seqirus
dana.mahadeo@seqirus.com

Panel: Ten-Years Later

Where is your highest degree from? Wayne State University, Ph.D., Biochemistry and Molecular Biology 2002

Other degrees: J.D, University of Maryland, 2011

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am responsible for the management of the intellectual property estate for the 2nd largest influenza vaccine manufacturer and interact with scientists, executives, other in-house attorneys and outside attorneys on a regular basis. I am responsible for identifying potential inventions, facilitating the patent filing process, working with outside counsel to obtain valuable patents and monitoring competitors for their activities. Part of my job is to facilitate the monetization of the IP in either licensing deals and/or adversarial proceedings against competitors

What skills make you successful in this job?

Issue spotting, attention to detail, strong writing skills, able to think creatively and communication skills are extremely important. You are often given a short turnaround time to make an assessment and decide on a course of action. You have to be decisive, often on a less-than-complete picture. Further, you will need to interact with senior executives and you will need to be able to communicate complex scientific and legal ideas to an audience that does not have experience in either one of those fields

How did you get your current position?

networking and job-listing

How long was your job search?

3 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$145,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Spending time as a patent agent gave me an insight into what life as a patent attorney would be like prior to attending law school.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

If you are interested in patent law, I would try to speak with as many patent practitioners as possible about what they do on a day-to-day basis. In-house attorneys do a job that is completely different from attorneys at law firms and both positions have different skill requirements. Becoming a successful patent attorney after a long scientific education path is not for the faint of heart. It involves taking the LSAT and applying to law school and then spending 3-4 years back in school. After that you will need to pass a state bar and take and pass the patent bar. However, the career is extremely rewarding and I wouldn't change anything about where I am now.

Sebastien Maloveste

Director Business Development
GenVec
smaloveste@genvec.com

Panel: Consulting, BD & Equity Research

Where is your highest degree from? Université de la Méditerranée, Marseille, France, Immunology 2007

What is your current role/responsibility?

As Director Business Development my function is to establish and implement strategies to form partnerships around the company's programs, technology platforms, and assets. To perform this role, I work with senior management responsible for overall corporate strategy and scientific direction to distill and generate narratives describing business opportunities based on the company's programs and capabilities. These are then incorporated into presentation materials, which are used at partnering meetings. I also manage relationships with these potential partners. I am regularly involved in agreement and business term negotiations, which requires developing deal terms and working closely with corporate legal counsel. My functions also involve searching for and evaluating new technologies for potential in-licensing to strengthen the company's programs and pipeline.

What skills make you successful in this job?

An entrepreneurial approach is essential for building visionary value driver propositions. Communication skills are necessary when presenting novel product opportunities to potential partners, as are solid listening skills. Interpersonal skills are also important to build relationships with strategic partners. Project management is helpful on a daily basis to delineate key deliverables with corresponding timelines.

How did you get your current position?

I was introduced to the company through a former colleague.

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I performed consulting activities for a biotech company on business development-related projects as a technical expert. I volunteered in a tech-transfer office during my postdoc. I also studied for the patent bar exam. A solid scientific background is a plus. Finally, I drafted a business plan during business development classes taken at FAES.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Hands-on work with project management; licensing and business deal structure, and intellectual property-related matters are highly desirable. A good understanding of the product development life cycle and of biotech industry trends is also important. Be an enthusiastic and passionate team player.

Uri Manor

Director
Salk Institute
umanor@salk.edu

Panel: Staying Close to the Science

Where is your highest degree from? Johns Hopkins University, Cellular and Molecular Biophysics 2011

What is your current role/responsibility?

Director of the Biophotonics core facility at the Salk Institute, which houses and performs the majority of the light and electron microscopy experiments (and corresponding data analysis) done at the Salk Institute. I have many responsibilities, including fundraising, training, consulting, collaborating, evaluating and purchasing equipment, and whenever possible doing my own research as well.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Scientific/technical skills are an obvious must, but also administrative, written and verbal communication, and people management (both my own staff and dealing with researchers who use the core).

How did you get your current position?

I applied with an email to the head of the job search, which I learned about from the confocal microscopy listserv at the NIH.

How long was your job search?

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

A lab that is considered a leader in the area you want to pursue may help you in your long term career plans.

James McGuire

Manager, Medical Writing
Cardinal Health Regulatory Sciences
mac.mcguire@gmail.com

Panel: Writing & Communication

Where is your highest degree from? University of Kansas School of Pharmacy, Neuroscience PhD

Other degrees: Pacific University, BS Biology

What is your current role/responsibility?

For the medical writing portion of my role, I am responsible for the delivery of high-quality written regulatory documents to sponsor companies in a timely manner. The documents I typically work on include NDA, ANDA, BLA, and IND summary sections; clinical study reports; protocols; and other regulatory documents across many therapeutic areas. I am also responsible for providing objective and unbiased strategic insight to clients and offer relevant perspective related to drug class and or marketplace. I work with internal colleagues and external clients to develop and execute content-related components of projects.

For the managerial portion of my role, I conduct performance reviews and evaluations and assist in the training of other medical writers. I work with the director of our group in the development of standard operating procedures, project proposals, and project resourcing. Additionally, I serve on internal committees focused process improvement.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Being successful in medical writing requires an ability to think critically, to be effective in time management, to be flexible and adaptable, to be detail-oriented, and to not take feedback personally.

In my opinion, the most important trait that makes a medical writer successful is an ability to think critically. Many of the documents that we work on are data heavy, and you have to be able to look over all of the data quickly and determine what the main message is and point out other interesting aspects of the data. You also have to be able to think critically about the document and problem solve for each specific project, weighing the pros and cons of different options, in order to provide the most effective document you can. I think a lot of hiring managers undervalue this aspect when searching for medical writing candidates.

Another critical aspect of medical writing is time management. Medical writing can be quite cyclical, meaning you're incredibly busy for a few weeks, but then slow the next. When it is busy, medical writers can be juggling multiple projects at once and have several documents in different stages of development. A successful medical writer has to be able to balance those projects, determine which ones need to be completed first, and deliver them on time. The writing of the clinical sections of an NDA submission are usually the last piece to be completed before a company can submit their package to the FDA, which means delivering documents late is not an option.

