

Jessica BRUEGGEMAN

Changing Health Behavior with Insight and Compassion

Passionate and knowledgeable about her belief that changing health behavior can lead to improved health outcomes, Jessica Brueggeman succeeds in making a believer out of anyone who comes within her sphere of influence.

In her role as VP of the health behavior group at MicroMass Communications, Ms. Brueggeman has been a pioneer in the application of behavioral science to improve health outcomes and finding unique insights into chronic health problems.

She has been the principle architect of effective patient education and support programs in diseases ranging from weight management to diabetes, cancer, Parkinson's disease, depression, and even toenail fungus.

The tens of thousands of patients whose lives Ms. Brueggeman has touched through her work also benefit through the indirect support and encouragement delivered via MMC's innovative patient relationship marketing programs.

Marrying her background as a nurse with her academic knowledge, including a master's in public health, she has an instinct for under-

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY CURIOSITY

standing the varying needs of every person her campaigns touch.

She can quickly identify intrinsic and fundamental factors impacting a situation that is lost to many people. Ms. Brueggeman is also unparalleled at bringing together evidence from multiple disciplines, including behavioral and clinical science, to create effective communications and interventions that are more likely to yield success than a one-sided approach.

Over the years, her work in behavioral science has been adopted by the top pharmaceutical companies and recognized by the leading pharmaceutical awards programs.

Ms. Brueggeman envisions new ways to look for solutions, leveraging complex patient insights and applying them through a dynamic behavioral marketing framework. She is imbued with energy, constantly buzzing around the office moving from one thing to the next, and she is determined, pushing to make things happen even in situations where she faces significant barriers.

She values the collaborative and creative culture at MicroMass, where creative ideas can come from behaviorists and behavior change ideas can come from creative staff.

Overall, she believes the greatest challenge lies in persuading marketers to adopt new solutions rather than sticking to formulaic and safe approaches to product marketing. In addition, FDA guidance in specific areas is still ambiguous and open to interpretation, she notes, and these factors combined limit pharma's appetite and opportunity for innovation.

She has a passion and compassion for her co-workers, clients, and, most importantly the patients, and she works tirelessly to share the results of her research in behavioral science with all stakeholders in an effort to engage patients in their own healthcare.

Her leadership, professional accomplishments, and commitment to the community are admirable, but it is her breakthrough strategies that inspire her colleagues the most. When obstacles arise, rather than give up on a strategy, Ms. Brueggeman reminds her colleagues that they are creating a new path and to persevere when pioneering new directions.

ENERGETIC. DETERMINED.



A visionary when it comes to healthcare marketing and blending science with the art of communication, Jessica Brueggeman inspires everyone around her.

She is always evaluating her team, identifying strengths, and leveraging those strengths to help the company's growth and success in the pharma/life sciences space. She works collaboratively and constantly puts the needs of others before her own.

By turning every experience into a learning opportunity, Ms. Brueggeman encourages those around her. She likes to find ways to relate to people and put them at ease, using humor and humility to set a positive and relaxed tone.

Clients are constantly asking to work with her because of her experience, thought leadership, and ability to develop great relationships.

Ms. Brueggeman inspires everyone around her. She inspires her staff to ask the extra questions, to go the extra mile to develop the best solutions for her clients. She inspires the agency to help clients improve their patients' health outcomes. And she inspires her clients with a fresh and better way to achieve results for their marketing needs and goals.

Her two main goals now are to focus on expanding the agency's behavioral science approach by developing innovative real-world applications of behavioral science, and mentoring the staff in a way that challenges them and gives them permission to think about what should and could be done and not what has or can't be done.

Outside of work, Ms. Brueggeman is a deacon in her church and is involved in a variety of community activities. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Jessica Stewart Brueggeman

TITLE: VP, Health Behavior Group

COMPANY: MicroMass Communications

EDUCATION: BSN, UNC-Chapel Hill; MPH, UNC-Greensboro

FAMILY: Husband Steve, daughter Carolyn, 7; son Gray, 4; and cats (Hazel and Sandy)

HOBBIES: Hiking, gardening, taking pictures, spending time with family

BUCKET LIST: Take a family vacation at a dude ranch out West; visit Italy; sit front row at a Lyle Lovett concert; reel in a large fish by herself; complete a language immersion program; take a course or immerse herself in books to understand the history of Africa/government; drive from the East Coast to the West Coast in an RV and visit National Parks along the way; learn to sew

AWARDS/HONORS: 2011 Partner's Choice Award (MicroMass Communications); 2010 Healthcare Businesswomen's Association Rising Star Award; 2010 Ethel Martus Lawther Alumni Award — UNC Greensboro; 2009 DTC Silver Award — Best Point of Care Campaign; 2008 Pharmaceutical Executive Ad Stars

ASSOCIATIONS: Healthcare Businesswomen's Association

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [f](#) [p](#)

PASSIONATE. ENGAGED.

Rick RUSSELL
Driving a Thriving Culture

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY PATIENTS

A passionate leader, Rick Russell is dedicated to recognizing the talents of his team members and changing the status quo, and he is not afraid to roll up his sleeves to help others who are in need.

Speak less and listen more. Rick Russell understands that great leadership is about gaining trust so that people will speak their mind, then listening to what they have to say.

Mr. Russell believes that culture is one of the most important aspects of an organization and that with a highly engaged and innovative workforce, business results will follow. In his role as executive VP and chief commercial officer at Sunovion, he has been instrumental in building a collaborative and empowered culture for the commercial organization.

Mr. Russell took over commercial operations in September 2011, shortly after the predecessor company Sepracor was acquired by Dainippon Sumitomo Pharma Company.

It was a challenging time in the organization's history, but he quickly helped the company adjust. He set the stage by gaining insights on how employees viewed the commercial organization and then engaged them in the organizational change needed to move forward. He began by issuing a survey to get a baseline assessment of how the team and leadership were performing. He took the survey findings very seriously and was transparent with employees about the results, leveraging areas where the organization was excelling and acknowledging the challenges. He made a commitment to employees that he would use the results to make the organization more nimble and collaborative. This strategy helped to rebuild trust with employees and reinforce their value to the organization's future success.

He worked with the executive leadership team to change antiquated incentive programs to ones that are far more motivational and inclusive, stretching across the entire organiza-

tion. For example, he has created opportunities for people outside of sales to participate in the company's annual President's Award.

Mr. Russell has embraced a culture of openness and transparency by empowering the teams, communicating tough business decisions early, being inclusive at all levels of the organization through involvement on strategic project teams, and streamlining the decision-making process for greater efficiency. There is stronger collaboration among cross-functional teams and there is an overwhelming feeling of employee empowerment and accountability.

At the time he joined Sunovion, the company was facing the loss of patent expiration for two significant products: one for its flagship brand, the sleeping agent Lunesta, and the second for Xopenex for asthma.

In an effort to preserve patient loyalty in the months leading to generic entry, Mr. Russell spearheaded several high-profile retention projects, including the philanthropic Follow the Wings campaign and the groundbreaking Project LUNA. The Follow the Wings campaign incorporated Lunesta branding within an interactive game that, when played, provided a \$1 contribution to the global nonprofit organization CARE. He then launched an online engagement platform for Lunesta, Project LUNA, to provide tools to help people take on their personal sleep challenges, develop better sleeping habits, and get motivation from others doing the same. The project increased branded website visits by almost 100% and unaided awareness by 10%.

He also developed a commercial plan to preserve revenue and talent and allow for a successful transition of resources and focus to the company's new antipsychotic medication for adults

with schizophrenia, Latuda. Under his leadership, Latuda became the new marquee brand for Sunovion in 2012. Latuda was just recently approved by the FDA as the first atypical antipsychotic for the treatment of bipolar depression both as monotherapy and as adjunctive therapy with either lithium or valproate.

A commercial leader who is a scientist at heart — he has advanced training in organic chemistry — Mr. Russell combines a deep understanding of research and a collaborative nature to provide meaningful solutions for patients. He was instrumental in advocating that Sunovion join the Massachusetts Neuroscience Consortium, a group of seven companies that collectively fund preclinical and clinical neuroscience research. The consortium was established to identify and validate new targets for CNS diseases that may accelerate breakthroughs for patients who so desperately need them.

"CNS and respiratory diseases not only impact patients' lives, but the lives of their caregivers and families," he says.

Mr. Russell inspires people around him to put their best foot forward. He champions employees' efforts, instills confidence in his teams, and holds people accountable for individual performance and business results.

Mr. Russell believes in celebrating small wins. For example, he holds monthly breakfasts to recognize employees' work anniversaries and he personally calls the top performers across the salesforces to recognize them for their hard work.

Philanthropy matters to Mr. Russell. At Sunovion, he championed the company's first nationwide community service program, Sunovion HandsOn!, helping the executive team to make significant strides toward a more cohesive, collaborative environment based on a solid foundation in community support. The initiative was a tremendous success across all levels of the company, as demonstrated by the fact that 80% of employees — 1,400 volunteers — participated in the national day of service, totaling about 7,000 volunteer hours through more than 150 community service projects. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Richard E. Russell

TITLE: Executive VP and Chief Commercial Officer

COMPANY: Sunovion Pharmaceuticals Inc.

EDUCATION: BS, Chemistry, Bates College; MS, Organic Chemistry, University of New Hampshire

FAMILY: Wife, Suzanne; children, Samantha, 17; Abigail, 13; Erik, 10; Ian, 10

HOBBIES: Skiing, biking, coaching his children's sports teams, wine collecting, going to antique car shows

SOCIAL MEDIA: 

Matthew WEST

The Talent Maestro

PASSIONATE. CONNECTED.



Matthew West is the person to know and to connect with when it comes to talent in the healthcare and pharmaceutical space.

The agency business remains the province of intelligent, creative, and determined human beings. Matthew West's gift is an incredible eye for talent and an uncanny ability to draw these individuals to McCann Regan Campbell Ward (RCW).

As VP and chief talent officer, Mr. West has helped change the agency's talent profile by personally sourcing and hiring more than half of its employees. He has "restocked" the creative department with pharmaceutical professionals, Ph.D.s, consumer-advertising veterans, and fresh-out-of-college English majors and designers.

