

Welcome to the quarterly CNSPY Newsletter. Here, we report the most recent networking events sponsored by CNSPY and provide a preview of upcoming events. New to this issue, we share the results of the CNSPY member survey and highlight where we will focus our efforts going forward based on these data; however, we encourage you to speak up if something else interests you! We are also excited about this issue's "Career in Focus" section, which spotlights Industry R&D with Dr. Jared Davis, the Associate Director of RNA Biochemistry at Alexion Pharmaceuticals. Dr. Davis previously joined us for a Small Group Discussion, which received excellent reviews! However, many were unable to attend due to the limited space available. Thus, we've brought him back for an exclusive interview in which he answers many questions about Industry R&D for those who missed his Small Group Discussion!

- Victoria Schulman, SPYglass Editor-in-Chief and CNSPY Blogger

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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 peers and colleagues. We aim to establish new avenues for collaboration, business ventures, and job opportunities while supporting an entrepreneurial environment among science trainees at Yale.

New Team Members

CNSPY welcomed a few new members to its leadership recently, and we want to take a moment to recognize them!

We welcome **Arian Abdulla** to the Events Team! He quickly accepted his new role and has already organized future Small Group Discussions for CNSPY members. Thanks for joining the team and jumping right in!

We also welcome **Nayi Wang** as the new Director of our Networking in Nature series. As Yixiao Zou, the program's founder, is preparing to graduate, we are excited to see the new places that Nayi will take the program and its participants! Thanks for joining the team!

Finally, **Seongseop Kim**, a veteran CNSPY board member, has stepped up to run the website and has done a fabulous job thus far! We thank him for adding this task to his many other duties on the Business Team.

We are always looking for dedicated individuals who are interested in exploring new career avenues and sharing that passion with our members. If you are one of those people, we want to hear from you! Apply to join the team!

JOIN THE TEAM! Apply [here](#) or [email us](#)

CNSPY Outreach

The CNSPY was invited to participate in the "Girls in STEM Expo" sponsored by Gateway Community College in New Haven, CT on Friday, March 27th, 2015.



Executive board members, Prabitha Natarajan and Victoria Schulman, and CNSPY Strategy Consultant, Shalini Nag, promoted careers in STEM fields and spoke about biomedical research to female students in area high schools. As part of the students' scavenger hunt, CNSPY representatives answered a number of PhD-related questions about graduate school and the process of earning higher degrees. The event was a great success, and we thank the Girls Expo for inviting us to participate!



Small Group Discussions

Our most popular event continues as we have invited a number of professionals in a wide range of career avenues to join us and speak about their jobs, companies, and the paths they took to get there. These round-table discussions allow students and postdocs to ask questions in an informal setting to learn about different careers.

Dr. Jared Davis, Associate Director of RNA Biochemistry, Alexion Pharmaceuticals

On Wednesday, March 18th, 2015, Dr. Jared Davis, a former postdoc at Yale, joined us to discuss his transition from academia to industry and how to apply to an industry position. Jared spoke to a packed room about how to sell yourself during the application process from the cover letter to the job talk and expounded upon the hierarchy within a typical Pharma company, especially at Alexion. CNSPY members also benefited from Jared's insight into RNA therapeutics as a whole and the upcoming company growth at Alexion in New Haven, CT. He also offered a few pieces of advice during the event: (1) When an HR representative calls you out of the blue, always ask to reschedule or call back. This will give you time to prepare for the conversation and remind yourself about the job posting and the company. (2) Ask what type of audience will be at your job talk. This will allow you to tailor your job talk to match the audience's background and experience level. (3) Lastly, make sure to have an excellent answer for why you want to switch from academia to industry. In closing, we would like to thank Dr. Jared Davis for coming and James Havey and Tenaya Vallery for organizing.



Dr. Thomas Magaldi, Administrator, Office of Career Services, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center

On Thursday, April 2nd, 2015, Dr. Thomas Magaldi, a former Executive Board Member of CNSPY, returned to Yale to speak to students and postdocs about his role as the Administrator of Career Services at Sloan-Kettering in NYC. He gave advice on how to prepare for this type of position, what skills are needed, and how to pursue and develop these skills during traditional academic training. He highlighted that his current work is very similar to the work he did for CNSPY - establishing career development

programs to complement lab bench training, inviting guest speakers, and educating trainees about different career avenues. As such, he recommended that interested Yale science trainees get involved with CNSPY to develop experience in this field. Finally, he discussed how to find similar positions and how to advance in this type of career. He encouraged students/postdocs to connect with him on LinkedIn, so look him up! We thank him for joining us, and thank you to Claudia Bertuccio for organizing the event.

