

# FIT 2020

## **Mentored Research Projects: Getting the Most Out of Your Mentors, Overcoming Common Challenges, and Grant Funding**

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With thanks to Chinazo Cunningham, MD, MS  
(unofficial mentor, role model, friend, and colleague)

# What is a mentor?

**mentor** noun



men·tor | \ 'men-,tôr , -tər \

## Definition of *mentor* (Entry 1 of 3)

- 1 *capitalized* : a friend of Odysseus entrusted with the education of Odysseus' son Telemachus
- 2 **a** : a trusted counselor or guide  
*// a mentor who, because he is detached and disinterested, can hold up a mirror to us*  
— P. W. Keve
- b** : TUTOR, COACH  
*// The student sought a mentor in chemistry.*

# Functions of Mentors

Sponsorship

Coaching

Protecting

Challenging

Providing exposure and visibility

Goal setting

Guiding

Listening

Help with decision-making

Giving informed feedback

Role Modeling

Counseling

Friend

# The Mentoring Team

## Career Mentor

- Responsible for overall career guidance and support for mentee.

## Research Mentor

- Responsible for developing the creative and/or independent research careers of mentees.

## Co-Mentor

- Works with the mentee and research mentor to provide specialized content area or methodological expertise.

## Peer (Near-Peer) Mentor

- At or near same level as mentee, works alongside to also help guide scholarship

# Mentors on my path

# 1. Research is about asking interesting questions about things you care about

1997-1999

- Working in drug policy reform
- Decided to go to medical school, doing post-bac
- Ernest Drucker, PhD

OFFICE-BASED METHADONE  
PRESCRIBING: ACCEPTANCE  
BY INNER-CITY PRACTITIONERS  
IN NEW YORK

JENNIFER McNEELY, ERNEST DRUCKER, PhD,  
DIANA HARTEL, DRPH, AND ELLEN TUCHMAN, CSW

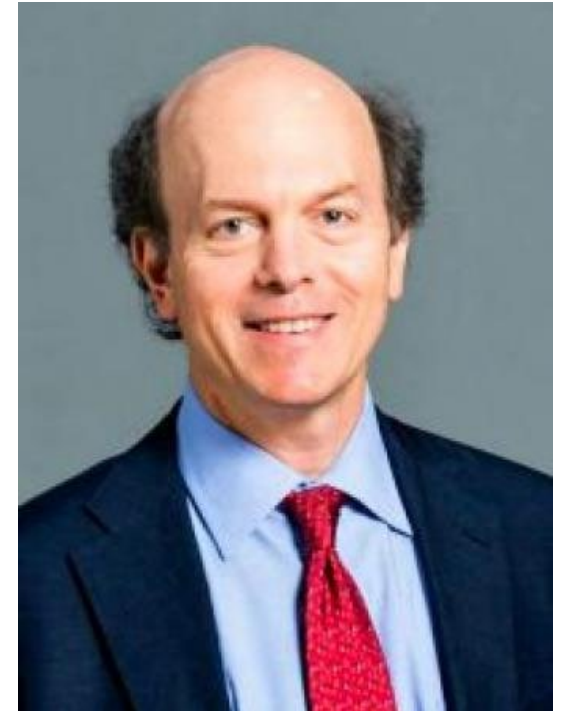
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## 2. You can be an academic and do research about things you care about

2003-2004

- Research year during medical school
- ‘He knows about drugs and he’s just a really good mentor’
- Marc Gourevitch, MD, MPH



Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment 31 (2006) 51–57

Improving access to sterile syringes and safe syringe disposal for injection drug users in methadone maintenance treatment

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### **3. (Even though you never saw yourself this way), a research career is a viable choice** **2007-2010**

- Residency 2004-2007
- Fellowship in Medicine and Public Health Research at NYU
- KL2 -> K23 in 2010
- Primary mentor Marc Gourevitch, Director, Division of General Internal Medicine

## 4. Developing a Professional Network and Body of Work 2011-2016

- Patient self-administered screening tools for alcohol and drug use
- Rich Saitz, MD, MPH
  - Key collaborator and unofficial mentor
- NIDA Clinical Trials Network
  - Co-Lead Investigator of a large CTN trial
- AMERSA, INEBRIA



# What are the key things I've gained from mentors?

- Early years: Inspiration and confidence
- Middle years: Roadmap to a viable career
- Later: Networking, access to resources, navigating institutions
- Now: Being a mentor, career advice, friendship

# Mentoring content

Career goals

Conducting research

Confidence building

Critical, informed feedback

Organization and committee participation

Negotiating

Professional networking

Promotion/tenure

Publishing

Grant writing

# What Makes a Mentor Effective?

## Competence

- Professional knowledge and experience
- Respect
- Interpersonal skills and good judgment

## Confidence

- Shares network of contacts and resources
- Allows mentee to develop on his/her own terms
- Demonstrates initiative, takes risks
- Shares credit

## Commitment

- Invests time, energy and effort to mentoring
- Shares personal experience

How do you get the most out of your mentor?

Be a **PROACTIVE** mentee

## It takes 2

Successful mentoring partnerships occur when:

- Mentees take initiative and drive the partnership.
- Mentees determine the pace, route, and destination.
- Mentors can then offers insights and counsel that is focused on mentees' objectives.

# Mentee Do's and Don'ts

## DO

- Take initiative
- Make and use an IDP
- Understand that mentors are busy
- Communicate agenda and goals for meetings
- Practice self reflection
- Clarify goals and expectations
- Have multiple mentors
- Look for opportunities to teach your mentor
- Keep your CV, IDP up to date

## DON'T

- Be passive—don't wait for the mentor to initiate interactions
- Be late, disorganized
- Wait for the last minute to ask for things
- Hesitate to ask for what you need
- Stay in the comfort zone
- Stay in a mentoring relationship when it's not helpful



# Unique mentoring issues for women & minority scholars

## Challenges

- Less likely to be promoted
- Less likely to obtain NIH funding
- Fewer in leadership/mentorship positions
  - Commitment may be there, but bandwidth can be low

## Mentoring is even more critical

- Have mentors that understand your challenges
- Team approach can help
- Choose an institution that supports you and your mentors

# Grant funding for early/developing investigators

- Pilot grants
- Institutional career development awards (K12, KL2)
- NIH career development awards (K01, K23)
- Other peoples' grants:
  - Co-Investigator
  - Study Physician
  - Site Lead

**Ask your mentors!**

# References and Resources

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