



Charleston Women In Medicine

Special Meeting with Drs. Knutson and Linton

January 18, 2022



WIM Group Mission

- To support meaningful culture change: recognizing and eradicating all types of sexism in this hospital system
- To support women and their unique needs to promotion in their faculty and academic pursuits, including research, teaching, mentorship, and service
- To elevate women to meaningful leadership positions and decision-making roles in the hospital organization
- To advocate for the things women need to succeed in academic medicine, including those related to family-work balance

History and National Data ~ Women in Academic Medicine



History and Background

MIT: Study on the Status of Women Faculty in Science (1996)

- Improve status and equity for Senior Women faculty (e.g., standing Committee on Women Faculty, seeking out women for leadership roles, reviews of compensation / salary systems, replace administrators who permit inequitable treatment of women faculty)
- Improve professional lives of Junior Women faculty (e.g., promote integration and prevent isolation, uniform adherence to a fair and equitable set of policies on maternity leave, and active engagement to change the presumption that women with children cannot achieve equally to men and/or women who do not have children)
- Increase the number of women faculty (e.g., ensuring women are on search committees, department Chairs making conscious efforts to recruit women, and addressing the family-work conflict realistically and openly)



comment

Scientists from historically excluded groups face a hostile obstacle course

Inclusive and equitable geoscience requires identification and removal of structural barriers to participation. Replacing the leaky pipeline metaphor with that of a hostile obstacle course demands that those with power take the lead.

Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, Rebecca T. Barnes, Meredith G. Hastings, Allison Mattheis, Blair Schneider, Billy M. Williams and Erika Marín-Spiotta

Berhe, A.A., Barnes, R.T., Hastings, M.G. *et al.* Scientists from historically excluded groups face a hostile obstacle course. *Nat. Geosci.* (December 2021). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41561-021-00868-0>

CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS

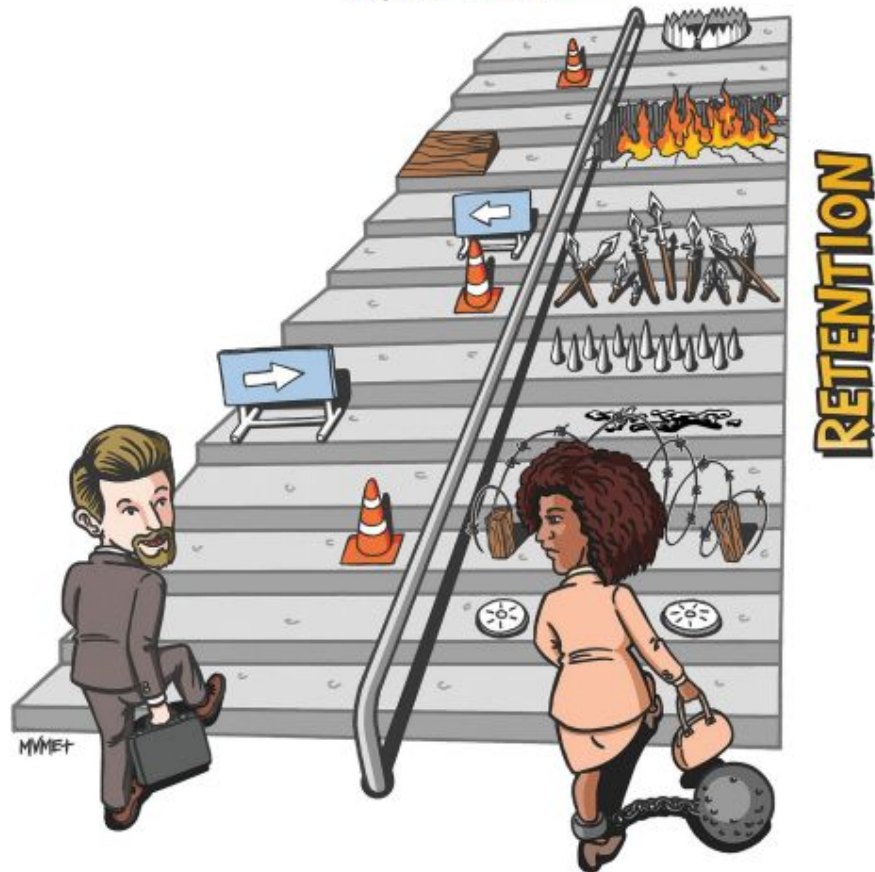


Fig. 1 | The hostile obstacle course that women and BIPOC researchers have to endure in STEM. Illustration inspired (with permission) by Emanu's Equality hurdlesSM. Credit: Mvmet.

Berhe, A.A., Barnes, R.T., Hastings, M.G. et al. Scientists from historically excluded groups face a hostile obstacle course. *Nat. Geosci.* (December 2021). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41561-021-00868-0>

Charleston Women in Medicine: State of the System





Issues of Import and Concern for WIM Members

- Systemic, implicit, and explicit sexism in our hospital system
 - Few women in leadership and decision-making positions
 - Little or no infrastructure for family leave / maternity
 - Nearly non-existent childcare resources in the community
 - Health insurance creating monopoly on employee's healthcare
 - Women introduced by first name
 - Questions about relationship status and parenthood during interview
 - Pushed to flex boundaries around work
- Frequent discussions with female residents and medical students about culture of sexism

Evidence-Based Opportunities for Gender Equity in AMC



Opportunities for Growth and Improvements

Integrated Framework for Gender Equity in Academic Medicine, Westring et al., *Academic Medicine* (2016)