Dr. Stephanie Airoidi, STEM Program Coordinator, Connecticut Science Center

On Tuesday, April 14th, 2015, Dr. Stephanie Airoidi shared how she successfully transitioned from academia to non-profit work. She began by describing her own story: After graduating from Yale in Genetics in 2009, Dr. Airoidi moved to North Carolina where she pursued volunteering opportunities at the local Science Center. At the same time, she tutored children in the sciences part-time and ran a few summer camp programs. Volunteering at the Science Center in NC gave her hands-on experience in this type of work and allowed her to network with others in the field. These efforts eventually led to a job offer. After a couple of years, she returned to Connecticut and was able to secure a position at the Connecticut Science Center where she was hired as a STEM Program Coordinator.

Dr. Airoidi also provided insight about her daily routine and responsibilities. She teaches children from kindergarten to 9th grade, trains elementary and middle school teachers on how to effectively teach science, and develops science curricula. She described her work as exciting and a lot more dynamic than teaching a standard class. She enjoys the constant stimulations that every day brings, as there is no 'typical' day. "Working in the non-profit sector offers a very good work-life balance," Dr. Airoidi said, "and you still have very stimulating conversations about science with your coworkers, but in a broader way than you would if you worked in an academic lab."

As she sits on hiring committees at the Connecticut Science Center, she was able to provide insight into what makes for an attractive candidate. Potential applicants should be able to demonstrate previous experiences in science outreach and volunteer work with kids. They should also have energy, motivation, and enthusiasm. Additionally, references from your lab (PI) do not help as much as they do for academic positions. The types of references they want are from those who know you well and can speak to your ability to work reliably. Although a career in science outreach does not necessarily require a PhD, it is certainly possible to highlight skills gained from a PhD that would be desired for this kind of job. We thank Dr. Airoidi for sharing her thoughts with us, and thank you to Sophie Dutheil for organizing the event!



Small Group Discussions (Continued...)

Drs. Thalyana Smith-Vikos & Barbara Cheifet, Editors, BioMed Central, Springer Publishing Company

On Thursday, April 30th, 2015, Drs. Smith-Vikos and Cheifet joined members of the CNSPY, the *Yale Journal of Biology & Medicine* (YJBM), and the Biomedical Careers Committee (BCC) to share how they successfully transitioned from academia - as graduate students - to editorial positions at BioMed Central. Both expressed that their prior experience on the editorial board of YJBM played a significant role in their successes; however, this background is not a requirement. Dr. Smith-Vikos emphasized that additional scientific writing helped her leverage her position. She critically reviewed and reported the latest research on genetics and biotechnology for GEN online magazine - a paid experience that was looked upon very favorably. Find her work [here](#). After the small group discussions, Drs. Smith-Vikos and Cheifet gave a brief seminar-style presentation about the company to a broader audience and offered further advice to those interested in a similar career path. We thank Nisheet Nautiyal of the CNSPY, Priya Date of the BCC, and Tomo Sasaki, Nicholas Vincent, and Danielle Gerhard of the YJBM for coordinating this joint event for everyone!



Join us for our next Small Group Discussion featuring a talk on Science Policy with former AAAS fellow, Yaihara Fortis-Santiago, on June 4th!



Networking in Nature

Now that the weather is improving, our Networking in Nature series will resume with new leadership. Originally brought to us by CNSPY Executive Board Members, Yixiao Zou and Prabitha Natarajan, Networking in Nature allows trainees and career mentors to mingle while hiking the trails of Connecticut! As Yixiao prepares to graduate, he has passed the reigns on to Nayi Wang, who plans to take the program and its participants to new places!

Sign up as a CNSPY member [here](#) to receive emails and registration details about upcoming Networking in Nature events and Small Group Discussions!