He recognizes what makes the agency tick and is always mindful of adding people to the team who are not just qualified, but excellent cultural fits.

Mr. West joined RCW when the company was growing rapidly. It was a tough transition for employees, who were accustomed to a small, intricately connected agency environment. He understood how to navigate the big change of expanding the company, while keeping the agency's culture intact. Mr. West brought the company together by recruiting the right candidates, who were the right fit for the agency's eclectic environment.

He has led recruitment efforts with his in-

novative Advertising Master Class, which has attracted students from Cornell University, the Parsons School of Design, and the Miami Ad School. In these classes, students shadow copywriters, art directors, account planners, and other agency personnel for a day. They then use this experience as the basis for an application for RCW internships. Many of these internships have led to jobs at the agency.

For Mr. West, the agency business is 100% about people and he is a tireless advocate for those people.

Creating opportunities for employees by mapping out career trajectories for them and understanding their strengths, weaknesses, passions, and desires is both challenging and rewarding.

New employees are immediately immersed into the radical hospitality culture that Mr. West has brought about. For example, mass emails are sent out introducing new people into the company. And he created a fun and intriguing questionnaire for new employees to answer, giving everyone a reason to go up and introduce themselves.

He enriches the work environment with programs such as the annual Take Your Kid to Advertising class. Each year employees' children from ages 6 to 12 have a chance to develop ad campaigns for their own ice cream, candy, or sneakers. Then they present their work to the creative director.

He has been a champion for programs that enrich not only new hires, but all employees. Mr. West has contributed to the implementation of the agency's On It Award, which recognizes outstanding employees who go above and beyond to achieve the best results for their clients and their team.

He has created effective training programs to develop new processes and practices and is instrumental in keeping long-time employees on the RCW team, keeping staff turnover to a minimum.

"I am passionate about seeing people thrive, and I understand that for this to happen there must be a welcoming and supportive environment," Mr. West says.

He has been instrumental in McCann Health's expansion as a global agency with offices in different locations and the recruitment of key talent to serve a diverse client base. For example, he led an exploratory Latin American Talent Review for the purpose of acquiring two offices in Brazil and Mexico, and he is eager to continue to take on additional global assignments as they pertain to talent acquisition, recruitment, and training.

And his relationships with academic institutions are invaluable at building a network of excellence that helps set the agency apart.

Known to many as the connector, Mr. West gets huge satisfaction from linking people he

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY PEOPLE

knows with other people to create big ideas and/or make new networks.

"I am passionate about people," he says. "I love learning about people's journeys and how they have gotten to where they are now as well as where and who they want to be in the future," he says.

He is highly respected by the RCW parent company, McCann WorldGroup and IPG, and has become a voice within the global HR team.

Mr. West is a partner, a confidant, and when required, an ombudsman, and all with a significant level of professionalism and ethics.

Beyond being a devoted husband and father, Mr. West is extremely involved in the community. He volunteers at Baruch College as well the Harvard School of Public Health and Cornell to speak on effective interviewing, the pharmaceutical industry, and resume building.

Having lost his father to bladder cancer that metastasized to his brain, Mr. West is determined not to rest until there are cures for cancer. He is proud of his company's commitment to and focus on oncology, and the fact that so many clients aspire to cure cancer; indeed their products have made that lofty goal more of a reality than would seem possible.

He is also committed to the organization Autism Speaks, as he has several friends with autistic children. And he is actively involved in his temple at Congregation Kol Ami in White Plains, N.Y., where his two children attend nursery school. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Matthew West

TITLE: VP, Chief Talent Officer

COMPANY: McCann Regan Campbell Ward, a division of McCann Health

EDUCATION: BS, Cornell University; EdM, Harvard University

FAMILY: Wife, Hallie; daughter, Emma; son, Ryan

HOBBIES: Lecturing on communication, marketing, and talent issues at colleges across the nation; playing the piano with his children; creating video slide shows for family and friends

BUCKET LIST: Go to Italy; write a New York Times best seller; become a professional motivational speaker; see his son and daughter grow up and achieve their own successes and passions

ASSOCIATIONS: Society of Human Resource Management

SOCIAL MEDIA:  

Interested?



Inspiration. It doesn't
grow on trees.

Congratulations to Matthew West,
One of *PharmaVOICE*'s 100 Most
Inspiring People. If you're looking
for inspiration, or just a better job,
give Matthew a call. 646-742-2145.

McCANN
REGAN CAMPBELL WARD

Bold. Brainy. Brilliant.

ORGANIZED. ENERGETIC.

Kathy Jo USHER

Driving Market Strategies



Getting to Know...

Kathy Jo Usher

TITLE: Head, Managed Markets

COMPANY: Bayer Healthcare Dermatology

EDUCATION: BA, MA, Murray State University; MBA, University of Texas, Dallas

FAMILY: Sister, brother

HOBBIES: Sports both as a participant and a spectator, running, power yoga, golfing, hiking, and any water sport; traveling to new countries and learning about diverse cultures

BUCKET LIST: Reside outside of the United States for several years to experience living in an unfamiliar environment

AWARDS/HONORS: SRA Award for Leadership, United Way Campaign, Co-Leader, for the Consumer Care Division, Bayer; President's Award (twice), Shining Performance Award, Envision Award, KOSMC Award, Schering-Plough; Past Executive Leadership Team, Texas Cardiovascular and Stroke Partnership, Past Committee Chair, Executives in Action, Executive Consultant Fundraiser for a DFW American Diabetes Project, Executive Leadership Team, DFW Executive Healthcare, Women's Leadership Council, United Way of Northern NJ

ASSOCIATIONS: American Marketing Association, HSUS of North Texas/SPCA Paws Cause, Texas Cardiovascular and Stroke Partnership, World Affairs Council of Dallas, DFW Executive Healthcare Network, American Diabetes Association, Heifer International, Healthcare Businesswomen's Association

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#)

As a seasoned managed care and Medicaid expert, Kathy Jo Usher has the ability to turn the most difficult challenges into solutions.

Kathy Jo Usher, head, managed markets, Bayer Healthcare Dermatology, exemplifies strategic and innovative leadership in the pharmaceutical industry. She has demonstrated passion and outstanding creativity in her approach to health plans and managed markets. She continually looks for ways to provide educational information to her customers; for example, she works with a small, specialized public relations firm to develop a newsletter that informs and engages with industry leaders.

At Bayer Healthcare Dermatology, she has created a dynamic departmental team that relies on her organizational expertise and industry knowledge. She has influenced the managed markets department by generating impressive customer account revenue, developing cost-efficiencies, and co-pioneering a multi-divisional first-ever pilot for a joint pharmacy cross-functional team project. This project was developed to enhance product portfolio improvement and strengthen Bayer Healthcare's customer interactions.

In addition, she was selected for the Women's Leadership Peer Coaching Program and was nominated by the departmental president to a leadership position with Bayer's Consumer Care annual United Way campaign. She strives to forge strong relationships via cross-divisional leadership to achieve corporate goal advocacy, and for her efforts she has earned the SRA award for leadership.

Ms. Usher is motivated by wanting to make a creative and efficient difference in her area of responsibility at Bayer.

"I strive to be the best and most productive employee that Bayer has by taking my position and department to higher levels of functioning and success," she says. "I also want to lead and provide my direct reports with the tools and resources they need to fulfill their positions better than the competition."

She motivates those around her by encouraging them to think of better solutions for engaging with their jobs and those they interact with, both internally and externally, and she takes pleasure in preparing them for their next positions. To that end, she takes her role in the Women's Leadership Peer Coaching Program at Bayer seriously.

"I think it's incredibly important for leaders to offer our experiences, both good and bad, to help counsel and mentor those we can and help guide them through the various stages of career development," she says. "I've learned so much from these tremendous women during

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY NECESSITY

our sessions together and hope I have contributed to them."

As a seasoned managed care and Medicaid expert, she has the ability to turn the most difficult challenges into solutions by constructing sound, financially driven analysis and well-designed execution.

As a top-performing account executive with expertise in pharmaceuticals, business development, managed care, government affairs, and sales management, Ms. Usher has demonstrated extraordinary leadership and the skills to improve every aspect of an organization's public outreach efforts. Her resourcefulness and innovative spirit help to drive marketing strategies. Her high energy, rapport and can-do personality inspire the people around her.

Ms. Usher's commitment to serving various community and international organizations is unparalleled. She has been a member of the American Marketing Association; was a founding member of the HSUS of North Texas/SPCA Paws Cause benefit and fundraiser; has participated in medical mission trips to Guatemala, Mexico, and Nicaragua; was a past committee chair for the Texas Cardiovascular and Stroke Partnership; was a member of the World Affairs Council of Dallas; was on the executive leadership team for DFW Executive Healthcare Network, acted as executive consultant and project manager while at Executives in Action; was the executive consultant fundraiser for a project with the American Diabetes Association in Dallas; and was a group leader for BSE. Ms. Usher is currently a volunteer for Heifer International in New Jersey.

If Ms. Usher were to choose another career, she would like to be a physician working in a third-world country where basic healthcare is scarce or nonexistent.

"I'd like to provide medical care in a unique and quality way to patients, even in an environment of intense government regulation and reduced reimbursement; there are so many people in the world lacking basic care, which can lead to chronic illness and/or early death," she says.

Colleagues extol Ms. Usher's enthusiasm and commitment to growth, excellence, and her ability to carve out new paths for success, as well as her ability to galvanize her teams to perform at their highest levels. **PV**

ENTHUSIASTIC. DRIVEN.

Marc SIROCKMAN

Patient Educator

Marc Sirockman has grown a three-person, one-room office into a multi-million dollar business with more than 50 employees and hundreds of creative awards under its belt. This tremendous growth occurred when many other companies were downsizing. Mr. Sirockman achieved this by changing the agency's trajectory and creating a successful environment through his never-ending drive, contagious passion for educating patients, and expertise derived from his multifaceted career in pharmaceutical sales and training.

Mr. Sirockman lives by the fervent belief that patient and healthcare provider education is the cornerstone of the industry.

