

WHMC NEWSLETTER

APRIL
2025



About Us!

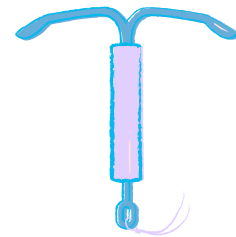
The Women's Health Multidisciplinary Consortium is a student led organization here at UNC.

Our mission is to create a trainee-focused, unified community of faculty, clinicians, and researchers with a vested interest in women's health research and sex-specific pathologies.

See pg 2.
for
interview!

Hot Off the Press!

Dr. Bianca Allison, a member of the WHMC board of faculty advisors, and her MD/PhD student, Cherise Glodowski (also one of our founding members!), recently published a paper investigating the association between patient-centered contraceptive counseling and patient/clinician outcomes.



Access through your UNC Library Account [here!](#)

See flyers
for more
info!

Upcoming Events

5

Apr

SOM Second Look 1-3:00 PM

14

Apr

Spicy 9 Fundraiser All day!

3

May

NC Diaper Bank volunteering 9:30-11 AM

6

May

WinS Annual Women in Science Symposium 10:30- 3 PM



Check out our spotlight on the UNC School of Medicine page for Women's History Month!

Featured Women's Health Research Lab at UNC: Dr. Bianca Allison & the Adolescent Research Lab

Please tell us briefly about your background and how it shaped your academic interests.

Between college and medical school, I worked with AmeriCorps' City Year in Chicago and saw firsthand how limited access to sexual and reproductive health education and care shaped young people's futures. Most of them assumed they would get pregnant and not finish high school because that's what their communities were doing - not because that's what they wanted their lives to look like. During medical school, my master's in public health training, pediatrics residency, and a primary care research fellowship, I learned everything I could about ways to improve adolescent autonomy and well-being, particularly the promotion of inclusive, affirming, adolescent-centered contraceptive care. In my faculty role now, I am a primary care pediatrician and health services researcher who is dedicated to improving adolescent reproductive healthcare by addressing systemic inequities and evidence-to-practice gaps.



What research are you currently working on, and what led you to do it?

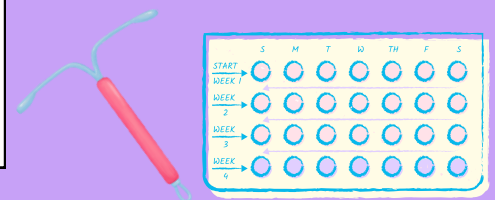
My research focuses on improving adolescent reproductive healthcare by developing provider education interventions that promote shared decision-making and reproductive autonomy. This work builds on my prior research, which identified gaps in adolescent-centered contraceptive counseling and disparities in access to contraceptive methods. Inspired by my interactions with adolescent patients, I seek to address systemic inequities by equipping clinics and clinicians with tools to provide unbiased, patient-centered contraceptive counseling.

Through my NIH/NCATS K12 award, I am now working to evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions in improving both clinician practices and adolescent health outcomes.

What advice would you have for young professionals currently building their careers in women's health?

My advice is to stay curious, patient-centered, and committed to equity. Seek out mentorship from diverse perspectives, as working in this field requires introspection and humility. Embrace interdisciplinary collaboration—seek opportunities to work with public health experts, policymakers, and community organizations to amplify your impact. Most importantly, let the voices of the individuals you serve guide your research, advocacy, and clinical care, to ensure that your work remains relevant, inclusive, and transformative.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

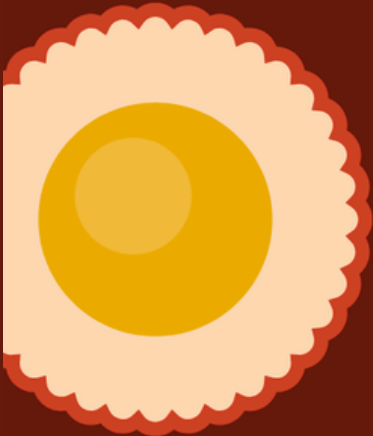




UNC WHMC



SPICY 9 BENEFIT NIGHT



**"ONE BITE, ONE
BREAKTHROUGH: SUPPORT
WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH"**

Note; Please make sure to drop off your
receipt in our box at Spicy 9 to make your
donation count!