Panel Discussions

CNSPY hosted a Panel Discussion this Spring. Three scientists from the same company shared their different experiences of how they got their positions in a similar working environment.

***Dr. Jo Viney, Vice President, Immunology Research
Dr. Timothy Zheng, Director of Immunology
Dr. Agnes Gardet, Research Scientist, Immunology
All from Research & Development at Biogen Idec.***

On Wednesday, March 11th, 2015, Drs. Viney, Zheng, and Gardet came to speak to Yale trainees about the Research and Development (R&D) sector of Industry. They answered numerous questions, offering advice on how to make the transition from academia to industry and how to prepare a competitive application.

As the hiring manager, Dr. Viney highlighted that postdoctoral experience was desired; thus, few students are hired right after graduation. This is largely because the best candidates have at least two high-profile, high-impact papers in two different (but potentially related) fields. Demonstrating success regardless of the project/subject matter makes you a highly competitive candidate, as research projects in industry can change frequently.

Drs. Zheng and Gardet both noted that industry is a great option for those who love benchwork and research but do not want to run their own labs. Many of the same skills needed in academia are desired in R&D, and unlike transitions to other non-academic jobs, your research and publication record still matter and are weighed heavily.

Dr. Zheng spoke about the opportunities for growth within R&D as well. While he initially moved to Biogen to continue research without the responsibilities of being a PI (i.e. grant writing and securing funding), he has since taken on a more managerial role in which he now directs a team of Research Scientists. He equates his current position to that of a PI, as he oversees numerous projects, but he is still free of other responsibilities that most PIs stress about on a regular basis.

We thank Drs. Viney, Zheng, and Gardet for taking time out of their busy schedules to travel from Boston and share their experiences with us. Lastly, thank you to Prabitha Natarajan for organizing the event!



CNSPY Events



CNSPY Mixers

As one of our more casual and easy-going events, the main objective of the mixers is to bring together old and new members as well as prospective CNSPY members to share details of their career explorations with one another in a informal atmosphere.

Past mixers have included free appetizers and chances to win free drinks in our ice breaker games. CNSPY hosts mixers quarterly, and our next mixer is set for June. Look for upcoming details in the CNSPY emails!



SPYcast

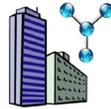
NEW! CNSPY is beginning a new and exciting initiative! SPYcast, the official podcast of CNSPY, will feature exclusive interviews with numerous career mentors from a variety of backgrounds. SPYcast gives CNSPY members the opportunity to learn from career mentors remotely, and with SPYcasts, you can listen in at any time that's convenient for you! We have already interviewed and recorded our first SPYcast with a career mentor in Science Communication. As soon as the editing is complete, you can access the podcast on our website. Send your requests for future SPYcast interviews from certain fields or specific individuals to Executive Board member, [Prabitha Natarajan](#).



CNSPY Blog

Last fall, CNSPY started a weekly blog series to offer thoughts and advice on how to improve your networking and interpersonal skills. Every Wednesday, CNSPY Blogger, Victoria Schulman, highlights many small things that could make a big difference. To get direct access to this content, subscribe to the [CNSPY blog](#).

Update: This spring we opened up the blog to guest writers. Since then CNSPY President, Tenaya Vallery, and CNSPY member, Dianna Bartel, have received rave reviews on their work! Due to this program's success, we will continue to accept proposals for blog ideas from guest bloggers. If you have an idea or a strategy for successful networking, interviewing, or communicating in general, consider guest blogging for CNSPY! If you'd like to write for the CNSPY blog, contact [Victoria Schulman](#).



Site Visits

CNSPY-sponsored trips to local companies in the industry sector provide Yale trainees with a preview of the facilities and advantages of a career in industry.

Jackson Laboratory, Farmington, CT

The Jackson Laboratory is a non-profit organization that focuses on mammalian genetics (mouse models) to advance human health care. In addition to research, they provide services and resources to other institutions and research groups. Lastly, they also have outreach programs working to educate students of all ages through internships, courses, and other programming. Jackson Laboratory has three locations: Sacramento, CA, Bar Harbor, ME, and Farmington, CT. Learn more about the company on their website, [Jackson Laboratory](#).

