

November 25th, 2019

On Dec 2, I am starting a new position as Chief Scientific Officer of a new start-up, biotech company in Boston. I am incredibly excited and honored to take on this position.

As I bid “Adieu”.... I wanted to take a few moments to reflect.

It's been an honor serving as the *ad interim* Director of the Whitaker Cardiovascular Institute. I believe that the WCVI is at a good place for Naomi Hamburg and the new recruited WCVI director to take over. Dean Antman tasked me with several things, all of which were achieved and none of which could have been done without the amazing, collaborative group of people that I have been fortunate to work with in the WCVI these past 20 months or so. I wish to point out Nancy Clinton who is our administrative director. Her knowledge of the campus is unsurpassed. I am continually impressed as she advocates for trainees and support staff many who go unrecognized. She really is the “**go-to-person**” for all that is WCVI and much more. I have learnt so much from Nancy and both Naomi and the new director will be lucky to have this *rock-of-the-WCVI* here. So thank you Nancy!

As I leave there are some “accomplishments” of the WCVI that I wish to point out: The WCVI seminar series is rated as one of the top seminar series on campus (not because of our lunches as we are still one of the rare seminars that provide lunches...) but because of the quality of our speakers. There have been positive murmuring about these seminars across town at the Charles River Campus. Coordinating these seminars was no easy task and could not have been done without the help of Drs. Marcello Panagia (this is his 2nd year), Dr. Ivan Luptak and most recently Dr. Francesca Seta and Dr. Maria Valero Munoz. But, the true backbone of this seminar series is Katie Tafelski who quietly, seamlessly and meticulously puts it all together. Thank you Katie!

Kudos to WCVI mentors as we have several K awardees in our institute: Drs. Jessica Fetterman (mentor: Dr. Hamburg), Drs. Shakun Karki and Melissa Farb (mentor: Dr. Gokce) and Dr. Shinobu Matsuura (mentor: Dr. Ravid). We look forward to great things from these K awardees!

In the past 20 months or so the WCVI gave out several grants.

The first group were specific to those with early careers and these Pilot Grant Early Career Awardees for one year for 2018 –2019 were Rosa Breton-Romero, PhD; Beatriz Ferran Perez, PhD; Jessica L. Fetterman, PhD, Vijaya B. Kolachalama, PhD; Ivan Luptak, M.D. PhD; and María Valero-Muñoz, PhD.

The second group were WCVI Pilot awards for this year for 2019-2020. Each Award is worth \$25,000 for one year. These were awarded to Frank Naya, PhD (on the Charles River Campus) and David Pimentel, MD and Markus Bachschmid, PhD who submitted a combined proposal. I hope that these awards will continue under the leadership of Dr. Hamburg and the new director.

I am grateful to my clinical colleagues particularly the heart failure attendings and the cardiomyopathy nurses: Drs. Pimental, Luptak, Gopal, Diane Gauthier and Ludwine Paul and many others that have moved on. These include Drs. Jennifer Ho, Jeremy Kolbulnik, Chang-Seng Liang, Doug Sawyer and Michael Givertz. I have learnt a tremendous amount from you and you are amazing colleagues and providers. The care that you give our BMC patients are unparalleled and you motivate me to take better care of my patients.

I'd like to thank the cardiology clinic staff. It is not an easy task especially on a Monday morning when I rush in and for some reason I don't want to keep any patient waiting. Thank you for putting up with me...you know who you are!

I'd also like to thank my clinical trials group: research coordinators: Denise Fine, Cheryl Kennedy and administrator Trish Godio. I have learnt so much for you. Thank you for all your time and patience with me.

Thanks also to all the fellows both past and present. I look forward to connecting again perhaps in a different manner. Stay in touch and let me know how I can help. I think for both the clinical and basic fellows / trainees a piece of advice. My advice is find a colleague who does the opposite of what you do... clinical→ basic and basic→ clinical. There is much to learn from the other and it makes for good grant writing and is obviously translationally and therefore clinically relevant. Also, find mentors that are peer mentors (in person, virtual or online) and at other institutions.

My lab has been focused on understanding deficiencies in diseases such as HFpEF and taking that back to the bench. I am grateful to my patients for allowing me to take care of them. We forget in the rushed clinical world that medicine is an art & a science. Taking care of patients is a bidirectional relationship and a privilege. It is my patients that have given me the motivation/ inspiration to ask the research questions that I have posed. As a physician who trained as a clinician and until most recently spent 60% of my time doing clinical work, the hardest thing was saying "good-bye" to my patients many of whom I have taken care of for 15-20 yrs.

Finally, while I say goodbye to my patients, to BMC, for the time being I get to continue my NIH-funded HFpEF research program, Dr. Hamburg takes on as the new *ad interim* director of the WCVI and the WCVI will be in excellent hands. This will be an exciting year for cardiology and WCVI with really many new opportunities to come. It's not "Au Revoir" but "a bientot". Stay in touch.
Thank You!

Flora