



The NICHD Connection

February 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Resources Available to Parents/ Fellows at the NIH Bethesda Campus	1
Letter from the Editor	2
Former Fellow Follow-up with Kenna Shaw, PhD	4
February Events	5
Recusal: To Review or Not to Review, That Is the Question	6
Announcements	7

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Shana R. Spindler, PhD
Shana.Spindler@gmail.com

LAYOUT & DESIGN

Nichole Jonas
jonasnic@mail.nih.gov

CONTRIBUTORS

Kris Langlais, PhD
Jason Riley, PhD
Silviya Zustiak, PhD

PHOTOGRAPHY

Stock.XCHNG

Resources Available to Parents/ Fellows at the NIH Bethesda Campus

By *Silviya Zustiak, PhD*

Whether you are planning to start a family or are already exploring parenthood, it's helpful to familiarize yourself with the resources available to you at the NIH Bethesda Campus. A great place to start is the NIH Parent Resource Packet. There you will find a wealth of information ranging from maternity leave to childcare and parent support groups.

After perusing the Parent Resource Packet, discussing your options with your supervisor is a good next step. You should notify him or her at least 30 days in advance about any planned maternity leave (even though it may be obvious!). You could also discuss a flexible work schedule or alternative work hours if your research allows. Many parents find it convenient to arrive at work as early as 6 am and leave in the early afternoon to spend more time with their children at home. Another option to consider is teleworking whenever possible. However, it is important to be aware that teleworkers should NOT be caring for family members (read "your child") while they are working from home, so make sure to resist the temptation.

A resource not mentioned in the NIH Parent Resource Packet, but one that is worth your time, is the free CPR training. That stands for cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. The course features infant CPR, a must for every new parent. Another useful resource is the Parenting LISTSERVE, where you can connect to other NIH parents sharing information on a variety of topics such as nannies, pediatric dentists, or neighborhood playgrounds. In the event that you need it, the Employee Assistance Program on campus offers a professional and confidential consultation on personal or work-related concerns (if for example your pregnancy has an effect on your relationship with your advisor).

Once maternity leave is over, there will be new challenges for you in the lab—apart from ongoing protocol troubleshooting. If you are not sure how to combine breastfeeding with work, do not despair, you will find

(continued on page 3)

Letter from the Editor

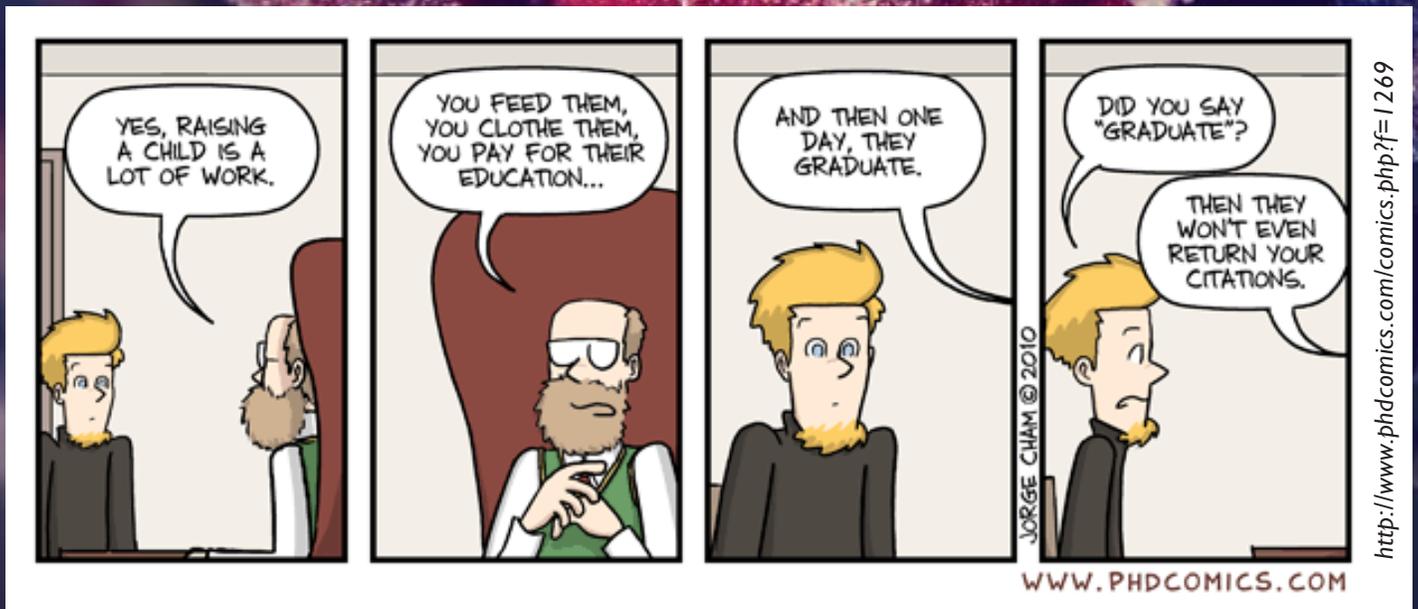
I personally know how difficult it can be to balance work life and family life, especially as the parent to a newborn. For many weeks, dirty diapers and late night feedings take precedence over anything remotely productive. When it's time to return to work, it can be a difficult adjustment. On this issue's **front page**, you will find Silviya Zustiak's very informative article covering the wealth of resources for parents at the NIH.

