Success of the PGA’s Mentoring Program

Considering the growing interest in non-academic career tracks, the PGA has undertaken the ‘PGA Mentorship Program’, an initiative to help trainees make career choices. The Program completed its second year in May 2018. Given the notable success of the program, the PGA has decided to make it a permanent resource by establishing the PGA Mentorship Committee, which is currently co-chaired by post-doctoral fellows Bojana Jovanovic and Shibin Mathew. The underlying premise for the Committee is to identify and recruit remarkable mentors with industry and/or academic backgrounds, who can help trainees successfully navigate their science/technology careers and job search process.

During the 2017-2018 academic year the Committee selected seven Ph.D. scientists, who generously volunteered to serve as mentors for the program: all had strong academic backgrounds, and extensive experience in pharma and biotech industries. Their own career paths/research areas included Immunology (Novartis, Obsidian Therapeutics), Precision Medicine (Novartis), Medical Writing (Pri-Med), Life Science Business Development (Eurofins Lancaster Labs), Medical Science Liaison (Arbor Pharmaceuticals), Research Lead/Vice President (Cedilla Therapeutics) and Technology development (Bio-Rad, Foundation Medicine).

Each mentor was matched with 3-to-5 mentees, based on the mentor’s expertise and the mentees’ career interests. The mentoring groups met 4-5 times during the year, to discuss the mentor’s experiences from current and past job settings, and to share tips on preparing effective CVs and cover letters, strategies for productive networking. Mentors laid out the do’s and don’ts of creating professional profiles on social sites such as LinkedIn. As determined from regular surveys, the mentees benefited immensely from this experience, and the network exposure through their mentors has helped some of the mentees get job interviews.

Continued on page 4.
To provide a comfortable and welcoming environment for all employees, DFCI has 4 Employee Resources Groups (ERG). Want to learn more? Visit [https://dfcionline.org/departments/diversity/affinitygroups/](https://dfcionline.org/departments/diversity/affinitygroups/) or email the contacts given below.

The LGBT & Friends ERG fosters an inclusive and supportive environment at Dana-Farber for people across the spectrums of sexuality and gender, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ). The group achieves this by:

· Increasing internal awareness and visibility of the LGBTQ community at DFCI
· Promoting DFCI as an ally of LGBTQ staff as well as patients and their families
· Supporting LGBTQ organizations and efforts within the greater Boston community.
· Creating non-work opportunities for LGBTQ and allied employees to have fun and build camaraderie.

Monthly meetings are open to DFCI employees and are held on the first Thursday of every month, from 12pm - 1pm; a dial-in option is available or contact the Group at dfciask_LGBT@dfci.harvard.edu to be added to the mailing list.

The newest of the ERGs, Mosaic strives to acknowledge, celebrate, and contribute to the cultural and racial diversity of the Dana-Farber community, and to support an inclusive and welcoming environment. Mosaic does this through the following key functionalities and priorities:

· Promoting cultural education and engagement by celebrating and fostering cultural and racial diversity throughout the Institute
· Providing current faculty and staff with professional development opportunities
· Supporting diversity and inclusion efforts within the Institute and the greater Boston community.

The Mosaic ERG serves and includes past, current, and prospective faculty and staff members, students, as well as patients, their families, and friends.

Monthly meetings are open to all DFCI employees and are held on the 4th Monday of every month, from 12:00 - 1:00 pm, in the Longwood Center, room 4054 (4th floor). Email dfci_mosaic@dfci.harvard.edu to join their mailing list.

The Young Professionals ERG seeks to support the mission of DFCI by promoting interactions among the Institute’s emerging leaders through social and professional networking events, community building activities, and career education opportunities. All members of the DFCI community are welcome. Learn more about these events by emailing DFCI_YoungProfessionals@dfci.harvard.edu, or contact Co-Chairs Renee Siegel and Maya Espada to find out about the next monthly leadership meeting.

Continued on page 3.
Get Ready for the 2018 PGA Retreat!