- Collection of articles in this special issue of *Academic Medicine*
- NIH initiative that funded R01 grants in 2008
- Studying causal factors that promote and support the careers of women in biomedical science
- **“...the causes of gender disparities are multifactorial, and solutions require complex, integrated strategies...A comprehensive framework is needed to address change at the individual, department, institutional, and academic community levels. We need change that disrupts the self-reinforcing systems of bias that perpetuate disparities in achievement by gender”**



Opportunities for Growth and Improvements

1. Equal Access to Opportunities and Resources
 - Specialty services space, equipment, and staffing
 - Salary
 - Grant funding
 - Leadership positions
 - Effective mentoring
 - Sponsorship (ex: ELAM)



Opportunities for Growth and Improvements

2. Management of Gender Bias

- Unconscious bias refers to implicit associations that can impact decision making without awareness (ex: men and women associate “scientist” or “leader” with “man”)
- Profound impacts on careers
- Evidence of gender bias in NIH grant proposal reviews (Kaatz et al) in that reviewers hold women applicants to higher evaluation standards

*Though the Westring article focuses on implicit bias, of note the WIM group members also experience **systemic and explicit gender bias**, and witness/mentor female students and learners who experience this bias



Opportunities for Growth and Improvements

3. Support for Work-Life Balance

- Frequently noted obstacle to women's career success in AMC: managing demands of work and family
- Women tend to take on a greater share of family and household responsibilities compared to men
 - Raj et al: family demands more profoundly impact women than men
- Women often face negative career penalties associated with parenthood
 - DeCastro Jones et al: despite consistent career goals for male and female faculty at the outset, women are more likely to prioritize balancing work and home life than men
- **“A culture that facilitates work-life balance is particularly critical”**



Opportunities for Growth and Improvements

4. Leadership Engagement

- Within institutions, departments, school-level
- National societies
- Grand funding agencies
- Administrative bodies
- **“Leadership attention to gender bias, access to resources and opportunities, and work-life balance is a key factor in translating a desire for gender equality into a cultural reality. Supportive policies and practices are only effective when implemented in the context of engaged leadership”**



Call to Action

Recommendation #1: Internal leaders examine their institutions, identify ways their culture perpetuates unequal access to resources and opportunities, subtle and outright discrimination, lack of leadership attention to promoting gender equity, and obstacles for those managing work and family demands.

- Gather faculty satisfaction data related to aspects of work culture that most directly affect women's careers; conduct a comprehensive faculty culture survey
- Gather objective data on recruitment, compensation, startup packages, promotions and compare across gender
- Explore interaction between race and gender, given that cultural barriers are amplified for women of color



Call to Action

Recommendation #2: Mobilize resources to remediate areas of known weakness

- Faculty development workshops are well-intentioned but insufficient
- Top down and bottom up approaches
 - Implicit bias training for those with recruitment or hiring responsibilities
 - Mentors could be provided with training and salary support to encourage effective mentoring of women faculty
 - Policies that support women's careers during child-raising years
 - Convenient child care and lactation facilities



Call to Action

Recommendation #3: Remain accountable and transparent in reporting the results from #1 and #2, and evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives implemented to address disparities

- Maintain a mindset of continuous improvement
- Gender equity and diversity are opportunities for scholarship

Drilling Down: WIM Wish List



Drilling Down: WIM Wish List

- Transition Concerns
 - Transparency re: Academic Rank with new CAMC IAM and request for WIM involvement when drafting criteria
 - Better understanding of what our rank means, including academic and leadership resources
 - Serious concerns about transition, especially IT and faculty resources for meaningful scholarly work
 - Building gender equity into developing policies for the CAMC IAM



Drilling Down: WIM Wish List

- Commit to Better Operationalize the Problems
 - Conduct a faculty culture survey and gather qualitative data
 - Systematically gather quantitative data on gender in regards to recruitment, compensation, startup packages, and promotions
 - Seek out examples of model institutions and systems
 - Be accountable for culture change efforts



Drilling Down: WIM Wish List

- Investment in Women
 - Providing women with some resources: Child care, tutoring, leave policies, call coverage, live-able schedules, job-sharing opportunities, COVID-specific
 - Develop policies and culture that considers family responsibilities the rule rather than the exception
 - Develop policies with explicit attention to sexual and gender-minority employees
 - Improve clarity around the process for reporting examples of sexist/biased behaviors and policies
 - Offer faculty development resources specific to women, especially Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine and opportunities for seeking advanced degrees



Drilling Down: WIM Wish List

- Women in Leadership
 - Prioritize internal searches/hiring for leadership positions before conducting external searches
 - Prioritize elevating women and people in under-represented groups for leadership and decision-making roles
 - Clearly identify the experience and priorities needed for leadership positions and make that explicit in the position posting/hiring process to avoid default prioritization of publication numbers alone



Drilling Down: WIM Wish List

- Value and Affirm our Work
 - Formally weight/increase the weighting of service - especially departmental service and mentorship of students/residents/faculty - for P&T.
 - Build a mentorship program
 - Women and faculty of color across the sciences are disproportionately asked to serve in mentorship roles, but this activity is not weighted equally to publication or other metrics in P&T
 - Women need titled roles
 - This would align with and support CAMC's EDI goals, while also appropriately valuing and affirming the professional service provided as a core component of the academic mission



Discussion