On Thursday, April 30th, 16 CNSPY members visited the Jackson Laboratory (JAX) in Farmington, CT, which is part of the UConn Health Center. There, members heard about the research and career opportunities at this new campus. The event began with presentations from JAX faculty, who showcased their research in the human microbiome, immunology, epigenetics, cancer, and computational biology. One exciting example given during the talks was a collaboration between the UConn Health Center and JAX to provide personalized medicine to a child battling cancer. JAX scientists implanted pieces of the patient's tumor sample into mice with a humanized immune system and tested which drugs worked the best and in what combination for optimized efficacy. JAX hopes to build a database of this genetic information so they can quickly provide optimal treatments for patients.

A reception followed the talks and panel discussion, allowing CNSPY members to interact with JAX postdocs and faculty to gain more insight into what it's like to work at a non-profit research center. Many of them highlighted the 401K plans, paid maternity leave, and Professional Development Courses available to all JAX employees. Others emphasized that, although they work for a company, they still have a lot of research freedom similar to academia. Finally, they mentioned that JAX currently has two open faculty positions, and one of their recent hires was a former postdoc at Yale from the Flavell lab!

CNSPY is incredibly thankful to both JAX for hosting and welcoming CNSPY members and to CNSPY board members Tenaya Vallery, James Havey, and Prabitha Natarajan for organizing the trip.

There are always new developments, opportunities, events, and programs hosted by CNSPY. Stay tuned by signing-up on our [website](#), joining our [LinkedIn](#) group, or following us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter @cnspy](#)

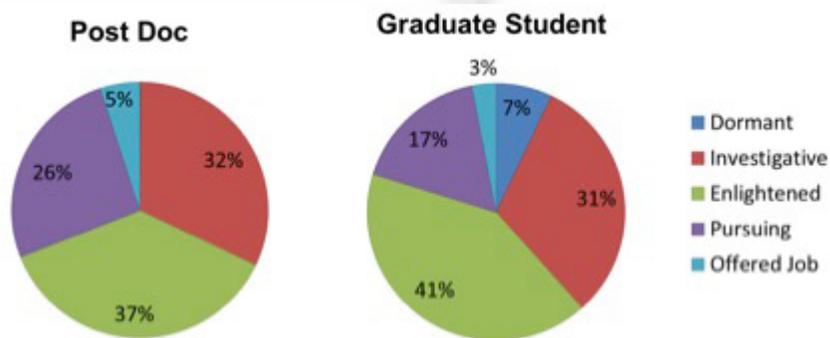
CNSPY Survey Results

Each year, the CNSPY polls its members to assess our efforts to serve and meet membership needs. This year, we had a great response, and we wanted to share the results with you! Our goals in the survey were to 1) create a typical CNSPY member profile to understand our members' top career interests, the primary reason for joining CNSPY, and the average career development stage of our members, and 2) get feedback on current CNSPY events and communication efforts in order to improve our ability to meet our members' needs and career exploration interests. Below, Daniel Mori, Seongseop Kim, and Stefan Elrington of the Business Team have summarized the survey data to highlight where we will focus our future efforts. If you have any other concerns or specific interests not addressed below, please let us know!

Typical CNSPY Member Profile:

CNSPY members are mostly in the Biological and Biomedical Sciences program. Most of our graduate student members have passed their qualifying exams (67%, 3rd year or higher), whereas 70% of our postdoc members are within the first few years of their program. The top reason for joining CNSPY was to “*identify and explore career options,*” followed by “*I am interested in career development events*” and “*I want to build a career network outside of Yale.*”

The average career development stage of a CNSPY member is “enlightened,” meaning they have a good idea which career they want and are looking for information about specific career options. The top five career interests are 1) research in industry, 2) business of science, 3) principal investigator (PI) in academia, 4) clinical research administration, and 5) science policy. The top career choice for graduate students was the business of science, and for postdocs, the top career choice was research in industry.



Feedback on CNSPY Events and Communication Efforts:

The majority of our members find our communication efforts (emails, newsletter, and blog) to be helpful, effective, and insightful. Therefore, we will continue these efforts to keep our membership informed about upcoming events and provide career advice. CNSPY events had an overwhelmingly positive feedback. Most events had a 100% satisfaction rate, with the exception of CNSPY Mixers, having a 70% satisfaction rate. The majority of our events are perceived to be most useful for career exploration and network building at Yale.