Medical writing is interesting in that you have to keep an eye on the big picture of what each detail means for a particular study or for the entire submission while not losing sight of the little things. The little things in this case include accuracy in data presentation; adhering to document templates and style; and grammar, spelling, margins, justification, etc. Everyone aims to have no mistakes in their documents, but successful medical writers consider more than just the obvious mistakes and data presentation errors. A successful medical writer must also consider how each word affects the meaning of the sentence (the wrong word may introduce unnecessary ambiguity) as well as consistency in messaging across a 200+ page document. Another trait that successful medical writers share is being flexible and adaptable. Flexible for a medical writer means being able to work on multiple documents at one time and switch back and forth between different documents at a moments notice. Project plans and document needs are continually changing and the medical writer has to adjust to those changes seamlessly. Medical writers must also be adaptable. It is not very often that you are assigned the same document type in the same therapeutic area. Successful medical writers have to be able to adapt to different document requirements and different therapeutic areas quickly. You have to be able to write like an expert on a topic, without necessarily being an expert on the topic.

Lastly, in order to succeed on medical writing you have to learn how to not take criticism and negative feedback about the documents you work on personally. Every document that a medical writer develops is reviewed by numerous people, sometimes up to 30, and everyone will provide feedback that they think will make the document better. A successful medical writer cannot interpret this feedback as a personal attack.

How did you get your current position?

When I first got into medical writing, I was fortunate enough to have a colleague from graduate school that was a medical writer. Her company needed more writers, she knew I was interested in medical writing and was able to refer me to the position. Luckily, I got an interview and offer and have been a medical writer since. After my initial position, I was referred to a different company in a similar role and, again, was asked to interview and ultimately received an offer. Now that I have been in medical writing for almost 5 years, with 2 of that being as a manager, I get calls from recruiters almost weekly. There is a huge demand for medical writers right now.

How long was your job search?

9 months (over 300 job applications)

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$85,000 per year

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I think graduate school and my postdoc with the NIH prepared me very well to succeed as a medical writer. From those experiences, I was used to putting in a little extra effort and being willing to work more when needed. I have not participated in any extra training or certifications since becoming a medical writer, but the American Medical Writers Association does offer some training and certifications.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

There is a huge demand for medical writers, especially regulatory medical writers. However, most companies are apprehensive about hiring people without any experience in medical writing. Aside from networking as much as possible, my advice would be to emphasize any writing activities performed during graduate school and postdoc, including protocols, manuscripts, abstracts, animal use protocols, etc. Additionally, it is critical to emphasize transferable skills that translate into being a good candidate for medical writing (ie, critical thinking, data analysis, statistics, assay development). Lastly, I would advise someone interested in medical writing to write and review documents as often as possible.

Christopher McNabb

Medical Science Liaison
Bayer U.S., LLC
chris.mcnabb@bayer.com

Panel: Sales & Marketing

Where is your highest degree from? University of Texas at Arlington, Experimental Psychology 2014

Other degrees: Bachelor's in Music Education from Texas Christian University

What is your current role/responsibility?

My primary role is to share the latest scientific updates in the field of multiple sclerosis with neurologists in my geography. My secondary responsibilities are to manage relationships with clinical research sites, attend major scientific conferences, train commercial colleagues and fellow MSL's on approved scientific topics, and gather competitive intelligence.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Complete fluency in the cutting edge science in your field is an absolute must. Beyond that, interpersonal skills infuse every aspect of the job, and professional-level presentation skills are also critical. The aspect that surprised me the most with its importance is the ability to manage complexity. This is evident in booking complex travel arrangements, managing time, and managing your territory.

How did you get your current position?

Networking with recruiters on LinkedIn, aggressive job searching on a variety of websites, consulting with NIH Career Counselors, and being persistent.

How long was your job search?

4 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$100,000 - \$120,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Consulting with NIH Career Counselors was probably the most important thing I did to make myself competitive for my position. Honest self-assessment of strengths and interests was also important because it reveals what you're really interested in. Volunteering to help coordinate career events like the NIH Career Symposium was also instructive.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

The MSL role is incredibly difficult to break into and is subject to the experience paradox, so be persistent. If you are on a short timeline, be open to accepting a stepping-stone position. Do not make the mistake of assuming that industry lacks the scientific rigor of academia. Use resources like myIDP at sciencecareers.org to help you complete an honest self-assessment of your strengths and interests.

David Mellert

Senior Scientific Writer
The Jackson Laboratory (JAX)
Dave.Mellert@jax.org

Panel: Writing & Communication

Where is your highest degree from? Stanford University (Ph.D.), Biology 2009

Other degrees: University of Michigan (B.S.)

What is your current role/responsibility?

My primary roles are to project manage, write, and edit grant materials and other scientific writing for JAX investigators. I also contribute to research communications, primarily through my involvement in the JAX podcast, and to broader institutional initiatives as needed.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Necessary skills: background knowledge of biomedical science (high level of expertise); writing and editing; project management; interpersonal communication; graphical data presentation.

I was surprised by how useful my project management training has been for grant writing.

How did you get your current position?

networking (spouse was offered faculty position at same research institution, putting me in a unique position to apply)

How long was your job search?

about six months, mostly looking for faculty positions or other independent research positions

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$60-80K

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I had great scientific writing mentorship during my science training. My undergraduate education at Michigan required a lot of writing, as I took many liberal arts classes along with my STEM classes. My project management training/certification (PMI-PMP) have been very useful.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Write as much as you can, on any topic. The best way to become a good writer is to write a lot. Create a portfolio of your best writing, drawing from the whole spectrum of intended audiences, from lay-oriented pieces to scientific publications. Network with scientific writers.

Stephanie Mok

Policy Analyst

Office of Management and Budget (OMB); Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA)

stephanie.i.mok@gmail.com

Panel: Science Policy & Advocacy

Where is your highest degree from? Cambridge University--PhD, Neuroscience 2015

Other degrees: Harvard University--A.B. in Neurobiology

What is your current role/responsibility?

Lead regulatory reviewer in the Executive Office of the President for certain HHS agencies: FDA (tobacco), CDC, NIH, AHRQ, and HRSA. Provide policy recommendations to White House and OMB senior leadership. Evaluate federal regulations for public and private impacts, economic costs and benefits, and align health and science policies with the administration's and other agencies' equities. Review and approve Federal collections of information prior to Agency implementation.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Cost-benefit analysis, Federal rulemaking processes, program evaluation, negotiation, technical and non-technical communications/presentations, microeconomic principles, networking & coordination, project management, scientific reading, writing skills

How did you get your current position?

Networking

How long was your job search?

