A 2019 ANTHOLOGY

WOMAN OF THE WEEK

52 EXECUTIVE WOMEN’S STORIES ON BUSINESS AND LEADERSHIP

PharmaVOICE
A SPECIAL PUBLICATION
We salute *PharmaVOICE* on the first anniversary of its *Woman of the Week* podcast series featuring women in our industry who are making an impact.
Welcome to the inaugural Woman of the Week Anthology, a collection of 52 stories showcasing 52 extraordinary leaders representing all facets of the life-sciences industry. This special ebook is an extension of the popular WoW podcast series that launched Jan. 2, 2019.

After attending conference after conference, meeting after meeting, featuring “manel” after “manel,” we recognized that there was a real need to provide a vehicle for women to tell their stories and share their expertise with the industry. In keeping with the PharmaVOICE brand, we are honored and happy to provide a vehicle for women to raise their voices.

The 52 women featured in the first year of the series share a common ambition: helping patients. They are creating new pathways, developing the next generation of talent, influencing decisions — big and small, launching new companies, setting the strategic direction for multinational organizations. In essence they are framing the future of the life-sciences industry.

We thank these women for being so generous and open to sharing their leadership and career journeys, and exposing their vulnerabilities. Many of our storytellers also relate their very personal reasons for joining the healthcare ecosystem and desire to make a difference.

Many of these women are true vanguards, having broken through gender and racial barriers, clearing a path for the next generation of women to come. We learn from them what it was like to have been the only women in the room, how they overcame barriers, and other lessons learned along the way.

The profiles featured in this anthology are just a snapshot of their WoW stories. If you have not yet listened to their podcasts, we encourage you to do so. We have provided a link to each of their recordings at the bottom of every profile page.

We hope you enjoy getting to know these women as much as we have. And we are pleased to continue this series in 2020. Check out the current catalog of inspiring podcasts at https://www.pharmavoice.com/wow-podcasts. ☝️
WoW Woman of the Week • a 2019 Anthology
March 2020 • a Special PharmaVOICE Publication

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Click on name to go to article.

Jan. 2, 2019 Maria Fardis, Ph.D., Iovance Biotherapeutics Inc.
Jan. 9, 2019 Wendy White, RareiTi
Jan. 16, 2019 Rachel King, GlycoMimetics Inc.
Jan 23, 2019 Jennifer De Camara, Johnson & Johnson
Jan. 30, 2019 Lynn O’Connor Vos, Muscular Dystrophy Association
Feb. 6, 2019 Amy Heymans, Mad*Pow
Feb. 13, 2019 Georgia Mitsi, Ph.D., Sunovion Pharmaceuticals
Feb. 20, 2019 Helen Torley, M.B. Ch. B., Halozyme
Feb. 27, 2019 Colleen Carter, Fingerpaint
Mar. 6, 2019 Melinda Richter, Johnson & Johnson
Mar. 13, 2019 Gail Moore, Horizon Pharma
Mar. 20, 2019 Shannon Dahl, Ph.D., Cell Care Therapeutics
Mar. 27, 2019 Clareece West, Cardinal Health (former)
Apr. 3, 2019 Deborah Dunsire, M.D., H. Lundbeck A/S
Apr. 10, 2019 Liz Lewis, Takeda Pharmaceuticals
Apr. 17, 2019 Gisela Schwab, M.D., Exelixis Inc.
Apr. 24, 2019 Sheri Madrid, Advanced Clinical
May 1, 2019 Kathy Giusti, Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation
May 8, 2019 Jayne Gershkowitz, Amicus Therapeutics
May 15, 2019 Laurie Cooke, Healthcare Businesswomen's Association
May 22, 2019 Ubavka DeNoble, M.D., Parexel Informatics
May 29, 2019 Jessica Rousset, CURE Pharmaceutical
June 5, 2019 Lauri Bartolomeo, Dudnyk
June 12, 2019 Joan Mannick, M.D., resTORbio
June 19, 2019 Andrea Pfeifer, Ph.D., AC Immune
June 26, 2019 Shontelle Dodson, Astellas
July 3, 2019 Anjum Swaroop, Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories
July 10, 2019 Paula Ragan, Ph.D., X4 Pharmaceuticals
July 17, 2019 Charlotte Jones-Burton, M.D., Bristol-Myers Squibb
July 24, 2019 Janet Kosloff, InCrowd
July 31, 2019 Kim Johnson, GSW
Aug. 7, 2019 Terri Phillips, M.D., Merz North America
Aug. 14, 2019 Elizabeth Pinto, Acadia Pharmaceuticals
Aug. 21, 2019 Lan Huang, Ph.D., BeyondSpring Pharmaceuticals Inc.
Aug. 28, 2019 Jennifer Gottlieb, W2O
Sep. 4, 2019 Anna Sundgren, Ph.D., AstraZeneca
Sep. 11, 2019 Carolyn Morgan, precisioneffect
Sep. 18, 2019 Barbara Lopez Kunz, DIA
Sep. 25, 2019 Meredith Terry, Ph.D., MicroMass Communications Inc.
Oct. 2, 2019 Peyton Howell, Parexel
Oct. 9, 2019 Jessica Scott, Takeda Pharmaceutical Company
Oct. 16, 2019 Gwen Nichols, M.D., Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Oct. 23, 2019 Sophia Ononye, Ph.D., The Sophia Consulting Firm
Oct. 30, 2019 Ahnai Purohit, Ph.D., Purohit Navigation
Nov. 6, 2019 Kimberly Haugstad, Global Genes
Nov. 13, 2019 Casey Lynch, Cortexyme
Nov. 20, 2019 Laura Shafner, AiCure
Nov. 27, 2019 Athena Countouriotis, M.D., Turning Point Therapeutics
Dec. 4, 2019 Patricia Malone, FreshBlood
Dec. 11, 2019 Corlis Murray, Abbott
Dec. 18, 2019 Kathy Vandebelt, Oracle
Dec. 25, 2019 Anne Heatherington, Ph.D., Takeda
Better Health, Brighter Future

There is more that we can do to help improve people’s lives.

Driven by passion to realize this goal, Takeda has been providing society with innovative life-changing medicines since our founding in 1781.

As a leading global biopharmaceutical company, Takeda will always be unwavering in our contribution to bring better health and a brighter future to people worldwide.

Diversity catalyzes bigger thinking, bolder visions and better results for the patients we serve. Takeda is committed to supporting an inclusive, equitable culture that enables our people to shine. We are proud to celebrate the achievements of women in science and healthcare every day, and especially on International Women’s Day.

www.takeda.com
Maria Fardis, Ph.D.
President & CEO
Iovance Biotherapeutics Inc.

**CAREER PATHS ARE TO BE DEFINED BY YOU — NOT OTHERS.**

Maria Fardis, Ph.D., is a scientist and an expert in medicinal chemistry. Before joining Iovance Biotherapeutics as president and CEO, Dr. Fardis was chief operating officer at Acerta Pharma, where she worked on the development of Calquence (acalabrutinib), until the company’s acquisition by AstraZeneca. Before joining Acerta, Dr. Fardis held the position of chief of oncology operations and alliances at Pharmacyclics, where she oversaw development of Imbruvica (ibrutinib). She was a key contributor in the creation of a broad clinical program for ibrutinib, as well as NDA and MAA submissions. During her time at Gilead, Dr. Fardis was involved with multiple therapeutic areas, including antivirals, oncology, and cardiovascular therapeutics and worked on the development and life-cycle management of Letairis.

Leveraging her considerable experience in drug development, she is now one of the few women CEOs and presidents of a biotech company — Iovance Biotherapeutics, which is focused on the development and commercialization of autologous cellular immunotherapies optimizing personalized, tumor infiltrating lymphocytes (TIL).

With a passion for science and patients, Dr. Fardis has consistently put the goals of the project before her personal career growth. “When I am focused on accomplishing something, the long hours are not long hours; they are not torturous,” she says. “I enjoy every minute. I’m doing exactly what I want to be doing with my day. I want to see the patient’s letter or the response from a patient’s family member saying how he or she is doing. I believe if you are doing what you enjoy doing, it doesn’t feel like a job. You are executing on your passion, and it’s just absolutely and utterly fun.”

Dr. Fardis believes that for female executives, it is important to create opportunities for the younger generation. “And from my perspective, the opportunity doesn’t need to be gender-specific. We need to think about other people’s careers and make sure that we provide a lending hand. It is our responsibility as executives to watch after other people’s careers, the same way that someone might have watched after our careers. We have a responsibility to develop our key members and the next generation of drug developers.”

Drug development definitely is not for the faint of heart, she says. “Bringing our best selves to work every day requires a number of factors. We have to start with the end goal in mind and in any drug development program that goal is to bring a product to the patients.”

Under Dr. Fardis’ leadership, Iovance’s market cap has increased six-fold. Part of creating value for the company comes from her belief in establishing a two-way collaboration with investors. “I learned along the way that investors are partners in our drug development program and journey,” she says. “Our job as a management team is to do the right thing for the product and patients. We have to remember every day that we have to take the product further along in development and by doing that we not only do the patients and the product good, but we create value and shareholder return on investment.”

**WOW MOMENT:** One of the best joys of anybody’s life in drug development is to see that label from the FDA when a product receives approval. It’s quite unparalleled. The excitement and accomplishment of bringing a therapy to patients is unparalleled.
Cofounder
RareiTi

THE THING THAT INSPIRES ME THE MOST IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR COLLABORATION.

Wendy White

Wendy White is a rare disease expert, author, marketer, digital trailblazer, and serial entrepreneur. She is the co-founder of RareiTi, a new global system of care for people and communities with unmet needs in the rare disease space. RareiTi offers managed access and medicines management programs that provide support beyond therapy, combining care solutions that are specifically developed, measured, and designed to improve outcomes.

Wendy’s focus on rare disease was forged when she re-centered her start-up company Siren Interactive to become one of the breakthrough entities in the rare disease space. When her third child Cindy was diagnosed with a rare connective tissue disorder, which is characterized by under-developed, absent, or misplaced/kneecaps in newborns. Wendy was tireless in her pursuit to discover what was wrong with Cindy. Eventually, a doctor at Johns Hopkins unlocked the mystery. “It was a relief to get a diagnosis even though there are no therapies for people with connective tissue disorders, but at least I had an idea of what was what going forward,” she says. Cindy is now 19, in college, and also a patient advocate, in addition to trying to master rock climbing and weight lifting.

The common thread throughout Wendy’s journey is her passion for patients as an innovative leader working at the intersection of advocacy, technology, and business in the rare disease space.

She was named chair — a volunteer role — of Global Genes in 2016. She evangelizes the nonprofit organization’s mission and dedication to the rare disease community.

“Our mission is to start with the patient and go ground up,” she says. “We know that fewer than 50% of the 7,000 rare diseases have an organized patient group. I truly believe that if you do the right thing for the patient then you’re going to do the right thing for the business.”

Wendy is also a dedicated volunteer within the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association, where she served as chair in 2015, during which time she laid the groundwork for the organization’s focus on gender parity throughout the life-sciences industry.

Whether as a volunteer leader or sitting in the C-suite, Wendy brings expertise and curiosity to the role. “What has worked for me is becoming an expert,” she says. “My advice is to become an expert in something specific, and hopefully something that you feel passionate about. And the great thing about that is then you can ask for sponsorship and mentorship.”

At the time of her WoW podcast, Wendy was chief patient officer of Vitrisa Therapeutics.

Listen to podcast
More therapies are available in rare disease than ever before. But that doesn’t help if patients don’t have access and pharma companies can’t show better outcomes.

RareiTi offers a new system of care for people and communities across the globe with unmet needs in the rare disease space. Our managed access and medicines management programs offer support beyond therapy, combining care solutions that are specifically developed, carefully measured and designed to improve outcomes.

BUILDING A MISSION DRIVEN MODEL THAT MATTERS

RareiTi offers a new system of care for people and communities across the globe with unmet needs in the rare disease space. Our managed access and medicines management programs offer support beyond therapy, combining care solutions that are specifically developed, carefully measured and designed to improve outcomes.
Rachel King has seemingly done it all. She started her career at the global consultancy Bain and Company then moved to the drug delivery company, ALZA, and then on to several start-ups, including Genetic Therapy (GTI), which was sold to Novartis, then onto an executive-in-residence role at New Enterprise Associates (NEA), one of the nation’s leading venture capital firms — all before cofounding GlycoMimetics. “As I reflect back, I feel fortunate, to have had opportunities to do work that I have found to be meaningful, interesting, and at many times fun.

Rachel has always loved biology, a passion that has guided her career over the years. “I’m driven by a desire to connect that in my work although I’m not a scientist and I’m not a physician,” she says. “But I was one of those kids in high school who had a microscope and a dissecting kit at home. I was a biology geek at that point.”

She has also been drawn to an entrepreneurial setting and a desire to work with people who she could learn from. After successful stints at Bain and Alza, she had the opportunity to join GTI as the 12th employee. GTI was a startup company and the first company that had permission to do gene transfer experiments in humans in the United States. In addition to the great science, Rachel was involved with raising VC funding, taking the company public, major collaborations, and the eventual sale to Novartis — all of which she says was foundational to her starting GlycoMimetics. GlycoMimetics pioneered the use of glycobiology technology to understand the roles cellular carbohydrates play in health and disease. The company’s lead product is uproleselan, a specific E-selectin inhibitor, to be used in combination with chemotherapy to treat patients with acute myeloid leukemia (AML) and potentially other hematologic cancers. The company has had a mixed bag of results, and after an initially stalled IPO, Rachel and her team successfully took the company public in 2014. She says the whole process was like pulling a rabbit out of a hat, and speaks to one of the company’s four core values: perseverance.

“The other three are: passion, integrity, and teamwork,” she says. “These give insight into how we work and how we feel about the company as we do these very difficult things.”

In addition to setting the strategic direction for GlycoMimetics, Rachel was also chair of BIO — the Biotechnology Industry Organization — for two years. As part of the executive team, she helped lay the groundwork for what was to become the 21st Century Cures Act; capital formation — how to create an environment where companies can more easily get finance; and a focus on messaging on the value story that biotech brings.

Rachel also serves on several boards, including those of Novavax and the University of Maryland’s Biopark, seats she gained due to the strength of her network. “Getting to know people who you respect and admire, and continuing to build relationships with those people, can bear fruit,” she says.

I think it’s important to recognize in the moment the value of the work that we’re doing and the colleagues who we are working with.

Lessons learned: Follow what you enjoy, that’s No. 1. And do it with the best possible people. In my experience, opportunities have come about through people I know.
Jennifer De Camara
VP Law, US Pharmaceutical Strategic Customer Group
Johnson & Johnson

WE HAVE WORK TO DO IN OUR ORGANIZATIONS TO CONTINUE TO LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD AND MAKE SURE THAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT ARE BEING PROVIDED.

From an early age, Jennifer De Camara recognized her own worth. She recalls a pivotal childhood experience with her grandmother, who noted that Jennifer was pointing out the most expensive things in a shop window and that she would either need be a doctor or a lawyer or marry one. “That really struck me because I remember immediately thinking why would I marry one if I can be one,” Jennifer says. “This felt like it was an important moment; you have to think about how to make your dreams come true and to take responsibility for how are you going to get from your dreams to your reality.”

With a double major in biology and political science, Jennifer has built a successful career that encompasses both of her passions. “I learned the importance of merging the rigor of the scientific method and knowing what good science looks like with the legal thought process.”

Working for one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, Jennifer’s day is multifaceted, requiring her to weigh in on a variety of topics. “I sit on the management board of our strategic customer group,” she says. “I advise our senior management on legal matters that support all levels of engagement with payers, institutional customers, and patient access and support programs, which is set against a rapidly evolving healthcare. I’m really fortunate to work with a lot of great people. The people who I work with are smart. Their hearts are in the right places. We’re all trying to help patients, so that part of my day is always very enjoyable. My days are really interesting and I never feel like I haven’t spent my time well during the day.”

Jennifer is passionate about the law, science, patients, as well as advocating for women and diversity in the workplace. “We know that women are not proportionately represented in leadership roles and so while we’ve come so far there is still so much more that needs to be done,” she says. “It’s good for business, you get your best work product from a diversity of thoughts, background, and experiences.”

One of the commonalities that Jennifer has found working with J&J’s employee resource groups that support women and their inclusion in leadership is a lack of confidence in how to balance career and home. There is a fear that career advancement might further throw that balance off and women may put off taking that next role until the kids are older. Additionally, women tend to not take a role until they believe they are experts. “We need to give ourselves permission to learn as we advance,” she says. “There are so many barriers that we disproportionately carry. I think it’s critical that we take down these artificial barriers.”

Jennifer is mindful of those who came before, women such as her grandmother, who also had a career in the law. “I came into the story benefiting from the chapters that were written by the generations before me — the women who fought for the right to vote and who earned their way into the workforce and made it normal, not just possible but normal, for me to go to law school and have the jobs that I’ve had,” she says. “I feel a responsibility that we’re writing our chapter in the story right now, and I hope that the story ultimately concludes in a world that stops judging and penalizing gender, color, or orientation, which don’t matter to how well you can do the job or how good a person you are. I feel very responsible to deliver to my daughter and her friends as much as I can to that story ending as happily as possible.”

ADVICE: Trust your instincts and don’t let uncomfortable questions go unanswered.
Lynn O’Connor Vos’ successful career has been multifaceted, from pediatric nursing, to technology, to leading a global healthcare communications advertising agency, to her role today as president and CEO of the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) — the 70+ year-old nonprofit organization that is committed to saving and improving the lives of kids and adults living with muscular dystrophy and related life-threatening diseases.

Underlying all of her success is a passion for patient care, advocacy, and giving back. “I’ve always been involved with nonprofits; I was a founding board member of the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation (MMRF) and a founding board member of the JED Foundation,” she says.

Lynn also has been an active volunteer for the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association, which named her its Woman of the Year in 2005.

“What has struck me about most of the nonprofits I’ve been engaged with is that they are very disruptive,” she says. “Certainly, Kathy Giusti, founder of the MMRF is recognized for pioneering a new way to bring drugs to market for cancer where there is absolutely nothing available. She herself was highly motivated since she was diagnosed with multiple myeloma at a very young age.”

The JED Foundation, whose mission is to protect the emotional health and prevent suicide for at-risk teens and young adults, is also groundbreaking. “Nobody was talking about suicide 14 or 15 years ago,” she says. “In fact, that was our biggest challenge: how do you get people to donate and give to our organization when nobody wanted to talk about the stigma of suicide.”

Fast forward to today, and Lynn is using all of the tools in her considerable toolbox to evolve the MDA into a high-science organization to take advantage of new drugs that are coming to the market for neuromuscular diseases. “MDA is a very big consumer brand that was put on the map by Jerry Lewis in the 1950s,” she says. “Today, we’re an umbrella organization that recognizes a collection of more than 40 rare diseases.”

Upon taking the CEO role, now almost two years ago, Lynn’s focus has been to heighten the brand so that everyone in the community knows that the MDA is the leading supporter of research and the largest care center network and provider of care support to patients with neuromuscular disease. “From the get-go, it was quite obvious to me and my senior team that we needed to clearly communicate the value of MDA when it comes to research and care,” Lynn says. They are careful to preserve some of MDA’s most well-known offerings, such as summer camp that hosts 4,000 kids each year. She and her team are also looking to galvanize the organization by offering unique technology solutions to improve care.

Lynn believes one of the things that distinguishes successful people is what she calls lateral or horizontal thinking. “These are people who can look at a situation, make a quick assessment from multiple data points, come up with ideas, and then package a solution that drives consensus among the team to get them to move forward,” she says. “This type of leadership doesn’t come naturally to everybody, but it’s certainly something that can be developed.”

As she reflects back on her career, Lynn wishes she had made a decade plan. “Another friend who I met through HBA, also a Woman of the Year, Carolyn Buck Luce, talks about having a decade-long plan,” Lynn says. “I was in the healthcare communications business for more than 20 years, and as I look back, I met a lot of milestones, I had a lot of fun, and I did a lot of great things, but if I had divided this time up into 10-year increments, I might have identified some different goals.”

C-SUITE ADVICE: First and foremost, you have to have an enormous degree of confidence in yourself. Become an expert at something; if you’ve got a passion or a real expertise in an area, go for it.
Amy Heymans embodies the title of chief experience officer. For her there is nothing more important than involving the people who will be affected by solutions in the creative process. She is using “human-centered design” to change the current state of the healthcare in industry. This is the premise upon which she cofounded Mad*Pow.