His personal passion for educating patients is paralleled in Artcraft Health Education's (AHE) mission, which is to empower patients through education so they can make the best possible health decisions. Knowledge acquired in his pharmaceutical sales rep days has provided Mr. Sirockman with an innate ability to know not only what patients need, but also what healthcare professionals and the industry require in terms.

To keep programs laser-focused, he encourages his staff to always remember that each of them is a patient too, and all teams — content, creative, medical illustration, animation, digital, and production — collaborate on each concept to ensure that educational messaging and call-to-actions are crystallized and actionable.

Mr. Sirockman is using his knowledge of business drivers to revolutionize interactive anatomical models and custom patient education programs. In addition, he has led the agency in providing innovative ways for patients to learn about their health. For example, AHE has created national support programs for summer camps that cater to specialty patient populations such as those with asthma, oncology, diabetes, and hemophilia. Programs are targeted to campers, camp counselors, and clinician educators.

Under Mr. Sirockman's leadership, the agency has incorporated animation and application development to better serve patients in the healthcare community. He also created the CARE principles that each project must adhere to. The acronym stands for clear, actionable, relevant, and engaging. This focus on perfecting the art of patient education has led AHE to win dozens of awards.



DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY

FEAR

Getting to Know...

Marc M. Sirockman

TITLE: Executive VP, General Manager

COMPANY: Artcraft Health Education

EDUCATION: BA, Business Administration, Wagner College

FAMILY: Wife, two children

HOBBIES: Fishing, boating, remodeling

BUCKET LIST: Navigate a boat through the Intracoastal Waterway, ride a motorcycle across country

AWARDS/HONORS: Marc's Top Award — CEO Award, Alpha Therapeutics

ASSOCIATIONS: American College of Cardiology, The Endocrine Society, Society of Pharmaceutical Training and Development, HealthCare Exhibitors Association

SOCIAL MEDIA:   

While his steadfast focus is on educating patients, Mr. Sirockman also takes time to mentor and educate his employees, sending out crucial articles daily, meeting regularly, and honoring a job well done with awards and celebrations. Mr. Sirockman's own drive, dedication, training, and inspiration spurs each employee to create innovative patient education strategies that bring value to healthcare professionals, patients, and pharmaceutical brands.

Mr. Sirockman's creed for company culture places high value on collaboration, wellness, socializing, and fun. He personally designed a new office for his growing staff, equipped with a gym, ergonomic desks, and a relaxing dining area that allows for an occasional game of chess. He strongly encourages employees to balance work and play to maximize productivity, job satisfaction, and company loyalty. Consequently, his staff members come to work each day motivated, appreciated, and looking forward to being a part of a great work environment.


In the midst of the rapid growth, myriad awards, and a brand new state-of-the-art office building, Mr. Sirockman has managed to re-

Marc Sirockman envisions a future where effective and innovative patient education will be inextricably linked to positive patient outcomes.

tain small company ideals and cultivate an atmosphere of commitment and responsibility among the agency's team members. Part of that responsibility is giving back to the community on a continual basis. AHE takes part in several community service projects each year, and these efforts earned the company another award — the Communitas Award in 2012.

Along with patients and the community, Mr. Sirockman also feels a strong responsibility to his team members, and he enjoys mentoring them daily.

"Being a mentor is very important to me," he says. "I have made great decisions and poor ones, and learned on the front lines. Helping others navigate corporate challenges, political agendas, and helping them visualize connections between 'words and music' has resulted in increased confidence to develop their instincts and execute on good plans."

Mr. Sirockman looks forward to more years of growing the company wisely, creatively, and profitably; strategically investing in clinical trial recruitment programs and education; and delving deeper in health and wellness-hospital based solutions; maximizing the opportunities for associates; and creatively problem-solving the next challenge headed down the pike. 

Jeff KUEFFER

A Passion for Process

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY SURVIVAL

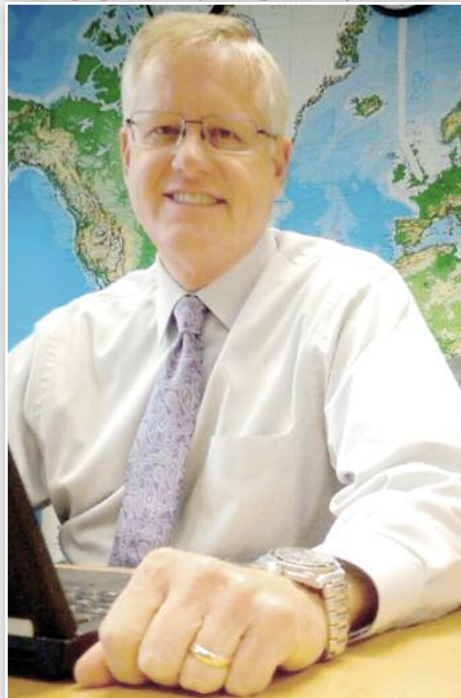
For fun, Jeff Kueffer, senior VP, global operations management at INC Research, takes old clocks apart, and restores them without an instruction manual. It's that type of attention to detail and systematic focus that enables him to excel in project management. Serving for more than 20 years in the United States Army, Mr. Kueffer's skills were shaped by career advice he received from Brigadier General Dean Cash: don't try to do everything at once. Instead select one or two items and focus your attention on those to achieve results. Then, build on that.

Whether managing the integration of the company's last five acquisitions, or developing and supporting a new methodology to support the execution of clinical trials, or fixing clocks, Mr. Kueffer is adept at building on things. Colleagues call him the chief architect and driving force behind the development, fine-tuning, and evolution of INC's business. With more than 25 years of project management experience, he has worked in both the public and private sector with primary emphasis in operations management, software development, and business process re-engineering. For the past 14 years, Mr. Kueffer has worked in a variety of senior operational leadership positions in support of pharmaceutical clinical drug development. His ability to effect change in a very risk averse industry in order to challenge convention not only at INC Research but also within the industry as a whole make him an innovative force in the life-sciences sector.

When Mr. Kueffer joined INC Research nine years ago, the company was a niche CRO comprised of about 260 employees trying to establish a presence in the emerging industry of clinical research. He says his journey at INC Research has been his greatest career highlight to date.

"Today, INC Research is a global CRO comprised of 5,000 skilled employees operating across more than 100 countries," he says. "I beam with pride at what we've built together and how we have developed a culture of quality and a commitment to excellence throughout our organization."

PERSISTENT. ARDENT.



Jeff Kueffer has what it takes to shake up the status quo and create a more efficient process for clinical trials.

The latest acquisition involved merging Kendle International, a global CRO of more than 3,000 employees, into INC Research which, at the time, had 2,000 employees and was one of his most challenging assignments to date.

"The challenge of bringing two distinct company cultures together to form a new, combined company required gaining the trust and confidence of all parties and getting their buy-in for a vision for our collective future," he says.

INC Research's success and growth is due in part to Mr. Kueffer's process engineering mindset and his ability to help the organization — and the industry — embrace a new way of doing things. He engineered a standardized methodology that brings reliability, consistency, and trust to clinical development planning.

He is a pioneer in applying engineering and systems management principles to the human element of starting up clinical trials and bringing new therapies to market.

Mr. Kueffer's unique brand of persistence has been instrumental in gaining the support of those around him. The ability to overcome organizational resistance or the inertia of the status quo requires resolve, tenacity, and determination, which is not the same as bullying through a problem.

"Persistence has been the touchstone of my success as a change agent," he says. "Persistence infers a commitment to all parties that you're in it to the end, that you won't turn

away from the hard issues or difficult challenges, that you can be relied on to be part of the solution."

Colleagues describe him as two parts process engineer, one part evangelist, and one part pit bull, and say his passion for problem solving is infectious. Not only is he able to adapt organizational structures to solve real problems, but he is also willing to question his past decisions to make better choices and recommendations in the future, an approach that is absolutely critical in the life-sciences field.

Beyond his passion for process and problem solving, Mr. Kueffer also loves his people. He seeks opportunities to spend time with staff members to help them understand the motivation behind an activity, or to simply better understand their concerns, ideas, and, most of all, their ambitions.

Recognized at INC Research for developing high-performing teams and for being a mentor and role model to those teams and the company as a whole, this leader is not above rolling up his sleeves to fix the copier, move furniture, or stop and address a problem someone at a less strategic level is having.

When new employees join his team, he gives them a list titled "What I Believe," which lists the 30 guiding principles he follows in his career and his personal life.

"I feel it is especially important that whenever a new person joins my team, I spend time with them to talk about the company, my role, my views, and to learn more about them," he says. "The time to keep a good employee is when she or he joins your team. How you welcome someone is extremely important."

The latter is one of his key principles, another is that people are the company's most important asset, and it's important to lead them, care for them, and counsel them. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Jeffrey A. Kueffer

TITLE: Senior VP, Global Operations Management

COMPANY: INC Research LLC

EDUCATION: BS, University of Arizona; MBA, University of New Mexico

FAMILY: Wife, Nancy; two daughters, Halley, 26, Jennifer, 22

HOBBIES: Fly fishing, camping, hiking, kayaking

BUCKET LIST: Hike the Appalachian Trail; float the Colorado River/Grand Canyon; visit all the National Parks across the United States; learn to play the harmonica; tour other continents extensively by river, rail, and road; return to visit the Basilica and Expiatory Church of the Holy Family; visit the Pyramids

ASSOCIATIONS: Drug Information Association

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [f](#) [g+](#)

Kim RAMKO

Partnering Forward

According to her colleagues, if every company had a Kim Ramko, there would be a lot more success in the world. Described as the life-sciences prototype for building a strong organization from the bottom up, Ms. Ramko's collaborative leadership over the past two years has quadrupled the growth in the number of practitioners in the Americas advisory life sciences practice at EY.

Succeeding in the healthcare field is both a professional and personal goal for her. Her mother is completely disabled due to rheumatoid arthritis, and she has a friend who continues to manage lupus.

"I want the 'system' to work better for individuals like them who have no choice but to deal with life-affecting illnesses every day," she says. "I hope that we are able to shift to a model where we place the patient at the center of care, meaning we include all aspects of care — preventive, medical, holistic, patient communities, and foundations."