3-4 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

~\$60k-\$75k

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Consulting experiences, scientific training, experience coordinating interagency activities

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

The policy teams in the White House greatly benefit from having individuals with scientific backgrounds. Anyone interested in utilizing their scientific training to promote health and science policy are a great asset to any of divisions within the Executive Office of the President and OMB.

Suman Mukherjee

Assistant professor
Bunker Hill Community College
smukherj@bhcc.mass.edu

Panel: Teaching Intensive Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? New Mexico State University, Molecular Biology 2010

Other degrees: Postdoctoral fellowship at NIH

What is your current role/responsibility?

Teach different Biology courses involving General Biology, Microbiology and Anatomy and Physiology. Attend departmental meeting and college forum meeting. Involve in Honors program. Also involve in student driven research in collaboration with Tufts University. Involve in college curriculum and policy.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Communication, patience, passion to teach diverse community of students, students of diverse country origin and ethnicity. Organization skill. Writing skill. Advance theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of Biology.

How did you get your current position?

Job-listing.

How long was your job search?

six months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

75,000/year

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Long experience in teaching field. I taught at Northern Virginia Community College, Howard University and Georgetown University in Washington D.C.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

You like to be a college professor. You have to have the patience to listen to student. Other than teaching one other job is to calm them down as most of students work during their community college study and they are nervous to submit assignments. In a set up like a four years college or University, student community is different, full time student are common there.

Swati Mukherjee

Scientist

Vaccine Business Unit

swati.mukherjee@takeda.com

Panel: Research & Development

Where is your highest degree from? New Mexico State University, Molecular Biology/Virology 2010

What is your current role/responsibility?

Design and oversee execution of projects as related to immunological processes

Directed development and validation of high-throughput assays

Manage a team of research associates for these projects

What skills make you successful in this job?

Management and people skills

Collaboration

Impromptu conversation in your field

How did you get your current position?

Networking, prior-conference interactions

How long was your job search?

2 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

90,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Collaborations and work on multiple viruses

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Work on collaborative process

Involve in basic industry management courses or manage students or fellows at some point in your career

Julia Oh

Assistant Professor
The Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine
julia.oh@jax.org

Panel: Non-traditional Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? Stanford University, Ph.D., Genetics

Other degrees: Harvard University, B.A.

What is your current role/responsibility?

As a PI, I wear many hats. The vast majority of my time is spent writing grants. I also write our human subjects protocols and our animal protocols. I am scientific editor for all our papers. I design experiments and make executive decisions on experiments and interpretation and making figures. I closely manage my staff scientists but am primarily a mentor to my postdocs and students. I make executive decisions on large expenses and manage the lab budget and personnel distributions. I am also the lab HR manager for job postings, interviews, and hiring decisions, and personnel problems. I also am the face of the lab so I spend a lot of time writing emails and working with our collaborators. I also work with the greater institution in terms of carving out space, equipment, and other institutional issues. I have some committee duties like the faculty scientific advisory committee and organizing our faculty retreat.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Time management for sure. Also thinking on the fly—I'm always having to switch from one project to the next or one meeting to the next. The whole people management thing still eludes me; I think that's one of the hardest parts of the job but I think having those skills would make it easier.

How did you get your current position?

I went the pretty traditional route of applying through job listings. Once interviewing, I tried to take advantage of my existing connections where I could.

How long was your job search?

6 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I wrote grants. Honestly, I put this as a must for anyone thinking about being a PI if you qualify. If you can, write an F32 and a K grant—R01s are basically the same and getting feedback from study section is just invaluable.

I also tried to keep abreast of major innovations in not just in my field but others. This helps establish cool collaborations and take the research in innovating directions.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

In 90% of cases, you have to have the papers as a postdoc to get you in the door. I think in the remaining 10% you can leverage your networks, but you have to have a pretty awesome network and people who will really fight for you.

It's a great job and at the same time it's a really tough job. It's hard times for new investigators!

Gabriel Parra

Principal Investigator
Laboratory of Hepatitis Virus, Division of Viral Products, CBER, FDA
gabriel.parra@fda.hhs.gov

Panel: Non-traditional Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? University of the Republic, Uruguay, Microbiology (Virology) 2007

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am leading the Gastrointestinal Viruses group at LHV, DVP, FDA. Besides regulatory work in viral vaccines, our group is developing new technologies to understand immunity to noroviruses.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Persistence, Persistence, Persistence, Curiosity, Communication, Organization, and Time management.

How did you get your current position?

I got my job after applying to over 20 jobs.

How long was your job search?

over 2 years

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Experience in peer-reviewing manuscripts, teaching, and mentoring.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Be persistent and try to have a unique scientific niche. Besides a solid research proposal you will also need to show leadership and mentoring skills.

Molly Perkins

Associate Director, Immunotherapy
bluebird bio
MollyRPerkins@gmail.com

Panel: Research & Development

Where is your highest degree from? University of Oxford, Clinical Medicine (Immunology) 2011

Other degrees: M.Sc. Watson School of Biological Sciences at CSHL, A.B. Harvard University

What is your current role/responsibility?

I lead a team of ~10 lab scientists at a 300-person biotech company. We are responsible for early stage R&D work to make CAR T cell therapies for cancer. In addition to CAR T cell research, I am also involved in developing assays to assess CAR T cells in patient blood samples from our clinical trials

What skills make you successful in this job?

Working with people, presentation skills, managing people. When I started, I was a full time bench scientist, so my lab skills were key.

How did you get your current position?

Job posting on the MassBio website, networking (LinkedIn friend-of-a-friend) to find an employee who submitted my application as an employee referral, using a different network connection to get advice on starting salaries to aid in negotiation after I was offered the job.

How long was your job search?

3-6 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$80k-\$90k coming out of PhD (Boston area)

Any other experiences that led to your success?

My lab skills and experience collaborating with others were the primary factors in getting my job. Having specific experience is key, so other colleagues did targeted short postdocs to move into our field.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Networking is easier than expected because of employee referral bonuses. It's key to have your resume submitted by an employee, so don't be afraid to reach out to people.

Todd Pihl

Scientific Project Director
CSRA Incorporated
todd.pihl@csra.com

Panel: Ten-Years Later

Where is your highest degree from? Johns Hopkins University, Biology 1990

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am a project manager for CSRA specializing in genomics data management and software development. My responsibilities include scientific input and oversight, staff and budget management, client relations and business development.

What skills make you successful in this job?

The skills needed to do this job include a strong set of communication and science skills, basic financial, personnel management and project management skills.

How did you get your current position?

I got this position through networking. I had a friend already working at CSRA who put my name in for an opening

How long was your job search?