“Human-centered design is a term that reflects a philosophy and a methodology that drives research to understand what drives people’s behavior, their mental model, their mindset, what they’re facing, what they need, what they desire, and what a positive experience for them looks like,” she says.

“We then take that information and design with them, if possible, what an ideal experience would be like as they interact with various organizations and channels. We also create journey maps to envision a more positive future and bring this to bear through patient support materials, digital materials, human-to-human interactions, etc.”

Amy and her team strive to solve complicated health issues and crack the code on how to design for engagement, which involves the overlap of several disciplines: motivational psychology, behavioral science, behavioral economics, as well as data science.”

“We take our innovation philosophy and put it into practice to improve the lives of patients,” she says.

To extend Mad*Pow’s reach, Amy and her team developed HxD, a health design conference, more than 10 years ago to explore the overlap of design, innovation, and health. “The conference, which draws more than 500 people, helps stimulate a dialogue about the application of human-centered design in healthcare and how we can leverage empathy and behavior changes design and psychology to improve the lives of patients and clinicians.”

Amy brings her passion around raising the importance of understanding the social determinants for health to her volunteer activities and teacher roles, both of which she says keep her grounded. “There is an interconnectedness between health and finance and education and socioeconomic status,” she says.

Carving out an entrepreneurial path, creating a visionary strategy, and ideating on a world-class level often doesn’t leave a lot of time for a balanced life. To avoid burnout, Amy has learned to be more forgiving to herself. “With so many balls in the air, aiming for perfection with everything can drive you crazy,” she says. “I had to let the house be messy. I had to ask for another day to work on a project. Learning to prioritize and say no to a few things is still a challenge for me, to be honest, but the better I am at it the better things go.”

LISTEN TO YOUR INNER VOICE, HAVE FAITH IN YOURSELF, AND DON’T SETTLE FOR LESS THAN YOU DESERVE.

ADVICE: We talk about balance, but it’s about designing our lives to include all of the things that fulfill us and then integrate them so they work together.
Health Experience Design

HXD provides a unique crossroads for a diverse community of executives and practitioners in design, innovation, research, strategy, and technology to come together and discuss how we might improve health experience and accelerate the transformation of our health system.

Join Amy Heymans, Mad*Pow Founder and CXO at Mad*Pow's annual Health Experience Design Conference in Boston.

Register using code PHARMAVOICE and save $250 off current prices.

See HXDconf.com for information on dates, schedule and registration.

@HXDconf
Georgia Mitsi, Ph.D.
Senior Director, Search and Evaluation, Digital Healthcare
Sunovion Pharmaceuticals

The fact is Dr. Georgia Mitsi loves learning new things — she has an MBA, a Ph.D., a masters in applied medical science, and a bachelors degree in biology. She also loves taking on challenging pathways. Both of which were more than enough motivation for her to not just dive into the digital healthcare arena, but to become a top thought leader on the subject matter.

“At the end of the day, the digital world opens up endless possibilities and brings a sense of hope and optimism,” Georgia says. “I do not believe that technology is a panacea nor do I see technology as a substitute for the expertise of doctors, but I do believe that technology has the unique ability to restore trust and provide the opportunity for more empathetic and in-depth interactions between patients and doctors.”

Georgia believes technology will allow doctors to do what they do best, provide care.

“At the same time, for pharmaceutical companies, I envision that technologies, especially advanced analytics and data science, will allow us to go beyond the traditional regulatory pathway and bring the right treatments for patients to the market faster.”

Georgia self-identifies as an introvert, and recognizes that it can be nerve-racking at times to push through one’s safety zone.

“I have learned that being comfortable with the uncomfortable is a great life skill; sometimes 50% of success is just showing up,” she says. “I think many women just like me strive to be perfect and we doubt ourselves; if I had the chance to go back in time and talk to myself 20 years ago I would say you’re good enough, just trust yourself and move on.”

Georgia is passionate and driven every day to address the needs of people who suffer from chronic conditions and who struggle to find the right resources or medical therapies.

“This is a fight worth fighting; I am always driven by a higher purpose, which is my calling in life,” Georgia says.

Georgia is also a passionate supporter of women and is committed to moving the needle on gender parity through a number of volunteer activities.

“We still live in an era where there is so much more work to be done to achieve gender parity through a number of volunteer activities.

“We still live in an era where there is so much more work to be done to achieve gender parity in the life-sciences field,” she says. “As a mother, as an immigrant — I moved to the U.S. from Greece when I was 30 — and as a woman I have at times experienced inequality. I dream of the day and a world in which gender parity is attainable; I believe that we can change the world with a little bit of coordination from both men and women who are supportive of its future.”

I HAVE LEARNED THAT BEING COMFORTABLE WITH THE UNCOMFORTABLE IS A GREAT LIFE SKILL; SOMETIMES 50% OF SUCCESS IS JUST SHOWING UP.

ADVICE: Careers are a marathon — not a sprint. We need to remember to laugh; I have taken my life and sometimes myself too seriously, smiling is a good thing, it brings people closer to you.
Helen Torley, M.B., Ch.B.
President and CEO
Halozyeme

I HAVE A PASSIONATE DESIRE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF PATIENTS.

Dr. Helen Torley made a significant leap into the C-suite just over five years ago when she left Onyx Pharmaceuticals, where she was executive VP and chief commercial officer, to become president and CEO of Halozyeme. While at Onxy, she oversaw the collaboration with Bayer on Nexavar and Stivarga and the U.S. launch of Kyprolis; she also was responsible for the development of Onyx's commercial capabilities in ex-U.S. markets.

“My desire to become a CEO was the logical next step in my career; I’ve been in the pharmaceutical industry about 30 years,” she says.

Dr. Torley, who started her career as a rheumatologist in clinical practice, joined the industry initially in clinical development then moved into marketing positions and business leadership positions. “I have had many different experiences, which led to my becoming a leader of a great company,” she says.

According to Dr. Torley, Halozyeme has a unique business model. “One-half of our business is focused on partnerships through our Enhanze technology and the other part of the business is focused on proprietary noble drug development, including a drug for patients with pancreatic cancer.”

Halozyeme’s Enhanze drug delivery technology enables biologics and small molecules currently administered intravenously to be delivered subcutaneously. The technology is based on the company’s proprietary recombinant human hyaluronidase PH20 enzyme (rHuPH20) that degrades hyaluronan, or HA. HA is a glycosaminoglycan, a chain of natural sugars that is a component of normal tissue, such as skin and cartilage and can also accumulate around many solid cancerous tumors.

One of the keys to Halozyeme’s success is based on Dr. Torley’s commitment to building a strong and high-functioning executive team that works together to realize the company’s strategy and to build a great culture.

“Many companies fail because they don’t have a cohesive leadership team. I’m very proud of both the technical skills we have on the leadership team, but also how we support each other to assure business success,” she says. “We have a very clear set of expectations as to how the entire company works together: We have a great culture where employees feel inspired and energized to work.”

Dr. Torley recommends The Five Dysfunctions of a Team by Patrick Lencioni, which she says sets out the principles of how to build cohesive teams that have each other’s backs in good times and in bad times. “One of most important tenets of this is building trust, knowing that we might not always know the answer and are willing to be vulnerable to ask for help,” she says.

Dr. Torley says her career was boosted through the support of sponsors, one in particular who recognized her talents early on and put her in an important leadership position overseeing a large piece of the company’s P&L. “If this hadn’t happened, my career would have been very different,” she says. “I think it’s really important that companies consider sponsorship programs for those employees they believe have high potential, the people who will be future leaders of large functions or divisions. It’s important to take them out of their comfort zone and see how agile they really are. There is nothing quite like this in terms of an accelerated learning environment.”

ADVICE: Sponsorship is making a bet on somebody who has shown potential and who you believe has the leadership qualities to be able to scale into a new role.
SUCCESS IS ABOUT HAVING A PURPOSEFUL LIFE WITH MEANING.

Early in her career Colleen Carter was inspired by a leadership concept that has guided her career ever since. “I was selected to attend an executive leadership program at Babson,” she says. “In one of the courses, the professor asked us to think about all of the people on our path who taught us what we needed to know to be the leaders who we are today or who inspired us to be a leader to grow into. These individuals could be bosses, colleagues, teachers, family members, etc. I remember I had my grandmother on my list. After we put their names on a flip chart we had to present back to the class what we had learned from everyone on our flip chart. It was fascinating to hear other people’s stories about how connections and relationships had impacted them. The thing that has stuck with me all these years is when the professor asked us to consider our own lives and consider how many flip charts would have our name on them. This was a really powerful moment for me because we have so many opportunities every day to make it onto someone’s flip chart. I think about this exercise often in small ways and big ways. This was a wow moment. We don’t get to where we are by ourselves. There are many people along the path who helped get us there. And I want to make it on to people’s flip charts.”

As a seasoned advertising executive, relationships are Colleen’s stock-in-trade. She has made a career out of building and nurturing personal connections with colleagues, peers, and clients. “Relationships are all about honesty, trust, respect, and communication,” she says. “Ultimately, our efforts affect our client successes. Their careers and their reputations can sometimes be affected by what we deliver or don’t deliver. At the end of the day we have to remember why we do what we all do in the first place — to get lifesaving medicines into the hands of those who need them most.”

Colleen believes the strength of the relationships that she builds with her clients and the work that comes out of those relationships helps her and her teams deliver on that goal. “I often think about the awesome responsibility of this,” she says. “We need to care about our clients. We need to care about these brands truly as much as our clients do. And when we make promises, we need to be prepared to deliver on them. Ultimately, our efforts affect our clients’ successes.”

Colleen has several guiding principles that shape her personal and professional life. “At Fingerpaint, we have three core pillars that speak to the work that we do, and they extend into the lives that we lead,” she says. “The first is what I’m doing ‘paint by number?’ The second is ‘can I see the difference this will make?’ And the third is ‘is it worth my signature?’”

For Colleen, the answers to these questions define success. “Am I thinking differently? Am I making a difference in the people in my life, in the lives of those I serve, in the people who I know, and the people who I don’t know? Am I proud of the work that I’m doing, so proud that I want to put my signature on it?” she says. “These are the things that define success for me today. It isn’t just success in a career; it’s success in life. I’m the same person who shows up at work as who shows up at home, and so it has to work in both areas.”
Melinda Richter’s journey has taken her from patient to innovation champion to one of the most influential women in the life-sciences industry today. Her accidental entry into healthcare began in Beijing, where she was on the fast track at a global telecom company, and in one moment everything changed — she found herself near death after being bitten by a bug. “I’ll never forget that moment when the doctors came in and told me that there’s nothing more they can do for me,” she says. “That set off a two-month journey where every night I would go to sleep not knowing whether I was going to wake up the next day. There are conversations that happen in your head in the deep dark of night. And for me, I knew that if I got the chance to live that I had to try to change the experience that I was going through.”

Her goal was to change the healthcare system to become much more innovative, productive, advanced, and sexier to attract the best talent and the best investors. “I quit my job,” Melinda says. “Everybody in my company thought I was absolutely crazy. I said I wasn’t crazy, I was compelled.”

She vowed to change how the industry innovated. She started by asking questions, bringing together biotech entrepreneurs with executives from big pharma companies, and learning the process of innovation. “I didn’t think I was going to make a big system change, I just wanted to start a little bit at a time,” Melinda says. “I started to build a model — a brick at a time — that has turned into JLABS, part of Johnson & Johnson innovation. It’s humbling to see where I’ve landed in that journey. It certainly wasn’t where I intended to go but I’m so glad this is where I got to.”

Taking lessons from her tech days, Melinda’s goal was to create a user experience for the healthcare system that allows patients to be empowered, engage in their health, and to make decisions that lessen the stress. At the same time, she believes it’s important to have the right model in place to incentivize entrepreneurs and investors to come to the table.

“We look to see what the system needs to make it a high-functioning system for everybody,” she says. “Our philosophy is that the best science and technology should become the best solutions for patients and consumers all over the world. And if we believe that to be true, we also have to be humble enough to say the best science and technology are just as likely to come from outside the walls of a big company like J&J as inside. Our job at JLABS is to locally embed ourselves in innovation ecosystems around the world with the express intention to take down the hurdles for entrepreneurs and give them the platform they need to test their ideas in a way that can make it much faster, much cheaper, and much more accessible to get those solutions to the people who need them.”

Currently, Melinda and the JLAB’s team have opened more than a dozen global innovation sites and assisted hundreds of companies.

Melinda Richter
Global Head
JLABS, Johnson & Johnson

I SEE SO MANY WOMEN WHO SAY ‘NO, I CAN’T DO THAT.’ FROM NOW ON, I WANT THEM TO SAY YES AND FIND THE SUPPORT THEY NEED TO MAKE IT WORK.

ADVICE: Life expands or contracts in direct proportion to your courage. So have courage, go after what you want because you will reap the rewards. We’re all scared — this is just table stakes for everybody, so know it, put it on the table, and then do it.
As a patient with a rare disease and a parent of a child living with a rare disease, Gail Moore’s role as director of global patient advocacy at Horizon Pharma is not just a job — it’s a passion and a mission.

Gail’s odyssey began 22 years ago with the birth of her first child. Her daughter Kinsey was hospitalized just four weeks after being born with an infection — salmonella in her bloodstream — a medical mystery. Over the next four years, Kinsey continued to contract strange infections, many of which were life-threatening, ultimately being diagnosed with a primary immune deficiency. This diagnosis led Gail and the medical team to delve into her and her husband’s family histories. As it turned out, Gail’s mother, who had been sick most of her life was also diagnosed, as well as herself and her son, who was 18 months younger than Kinsey. “I lived in a doctor’s office; Kinsey would get an infection and then my son Garrett would get it and they’d both end up in the hospital,” she recalls. “Before having children, I worked in a professional capacity for a hospital, and I knew what was happening to me wasn’t normal. Ultimately, I became very engaged with the patient community — the Immune Deficiency Foundation — that was supporting our diagnosis of primary immune deficiencies. Through that engagement I became an advocate, and ultimately this led me to my career in healthcare.”

The advocacy organization opened a lot of doors for Gail, and ultimately she was asked to be the patient’s voice inside the industry side of the business. “I’ve been doing this for the last 12 years,” she says.

Today, both of Gail’s children are doing well, having graduated from college. “They’re both independent, productive citizens who are out in the workforce and living their best life,” she says. “That’s what every parent can hope for. For myself, I still walk that line as a patient and an advocate for patients.”

Her advice for parents who may be facing a similar situation is to learn everything they can about the condition, don’t take no for an answer, and become their own best healthcare advocate. “There is a need for more education and thankfully science is growing rapidly; as a parent or as a patient with a rare disease, you need to be as educated as you can be so that you can go back and share that knowledge with your physicians and your healthcare team — this way you’re doing everything you can for your child or yourself,” she says.

In her role at Horizon, Gail works with national and global patient organizations associated with the medications and communities the company serves. “I am literally the liaison between Horizon and patient organizations,” she says. “I represent their voice internally. I educate both internal and external stakeholders about diseases and then I look for opportunities to collaborate to benefit the community in general. I have the best job in the world because I get to give back and represent patients’ voices within our company and also in the community itself. I want my legacy to be that in some way along the way I’ve made someone’s life a little bit easier.”

**Listen to podcast**

**WOW MOMENT:** I’m doing what I love doing and I’m able to make a difference in an area in which a lot of people don’t have an opportunity to do so.
Shannon Dahl, Ph.D.’s pursuit of regenerative medicine and tissue engineering began back in the 1990s while she was at MIT. At that time the field was just emerging, and Shannon was excited about the potential of offering natural solutions rather than synthetic medical devices to treat patients. She joined fellow Duke University alums — Laura Niklason, M.D., Ph.D., and Juliana Blum — to found Humacyte. In 2003, the three began laying the groundwork for the company and Humacyte launched in 2004 to advance a bioengineered blood vessel platform for vascular surgery. The technology provides an “off-the-shelf” bioengineered human acellular vessel that could replace a patient’s own blood vessel or create new vascular access for patients who require dialysis, without requiring cells or tissue from the patient.

At the time, Shannon knew and appreciated that she and her colleagues were embarking on new territory. Their work was recognized in 2016 by CNBC as a top Disruptor 50 company. “This was the same year that the Disruptor 50 recognized Uber, Airbnb, and 23andMe,” she says.

In addition to being a world-class regenerative medicine leader, Shannon has a reputation as a company builder who defines a clear path forward from early research to clinical trials, commercialization, and reimbursement.

In 2018, Shannon left Humacyte, in her own words, “to do it all again.” She was named chief scientific officer of Cell Care Therapeutics, which is developing novel therapies derived from the secretions of adult stem cells to treat severe inflammatory and degenerative retinal diseases in patients who suffer from vision loss. “We are offering a new type of off-the-shelf treatment for patients by harnessing the body’s natural regenerative capacity,” she says.

Shannon is a prolific innovator with more than 20 patents to her name. “I’m ultimately focused on bringing innovative therapies forward to help improve patient care and it’s an added bonus if these products reduce healthcare costs,” she says. “Innovation requires new ways of thinking about the interface of technology, strategy, healthcare, and policy. In ascending to the C-suite, Shannon says it’s important to continuously develop yourself and to be courageous about knowing your key value. “Becoming a good leader requires taking stock of who you are and knowing your value, strengths, and the impact you want to make so that you can focus your efforts with intention,” she says. “Good executives pay attention to how they interact with others, they know how to have teams work effectively together, they know how to engage others, they learn from others, and they develop and coach others to build a pipeline of leaders for the industry.”

Shannon also enjoys giving back to the scientific community. She serves as a mentor at Stanford StartX Med, which is a medical vertical of StartX. “I enjoy meeting these energetic, early-stage founders, simultaneously I get to see a broad range of interesting technologies across several sectors that are spinning out of the institution.”

**CHALLENGES ARE REALLY OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATION.**

**ADVICE:** My unique value is focused on being very comfortable at the edge of ambiguity and using five skills to define the path forward; it’s about clearly formulating the value proposition, driving priorities to realize strategic goals, developing rigorous data sets to support decision making, putting a stake in the ground with strong rationale and justification, and collaborating with internal and external stakeholder teams.
Clareece West
Former VP, General Manager
Cardinal Health

I BELIEVE YOU HAVE TO BE MORALLY GROUNDED AND COME TO THE TABLE WITH A CAN-DO, COLLABORATIVE, TEAM-DRIVEN MINDSET.

Clareece West has had a varied and successful career over the past 25 years. She has had leadership executive positions at two Fortune 500 companies and two large CROs. She has been part of several restructuring initiatives, including six acquisitions, and built large business development teams, while gaining global expertise.

And through it all, the biggest reward for Clareece is seeing the excitement from her teams to independently drive initiatives. “When I think about what all these experiences have in common, whether it was building business development or operational teams or leading through an acquisition, the reward was truly seeing the potential of a talented team and how to harness that talent for sustainable growth,” she says. “I love giving back all of the knowledge that I’ve been so fortunate to gain along my journey.”

Clareece has a passion for marrying science and technology to improve and advance devices and therapies for all patients. “Where the industry is heading, the two are virtually inseparable,” she says. “We won’t be able to improve patient therapies, nor will we improve the impact of medical devices, without this powerful combination. I firmly believe that technology can help us expand science when carefully used. It forces all of us to think differently, be a bit more innovative, and to push our market ahead especially for regulatory pathways and clinical trials as I’ve done over the years.”

Clareece is driven to do what’s right for patients. “Early in my career, my mentor coached me on the importance of putting the patient first,” she says. “I will be passionate until I don’t have a heartbeat about putting the patient first. Every decision we make in this industry has an impact on a patient. So, stay the extra minute, put the extra time in, and do the right thing because that patient can be anybody, whether it’s you, me, or someone we love. I may not be a nurse, I may not be a doctor, but I know everything that I, we, do in this industry has an incredible impact for the outcome of a patient.”

She is equally passionate about paying it forward through her volunteer activities with a number of organizations. For example, Clareece is a founding member of the Women’s Capital Connection, which is a regional angel investment group; she is an active member of the Mid-America Angel Investors Network; she works with the Ewing Kauffman Foundation as a reviewer of some of the organization’s business awards; and she is a volunteer with the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association.