This philosophy is actually the life blood of EY's Pharma 3.0 ecosystem: success or failure for life-sciences companies will no longer simply be about how many pills they sell, but rather their ability to demonstrate improvements in health outcomes that can bend the cost curve in the health system overall.

Ms. Ramko and her team have been pioneering innovative, new, data-driven approaches to succeeding in this outcomes-focused environment, including how to harness insights from disparate forms of data such as patient records, physician records, and pharmacological data, which together form the holy grail in improving patient outcomes.

Currently she is focusing on expanding EY's current practice to include innovative solutions at the intersection of the life-sciences — the payer and provider organizations — to help clients be successful in the evolving world of healthcare. Her years of experience in both life sciences and the payer space make her uniquely equipped to help companies navigate changing landscape.

Most recently, this included helping an EY team spearhead an initiative that brought together three organizations — a pharmaceutical company, a national grocery chain, and a branch of the military — in an innovative project designed to compile and examine new forms of data surrounding patient adherence, including how and where people get their prescriptions filled. Under Ms. Ramko's leadership, this team developed established a truly pioneering collab-

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY CHALLENGES

oration that will continue in the coming months as the project approaches the implementation stage.

As Americas advisory life sciences leader, Ms. Ramko has put analytics front-and-center for the practice and she has been a champion of figuring out how big data fits into clients' toolkits. Always forward-looking, she was able to spot the value in advanced analytics long before it became a hot commodity in the industry. Her insights about what lies ahead for the life sciences, including how the customer-facing process will be managed throughout the industry, have been among EY's advisory practice's most valuable assets, her colleagues say.

Through her understanding of the importance of the practical implementation of technology in pharma, Ms. Ramko has guided clients through these emerging areas, which range from increasing the efficiency of R&D and lab operations to optimizing the use of mobile technology and the cloud. She employs innovative strategies to identify areas where her clients can make strategic reductions in expenditures and streamline their operations, sometimes saving her clients millions of dollars.

Ms. Ramko has had an impact on the company beyond the numbers, bringing the spirit of collaboration and innovation to both the company and those it works with. For example, Ms. Ramko dedicated much time and energy developing a unique solution for the chain of custody for drugs. Rather than limiting her insights to those within the firm, she took the extra step of connecting them with leaders at other firms, putting the goal of finding a strong solution ahead of concerns about giving up proprietary information. Through this type of mutual partnering — as life-sciences clients increasingly explore new models and come to understand that no one organization can meet all their needs — Ms. Ramko is paving the way for other leaders by demonstrating that collaboration is the key to a successful future.

She has been a strong advocate for advising pharma clients to broaden their outreach beyond traditional advertising campaigns to include a greater focus on tech-centric methods, including social media, as the industry transitions to a patient-centric healthcare system.

Ms. Ramko is a consummate leader with infallible instincts and a rare ability to identify

ENERGETIC. CREATIVE.



Kim Ramko has been instrumental in preparing the industry for the shift from being product-centric to patient-centric.

and leverage each individual's strengths. She knows how to spot talent, organize well-balanced teams, and empower them to achieve their goals. Ms. Ramko is dedicated to helping women in the industry advance into positions of leadership. She recently had a role on an EY women's advisory board, where she helped organize an 18-city road show talking to women at a local level about the issues involved in succeeding as an executive. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Kim Ramko

TITLE: Americas Advisory Life Sciences Leader

COMPANY: Ernst & Young

EDUCATION: BBA, Computer Information Systems, Middle Tennessee State University

FAMILY: Husband, Paul; children, Jake, Loukas, Katy

HOBBIES: Tennis, hiking, biking, sailing

BUCKET LIST: Earn scuba dive master certification

ASSOCIATIONS: Healthcare Businesswomen's Association, AMCF, TDWI

TWEET AT: @KimRamkoEY

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [t](#) [f](#)

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY INEQUALITY

Graham Simpson, Ph.D., head of the therapeutic peptide chemistry performance unit, GlaxoSmithKline, relishes a challenge. Whether beekeeping in Kenya, competing in a grueling one-day survival challenge, or creating a solution for easy diagnosis of diseases, he doesn't quit until he's achieved his goal.

Dr. Simpson's latest venture is embracing GSK's PULSE Volunteer Partnership, which is a skills-based volunteering initiative that matches employees to a nonprofit organization full time for three or six months. Employees have the opportunity to contribute their skills to solving healthcare challenges at home and abroad. When volunteers return to GSK they become catalysts for changing the company for the better.

Dr. Simpson calls this one of the true opportunities of his career, although he found it humorous that in a matter of a month he had turned from being a researcher in drug discovery at a state-of-the-art lab to learning beekeeping and soap making in rural Kenyan villages.

"This was a life-changing chance to work with patients and communities to introduce sustainable enterprises based around rural hospitals," he says.

Through his experience in Kenya, he met a truly inspirational man who he now considers a friend and colleague. Dr. Simpson worked with John Ngere, a community health worker in Ombeyi, a village in western Kenya.

Dr. Simpson says Mr. Ngere, who is HIV positive, has dedicated his life to living positively and inspires local youths and the community to follow his lead. Dr. Simpson worked alongside Mr. Ngere and the Kenyan community health worker's wife, who is also HIV-positive, to start small businesses to help patients and fellow volunteers earn a living associated with the hospital.

Mr. and Mrs. Ngere's son was born HIV negative, but he died from anemia and malaria while Dr. Simpson was helping to drive the parents and child 20 miles to the nearest hospital.

"I was inspired by their response to the tragic death of their son, Nelson, who through the miracle of modern medicine was born HIV negative but sadly caught malaria and died," Dr. Simpson says. "John's determination to get on with life and not to dwell on the sadness really showed me his strength of character in the most heartbreaking circumstances."

After witnessing what he considered a preventable and needless death, Dr. Simpson be-

PASSIONATE. INQUISITIVE.



Dr. Graham SIMPSON A Chemical Reaction

Dr. Graham Simpson believes there is a huge opportunity to provide better healthcare to the underserved, a personal goal that inspires him daily.

came aware of the need for diagnoses of very simple infections and diseases in the developing world. Early diagnosis is the first step to effective treatment and Nelson's condition could have been so easily diagnosed and treated in the United Kingdom.

When Dr. Simpson returned to GSK, he brought with him the idea to design diagnostics kits that are cost-effective, accurate, and able to be administered by healthworkers who at times are untrained.

GSK has begun an open-innovation partnership with an NGO and Johns Hopkins University to make Dr. Simpson's vision a reality.

Dr. Simpson, along with his colleagues, developed two inexpensive paper-based products that can reliably diagnose diseases in remote and rural areas worldwide. A paper-based product was important, because as Dr. Simpson says, the standard diagnostics used in modern hospitals don't apply when there is no electricity or running water. He and his colleagues saw this as a huge opportunity to provide better healthcare to the underserved, a personal goal that inspires him daily.

Dr. Simpson believes the biggest challenge facing the industry today is discovering and creating access to medicines for those in the least developed countries, and no one company can do it alone.

"There is a need to change the business model, and disruptive innovation and the need to understand the real challenges on the ground must be tackled by collaboration between companies, charities, governments, and

global institutions," he says. "The opportunity to use my knowledge and experience of science and research to help develop medicines for patients whose lives are impacted by disease or illness keeps me motivated."

Dr. Simpson and his team recently won an award from the Ashoka Changemakers Competition for their initiative. Ashoka Changemakers is a global online community that connects people to share ideas, mentor each other, and identify and support the best ideas in social innovation. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Graham Simpson, Ph.D.

TITLE: Head of Therapeutic Peptide Chemistry Performance Unit (CPU)

COMPANY: GlaxoSmithKline

EDUCATION: BSc, Honors Organic Chemistry, University of Strathclyde; Ph.D., Organic Chemistry, University of Bristol

FAMILY: Wife, Jess; first child due in August

HOBBIES: Golfing, participating in triathlons, cooking exotic dishes, mowing new lawn


BUCKET LIST: Play golf with Seth Godin, David Ortiz, and Barack Obama at St. Andrews Old Course

AWARDS/HONORS: Fulbright Scholarship, 1851 Royal Commission Scholarship

ASSOCIATIONS: Royal Society of Chemistry MRSC, American Chemical Society

TWEET AT: @grahamsimpson

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [t](#) [f](#) [You Tube](#) [i](#) [t](#) [m](#)



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Matthew STUMM

Changing Patient Recruitment

Whether it's creating an industry-focused board game or getting his kids to go willingly to bed, Matthew Stumm, principal, creative and media strategy, BBK Worldwide, never runs out of ideas on how to creatively solve a problem. He leads a team of designers and copywriters in developing multinational creative platforms, which cross every traditional and social media channel in patient recruitment. His blend of eloquent visual communication skills and incisive strategic thinking ensures BBK campaigns deliver crucial study messages to all key audiences.

His creative vision and results-driven approach challenge those around him to fully assess each and every campaign the agency launches. He inspires those who work with him on a daily basis to reach new heights and embrace new challenges. From an industry perspective, he inspires change and innovation by always creating new ways to improve patient engagement and comprehension of clinical research.

A multi award-winning creative director with a proven track record of conceptualizing solutions for cross-channel marketing efforts spanning several industries, Mr. Stumm recalls an impactful moment very early in his career. He was walking down a street in Boston's North End on trash pick up day when he noticed an opened piece of direct mail lying next to a garbage can. He easily recognized the piece as one he had just created. He says seeing the piece evoked two strong feelings: satisfaction that someone had taken the time to open and read it, and disappointment that it had been discarded in the trash.

"It was an ironic moment," he says. "I had to laugh, but I was also humbled by that experience."

Mr. Stumm's proven results in initializing and delivering marketing messages via interactive, direct mail, collateral, and advertising, along with his demonstrated ability to lead and inspire creative teams have earned him an important place at the BBK table. Just this year, he and three other leaders at BBK were invited by the privately held company to take their dedication a step further to become minor principals.

In this new role, Mr. Stumm will drive innovation for Agency320, BBK's partner company for creative and media services and partner with BBK's founding principals Joan Bachenheimer and Bonnie Brescia to maintain the company's core mission and values while

driving growth in key market areas.