To keep that growing family funded, eventually we all need to complete our graduate or postdoctoral studies and find a job. Some fellows may go the tenure route while others will venture into industry or policy. If you've ever considered science communication, take a look at the **Former Fellow Follow-up column on page 4**. Here, Kris Langlais interviews Kenna Shaw, a former NICHD fellow

who now serves as the Scientific Projects Manager with the National Cancer Institute in the Office of Cancer Genomics. In this position, she works to improve how scientists communicate science to the public and to each other. For those fellows who choose to remain in the lab, Jason Riley recaps the latest **Research Ethics Lunchtime Discussion** about the ethics of recusal, a must for anyone who will serve as a reviewer.

February is packed with great events, so don't forget to check them out on **page 5!**

Your Editor in Chief,
Shana R. Spindler, PhD
Shana.Spindler@gmail.com



Resources available to parents/fellows at NIH (continued from page 1)

plenty of support at NIH. The Nursing Mothers Program offers free breastfeeding classes, advice from certified lactation consultants, and designated lactation rooms equipped with medical-grade pumps where you can not only pump but also meet a lively community of other nursing mothers.

Once you've returned to work, you will need a safe and reliable place for your baby. If you are considering NIH Child Care, which is a convenient and affordable option, you should put your baby on the wait-list the moment you know you are pregnant or even BEFORE (adding your name to the list is free of charge). The demand for the limited number of spots is high and a typical wait-time can be a year or more.

All of the above resources are summarized below. You should be aware that if you have an IRTA/ CRTA or Visiting Fellow award, you are entitled to 8 weeks of paid maternity leave but do not qualify for the Child Care Subsidy Program. However, if you are a Research or Clinical Fellow, the length of maternity leave will depend upon leave accrual, and Research/Clinical Fellows are eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program. If you need more time or flexibility, you should discuss it directly with your supervisor:

Summary of NIH resources for parents:

NIH Parent Resource Packet:

<http://does.ors.od.nih.gov/pdf/parentresource-packet.pdf>

NIH Child Care Program:

<http://doh.ors.od.nih.gov>

NIH Parenting Listserv:

<http://does.ors.od.nih.gov/childcare/LISTSERV@LIST.NIH.GOV>

NIH Child and Dependent Care Resource & Referral:

<http://does.ors.od.nih.gov/childcare>

NIH Employee Assistance Program:

<http://dohs.ors.od.nih.gov/eap/>

Medical and Family Friendly Leave:

<http://www1.od.nih.gov/oma/manualchap-ters/person/2300-630-5/>

Nursing Mothers Program & Services:

<http://dohs.ors.od.nih.gov/lactation.htm>

Alternative Work Schedules & Teleworking:

<http://telework.od.nih.gov>

CPR Training:

http://dohs.ors.od.nih.gov/cpr_training.htm



Former Fellow Follow-up with Kenna Shaw, PhD

Interview by Kris Langlais, PhD

In this Former Fellow Follow-up column, Kris Langlais shares his informal interview with Kenna Shaw, a former Weinstein lab postdoctoral fellow. While at the NICHD, Kenna made the jump from the bench to a position in science communications. Read below to see how she did it!