“I feel extremely privileged and grateful for a very long career in leadership and executive positions, which compels me to want to share and give back,” she says. “I can’t tell you how much I enjoy this piece of it. I would love to volunteer even more as I feel that volunteering is part of community stewardship and my personal passion is the Alzheimer’s Foundation as well as Kansas City Hospice House. When diseases and opportunities hit close to home it helps put into perspective how important volunteering is, how important donating is — whether that’s time or money, both very much matter.”

Clareece firmly believes in creating an action plan for one’s career and life. “I stop and assess my goals annually,” she says. “If you’re not planning to be successful, you’re not going to be successful. Our lives are a series of chapters that make up a book, and I’m under the impression that we get to write most of them.”

ADVICE: I would remind everyone to stop and assess your goals annually. If you’re not planning to be successful, you’re not going to be successful.
Deborah Dunsire, M.D., president and CEO of H. Lundbeck A/S, is one of the top-ranking women executives, as well as one of the most admired, in the pharmaceutical industry. As a testament to her inspiring leadership, Deborah was named Woman of the Year by the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association in 2009.

She is a transformative leader, whose focus on the patient never waivers. “My passion is to help people attain new medicines, develop medicines that are transformative, and address areas where there is a high unmet medical need,” she says. “Brain disease is certainly one of those frontiers. I believe we’re at the beginning of a new wave in treating diseases of the brain. We’re starting to understand the biology much better and we are thinking differently about the subsets of patients for whom we can get the right therapy.

“Our vision is to have every person be able to live their best life uninterrupted by brain disease,” she continues. “In the next 12 months we’ll be moving some products forward in our pipeline; for instance, in post-traumatic stress disorder, which is an area that’s growing and has no adequate therapies as yet. We’ll also be strengthening the pipeline of Lundbeck through external partnerships, licensing, or acquisition.”

In early March 2020, Lundbeck announced the U.S. FDA had approved Vyepti, making it the first and only FDA-approved intravenous treatment for migraine prevention in adults. Vyepti is expected to be available in April 2020.

Deborah’s journey to the C-suite may not have been one she anticipated but it’s certainly one that has positioned her as a role model to thousands of women.

“I came into the industry thinking I would be here temporarily, just gaining a little knowledge and understanding, but I was captivated by the degree of different skills that are required to bring a new medicine forward as well as by the opportunity to work on diseases with no therapies,” she says. “So in pursuing something that I found intellectually and emotionally captivating, I went on a journey that I never expected.”

Throughout her career, Deborah has held a variety of roles from clinical research to global marketing to sales and marketing, to new product planning, and ultimately to company leadership bringing together all aspects of the value chain from basic research all the way through to bringing medicines to patients.

“I have worked in multiple different countries — South Africa, Switzerland, the United States, and now in Denmark — and across the world the commonality has been bringing forward new medicines that can be transforming,” she says.

Patients have been at the core of everything Deborah does since she started in the industry in South Africa in the late 1980s, working with Sandoz on organ transplantation and the launch of Novartis’ Gleevec — the first targeted oncology agent.

“I still correspond with a woman who was in the Phase I trial of Gleevec; it’s now 20 years out since she was diagnosed with chronic myelogenous leukemia,” Deborah says. “She’s raising money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, working, and running marathons. She inspires me. For me, the wow moments have always been about when we are able to successfully transform science into medicine. We want people to be their best and that’s why we work every day.”

**WOW MOMENT:** The wow moments have always been about when we are able to successfully transform science into medicine.
Lundbeck Celebrates Women Who Are Making a Difference

Lundbeck is proud to support International Women’s Day and celebrate leaders like Lundbeck President & CEO Deborah Dunsire who are making an outsized impact on patients around the world.

From advancing women leaders within our own organization to focusing on the unique needs of women affected by brain diseases such as migraine and depression, Lundbeck is committed to making a difference, one person at a time.

To learn more, visit Lundbeck.com and LundbeckUS.com.
Liz Lewis
Head of Global Oncology Patient Value, Policy, and Access, Takeda Oncology, and Chief Counsel; Specialty Business/R&D Takeda Pharmaceuticals

I HAVE PUSHED MYSELF TO CONTINUALLY EVOLVE WITH THE COMPANY AND TO GRAB NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO REMAIN RELEVANT.

Liz Lewis occupies a unique space in Takeda’s C-suite. She is head of global oncology patient value, policy, and access, Takeda Oncology, and chief counsel, specialty business/R&D. “People ask me all the time how can someone who runs a legal function also do patient advocacy. This just reiterates advice I often give women, which is to grasp the opportunities and be more concerned about the journey rather than the end game,” she says. “I don’t think I would have had this opportunity if I hadn’t allowed myself to progress on the journey.”

When she joined Millennium, now Takeda, back in 2002, she helped build the company’s infrastructure from a legal and a compliance perspective for the launch of its first commercial product. As part of that role, Liz worked with the emerging advocacy group and had the opportunity to learn the organization inside out, so much so when the time came to replace the head of the group, she was positioned perfectly to take it to the next level. “Having worked hand in hand to design the programs and design the function, I had a very good sense of what that advocacy meant to the company, and even more importantly, a really strong vision of where I thought it needed to go into the future,” she says. “Takeda has always been focused on putting the patient at the center of everything we do, as well as on our trust with society and on reputation; this is consistent with how lawyers think, so it’s been easy for me from that respect to balance the two roles.”

Liz has never shied away from a challenge, in fact, she credits some of her career success to taking roles that no one else wanted. “In a couple of instances, these were jobs that were considered too hard or too difficult or wouldn’t necessarily garner a lot of success or recognition,” she says. “These were career-defining moments for me because I took them on and knocked them out of the park, which shaped my career in a different way.”

As the daughter of a physician, Liz has always been drawn to the life-sciences industry. She started her career as a healthcare lawyer upon graduating from law school. While in private practice she began working with more and more pharma clients and was recruited to work as outside counsel for Millennium and quickly transitioned to in-house counsel. And she has never looked back.

She is a high-energy leader who values open communication and is driven to make a difference and get things done. “My hallmark as a leader has always been that I’m an enterprise and strategic thinker; I’m constantly looking across the enterprise rather than at just one particular function,” she says. “Having an enterprise vision has always come naturally. I oftentimes am able to line up the dots in lots of different places. For years, I thought it was because I sat in a legal function and I had the opportunity to work with so many different groups, but I don’t think that’s it. I think that it requires a level of curiosity and having the ability to step back from what you’re doing on a day-to-day basis to allow yourself to have that broader perspective. It is a skill. I think it also requires a certain amount of empathy and awareness. When you’re thinking from an enterprise lens, you constantly have to put yourself in the shoes of others.”

Liz also represents Takeda as a board member for BIO and Mass Bio, which adds yet another dimension to her role, and one she loves: policy. “I’m one of the few non-CEOs who sits on the BIO board and of course one of the few women,” she says. “I represent Takeda in the U.S. on those issues that matter most for the company. It gives me an incredible opportunity within Takeda.”

ADVICE: For those of us in the biotech and the pharmaceutical life-sciences industry, continuing to attract and retain top diverse talent is really important and for that to happen I think there needs to be two things: mentorship and sponsorship.
Throughout her career, Gisela Schwab, M.D., has been driven by the desire to stretch herself and to expand her knowledge base to make a difference for cancer patients.

“My hands-on clinical experience, in particular in oncology, has been the primary driver for the choices I’ve made and the opportunities I’ve pursued in my career,” she says. “It has been a journey to learn and get the best education I could and then respond to opportunities that arose along the way, which may have meant a geographic relocation or even working in a new culture and new environment.”

Gisela’s sincere desire to contribute to the treatment of cancer patients drove her decision to go into research and ultimately into the biotech industry. Her multifaceted career has taken her from academia to biotech, from Canada to Europe to the United States, and eventually to her current role as president, product development and medical affairs, and chief medical officer, of Exelixis.

“I joined Exelixis about 12 years ago because of the people I met in the process of interviewing as well as the science,” she says. “I’ve never looked back. The company’s pipeline has a very intense focus on developing new therapies for patients with cancer.”

The company’s lead product Cabometyx (cabozantinib) recently received its fourth approval from the FDA for patients with hepatocellular carcinoma. Cabozantinib inhibits the activity of tyrosine kinases, including MET, AXL, VEGF receptors, and RET and is recognized for its potential to treat a wide variety of cancers.

“With the success of Cabometyx, the company has been able to transform itself from a direct discovery and development company to a commercially successful and fully integrated company with partnerships that allow us to bring cabozantinib to cancer patients worldwide,” Gisela says. “At the heart of my passion and dedication is the desire to contribute to better treatments for cancer patients. We’ve certainly come a very long way in understanding disease mechanisms, which has helped in developing more effective treatments for cancer patients, but there’s still a lot to be done despite all the progress that has been made.”

She credits her career success to having a good foundation based on the best education possible, establishing career goals, and following through on them, while remaining open to opportunities that present themselves, sometimes not always in a way that is foreseeable. “I certainly took advantage of different opportunities and it helped me develop my skill set and broaden my horizon,” she says. “In drug development, it is really important to appreciate how complicated the process is and that having a multidisciplinary team, different ideas, and creativity are very important. The ability to collaborate, communicate, and problem-solve are critical. This is a field where failure is more common than success and it takes perseverance and resilience to see a product to the marketplace.”

Gisela is also passionate about helping other women to succeed and offers this advice: step up and stretch yourself, seek out opportunities, and take opportunities as they arise.

“It’s really important to learn from any failure, you need to learn from the experience and come out stronger on the other side. Listen to podcast

Gisela Schwab, M.D.
President, Product Development and Medical Affairs, Chief Medical Officer
Exelixis Inc.

MY PASSION AND DEDICATION ARE TO CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER TREATMENTS FOR CANCER PATIENTS.
Performing Neighbor
Dreamer Artist Aunt
Mentor Storyteller
Optimist Partner

Through resilience comes resolve.

PREVAIL Over Cancer

exelixis.com
Sheri Madrid
Executive Director Clinical Operations
Advanced Clinical

SOMETIMES ONE OF THE BEST THINGS WE CAN DO AS LEADERS IS TO STOP TALKING, LISTEN, ASK QUESTIONS, AND COACH PEOPLE TO FIND THEIR OWN SOLUTIONS.

Sheri Madrid’s love of science led her to an accidental career in the CRO industry. Her fascination with how the body works, down to the cellular level, had her on a path to medical school. To gain experience, she worked as an anesthesiologist assistant in the OR and as a surgical technician assisting with the delivery of babies, but by the time she graduated from college, as much as she loved the science, she decided she didn’t want to practice medicine. “I started looking for something else that would allow me to work in a field where I could still be involved in some way with the human body, and I just happened to apply for a job at a CRO — I didn’t even know what a CRO was — and I loved it from my first day,” she says. “I’ve been in the clinical research industry ever since.”

Along the way like many women, Sheri found herself trying to balance her career and her family life. “Before I was married and had children I was very focused on working hard and learning as much as I could about clinical research,” she says. “I traveled to a lot of places in the world. I wanted to help a lot of people, my co-workers, study subjects, investigators, research coordinators, etc. After I had children, I still really wanted to work and to help others as much as I could, but I also felt that I needed to be involved with my family.”

She made the decision that until all of her children were out of school that she would focus on clinical research positions that allowed her to work remotely. “Fortunately in the clinical research industry, there are a number of remote positions available, which has allowed me to work hard, and still be a good wife and mother to my family.”

Sheri joined Advanced Clinical as executive director, clinical operations, almost four years ago. She was drawn to the company because of a shared philosophy around servant leadership. “At Advanced Clinical, we serve our co-workers and the industry, which aligned perfectly with my own personal values of helping others,” she says. “Advanced Clinical’s leaders are very much about always doing the right thing.”

As a seasoned clinical ops executive, Sheri has her finger on the pulse of some of the biggest trends, including the wide array of data sources being used. “Data are coming from local labs, central labs, wearable devices, photographic images, case report forms, which is quite different than 10 years ago,” she says.

With a variety of new data sources combined with new technologies, clinical studies are becoming more complex. Sheri says this requires out-of-the-box thinking to make the process easier for study subjects. As trials become more complex and data are being collected from a wider variety of sources, she is heartened to see companies, such as hers, engage with travel services to help subjects get to their study visits, for example. “Patients need all the help they can get, and helping people in a real way is what gets me excited,” she says.

Sheri is equally committed to supporting the next generation of clinical operations personnel and gives credit to the company’s Advanced Clinical University, which provides mentoring opportunities for CRAs who are entering the industry. “We have a formalized blueprint so that we can help people not only as they enter the industry, but as they join the company,” she says.

ADVICE: Don’t get caught up in the busy ness of the work; really pay attention to the people who are around you. Everyone has a talent and there is something to learn from everyone.

Listen to podcast
Advanced Clinical is proud to support #IWD (International Women’s Day) and women leaders across the life-sciences industry. We commend them for the difference they are making in healthcare.

And a special shout out to our Sheri Madrid who is making a positive impact on patients. As a coach and mentor, she takes the time to listen and ask questions to help people find their own solutions.

To learn more, visit advancedclinical.com

STANDING TOGETHER

SHERI MADRID
Executive Director, Clinical Operations
I TRULY BELIEVE THINGS HAPPEN FOR A REASON. EVEN THE GREATEST CHALLENGES IN YOUR LIFE WILL ALWAYS MAKE YOU SO MUCH STRONGER AND SO MUCH BETTER.

Kathy Giusti’s story is one of survival. Upon being diagnosed with multiple myeloma at 37, her world was turned upside down. Rather than succumb to what was at the time a death sentence — doctors told her she only had three years to live — Kathy started the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation (MMRF). “My daughter was 1 at the time and my son hadn’t been born yet, I was hoping to buy enough time that she might remember me,” she says.

Fast forward 20 years, and the nonprofit organization Kathy started from her home with her twin sister is now a world-class research organization whose business model is built around cancer — from data to analytics to the clinic. The MMRF identifies barriers and then finds the solutions to overcome them, bringing in the best partners and aligning incentives to drive better outcomes for patients. Since its inception, the organization has collected thousands of samples and tissues, opened nearly 100 trials, helped bring 11 FDA-approved therapies to market, and built CoMMpass, the single largest genomic dataset for any cancer.

“The path I took, moving from science to business school and from sales to marketing prepared me to be an entrepreneur,” Kathy says. “We’ve shown that the nonprofit sector can be extraordinary and amazing work can be done.”

Through the work with CoMMpass, Kathy and her team founded the Multiple Myeloma Research Consortium (MMRC), the first collaborative research organization of its kind. It brings together academic and community cancer centers with industry, to advance innovative Phase I and Phase II clinical trials of today’s most promising drug candidates. “We now know there are 12 subtypes of myeloma, and we need to pursue cures for each and every one of them,” she says. “This became our model for precision medicine.”

In recognition of her vision, tenacity, perseverance, and collaborative approach Kathy has received nearly every industry accolade, including being named No. 19 on Fortune’s World’s 50 Greatest Leaders, one of Time magazine’s 100 Most Influential People in the world, and one of 34 leaders who are changing healthcare. “The awards give awareness to the hard work of the entire myeloma community and also allow people to understand that the model is transferable,” she says.

Even with all of the successes, Kathy is grounded in serving patients. “My job every day is working with patients,” she says. In fact, she personally answers emails from patients she receives on a daily basis.

Recently, Kathy was asked to join the faculty of Harvard Business School and co-chair the Kraft Precision Medicine Accelerator, an endowment from Robert Kraft, who lost his wife to ovarian cancer. The vision is to develop a business framework that encourages all cancer organizations to align on shared goals and create a collective impact. It was at this time that Kathy’s mom was fighting melanoma, her sister was fighting breast cancer, and her dad had recently died of kidney cancer. “When I got the call from the dean of the business school to come up and work across all diseases in precision medicine, I thought the stars are aligned,” she says. “I couldn’t think of anything I could do to have a greater impact.”

ADVICE: You can’t just say what you’re going to do — you have to have a plan and you have to write it, you have to organize it, and you have to have milestones around the plan.

Listen to podcast
Jayne Gershkowitz
Chief Patient Advocate
Amicus Therapeutics

THERE IS SOMETHING ABOUT THE RARE DISEASE COMMUNITY THAT IS INSPIRING AND REALLY BEAUTIFUL.

Jayne Gershkowitz’s career journey leading her to become one of the foremost authorities on rare disease could best be described as circuitous. She is a journalist by trade and curious by nature. “I have always been interested in learning new things and painting a picture to help other people understand what I’ve had the privilege to see,” she says. “I moved from newspaper journalism into corporate communications and marketing communications and then took that into the nonprofit space. While I was working at a large healthcare and social service agency in the greater Boston area for many years, I had the opportunity to start to talk to people about genetic education.”

From there, she was introduced to the National Tay-Sachs & Allied Diseases Association, one of the country’s oldest if not the oldest genetic disease patient advocacy organizations. Jayne was asked to take on the role of executive director, as the organization was looking for someone with marketing and good communications skills who could help the association to the next level.

Jayne threw herself into understanding the diseases, what was happening with research, which was still in its infancy, and the impact on the families. “These diseases affect very young children and we needed to understand what were the needs of the families and what they were looking for in terms of support — support from some type of infrastructure, support from each other — to get through a death sentence diagnosis,” she says.

Through hard work and perseverance, Jayne and her team made a difference, they amassed funds to support early research in these neurodegenerative diseases and gain more attention from other researchers.

After serving as executive director for almost eight years, Jayne joined Amicus Therapeutics, where she currently is chief patient advocate. In this C-suite position, Jayne provides a systemic strategy to global internal and external patient advocacy that defines corporate culture, informs all development and access to orphan drug products, and creates educational and supportive initiatives to improve the lives of individuals and families living with rare diseases.

“I’ve had many different wonderful career opportunities and to move from the non-profit side to the for-profit side has been an honor,” she says. “I have been able to help frame the way the company interacts with rare disease communities since its earliest days with an approach that is highly respectful to people living with these diseases, trying to understand their experience, and thereby trying to make a difference. The culture at Amicus is quite special and it is because of our patient dedication and this has been part of the fabric of the company since we started.”

Jayne’s involvement in the rare disease community extends beyond her day-to-day responsibilities. She continued her association with Tay-Sachs, serving on the board of directors for 11 years, she was an active steering committee member on the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey for eight years, the vice chair, and board of directors of NORD for three years.

In 2015, Jayne co-founded the Professional Patient Advocates in Life Sciences, a nonprofit organization that is focused on education. “So often patient advocates and family advocates want to have the opportunity to share their story because they are trying to increase awareness about a disease,” she says. “They want people to have a good understanding of their disease, because they’re looking to our industry to be innovative and to make a difference.”

ADVICE: The key to developing relationships is being authentic, being honest, and being transparent in how you communicate.
Our passion for making a difference unites us.

Amicus is committed to improving the lives of patients and families affected by rare and orphan diseases.
As president and CEO of the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association, Laurie Cooke leads a global legion of volunteers and staff who are committed to the organization’s core purpose of furthering the advancement and impact of women in the business of healthcare. The global nonprofit organization is comprised of individuals and organizations from across the healthcare industry committed to: achieving gender parity in leadership positions; facilitating career and business connections; and providing effective practices that enable organizations to realize the full potential of their female talent.

Since the association took up the mantle of addressing the gender gap in the life-sciences industry a couple of years ago, Laurie has been a prominent figure on the speaking circuit. She is the perfect ambassador to bring relevant metrics and experiences to the main stage. “While the healthcare and the pharma industries are faring better than the rest of the 18 industries that are measured in the McKinsey Women in the Workplace study, the increases are very small — 1% to 2%,” she says. “We are still very far behind in terms of representation of women at all levels. The statistics overall for women represented in the C-suite are one in five and when we look at women of color those stats drop to one in 25.”

Work toward achieving gender balance is also ongoing under the HBA’s Gender Parity Collaborative, which includes a cohort of companies committed to taking an active role in defining strategies, measuring performance, creating change, and inspiring others.

“An ongoing issue is how do we get more men to be our gender allies,” she says. “There are business cases that document the benefit of having gender diversity at the table — it’s not just good for business, it’s the right thing to do.”

One of the HBA’s signature programs is its annual Woman of the Year (WOTY). Laurie notes, one of the recent key takeaways for her came from 2018’s WOTY Dr. Julie Gerberding, who said don’t blaze the trail; widen it. And don’t just be the first, make sure you’re not the last. “These two statements really resonated with me and made me think times are changing,” Laurie says.