Along with his new responsibilities, Mr. Stumm hopes to play an instrumental part in integrating mobile technology into the patient recruitment conversation. He plans to continue to push the industry to embrace mobile technology and consider it as part of the patient recruitment strategy, when appropriate.

"I am also exploring the role mobile apps can play in healthcare awareness," he says. "The way we receive information and news is changing so quickly, we're looking to keep up and create useful and impactful solutions for our industry."

For example, in an effort to help clinical trial sponsors capitalize on mobile trends and maximize recruitment dollars, Mr. Stumm led the agency in the development of in-app advertising, a suite of advertising tools for mobile applications designed to increase patient recruitment campaign effectiveness and return on investment. This new group of in-app advertising tools creates recruitment opportunities in video, radio, and banner mobile ad networks.

Mr. Stumm is careful what he promises, though, because he received some wise advice from a creative director early on in his career: "Amateurs guarantee. Professionals hope."

"It really stuck with me, and to this day it reminds me of the importance of humility in the workplace," he says.

Mr. Stumm's colleagues say as a leader he embodies the true spirit of inspiration.

People who work with him describe him as a selfless leader whose humility fosters an atmosphere of teamwork and collaboration. His enthusiasm makes those around him better at what they do, which ultimately results in client success.

Creative work surrounding medical campaigns can be very dry by nature, and Mr. Stumm's ability to bring a level of quirkiness that begs the listener/viewer's attention is a rarity. His insight into the patient mindset and ability to connect and engage through creative messaging and design have

Getting to Know...

Matthew Stumm

TITLE: Principal, Creative & Media Strategy

COMPANY: BBK Worldwide

EDUCATION: BFA, Graphic Design, The Art Institute of Boston

FAMILY: Daughter, Lily, 8; son, Andrew, 6

HOBBIES: Photography, gardening, fishing, playing chauffeur to kids


AWARDS/HONORS: New England Direct Marketing Association; DMA International ECHO Awards; American Graphic Design Awards; Web Health Awards

ASSOCIATIONS: Direct Marketers Association

TWEET AT: @mstummbbk

SOCIAL MEDIA:



introduced clinical trial participation to many and thereby expanding their potential options. This accomplishment is what truly motivates Mr. Stumm and in turn inspires his colleagues. 

Matthew Stumm's goal is to play an instrumental part in integrating mobile technology into the patient recruitment conversation.

CREATIVE. FUNNY.



DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY
EXCITEMENT

Denise DUCA

Growing Resources

For more than a decade, Denise Duca has led the human resources team at Acorda Therapeutics. The company had just more than 50 employees when she interviewed to work there. She was coming from a position where three companies were merging, and she worked on the team that facilitated the placement of thousands of employees. Worried that a small company might not have enough challenges for her, she asked her interviewers if there would be enough work to keep her busy.

“For anyone who has worked in biotech, I hope you are now laughing with me,” Ms. Duca says. “To my surprise, I’ve been running for 11 years just trying to keep up with all that needs to get done.”

Overall, Ms. Duca has helped Acorda expand from fewer than 100 employees in 2008 to more than 400 today, overcoming the challenges of attracting employees to a small company in an area not traditionally known for biotechnology. She manages human resources strategy, compensation and benefit planning, recruitment, and leadership development. She has developed innovative recognition and merit programs designed to inspire employees and to create a culture of commitment to the business. Her vision and leadership in HR practices have helped to make Acorda one of the most highly recognized and honored companies in biotechnology in recent years.

Under her direction, Acorda was named one of the Best Companies to Work for in New York in 2011, 2012, and 2013 based on a survey of employees. The survey questions included ranking multiple work factors, such as benefits and job satisfaction. In 2011, The Scientist ranked Acorda fifth on its list of Best Places to Work in Industry out of more than 250 companies that applied to be considered.

Ms. Duca has managed human resources at the company during several periods of explosive growth and historic transition. During her tenure, Acorda acquired Zanaflex Capsules in 2005, which necessitated the development of an entire commercial infrastructure. This started as a small marketing team in the home office and 10 sales professionals in the field. Ms. Duca led the process of hiring additional headquarters-based marketing professionals, as well as 42 additional sales professionals to drive the success of the company’s first-ever marketed product.

In 2009, Acorda was preparing to launch

COURAGEOUS. KIND.



Under Denise Duca’s leadership, Acorda has grown from 50 to 375 employees in less than a decade, while maintaining its best-company-to-work-for status two years in a row.

Ampyra, a product that would transform the company. Before the launch, Ms. Duca needed to grow the salesforce again to 100 sales professionals, but could not hire employees too far in advance of the expected FDA approval date. This meant hiring and training 52 new people all within a very short timeframe. In conjunction with doubling the sales team, Ms. Duca needed to prepare programs and processes necessary for Acorda to significantly expand the internal commercial team. During her tenure, she has also completely revised the company’s benefits program, workplace policies, and other HR guidelines to reflect the needs of a growing organization while managing to maintain the company’s culture. These new programs have led to a very high employee retention rate.

She’s been busy and successful, and she remains as motivated 11 years later contributing to the success of the company as she was that first day.

She inspires others by “stretching their brains” and demonstrating a balance of compassion with business needs when making decisions.

“Direct reports say that I foster an environment of continued learning and one of taking risks,” she says. “I do know that I provide challenging assignments, and offer alternative solutions to help them solve problems.”

Her experience in recruitment recently led the Westchester County Business Journal to invite her to participate in a panel discussion entitled Stop the Flight, which is focused on

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY ACHIEVEMENT

the essential need and optimal strategies to attract highly skilled younger workers to the Westchester region.

Ms. Duca shares the company’s commitment to improving the lives of people living with MS and has volunteered with the National Multiple Sclerosis Society’s Walk MS fundraisers. She and other members of the Acorda team worked on a campaign called Walk Because in which Walk MS participants could receive information about mobility issues and share video messages of thanks, hope, and encouragement to inspire others.

“I want to see a cure for this debilitating disease,” she says.

She also contributes to St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, because she says, “children should never be sick.”

Some of the best advice she ever got was to continue to grow her leadership skills, to take risks, to not shy away from challenges, and to demonstrate managerial courage. She has taken that advice to heart and has continually grown as a leader.

In the future, she wants to continue to contribute to the success of Acorda, and to find more ways to encourage growth and development in the members of her department and the organization.

And she no longer worries about not having enough to do. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Denise J. Duca

TITLE: Senior VP, Human Resources

COMPANY: Acorda Therapeutics Inc.

EDUCATION: Bachelor of Professional Studies, Pace University; Master’s and EdM, Psychological Counseling, Teachers College, Columbia University; Doctoral studies Adult Education and Organizational Learning, Teachers College, Columbia University

FAMILY: Significant other, Peter; Baron, the Bichon Frise

HOBBIES: Traveling, ballroom dancing

BUCKET LIST: Spend time on the Amalfi coastline, dance the Viennese Waltz in Vienna, travel to Australia, complete doctoral studies

AWARDS/HONORS: Best Companies to Work for in New York State, 2013; Corporate Counsel Magazine, Best Legal Departments, 2013; Forbes 2012 America’s Most Trustworthy Companies

ASSOCIATIONS: Society for Human Resource Management, Westchester Human Resource Management Association, and Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association

SOCIAL MEDIA: **in**

Pam STROBEL

Quality Act

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY CONSEQUENCES

According to colleagues, Pam Strobel embodies Aristotle's quote: quality is not an act; it is a habit. It's not just a job with Ms. Strobel; it's who she is.

In a time of constant change, Ms. Strobel, executive director, strategic resourcing quality, at inVentiv Health Clinical, has met the challenges head on and has not only maintained quality, but improved it all along her career path.

In these days of increasing pressure to minimize waste and reduce development costs, pharma is moving to a modern risk-management approach that relies on proactive quality measures. Described by colleagues as a fantastic quality and compliance auditor, Ms. Strobel is proactive in a field that is by definition retrospective.

She creates initiatives to build process improvements surrounding the quality of clinical trial data in real time. She repeatedly applies the knowledge and best practices she learned through years of quality inspections and auditing to client company operational aspects.

Adapting and leading through change have been challenging, but Ms. Strobel puts all her skills to work for a smooth transition.

"Change is often uncomfortable for people and requires respect and exceptional planning to be successful," she says.

Her reward is managing successful regulatory inspections — although even the ones with less successful outcomes can positive good learnings and are considered a success to her.

She introduced a centralized remote data review team to improve the efficiency and compliance of monitoring patient visit data for a large pharmaceutical client. Through this, her team was able to quickly identify and resolve quality and safety issues as well as protocol deviations. During her tenure at inVentiv, she identified a need to improve documentation. She then worked with the training department to roll out courses that emphasize and explain the importance of good documentation practices. Following the implementation of the new training, she audited the doc-

OPTIMISTIC. EMPATHETIC.



Pam Strobel creates initiatives that build process improvements to increase the quality of clinical trial data in real-time.

umentation to ensure that the quality had improved.

Other accomplishments include creating a quality dashboard tracking system in Share-Point that tracks client audits/assessments, protocol deviations, issue escalation, training compliance, and regulatory inspections for each of FSPs in real time. She can then see trends across a single client as well as all clients where she can recommend process improvements.

She applies the methodologies of failure mode and effects analysis (FMEA), and Lean and Six Sigma, which are all common practices on the manufacturing side, to the clinical trials industry to drive quality, speed, and delivery. She is working at the operational forefront to help clients embed quality into all aspects of the clinical trial process.

Beyond her present career accomplishments, her next goal is to define a culture of quality in the industry.

"I think we've made some major strides in defining what quality is, but I think there's still opportunity in driving quality throughout clinical research," she says.

Ms. Strobel easily adapts her leadership style to motivate the different types of personalities she manages. She believes in ongoing training and continuous improvement. She models the behaviors she believes in and focuses on the positive.

"I honestly believe that most people have good intentions," she says. "I know that

Getting to Know...

