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SAVE THE DATE

Resume Writing Webinar
BSCP Virtual Career Development Series
Zoom
Thursday, February 29, 2024
4:30 to 6:30 PM ET
Webinar registration [here](#).
Program information for the entire series [here](#).

New England Science Symposium
The Joseph B. Martin Conference Center
at Harvard Medical School
Saturday, March 23, 2024
Program and registration information [here](#).

Virtual Career Fair
Wednesday, May 15, 2024
12:00 to 2:00 PM ET
For more information, please visit the
BSCP website at www.bscp.org.

REMINDER

Please remember to update your contact
information at www.bscp.org.
Click on “Update Contact Information”
and then “Current BSCP Students/Fellows
and Alumni.”

OPPORTUNITIES AT THE CDC

From high school students considering their summer plans and physicians or scientists finishing a terminal degree — or those looking for a change of career — Wanda Barfield, MD, MPH, FAAP, Director of the Division of Reproductive Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and retired Rear Admiral in the U.S. Public Health Service, would invite you to consider joining the CDC.

If you are a student or trainee interested in nurturing a passion for public health, the CDC is the perfect incubator, regardless of your specific interests. “If it’s about analyzing data, using new techniques to analyze that data — data modernization efforts — there are opportunities here; if it’s working with the public in terms of communication messages and working with communities, there’s opportunities here; if it’s solving specific public health problems, whether it’s an infectious disease issue, and going out to the field to do an investigation, there’s opportunities here. So, there’s really a variety of areas; it’s just going to depend on what that person’s passion is, and then seeking more information to find where the fit is.”

Some students may want to consider adding public health experience to their resume prior to applying. According to Eric Pevzner, PhD, Chief of the Epidemiology Workforce Branch within the Epidemic Intelligence Service at the CDC, having a passion for public health starts at the local level. “If you think you’re interested in public health, get some local public health experience because that’s going to make you a stronger candidate for the CDC,” advises Pevzner.

If you suspect that working for the CDC would take you away from personal



Wanda Barfield, MD, MPH, FAAP

experiences with local communities, Pevzner will disagree. “There’s so many different perspectives in training that we value here at the CDC — because we come together as a team,” he says. “We are a collection of incredibly service-oriented and intelligent people that come to the CDC because they really care about making a difference in people’s lives.”

As a BSCP advisor since 2006, Barfield would like to share these opportunities with the BSCP community specifically. “I hope that people realize that we have students of all walks of life and life stages — some people who may have completed a career and came back to do public health. So, I don’t want people to think that you’re necessarily fixed at a certain age,” implores Barfield. Instead, she underscores the importance of an interest in public health and a passion for making a difference. “The CDC is also trying to make sure that we’re engaging schools that have historically underrepresented students to make sure that they understand that there are also opportunities as well.”

If students and trainees see that an opportunity is no longer accepting applications, they should not feel discouraged. Some fellowships accept applications on a

rolling basis throughout the year, and new opportunities are always on the horizon.

Students and trainees can expect that fellowships at the CDC will never be 'one-size-fits-all.' "If it's more of a local fellowship, they're going to be doing a lot of very interesting things at the local health department level that I think are going to give them what we would call 'boots on the ground' experience in public health," says Barfield. "It could be varied in terms of the topics of interest; whether it's an outbreak, let's say an increase in congenital syphilis, or some environmental concern, or an issue related to a certain infectious disease or respiratory virus, there may be some really varied experiences and learning different skill sets in that experience, versus doing work that might be more specialized in, say, a center at the CDC."

Students interested in pursuing medical school should feel encouraged to find a home at the CDC while they prepare to matriculate. Dr. Barfield mentions an MPH student she met at BSCP who she recruited to the CDC to do work on "adolescent health and teen pregnancy prevention, and then spent his free time studying the MCAT, applied to medical school, and decided to go to medical school." Dr. Barfield remembers him having a great time at his fellowship and learning about topics that made him a more rounded candidate for his future studies.

At the CDC, there is ample opportunity for fellows to contribute to real-world issues. Those interested in joining the CDC will not only make a difference in their area of interest, but they'll also gain real-world leadership experience addressing any manner of cases. "We've had several pandemics as of late, and that's been all hands on deck,"

recalls Barfield. While students might have entered a fellowship in 2020 with a focus in veterinary medicine, they might've shifted their focus toward a COVID-19 response while still gaining remarkable experience within their specific field. "There are lots of opportunities for fellows to contribute when those things arise," says Barfield.