KRIS: What is your current position, and what do you do?

KENNA: I'm a Scientific Project Manager at the National Cancer Institute, where I help to manage The Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA) program. I manage top-level decisions and dig deep into the selection of projects. My time is spent working with the scientists and contractors that make the research possible. I deal with the small minutiae of communications all the way to which tumor types the program will ultimately focus on. I like the breadth of work and how valuable the work is for the entire research community since the mantra is "share the data, share the data, share the data." Everyday is something new since the overall field is new to me. I am not only learning new project management and scientific management skills, but I am also getting more knowledge in "science content," specifically cancer genomics. I like the mix of being in the program side at NCI because there is always something new.

KRIS: Did you prepare for the move while at NICHD, and if so, what did you do?

KENNA: The preparation for the career move was really a fellowship at the National Science Resource Center (NSRC). I thought I was interested in science education since I had done a Fulbright in Chile and done science education while a graduate student. But I needed more "chops" to get a "real job." After the NSRC I became the Director of Education at the American Society of Human Genetics.

KRIS: How did you make the transition from postdoc to the fellowship at NSRC?

KENNA: Actually, I had a relationship with both organizations at once. I was a fellow at NICHD and worked at the NSRC part time.... this was okay as long as I made sure to spend a full day at the bench.

KRIS: What was your thought process here? (Leaving the bench)

KENNA: For me it was a no-brainer. I realized that my passion was more about learning broadly instead of learning deeply—more about being broadly enabled than deeply trained. Plus, I was scooped. So, in a situation where I was 6 months pregnant and just scooped, the thought of continuing at 80 hours a week in the lab screening Zebrafish all day, well, was not that appealing when I knew I was also passionate about communicating my excitement about science to others. Science education/communication was something I had long been interested in.

KRIS: Briefly describe your career path from NICHD to your current position at NCI. Any interesting challenges to share?

KENNA: [After the NSRC fellowship], I was the Director of Education at the American Society of Human Genetics, where I wrote and was awarded my first grant as a PI from the National Science Foundation. I developed education and training programs there. Then I was recruited to start a new venture at Nature Publishing Group to develop an online learning system for

(continued on page 5)

Former Fellow Follow-up with Kenna Shaw, PhD

(continued from page 4)

undergraduates. I was the executive editor there and left because I could not relocate my family to Boston. So even though I thought I had my dream job, I had to move into a new direction. This was a hard decision because it is not one I would like to necessarily recommend—I chose money over passion. Science education doesn't really offer a lot of job security (unless you teach), and it sure doesn't pay the big bucks. With a growing family (I just had my second kiddo at the time), and with my husband working for a start-up, I chose the federal government for security and more "growth" potential in the short term.

KRIS: Any tips for fellows who want to use their scientific expertise in a career away from bench? How to explore? How to prepare?

KENNA: I think that people need to think about this before they jump ship and move to a different career. I know lots of folks who have a PhD and then expect that they can be a senior level position in anything they do next. Often, you have to "start over" and get trained in the content of a new area. But the nice thing about the PhD is how fast you learn the new content, the new context. That's the power of a PhD—learning to quickly dig deep and become independent in a new content area, ready to think deeply about it. Not that many degrees prepare you like that. But it doesn't mean you can just jump in without a little grunt work!

KRIS: Where do you see yourself in a few years? Long-term goals?

KENNA: Who knows! I have to admit that 5 years ago I never saw myself as a federal employee, but I actually think that given the right opportunity that couples project management with the ability to use a broad skill set, I might be anywhere!

Events

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 8:30-12:00PM

Abstract Writing with Dr. Pam Hurley

One-on-one sessions in the p.m. Abstract draft required in advance!

Please sign up with Brenda Hanning hanningb@mail.nih.gov. A couple of spots left!

