

GW Postdoc Association Annual Report 2019

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Allison Kolbe, Vice President

James McDonald, Treasurer

Derek Jones, Secretary

Cleyton Domingues, SMHS Representative

Fabio Oldini, CCAS Representative

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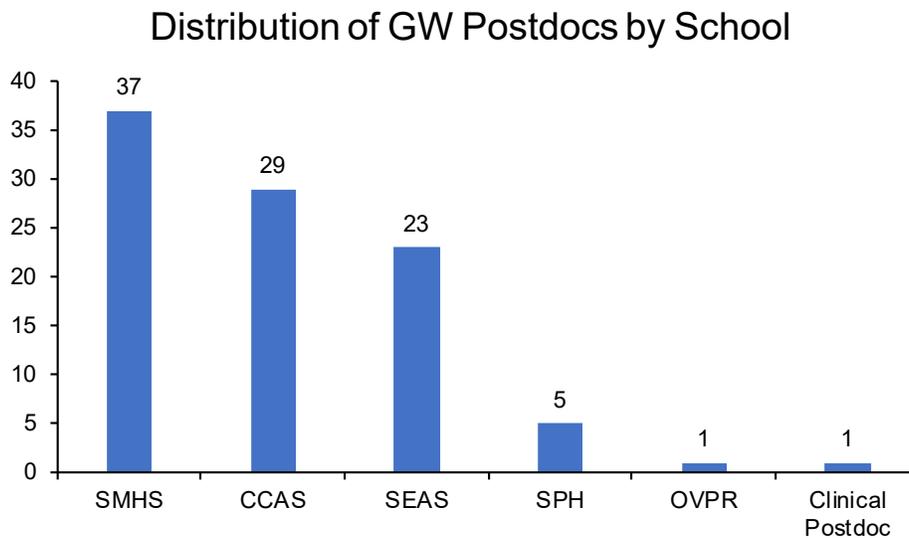
12/16/2019

On behalf of the GW Postdoc Association (GWPA), I would like to thank you for your support this year. At the start of 2019, the GWPA board members and I met and laid out a proposal for our activities this year. In this report, we would like to share with you the results of our effort in 2019.

The success last year would not have been possible without the help and support of the GW schools, all GWPA members, and my fellow board members. Thank you!

Tracking Postdoc Demographics

4 times per year (January, April, July and October), we reached out to OVPR to compile an updated list of postdocs at GW. There were 96 postdocs at GW as of October 2019, the distribution by school is illustrated below. This complete list was a crucial part of communicating the GWPA activities to all GW postdocs. We currently maintain an email list of 170 current and former GW faculty and staff, including active GWPA members (Post-doctoral Scientists and Research Scientists), school leadership, and others who have expressed interest in GWPA.

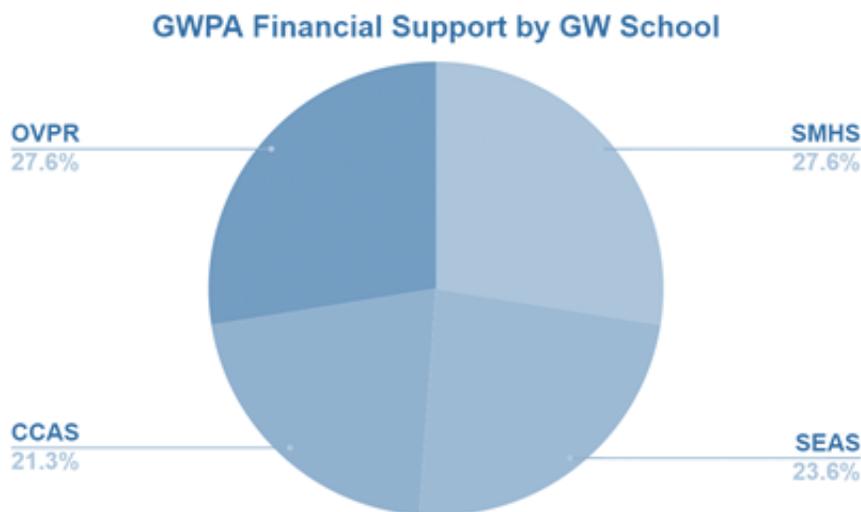


Welcoming New GW postdocs

Thanks to OVPR's support with updated lists of current postdocs, the GWPA was able to identify new GW postdocs. To welcome them and help them to connect with their peers, the GWPA invited them to welcome breakfasts. These breakfasts led to new connections and gave the GWPA the chance to help new postdocs with any questions or issues regarding the GW administration, Washington DC, etc.

Budget

At the request of several GW Deans, the GWPA altered the timing of its requests for financial support to correspond with the university fiscal year. Previously, the GWPA sought support at the start of each calendar year. To secure an operating budget for January to July 2019, the GWPA made smaller requests for support in January and February 2019. The totals reported below include support given at the start of calendar year 2019 as well as for fiscal year 2019-2020. The total financial support received by the GWPA was \$12700 for January 2019 to June 2020. Of this total sum, we received \$3500 from the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), and \$3500 from the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR), \$3000 from the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS), \$2700 from the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS).



Professional Development Events

The GWPA organized 8 professional development events in 2019. The details of these events are below.