**APRIL 14 2025 • MONDAY
11 AM TO 10 PM
140 W. FRANKLIN ST #150
CHAPEL HILL, NC 27516**

Women in Science (WinS) Annual Spring 2025 Symposium

“Take the Fork in the Road: Career Development for WinS”

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
KIM BOGGESS,
MD



Tuesday, May 6th

10:30 AM - 3PM

Bioinformatics Building

REGISTER HERE



For questions please email
wins@unc.edu

Funding supported by GPSP



National Institute of
Environmental Health Sciences

27th

ANNUAL



NIEHS BIOMEDICAL CAREER SYMPOSIUM

REGISTRATION OPEN

Register at bit.ly/3I89QeQ.



KEYNOTE

“A Tale of Two Callings”

Robert Lefkowitz, M.D.

2012 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry

The Chancellor's Distinguished
Professor of Medicine
Duke University Medical Center

For more
information, visit:

<https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/career-fair>.

Or contact:

NIEHSCareerSymposium@niehs.nih.gov

Organized by the NIEHS
Trainees' Assembly

Sponsored by the NIEHS
Office of Fellows' Career
Development

Tuesday, April 15, 2025

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

On-Site Event: NIEHS Main Campus/Rall Building

NIEHS Building 101, Rodbell Auditorium

111 TW Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Career Development Workshops

- Exploring Career Pathways
- Decoding NIH Grants
- Changing Course With Confidence
- Unlocking Your Leadership Potential
- Mastering Networking, Interview, and Negotiation Skills

Career-Specific Panel Discussions

- Opportunities in Federal Government and NGO
- Careers in Data Science and Public Health
- Preparing for Industry Positions
- Achieving Success in Academia

Networking Opportunities

- Exhibitor browsing with organizations, professional societies, and resources focused on biomedical research

Wednesday April 16, 2025

Virtual Event • 9:00 a.m. – noon EDT

- **Building a Professional LinkedIn Profile and Resume**
- **CV and Resume One-on-One Consultations**

Registration is open until March 28.

Individuals with disabilities who need accommodation to participate in this event should contact Kimberly Abt at 984-287-3998 or kimberly.abt@nih.gov. TTY users should contact the Federal TTY Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Requests should be made at least 5 business days in advance of the event.

Any individual seeking access to the NIEHS campus will need to be prepared to show a photo ID (e.g., driver's license, passport, government, or university ID) and be registered for the event.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS OB-GYN + WOMEN'S HEALTH

2025 RESEARCH DAY POSTER PRESENTATION

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 11



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Obstetrics and
Gynecology



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Center for
Women's Health
Research

The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology will again feature a student poster session as part of its annual research day on May 14, 2025. This session will showcase the work of promising early-stage researchers and their faculty mentors.

We invite abstract submissions from UNC medical and PhD students in the areas of obstetrics, gynecology, reproductive sciences, and women's health. Those with accepted posters will be expected to join the poster session in person, where they will discuss their work with faculty. A prize will be given for the top paper, as evaluated by faculty judges.

The due date is April 11, 2025 at 5 p.m. EDT. Decisions will be made in the weeks that follow.

Abstracts should follow the standard format (background, methods, results, conclusion) and should be no more than 300 words.

Financial support may be provided to assist with posters.