Laurie’s career has not always been in the nonprofit world, she has an undergrad degree in microbiology and an advanced degree in clinical pharmacy. She spent more than 10 years working for a major pharmaceutical company. “This gave me an opportunity to learn so many things like global drug development and strategy, portfolio and project management, how to manage big teams and big budgets, and probably more than anything else how to navigate effectively among different cultures,” she says. “I went through three mergers, all with very different cultures and I don’t just mean organizational cultures. I mean French, German, Japanese, and American cultures that needed to come together to work with each other and focus on the customer, which is the patient.”

Laurie says in some ways her career has come full circle. “I found a different way to help the patient and a wow moment for me was when I realized you can accomplish your goal in very different ways,” she says. “I went through three mergers, all with very different cultures and I don’t just mean organizational cultures. I mean French, German, Japanese, and American cultures that needed to come together to work with each other and focus on the customer, which is the patient.”

One of the HBA’s signature programs is its annual Woman of the Year (WOTY). Laurie notes, one of the recent key takeaways for her came from 2018’s WOTY Dr. Julie Gerberding, who said don’t blaze the trail; widen it. And don’t just be the first, make sure you’re not the last. “These two statements really resonated with me and made me think times are changing,” Laurie says.

Laurie’s career has not always been in the nonprofit world, she has an undergrad degree in microbiology and an advanced degree in clinical pharmacy. She spent more than 10 years working for a major pharmaceutical company. “This gave me an opportunity to learn so many things like global drug development and strategy, portfolio and project management, how to manage big teams and big budgets, and probably more than anything else how to navigate effectively among different cultures,” she says. “I went through three mergers, all with very different cultures and I don’t just mean organizational cultures. I mean French, German, Japanese, and American cultures that needed to come together to work with each other and focus on the customer, which is the patient.”

Laurie says in some ways her career has come full circle. “I found a different way to help the patient and a wow moment for me was when I realized you can accomplish your goal in very different ways,” she says. “I’m working for a nonprofit where I interact with people in global pharma companies, hospitals, and other organizations that are patient-focused. I am now adding value at a different level by helping people to become even stronger leaders.”

Listen to podcast 🎧

ADVICE: Women need to bring other women along.
I ALWAYS TO DO THINGS THAT I DON'T LIKE FIRST, THIS HAS BEEN MY PHILOSOPHY ALL MY LIFE, THEN I HAVE TIME TO ENJOY THE THINGS THAT I REALLY LIKE.

Ubavka DeNoble, M.D., was recently named chief commercial officer of Parexel Informatics, as such she is responsible for commercial strategy and development of the organization. “My focus is related to marketing, field product development, and working with my customers to increase the market share of the organization,” she says. “This is why I’m so excited to be on this side of the business. As a physician, I worked for many years on drug development and now I have an opportunity to observe what will be the best technology that we can apply to clinical trials to accelerate drug development to simplify this process. I am also very focused on telemedicine and I am carefully following what’s happening because I believe this is going to be a very important part of clinical trials going forward, especially for patients who are facing rare diseases and patients who are living in places that are not easily accessible.”

Ubavka came to the United States from Sarajevo in 1992. “My story is one of the million stories in the United States,” she says. “In 1992, it was a time of war in Yugoslavia. My husband is Croatian and I am from Bosnia, and that was not a good combination. At this time, we had the opportunity that presented itself to come to the U.S. because my husband was here as a collaborator at Duke.”

Faced with a new country, a new child, and the need for a new job — to be a physician she would have had to go through her residency again — Ubavka joined the industry. “I have to admit, I didn’t know anything about the corporate world,” she says. “My survival instinct kicked in, which actually was very beneficial because I didn’t understand or accept obstacles that one faces in a new environment. I knew that I needed to work hard. I knew medicine. I joined the industry in an entry-level position as a product safety associate.”

Ubavka quickly rose through the ranks to a VP position, at the same time the industry was going through a growth phase, which meant mergers and acquisitions. “Every single merger and acquisition and change of management, I learned something new,” she says.

She came to Parexel eight years ago after her previous company was acquired. “I didn’t have some extraordinary expectation, I just wanted to be part of a big company, have some stability, and to have the opportunity to grow,” she says. “Parexel has given me this exposure and opened so many doors. Even today, I am still absolutely fascinated with the diversity profile of the people who we have in this company.”

Among her many accomplishments, Ubavka says her biggest achievement is her participation in the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School. “I have the opportunity to meet exceptional women starting with Iris Bohnet, who is the academic dean of the Kennedy School and the new chair Carol Hamilton — people who have amazing biographies,” she says. “To be part of such a group and to be part of the conversation around the position of women is my biggest achievement.”

Ubavka also focuses her energy on developing and mentoring young people. “I want to help them not make the same mistakes as I did,” she says. 

Ubavka DeNoble, M.D., was recently named chief commercial officer of Parexel Informatics, as such she is responsible for commercial strategy and development of the organization. “My focus is related to marketing, field product development, and working with my customers to increase the market share of the organization,” she says. “This is why I’m so excited to be on this side of the business. As a physician, I worked for many years on drug development and now I have an opportunity to observe what will be the best technology that we can apply to clinical trials to accelerate drug development to simplify this process. I am also very focused on telemedicine and I am carefully following what’s happening because I believe this is going to be a very important part of clinical trials going forward, especially for patients who are facing rare diseases and patients who are living in places that are not easily accessible.”

Ubavka came to the United States from Sarajevo in 1992. “My story is one of the million stories in the United States,” she says. “In 1992, it was a time of war in Yugoslavia. My husband is Croatian and I am from Bosnia, and that was not a good combination. At this time, we had the opportunity that presented itself to come to the U.S. because my husband was here as a collaborator at Duke.”

Faced with a new country, a new child, and the need for a new job — to be a physician she would have had to go through her residency again — Ubavka joined the industry. “I have to admit, I didn’t know anything about the corporate world,” she says. “My survival instinct kicked in, which actually was very beneficial because I didn’t understand or accept obstacles that one faces in a new environment. I knew that I needed to work hard. I knew medicine. I joined the industry in an entry-level position as a product safety associate.”

Ubavka quickly rose through the ranks to a VP position, at the same time the industry was going through a growth phase, which meant mergers and acquisitions. “Every single merger and acquisition and change of management, I learned something new,” she says.

She came to Parexel eight years ago after her previous company was acquired. “I didn’t have some extraordinary expectation, I just wanted to be part of a big company, have some stability, and to have the opportunity to grow,” she says. “Parexel has given me this exposure and opened so many doors. Even today, I am still absolutely fascinated with the diversity profile of the people who we have in this company.”

Among her many accomplishments, Ubavka says her biggest achievement is her participation in the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School. “I have the opportunity to meet exceptional women starting with Iris Bohnet, who is the academic dean of the Kennedy School and the new chair Carol Hamilton — people who have amazing biographies,” she says. “To be part of such a group and to be part of the conversation around the position of women is my biggest achievement.”

Ubavka also focuses her energy on developing and mentoring young people. “I want to help them not make the same mistakes as I did,” she says.

Ubavka DeNoble, M.D., was recently named chief commercial officer of Parexel Informatics, as such she is responsible for commercial strategy and development of the organization. “My focus is related to marketing, field product development, and working with my customers to increase the market share of the organization,” she says. “This is why I’m so excited to be on this side of the business. As a physician, I worked for many years on drug development and now I have an opportunity to observe what will be the best technology that we can apply to clinical trials to accelerate drug development to simplify this process. I am also very focused on telemedicine and I am carefully following what’s happening because I believe this is going to be a very important part of clinical trials going forward, especially for patients who are facing rare diseases and patients who are living in places that are not easily accessible.”

Ubavka came to the United States from Sarajevo in 1992. “My story is one of the million stories in the United States,” she says. “In 1992, it was a time of war in Yugoslavia. My husband is Croatian and I am from Bosnia, and that was not a good combination. At this time, we had the opportunity that presented itself to come to the U.S. because my husband was here as a collaborator at Duke.”

Faced with a new country, a new child, and the need for a new job — to be a physician she would have had to go through her residency again — Ubavka joined the industry. “I have to admit, I didn’t know anything about the corporate world,” she says. “My survival instinct kicked in, which actually was very beneficial because I didn’t understand or accept obstacles that one faces in a new environment. I knew that I needed to work hard. I knew medicine. I joined the industry in an entry-level position as a product safety associate.”

Ubavka quickly rose through the ranks to a VP position, at the same time the industry was going through a growth phase, which meant mergers and acquisitions. “Every single merger and acquisition and change of management, I learned something new,” she says.

She came to Parexel eight years ago after her previous company was acquired. “I didn’t have some extraordinary expectation, I just wanted to be part of a big company, have some stability, and to have the opportunity to grow,” she says. “Parexel has given me this exposure and opened so many doors. Even today, I am still absolutely fascinated with the diversity profile of the people who we have in this company.”

Among her many accomplishments, Ubavka says her biggest achievement is her participation in the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School. “I have the opportunity to meet exceptional women starting with Iris Bohnet, who is the academic dean of the Kennedy School and the new chair Carol Hamilton — people who have amazing biographies,” she says. “To be part of such a group and to be part of the conversation around the position of women is my biggest achievement.”

Ubavka also focuses her energy on developing and mentoring young people. “I want to help them not make the same mistakes as I did,” she says.

Ubavka DeNoble, M.D., was recently named chief commercial officer of Parexel Informatics, as such she is responsible for commercial strategy and development of the organization. “My focus is related to marketing, field product development, and working with my customers to increase the market share of the organization,” she says. “This is why I’m so excited to be on this side of the business. As a physician, I worked for many years on drug development and now I have an opportunity to observe what will be the best technology that we can apply to clinical trials to accelerate drug development to simplify this process. I am also very focused on telemedicine and I am carefully following what’s happening because I believe this is going to be a very important part of clinical trials going forward, especially for patients who are facing rare diseases and patients who are living in places that are not easily accessible.”

Ubavka came to the United States from Sarajevo in 1992. “My story is one of the million stories in the United States,” she says. “In 1992, it was a time of war in Yugoslavia. My husband is Croatian and I am from Bosnia, and that was not a good combination. At this time, we had the opportunity that presented itself to come to the U.S. because my husband was here as a collaborator at Duke.”

Faced with a new country, a new child, and the need for a new job — to be a physician she would have had to go through her residency again — Ubavka joined the industry. “I have to admit, I didn’t know anything about the corporate world,” she says. “My survival instinct kicked in, which actually was very beneficial because I didn’t understand or accept obstacles that one faces in a new environment. I knew that I needed to work hard. I knew medicine. I joined the industry in an entry-level position as a product safety associate.”

Ubavka quickly rose through the ranks to a VP position, at the same time the industry was going through a growth phase, which meant mergers and acquisitions. “Every single merger and acquisition and change of management, I learned something new,” she says.

She came to Parexel eight years ago after her previous company was acquired. “I didn’t have some extraordinary expectation, I just wanted to be part of a big company, have some stability, and to have the opportunity to grow,” she says. “Parexel has given me this exposure and opened so many doors. Even today, I am still absolutely fascinated with the diversity profile of the people who we have in this company.”

Among her many accomplishments, Ubavka says her biggest achievement is her participation in the Women and Public Policy Program at the Harvard Kennedy School. “I have the opportunity to meet exceptional women starting with Iris Bohnet, who is the academic dean of the Kennedy School and the new chair Carol Hamilton — people who have amazing biographies,” she says. “To be part of such a group and to be part of the conversation around the position of women is my biggest achievement.”

Ubavka also focuses her energy on developing and mentoring young people. “I want to help them not make the same mistakes as I did,” she says.
Women all over the world play a key role in the development of life-changing medicines. On International Women’s Day and every day, Parexel salutes the female scientists and leaders who are revolutionizing clinical research and helping bring new treatments to patients.
Jessica Rousset
Chief Operating Officer
CURE Pharmaceutical

INNOVATION IS HOW WE CAN HAVE THE BIGGEST IMPACT IN TERMS OF UNMET NEEDS.

Jessica Rousset didn’t predict her path when she was fresh out of engineering school. She was working on a cancer vaccine in the GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals lab outside of Brussels when management identified that she might be better suited for marketing rather than as a career scientist. “Frankly, I was a little bit insulted at first, but it made me think, wow, okay, maybe my best laid plans are not going to come to fruition the way I had envisioned,” Jessica says. “But I was very fortunate to be at Glaxo. I started in the lab and then I was put on a rotation, which allowed me to be involved in international clinical trial monitoring and in corporate strategy.”

The big lesson for Jessica was that she learned she was comfortable crossing disciplines. With this knowledge in hand, she was ready to tackle new adventures in the United States. With dual citizenship — French-American — she set sail to California and joined the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla. “This was an eye-opening experience, a small academic institution with a very different culture and very different power dynamics with researchers bringing in grant dollars,” she says. “I was able to dive into understanding early discoveries and bench science and use my creativity and imagination to understand what type of products and commercial embodiments could come of this work.”

Again, she was able to take comfort in her ability to manage multiple disciplines: IT law, contract law, deal structuring, negotiations, and business opportunities. After about five years, she was ready to spread her wings yet again, and joined Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles (CHLA). As co-director, consortium for technology and innovation in pediatrics, she was responsible for operationalizing tech transfer from the ground-up. “I stayed at CHLA for 10 years, growing the role from a one-person tech transfer office to an innovation center, reinventing my role several times. In a way, this put CHLA on the map as a leader in pediatric innovation and that’s a legacy that I cherish.”

Jessica joined Cure Pharmaceutical just over three years ago as its chief business officer, before being promoted to her current role as chief operations officer. Cure is creating novel methods for administering drugs with the goals of greater convenience and discretion for patients and caregivers, removing the stigma associated with pills and importantly increasing a drug’s overall efficacy while limiting its side effects.

“I was inspired by the CEO of Cure and I immediately felt that we shared a vision, a philosophy, and a set of values, and ultimately that’s what swayed my decision,” she says. “My long-term vision for the organization is to unlock and deploy all the potential of the technology across many different industry verticals. My hope is that we can grow the company while maintaining its unique culture and create offshoots of the company to tackle all of the market opportunities that are ahead of us.”

With technology being the common thread through most of her career, Jessica is acutely aware of the gender disparity in the field, and is eager to move the needle. “This is a reality that I can change and I take this responsibility very seriously,” she says. “At Cure, we are looking to expand our board and want to bring more women to the board. We want that diversity, and certainly gender diversity within the leadership of the company.”

ADVICE: We choose challenging, meaningful jobs, but they are difficult and you need to put all of your energy into the work that you love and you need to feel valued.
As executive VP, creative director, of Dudnyk, Laurie Bartolomeo loves the excitement of coming up with new ideas, making them come to life, and presenting them to clients. As the mother of a child with a rare disease, what she loves even more is the work Dudnyk does to create awareness around rare disease drugs. Ironically, Dudnyk entered the rare disease space about 10 years ago, just before Laurie had her son Sammy, who has Angelman Syndrome, a complex genetic disorder that primarily affects the nervous system.

“When my son was born I started to live a journey that I had only watched other people go through in my professional career,” she says. “My experience very much followed what we know to be so challenging and difficult about rare disease. My son was diagnosed with infantile spasms at 11 months. Infantile spasms is not really technically a disease, it’s more of a cluster of symptoms indicative of something else. Getting his actual diagnosis took us seven years, which was frustrating but what we also so often see in rare disease communities. Working in this business and living in an area where we are surrounded by some of the top doctors in the world, it still took seven years, which gave me a unique perspective into so many of the families who are going through the same thing.”

Today, Sammy is 9 and Laurie says he brings love and joy to everyone who meets him. “He’s nonverbal, so he doesn’t talk; he’s G-tube fed, so he doesn’t eat; he’s in a wheelchair, so he doesn’t walk, but when I say all of these things I feel like it paints a picture of him that is not him,” Laurie says. “He is an amazing little boy who connects deeply with his family and with other people around him. We couldn’t be more grateful and blessed to have him in our family.”

Laurie’s 20-year creative advertising career includes a number of wins and accolades, yet the one campaign that remains top of mind for her is Get Swell, which was developed for Takeda’s Cinryze. Cinryze is an injectable prescription medicine that is used to help prevent swelling and/or painful attacks in children — 6 years of age and older, teenagers, and adults with hereditary angioedema (HAE). “John Kemble, who has been my partner on the creative and the art side for a long time, and I put together the campaign for Cinryze,” Laurie says. “HAE causes random attacks of swelling, a very debilitating, difficult disease,” she says. “We became profoundly involved, we met with patients and families; it was an amazing experience. We created the Swell Campaign, which we felt captured the insights of the emotional burden on the patient.”

The campaign received critical acclaim from the patient community, the client, as well as the industry — winning award after award. “This was a culmination of doing great creative work and doing something important to raise awareness around this disease,” Laurie says.

For Laurie, the Cinryze campaign embodies how she thinks about the creative process. “You can’t have good creative unless it is based in meaningful, strategic insights,” she says. “It’s one thing to grab attention and break the book so to speak, but to really change behavior and move the needle you have to hit on some internal truth, something that’s going to resonate with the audience in a way that’s powerful and that makes them reconsider their mindset or their behavior.”

**ADVICE:** To be a true leader you have to earn the respect and the trust of the people around you.

Listen to podcast
On **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY**, and every day, Dudnyk celebrates gender equality in the workplace and in the world.

Happy International Women’s Day to all of our female colleagues.

DUDNYK
A MEMBER OF FISHAWACK HEALTH
Joan Mannick, M.D., was in the right place at the right time to take advantage of a unique opportunity to lead a new company spun out of the Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research three years ago. That company is resTORbio, which she cofounded and serves as its chief medical officer.

“We were targeting aging pathways as a new way to treat age-related diseases, and Novartis decided to spin out the lead program into its own separate company, which is resTORbio,” she says. “I was delighted to take on the role, because I am quite passionate about the positive data from two Phase II trials. I wanted to move the program forward to determine if we would continue to see positive results in later phase trials.”

resTORbio’s lead program selectively inhibits the activity of a protein complex called target of rapamycin complex 1, or TORC1, an evolutionarily conserved pathway that contributes to the decline in function of multiple aging organ systems. The lead product candidate is a TORC1 inhibitor called RTB101, which is being developed alone and in combination with other TORC1 inhibitors for multiple aging-related diseases. “We are working on some really interesting high-quality science in preclinical species that suggests that aging isn’t just due to random wear and tear; it’s actually a biology that’s regulated,” Dr. Mannick says. “One of the best validated mechanisms identified to date is the activity of TORC1. When we inhibit the activity of this protein complex in every species study to date — yeast, worms, flies, and mice — the organisms not only live longer, but they stay healthier longer.”

Dr. Mannick says while the research is still in early stages, there is potential to improve a variety of age-related diseases.

In January 2018, Dr. Mannick and her team took the company public, an experience that she says unlike most people, she enjoyed. “I have a wonderful CEO, Chen Schor, and the two of us went on our IPO road show where we met with many, many, many different investors,” she says. “Because Chen and I get along so well, it was fun. I care greatly about this program and I hoped I could get other people to be as excited about it as I was.”

In addition to advancing the science and developing drugs that help people live longer, healthier lives, one of Dr. Mannick’s goals is to create a company culture that makes it a great place to work. “I had a really great mentor at Novartis, Dr. Lloyd Klickstein, who is one of my inspirations,” she says. “As a leader and a manager, he always made us feel heard. He gave us air cover and he made sure that our contributions were seen by upper management. This is the kind of leader and manager I want to be. I’m grateful he’s come to be the chief scientific officer at resTORbio.”

Joining resTORbio was not the first big leap Dr. Mannick has taken in her career. When she was 50 she had a self-described Eureka moment and made a life-altering decision to leave academic medicine to enter the world of biotech.

“I talked to my father, who said: Joan, 50 is one of the last times you can change careers and try something completely new,” she says. “I had some friends who had left academic medicine to go into biotech and they loved it, so I decided to take a risk and try something new. I eventually ended up at Novartis working in translational medicine. It was the perfect job for me because I knew the science and I knew the medicine, and while I wasn’t the best at either of those, I was really good at bridging the two.”