Overall Survey Conclusions:

In conclusion, we found that our membership is highly aware of alternative career paths, and most have a specific career(s) in mind that they want to explore further. CNSPY events are specifically designed to allow our members to have personal interactions and networking opportunities with our career mentors, thereby allowing members to fulfill their desire for further career exploration in a specific field of interest. We were also able to identify several opportunities for growth and improvement; the top four are presented below. We look forward to continuing to serve the career exploration, career development, and networking needs of our membership.

Directions for CNSPY Growth:

- 1) Increase efforts to reach out to the Physical Sciences and Allied Health communities, as over 90% of our current membership is in the Biological Sciences.
- 2) Concentrate on events that target the specific career interests of our membership by increasing events related to “research in industry,” “business of science,” “PI in academia,” “clinical research management,” and “science policy.”
- 3) Consider strengthening the “network-building” aspect of our events, and work on bringing more events that focus on career development skills.
- 4) Improve the usefulness of CNSPY Mixers because, although designed to be more casual, members would prefer to the mixers to be more helpful and beneficial for their career exploration.

Do not hesitate to [contact us](#) if a specific interest or concern was not addressed in these survey conclusions!

Career in focus: Industry R&D

This issue focuses on careers in Research & Development (R&D) in Industry. For this, we bring back Dr. Jared Davis, the Associate Director of RNA Biochemistry at Alexion Pharmaceuticals in Cheshire, CT. Dr. Davis previously joined us for a Small Group Discussion that received rave reviews and boasted one of the largest waitlists the CNPSY has seen yet! Due to the high demand for Dr. Davis' insight, we've highlighted his career path here for those who were unable to attend his discussion. Below you'll find some general information on careers in R&D, followed by an interview with Dr. Davis, who studied RNA tertiary structure and folding in graduate school and received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin.



FAQs

What is Industry R&D?

R&D involves performing research-based experiments to identify and develop new therapeutics and/or protocols and instruments for health care and scientific discovery. The work is similar to that of academic research, but the main difference lies in the goal. Whereas academia often seeks to identify novel facts about biology and science, R&D seeks to identify technological advances for commercial use based on these scientific discoveries.

Why consider Industry R&D?

If you love research, but aren't fond of grant writing, long periods of troubleshooting, low salaries, or the academic career track, Industry R&D could be a good career option. A career in R&D is particularly well suited for those who are proud of their research accolades but know they want to leave academia because R&D weighs your research quality very heavily, and your publication record is a large factor in the hiring process. Although personality fit may be enough to secure a job, the best candidates for R&D positions are those who have at least two high-impact papers on different topics both published in well respected journals. This is desired because R&D projects are often "high-risk/high-reward," and the projects change frequently; thus, a strong track record in a variety of areas is key. This shows that you can adapt and refocus your skills quickly to meet the needs of the ever-changing interests of the company. Ironically though, it may be difficult to publish your work in R&D positions due to proprietary issues; note this for future career prospects.

Another reason to consider a position in Industry R&D is the compensation. If you love research, but don't want to be a PI, the prospects for a salary increase are extremely minimal. However, R&D is a great, higher-paying alternative. Most Research 1 Scientists (entry-level) have starting salary offers between \$80,000-120,000/year to do the job of a typical postdoc - who averages about \$40,000/year in academia (Reference: Nature Jobs). Thus, if you love research but the postdoc salary isn't/wouldn't make ends meet for your family, a career in Industry R&D may be for you.

Finally, Industry R&D is a great choice for those who do not want the responsibilities of being a PI in academia, i.e. grant writing, teaching classes, mentoring students, and serving on thesis committees. R&D allows employees to either remain as career benchtop researchers or, after 3-5 years, researchers can move into managerial positions similar to a PI, but without the less desired tasks listed above. In R&D, group leaders run a lab and oversee a number of projects that other researchers are working on, but they are not responsible for securing funding, teaching, or mentoring students.

However, Industry also has its downsides. Although R&D gives die-hard researchers their dream job with better pay and benefits without the downsides of being a PI, there is limited freedom. In Industry, particularly in Pharma, you are hired to work on a specific project. There is little freedom to explore a hunch or follow up on a happenstance finding as in academia, and regardless if you've been working on a project for years, if the company decides to move in a new direction, you must drop that project and move on. This is less true in Biotech, but it is certainly something to consider.