About 3 months.

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Depending on experience, around \$100,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

The ability to communicate across disciplines has been a key factor in my career. While eventually a PMP certification was needed, that came after working in the field for a few years. Communication skills have definitely been the predominant driver.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

There is no magic combination of skills and credentials. Government contracting frequently has a number of job openings and you should focus on making a solid argument on why you can do a job rather than worry about if you are completely qualified. Communication skills and the ability to work as an effective team member are highly desirable traits.

Tiffany Powell-Wiley

Assistant Clinical Investigator
Division of Intramural Research, NHLBI, NIH
tiffany.powell@nih.gov

Panel: Options for Clinicians

Where is your highest degree from? Duke University School of Medicine, Medicine 2004

Other degrees: MPH - University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am currently an Assistant Clinical Investigator in the Division of Intramural Research at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health. I lead a research group made up of research fellows, clinical fellows, and staff (coordinator, statistician, nurses, etc.) in conducting epidemiologic and community-based participatory research studies. Our work focus on two main goals. Our first goal is to delineate mechanisms by which neighborhood environment influences the development of obesity, diabetes, and other markers of cardiometabolic risk. Our second goal is to identify methods for incorporating mobile health technology into interventions addressing behaviors associated with cardiometabolic health in a resource-limited neighborhood environment.

What skills make you successful in this job?

The management expertise required for leading my research group includes:

- Multi-disciplinary team development and management
- Clinical protocol design and implementation
- Project management, which includes time management, critical analyses, writing and public speaking
- Mentorship
- Interpersonal skills

The scientific expertise required for leading my research team includes:

- Health disparities
- Neighborhood environment measures in social epidemiology
- Community-based participatory research
- Behavioral intervention design incorporating mobile health technology

How did you get your current position?

I was investigating faculty positions in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and I found out about the opportunity to become an assistant clinical investigator in discussions with my research mentor, with whom I had worked with at NIH as a medical student. This highlighted for me the importance of staying in contact with research mentors throughout your career.

How long was your job search?

1 year

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

During my cardiology fellowship, I was able to have two years of dedicated research time. This time allowed me to develop my areas of interest in cardiovascular research and gain experience in leading research projects, including concept development, data analyses and interpretation, and manuscript development. I also gained experience in primary data collection and in mentoring students and medical residents. All of these experiences were the building blocks required for running a research lab at the NIH.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

My advice in developing a career as a physician-scientist is:

- Gain the dedicated research time in your training to develop your research niche.
- Maintain contact and collaboration with mentors.
- Develop and maintain your clinical skills – they can be invaluable in your research career and beyond.
- Remember that some of the best career opportunities develop when you least expect it.

Lindsey Pujanandez

Associate Editor
Science Translational Medicine
lpujanandez@aaas.org

Panel: Writing & Communication

Where is your highest degree from? University of Colorado, Immunology 2013

What is your current role/responsibility?

As an editor, I shepherd papers through peer review and publication from start to finish. This entails triaging all submissions to only send the top candidates for external review, finding reviewers, dealing with difficult decisions, providing guidance to authors for revisions, dealing with appeals, professional editing of papers nearing acceptance, and editing of the galley proofs prior to publication. I also spend time attending conferences and visiting labs to build relationships and solicit papers.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Ability to understand a variety of topics quickly, meet deadlines, time management, written communication are all a must. It was a little surprising as to how much of a customer service aspect there is for this position.

How did you get your current position?

Before this, I was a staff scientist at The Journal of Immunology, which absolutely contributed to my securing the job at Science Translational Medicine.

How long was your job search?

I was not actually looking; the opportunity presented itself

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$60,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I had a demonstrated interest in the field. I created an internship in the Communication Department at HHMI prior to graduate school, which I think helped me get a job at The Journal of Immunology.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

It's really fun but can be frustrating at times. People fight rejections at every turn. In general, editors work pretty hard and the pay may not be commensurate with the effort.

Kevin Ramkissoon

Science Policy Analyst
NIH Office of Science Policy [Contractor - CALIBRE]
kevin.ramkissoon@nih.gov

Panel: Science Policy & Advocacy

Where is your highest degree from? University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Microbiology/Immunology 2010

Other degrees: Physics & Mathematics B.S.

What is your current role/responsibility?

Kevin Ramkissoon, Ph.D. is a Health Science Policy Analyst with the National Institutes of Health Office of Science Policy within the Office of the Director. He currently functions as the biosecurity policy team lead in the Division of Biosafety, Biosecurity, and Emerging Biotechnology Policy where he is involved in the evaluation of emerging biotechnologies and the development, implementation, and evaluation of Federal policies aimed at advancing biomedical research and enhancing biosafety and biosecurity.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Critical thinking and effective communication skills, both written and verbal, as well as the ability to multitask different projects and deadlines are important in the day-to-day of the policy world.

How did you get your current position?

Networking and attendance/participation in science policy meetings and discussion groups on diverse policy issues helped target my job search and led to a policy detail (internship) at the NIH that was a precursor to my current position.

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Participation in various career interest groups, including the NIH Science Policy Discussion Group, was critical to informing my decisions and building a diverse professional network. Career/skill building exercises and other opportunities outside the lab to enhance my communication and project management skills have been also helpful.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Actively seek out opportunities beyond the lab that will help you develop your communication skills, exposure you to discussions on policy issues that may be of relevance to potential employers, and network within your field of interest.

Anna Sadusky

Director, Regulatory Science and Policy
American Association for Cancer Research
anna.sadusky@gmail.com

Panel: Science Policy & Advocacy

Where is your highest degree from? Northwestern University, Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Cell Biology 2005

What is your current role/responsibility?

As Director of Regulatory Science and Policy for the AACR, I am expected to work with the FDA to implement a range of exciting and informative regulatory science and policy programs and activities related to the AACR's mission.

As AACR's primary liaison to the AACR's Regulatory Science and Policy Subcommittee, I am expected to provide support and key information to the Subcommittee, as well as suggest innovative ideas to ensure that the AACR maintains its position as an authoritative voice on cancer research regulatory science and policy-related issues.

As the AACR's primary staff member on regulatory science and policy-related issues, I am also expected to prepare and provide summaries, scholarly papers, position papers, issue briefs, policy statements, and other related documents, as well as organize sessions that include a regulatory science and policy focus at the AACR Annual Meeting, and other AACR-sponsored meetings and events throughout the year.

I am also responsible for multiple direct reports, entry-level and senior science policy analysts.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Time management, critical analysis, writing, public speaking, networking.