The 14th annual DFCI Postdoc and Graduate Student Retreat will be held on Oct 4, 2018 from 10:30am to 6pm. The venue for this year’s event is the Linda K. Paresky Conference Center at Simmons college. The keynote speaker is Dr. Greg Verdine, the Erving Professor of Chemistry at Harvard University and Harvard Medical School. Dr. Verdine is a pioneer in the field of chemical biology. His lab has developed a new class of therapeutics termed “stapled peptides”, with the ability to target molecules previously considered to be “undruggable”. In earlier work, the Verdine lab also elucidated the molecular mechanism of epigenetic DNA methylation. Dr. Verdine is a highly successful serial entrepreneur, having founded or co-founded a number of biotechnology companies. He currently serves as the President, CEO, and CSO of Fog Pharmaceuticals and LifeMine Therapeutics.

Our Retreat this year will feature oral and poster presentations by DFCI post-docs and graduate students, and a talk by the Belfer Office for Dana-Farber Innovations (BODFI) on how to commercialize technology developed at Dana-Farber. The Retreat will continue with a career panel discussion, in which panelists from diverse fields will share their professional experiences. The day will culminate in the Kotzen Conference Room with the poster presentation session combined with the cocktail/award reception. Don’t forget to submit your abstract by Sept. 7th for the poster and oral presentation sessions. A $1,000 prize will be awarded to the best poster and oral presentations. At the reception, Dr. Hahn will announce these prizes, along with the faculty member voted as the 7th Annual Mentor-of-the-Year, and will recognize the recipients of this year’s PGA Travel Awards. Stay for the reception to be eligible to win some great raffle prizes!

Get the latest Retreat updates at: https://dfcionline.org/departments/pgsao/pga/retreat/.

Keynote speaker Dr. Verdine

ERGs, continued from page 2.

The Working Parents ERG offers resources and support for working parents, to enable you to balance your personal and professional lives. You don’t need to be a parent to join! The ERG meets each month to network and talk about parenting through open-ended discussions, and to share resources, discuss articles, and listen to guest speakers or participate in facilitated discussions. To learn more, email dfci_workparents@dfci.harvard.edu.

Editorial Team: Sondra Downey-Kopyscinski and Alison Taylor. Articles written by Bojana Jovanovic, Shibin Matthew and Srikanth Talluri.

Special thanks to Jennifer Molina and Sonal Jhaveri, as well as members of the PGA for comments. We would especially like to thank Lorraine Barnes of the Human Resources Dept. who funds the PGA Post. If you are interested in contributing to the PGA Post, or have comments and suggestions, email dfci_pgapost@dfci.harvard.edu.
Co-chairs Bojana and Shibin would like to thank the DFCI leadership, especially Barrett Rollins and Michelle Cox, for providing funds to support various stages of the program. Special thanks also to Jennifer Molina from the PGSAO office for administrative help. We are also very grateful to mentors and mentees from the first year of the Program for supporting this year’s activities and helping to make effort a continued success. Because of this amazing, wide-ranging support, the committee is excited to announce that the third year of the Program will commence in January 2019. Please look for the announcements and application guidelines that will be sent out in Fall 2018.

PGSAO/PGA Calendar

**Manuscript Writing**
Instructor: Sonal Jhaveri, Ph.D., Science Program Director, PGSAO
Dates: All Tuesdays – September 11, 18, 25, October 2 (October 9, 10 in case of cancellation)
Time: 2:30-4:00PM
Location: Conference rooms vary from week to week - location information will be sent to all registrants prior to the first class.

**September Brain Lunch Seminar**
Presenter: Israel Canadas Castillo, Ph.D., Medical Oncology, Barbie Lab
Talk Title: “Tumor innate immunity primed by specific interferon-stimulated endogenous retroviruses”
Date: Friday, September 14, 2018
Time: 12:00 - 1:00 PM
*Location: Smith 304
Please note new location!

**What Search Committees Look for in An Academic Job Candidate**
Panelists: Scott Armstrong, M.D., Ph.D., Chairman, Department of Pediatric Oncology, Margaret Shipp, M.D., Division Chief, Division of Hematologic Neoplasia, Medical Oncology Department and Kai Wucherpfennig, M.D., Ph.D., Chair, Department of Cancer Immunology & Virology
Date: Friday, September 21, 2018
Time: 2:00 - 3:30 PM
Location: Yawkey 306

**What Industry Recruiters Look for in Job Candidates**
Presenter: Tom Hamilton
Date: Monday, October 1, 2018
Time: 2:00 - 3:30 PM
Location: Yawkey 306

Curing Cancer Comics is brought to you by a former DFCI postdoc!