Listen to podcast

ADVICE: Be resilient, don’t worry when you hit hurdles, keep going because there is usually a way forward, and don’t take no for an answer.
An entrepreneur by nature, Dr. Andrea Pfeifer made an amazing leap moving from head of Nestlé’s Global Research in Lausanne, Switzerland, to cofounding AC Immune in 2003. “From childhood, I always felt I had to be an entrepreneur, and I was quite vocal about this,” she says. “Even when I was working at Nestlé as head of research I was very much interested in innovation, in particular in the healthcare sector. My approach was always about how nutrition, for example, could improve the well-being of people and prevent diseases.”

Her desire to help people improve their quality of life also goes back to her childhood. “I had countless chronic diseases, and I felt strongly that I needed to use my energy, my knowledge, my interest, my curiosity to bring something positive to people. My desire to make a better world has been part of my entire professional life.”

While at Nestlé, she led the scientific development of the first functional food, LCI, and one of the first cosmeceutical products in a joint venture with L’Oreal. She also co-founded the Nestlé Venture Capital Fund, a €100 million life-sciences corporate venture fund.

Dr. Pfeifer was recognized in 2009 as Technology Pioneer by the WEF and Swiss Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst&Young. Additional recognitions include the BioAlps prize 2013, one of the top 10 women in biotech from Fierce Biotech, and one of the 300 most influential personalities in Switzerland.

Today, as CEO of AC Immune, she oversees the clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company, which aims to become a global leader in precision medicine for neurodegenerative diseases. The company has nine therapeutic and three diagnostic product candidates in the pipeline, with five currently in clinical trials.

Dr. Pfeifer is passionate about moving the needle on Alzheimer’s disease, so much so that she co-founded the CEOi Initiative on Alzheimer’s disease. “I see every day how many patients and how many families of these patients are affected by Alzheimer’s and what the impact is on society,” she says. “There’s one event that I will never forget. Some years ago, I went to South Africa and had the chance to talk to Nelson Mandela about my work. Very proudly, by the way, I told him about the research we were doing around Alzheimer’s. He was very quiet and then he said, ‘You know, I did something for my country and I’m very proud that I’ve changed many things in my country, but you are doing something for the world.’ I went home and organized a meeting with all of my staff. I told them about my experience and I said this is exactly how you should see what we do and by the way, we will go — and this has become a common saying in AC Immune — to the moon. And our moon is, of course, to have a treatment for Alzheimer’s. At the moment, I would say we are going to Mars because it’s so difficult.”

Dr. Pfeifer says throughout her professional career she eschewed being a role model, but now says showing that a woman, even in a culturally complicated environment, can actually succeed is important. “As a woman in business I don’t think you should become a man, this is something I really stand for,” she says. “I accept that I might inspire other young women and I’m proud of this. We are probably one of the only companies in Switzerland that is 65% women — which I am also proud of.”

**ADVICE:** We will make it to the moon and our moon is, of course, to have a treatment for Alzheimer’s.
Throughout Shontelle Dodson’s career the common thread has been her desire to work for patients. “I have had a very unique career path within Astellas — actually my whole career — in that I have largely been focused in medical affairs,” Shontelle says. “It was only recently, about nine months ago, that I moved over to the commercial side of the business.”

Part of her focus on medical affairs has been her desire to care for patients and provide patient access to medications, as well as bring value to patients. When Shontelle joined Astellas nearly eight years ago, the company had a very small health outcomes group, which she expanded. “Subsequently, we created a broader global alignment around that group,” she says.

During her time in medical affairs, she also pioneered multiple innovative real-world data projects, including the creation of two national registries and innovative research partnerships with leading managed care and academic organizations.

Today, as senior VP, health systems, Shontelle leads health systems and oversees payer and channel account management, contracts and pricing, reimbursement and market access strategy, health systems marketing, key account management, and operations. “It’s important within the health systems group that we understand the overall product portfolio strategy so that we are collectively working together and moving in the same direction,” she says.

One of the initiatives that Shontelle is extremely passionate about is Astellas’ Oncology C3 Prize, which was launched four years ago. “Changing Cancer Care was initiated by my colleague Mark Reisenauer, senior VP of oncology, who was inspired after he experienced challenges as a caregiver to his father who had head and neck cancer,” Shontelle says. “The challenge is around supporting and inspiring innovative nontreatment ideas that could help patients and their caregivers. We’re looking for ideas — big and small — that help improve the lives of people who are impacted by cancer.”

Shontelle’s passion for patients was cemented during the time she spent as a resident in the Department of Veterans Affairs right after completing her Pharm.D. “I saw firsthand the benefit of helping patients navigate their health journey by arming them with more information and helping them to be more compliant with their medication to achieve better outcomes,” she says. “Seeing the difference I could make for patients, shaped me for life.”

For her leadership, Shontelle has been recognized by Astellas with its Vision Award and the Rising Star award from the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association.

I ASPIRE TO BE A CONTINUAL LEARNER AND AN AUTHENTIC LEADER.

Advice: I try to ensure I always make time to invest in other people because I’m so fortunate that people invested in me.
Anjum Swaroop is somewhat of an anomaly in today’s workplace. She has spent nearly her entire career — more than two decades — with the same company: Dr. Reddy’s Laboratories.

She attributes her longevity to three key factors: the company’s vision, the opportunities presented to her, and Dr. Reddy’s culture. “Dr. Anji Reddy, who was the founder, believed that medicine has value when it’s accessible and affordable to people all across the globe,” she says. “Personally, I share his vision, and I strongly believe in the notion that the poorest of poor must have access to affordable medications. I feel a real connection to the company, and that has played a large part in keeping me here.

“Also the company has provided me with immense opportunity to grow, and I have been supported to build the skills that I needed to succeed and also to drive success in the company,” she continues. “For example, Dr. Reddy’s has sponsored and supported all of my academic pursuits. In addition, I have had great mentors who have guided me, given me the requisite flexibility, encouraged me to go to school, and supported me through it all. Lastly, we have a great culture of collaboration, trust, and respect. Over the years, I have developed great relationships with colleagues. Culture is a great asset to have in a company.”

Currently, Anjum serves as chief IP counsel, a role she has held for more than six years. “I love my current role,” she says. “I love litigation, and I am deeply emerged in it. Moving from an Indian scientist to a U.S. attorney has been an adventurous ride.”

Over her 20-plus years, Anjum has seen how Dr. Reddy’s has grown from a midsize domestic operation, manufacturing, active pharmaceutical ingredients, to a company with a commercial presence in 30 countries.

“And now we have grown our business from an API manufacturer to a global leader in finished dosage forms,” she says. “The challenges, of course, are what you expect when a company expands from a small operation to a global giant. As we went into different markets and as the company grew, we were required to find the best ways to work and navigate all of the hurdles and requirements in those markets. The personal challenge for me during that time was adapting to a new culture. I had not been to the United States before. I was working in a new discipline, I had to raise my kids in a new environment. Those were a few challenges, but I wouldn’t change anything about it.”

Upon arriving in the U.S., Anjum determined that she needed a formal legal education to run the department smoothly, and undertook the daunting task of getting a law degree from Rutgers Law School.

Anjum is a very passionate, very focused, and very motivated leader, driven to accomplish as much as possible. “I lead by example; by doing right by yourself, you set an example to the team,” she says. “I like to jump into areas that need my attention. I don’t believe in the philosophy of leaders who practice ‘do as I say and not as I do,’ because that’s not going to inspire or motivate the teams. I feel I have a responsibility toward my team, they look up to me for leadership and support.”

Anjum says she has an unconventional view of success. “I don’t define success necessarily as my achievement at the workplace,” she says. “Success means evaluating what I have accomplished for the world around me; have I made a difference in some way to my family, my friends, my community?”

**ADVICE:** My advice to young women is whatever your dreams are, follow your dream, be persistent, and don’t let anything stop you.
Paula Ragan, Ph.D., has more than 18 years of experience building and creating companies in the biotech industry. She has been X4’s president, CEO, and a member of the board since founding the company in July 2014.

“I remember in the seventh grade seeing the cover of a Scientific American magazine with a prosthesis, and it struck me as wow, something could be built to make someone whole again,” Paula says. “Since then, I’ve been on a life-long journey to create and build things to help patients.” Before X4, Paula consulted as chief business officer at Lysosomal Therapeutics, a private biopharmaceutical company, where she led the company’s business development activities.

Throughout her career, Paula says she’s been very fortunate to connect with different companies and people who are innovative and patient-focused. One of the major imprints was the time she spent at Genzyme.

“Every single person always put the patient first; this was the culture driven by Henri Termeer, the former CEO of Genzyme,” she says. “He was a true gift to the industry, a visionary, and his saying ‘that good medicine is good business’ inspired everyone to bring good medicine to patients.”

X4 is developing novel therapeutics designed to improve immune cell trafficking to treat rare diseases, including primary immunodeficiencies and certain cancers. The company’s lead product candidate, mavorixafor (X4P-001), is a potential first-in-class, once-daily, oral inhibitor of CXCR4, currently in a Phase III clinical trial for the treatment of WHIM syndrome, a rare, inherited, primary immunodeficiency disease caused by genetic mutations in the CXCR4 receptor gene. Mavorixafor is also being developed by X4 to treat severe congenital neutropenia (SCN), Waldenström’s macroglobulinemia, and clear cell renal cell carcinoma.

The CXCR4 receptor was partially the inspiration for the company’s name.

“In the lab people would call it X4, so they didn’t have to use a mouthful when they were referring to the biology,” she says. “And secondly, I’m a bit of a superhero nerd. The X-Men in particular is a cool group of misfits who make a difference in the world. So, like a Venn diagram X4 is where it all came together.”

Building a business, especially a biotech business, requires a good scientific narrative to tell potential investors, perseverance to get through the hard times, and a solid network.

“I literally talked to every single person who anyone ever recommended I talk to,” she says. “I was fortunate to have Genzyme as my network anchor. I think having some portion of one’s career in a larger biotech is incredibly valuable because there is an intrinsic population of very talented people who you naturally touch base with through business interactions.”

In terms of raising money, Paula says it’s something that she had to get comfortable with pretty quickly.

“It’s part of this ecosystem, it’s just another element that you have to appreciate,” she says. “I was so cautious and almost apologetic when I asked the first person to invest in X4. Now it’s been five years, and we had a very successful recent fundraising and it’s the complete inverse; this company is going to make a difference.”

INTRINSICALLY, I AM A COMPETITIVE PERSON. I THINK THIS MAKES YOU STRIVE TO ALWAYS TRY TO WIN.

ADVICE: If you have a bug to innovate, call me and I’ll help you in any way that I can. There’s a fine line between being brave and naïve, and you definitely need a strong element of being brave.
Charlotte Jones-Burton, M.D., is leading Bristol-Myers Squibb’s cardiovascular development team to develop innovative medicines just as a conductor leads an orchestra. “I’m responsible for leading a cross-functional team — all the way from discovery to commercialization for our cardiovascular therapeutic area,” she says. “Specifically, I work with our head of cardiovascular development to ensure that the strategy that has been outlined is well developed and then is executed.”

Because cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer across the world, she says it’s important to continue education and funding.

Dr. Jones-Burton is as passionate about developing medicines as she is about driving diversity in clinical trials, particularly for racial minorities and women. “One of the key barriers to diversity in clinical trials is systemic and one that isn’t frequently talked about, which is a lack of representation along the process from drug discovery through development and commercialization within academic institutions, as well as in the pharmaceutical industry,” she says. “Diversity among those who are responsible for developing the strategy, discovering, and developing the medicines is critical. Why? This would ensure that clinical trials are designed to support the inclusion of many different populations, gender as well as racial ethnic diversity. This will allow the data to be generalizable to the broadest populations, and at the end of the day, that’s really what we’re striving for.”

To ensure there is full representation from bench-to-bedside, Dr. Jones-Burton believes what is needed is a commitment, a well-defined goal, and a way of monitoring to ensure that the goal is realized. “We have been successful in terms of the diversity around geography, so, I believe we can achieve success in other areas of diversity,” she says.

Bristol-Myers Squibb is ensuring its workforce is representative of the populations that it is aiming to treat with its medicines. “We have one group devoted specifically to women, we have another group devoted to black employees, another group devoted to Latina employees and there are others,” Dr. Jones-Burton says. “The company is also committed to the leadership development of individuals who represent these diverse populations such as myself. I’m an African-American woman and the investment in my leadership development allowed me to leave my fingerprints on these issues for the teams in which I lead.”

Dr. Jones-Burton is so passionate about making sure that there is diverse representation within the pharmaceutical and life-sciences industry that she was compelled to start an organization called Women of Color in Pharma.

“The vision of the organization is to transform the pharmaceutical industry with women of color and the mission is to empower women of color to excel in their professional and personal development so that they can have roles of impact,” she says. “We want to ensure that there is a strategic network where people have a safe and nurturing environment for self-reflection and discovery among Black and Latina women to foster personal and professional growth that will address a critical gap required to promote innovation and leadership.”

Along the way Dr. Jones-Burton has learned some important lessons, noting it’s important to do the work to understand what your passion is, what your purpose is, and what your potential is. “It’s important to develop meaningful relationships that you can leverage along your career journey,” she says. “It’s also important to show up with your ABCs. A is an attitude of gratitude. It’s an awesome responsibility to be in a position to change people’s lives and therefore, you must approach it with an attitude of gratitude. The B stands for belief in yourself. It’s really important that you have that. C stands for the courage to use your voice.”

**ADVICE:** It’s important to show up with your ABCs: attitude of gratitude, a belief in yourself, and the courage to speak up.

Charlotte Jones-Burton, M.D., is leading Bristol-Myers Squibb’s cardiovascular development team to develop innovative medicines just as a conductor leads an orchestra. “I’m responsible for leading a cross-functional team — all the way from discovery to commercialization for our cardiovascular therapeutic area,” she says. “Specifically, I work with our head of cardiovascular development to ensure that the strategy that has been outlined is well developed and then is executed.”

Because cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer across the world, she says it’s important to continue education and funding.

Dr. Jones-Burton is as passionate about developing medicines as she is about driving diversity in clinical trials, particularly for racial minorities and women. “One of the key barriers to diversity in clinical trials is systemic and one that isn’t frequently talked about, which is a lack of representation along the process from drug discovery through development and commercialization within academic institutions, as well as in the pharmaceutical industry,” she says. “Diversity among those who are responsible for developing the strategy, discovering, and developing the medicines is critical. Why? This would ensure that clinical trials are designed to support the inclusion of many different populations, gender as well as racial ethnic diversity. This will allow the data to be generalizable to the broadest populations, and at the end of the day, that’s really what we’re striving for.”

To ensure there is full representation from bench-to-bedside, Dr. Jones-Burton believes what is needed is a commitment, a well-defined goal, and a way of monitoring to ensure that the goal is realized. “We have been successful in terms of the diversity around geography, so, I believe we can achieve success in other areas of diversity,” she says.

Bristol-Myers Squibb is ensuring its workforce is representative of the populations that it is aiming to treat with its medicines. “We have one group devoted specifically to women, we have another group devoted to black employees, another group devoted to Latina employees and there are others,” Dr. Jones-Burton says. “The company is also committed to the leadership development of individuals who represent these diverse populations such as myself. I’m an African-American woman and the investment in my leadership development allowed me to leave my fingerprints on these issues for the teams in which I lead.”

Dr. Jones-Burton is so passionate about making sure that there is diverse representation within the pharmaceutical and life-sciences industry that she was compelled to start an organization called Women of Color in Pharma.

“The vision of the organization is to transform the pharmaceutical industry with women of color and the mission is to empower women of color to excel in their professional and personal development so that they can have roles of impact,” she says. “We want to ensure that there is a strategic network where people have a safe and nurturing environment for self-reflection and discovery among Black and Latina women to foster personal and professional growth that will address a critical gap required to promote innovation and leadership.”

Along the way Dr. Jones-Burton has learned some important lessons, noting it’s important to do the work to understand what your passion is, what your purpose is, and what your potential is. “It’s important to develop meaningful relationships that you can leverage along your career journey,” she says. “It’s also important to show up with your ABCs. A is an attitude of gratitude. It’s an awesome responsibility to be in a position to change people’s lives and therefore, you must approach it with an attitude of gratitude. The B stands for belief in yourself. It’s really important that you have that. C stands for the courage to use your voice.”

**ADVICE:** It’s important to show up with your ABCs: attitude of gratitude, a belief in yourself, and the courage to speak up.
Janet Kosloff
Founder and CEO
InCrowd

WOMEN CAN BE WHO THEY ARE AND STILL BE SUCCESSFUL.

Janet Kosloff’s entrepreneurial spirit was stoked by her experience in working for a number of start-ups on her way to founding her own company, InCrowd, but having two entrepreneurial parents might have added a little fuel to the fire as well. “Having parents who are entrepreneurs gave me a different type of work ethic than I may have gotten if they didn’t have their own business,” she says. “But I really caught the bug working for other start-ups. I had the confidence that at some point I would be able to start my own company.”

Janet connected with Diane Hayes in 2010 believing that healthcare market insights desperately needed one thing: less friction. They knew the power that busy doctors have to meaningfully influence drug commercialization, and they knew the frustration most market insights professionals have in reaching them quickly.

“As technology began to evolve, we knew that we could provide a solution that allowed our clients to tap into the ability to write survey questions and send them to very targeted responders and get data back in real time,” Janet says. “The real innovation that we brought to the industry 10 years ago, which is much more commonplace now, was the ability to get urgent business questions answered right away instead of having to go through a traditional, linear time-consuming process.”

Running a business requires a whole host of skills, and for Janet one of the most important factors for the success of a company in the long term is hiring the right people. “This is not only based on the skill sets that they bring to the table, but it’s also the chemistry of the company as a whole,” she says. “This is especially true when the company is small and growing, when it’s important to have the right chemistry.”

As a result her team, she says, is the best part of running the business. “For me, it’s been such a joy to work with smart, competent, just genuinely good people who care so much about the business that was once just an idea in your head,” Janet says. “There is a lot of gratification you get from people working hard and being committed to making that idea come to life. One of the things that Diane Hayes and I found joy in was creating a culture that we always wanted in companies where we worked but that didn’t exist.”

For Janet, starting InCrowd and having it be successful is one of the major successes of her life. “Unfortunately both my parents have passed away, but I think a lot about how proud they would be of me taking an idea, taking a leap, and executing that idea,” she says. “We have more than 50 people, and I see people buying houses, getting married, having babies, and getting on with their lives, being such an important factor in fueling their lives and being happy is a success to me. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to do that.”

Janet and Diane recently passed the torch to Daniel Fitzgerald to carry InCrowd to the next stage.

ADVICE: Being authentic and proud of who you are is extremely inspiring.

Janet Kosloff’s entrepreneurial spirit was stoked by her experience in working for a number of start-ups on her way to founding her own company, InCrowd, but having two entrepreneurial parents might have added a little fuel to the fire as well. “Having parents who are entrepreneurs gave me a different type of work ethic than I may have gotten if they didn’t have their own business,” she says. “But I really caught the bug working for other start-ups. I had the confidence that at some point I would be able to start my own company.”

Janet connected with Diane Hayes in 2010 believing that healthcare market insights desperately needed one thing: less friction. They knew the power that busy doctors have to meaningfully influence drug commercialization, and they knew the frustration most market insights professionals have in reaching them quickly.

“As technology began to evolve, we knew that we could provide a solution that allowed our clients to tap into the ability to write survey questions and send them to very targeted responders and get data back in real time,” Janet says. “The real innovation that we brought to the industry 10 years ago, which is much more commonplace now, was the ability to get urgent business questions answered right away instead of having to go through a traditional, linear time-consuming process.”

Running a business requires a whole host of skills, and for Janet one of the most important factors for the success of a company in the long term is hiring the right people. “This is not only based on the skill sets that they bring to the table, but it’s also the chemistry of the company as a whole,” she says. “This is especially true when the company is small and growing, when it’s important to have the right chemistry.”

As a result her team, she says, is the best part of running the business. “For me, it’s been such a joy to work with smart, competent, just genuinely good people who care so much about the business that was once just an idea in your head,” Janet says. “There is a lot of gratification you get from people working hard and being committed to making that idea come to life. One of the things that Diane Hayes and I found joy in was creating a culture that we always wanted in companies where we worked but that didn’t exist.”

