

The Career Network SPYglass

Welcome to The Career Network SPYglass. In this issue, we are excited to share news of the events that we have organized so far in 2014 and provide a preview of upcoming events. Our Career in Focus section brings you FAQs about Academic Administration and an interview with Dr. Arnaldo Diaz who is the Assistant Dean for Research Training Programs and Adjunct Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Pennsylvania.

The last few months also brought many changes in the CNSPY leadership; three of our executive board members have accepted job offers in medical education, pharma, and consulting. We thank the outgoing members for their contributions to CNSPY and wish them the very best. We also welcome aboard the newest members of the leadership team. In particular, Deborah Ayeni, 3rd year graduate student in Experimental Pathology has taken over as editor-in-chief of The Career Network Spyglass.

Shalini Nag, President
(Design & Content Developer, The Career Network Spyglass)

In this issue

CNSPY in focus

Science Policy workshop
with Dr. Wendy Hall
CDPG program
CNSPY in the news
Other CNSPY activities
Upcoming events

Career in focus

Academic Administration
FAQs
Interview with Dr. Arnaldo
Diaz

CNSPY in focus

CNSPY was established to provide graduate students and postdocs with a platform to explore diverse career options and build an extensive professional network of peers, career mentors, and faculty advisors. Our events allow our members to meet and learn from career mentors while building a community of like-minded peers. We aim to establish new avenues for collaboration, business ventures, and job opportunities while supporting an entrepreneurial environment among science trainees at Yale.

Science Policy “A Taste of Policy Making: Exploration of an Alternative Career” (Seminar and Workshop)

CNSPY Organizer: Angela Di Fulvio

This workshop, led by Dr. Wendy Hall, was the highlight of this quarter. Dr. Hall, is a senior official at the US Department of Homeland Security who has been working for the US Federal Government for over 10 years. The event consisted of an interactive seminar held on 14th of February and a workshop on the 15th. During the seminar, Dr. Hall outlined the basics of policy careers and the duties of policy officers, especially regarding ethical issues (e.g. side political activities, accepting external compensations, etc). She also explained the structure of the US government (legislative, executive and judicial branches) with emphasis on departments where science PhD can find job opportunities. The session was very interactive and at least 20% of the time was devoted to questions from the audience. There were about 20 attendees, including graduate students (80%) and postdocs (20%) from the biology and physics departments and the school of public health. On the second day of the workshop, Dr. Hall led a table-top policy exercise. She distributed some read-ahead roles for participants on the 14th so that they could play their roles in the simulated

policy debate the next day. The event was held in a room with a big round table, resembling an actual setup at government agencies. The purpose of the simulated debate was to give the US President some guidelines about the regulations surrounding the publication of government-funded research projects in scientific journals especially if the outcome of the research could be potentially threatening for public health. The simulation was based on a past project with Dr. Hall's team and the 15 participants got a taste of working in policy. Dr. Hall believes that having PhDs within the Government will help bring an evidence-based approach to US policymaking. Therefore, she is personally committed to recruiting PhDs. A survey of the event indicated that the participants found the event extremely valuable and there was an overall positive feedback including suggestions about organizing such an event again!

Contributed by: Angela Di Fulvio

Career Development Peer Groups Program (CDPG)

CNSPY organizers: Yan Gao, Lu Jin, Tenaya Vallery, Tiffany Tsang, Shalini Nag

The CDPG program, co-organized by CNSPY, WISAY and GCS, facilitates the discovery of interests, skills

CNSPY in the news

At the 'What can you be with a PhD' symposium held at NYU Langone medical center in November 2013, CNSPY career mentor Dana Perkins spoke very highly of CNSPY as a great career development organization!!

and strengths of participants through a structured group discussion with a goal of identifying careers with the best fit. In its second phase, participants attended series of small group discussions organized by CNSPY in order to explore a variety of career paths. This includes a discussion on teaching-focused careers in academia led by Dr. Lilian Hsu from Mount Holyoke College, a conversation on working in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries with Dr. Jim King from Boehringer Ingelheim and Dr. Ken Blount from BioRelix. Dr. Jeanne Garbarino from Rockefeller University led a science outreach seminar on an efficient approach to utilizing social media to expand one's professional profile. In addition, we had our first successful video discussion on non-profit research with Dr. Imran Babar from Rare Genomics Institute and an engaging and informative discussion session on government research with Dr. Mike Stulberg from the USDA. We have highlighted a few of the discussions below. Going forward, Tiffany Tsang will be the CNSPY lead for this program.

Working in the Pharmaceutical Industry (Small group discussion)

CNSPY organizers: Yan Gao & Thihan Padukkavidana

CNSPY started the year with a small group discussion led by one of our most supportive mentors, Dr. Jim King, a principal scientist at Boehringer Ingelheim. He spoke extensively to eleven selected attendees from various departments on careers in the pharmaceutical industry. The discussions spanned a variety of topics ranging from identifying positions to apply to, how to structure your CV, and navigating through various career avenues. He also gave specific insights into the culture and nuances of working in such an environment. CNSPY received excellent feedback from participants and Dr. King encouraged us to continue our activities. This event was part of the CDPG program and was also open to all CNSPY members.