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1:00-3:00 PM

Careers in Marketing for Scientists

Building 10, Lipsett Amphitheater

For more information and registration, please visit the Calendar of Events on the OITE website at <https://www.training.nih.gov/>.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 12-1:30PM

Approaches to Identify Grant Support

This will include two fellows doing a mock session with NIGMS scientific administrators. Come to the meeting to learn about the program officer's role in shaping the scientific priorities in his or her area, and how these individuals can guide you to make decisions about what grant to apply for, when, and from whom.

Please contact Brenda Hanning for more information at hanningb@mail.nih.gov.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 12:45PM

Fellows Lunch Outing to Bangkok Garden

Meet in front of Bldg 50. See announcement on [page 7](#) for more info.

Recusal: To review or not to review, that is the question

By Jason Riley, PhD

What is recusal and when is it necessary? To recuse is to remove oneself from participation—in our case as a reviewer—to avoid a real (or perceived) conflict of interest. At the latest Research Ethics Luncheon Discussion, Dr. Sergey Leikin recounted his experiences with this topic. His conclusion: recusal is a difficult matter, not made any easier by the fact that most journals have vague rules regarding reviewer ethics. Over the course of the meeting, the group discussed various cases that can arise and debated ethical decisions for each situation.

The good news is that some conflicts of interest are easier to identify; for example, if you work in the same lab as the author or if your research or position depends on a source of funding that will directly benefit from the publication (or not) of the manuscript.

While clear-cut cases do exist, recusal is often a gray area. What should you do in the event that you are asked to review a paper with an author you know personally? While some quickly call this unethical, Dr. Leikin argues that it can be ethical to serve as a reviewer in this circumstance if you are not linked to the work. Some fields may have only a handful of qualified reviewers; therefore eliminating all reviewers in a small research community could lead to solid scientific data not being published. Where is the ethical line then?

For the gray area situations, Dr. Leikin suggests that a reviewer should refer anything that might represent a conflict of interest to the edi-

tor. Remember though, it is still the reviewer's decision to recuse himself if he is uncomfortable, even with the editor's approval. In a more drastic approach, some might choose to recuse themselves from all

reviewing opportunities to avoid a conflict of interest. It is to our benefit, however, to review for as many journals as possible—think resume-builder—and ethically we have a responsibility to review. Most journals use two to three reviewers per paper, so as a rule of thumb, an author is responsible for two paper reviews per first-author paper produced (as a “minimum” guideline).

Ethical decisions require ample contemplation and self-examination. We are capable of arriving at the best possible conclusions, but it is critical to have the proper information and tools to guide our decisions. To learn more about making ethical decisions, check out the hyperlink below or attend one of the numerous ethics courses and lectures offered by the NIH.

For further thoughts and information see the following hyperlink: <http://publicationethics.org/>



Dr. Sergey Leikin

Announcements

STUDY SECTIONS

The winter meetings of the NICHD study sections are coming up. This is the opportunity to learn firsthand about the grants review process for securing extramural funding. For any of you who anticipate applying for an NIH grant in the future, we are fortunate to have this program in place, which allows you to sit in the room and hear the discussions about prioritizing among applicants, scoring, and learning what makes for a strong application. These are long meetings, typically held off campus in a hotel in Bethesda or DC. There will be an orientation for attendees led by Dr. Marita Hopmann the week of **February 14**, precise time and date to be confirmed.

To sign up, please contact Brenda Hanning at hanningb@mail.nih.gov for the Initial Review Group (IRG) Subcommittee Meeting Schedules. Here is a link to the description of each study section: <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/org/dsr/descriptions/index.cfm>

FELLOWS LUNCH OUTING TO BANGKOK GARDEN

Wednesday, February 16 12:45pm

Bangkok Garden is a traditional Thai restaurant serving delicious, inexpensive dishes ranging from Yam Pla Grob to Tom Yum Goong! Curious? Join us in front of Bldg 50 at 12:45pm to walk the Bethesda Trolley Trail to the restaurant (see map). See you there!

Bangkok Garden
4906 St. Elmo Ave.
Bethesda, MD 20814
Phone: (301) 951-0670