For Janet, starting InCrowd and having it be successful is one of the major successes of her life. “Unfortunately both my parents have passed away, but I think a lot about how proud they would be of me taking an idea, taking a leap, and executing that idea,” she says. “We have more than 50 people, and I see people buying houses, getting married, having babies, and getting on with their lives, being such an important factor in fueling their lives and being happy is a success to me. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to do that.”

Janet and Diane recently passed the torch to Daniel Fitzgerald to carry InCrowd to the next stage.
Kim Johnson, president of GSW, a Syneos Health company, is a seasoned marketing and advertising executive who has expertly honed her craft on both sides of the table, having led major healthcare advertising agencies for almost a decade and serving on a major brand team at a top 5 pharmaceutical company.

“I’ve been in healthcare for more than 15 years, and it’s no accident that I work in the industry,” Kim says. “If we do our jobs right, we help people live longer, fuller, better lives. And for me, there’s no better motivation than that.”

With so many companies and industries looking to break into healthcare, Kim believes that those who already have an established footprint are well-positioned to contribute to advancing the healthcare conversation in the United States. “I have a sense of responsibility to moving the industry forward. I get a lot of excitement from working in healthcare and I think it’s a great time to be in this space.”

Kim cites the advances happening in the area of cancer research as just one of the areas where science is creating new opportunities. “Healthcare is so dynamic,” she says. “There is tremendous, cutting-edge work happening in oncology; I am fascinated by how dynamic and how transformative the science is.”

With her agency GSW part of the Syneos Health family of companies, she has access to a tremendous amount of data and trends that provide guidance and insights on the developing market factors. Kim says one of the areas she and her team is tracking is what they are calling the radical reorganization of biopharma —more consolidation, more M&A, and even internal changes inside organizations to work smarter.

“Healthcare companies are determined to innovate, and they have to figure out different ways to flex different cost structures,” she says. “We will continue to see changes in how companies do business. We have a lot of clients increasingly interested in agile marketing. While it’s a bit of a buzzword, more and more clients are asking us to partner with them to work in more iterative cycles, create faster production cycles, etc.

On the agency side, we’ve adapted — we have to. We work at a high-volume, high-velocity, high-production pace.”

Another trend Kim is tracking is the collaboration between pharmaceutical companies and nontraditional service companies, such as the partnership between Merck and Amazon to launch a voice navigation challenge for healthcare in the diabetes space. “The Alexa Diabetes Challenge contest is to incentivize startups and individual developers to create different apps that can harness Amazon Alexa’s voice technology for patients with diabetes,” she says. “We will to continue to see these types of collaborations inside healthcare with a capital H — pharma partnering with technology and service-based companies to leverage and take advantage of trends. Ultimately, my hope is that the patients will benefit.”

GSW is perfectly positioned on both coasts, with offices in New York and Los Angeles, to capitalize on talent and business opportunities. “My intention is to continue to operate with a very entrepreneurial culture and have senior-level leadership on all of our client businesses,” she says. “Like Steve Jobs said ‘Apple is the biggest startup in the world.’ I think there’s something to be said for bringing that type of spirit and mentality to agencies today. I believe greatness starts with our people, with the interactions on the team, with our partnerships with clients. We value high standards at the agency, and we hold everyone accountable.”

**ADVICE:** I’m a results-oriented person so I look for results, so I would tell my younger self to be more patient; I tell my older self to be more patient.
Terri Phillips, M.D.
VP and Head Global Medical Affairs
Merz North America

IF YOU BELIEVE IT, THEN YOU CAN ACHIEVE IT.

Following in her father’s military footsteps, Terri Phillips, M.D., served 14 years in the U.S. Army as a major in the medical corps. After leaving her assignment at Fort Campbell, the home of the 101st Airborne Division, Dr. Phillips, went into private practice and subsequently into the pharmaceutical industry.

“When in the Army, I did my residency in pediatrics and a fellowship in neonatal perinatal medicine,” she says. “I knew I wanted to subspecialize in pediatrics and the intensive care nursery was a place that I loved. I also loved the emergency room. I enjoyed the thrill of not knowing what was going to be next.”

Dr. Phillips says her path to medical affairs was serendipitous. “At the time I was looking for a way to balance work with my family,” she says. “I was raising four children and was married to another physician, our household, as you can imagine, was chaotic. The demand to give time to the kids started to weigh on me. In my specialty — and I was also the medical director — I worked nights, weekends, holidays, because the intensive care nursery never closes.”

As fate would have it, one of the large companies in the area was looking for a field-based medical person, who could work from a home. “This is how I ended up in medical affairs, and it’s been where I’ve spent my entire career,” she says.

As the importance of medical affairs within the pharmaceutical industry continues to increase in importance, Dr. Phillips says it’s been fun to watch that trajectory and be part of it. “Medical affairs is now recognized as one of the pillars of a successful commercial strategy for any company,” she says.

Dr. Phillips, who has been in her current position as VP and head global medical affairs at Merz North America for about two years, says her No. 1 goal is to build a best-in-class global medical affairs function, which begins with hiring the right people.

“We are in one of the fastest-growing aesthetics and neuroscience markets in the world,” she says. “It’s important that we forge strong, credible relationships with healthcare providers who understand that we are generating strong, credible science that they can trust.”

As an African-American woman and doctor, she knows all too well the challenges of being an “only” in the room. “As a woman of color, the simple fact is that I just didn’t see people like myself — at the executive level or senior management level,” she says. “When I was coming up through my training as a neonatal fellow, I was frequently the only person in the room who looked like me. I was also raising a family, and finding a woman leader who was also raising a family, someone who I could go to for advice about how to deal with a challenge, manage career progression, or how to balance it all, was rare.”

Dr. Phillips believes it’s incumbent on senior women leaders to be accessible to the next-generation and demonstrate in a very visible way that women can achieve professional goals while also having a family.

“As a society, we need to make it easier for women to combine their professional and personal lives and to make it okay to step off and then come back in to the workplace,” she says. ☻

Listen to podcast ⏯️

ADVICE: As a society, we need to make it easier for women to combine their professional and personal lives and to make it okay to step off and then come back into the workplace.
Elizabeth Pinto
Senior Director, Patient Services
Acadia Pharmaceuticals

If there is anything we can do to make someone else's journey just a tiny bit easier, we should absolutely do so.

With the desire to have a career that has a deeper purpose in making a difference in other people’s lives, Liz Pinto has spent virtually her entire professional life working on patient-led initiatives.

“I have had experience across the board from HCP to channel messaging, but at the end of the day, what drives me the most and makes me most passionate about the work that I do are the patients and caregivers,” she says. “What I like about the roles that I’ve had, and the role that I’m in now — in the patient services realm and patient marketing realm — is that I get to see firsthand the fruits of my efforts.”

Liz says the long hours, the stress, and deadlines melt away way when a patient, family member, or caregiver extends their thanks for the work you have done to help them to get treatment. “This is the biggest driver and repayment, and it makes an extra couple hours in a week seem like nothing,” Liz says.

Armed with a marketing degree, Liz says she could have used her skills to sell gum, for example, but that wouldn’t be fulfilling. “The pharmaceutical and the healthcare industry is highly regulated and it’s complicated. You have to think outside of the box — I love a challenge,” she says. “I always say this is our business, but it’s people’s lives. If there is anything that we can do to make someone else’s journey just a tiny bit easier, we should absolutely do so. This is just fundamental.”

In her current role as senior director, patient services at Acadia Pharmaceuticals, Liz oversees a team that is responsible for supporting three areas of the business: data and analytics, reimbursement, and access marketing. “Ultimately, we’re responsible for creating an easy and smooth process for healthcare professionals, patients, and caregivers to access medication,” she says. “We also provide support in a number of different ways to help patients stay on their treatment as prescribed. On top of this, of course, is making sure that our strategy is both patient-centered and aligns to our ultimate organizational goals.”

Liz is a servant leader, who helps her team to develop and perform at the highest level. “I always hire people smarter than me,” she says. “I’ve also learned that when you make other people look good and help them succeed, it helps you as well. It’s important to find out what motivates people — the same thing doesn’t motivate everyone. Also, I personally take a vested interest in the people who I mentor or coach. I like to pull people up — and make sure they are recognized for their hard work and skills.”

Advice: I always hire people smarter than me. I’ve learned that when you make other people look good and help other people succeed, it helps you as well.
Lan Huang, Ph.D., a scientist and entrepreneur, has more than a decade of experience in both the Chinese and U.S. biotechnology industries. “My true passion is to bring scientific discoveries to become medicines and to help patients globally,” she says. “My Chinese background and U.S. training is a perfect union to develop a more cost- and time-efficient business model for innovative drug development.”

BeyondSpring Pharmaceuticals is not Lan’s first entrepreneurial venture. She learned to be a start-up success with her first company in 2007, when she cofounded Wuxi MTLH Biotechnology Co. She served as CEO of Wuxi until in 2010.

In 2008, she founded Paramax International Inc., a CRO that conducts clinical trials for global biopharmaceutical and medical device companies. The company was later acquired by ReSearch Pharmaceutical Services.

In 2010, Dr. Huang then founded Wanchun Biotech, the former holding company of BeyondSpring. “These were the building blocks for me, I translated these experience into founding BeyondSpring in 2014,” she says.

The company’s name speaks to Lan’s mission to work beyond borders and go beyond seasons — from the hope of spring directly into the harvest season of autumn — quickly. “BeyondSpring is innovative and because we also use a lot of Chinese clinical resources, we can conduct trials much faster and cheaper.”

BeyondSpring is a global, clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company developing innovative immuno-oncology cancer therapies. The company has a robust pipeline generated from internal development. BeyondSpring also has a collaboration with the University of Washington in de novo drug discovery using a ubiquitination platform. The company’s lead asset, Plinabulin, is in two Phase III global clinical trials as a direct anticancer agent in the treatment of non-small cell lung cancer and in the prevention of chemotherapy-induced neutropenia.

“I am very excited about the immuno-oncology,” Lan says. “The body’s ability to use the immune system to fight cancer is just the ultimate. The field still needs improvement, even for second-line non-small cell lung cancer the response rate is less than 20%. So, 80% of patients need additional help.”

BeyondSpring has dual operations in New York and China, each with a different focus. “All of the R&D plans, protocols, and regulatory filings originate from New York,” she says. “Because there are so many cancer patients in China, the Chinese operations focus on clinical trials.”

Lan’s passion and drive to transform cancer treatment stem from her childhood, when her grandfather died of cancer. “Every cancer patient is like my family member,” she says. “Every day I’m fighting to bring innovative drugs to the market so I can help them.”

Not that she needs another reason to change the oncology landscape, but she is inspired by her young son, who is not only very supportive of her mission, but is doing his part as well by donating to Children’s Hospital every year. “He sees me travel to China to treat and help cancer patients, she says. “Recently, he wrote in a book: ‘My mom is a scientist trying to find a cure with cancer. I would like God to help my mom with finding a cure for cancer. And this is important to me because this would help millions of people and would make my mom and her company succeed.’ My young son wants to help mommy and help patients globally. This drives me every day.”

LISTEN TO PODCAST

ADVICE: Work hard, do the right things, and you can achieve your goal.
At BeyondSpring Pharmaceuticals, we believe that it takes a force of nature to fight a force of nature. That’s why we’re developing oncological solutions that help keep patients in the fight of their lives. We’re on a relentless quest to control oncological disease by evolving the standard of care and improving patient outcomes.

The power is in our pipeline. Contact Rich Daly at General@BeyondSpringPharma.com.
Jennifer Gottlieb has spent her entire 25-year-plus career in the marketing communication world, serving small and large pharma and biotech companies, conquering one challenge after another, and building high-performing teams. Her vast experience positioned her perfectly to ascend to the presidency of W2O about two years ago.

“I am a lifelong learner of the industry as well as the areas in which I am expert, but I would say my work at big public holding companies as well as independent agencies gave me the best background to join forces with Jim Weiss, our CEO and founder in 2006,” she says. “Over a 13-year period, we’ve grown this company from a $6 million biotechnology start-up based in San Francisco to the more than $200 million integrated powerhouse healthcare firm it is today. Holding a number of different jobs and growing with the firm over the past decade-plus of time enabled me to take this position with a lot of confidence as to what we can do next.”

Jennifer also has a great deal of excitement about the changing environment of pharmaceutical marketing and communications. “With the convergence of different disciplines — communications, marketing, digital, social — and the different mediums, the lines are blurring in terms of what’s the best solution for the client,” she says.

Jennifer says the industry is headed for a technology-focused future. “We often call it the uber-ization of healthcare,” she says. “As more and more people get their information from their phone, this will lead to a mobile-first dynamic. This doesn’t mean there won’t be traditional TV advertising, print advertising, or traditional public relations, but it will come down to how people consume information, what is the most critical information they need, how the information is customized for them, and how does the content continue to be nimble and refreshed on a regular basis to maintain interest and relevance. From this, we will see the impact on the rest of the marketing mix.”

Believing that people are the most important asset a company has, Jennifer and the W2O executive team have created a people-first culture. “This means our employees as well as our client partners, patient communities, and the healthcare industry at large,” she says. “People are our North Star; we’re in this business because we love solving problems and helping people live healthier lives. We always say we want to make the world a healthier place through marketing and communications.”

Jennifer is a role model to W2O team members as well as to women throughout the industry. “I am a very honest and real leader, so when I project my leadership and how I do it, it’s very much with all of the joy the position holds as well as all of the challenges — so people have a chance to learn from my experiences. I don’t pretend that it’s easy all the time — work-life integration requires juggling.”

ADVICE: We believe ideas can come from anyone at any level. We want people to be their best. Because we want people to take the hill and operate with courage and conviction, we promote an open environment that allows people to flourish.
On International Women’s Day (#IWD), we’d like to congratulate our Global President, Jennifer Gottlieb, and other female leaders who are advancing and redefining the healthcare industry.

Jennifer is leading W2O into the future as one of the largest and most innovative healthcare marketing and communications firms in the industry. She’s committed to diversity and inclusion and has supported the creation of several employee resource groups, including Women of W2O.

Thank you all for your positive impact and happy #IWD!
As is all too often in the life-sciences industry, Anna Sundgren, Ph.D., found her purpose through personal tragedy. Her mother passed away while on dialysis in 2010. Because she had an underlying disease, Anna’s mother was ineligible for a transplant. Since her mom’s death, Anna has channeled all of her passion into research and development around chronic kidney disease.

As the time of her podcast, Anna was senior director for AstraZeneca’s renal disease business unit, where she held dual responsibilities. “For the past five years, I have worked to build a strategic path for renal disease in the company,” she says. “I also have the role as a global development leader, where I have the honor, if you will, to be involved in R&D.”

Today, Anna is the global development leader for Lokelma and Bydureon. Lokelma is approved in the United States for the treatment of adults with hyperkalaemia, a serious condition characterized by elevated potassium levels in the blood associated with cardiovascular, renal, and metabolic diseases. Bydureon is a Type 2 diabetes medication.

Anna has been involved in research and pharmaceutical development for more than 20 years, since earning her Ph.D. in neurochemistry and neurotoxicology from Stockholm University, Sweden, in 1998.

Anna says innovation in treating kidney disease is very much needed, as there has been little movement in the past 30 years. “The number of deaths in this area has doubled since 1990, the reason being because when kidney function declines there is limited capacity to filter urine,” she says. “As a result, complications arise that can lead to cardiovascular death. Essentially, people succumb to complications before they can receive a transplant. With the new scientific understanding we have in the area, we have the ability to address kidney disease in ways that we didn’t have 30 years ago.”

Part of her vision, and that of AstraZeneca, is to be able to diagnose chronic kidney disease early on, knowing that if treated effectively with the new medicines that are coming into the renal space, this will effectively stop patients from having to go on to dialysis and be subject to another disease or require a kidney transplant.

Anna has been with AstraZeneca since 2001; she joined the company when a new laboratory opened in Sweden. “I was drawn to the company because of its science-oriented focus and the opportunities this presented,” she says. “AstraZeneca has always allowed personal growth and continuous learning, which has allowed me to acquire new skills to move up in the organization. When you get a new job, it feels like you’re changing company almost. I’ve worked on several different continents in many, many different roles, so it doesn’t seem like 18 years, which I can’t believe myself sometimes. I’ve enjoyed the international work, which has opened me up to different perspectives and different cultures. This helps me move things along in a more sensible way.”

**ADVICE:** Enabling people to develop within the team is something I am very proud of. There’s nothing in this business you can do alone — unleashing the potential of a team is what matters.
Caroly

President
precisioneffect

As president of precisioneffect, Carolyn Morgan’s vision is clear: to work with companies that are seeking to change the standard of care. “This has been a big part of our success and a big part of our strategic vision,” she says. “People understand what kind of company we want to be and what kind of clients we want to work with. We tend to be risk takers. We are comfortable charting uncharted territories and figuring out how to solve complicated problems.”

To achieve the agency’s goals, this requires behavior change across the board. “We look to change the way physicians practice and have patients open up to try a new novel therapy or a new way of being treated,” she says.

This philosophy of behavior change extends to the agency’s internal culture as well. Cultivating team dynamics while cultivating client business is never easy, especially during a growth phase, so Carolyn says in the last year the agency conducted an internal cultural analysis. “We have to keep up with what the teams’ needs are,” she says. “It’s different workflows. It’s different processes. We have to make sure we are giving everybody what they need to be successful.”

Through that process, Carolyn and her executive team started to hear a lot of the same things. And like other successful agencies, she learned there was a need to celebrate teamwork. “We’re a large team but we’re also individual teams helping each client,” she says. “We’ve relaunched our culture as one of we-centricity and we’re celebrating we-centric moments through we-centric toasts every Friday to celebrate different team wins or nominating peers for cheers and giving them opportunities to be recognized through company meetings. We want to make sure that we’re celebrating those smaller moments to build each other up and that we’re always proud of the work that we’re doing before it leaves the shop.”

Carolyn joined the agency more than 15 years ago, and was named president in 2013. In that time, the agency has experienced tremendous growth and was brought in under the umbrella of the Precision Medicine Group, founded by Mark Clein and Ethan Leder.

As a leader, Carolyn says helping people to trust their gut has been one of the biggest lessons she’s learned. “It’s okay if something’s not going right; we’re human, things are going to go wrong,” she says. “I’ve also learned that I always need to be learning. I don’t have all the answers and I’m not afraid to fail, but I’d rather fail fast. I’d rather make a decision and move forward, and then if it doesn’t work out, I’m okay saying it wasn’t the right choice. Let’s regroup and let’s re-band together and let’s move forward with another alternative. Banding the team together in those moments is really important.”

Carolyn says her job as a leader is never done. “I know that I can improve all the time, and I know the agency can improve all the time,” she says. “I’m constantly seeking additional inputs so I can determine whether or not something is going to work well. I think if you go through a whole year and you haven’t made any mistakes, you’re probably not taking any risks and you’re probably not growing.”

Bruce Lehman, founder of LehmanMillet, which eventually became precisioneffect, saw Carolyn’s potential early on and positioned her to take over the agency upon his retirement. But she had to prove herself first and moved to southern California with her husband and two sets of twins, which were born 26 months apart, to run a sister agency that had been recently acquired.

“In 2013, I achieved my goal of growing that office, I tripled it in size, and I moved back to Boston to become president,” she says.

Lessons Learned: Helping people to trust their gut has been one of the biggest lessons I’ve learned.
As global chief executive of DIA Barbara Lopez Kunz is responsible for the leadership and oversight of a 55-year-old organization that brings together thought leaders from across the entire healthcare ecosystem to work on difficult issues that need to be resolved to get medical products, therapy drugs, and devices to patients globally.

“In the current environment there is a need for a trusted voice, a non-biased broker, if you will, to ensure that there’s relevance to the information that’s being shared, therefore we believe DIA is ever more important,” she says. “There’s a real need for detailed conversations, between academics and industry regulators, payers, healthcare providers, clinicians, and of course patients. There are a lot of areas that are ripe for resolution and for improvement. Our work couldn’t be more important.”

Currently, DIA has a global footprint in more than 80 countries, connects with more than 10,000 meeting attendees, and engages with more than 6,000 collaborators.

To manage its global network, Barbara says the organization is working on a digital strategy to make content available to people, whether they are sitting in Brazil, Washington D.C., or Tanzania. DIA provides access to insights from leaders and peers in the form of 23,000-plus global forum views and 12,000-plus podcast downloads. “We want to provide content that can be accessed in real time, so our members can learn what’s happening and what’s being discussed as new ideas are brought forward through DIA,” she says. “We want those tens of thousands of people who are committed to DIA to be able share in the knowledge.”