Pamela Strobel

TITLE: Executive Director, Strategic Resourcing Quality

COMPANY: inVentiv Health Clinical

EDUCATION: BA, Biology, George Mason University; Masters of Health Science, Health Policy and Management, Health Finance, The Johns Hopkins University, Bloomberg School of Public Health

FAMILY: Husband; three sons

HOBBIES: Reading, watching baseball, exercising, gardening

BUCKET LIST: Visit the national parks and baseball stadiums not seen yet


AWARDS/HONORS: Charlie Award, Pfizer, 2006; President's Award, Kforce Clinical Research, 2009

ASSOCIATIONS: AVOCA, DIA, ACRP

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [f](#)

sounds a little counter-intuitive for an auditor, but this approach doesn't impact whether or not I identify issues, just how those messages are delivered and received."

The people she works with and for inspire her every day.

"Sometimes it's one of my team members, sometimes it's a subject in a clinical trial," she says. "And knowing that what I do makes a difference is a great motivator." 

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Ann MOHAMADI

Charting Her Own Course

If you want something done, and done right, call Ann Mohamadi. She is relentless in her pursuit of excellence and getting the job done — beyond expectations.

Ms. Mohamadi brings a vast and varied background — ranging from accounting to marketing to sales to advertising — to her position as managing director, pharmaceuticals and life sciences for PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). PwC's pharmaceutical and life sciences industry group offers clients assurance, tax and advisory services. The firm provides industry-focused strategy and operational consulting services covering R&D, supply chain, and commercial strategy as well global capabilities in risk management and compliance, information systems, and deals support.

"I have had the opportunity to make some really significant and unique moves," Ms. Mohamadi says. "For me, the highlight is being able to leverage transferrable skills to start or build a new career."

Ms. Mohamadi's career to date is reflective of some advice she was given early on: define yourself. Instead of obsessing that her career path didn't follow a traditional route, she took this advice to heart and defined her own course.

"Not having the same experiences as everyone else, wasn't always easy," she says. "I went into marketing without marketing and sales experience. I went into consumer packaged goods without consumer experience. I went into advertising without advertising experience. I was always focused on trying to prove my value until one of my bosses said,

'don't wait for anybody to tell you what you need to do; define yourself and create your own unique value.'"

Ms. Mohamadi has never been satisfied with the status quo. She wanted to play soccer in high school, but there was no girl's team, so she said, "I'll play on the men's soccer team." In spite of opposition, and because nobody could come up with a good reason why she couldn't, she played men's soccer.

With the energy of 10 people, Ms. Mohamadi is adept at juggling multiple priorities, including managing a growing list of pharmaceutical clients for PwC, fulfilling board responsibilities for a number of industry-related organizations, volunteering for several charities, making connections for those in her vast network, and being present for her family.

A natural collaborator, she recognizes that everybody brings a unique skill set and perspective to the table. Ms. Mohamadi's collaborative skills came into play early in her career when she was charged with leading a growth achievement initiative for a franchise brand and market leader with joint-venture partners, each of which were undergoing its own cultural and integration challenges at the time.

"It's the ability to harness a team's talents that creates a solid end result," she says. "It's important that people believe that their contributions are valued and their perspectives are noted. The way healthcare is evolving, it's more important than ever to consider more stakeholders than we did in the past, and the value of having unique perspectives and unique experiences is crucial."

Generous with her time, Ms. Mohamadi has a true sense of commitment to people. She is an authentic leader who strives to provide an opportunity for people to share different perspectives and incorporate different ideas.

Ms. Mohamadi says it is critical for people to think more innovatively and in a nontraditional manner going forward.

Noted for being strategic and forward-thinking herself, Ms. Mohamadi's colleagues say she is the type of leader who should be celebrated. She is lauded as being a tremendous contributor to the overall business of healthcare. She is motivated by the fact that there is a real need to make a difference in an industry that offers significant value to patients, and has the ability to impact the entire world.

A people person, Ms. Mohamadi has a great sense of humor and derives energy from different types of people, especially those who are funny, intelligent, and interesting.

A natural convener, Ms. Mohamadi is extremely adept at relationship building, which has led to a large and impressive network. But for her it's not about the size of the proverbial Rolodex, she truly cares about the people she

AUTHENTIC. ENERGETIC.



Ann Mohamadi brings a wealth of experiences and knowledge to her role as a leader and change agent in the life-sciences industry.

meets along the way and she takes the time to build and nurture her relationships and network, which she generously activates time and time again to assist others.

"I believe I am uniquely positioned to connect disparate groups of people who wouldn't otherwise meet but who would derive tremendous value by knowing each other," she says.

Giving back is important to Ms. Mohamadi and she believes that mentoring is a great way to share what's she's learned along the way to help others accelerate their knowledge and careers.

Colleagues say Ms. Mohamadi's compassion is evident in her leadership style and she makes the time to help others succeed, believing in the power of achievement despite obstacles that may be present, setting a vision and a path so people understand what the expectations are, and making sure that everyone shares in the success and that their contributions are recognized.

She has been a long-time member of and volunteer with the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association and currently sits on its corporate board of directors.

Ms. Mohamadi also generously lends her support to the Annual Sparkle of Hope Dinner Auction in support of Community Hope's mission to aid veterans and disabled individuals. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Ann Mohamadi

TITLE: Managing Director, Pharmaceuticals and Life Sciences

COMPANY: PricewaterhouseCoopers

EDUCATION: BS, Accounting, St. Joseph's University

FAMILY: Parents, two brothers, two sisters-in-law, one niece, Anna, and another niece on the way

HOBBIES: Cycling, swimming, traveling, photography

BUCKET LIST: Traveling to many countries she hasn't had the opportunity to see

ASSOCIATIONS: Healthcare Businesswomen's Association, American Cancer Society, Sparkle of Hope, South Asian Pharmaceutical Council

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [f](#)

Dr. Stefan LARSSON

Improving Outcomes



VISIONARY. PIONEER.

Dr. Stefan Larsson is focusing his talents on finding a new approach to helping governments and other payers focus on managing costs.

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY **OUTCOMES**

son is committed to finding a new approach to helping governments and other payers focus on managing costs.

Based on his work within the Swedish healthcare system, Dr. Larsson played a leading role in BCG's efforts to co-found an international consortium that would have a broader impact beyond the borders of one country and reach the rest of the world to standardize healthcare outcomes measurement. The result is ICHOM (the International Consortium of Health Outcomes Measurement), which was launched in 2012 by BCG, Michael Porter of the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at Harvard Business School, and the Karolinska Institute.

Through this platform, and a huge interest from the global healthcare community, he is driving the next level of impact in international healthcare delivery: quality, cost, and outcomes.

He is also dedicated to BCG's Center for Health Care Value, which includes helping pharma companies define their strategy in an increasingly outcomes-focused competitive environment, impacting R&D effectiveness, regulatory affairs, drug safety, manufacturing, in-licensing strategy, and commercial effectiveness. **PV**

Stefan Larsson, M.D., Ph.D., is a pioneer in a critical part of the healthcare puzzle: health outcomes management.

Combining an analytical mind, a medical background, and deep consulting experience, Dr. Larsson has significantly advanced the thinking on value-based healthcare and its implications across all sectors of healthcare — pharma companies, medical device companies, payers, and providers.

Dr. Larsson saw a huge unmet need in the world of healthcare to drive outcomes-based care delivery models. With his colleagues, he brought greater focus to the work that disease registries in Sweden were doing to measure outcomes, and he helped promote the tremendous

role that outcomes measurement can play in improving healthcare delivery for a given medical condition.

The outcome of this work was amazing. Care delivery in Sweden has improved based on the application of outcome measurement, which is literally changing the quality and cost of care delivery. There have been massive improvements in the areas where this transition has occurred, for example heart attack survival.

He joined The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) in 1996 and now serves as a senior partner and managing director in the firm's Stockholm office. He is the global leader of BCG's healthcare payers and providers sector.

With healthcare costs representing 9% to 18% of GDP in the developed world and having risen two to three times faster than economic growth over the past 20 years, Dr. Larsson

Getting to Know...

Stefan Larsson, M.D., Ph.D.

TITLE: Senior Partner and Managing Director

COMPANY: The Boston Consulting Group

EDUCATION: M.D., Karolinska Institute; Ph.D., Karolinska Institute and Harvard Medical School

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Dr. Zubin Damania, aka ZDoggMD, is talking, or rather, rapping about public health issues in a unique online community.

Physician and hospitalist Zubin Damania, M.D., has an alter ego — YouTube sensation ZDoggMD.

In addition to specializing in in-patient internal medicine for almost a decade with the Palo Alto Medical Foundation and Stanford Hospital, Dr. Damania is capitalizing on a unique mashup of medicine and music to connect with patients. As ZDoggMD, Dr. Damania is combining his love of science, comedy, and music.

After releasing a video of his medical school commencement speech that received rave reviews on YouTube, Dr. Damania thought there just might be something to his humorous approach and to being “slightly funnier than placebo,” the tagline of his website ZDoggMD.com.

“As ZDogg I get to write, perform, produce, and distribute satirical music videos that attempt to address important topics in healthcare,” he says. “Social media is a powerful tool to bring a practicing physician’s perspective to the public at large. Ultimately the goal is to educate and entertain.”

One of his most popular videos — Manhood in the Mirror, a parody of Michael Jackson’s Man in the Mirror — addresses the topic of testicular self-exam. It’s well worth check-

ing out this video as well as ZDoggMD’s 60 other productions, which collectively have more than 1 million views on YouTube.

Dr. Damania wowed attendees at TedMed this year with the Man in the Mirror video as well as his talk and unique perspective on medicine, physician burnout, and healthcare reform.

His healthcare journey led him from the Bay Area to downtown Las Vegas, where he currently directs the health-related efforts of a revolutionary community revitalization movement called Downtown Project.

“Led by Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh, we’re working to create the most community-oriented large city in the world — and do it in record time,” he says. “My role is to lead the development of an innovative healthcare infrastructure designed to serve the needs of the downtown community and beyond.”

He is implementing a primary-care wellness model that promotes health at both the individual and community levels.

The Downtown Medical Clinic is slated to open by the end of 2013 and will provide the community with a welcoming and collaborative team-based primary-care experience for a flat monthly fee: no insurance accepted and no copays.