Contributed by: Thihan Padukkavidana

Working in Academia, teaching-focused (Small group discussion)

CNSPY Organizer: Tenaya Vallery

Dr. Lilian Hsu, a professor of biochemistry at Mount

Holyoke College, met with nine graduate students and post-docs to discuss a career in academia with a strong teaching-focus. Dr. Hsu discussed her career path and professional experiences, offering an insight for those seeking the same profession. She also answered questions from the attendees on the hiring process, how to be a competitive candidate, and how to structure research for teaching undergraduate students. This event was part of the CDPG program and was also open to all CNSPY members.

Contributed by: Tenaya Vallery

Working in Biotechnology (Small group discussion)

CNSPY Organizer: Tenaya Vallery

Dr. Ken Blount, co-founder of BioRelix, met with eight graduate students and post-docs to discuss a career in biotechnology. In addition to sharing his career path, Dr. Blount also answered questions on the differences between working at pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, transitioning from academia to industry, features of a competitive applicant, and the projection for research in industry. The event was part of the CDPG program and was open to all CNSPY members.

Contributed by: Tenaya Vallery

Non-profit research (Small group video discussion)

CNSPY organizers: Lu Jin

Dr. Imran Babar is the vice-president for scientific affairs at the Rare Genomics institute. He also works at a healthcare focused venture capital firm. During this video discussion, Dr. Babar shared his career path using a power point presentation. He spoke extensively to the eleven attendees on non-profit research and expatiated on equity research in venture capital. This event was part of the CDPG program and was also open to all CNSPY members.

CNSPY Mixer at Kelly's Gastropub

Our quarterly mixer held in March was a great opportunity for CNSPY members to reconnect and socialize with riveting conversations about shared career interests and explorations. Many thanks to Kelly's for providing us with the space. Our next mixer will take place on May 29th.

Get involved! Join the CNSPY Leadership Team!

CNSPY has many exciting projects in the pipeline, and you can get actively involved in project(s) that you are passionate about and/or align with your own career objectives. You will gain exposure and experience while developing your skills and enhancing your CV. Numerous positions that require diverse skills and interests, and have varying levels of responsibility are available on the CNSPY leadership team. Application forms are posted on our [website](#). Please email [us](#) to learn about more opportunities and apply.

Keep abreast of CNSPY events!

There are always new developments, opportunities, events and programs at CNSPY. Stay tuned by signing-up on our [website](#), or joining our [Linked-in](#) and [Facebook](#) groups.

Career in focus: Academic Administration

In this issue, former CNSPY board member and recent graduate, Yan Gao researched and provided answers to frequently asked questions on careers in Academic Administration. In addition to this, CNSPY member and 3rd year graduate student in Genetics, Hariyat Andargachew interviewed Dr. Arnaldo Diaz, Assistant Dean for Research Training Programs and Adjunct Professor of Pharmacology, at the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) to provide first-hand insights into careers in Academic Administration.

Career FAQs

What is academic administration?

Academic administration positions include the maintenance and supervision of an institution or research group and are often separate from academic positions, although some positions may have joint responsibilities.

Why switch?

Working in administration is an attractive option for Ph.D.s who want to remain associated with institutions of higher education and work with academics but do not want faculty positions. Since administrative structure varies greatly among institutions, an 'administrator' may interact with diverse personnel from secretaries to deans. Numerous administrative positions are only open to Ph.D.s. For instance, for jobs in career services, some institutions require graduate training because they want someone who can relate to graduate students and provide adequate counseling and advice.

What are the major types of administrative jobs?

According to the Chronicle of Higher Education, academic administrative jobs can be divided into four major categories: Academic affairs – admissions, supervision of hiring, promotion, tenure, and evaluation; Business/Administrative affairs - fundraising, grants and contract administration, institutional compliance with federal and state regulations; Deans - approving faculty hiring, setting academic policies, overseeing the budget, fundraising, and other administration; Student affairs - oversight of student life and activities, such as religious or cultural groups, disability services, career centers and public service centers.

Where would you work?

Colleges, universities and institutes of technology that provide tertiary education are situated throughout the United States and across the world. Such institutions vary greatly in size and can be either teaching- or research- oriented.

How to make the transition?

One piece of advice: use your university as a testing and training ground. Campuses offer many opportunities for part time work, which can be used to test out one's likes and dislikes as well as to get valuable experience to put on a résumé.

Interview with Dr. Arnaldo Diaz

Assistant Dean for Research Training Programs and Adjunct Professor of Pharmacology, UPenn

How did you get interested in academic administration?