In addition to providing oversight of DIA’s global operations, Barbara is responsible for implementing strategies that focus on driving thought leadership and innovation to improve the health of people worldwide. As such, Barbara is on top of the many trends that are impacting the industry.

“There are exciting new technologies coming forward, I would never have imagined that we would have turned cancer into a chronic condition or we would be 3D printing organs or that gene therapy and gene editing are the evolution of genetic medicine,” she says. “Just as important are the processes to ensure that those technologies go from early ideation to patients. We are talking about the use of real-world data in regulatory decision-making and in clinical development. We are talking about understanding the people who are living with diseases as we build therapeutic responses. We are talking about regulatory harmonization; DIA has been very involved with the ICH to ensure that guidances are being shared and implemented effectively as well as ensuring that we train regulators, and we’re doing all of this on a global scale.”

Since joining DIA six years ago from Battelle, where she served as president of health and life sciences, Barbara says she has been moved by the people who are living with diseases as we build therapeutic responses. We are talking about understanding the people who are living with diseases as we build therapeutic responses. We are talking about regulatory harmonization; DIA has been very involved with the ICH to ensure that guidances are being shared and implemented effectively as well as ensuring that we train regulators, and we’re doing all of this on a global scale.”

Barbara says the reason she moved her career into the healthcare space was to make a difference in other people’s lives. “There is a personal satisfaction you get from seeing the energy and effort that you put into your career have a real value for other people — there’s nothing better than that.”

**ADVICE:** The ability to help people to bring their best game forward is important to the success of any organization.
Meredith Terry, Ph.D.
Director, Behavioral Strategy
MicroMass Communications Inc.

At the time of Meredith Terry, Ph.D.’s podcast, she had just been promoted to director of behavioral strategy at MicroMass, a position that allows her to translate her unique skills in social psychology into behavioral strategy and design in the agency world.

“My sub-area of social psychology is self and identity — how people think about and relate to themselves, what goes on inside their head, and how does this affect the decisions they make. I started looking at how does the way we think about ourselves affect how adherent we are to medications, our likelihood of following through with what our doctor recommends, and how we engage in health decisions.”

Following this path was a nice jump from the academic world to the world of applying that research into marketing. “When thinking about more complex behaviors, social psychology opens up the door to understanding the complexity of behavior,” Meredith says. “I feel lucky every day that I get to wake up and still think about people and why they do what they do.”

The focus of the agency is to apply evidence-based behavioral science research to change either patient or provider behavior. “Some of our team members have degrees in health communication or health psychology, some have degrees in public health and social work,” she says. “Our main purpose is to pull insights developed by our behavioral scientists into campaigns that reflect how patients think, feel, and behave and how we can change the way they’re thinking, feeling, and behaving to optimize the outcomes they’re experiencing.”

Meredith’s background is as a social psychologist, which is the scientific study of how people think about, influence, and relate to one another. “I like to think about my Ph.D. as being a lens into everyday human behavior and understanding how people are affected by the world around them and how they are affected by the other people in their world,” she says.

Meredith’s career path has been nontraditional, taking her from teaching to academic research to the agency world. “I left my tenure-track position at a small teaching university to take a research fellowship at Duke,” she says. Significant benefits to health — physical health and mental health in terms of reduced anxiety and depression,” she says. “We are using this evidence to create CRM campaigns with mindfulness instructions, or resources on a website, or as part of a starter kit for patients who are starting on a new product to help them learn this skill.”

ADVICE: Don’t underestimate the small moments. It’s easy to think back about the big moments, but on a day-to-day level, a lot of small moments can shift and guide your life in different directions.
Connecting the why to what she does has always been easy for Peyton Howell, who feels very lucky and blessed to be part of the healthcare industry, particularly within pharmaceuticals. The why for Peyton is her ability to make a difference in the lives of patients.

It was while at The Lash Group, a boutique consultancy she cofounded in the early 1990s, that Peyton was involved with developing the first generation of reimbursement support and patient-assistance programs. “This work changed how patients were able to access life-saving treatments,” she says. Early on, she and her team faced a fork in the road, which turned into a wow moment for Peyton. “A customer with a new product launch experienced success greater than what any of us had expected, and certainly far more than we were staffed to accommodate,” she says. “Because we were running the reimbursement program, if we didn’t respond to the overwhelming incoming volume then patients would have had delayed access to treatment, and patients’ lives could have been affected. So the situation was fairly urgent. I honestly didn’t know what to do. I went with my gut; I rallied the entire group together and I was completely vulnerable and honest. I said we were either going to address this together and go on to be great, or we would fail and patients would be impacted. I connected the why.” The company went on to be great, and eventually the Lash Group was bought by AmeriSourceBergen.

Peyton’s ability to rally her teams to go beyond what they are capable of doing is one of the hallmarks of her leadership style. “The power of why is so palpable, particularly when it involves a patient,” she says. “It was an incredible lesson for me to get the team to see that there is no limit to what even a relatively small team of people can do when they’re working together toward a common goal.”

Another lesson Peyton took from her days as an entrepreneur business owner is understanding how to build an organization for sustained growth and developing teams to be successful. “Every day, I act as a founder and an owner, whether I’m an owner or not,” she says. “Having an owner mindset as an employee, thinking about how every dollar is invested and spent, is a great way to lead.”

Today, Peyton sits in the C-suite of one of the largest global biopharmaceutical companies in the world — Parexel — as executive VP and chief commercial and strategy officer. She is bringing all the expertise and insights she has gleaned during her 25-year career from the commercial side of the business to drug development. “My role involves strategic oversight, including M&A, marketing and communications, and sales and business development,” she says. “It also includes something that echoes my roots, which is all of our consulting services.”

In the almost two years since Peyton joined Parexel, the company has implemented a new corporate strategy focused on the patient and completed a brand refresh. “Longer term, my goal is to have Parexel be the market leader in terms of innovation in clinical research and drug development, as well as being the CRO that is focused on the patient and patient access,” she says.

**ADVICE:** When you can identify your performance metrics, particularly as a female leader, then that’s the discussion you can have to continue to advance your career and frankly identify your value to any company.
As a lawyer and physician, Jessica Scott, M.D., brings a unique perspective to Takeda and her role as head of patient engagement across Takeda R&D. Jessica is using her unique skills to help lead an organizational and cultural mindset from developing medicines for patients to developing medicines with patients. “I noticed that there was a keen interest in patient-centricity and patient-focus and yet, patients weren’t part of research and development,” she says. For her, a real patient partnership involves bringing patients into the process much earlier in the 10- to 15-year development cycle for a new medicine.

She is taking action and so far the results have been very rewarding. “We are seeing evidence of the impact on our pipeline,” Jessica says. “Study teams are having ‘aha’ moments when interacting with patients, which is really rewarding.”

One of the reasons Jessica joined Takeda in 2018 from GlaxoSmithKline was to be part of the culture change within the organization. “Our president of R&D, Andy Plump, had already worked with a task force to begin this transition,” she says. “They had developed key performance indicators for the R&D organization to instill a patient-centric culture — values and beliefs — that are more in tune with patients’ perspectives.”

Through a series of initiatives tied to clear metrics, Jessica and her team are creating the opportunity for discovery, and triggering innovative thinking by leveraging incentives as part of a push and pull strategy. As part of the pull, they are creating clear communications that outline the value of the engagement, so that the broader organization can learn from the activities that are being conducted by the early adopters.

Jessica admits there is still work to be done, but Takeda is well on its way. “We are operationalizing a gauzy idea into reality because we believe it’s the right thing to do,” she says. “And it aligns with our Takeda priorities to put the patient first, which will help bring trust, build reputation, and ultimately drive business.”

Jessica’s passion around understanding the patient perspective stems from her very personal connection to the process. “When I was a teenager, my sister was diagnosed with cancer, and she was treated in a very highly respected academic medical center from a disease perspective, but not necessarily as a whole person,” she says. “And certainly the needs of our family weren’t addressed either. I wanted to go into medicine not to cure cancer, although increasingly, I’ve gotten closer and closer to being part of delivering medicines that can cure cancer, but to take care of the whole person and the whole family.”

Unfortunately, Jessica’s sister passed away after three years of treatment, including involvement in a clinical trial. “For me, this meant going to law school,” she says. “Law school was a really valuable experience. I learned clarity of thought and communication, advocacy, reasoning, and the use of laws and regulations. I love the way these two disciplines have come together in my career, and it’s certainly inspiring and really aligns with my values and my passion.”

ADVICE: To reach the executive level, uncover what you are passionate about. Explore what inspires you and realize that you won’t always know where you are going to land. Be open to where the journey might take you.
Gwen Nichols, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

I GAUGE SUCCESS BY KNOWING THAT WHAT I’VE DONE HAS HAD AN IMPACT.

Gwen Nichols, M.D., has crafted a multifaceted career, stretching herself to tackle new challenges every 10 years or so. She spent 10 years at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, between training and as an attending physician on the leukemia service. She spent 10 years at Columbia University Medical Center, ultimately as director, hematologic malignancies program. She then spent 10 years at Roche, starting as a translational medicine leader, eventually being named oncology site head. Now, as chief medical officer of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS), she is using her passion and skill to change the spectrum of treatment for patients on a global scale. “The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society has been around for 70 years and our mission is to help patients with blood cancers, including leukemias, lymphomas, myeloma, myelodysplastic syndromes, and a large number of less frequently diagnosed but equally important malignancies that involve the blood,” Dr. Nichols says. “Our goal is to find cures and to help patients get the best possible treatments for these diseases. We serve thousands of patients and conduct $50 million to $60 million in research each year. We have a broad mission to not only serve patients, doctors, and nurses, but also caregivers.”

Dr. Nichols always wanted to be a scientist and to take care of patients. “I wanted a career where I could do both,” she says. At the beginning she got a lot of satisfaction taking care of one patient at a time, but grew dissatisfied that science wasn’t changing fast enough. “So, I went to a pharmaceutical company to develop drugs with the hope of changing a whole disease and maybe thousands of people’s lives,” she says. “And then I thought this still isn’t quite enough. When I looked at the job description for LLS, I thought here was an opportunity to change the global trajectory of care in a way that couldn’t be done at one academic institution or one company.”

Dr. Nichols is proud to note that in partnership with the pharmaceutical industry over the past three years, almost all of the drugs that have been approved by the FDA to treat blood cancers — 45 of the 50 new agents — can be traced back to research supported by LLS. “Some portion of the discovery or the clinical trials that led to the approval of these agents, oftentimes it was research we started, or was supported by us,” she says. “It’s a long discovery and development period — 15 to 20 years — and we see ourselves as a important piece of the continuum to get drugs to the pharmaceutical manufacturers to be able to develop them fully and get them to patients.”

One of the initiatives that Dr. Nichols is extremely passionate about is The LLS Children’s Initiative: Cures and Care for Children, through which the organization is committed to more than doubling its investment in pediatric cancer research to $25 million over the next five years. She became interested in the research during her time at Roche Pharmaceuticals, where she had the opportunity of seeing several new agents that had promising potential for pediatric diseases, in particular pediatric leukemias, as well as pediatric sarcomas.

Another LLS initiative that has her excited is Women Curing Cancer. “This program, which brings together philanthropic women to collectively move the needle in cancer cures and access to treatments, came out of our Washington, D.C., chapter where we have a number of very powerful women,” she says.

ADVICE: I was a lone wolf for many years and I wish that I had learned earlier that advocating for yourself doesn’t mean talking yourself up and being boastful, it’s about finding like-minded people and figuring out how to work together. The more you can help people succeed, the more all of you will succeed.
Sophia Ononye, Ph.D., came to the United States 17 years ago to pursue her dream to become a leader within the healthcare and life-sciences industry. “From the time I was 7 I didn’t want to be anything else or do anything else,” she says. Today, her dream has become a reality. As founder and CEO of her own consulting firm, Sophia has created a powerful brand. “I’m a Nigerian-American entrepreneur with a strong background in oncology and a diverse interest in digital health, value-based care, and innovative drug development,” she says.

Sophia’s curiosity and ambition have already taken her far. She has earned a bachelor’s degree in biochemistry, a master’s degree in public health, a Ph.D. in pharmaceutical sciences, with a concentration in medicinal chemistry, an MBA in health management, and a postdoctoral fellowship in medical oncology research.

While pursuing her BA at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, she did a National Science Foundation internship at the Ohio State University, which was a very important turning point for her career. “This allowed me to get a job at Pfizer as an associate analytical development scientist,” she says. “Moving from Ohio to Connecticut was like moving to Las Vegas, I was so excited.”

Sophia was eager to take advantage of the opportunity. Growing up in Nigeria she saw the challenges her mother faced as she pursued her own Ph.D. and the lack of opportunities especially for women in life sciences and healthcare. “Watching my mom, watching my community understand their own medical needs, and growing up without a lot, made me a lot stronger and a lot more mature at a very early age,” she says.

Sophia says what has contributed the most to her professional success is her massive intellectual curiosity. “By the time I was 6 or 7 nobody was able to answer my questions and I was reading the Encyclopedia Britannica for fun,” she says. “Imagine being the youngest of five and instead of reading a storybook, I cared more about finding out what hepatitis C was.”

Another key to her success is focus and understanding that hard work pays off. Sophia also has learned to harness the power of having a well-developed network. “I want to inspire, motivate, and empower other women, women of color, or people who are looking to branch out into areas beyond the norm,” she says. “I’ve always believed that with hard work, determination, and the right people on your side there’s very little that you cannot achieve in this world.”

Sophia had her wow moment while being mentored by the managing director of the Yale Entrepreneurial Institute, who inspired her to take a leap of faith into the world of being a business owner. “Being an entrepreneur it’s probably the most difficult thing I’ve ever done, even more difficult than being a medicinal chemist,” she says.

“There are days when I wake up and I’m so excited; this is who I am, this is who I want to be. I love the autonomy. I love the flexibility. And then there are days when I wake up and think why am I doing this?”

Sophia cares deeply about the impact she can have by helping biotech and pharmaceutical companies take what they’re doing to next level. “I care about transforming patients’ lives, not just here in the United States, but worldwide, and that comes from the fact that I still have family back in Nigeria who could benefit from drugs being developing here in the United States.”

**ADVICE:** Listen to your inner voice as well as your inner critic, your inner critic sometimes has something positive to say to you. It might not be in the tone that you like, but listen and take that bold step.
Throughout her career, Ahnal Purohit, Ph.D., has been ahead of the curve. As founder and CEO of Purohit Navigation, she has been the visionary behind many of the company’s groundbreaking initiatives. And today, she is redefining how traditional advertising agencies fit into the healthcare ecosystem. “I believe we can all agree that the healthcare ecosystem is changing and will continue to change,” she says. “And as the ecosystem changes, how can we be comfortable thinking of marketing and advertising in a traditional way? For our own survival we must rethink and redefine ourselves to be relevant. I also believe that most clients agree the ecosystem is changing. When we have conversations with them, it’s not whether healthcare is changing or not, it’s about where it is changing, how it is changing, and how fast it is changing. Our engagement with clients relates back to what kind of novel solutions we can bring to the table and how we can uncover opportunities specific to their challenges.”

Ahnal says the company’s name Purohit Navigation, speaks to the role they play to navigate a brand, a franchise, or company to its fullest potential. “We have to think outside of the box and look at the continuum and uncover what is going to be most relevant,” she says.

Thinking unconventionally defines how Ahnal has always grounded her business as well as her career. She was one of the first women, no less a woman of color, to start an advertising agency almost 35 years ago. “At that time it was a man’s world, no doubt about it,” she says. “Initially the barrier was not only that I was a woman, but that I was a woman of Indian origin and an immigrant. It wasn’t that men didn’t want to work with me; quite frankly, they didn’t know what to do with me. I would enter an office and they wouldn’t know how to greet me, how to talk to me, etc. I think it was the fear of unknown. I had to convince them that I may look different, I may talk differently, and I represent a group that they may not know, but at the end of the day, my thinking was similar to what they wanted and that I was approachable.”

One of the ways that Ahnal broke through was by listening, learning, and understanding their fears. “I empathized with them and I provided strategic solutions that included outside of the box thinking,” she says. “I figured that most people want to be associated with individuals who can help them succeed in their jobs and their careers. My thinking was if I can help them to be successful, success will also come to me.”

Ahnal acknowledges that there were some pharma company leaders who felt that she did not belong in the industry and were vocal in their opposition. “Some of the things they said would be considered abhorrent today, to say the least,” she says. “But there were many others who were very supportive of me. This taught me that there are a lot of good people in our industry, and that I should concentrate on them, appreciate the opportunities that they were giving to me, and be positive. Even now, I tell my staff to appreciate all of our clients; they believe in us and they trust us.”

Ahnal wants people to know that hard work and talent are equally distributed by gender, race, age, etc. “And because of this philosophy at Purohit Navigation we hire only based on talent,” she says. “I also believe that most clients agree the ecosystem is changing. When we have conversations with them, it’s not whether healthcare is changing or not, it’s about where it is changing, how it is changing, and how fast it is changing. Our engagement with clients relates back to what kind of novel solutions we can bring to the table and how we can uncover opportunities specific to their challenges.”

Ahnal acknowledges that there were some pharma company leaders who felt that she did not belong in the industry and were vocal in their opposition. “Some of the things they said would be considered abhorrent today, to say the least,” she says. “But there were many others who were very supportive of me. This taught me that there are a lot of good people in our industry, and that I should concentrate on them, appreciate the opportunities that they were giving to me, and be positive. Even now, I tell my staff to appreciate all of our clients; they believe in us and they trust us.”

Ahnal says the company’s name Purohit Navigation, speaks to the role they play to navigate a brand, a franchise, or company to its fullest potential. “We have to think outside of the box and look at the continuum and uncover what is going to be most relevant,” she says.

Thinking unconventionally defines how Ahnal has always grounded her business as well as her career. She was one of the first women, no less a woman of color, to start an advertising agency almost 35 years ago. “At that time it was a man’s world, no doubt about it,” she says. “Initially the barrier was not only that I was a woman, but that I was a woman of Indian origin and an immigrant. It wasn’t that men didn’t want to work with me; quite frankly, they didn’t know what to do with me. I would enter an office and they wouldn’t know how to greet me, how to talk to me, etc. I think it was the fear of unknown. I had to convince them that I may look different, I may talk differently, and I represent a group that they may
DISCOVER THE EXTRAORDINARY

What are you looking for? We are a unique healthcare firm providing strategic guidance, creative direction, and commercial support to help your brand reach its fullest potential. No matter where you are in the product lifecycle continuum—from discovery to portfolio management—we can lead you to new opportunities and beyond.

Explore now
Find information, innovation, and inspiration at purohitnavigation.com
Contact Anshal at 312.935.5040 or purohit@purohitnavigation.com
Kimberly Haugstad
CEO
Global Genes

THE TIME FOR RARE IS NOW, says Kimberly Haugstad, CEO of Global Genes. Kimberly, who has been in the role for less than a year, is already having an impact by amping up the nonprofit organization’s awareness and education programs, which are essential to support families, as well as strengthening partnership opportunities to be even more collaborative. “This is truly a time for rare in the world right now,” she says. “We want to offer the opportunity to partner with everyone — patients, researchers, industry, payers, and governments around the world.”

As part of its goals, Global Genes established a research alliance in addition to its existing corporate and patient alliance programs. “Creating this research alliance completes the full triangle and allows us to fully engage across the different spectrums,” she says.

Already familiar with the nonprofit world, having recently spent 11 years with the Hemophilia Federation of America, most recently as CEO and president, she knows for Global Genes to achieve its goals, scalability is vital.

“There are 400 million people in the world potentially with a rare disease, and 30 million in the United States alone,” Kimberly says. “To accomplish the work that needs to be done, we are taking a hard look at how we can scale and ramp up.”

One of the areas where Kimberly and her executive team are looking to create efficiencies is by identifying common umbrellas or themes.

“For example, we are taking a detailed look at a program we call RARE Concierge,” she says. “Today, through RARE Concierge someone can reach out to us to potentially connect with a genetic counselor for information. We’re spending a lot of time to see how we might be able to scale this service to make it available to people worldwide.”