**EMAIL CWHR@UNC.EDU WITH ANY QUESTIONS/ISSUES
SUBMIT YOUR ABSTRACT USING [THIS LINK](#) OR QR CODE**



HOSTED BY WHMC AND FAMILY MEDICINE INTEREST
GROUP



[HTTPS://GO.UNC.EDU/B4DBE](https://go.unc.edu/B4DBE)

JOIN US

MAY 3RD, 9:30 - 11AM

MAY 9TH, 9:30-11AM

MAY 23RD, 9:30-11AM

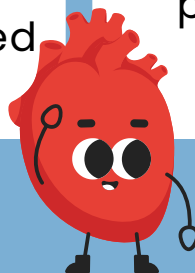
WHMC CO-CHAIR INTERVIEW: LIZZY THOMAS, MD-PHD STUDENT



Could you tell us briefly about your background and how it shaped your academic interests?

I am from Los Angeles and initially became interested in medicine and cardiovascular health and disease through working in clinical research with Dr. Tamara Horwich, an amazing cardiologist at UCLA who now co-directs the UCLA Women's Cardiovascular Health Center. As an undergrad at Harvard, I majored in developmental and regenerative biology and minored in moral philosophy. I then did master's degrees at Oxford in both of those areas (more or less), with a master's in applied ethics and one in clinical embryology. I came out of all of that very interested in women's health and ethical questions related to it.

Since joining the MD-PhD program here at UNC in 2020, clinical rotations in cardiac surgery, the general cardiology service, the advanced heart failure service, and the cardiovascular ICU have all reaffirmed my interest in treating and better understanding heart health and disease. I came into medical school thinking women's health clinically meant only ob-gyn, but I have since learned that, just as women have every organ system, women's health encompasses virtually every medical specialty. In my career, I hope to contribute to the growing field of understanding sex differences in cardiovascular disease and how we can leverage them to prevent heart disease in women better.



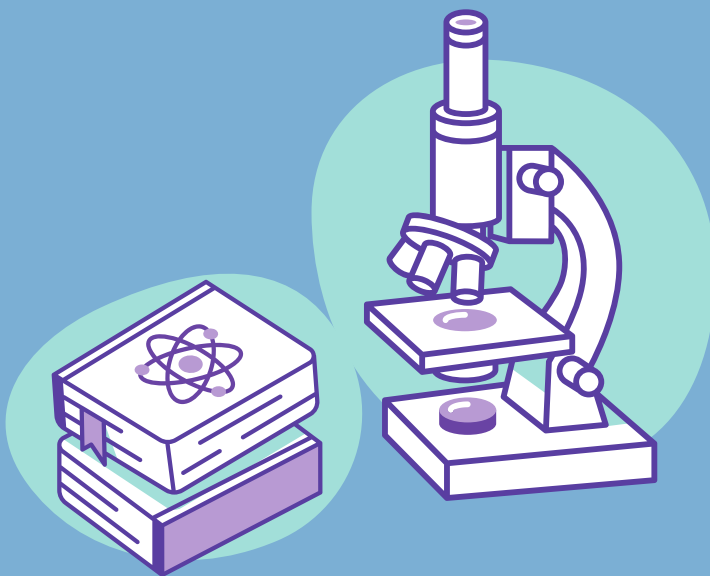
INTERVIEW, CONTINUED

What research or other work in women's health are you involved in currently?

I am involved with reproductive ethics research related to the ethical inclusion of pregnant adolescents in HIV research with one of my mentors, the amazing Dr. Annie Lyerly, and my incredible friend Elana Jaffe Brotkin. I am also involved in research related to sex differences in response to cardiac rehab with Dr. Montika Bush and Dr. Adam Moskowitz. Outside of research, I am one of the co-chairs of the WHMC and the chair of our Hot Topics Seminars initiative.

Who inspires you academically or otherwise?

So many people – too many to list here! I'm very inspired by my family, my partner Mark and our baby Luca, my parents, and my three brothers. Academically, I have been so fortunate to have numerous and incredible mentors, including Dr. Tamara Horwich at UCLA, my undergraduate PI Dr. Doug Melton, my college professor and legendary applied ethicist Dr. Frances Kamm, my master's theses supervisors Dr. César Palacios-González and Dr. Fadil Hannan, and Dr. Annie Lyerly here at UNC. I have been inspired by many friends and classmates here at UNC, especially my fellow MD-PhD program mates. Even five years in, I'm still blown away to be a part of this brilliant group of people.



