

TIBBS Career Blitz - January 2012

Career Profile of a Principle Investigator in a Government Lab: Donna Baird, PhD

What is your current title and how long have you worked in your current job?

Senior Investigator at National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, NIH; I have worked as a research fellow and then principal investigator at NIH, NIEHS since 1984.

Where did you get your PhD and what discipline was it in?

PhD from the University of Minnesota in Evolutionary Biology/Ecology

Did you do a postdoc?

Yes, with political scientists at Northern University in Illinois

What are your main daily responsibilities?

(1) Guiding my current field study, Study of Environment, Lifestyle & Fibroids (questionnaire development, data collection, quality control, etc.), (2) analyzing data and writing epidemiology manuscripts

What are the keys to success in your career field?

Enthusiasm for research, ideas, good colleagues, support

What were the most important factors in choosing your career path?

I want my work to meet 4 needs: (1) potential for improving public health, (2) being able to study biologically interesting processes, (3) including methodologic challenges, (4) being able to work with colleagues I respect and enjoy

What 1 or 2 pieces of advice do you have for people who want to land a job like yours?

Identify and follow your passions.