Dr. Zubin DAMANIA ZDoggMD

Getting to Know...

Zubin Damania, M.D.

TITLES AND COMPANIES: Healthcare Development at Downtown Project LLC; Founder, ZDoggMD LLC


EDUCATION: BA, Molecular and Cell Biology, Music, University of California, Berkeley; M.D., University of California, San Francisco — School of Medicine; Internal Medicine Residency, Internal Medicine, Stanford University

AWARDS/HONORS: Medgadget Best New Medical Blog of 2011 — ZDoggMD.com; Third Place, Disposable Film Festival Healthcare Awards 2011 — for the pro-vaccination video Immunize

TWEET AT: @zdoggm

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [t](#) [f](#) [g+](#) [You Tube](#)

For the price of a gym membership, the clinic offers total access to an extensive care team consisting of health coaches, nurses, social workers, and physicians.

In addition to healthcare, the Downtown Project so far has allocated \$350 million to aid in the revitalization of Downtown Las Vegas, with \$200 million being invested in real estate, \$50 million in small businesses, \$50 million in education, and \$50 million in tech startups through the VegasTechFund. 

Dr. Ramesh RASKAR

Opening Up a New Lens of Discovery

Following the Sanskrit schloka “Ma Faleshu Kadachanam” (if you do good stuff without worrying about self-gain, good stuff will happen to you), Ramesh Raskar, Ph.D., is passionately leading the revolution in the use of consumer devices and data analytics toward the next generation of health solutions.

“A smartphone is not just for communication and computing, but it is a scientific instrument,” he says. “My passion is to convert such widespread technologies into medical instruments and health solutions spanning diagnostics; behavior; and data science for discovery, prediction, and delivery.”

As a result, he believes there can be a highly evolved personalized health diagnostic and delivery method embedded into mobile phones by default, similar to how photography and commerce are now greatly dominated by mobile phone platforms.

Using his electrical engineering and computing background, Dr. Raskar wants to solve the most critical consumer health problems through health technology innovation.

Dr. Raskar joined MIT’s Media Lab from Mitsubishi Electric Research Laboratories in

2008 as head of the lab’s Camera Culture research group. His research interests span the fields of computational photography, inverse problems in imaging, and human-computer interaction.

As associate professor at MIT Media Lab, his research goal is to create an entirely new class of imaging platforms that have an understanding of the world that far exceeds human ability and produce meaningful abstractions that are well within human comprehension, which has applications for healthcare, such as “superhuman eyesite.”

This highly creative and self-described obsessive entrepreneur is well on his way. To date, his inventions include a transient imaging camera that produces a trillion frames per second to look around a corner; a next-generation CT-scan machine; imperceptible markers for motion capture (Project Prakash); long-distance barcodes (Bokode); touch and hover 3D interaction displays (BiDi screen); low-cost eye care devices (NETRA), and new theoretical models to augment light fields (ALF) to represent wave phenomena.

He says being a brand new faculty member at MIT Media Lab developing the transient imaging camera was quite a challenge as he had almost no resources or funding.

“For this crazy, ambitious, long-term project, I had to beg and borrow equipment and lab facilities, convince a team that was highly skeptical, and keep collaborators engaged for the long haul despite everyone’s desire to get quick results,” he says.

Making the switch from corporate America to academia took some adjustment, including cutting his salary by two-thirds, but it was worth it, he says.

“The reason I came to academia is to work with young people and to pass on the torch of creativity and generative thinking,” he says. “In addition, I organize a series of workshops to bring young individuals together to solve the most important problems in a week-long

OPTIMIST. PARANOID.



Dr. Ramesh Raskar’s goal is to create an entirely new class of imaging platforms.

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY MAGIC

brainstorm and hackathon. I have fostered an environment of entrepreneurship that can take brilliant ideas into the real world for impact.”

He is a voracious blogger and generously shares his views on topics including from how to invent via an idea hexagon to how to give talks that don’t put your audience to sleep, to how to attend a conference, to how to contact a busy person (if you want an email response, best time to email is Wed-Thu 2pm-5pm).

Beyond using social media to share his views, Dr. Raskar says the world is now his lab because of social media.

“Originally, I used social media for sharing and understanding the research out there,” he says. “But now with projects like VisionBlocks and PhotoCloud, social media is itself the research platform.”

Dr. Raskar’s accomplishments have not gone unrecognized. In 2004, he received the TR100 Award from Technology Review, presented to top young innovators under the age of 35, and in 2003, he received the Global Indus Technovator Award, instituted at MIT to recognize the top 20 Indian technology innovators worldwide.

In 2009, he was awarded a Sloan Research Fellowship. In 2010, he received the DARPA Young Faculty award. He holds more than 40 U.S. patents, and has received four Mitsubishi Electric Invention Awards. He is currently co-authoring a book on computational photography. **PV**

Getting to Know...

Ramesh Raskar, Ph.D.

TITLE: Associate Professor

COMPANY: MIT Media Lab

EDUCATION: Ph.D., UNC Chapel Hill

HOBBIES: Playing with photons, helping people reach their potential, hiking, traveling

BUCKET LIST: After covering six continents, visiting Antarctica, have dinner with JJ Abrams (a director fellow at the Media Lab), write a script for the next superhero movie

TWEET AT: @raskarmit

SOCIAL MEDIA:



Jody BLAKEWAY

Client Satisfaction

Engaging employees and creating strong processes is at the heart of not only what Jody Blakeway does, but who she is. Ms. Blakeway has demonstrated throughout her diverse career a commitment to setting a standard of excellence in client service and operational practices.

For the past five years, Ms. Blakeway served as senior VP of client services for athenahealth, where her primary focus was the client.

Today, as chief operating officer and senior VP of strategic integration for Epocrates, an athenahealth company, she leads the operational and cultural integration for the newly merged companies.

Her eye is still on the clients, but her focus is on the employees, as they adapt to the transition of the merger. As Ms. Blakeway sees it her challenge is providing excellent leadership, engaging employees, and introducing strong processes because employees who are comfortable and feel settled in their company lead to loyal and satisfied clients.

Colleagues say she is an innovator with an excellent reputation in leading complex organizations. She inspires trust and confidence in clients and employees alike, and she combines creativity and customer focus, with expert coaching and mentoring skills, to achieve unprecedented rates of employee engagement and client retention.

Ms. Blakeway draws inspiration from an unusual source — fashion icon Coco Chanel.

“Coco was very entrepreneurial,” Ms.

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY CURIOSITY

Blakeway says. “She is an icon for so many good business reasons. I’m inspired by her ability to reinvent herself decade after decade. The company is still privately owned and is successful to this day.”

Like Coco Chanel, Ms. Blakeway knows the key to business success is built upon trust and good relationships — with clients and with employees, and similar to Chanel, Ms. Blakeway reinvents herself when the need arises.

Her professional career is rich and varied and many of her client- and employee-focused initiatives stem from her experiences, ranging from work as a dietician to managerial roles in the nonprofit world and executive-level positions at large for-profit companies. Her experience as well as her empathetic and diplomatic nature and exceptional listening skills made her the perfect candidate to orchestrate the integration between athenahealth and the recently purchased Epocrates.

“Athenahealth acquiring Epocrates is a game changer in health IT; it’s two venerable brands coming together, and furthers our vision to become a national health information backbone that makes healthcare work as it should,” Ms. Blakeway says.

As the former senior VP of client services for athenahealth, Ms. Blakeway established a more consultative approach to client service, supporting individual client needs based on factors such as size and altered operational practices accordingly.

Ms. Blakeway recognized a huge shift in the healthcare market in terms of more hospital-owned physicians versus independent doctors. New and more clients of all different sizes meant different service needs that athenahealth, a provider of cloud-based services for EHR, practice management, and care coordination, had to be able to support.

When Ms. Blakeway first came to athenahealth, client satisfaction was declining, and there were no existing blueprints to follow in terms of a service model that could change that. Ms. Blakeway, leveraging her skills and experience, began to scale the organization to a new implementation and service model, focused on process, communication and training, and building it into a much more stable, high-performing organization.

EMPATHETIC. GOOD-LISTENER.



Jody Blakeway is making a difference in healthcare, and she is doing it with a strong, elegant conviction rooted in a mission to make healthcare work as it should.

“Basically I came in and said, here’s what’s dynamic in the market, here’s what our clients need, and here’s how we can best service them with the right infrastructure, tools, and training. It’s all about the execution.”

While Ms. Blakeway is noted for her quiet, sophisticated, and unwavering conviction, don’t be fooled, as she can also deliver a very direct and assertive message, which is part of her charm.

Ms. Blakeway’s strength of character and grace are a rare combination and these qualities come through clearly in her leadership style and unique ability to motivate employees and drive big, innovative advances quickly, efficiently, and elegantly.

In the coming months as Ms. Blakeway continues to lead the Epocrates integration efforts, she remains committed as a senior leader to developing the next generation of leaders through her unique mentoring style and will continue to help her colleagues reach their full potential.

“By tying their personal strengths and visions for their careers to the vision and strategy of the company — it’s a win-win for everyone,” Ms. Blakeway says. “It’s about listening to people, getting to know them, and connecting.” **PV**

Getting to Know...

Jody Blakeway

TITLE: Chief Operating Officer and Senior VP, Strategic Integration

COMPANY: Epocrates, an athenahealth company

EDUCATION: BS, Nutrition and Dietetics, University of California, Davis; MBA, Harvard

FAMILY: Mother; four nieces and nephews; five great nieces and nephews

HOBBIES: Gardening, health and wellness, yoga, Gyrotonics

BUCKET LIST: Visit India, stay in touch with college and graduate school friends

ASSOCIATIONS: Harvard Business School Women’s Association, American Dietetic Association, Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association, MGMA

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [t](#) [v](#)

Adrienne ROBINSON

Forging New Pathways

With assignments in nearly all major functional areas, starting at P&G where she was for eight years, and during her current 17-year tenure at Merck, Adrienne Robinson has a zeal for finding new pathways to solving problems as well as the willingness to try new things. She is also not afraid to roll up her sleeves and take action.