MONTHLY CALENDAR



APRIL 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5 SOM Second Look
6	7	8	9	10	11 Women's Health & OB-GYN Abstracts Due	12
13	14 SPICY9 FUNDRAISER	15 NIEHS Biomedical Career Symposium	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Earth Day	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD



"Dr. Rahima Benhabbour, PhD, a tenured associate professor of biomedical engineering, is developing the first 3D-printed intravaginal ring, revolutionizing how women receive treatments for infertility, HIV, menopause, and more."

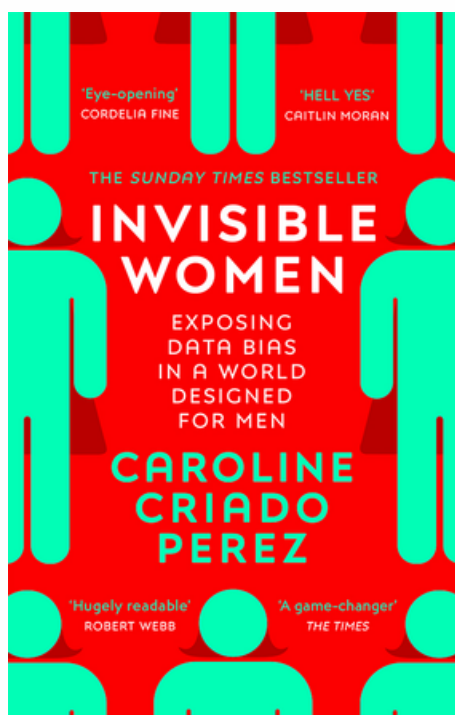
[Read more here!](#)

"Approximately one in five pregnant and postpartum individuals experience depression and anxiety, yet less than 10 per cent receive proper treatment. To address this problem, Dr. Samantha Meltzer-Brody, alongside team of interdisciplinary researchers from Canada and the United States, investigated if talk therapy can be effectively delivered by non-mental health specialists and telemedicine to increase access."

[Read more here!](#)



Check out the amazing work our WHMC faculty are doing!



Available through [UNC Library](#)

WHMC BOOK RECOMMENDATION OF THE MONTH

Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men

by Caroline Criado-Perez

This book explores the "gender data gap," which causes women to be disadvantaged in all aspects of their lives. Criado-Perez illustrates how centuries of using biased data have built a society engineered for men. This pervasive issue impacts everything from healthcare to urban planning to the workforce. Through more inclusive data collection and analysis, Criado-Perez hopes to close the gap in big data. She hopes to illuminate the *Invisible Women* and ensure that 50% of the world's population is not overlooked.



POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION CAN INCREASE DIFFICULTY WITH BREASTFEEDING

Fact
or
Fiction?

A study from University College London has found that postnatal depression affects the oxytocin system in mothers during breastfeeding. Oxytocin is a hormone crucial for milk release and bonding between mother and baby. In the study, 62 mothers were given a nasal spray containing oxytocin or a placebo before breastfeeding. While oxytocin levels in breast milk increased in non-depressed mothers, this effect was reduced in mothers with postnatal depression. These findings suggest that disruptions in the oxytocin system could contribute to the challenges faced by depressed mothers during breastfeeding, potentially impacting infant development and mental health.

For more: ["Intranasal oxytocin increases breast milk oxytocin, but has a reduced effect in depressed mothers: A randomized controlled trial"](#)

GET INVOLVED WITH THE WHMC!



Visit our website!

Submit your work, recent publications, upcoming events, and more **here** to be featured in our monthly newsletter!



Share the WHMC
listserv with others!

It's your WHMC
communication
engagement team
here!

We're looking for your submissions! This is a
space for a community bulletin – a place to
look for research or work positions, fill
professional needs, submit shoutouts, and
submit photos to be used in future newsletters!

Kate Aberman



Sarah Rebbeor



Kylie Hutchison



Mehnaz Shafquat



Emily Perou