How did you get your current position?

I originally applied to the AACR for a job listed on Indeed.com. During the hiring process, HR felt that I was over-qualified and suggested that I apply to a more senior position. I was hired as the Associate Director of Science Policy and due to the departure of another colleague, I was then promoted into my current position.

How long was your job search?

3 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$60,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

My extensive training from graduate school and multiple post-docs as well as my research background in industry as a scientist and senior scientist were valuable for joining a research association. I also have a certificate in biomedical regulatory affairs which was vital for transitioning into regulatory science.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

It is never too late to transition into the policy space. Try to get involved in the policy office for a scientific or patient-focused disease organization, such as participating in a Hill Day or other advocacy type event. Attend congressional briefings and public meetings from government agencies such as FDA. NETWORK! Email people and ask for advice to break into this path. You never know if there might be a job that may open up. It's always easier to pass along a name/resume to HR!

Anca Segall

Professor of Biology
San Diego State University
asegall@mail.sdsu.edu

Panel: Teaching Intensive Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? University of Utah, Genetics / Biology 1987

Other degrees: B.S., University of Maryland College Park

What is your current role/responsibility?

~35-40% teaching (undergraduates and graduate students)

~45-50% research (overseeing research program and graduate students training in my lab, writing grants, writing papers, manage collaborations, etc)

10% administrative, including being on graduate students committees, steering Viral Information Institute, search committees, contributing to writing institutional grant proposals (equipment grants, training grants)

What skills make you successful in this job?

innovation, patience, flexibility, writing skills, oral communication skills, negotiation skills

Surprise: management and budgeting skills - should have predicted, wasn't entirely prepared

How did you get your current position?

job listing

How long was your job search?

2 years

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

very dependent on institution type and appointment type (9 vs 10 vs 12 month)

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I had very broad experience: 2 year postdoc in industry (du Pont), 5 year postdoc at NIH, teaching assistant during grad school, ~1.5 years clinical micro lab experience as a job during college and first year of grad school.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

During your job search, be broad in your search. Investigate the institutions and particularly the faculty and the graduate programs in the departments to which you are applying. Think about questions ahead of time and feel free to ask them, but don't be condescending and be careful not to sound entirely ignorant about the institution you're visiting.

Erik Shapiro

Associate Professor and Associate Chair for Research
Michigan State University, Department of Radiology
erik.shapiro@rad.msu.edu

Panel: Long Term Success as a Faculty Member

Where is your highest degree from? University of Pennsylvania, Chemistry 2001

What is your current role/responsibility?

In my faculty role, my role is to run my laboratory, which focuses on the use of nanotechnology and biomedical imaging to address biomedical questions. My role as Associate Chair for my department, has two components. The first is to manage the general research efforts of my department, including the research infrastructure, such as imaging and data analysis resources. The second component is to advise on more general issues of my department, such as budgets, personnel and equipment purchases.

What skills make you successful in this job?

For my faculty position, perhaps the most important skill is mental multi-tasking. In the lab, there are typically 10-12 concurrent projects ongoing amongst undergrads, graduate students, postdocs and staff, and collaborators. Making sure each of these projects is well managed and supported is critical to the success of the project, as well as the training of the scientists involved. In my role as Associate Chair, the most important skill is diplomacy. Building personal relationships is more important in science than I initially thought. As a scientist, I assumed administrative life would be more quantitative in nature, but for sure, interpersonal skills - listening, negotiating, responding to emails in a timely manner - these skills are crucial.

How did you get your current position?

I saw a job announcement. I made an informal inquiry whether someone with my skills and experience would fit with what they were looking for. From there, it was a fairly standard recruitment experience. I will say, all of my faculty jobs (of which this is my third stint) were initiated by an informal email request to the head of the search committee. This is always well received and a way to make yourself known to the committee.

How long was your job search?

9 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

In a large, research intensive institution: Junior prof - \$100k. Assoc prof - \$150k

Any other experiences that led to your success?

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Faculty positions are more difficult to get now than when I started. I heard somewhere that there are ~100 newly minted PhD's for every open faculty spot. In order to get a faculty position, one must need to do three things today: 1) In general, you need to have a grant in hand. 2) You need to publish papers in very well respected journals. 3) You need to fill the specific gap the position is advertising for. For those interested in advancing through the administrative ladder, it can be very rewarding. I recommend taking on increased administrative responsibilities in your own institution - managing an important piece of equipment, for example, or running a seminar series. See if you like it. If so, look around job sites. Associate Chair, Chair and Dean positions are advertised just like faculty positions.

Madeline Sofia

Assistant Producer
National Public Radio
msofia@npr.org

Panel: Science Education & Outreach

Where is your highest degree from? University of Rochester Medical Center, Microbiology and Immunology 2016

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am an assistant producer. I help shape radio stories, as well as do some audio editing. I also coordinate a group of young scientists across the country who are interested in science communication. We serve to connect them, as well as help them develop communication skills.

What skills make you successful in this job?

My job requires story telling development experience as well as audio editing skills. As for the community building, it requires networking skills as well as social media strategy development. I also dabble in multimedia.

How did you get your current position?

I got my job primarily through networking. After an internship, I was hired.

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

60,000 +

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I taught science communication as a graduate student, as well as directed and produced a science story-telling podcast.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Start networking now! Try to get experience in as many science communication related endeavors as you can. And of course-- join our science communication community!

David Soto-Pantoja

Assistant Professor
Wake Forest School of Medicine
dsotopan@wakehealth.edu

Panel: Transitioning from Postdoc to Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? Wake Forest School of Medicine, Molecular Genetics 2009

Other degrees: University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez Campus

What is your current role/responsibility?

Principal Investigator

What skills make you successful in this job?

Not surprised but can not stress how important good communication and management skills are

How did you get your current position?

During my job search I only was call and obtained two jobs by web search my current position and four other offers were found by networking.

How long was your job search?

6-9 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

The NIH course "Scientist Teaching Science" was definitively an asset during my job search.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Start a conversation early about developing an independent project in the lab. Start early and create opportunities to connect with individuals that are doing what you want to do...don't go at it alone.