"I am part of the supply chain organization, which has the ability to drive enterprisewide results across the company because of the horizontal end-to-end view and touchpoints to the customer," she says. "We are poised to take a bigger role to ensure we are optimizing our supply chains with better data for decision making, more innovation in how we make and supply products, and how we work with our internal partner organizations to better align our needs to meet the customer requirements. This orchestration will deliver better customer service and reduce costs."

Colleagues and peers note that Ms. Robinson is in the right position as director of business affairs and alliance management at Merck to lead such an overarching objective. She is noted as being an exceptional leader and very supportive of her team members. She takes great pride in driving value in everything she does.

"My challenges are getting more done with

fewer resources and making sure people are able to bring their best self to the tasks and feel truly valued for their contribution," Ms. Robinson says. "What I appreciate about this pressure is that it forces creative and innovative approaches that perhaps wouldn't have been tried without this challenge. I want to make sure that we don't work harder to exhaustion, but smarter to exhilaration."

Working smarter to execution is also a hallmark of Ms. Robinson's leadership legacy at Merck. One example of her game-changing vision occurred while she was in the Merck Research Laboratories, during which time she had the opportunity to lead the implementation of a new business for clinical operations. This business was the first of its kind in the industry and within nine months she had created a department that was operational and delivering value and savings.

"This team was the most dedicated and inspirational group of people I've had the pleasure to work with so far in my career," she says. "I had to build a really powerful team that would deliver this new business. There was such a compressed timeline to get the team in place and then every individual had to be ready to contribute 150% to get all the work done to be ready to launch the organization."

Believing that the industry is experiencing extraordinary challenges that put so much pressure on delivering innovative medicines to the patient, Ms. Robinson looks forward to another opportunity to bring more business innovation capabilities or lead another start-up operation within Merck.

"To meet the challenges ahead and bring all the forces together across what may seem like disparate purposes or industries to find ways to deliver better healthcare to people means more collaboration," she says. "Collaboration will have to span multiple industries, academic institutions, nonprofit, and government to put together never-thought-of-before solutions and approaches."

Ms. Robinson demonstrates a high level of professionalism in every endeavor she undertakes. She is very passionate about helping others succeed. Despite her numerous responsibilities she doesn't hesitate to make time to coach, network, and provide guidance to others. She has an extremely positive attitude, which goes a long way to motivating

Adrienne Robinson has multifunctional global experience and a passion for innovation cultivation.

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY POSSIBILITIES

her teams. She has been an active mentor through her entire career.

"It's satisfying to help people be their best and I truly get as much out of the relationship as I give," Ms. Robinson says. "I have particularly enjoyed mentoring some of the younger professionals who have just started working at Merck through a development rotation program. I love their energy and perspective and I find it very refreshing."

With a commitment to helping women, she is a tireless supporter of the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association, serving on its Metro chapter board; the Licensing Executives Society, for which she writes articles focused on women's leadership and sits on its editorial board; and is a board member of the Soroptomists International, a worldwide service organization for women.

"In my volunteer work, I'm really proud of a new initiative that I'm leading for the HBA," she says. "I envisioned and championed a program called the Women's Healthcare Leadership Showcase, which is a first-of-its-kind event to debut this fall. The goal of this program is to bring together companies across a diverse spectrum to showcase their work in women's healthcare advancements. The hope is that this event creates new pathways and connections for collaboration in serving the needs of women's healthcare."

She also volunteers for Perfect Fit, which provides professional clothes, guidance, and support for the women who are trying to change their life from poor circumstances.

Ms. Robinson looks to bring innovative ideas to the table and takes the lead to make them happen. **PV**



ENERGETIC. INNOVATIVE.

Getting to Know...

Adrienne Robinson

TITLE: Director, Business Affairs & Alliance Management

COMPANY: Merck

EDUCATION: BS, Engineering Chemistry, Colorado School of Mines; MS, Technology Commercialization, University of Texas; MBA, Quantitative Analysis, Pennsylvania State University

FAMILY: Husband, Doug; three sons, Tyler, 24; Ryan, 22; and Nate, 19; four dogs and two cats

HOBBIES: Reading, playing piano, kayaking, gardening, and cooking

BUCKET LIST: Buy a small RV and travel the country with husband and puppies; meeting regular everyday people doing helpful things for others, and write a book about these everyday heroes

AWARDS/HONORS: Nominated as one of Merck's Amazing Women of the Year, 2004

ASSOCIATIONS: Healthcare Businesswomen's Association; Licensing Executives Society, Soroptomists

TWEET AT: @Adrienne.robin15

SOCIAL MEDIA: [in](#) [t](#) [f](#) [y](#)

TENACIOUS. PERSISTENT.

Diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia at 53, Susan Grant tirelessly works to educate physicians and patients about the rare disease.



Susan GRANT

Patient with a Purpose

DRIVEN TO INNOVATE BY
HOPE

It is terrorizing to realize you are losing your mind,” says Susan Grant, e-patient advocate and co-founder of Planning for Hope. “I grieve over each cognitive decline.”

Diagnosed with a rare disease — frontotemporal dementia (FTD) — at the peak of her career, Ms. Grant did not let that terror stop her from helping others afflicted with the same diagnosis. Committed to changing the status quo associated with FTD, she met her personal challenge head on by establishing Planning for Hope (PFH), a 501c3 entity to educate and empower other people with the disease and to aid their families.

FTD is a type of dementia, second in prevalence to Alzheimer’s disease. FTD accounts for as many dementia sufferers under the age of 65 as does Alzheimer’s, and often appears in men and women as young as their 30s. The disease is sometimes called “baby boomer dementia.” Patients often go misdiagnosed for many years. As a result, they do not get the proper medical interventions that could prolong quality of life, and they may face financial hardship because they are unable to collect disability benefits that they would be entitled to with a proper diagnosis. There is no single known cause, treatment, or cure for FTD.

Before her diagnosis, Ms. Grant was a prominent financial advisor at Ameriprise Financial, ranking in the top 1% out of 10,000 advisors, managing investments of about \$40 million.

Many experience changes in their late 40s. At her medical retirement at age 53, she started to realize that “something was different with her brain.” A renowned quick thinker, she was having trouble making decisions and staying organized. After six diagnoses, in that year of retirement, physicians misdiagnosed her, with symptoms were due to stress, Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, the aging process, and menopause. She finally believed she was correctly diagnosed with FTD with Parkinsonian’s symptoms.

Today, other than fighting the disease to live a longer and fuller life than expected, her goal is to increase awareness of the disease and educate patients and physicians on the early signs many patients are working with until the disease becomes debilitating.

She also wants to encourage everyone to

prepare for such a medical emergency by getting their financial planning and insurance in order, so that if they are affected by such a medical crisis, they will have the ability to live fully and fight their disease without financial worry. Her experience as a financial planner prepared her well for the life that lies ahead.

Instead of turning inward and caring only for herself, Ms. Grant wants others — especially family members, as the disease appears to be hereditary — to learn from her experience and to have a better chance at diagnoses and care.

Her unselfish attendance to others so they may have a better health outcome with early diagnosis and treatment is a constant inspiration to those who know her. They marvel at her fortitude and drive as flies around the country to talk with researchers, physicians, patients, and caregivers in her attempt to spread awareness of the disease.

“I love my life and hope to live every moment to the fullest,” she says.

While there is currently no cure, the science of the brain is moving forward at an incredible pace, and there is much to be hopeful for, Ms. Grant notes. With the whole genome mapped, mutations of proteins in the brain are being discovered. There are new medications in clinical trials.

“The hope is that as researchers find new mutations, perhaps they could do something for me, but probably not,” she says. “But that’s okay, because the hope is for my nieces and nephews, the hope is in the science. I’m a patient with a purpose.”

Ms. Grant says she will continue her mission of challenging researchers and neurologists to find the very early signs of FTD or dementia. She wants people with the disease to have the tools to compensate during the early time of this dreaded disease.

“For those of us who are overachievers, I think this is one of the worst diseases,” she says. “There is not a cure today, but we can’t just give up — we must live the best we can live.”

To spread her message, Ms. Grant and her foundation team have produced a documentary and YouTube channel; authored an eBook; started an online patient support group; appeared on PBS, radio, podcasts, and in print;


launched press releases, mobile alerts, and emails; and led online fundraisers and causes campaigns.

Ms. Grant acknowledges that the production of the documentary Planning for Hope - Living with Frontotemporal Disease has been one of her biggest challenges so far. It took three years to produce, and the nonprofit organization had to raise \$150,000. The point of the documentary is to educate and shed light on the stigma of dementia and to demolish stereotypes.

“We wanted to show a rare disease striking each person differently,” she says. “Being diagnosed as young as 40 or 50 is just the beginning of being labeled. We all don’t look alike or act alike.”

As an e-patient, Ms. Grant uses online resources to research more symptoms of this rare disease in the very early stages.

She participated, for eight years, in clinical trials at the Mayo Clinic, University of Pennsylvania, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs, and at NIH. The National Jewish Hospital in Denver helped me build my immune system. She now uses online resources to manage her condition and participates with her physicians on a treatment plan for medication usage.

Ms. Grant’s courage, bravery, and selflessness are easily summed up by her email tagline: Live Fast, Love Lots, and Protect the Dignity of Those who have No Choice. 

Planning for Hope — Living with Frontotemporal Disease can be viewed on YouTube at this address: <http://www.youtube.com/user/FTDPlanningForHope?feature=watch>.

Getting to Know...

Susan Grant

TITLE: E-patient Advocate

COMPANY: Planning for Hope

EDUCATION: MS, Entomology, The Ohio State University

FAMILY: Partner, Cindy Dilks

HOBBIES: Traveling; collecting butterflies, rocks, seashells

BUCKET LIST: One more trip to Costa Rica to catch a blue Morpho butterfly

AWARDS/HONORS: Living longer than expected

ASSOCIATIONS: On-line patient groups

SOCIAL MEDIA:    

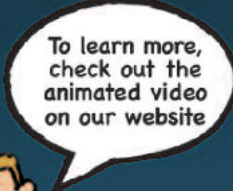
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