For those seeking more information, navigate to the [CDC Fellowships and Training Opportunities website](#), which has been redesigned to specifically invite students and trainees looking for an opportunity that's perfect for them. If you'd like to stay in touch as new CDC opportunities arise, the CDC email subscription service will routinely share fellowships and training opportunities straight to their inbox. Students and trainees are welcome to reach out to the CDC at fellowships@cdc.gov for more information. ■

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Wayne DeBeatham, MD

In March 2023, Wayne DeBeatham, MD, returned to the biennial Biomedical Science Careers Program (BSCP) Student Conference for the sixth time as an advisor. DeBeatham first joined the conference as an undergraduate at Dartmouth in 1996 and made a habit of attending for over a decade.

Now a urologic hospitalist at Phelps Hospital in Westchester County with plans of pursuing graduate work to satiate a hunger for research, DeBeatham seldom refuses an opportunity for reflection or investigation. After Dartmouth, DeBeatham studied at the Harvard Extension School and matriculated into the University of Connecticut School of Medicine. Despite a preceding reputation at BSCP, he wants to underscore how many obstacles and challenges he has had to overcome to be where he is now.

"I know that there's a 17-year-old kid who's afraid, who wants to be in the sciences, and either thinks that they're not good enough or they're not smart enough, or that all is lost." DeBeatham knows this because he recognizes the feeling from his first BSCP Conference. "My goal has been to find that person, find that version of me," he says.

DeBeatham was born in Connecticut to parents who immigrated from Jamaica and found passions in the sciences at an early age. "I always knew I was going to wear a white coat one day; I just didn't realize what it would be," DeBeatham says. For a time, he considered working with computers or becoming a software engineer, but developed a passion for medicine early in college, around the same time he attended his first BSCP Conference. It was his mentors outside of his academic institutions who were

showing him his own potential in medicine.

Many of those mentors were close to his family, first and foremost being his godparents, the Cokers. "I knew you had to go to college, but the full details we didn't exactly know. A lot of it was self-directed," says DeBeatham.

"[My godparents] were very, very, very involved in education," DeBeatham recalls — specifically the outcome of his own studies. When it came to encouraging his growth and illuminating the path forward, they were there every step of the way. His godfather has since passed away, but he'd been the one who saw his potential for acceptance into an Ivy League school.

Following his path toward medicine, DeBeatham found another mentor in the summer after his sophomore year at Dartmouth. "A good friend of the family who was, again, Jamaican born, was a general surgeon. I think he took me under his wing when he saw [my passion]." DeBeatham recalls going in to shadow him in



Wayne DeBeatham, MD

the operating room, receiving scrubs and being instructed to “just tell them you’re a second year.”

During his early years at Dartmouth, DeBeatham felt under-supported and unsure of who his friends were. It was in that first year that he heard of the BSCP Conference by word of mouth and joined a busload of pre-med students to attend. He remembers the Conference differently back then. “I forgot who arranged [their logistics], because I remember staying at somebody’s dorm at MIT the night before,” recalls DeBeatham. What hasn’t changed, by his estimation, has been the Conference’s capability to create a self-sustaining community that naturally connects students and trainees with mentors. He can’t recall exactly who his BSCP advisor was that first year — referring to many — but he does remember meeting fellow mentees whom he now reunites with as fellow BSCP advisors themselves.

One particular mentor who stands out to him is a pillar of the BSCP community, Dr. Deborah Harmon-Hines — who has long served as an advisor and panelist at the Conference. “I just

remember appreciating how I learned something new every time I saw her,” says DeBeatham. Some of her advice that still sticks with DeBeatham was especially useful when he applied to medical school himself. “She did a lot of talking about the hidden curriculum, the hidden things that happen in that application admissions process that, as a neophyte, you just don’t know.”

DeBeatham credits his faith as a major source of guidance and for lending him a few mentors. “God puts different people in your life at different phases. Everyone’s a mentor in their own way — they may not even know they’re a mentor.” Now a mainstay himself at BSCP Conferences as an advisor and panelist, DeBeatham is nothing but humble as he hopes to pay it forward and create change for the students he meets.

“One of my goals is to be honest, because I think what happens is we tend to talk about the amazing things that everyone does. And we tend to talk about our progression, and we say, ‘I started off here and I ended here.’ And everyone concludes that’s a straight line, but we don’t realize how circuitous and arduous and challenging it’s been. We don’t see the effort.” DeBeatham prioritizes honesty as a mentor because when he first arrived at BSCP he was struggling academically. “It was rewarding, but terrifying, right, because I think at that moment in time things weren’t great. I was not excelling. But that said, having a framework and seeing people who looked like me and were just genuinely interested in your well-being was really wonderful.”

DeBeatham describes the atmosphere at the most recent BSCP Conference as feeling more like a reunion than a typical academic or medical conference. “Some of the advisors have been advisors since the first BSCP Conference, and they’re still advising, and they get to come back and join this community every year.” Heading to the hotel’s restaurant to grab some food after a day full of advising and panels brings DeBeatham to the bar to chat

with advisors he only ever sees at BSCP. The result: new ideas that he’ll bring to his own work.