February: Time management for Postdocs
Speaker: Ms Sara Melita, GWU

March: Finding Mentors for Career Success
Speakers: Dr Philip Ryan, NIH

April: Interviewing and Negotiation Skills.
Speaker: Dr Yashanda Scruggs, GWU

May: Data Management Integrity
Speaker: Dr Hiromi Sanders and Megan Potterbusch, RCR GWU

June: Career in Technology Transfer

Speaker: Dr Abritee Dhal, National Cancer Institute

October: How to be successful in academia?

Speaker: Dr Adnan Hyder, GWU

November: An Insight from the FDA

Speaker: Dr Donald Fink, FDA

December: Export controls: Times you can't share your research with everyone

Speaker: Dr Hiromi Sanders, Juan Hernandez RCR GWU

Networking and Social Events

In addition to the professional development workshops, GWPA hosted several social and networking events where GW postdocs could meet with their colleagues. These events included a picnic on the National Mall, Ice Cream socials on campus, socials at local pubs, and a holiday potluck. Note: the GWPA did not sponsor alcohol at any of these events. These events provided a casual setting for GW Postdocs to meet their colleagues in the area and take some time off from the stresses of work.

Weekly Newsletter

The GWPA published and distributed a weekly newsletter to GW postdocs. These newsletters serve as a central message board for general announcements, events, job opportunities and postdoc news. Through GW, we gained access to the Emma email distribution software package and greatly improved the appearance of our newsletters. Part of this was the complete redesign of the GWPA logo. The weekly newsletter is the core means by which we communicate with our members, and we thank the GW Marketing and Creative Services team for making these critical resources available to us.

National Postdoctoral Association Membership (NPA)

NPA Membership: The GWPA is a sustaining member of the NPA. This enables all GWPA members to sign up for a free NPA Affiliate Membership. This membership comes with several perks such as subscription to NPA newsletters (the PostDocket, access to members-only NPA web content (job postings...)), and access to NPA member groups. As part of the NPA, GWPA members also have the opportunity to attend the annual conference at a discount and to serve on NPA committees that represent postdoc issues nationally.

NPA Annual Conference: We had 2 of our members, Derek Jones and Chloé Bouarab, attend the NPA Annual Conference in April 2019. It was a great experience and the lessons they learnt at the conference (how to transition to industry, negotiation skills...) were distributed to all the GW postdocs via the newsletter.

Postdoc Appreciation Week

Every year, the NPA celebrates one week in September as the National Postdoc Appreciation Week. The GWPA has been celebrating the GW Postdoc Appreciation Day (PAD) during this week since 2016, and this year, the PAD fell on September 19th. We organized a full day of events for GW Postdocs to network, share their work, and appreciate the work of others. The events on this day are detailed below.

Career panel discussion: We invited 4 guests who have pursued a variety of different career paths after their postdoc, to introduce the many different options available to GW postdocs. GWPA postdocs met with our guests over lunch and established good connections with them. The invited guests included:

Dr Amy Avida, FDA

Dr Angelica van Goor, AAAS Policy

Dr Alison Hall, Associate Dean for Research Workforce Development at GWU

Ms Carmen Marshall, GE Healthcare Life Science

Research Competition: This year, postdocs were invited to give poster presentations. These presentations were judged by two GW faculty and the top three highest scoring presentations were awarded cash prizes of \$300, \$200 and \$100, respectively. The winners of the 2019 postdoc research competition were Preethi Bala Balakrishnan (SMHS), Patrick Cox (CCAS), and Chloé Bouarab (SMHS).

Workshop: We invited Dr Olivia V. Ambrogio from *Sharing Science* to hold a workshop on perfecting a scientific project elevator pitch. She gave GWPA postdocs useful tips to effectively share our scientific work with broader audiences.

Faculty Mentorship Award: For the second year, the GWPA hosted the GWPA Mentor Award, which rewards a GW faculty mentor who has been instrumental in promoting the career and professional development of GW postdocs. Postdocs submitted their nominations and rated the mentorship they received based on several key aspects of mentoring as explained in the article, "Characteristics of Successful and Failed Mentoring Relationships: A Qualitative Study Across Two Academic Health Centers" by Straus et al. Of the 9 nominations received from postdocs, Dr Keryn Gedan was awarded the mentor award this year.

Postdoc news at Faculty Senate meetings

Since 2017, we have had one member from the GWPA board attend the Faculty senate meetings to represent postdocs and their interests in related matters. This year we had GWPA Vice-President, Allison Kolbe attend these meetings. One major issue that was brought up was the absence of a postdoc office at GW to help postdocs in their professional career. This is an issue that the GWPA is continuing to work on with Dr. Alison Hall, Associate Dean for Workforce Development, and Gina Lohr, Senior Associate Vice Provost for Research.

New Board Members

We would like to inform you that we changed our by-laws to simplify the recruitment of new board members. From now on, the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary may also hold a School Representative position.

In November 2019, we reached out to all GW postdocs asking for nominations to serve on the GWPA Board for 2020. We received 4 new nominations and 2 nominations from current board members. These postdocs will assume the following positions on the GWPA board starting January 1st, 2020.

President – Chloé Bouarab

Vice-President – Patrick Cox

Treasurer – Payal Mitra

Secretary – Derek Jones

SMHS Representatives – Nabanita Kundu, Hovhannes Arestakesyan

CCAS Representative – Patrick Cox

SEAS Representative – Kedar Aras

Once again, we would like to thank you for your support of the GWPA in 2019. We hope you will continue your support in working with the new board members and the great ideas and opportunities they will bring to the GWPA.

Thanks!

Chloé Bouarab

President, GW Postdoc Association

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