What kinds of skills are needed to be successful in Industry R&D?

Similar to academia, you need to excel at benchtop research to succeed in R&D; thus, creativity, technical skills, and critical thinking are key. Additionally, communicating your data efficiently and quickly to various audiences (researchers, clients, investors, etc.) is also necessary. Finally, personal skills, team skills, and leadership skills are also important.

Opportunities at Yale:

- 1) [Internships](#) - Many departments, including BBS and MB&B, offer valuable R&D experiences in [interesting fields!](#)
- 2) [Biomedical Career Fair](#) - Learn about Industry options in the area and network with representatives at the reception or by serving as a [host!](#) Similarly, attend the [Nature Jobs Expo](#) in nearby Boston to learn more.
- 3) Develop leadership and team skills by joining the board of a campus organization: [CNPSY](#), [ANY](#), [WISAY](#), etc.
- 4) Lastly, consider taking courses in [management](#) and [science communication](#) to hone these needed skills.

How did you get interested in industry work?

I took my training one step at a time. I never really had a grand vision for where I wanted to end up. I chose a degree in biochemistry without knowing what I was getting myself into, and I never really planned on getting a PhD. I chose biochemistry because I liked chemistry and I liked biology, and I thought biochemistry sounded like a mix of the two. As I progressed in my undergraduate degree, I looked around at the options and figured that going to graduate school made the most sense. I went to graduate school without thinking I would do a postdoc, but my graduate research didn't translate well to industry and I needed a postdoc to continue on the path to an academic career anyways. Since both of these paths required postdoctoral research experience, I applied for positions and went on to do a postdoc at Yale University in the Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry Department where I studied ribozyme reaction mechanisms and ribosome associated RNAses.

I didn't make a decision until the end of my postdoc. Near the end of my postdoc, I applied to both academic and industry positions, and I was lucky enough to get offers in both areas. It was a tough decision for me and ultimately came down to the current funding landscape in academia and the job offers I received. I was not confident that I would be able to get the funding I needed to be successful at the universities that offered me positions. The job offer I received in industry matched my strengths and interests and provided an excellent opportunity for career growth.

Can you share your career path with us?

During my postdoc (in the MB&B department at Yale), I went to several career events: the annual career fair, the talks about potential career paths, and even a resume/CV writing and interview course. These courses helped me see the possibilities and gave me the basic skills I needed to put together a CV and know what to expect in the interview. They did not, however, directly lead to a job. I tried to work the few industry connections I had. These connections led to one on-site interview, two informational interviews, and zero job offers. The job I did get at Alexion came through an online application (one of many that I sent out). When I applied, I tried to reach out to someone at the company through a mutual friend, but I was unsuccessful. I did not know anyone in the company, but I got the job without any connections or referrals.

I keep hearing that most jobs come through a connection, but this was not my experience. Since I have been at Alexion, less than 20% of the people I have been involved in hiring have had any connections to Alexion, so don't be discouraged if your networking doesn't pan out. If you are the right fit for the job, you will be given an opportunity to interview.

What was the most challenging part of your transition from academia to industry?

The answer to this question has changed over time as I have taken on new challenges.

If you would have asked me in the first few weeks, I would have said getting used to the culture and the nomenclature was the most challenging. For the first month I carried a notebook around and wrote down every acronym I did not understand in a meeting to be Googled as soon as I got a chance.

If you asked me after a few months at the company, when I became a boss, I would have said that being a boss was my biggest challenge. I was not trained as a manager in school or as a postdoc. I mentored other students from time to time, but I never had to give performance reviews, or decide compensation. Since becoming a boss, I have tried to attend every management training opportunity I have been given, and I am slowly becoming more comfortable in this role.

Now I would say that the biggest challenge is stepping away from the bench to take a broader view and managing several projects. This has been a tough transition. I have been trained to get into the weeds of a project and solve every problem. Now I have to rely on others to solve problems, and instead take a bigger picture view and manage several projects. This has taken patience and trust in others' capabilities.

Can you describe the interview/application process?