Cynthia St. Hilaire

Assistant Professor of Medicine
University Of Pittsburgh School Of Medicine
sthilaire@pitt.edu

Panel: Transitioning from postdoc to faculty

Where is your highest degree from? Boston University School of Medicine, Biochemistry 2008

Other degrees: University of Vermont - BS in Molecular Genetics

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am the principal investigator of my laboratory which is in the Division of Cardiology and part of the Vascular Medicine Institute at the University of Pittsburgh. My lab studies the mechanisms that drive vascular and valvular calcification pathobiology. As I am at a medical school I have very little teaching - my contract is 80% research and 20% service, admin, teaching, etc. My lab currently consists of a lab manager, 2 postdocs, 1 part-time medical student, 1 part-time undergraduate, and this summer I will hire a full-time research tech. My lab has 3 main projects and a few small collaborations and I oversee, troubleshoot, and help to plan how these projects progress. I started my lab in July 2015 and am surprised at how little time that I am spending at the bench since the start. Most of the day is at my desk, mapping out paper ideas, planning experiments with my staff, or writing (I submitted my first R01 in Feb).

What skills make you successful in this job?

Besides the obvious need for science & troubleshooting skills; Writing: I cannot stress this enough. If you cannot communicate clearly you won't get the job or the grant or have your papers accepted. Even just the ability to craft a succinct email to your Chair is extremely important. People and Leadership skills: I am surprised at the amount of effort it takes to actually manage people and deal with inter-personal problems between lab members or groups – and I have a great group working for me. I have found skills & techniques that I learned at the leadership training courses I took while a post doc at NIH to be extremely helpful. Saying Yes: people always told me to not take on too many administrative roles, or volunteer for committee, etc., but did not listen to this advice as I strongly feel that this is exactly what you need to do at your new Institute. Your colleagues are the ones on the tenure committee and if they know that you are a go-getter who always completes tasks on time (that part is key!) that can only help you. Also, they then think of you first for things like editorial board members, grant review study sections, etc., which are all roles that you will need to acquire for full professor.

How did you get your current position?

Networking. My friend, another postdoc at NIH, was on the job market a year before me and accepted his offer from my current department. I told him that if he ever got a chance, to please to share my CV. His first day he had lunch with his neighbor, told him about me, that neighbor sent my CV to the VMI director; I had an interview scheduled by the end of the week and a verbal offer after the first interview.

How long was your job search?

In 2012 and 2013, if a top school in city my husband and I wanted to move to was hiring I would apply, but I knew it was a long shot (was before I had a K22). My hard-core search began after I received a K award. In 2014 I sent out 21 applications, had 5

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

I received starting salary offers that spanned between \$86K and \$125K

Any other experiences that led to your success?

I published a paper in a high impact journal and received a K grant. However, those are not requirements, as others in my department has one, or the other, or neither, and made it. So much of the interview is personality, if people don't think you'll make a good colleague, they won't want to hire you.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

You don't wait and see if a job in academia works out for you, you go after it. I have been planning and striving for this position my whole scientific adult life, literally since 2004 when I started grad school. I had a goal and I did everything possible to get there, and it worked.

Catherine Swanwick

Chief Executive Officer
Catilli Games
catherine@catilli.com

Panel: Science Education & Outreach

Where is your highest degree from? University of Virginia, Neuroscience 2005

Other degrees: Duke University, B.S. Biology

What is your current role/responsibility?

I lead a small company in creating fun STEM games for ages 4+. We focus primarily on tabletop games, but we also develop digital games. I teach high school during the day but I work on company projects and administrative issues at nights and on weekends. I manage a small team of game designers, artists, and programmers (~5 people).

What skills make you successful in this job?

Time management, people skills, public speaking, critical thinking. Resilience is the most important skill - many ups and downs.

How did you get your current position?

I co-founded the company with a fellow teacher/friend.

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$45,000 - varies widely, at first unpaid

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Learning lab management skills from my postdoctoral fellowship, volunteer teaching experiences with schools, museums, science fairs

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

You must be passionate about your mission and have a thick skin - you will have many failures.

Ameer Taha

Assistant Professor
University of California Davis
ataha@ucdavis.edu

Panel: Transitioning from Postdoc to Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? University of Toronto, Pharmacology 2009

Other degrees:

What is your current role/responsibility?

Research, mentoring and teaching.

What skills make you successful in this job?

I used to study brain lipid kinetics during my post-doc. When I came to UC Davis, the department wanted me to teach food enzymology class. It turns out that my expertise in brain lipid kinetics were surprisingly transferrable to enzymes used in food processing, brewing, etc.

How did you get your current position?

Job-listing

How long was your job search?

2 to 3 years

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$70K

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Unique expertise in the field and publications

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Publish, try to give guest lectures when possible to build on teaching experience and write grants with your supervisor.

Rayna Truelove

Program Officer
Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation
rayna.truelove@gmail.com

Panel: Science Administration

Where is your highest degree from? Brown University (NIH GPP), Neuroscience 2013

Other degrees: Trinity University, B.S. in Neuroscience

What is your current role/responsibility?

I serve as the Principal investigator of two large grants for five national programs that address the problem of underrepresentation in the faculty of academia, particularly the humanities and social sciences. I direct programs that provide community for a large alumni network and oversee the awarding of grants and fellowships to graduate students and junior faculty. I manage two staff members and work with a broad network of administrators, faculty, and program officers at other foundations to expand diversity in the professoriate. I create and evaluate surveys that assess program effectiveness and impact, manage social media and marketing tools, plan conferences and retreats for faculty and students, and conduct application review and selection panel recruitment.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Project and People Management; Communication; Organization; Critical Thinking/Analysis; Budgeting

Project/People Management: I must leverage the most salient skills and qualities of my staff to ensure projects are completed and all have taken ownership of the broader initiative.

Communication: I speak with a wide audience—in a given day, I may convince a Dean to release a faculty member for leave, coach a graduate student applying for grant funds, and pitch ideas to Executive staff for my program. I must also write thorough and persuasive grant reports quarterly and annually. **Organization:** I have many to-do lists and strategic vision plans for the week, month, year so that I can manage multiple tasks and competing priorities each day. **Critical Thinking/Analysis:** Being outside of these disciplines requires a quick integration of key information. Budgeting is pretty straightforward...

How did you get your current position?

I cast my net very wide. I found the job through an online search, and didn't know anyone connected with the organization. But my network was key once I advanced to the reference-checking stage.

How long was your job search?

Three months.

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

Any other experiences that led to your success?