At the center of any BSCP Conference are the students, and interacting with them is an ever-present highlight for DeBeatham. This past year, he was asked to fill in for an ill panelist and found himself “essentially holding court with a packed room of students for a session that’s supposed to be an hour. I think it went over. Students are coming up and lining up, wanting to ask for my advice. I’m like, ‘Wait, what are you talking about? I’m supposed to be asking you!’”

Outside of the BSCP Conferences, DeBeatham is still learning and growing as a clinician and scientist — and continuing to find his own mentors. His work is mostly clinical for now; however, with his boss’s mentorship, DeBeatham is looking forward to taking time for graduate work. “I think it definitely behooves us as clinicians to be very involved [in research],” says DeBeatham.

As he looks to the future, he takes a moment to consider the impact of BSCP. “At one point, Dr. [Joan] Reede [president and chair of BSCP] reads the list of names who were former students who are now advisors . . . and down the table it was doctor, doctor, doctor, PhD, doctor.” DeBeatham pauses for a moment. “That’s a big reason I keep coming back [to the BSCP Conference], because it had this out-sized impact on my life,” he says. “I don’t think I’d be a doctor right now if it weren’t for this conference.” ■

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERIES

The BSCP Career Development Series (CDS) provides networking opportunities, skills enhancement and tools for career advancement for students, fellows, and junior faculty. The Spring 2024 sessions aim to help students/fellows enhance their brand for academic and career growth, including workshops on resume and CV writing and utilizing LinkedIn at each stage of their career. Sessions are followed by one-to-one feedback sessions with professionals and culminate in a virtual Career Fair.

One of the goals of the Biomedical Science Careers Program is to provide students with the skills they need to portray themselves in the best light possible. By doing so, the BSCP believes that students will be prepared to reach their most ambitious goals.

The 2024 CDS aims to continue this mission of support. As the spring progresses, students and trainees taking part in the CDS will receive coaching and instruction. The series begins on February 29 with a resume writing webinar, followed by a webinar on CV writing for scientific positions, and progressing to the LinkedIn branding sessions in March. These LinkedIn branding sessions will be tailored to each student or trainee's academic level to ensure that the information they receive is as specific and actionable as possible.

Once students and trainees have progressed through the series, they'll be paired with an industry professional for a one-on-one resume and/or CV review session, as well as a review of their LinkedIn presence. These industry professionals will personally guide each participating student and trainee through a holistic view of how they appear to recruiters and admissions teams. Students/fellows will be able to talk through their goals and get advice on how best to structure their resumes and tell their story as they approach interviews.

When the career fair on Wednesday, May 15 arrives, it is BSCP's hope that students and trainees who take part in the CDS are confident and prepared to take the next step in their professional career.

If you or someone you know could benefit from this series, please join us! Registration information can be found [here](#). If you are a company interested in hosting a table at the career fair, please contact Khaliah Noel-Gibson at khaliah_noel-gibson@hms.harvard.edu. ■

2023–2024 HOPE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

On Wednesday, October 25, 2023, the Biomedical Sciences Careers Program had the great privilege of presenting six students with Hope Scholarships at the 26th annual Evening of Hope. Evening of Hope is BSCP's annual fundraising gala and is a celebration of the success of BSCP in our community. Hope Scholarships are a direct testament to the community that surrounds and supports the BSCP and its mission. The Scholarships, in the amount of \$7,500, are awarded to the students over the course of two years and are to be used for educational purposes. Each scholarship is supported by one of BSCP's partners.

These six students have demonstrated an interest in biomedical, biopharmaceutical or other science-related fields and have had direct involvement in BSCP. The students are highly motivated, have recognized potential and seek opportunities for educational advancement. BSCP could not be prouder of our newest cohort of scholars nor more grateful to those sponsors who have given so generously in support of our mission.

The 2023–2024 Hope Scholars are:

Dominique Pablito
PhD Candidate
Brown University

Scholarship Sponsor: Anonymous Benefactor

Jahzara Nordeus
College Student
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Scholarship Sponsor: Biogen Foundation

Mark Bright Bray
PhD Candidate
University of Pennsylvania

Scholarship Sponsor: Cytiva

J'Nye Sibley
College Student
Lesley University

Scholarship Sponsor: Cytiva

Sara Gonzalez
College Student
Brown University

Scholarship Sponsor: Sanofi

Jasmine Miller
MD Candidate
University of Connecticut School of Medicine

Scholarship Sponsor: Vertex Pharmaceuticals

Hope Scholarship bios can be found [here](#). ■