Kimberly points out that it is a tremendous opportunity, honor, and privilege for everyone at Global Genes to be able to help rare disease patients, families, and care givers along their path. “We are here for families and patients across their life span, from helping a newly diagnosed family with a baby in their arms through their child’s transition into adolescence or adulthood.”

Part of Global Genes’ secret sauce is its inclusiveness and openness. The organization strives to be approachable, inviting, flexible, and accessible. “We believe no one with a rare disease should be alone,” Kimberly says. “We also always want to say yes to opportunities. We always look at the forward path. We not might always be able to say yes right away, but we’re always looking ahead to what’s coming next.”

And what’s next is an emergence of new technologies using gene sequencing and other tools.

“We are able to look so much deeper into ourselves from an identification and diagnosis standpoint,” Kimberly says. “At the same time, the plant is shrinking in the sense that we’re all more connected than ever, which means there’s more opportunity for us to connect in rare disease. Even for those individual diseases that have two, four, six, 10 or 20 patients, we’re now able to find those individuals and come together collectively to apply science and technology.”

ADVICE: If I could do it all over again, I would take more risks and push the envelope. I would remind myself that you only get this time once, make it meaningful.
Casey Lynch, cofounder and CEO of Cortexyme, is a scientist and serial entrepreneur. She founded her first company while at Stanford, where she was a post-doc working on Alzheimer’s disease. “I’ve always had a love for science, but I also had an interest in bringing that science further than an academic lab generally allows,” she says. “While I was working on my post-doc, I had an idea for a company. My first venture was Aspira Biosystems. This was during the genomics/proteomics heyday and we created a platform to understand 100,000 proteins at a time instead of one by one.”

Eventually, Aspira was acquired in a private transaction. “My next company was an investment advisory firm called NeuroInsights,” Casey says. “So many neuroscience companies were emerging that we felt were underappreciated by investors. We wanted to be able to communicate information about these companies, analyze the assets, and bring the community together. I worked with many investors and pharmaceutical companies over that time. I loved helping scientist-entrepreneurs think through the strategy and raise funds.”

She says this experience, and a long-standing interest in Alzheimer’s disease, are what brought her to Cortexyme. Cortexyme is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company pioneering a novel disease-modifying therapeutic approach to treat what they believe to be a key underlying cause of Alzheimer’s and other degenerative diseases. The company is targeting a specific pathogen found in the brain of Alzheimer’s patients that causes neurodegeneration and other pathology in animal models. Cortexyme’s lead small molecule, COR388, has advanced through preclinical and Phase Ib testing and is currently the subject of a Phase II/III GAIN clinical trial in mild to moderate Alzheimer’s disease patients.

“We know that there’s a lot more going on in the brain of patients than just beta amyloid; the last 30 years of research around Alzheimer’s disease has been focused only on that target,” Casey says. “But we know now that there’s neuroinflammation in the brain, microglial activation.”

Casey and her team became convinced that an infection upstream of the pathology could be driving not just beta amyloid, but all of the other detrimental pathology and ongoing toxicity associated with Alzheimer’s. “Meanwhile, my co-founder, Steve Dominy, who was at UCSF and an expert in HIV dementia, was researching infectious causes of neurological disease, when I came across some very important literature showing that periodontal disease or gum disease is actually a risk factor for Alzheimer’s later in life,” she says. “He went looking for the bacteria called P. gingivalis, which causes chronic degenerative disease in the mouth, and found it in the brain of Alzheimer’s patients.”

Casey has some views on what it takes to be successful as a female entrepreneur. “We need to change people’s pattern matching,” she says. “We need to change the way investors think about who a CEO can be. There are certain unconscious biases about what CEOs look like, and the more we can shift this perception, the better,” she says.
Laura Shafner cofounded AiCure in 2009 with Adam Hanina and Gordon Kessler as a way to establish a connection between patients, disease, and treatment through AI and advanced data analytics using a proprietary intelligent software platform that captures and understands video, audio, and behavioral data.

Laura’s background is in finance and public health, and the link between the two, she says, is an interest in predicting human behavior.

“The early concept of the company was to capture patient or operational data to create a much fuller view of risks and then be able to predict how those risks pan out,” she says. “We know if we can predict a risk, we can hedge against it. Whether it’s human behavior in the financial market or in public health, the idea is to accurately predict behavior. The fact was that in order to predict behavior, we needed the best data possible. And where is the place to get the best data possible? From the person whose behavior you’re trying to predict.”

Laura believes medical outcomes and behavior are intricately linked.

“Understanding people’s perceptions of their illness, how they understand their illness, and their response to the illness are as important as understanding the efficacy of the drug,” she says. “In addition to those individual parameters, there is a much larger ecosystem in which we all live and that impacts our ability to understand illness and response to it, and it’s the interface between the two that I find particularly interesting.”

Part of the inspiration to start AiCure was to get a much broader and fuller understanding of the patient and to better characterize where he or she is in terms of their illness. The journey is personal for Laura, her father, a psychiatrist, suffered from bipolar disease. “I saw growing up how his perception of his illness very much impacted the degree to which he was able or willing to take his treatment and realize the benefit,” she says. “Having effective drugs was not enough. The healthcare system is not built to provide a 360-degree view of the patient. It’s very much targeted on the disease itself.”

Because much of AI today sits on structured datasets such as electronic health records that are a derivative of patient performance or operational performance, they are not a direct observable data point for the patient. “We believe the closer we are to the patient, the more accurate the data, the better able we are to understand or characterize his or her response to treatment,” she says. “We want to capture patients in their moment, whether they are taking their medicine or how they are living with their treatment and their illness. Once the data are captured, we can calibrate it, annotate it, structure it, and then we can start to articulate what we are seeing. And it’s this articulation of the value of the data that is particularly important in connecting how patients respond to almost every new treatment,” she says.

The AI component of the process is two-fold, Laura says. One part is to scale the capture of the data and the second is the algorithm. AiCure’s technology, which has practical applications across the drug development and commercial landscapes, can help reduce medical costs for payers and reduce trial failures for pharma companies.

Laura Shafner
Co-founder
AiCure

AS MORE AND MORE WOMEN ENTER THE TECH FIELD, THE INSIGHTS BECOME THAT MUCH RICHER.

Laura Shafner

ADVICE: Find balance; I feel most at ease when there’s equilibrium. Sometimes it’s difficult to find, but I think it’s essential for success that no one area overtakes over another.

Listen to podcast

We use AI to see, hear and confirm how patients take & respond to treatment.

AiCure visually confirms dosing to provide study teams insight into patient behavior and facilitate rapid interventions for those struggling with adherence to study protocol. This combination of technology and human feedback is clinically demonstrated to increase adherence and reduce drop out in a range of patient populations.

Manage Adherence & Engagement
Leading patients through a few quick steps to confirm the patient, the medication, and successful ingestion, is the foundation of our mobile application. AiCure can also collect eDiary information, conduct a range of interactive digital biomarker assessments, and remind patients about upcoming visits during the course of a trial.

Decrease Risk
Improved data quality during the conduct of a trial drives site recruitment and study conduct decisions while it still matters. Our dosing data facilitate pre-randomization or post-hoc adjustment of participant cohorts in line with formal definitions in your SAP.

Measure Response
We measure audio and visual parameters of patient behavior on the same platform we use to monitor medication adherence. These “digital biomarkers” hold the promise of novel assessment in near-real time of patient disease state and responsiveness to treatment.

Working with the majority of Top-20 global pharmaceutical and biotech companies.

AiCure is an AI and advanced data analytics company targeting the healthcare industry. Our proprietary intelligent software captures and understands video, audio, and behavioral data to establish the link between patients, disease and treatment.

www.aicure.com  info@aicure.com  1-800-570-0448

© 2020 AiCure, All Rights Reserved. These materials may not be modified or reproduced in whole or in part without the express written consent of AiCure, LLC.
Since being named CEO of Turning Point Therapeutics in September 2018, Athena Countouriotis, M.D., has had a big impact: overseeing the best biotech IPO in 2019 (at the time of the podcast recording), advancing the company’s third asset to the clinic, growing the company from 20 employees to more than 90, and a successful second-round of financing.

For Athena, who is a physician by training as well as a financial market enthusiast, the CEO position was the perfect culmination of her skills and passion to bring drugs to patients faster. “I’ve been lucky enough to bring multiple drugs, specifically within oncology, to market, and I wanted to potentially have even have a bigger impact,” she says. Earlier in her career, Athena led various clinical development organizations within Pfizer and Bristol-Myers Squibb for oncology therapeutics including Sutent, Mylotarg, Bosulif, and Sprycel.

“The CEO position is a role that I’ve wanted for a long time, and now that I have it I want to keep moving forward,” she says.

Athena joined the company in May 2018 as executive VP and chief medical officer to advance the clinical development of repotrectinib, Turning Point’s lead product candidate. Repotrectinib is in multiple clinical studies for the treatment of a variety of cancers.

Turning Point is not the first company Athena has helped take public. In 2012, in the role of chief medical officer, she was part of the IPO team for Ambit Biosciences.

With this experience in hand, as well as a solid story built on good clinical data, a strong management team, and a strong scientific platform, Athena says the feedback leading up to Turning Point’s IPO was incredibly positive.

“The day we launched the stock on NASDAQ, we were up 60%,” she says.

“I was invited to come on Squawk Box to talk about the company and our IPO because we had the best biotech IPO of the year. The stock remains up 100% and at one point we were up 160% on the IPO price prior to some of the recent market changes.” (Editor’s note: these numbers are as of the podcast recording date.)

Athena’s goals for 2020 are to continue to advance the pipeline and to be mindful of the three most important stakeholders: patients, employees, and shareholders.

“We’re always mindful of these three groups with clearly the patients being the first and most important,” she says. “We are building the company for long-term growth, hopefully for future approval for our lead asset, repotrectinib, and eventually commercialization.”

In building the company for the future, Athena has brought in a team who are experts in their own right.

“I absolutely trust my team, many of whom I have worked with before,” she says. We spend a lot of time together, in the office and out of the office. I enjoy being around the people within this company on so many levels. We work hard. We all have a common goal, bringing medicines to patients. And in many cases, we view life through the same lens: we’re committed to our careers and we are committed to our families. I know most of the folks within the company as well as their extended families and/or their children because we spend a lot of time together.”

ADVICE: I look at every day as being incredibly precious — what kind of impact can we have each day? I find ways to be around people who I want to spend time with, even if it’s a short period of time, because life is incredibly short.
I BELIEVE YOU CAN MOVE UP, BE SUCCESSFUL, AND BE NICE.

Interestingly, Patricia Malone’s background isn’t in marketing. She didn’t go to art school. She hasn’t been a brand manager. Patricia’s path to becoming a successful advertising executive, entrepreneur, and chief creative officer started with her experience as a critical care nurse and a degree in English literature. “It’s really interesting how you get to where you are, this combination did and still does help me balance many things in my career and my life, actually,” she says. “The combination of critical care nursing and English lit and creative writing helped me get in the door when I had no experience in healthcare advertising or copywriting.”

Patricia says the other factor that helped open that first door was her first boss. “When we met, we really connected,” she says. “She was amazing. She was open-minded enough, confident enough, and truly willing enough to take a risk and to hire me. The one lesson that I have carried with me throughout my career is to look for passion and potential, not necessarily senior experience or firsthand advertising experience.”

As a critical care nurse she learned to stay calm in the midst of chaos, which has served her well throughout her career in several ways. “Agencies can be crazy whether it’s a brand launch or managing multiple work stream deadlines, I learned to quickly triage and troubleshoot,” she says. “The ICU also taught me about great team work. Leading an advertising agency as well as creative teams is about teamwork. It’s not about one person’s idea; ideas come from everywhere and good creative is a building process to get to the end result. Teamwork is sharing the load on those late nights and weekends or unexpected deadlines. It’s about having each other’s backs and we can get it done together.”

Also, Patricia, says her experience working with patients has helped her shape and create narratives that resonate. “As a nurse I worked with patients in many of these categories and diseases I end up writing about, which helps me bring firsthand insights — not just market research insights — and emotion to the creative outlet,” she says.

Over the years, Patricia has worked in big agencies and small agencies, agencies on the East Coast and agencies on the West Coast, and she also has started her own agency. More than 20 years ago, Patricia cofounded Stratagem, a San Francisco-based full-service marketing and communications agency.

In 2018, she tapped back into her entrepreneurial tool box to join fellow agency veteran Bob Finkel to relaunch the consultancy he had started in 2015. “Bob started FreshBlood to assist emerging companies forge a strong foundation on the road to commercialization,” she says. “In 2018, in response to client demand for creative services, I joined Bob, who I have known for years, to relaunch FreshBlood. We execute on strategy and create full channel campaigns through to launch. We are a true hybrid of a market consultancy and creative ad agency. We offer clients the full value chain of services from consultative to campaign, and they can tap into the value chain that best meets their needs.”

Throughout her career, Patricia, has provided guidance and support to creative talent coming up the ranks. “I love starting a brand new creative team member on his or her career journey; it’s exciting to see someone take off,” she says. “I believe it’s important to provide them with the tools they need at the beginning and to give them challenges to build confidence and creative curiosity.”

ADVICE: As a leader, you need to put the stepping stones in place to help others get to their destination.
Corlis Murray's career began while she was in high school with her love of science and math. “This wasn’t just a subject to me; I really loved it,” she says. “I was intrigued and fascinated by math, but I didn’t know what to do with it.” One of Corlis’ teachers set her on her future path by describing the field of biomedical engineering. Around that same time, Corlis’ high school counselor presented her with the opportunity to work for an IBM field engineering team. This experience led to another opportunity, a chance to work with an industrial engineering group at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. The foundation for Corlis to become one of the top engineers in the pharmaceutical industry was firmly cemented.

She has been at Abbott since 1989, and in her more than 30 years at the company she has held areas of responsibility for quality, operations, manufacturing, as well as engineering across several of the company’s businesses. “I’ve been very fortunate that my areas of responsibility have increased over time,” she says.

Currently, Corlis serves as senior VP for the quality assurance regulatory and engineering group at the corporate level. “My team supports Abbott’s businesses worldwide,” she says. “We operate in 160 countries, and we have more than 100,000 employees.”

Having achieved tremendous success in her own career, Corlis is leveraging her leadership position to advocate for women and diversity in the workplace, and women in STEM in particular. Corlis was named one of Business Insider’s most powerful female engineers of 2018, she was on Crain’s Chicago Business Tech 50 2018 list, and has been named a “STEM Champion for Women and Girls” by Working Mother magazine.

With only one quarter of the STEM workforce comprised of women, Corlis set out to try to change the paradigm. She and her team established a high school STEM internship program at Abbott in 2012, and to-date, almost 150 students have participated. Seven years later, the company has started to hire full-time engineers who started with the company as 15 and 16 year olds. Five of the seven are women — reinforcing the importance of exposure to and representation in STEM. “We are working with 13 high schools in nine different Abbott locations,” she says. “We are seeing pull-through from our high school STEM program, which we consider to be our entry-level development program. These students go on to college, and from college into our professional development program, and from our professional development program into full-time Abbott employees.”

She and her team developed a blueprint, a 30-page document, that is scalable and adaptable by other companies. They are sharing their insights and working with STEM connector, which is able to reach many more companies.

ADVICE: It’s okay to move away from those things that are the most familiar, so that you can learn how to be flexible and adaptable to new environments, because this is critically important to take the next steps.
Global Head of Clinical Innovation
Oracle

**I WANT TO SEE DRUGS GET TO MARKET. I WANT TO SEE DRUG DEVELOPMENT CHANGE.**

In her 30 year career at Eli Lilly, Kathy Vandebelt developed a reputation as being builder of organizations and new ways of working. She started her journey with the company after receiving her pharmacology degree from the University of Toronto as its first CRA in a Canadian affiliate. Fast forward a bit and Kathy was approached to move to Asia Pacific and build a new organization there. Eventually, as all roads lead back to Lilly’s head office in Indianapolis, she came back to the United States, where she was assigned responsibility for global statistical operations. She was then named global head of data science and solutions. Her last role was as the global head of clinical innovation. “This progression made sense because I had experience across a diverse portfolio and global clinical experience,” she says. “I put together a very dynamic group to focus on newer and better ways to conduct clinical research to benefit the industry. This was an awesome opportunity to round out my career at Lilly.”

When working on new and better ways to conduct research, technology and digitization are part of the remit. “I have always wanted to see clinical research done better, done faster, made easier for the humans who were engaged in it, and technology is an enabler to make this happen,” she says.

Over the years, Kathy developed relationships with different people throughout the healthcare ecosystem, including executives at Oracle. These connections led her to join the company in February 2019 as global head of clinical innovation within the healthcare practice and life sciences business.

“The leader of our business unit, Steve Rosenberg, had a vision to bring this new capability to the health-sciences global business unit, and he tasked me to take on the leadership role,” she says. “One of the reasons I joined Oracle is because the company has a new platform that I think could unlock new ways of thinking, and I’m really intrigued by that,” she says. “But new ways need to be better — not just different. So when I think of new, it has to meet a customer or a user’s need. We need to change the way we think.”

As she looks to build out her team, to remodel clinical research to leverage existing and emerging data sources, and make it easy and satisfying for patients to be involved in their healthcare, she will look to employ the same leadership principle that has been successful for her over the years. “My leadership style is situational,” she says. “I like to get to get to know the people I’m working with and I like to find out if what they’re doing is something new, or is it something they’ve done before. Are they really highly motivated to do it or is it the last thing they want to do on earth? I also figure out how team members like to communicate. There’s nothing worse than having somebody who’s really chatty working with somebody who just wants the facts.”

**ADVICE:** Hire your direct opposite as soon as you possibly can. The challenge to that is they’re not the person you’re going to naturally gravitate to.
Anne Heatherington, Ph.D., joined Takeda Pharmaceuticals in February 2019 as senior VP and head of Data Sciences Institute (DSI).

In this role, she oversees many of the quantitative groups within Takeda R&D, including statistics and quantitative solutions, global health outcomes and epidemiology, data architecture and digital solutions, and digital strategy group. Her mandate is to drive innovation in R&D through focusing on knowledge infrastructure, enabling patient-centricity, and developing tools and infrastructure to thoroughly understand the safety and efficacy of Takeda’s medicines.

Dr. Heatherington says the Data Sciences Institute was the brainchild of her predecessor, who proposed to bring many of the quantitative disciplines involved in clinical research under one roof. “In drug development we generate vast quantities of patient-level data both during development and after drugs are registered and on the market,” she says. “The vast majority of that data flows through different parts or all of the members of DSI, therefore our group is involved in every regulatory submission no matter the country, every study we design, every clinical study report written. Our ability to analyze and interpret the data is our currency. Additionally, Takeda recently embarked on a larger enterprise-wide digital effort to support our position as a global R&D leader. This effort includes colleagues from areas as diverse as our IT group, our global business units, our commercial organization, and even manufacturing. We are focused on creating an enterprise-wide approach to data and digital. I am the R&D representative on our digital advisory board.”

In some ways, Dr. Heatherington says, a common theme across all of her roles has involved data or analytics. While she says her career progressed fairly normally, there were a couple of seismic shifts along the way.

Dr. Heatherington grew up in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and attended Queen’s University. While pursuing her pharmacy degree, she was introduced to the concept of pharmacokinetics. “Everybody in my class hated it,” she says. “I perked up. I loved the idea that I could study the math of drugs. This led me to a Ph.D. in pharmacokinetics. Quite unwittingly, this was with one of the grandfathers of the discipline, so I embarked on my career having worked with some of the best people in this field.”

After her postdoc at the Center for Bioengineering at the University of Washington in Seattle, she and her new husband both went on to Amgen where they were thrown into the world of therapeutic proteins. “To say it was baptism by fire would be an understatement,” Dr. Heatherington says. “This was the 1990s and it was all hands on deck. My boss at the time said I received about 20 years’ worth of experience during my eight years there.”

The first seismic shift for Dr. Heatherington was when she went back to the UK to join the clinical pharmacology department at Pfizer, where she stayed for 14 years. The second seismic shift was when she joined a 40-person rare disease startup company to be head of development. “I threw myself into the rare disease space,” Dr. Heatherington says. “Those two years had a profound impact on me. I realized what you could do with so little. Unfortunately, that rare disease program failed. However, as they say, when one door closes another opens, and that opportunity allowed me to be ready when Andy Plump, the head of R&D at Takeda came knocking.”

Listen to podcast
Be empowered.

Be here.