My previous role at OITE (Director of Student Services, Undergraduate Scholarship Program) showed that I was able to be a successful administrator and work well with a variety of trainees, staff, and PIs. My diverse writing experiences helped and included: freelance medical writing, writing reviews of neuroscience and psychology books and documentaries for lay audiences, and volunteering as a Primary Editor on the NIH Fellows Editorial Board as a grad student.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

This is general advice for non-bench, alternative career-seekers: Find ways to define yourself outside of science and network with people in careers you admire. Trying out and learning about areas/careers outside of your own helps you build an identity that is based on a more holistic version of yourself that includes a variety of strengths and skills. Be gentle to yourself and realize that sometimes it may be very uncomfortable to no longer be THE expert in the room—the key is to be a curious and humble student of new areas. Then you'll start to find ways to adapt/transfer your skills to solve broader problems. Practice self-care and document your career journey in some way so you can see how far you've come!

Peko Tsuji

Assistant Professor
Towson University
ptsuji@towson.edu

Panel: Teaching Intensive Faculty

Where is your highest degree from? Medical University of South Carolina, Biomedical Sciences 2007

Other degrees: Johns Hopkins University (MPH), College of Charleston (MS Marine Biology), JWG Universitaet Frankfurt (MS Zoology)

What is your current role/responsibility?

Assistant Professor in Department of Biological Sciences: teaching graduate and undergraduate classes, Graduate Program Director (Biology MS program), research on Selenium and colon cancer

What skills make you successful in this job?

Patience (dealing with students)

Perseverance

Thick skin (you will get rejections - grant applications, manuscripts, etc)

Humor - you need a great sense of humor to survive academia

Networking - find a cohort of peers (it's easier to bear the bad parts when you can complain to those who go through the same process), find mentors (you will need a few)

How did you get your current position?

Job listing through Higher Ed

How long was your job search?

~6 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$65,000 - \$75,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Dannon Leadership Training

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Comprehensive Universities are both research- and teaching-intensive. It's a lot of fun, but try to focus on what gets you tenure AND try to find the balance that keeps your sanity. It's possible! :)

Betsey Wagener

Research Administrator
University of Arizona Cancer Center
betsey@email.arizona.edu

Panel: Science Administration

Where is your highest degree from? University of Arizona, Cancer Biology 2004

Other degrees: Wittenberg University (BA)

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am the research administrator for the skin cancer research team and for the T32 Postdoctoral Training in Cancer Health Disparities grant at the UA Cancer Center. I am responsible for both grant submissions and on-going monitoring of awarded grants. I make sure that the PIs and investigators can do their laboratory work while taking care of any/all administrative issues for preparing and managing grants. For grant submissions, I draft supplemental documents for grant applications (I leave the scientific writing to the investigators), prepare budgets, develop submission timelines and checklists, maintain regular communications/updates with co-investigators, and coordinate grant submissions with the university research office. For awarded grants, I prepare annual reports to the funding agency, monitor budgets and expenditures, manage any subawards, prepare timelines and milestones for completing the research goals of the proposal, help with editing and submission of manuscripts, and lead PI meetings.

What skills make you successful in this job?

1. Interpersonal communication skills are probably the most important. I am the intermediary between co-investigators, postdoctoral fellows, research staff, and administrative staff to the PIs. I have to be approachable while also setting firm goals.
2. Project Management is the crux of my day-to-day activities. I have to make sure things happen on-time and that nothing gets lost in the shuffle across our 20+ person team.
3. I was surprised about how much the investigators rely on me for all aspects budgeting and accounting so I have to constantly be on top of that -- reminding them of remaining balances plus the costs of planned experiments.

How did you get your current position?

A combination of networking and casually reviewing job listings.

How long was your job search?

2 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

~\$55-60K

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Management training courses have been particularly helpful. I am also a certified Project Manager and I did learn additional tips for managing projects by going through that certification process above and beyond those I learned during my PhD/postdoc.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Take advantage of leadership/management training opportunities and do not shy away from learning grant budgeting and accounting strategies. Being involved in the grants submission process is a must -- write your own grants, prepare the budget, and either submit them yourself or at least learn what steps are involved in the submission process. Be very familiar with funding agency application instructions and requirements.

Julie Wallace

Health Science Policy Analyst
NIH/NIDDK/OSPPA
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Panel: Ten-Years Later

Where is your highest degree from? Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Biology 2005

What is your current role/responsibility?

I am a Health Science Policy Analyst in NIDDK's Office of Scientific Program and Policy Analysis. We are the legislative division of the Institute, mediating interactions between NIDDK and the Congress, including written (letters, budget justification, reporting) and oral communications (hearing testimony, meetings, briefings). We provide support for the Institute Director, including interactions with patient advocacy organizations and presentations for a wide range of audiences. Day-to-day activities include writing, developing presentations, reading scientific material, and leading projects. I work independently and as part of a team for specific projects, but do not oversee other employees.

What skills make you successful in this job?

The ability to write for lay audiences (Congress, patient advocacy organizations, the public) is critical. This includes not only being able to distill complex scientific concepts into succinct and easy to understand language, but also telling a compelling, persuasive, and scientifically accurate story. Knowing how to craft an email request that gets a response is a skill I didn't appreciate previously! Project management is also key—being able to meet deadlines when working with different types of Institute staff. Diplomacy and savvy (interpersonal skills) are also necessary to work with the Institute director and senior staff, Congressional staff, other stakeholders, and scientists.

How did you get your current position?

I was exploring different career paths away from the bench with informational interviews and networking. At an Association for Women in Science networking event, I spoke with a director of science policy at one of the NIH Institutes. She suggested I meet with my Institute's (NIDDK) science policy office to learn more. My timing was fortuitous; I met with the director who had just posted a vacancy announcement on USA Jobs. I applied and interviewed with other candidates, and was ultimately selected for the position.

Any other experiences that led to your success?

In my time as a postdoc at NIDDK, in addition to my research, I volunteered at the Koshland Science Museum (experience in science policy and oral communications) and as a member of the Fellows Committee at NIH (experience in committee work and policy issues), wrote for the Association for Women in Science magazine and the NIH Catalyst (experience in writing), and taught with NIH's Adventures in Science (experience in outreach and oral communications).

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

I encourage you to get experience writing and working with an editor. Learning how to write for lay audiences (versus scientific manuscripts) takes practice, as does learning how to accept edits! It is difficult to get a foot in the door in policy without experience, so you should try to get any volunteer experience working in policy (professional societies, patient advocacy organizations, policy offices) you can.

Jason Warfel

Method Validation and Technical Transfer Lead
Bristol Myers Squibb
jason.warfel@bms.com

Panel: Technology Transfer & Intellectual Property

Where is your highest degree from? Georgetown University / NIH Graduate Partnership, Microbiology & Immunology 2010

What is your current role/responsibility?