I became interested in academic administration as an undergraduate student at the University of Puerto Rico where I was involved in the Minority Access to Research Careers program, which gave me an opportunity to interact with the program directors. That led me to develop an interest in understanding how the program was put together and the process of grant applications to sponsor the students in the program. I moved to Texas to pursue my PhD and I used that opportunity to get involved in student associations and to develop programs to recruit minority students to do research. Later on, I moved to

UPenn for my post-doc in cancer pharmacology. During my post-doc, I volunteered to be a part of the planning committee for a symposium that I had attended as an undergrad. This helped me learn how to coordinate programs and meetings, but it also was a great opportunity for me to meet and network with higher-level program coordinators from various institutions. Also as a post-doc, I was in charge of coordinating the scientific seminar series for the summer programs which also provided the opportunity to mentor the summer students.

Can you share with us your career path?

I started as a post doc in 2008 with Dr. Ian Blair, who was my research mentor. However, I also had career mentors within and outside of UPenn whom I consulted before making the move away from academia towards the end of my postdoc. I started working as a summer research program coordinator in 2010 and in 2011, I accepted the offer to be the associate director, a newly created position. In 2013, I was promoted to assistant dean for research training programs.

What does academic administration entail?

Strategic planning skills and the ability to successfully navigate a large organization are extremely important. I would also place a very strong emphasis on interpersonal and communication skills. I interact with and mentor students and trainees at all levels including undergraduate, post baccalaureate and graduate students as well as post docs. I try to stay accessible to these trainees as much as possible, which means being flexible with my day-to-day schedule. It's also important to keep up to date with relevant information and develop partnerships with other schools and programs.

Is there an opportunity for career growth?

Yes there is. You have to be alert and be ready to take opportunities for growth. For instance, during my post-doc, I learned about a week-long leadership training course sponsored by SACNAS. I attended the course and it turned out to be a great learning and networking opportunity. So I will advise that you constantly train and prepare yourself.

What does your day look like typically?

Every day is different. For instance, today, I'm working with the cohort for the 2014 summer internship program. What that means is that I'm making sure that the students are matched to the right research mentor. At the same time, I'm also reviewing applications for the post-bacc program, which also starts in the summer. I'm currently planning a second visit for PhD students in the biomedical sciences that were offered an admission and I am also working on a grant proposal. I'd summarize my typical day like this: strategic planning, writing and mentoring. Depending

on the season, my job description may also vary. For example, in the spring, I am a part of the admissions committee for PhD and MD/PhD programs while in the fall I travel to recruit students at major conferences including ABRCMS, SACNAS, and the Leadership Alliance. Penn visits about 15 schools, including schools in Puerto Rico, to recruit students into the graduate program so I will say there is a fair amount of traveling but it's seasonal.

What do you enjoy the most and what is the least favorite aspect of your job?

I enjoy the interaction I get to have with students. Being an advocate for my students and being able to help and guide them is very rewarding. Having travelled that path myself, I feel I am able to offer the students the benefit of my knowledge and experience. My commitment is to underrepresented minorities in the sciences and I follow up with each student's progress. Knowing that they are progressing and making advances brings me satisfaction. One of the challenges in being a young professional is to project authority. I'm still learning and seek advice as I grow into my position.

How did you get over the stigma of switching careers?

In graduate school I wanted to go to industry but my advisor wanted me to go into academia. Ultimately, he was not very helpful as a career mentor. As I mentioned earlier, I went to UPenn as a postdoc and my advisor there was supportive. I sought out a career mentor separate from my research mentor to give myself the benefit of multiple perspectives. When you're looking for a research mentor (for instance as a graduate student looking for post-doctoral positions) always look out for where the past students are currently. This will give you an idea of how familiar the advisor is with alternative career paths.

Advise to graduate students and post-docs interested in academic administration?

As a graduate student I wanted to go into Pharma but I interacted with people from different fields and always kept my eyes open. Networking is key. Don't limit yourself to one track but be open-minded to different career paths. However, irrespective of what you want to do, find a mentor in that field and have them guide you.

CNSPY Upcoming Events

Small group discussion with Dr. Michel Ledizet on April 28th at 7pm (Venue TBA)

Small group discussion with Shannyn Smith on Careers in Medical Communications (Date and Venue TBA)

CNSPY mixer at Kelly's Gastropub on May 29th at 6.30pm

Thank you for reading!

[CNSPY Leadership Team](#)

Co-founders- Thihan Padukkavidana, Rebecca Brown

Executive Board - Shalini Nag(President), Jacqueline Heiss, Yixiao Zou, Tenaya Vallery, Deborah Ayeni

Project Managers - Tiffany Tsang, Anna Chase, Sofia Espinoza, Kent Riley, Angela Di Fulvio, Daniel Mori, Danielle Krasner

Career Liason: Michael Cha

Advisors- Yan Gao, Lu Jin