I applied online. I was asked to provide a cover letter, a CV or resume, and I had to fill out a questionnaire that asked about my current position, pay, and skills. I had almost given up on the application (because I had applied to so many companies) when I got a call from HR at Alexion asking if this was a good time to talk. At the time, I was working in the lab and I was in the middle of an experiment, but I stupidly said "yes" and started frantically Googling Alexion while the interview started. If you get a cold call out of the blue and are asked if it is a good time talk, say "no." Ask if they can call you back to give you a chance gather your thoughts. I muddled my way through the first HR phone screen/interview, where they asked very general questions about the company, salary, and potential start dates.

After a day or two, a follow-up phone interview was scheduled with the hiring manager. This interview was much more technical - I was asked about my research and experience, among other things. I was then invited to visit Alexion, where I interviewed with several of the scientists and managers there, and I also gave a talk on my research. I was offered a job within a week of my interview, and I started working at Alexion about a month after I received my job offer.

What did you highlight on your resume/CV?

When writing my CV for job applications, I read some advice on [Science Careers](#) that said to make sure that on either your CV or your cover letter, you had all the keywords sighted on the job listing. I had also read advice that said to create an abbreviated CV, which ends up being a hybrid CV/resume, so I made sure to do these things when applying for jobs. For each application, I tailored my CV and cover letter to make sure those key words from the job listings were in at least one of those places, if not both.

Also, when I applied to Alexion, they were looking for someone with experience with Design of Experiments software (JMP). In order to meet this requirement, I downloaded the trial version of this software and spent a couple of days learning how to use it. I played with it and used it to design an experiment in the lab and analyze the data. Then I was able to state that I was familiar with JMP software on my resume/CV and my cover letter. Funny story - once I was hired, I became a go-to person for help with this program!

What is a typical day like you for?

My workload is best looked at as a weekly block. It's a difficult question to answer because each day varies a lot, but each week, I meet with each of my reserach scientists individually and as a group where we review data, look at projects, and plan out how to use our resources to meet our project goals.

I spend a lot of my time reading and writing - either putting out my own reports or reading others' reports - and I also spend a lot of time researching on Pubmed for projects that we are working on. I try to visit the lab as often as I can, and every once in a while I even answer a phone call from my wife. :)

What skills, other than traditional benchwork, did you need to develop in order to move into your current position?

The skills that I have worked the hardest to develop since moving into industry are management and interpersonal skills because much of my job is directing a lab and overseeing groups of research scientists. When I've had opportunities to do external training, I take advantage of it, and much of that training has focused on improving my skills in those areas.

What are your most and least favorite aspects of your current position?

I enjoy mentoring new scientists and working with a team to solve problems. Every week brings a new challenge - I get to research the problem, use the problem solving skills that I gained as a postdoc and graduate student, and work with a group of highly capable scientists to solve the problem.

My least favorite aspect of my job is the mundane clerical work. I don't spend a lot of time on this but each week I have to report my time, approve expense reports, and approve purchase orders, etc. It is mundane, but luckily it does not take up much of my time.

Is there room for career development and advancement for someone in your position?

I am surrounded by people who are proof of opportunities for career advancement at Alexion. My boss is a great example of this. In a time span of ten years, she went from a Research 1 Scientist to a Senior Director, overseeing over twenty people.

Alexion has been a rewarding environment for me as well - I have been given opportunities to advance from a research scientist and take on more responsibility as the company has grown and expanded their research and development platforms.

Is there any last advice you would give to someone looking to transition from academia into a career path like yours?

Look for connections; talk to anyone you know in industry. But, don't be discouraged if your networking does not lead to a job. People are hired without any connections (like myself). And don't be afraid of the switch to industry. So far the transition has been great for me!

We extend our greatest thanks to Dr. Jared Davis for not only joining us for a Small Group Discussion back in March, but also for participating further as our featured scientist in this issue's Career-in-Focus section to provide additional insight here in the Career Network SPYglass for those who were unable to attend his Small Group Discussion!

Thank you for reading!!

[CNSPY Leadership Team](#)

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Executive Board - Tenaya Vallery, Dan Mori, Claudio Bertuccio, Jimi Miller, Prabitha Natarajan, Victoria Schulman, and Yixiao Zou

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