I lead teams of scientists to complete validation and technical transfer projects for analytical quality control methods for commercial and late-stage clinical biological drugs.

What skills make you successful in this job?

I write protocols, reports, and responses to health authorities routinely so clear technical writing is a very important skill. Additionally, communication skills and the ability to clearly explain the science to people with varying levels of technical expertise is critical. It helps to have a broad technical background since you'll be working on different types of methods (e.g. immunoassays, bioassays, separations methods).

How did you get your current position?

I found out about this position from someone in my personal network who works at Bristol Myers Squibb.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Consider a fellowship at the Food and Drug Administration. I did a postdoc at the FDA and was able to gain experience in biopharma from the regulatory side of the table which was very beneficial during my job search. Additionally, it helps to study the regulations that govern method validation and technical transfer. During most of my interviews I was asked whether or not I was familiar with the ICH guidelines for method validation.

James Whittle

Patent Attorney
WilmerHale LLP
james.whittle@wilmerhale.com

Panel: Technology Transfer & Intellectual Property

Where is your highest degree from? M.I.T., Structural Biology 2010

Other degrees: J.D., G.W. Law School, 2016

What is your current role/responsibility?

As a Patent Attorney at WilmerHale LLP, I work to protect intellectual-property rights of universities, small companies, and branded (bio)pharmaceutical manufacturers. I work from an office in Washington, but our clients come from across the country. My practice includes applying for domestic and foreign patents, defending issued patents from legal challenges to their validity, and enforcing patent rights against competitor companies, as well as providing advice to companies and investors about intellectual property.

On a typical day, half my time is spent on “patent prosecution”—reading correspondence from the patent office, comparing older patents and journal articles against our clients’ applications, and drafting responses to the patent office. The other half of the time, I spend on “patent litigation”—developing legal and scientific arguments to support enforcement of patent rights in court. This involves e-mails and internal meetings with attorneys in our firm’s IP and litigation departments and teleconferences with outside scientific experts, our clients’ in-house legal counsel, and even the inventors themselves.

What skills make you successful in this job?

More than anything else, a patent attorney has to enjoy reading and writing. Most of my day is spent on a keyboard. Attention to detail is also required. It helps to be a perfectionist. We are expected to act professionally, be polite, and communicate effectively, but the atmosphere is not as formal as one might think—no suits except for client meetings or court appearances.

How did you get your current position?

I found my job through law school. While I was still a post-doc at NIH, I applied to GW law school and concurrently took PLI’s three-day Patent Bar Review course—ask for the government discount—and passed the patent bar. I received a full scholarship through GW’s early-admission program. In law school, I had paid summer jobs at my current firm and another in the area. The first job came through a professor who knew a partner at the firm. The second was from on-campus recruiting. Firms come to the law school to recruit, so law students who have a Ph.D. rarely have difficulty finding a job.

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$180,000

Any other experiences that led to your success?

As a postdoc, I filed invention disclosures that resulted in patent applications bearing my name. I was a member of FELCOM, mentored summer students, and gave a talk at a conference. If you find you enjoy the process of writing up your research for publication, that’s a good sign you might like a career as a patent attorney.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

There are several paths into the profession. Going start to law school is not the most common, though it has worked for me. But a Ph.D. alone can be enough for an entry-level patent-law position, if you can demonstrate an interest in the field. It could be useful to take NIH-FAES courses on technology transfer, to seek out informational interviews with your institute’s technology transfer office, and to take the patent bar exam.

Bradford Wilson

Adjunct Professor
Howard University
bradford.wilson@howard.edu

Panel: Long Term Success as a Faculty Member

Where is your highest degree from? Howard University, Genetics and Human Genetics 2011

What is your current role/responsibility?

Provide instruction on basic concepts in human genetics and biochemical and molecular genetics to graduate and medical students.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Verbal and written communication, computer skills; Microsoft Office software applications, teaching skills; ability to teach to students of all learning modalities, technical skills; audio/video equipment for lecture presentation

How did you get your current position?

Networking with colleagues

How long was your job search?

3 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$66K

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Cast your nets broadly, be open to all opportunities, select the opportunity within a nurturing and supportive environment.
Bradford

Julie Wu

Primary Patent Examiner
USPTO
julie.wu@uspto.gov

Panel: Technology Transfer & Intellectual Property

Where is your highest degree from? Yale University, Pharmacology Ph.D.

Other degrees: SUNY at Stony Brook

What is your current role/responsibility?

Review patent applications in the area of antibody engineering, immunotherapy and CRISPR gene editing to determine patent eligibility. By reading published scientific papers and patent application, decide if the application is novel and enable. Also have meetings with attorneys regarding the patent application.

What skills make you successful in this job?

Strong scientific background in diverse areas, writing and reading. Being able to understand a scientific topic quickly.

How did you get your current position?

Networking. A former PRAT fellow informed the PRAT program that the USPTO was hiring.

How long was your job search?

This was the first job I applied to.

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$70k-high \$80's. The salary jumps fairly quickly.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Take IP courses that are offered from FAES and take advantage of Details at the NIH Tech transfer offices.

Corinne Zeller-Knuth

Sr. Medical Information Scientist
Fresenius Medical Care
zellerknuth@gmail.com

Panel: Regulatory Affairs & Science Management

Where is your highest degree from? UNC Chapel Hill, Biochemistry 2007

Other degrees: Florida Atlantic University, BS Chemistry 2002

What is your current role/responsibility?

The Medical Information and Communication Office provides scientific information and professional education to healthcare providers and internal partners. I split my time between answering medical information requests, developing educational materials, doing scientific review of promotional materials, and conducting research and writing for internal colleagues.

What skills make you successful in this job?

The biggest requirement is flexibility. I never know what my day is going to look like so I always have tasks waiting in the wings just in case it's a slow day. Of course, writing and critical thinking are essential to the basic job functions.

How did you get your current position?

I had a recurring search set up and when I saw the post for my job I did a LinkedIn search for any possible connections. It turned out that I had overlapped with my boss at the NIEHS, although we didn't know each other. I used that connection to reach out to her. I started a month later.

How long was your job search?

2 months

What is the average starting salary for your career path?

\$70-100K

Any other experiences that led to your success?

Right after grad school I spent two years teaching at a small liberal arts college. This experience taught me how to explain anything at any level, which has proved essential to my current job.

What advice would you give to someone who was interested in your career path?

Write, write, write. Present to as many different audiences as possible.