

# WHMC NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY  
2026

## 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.

## Hot Off the Press!

Migraines and preeclampsia are common disorders in patients of reproductive age with shared features. A recent study published in the Lancet investigated the association between preeclampsia and migraines in parous patients in Denmark. The study found that a history of migraines correlated with an increased risk of preeclampsia in the first pregnancy, as well as preeclampsia recurrence. Additionally, preeclampsia was associated with migraine treatment initiation, and recurrent severe headaches.



Read more [here](#) with your UNC ONYEN!

## Upcoming Events



06  
Feb

Women's Heart Health  
Lunch and Learn *12 - 1 pm*

11  
Feb

STEM & Society book club @  
Steel String Brewery *6:30 - 8 pm*

19  
Feb

Journal Club with  
Dr. Carolyn Coyne *6:30 - 8 pm*

21  
Feb

NC Diaper Bank  
Volunteering *9:30 - 11:30 am*

25  
Feb

STEM & Society book club @  
Steel String Brewery *6:30 - 8 pm*

see flyers for  
more info!

The Winter Olympics start this Friday and will be the most gender-balanced games in history, with **47%** female athletes slated to compete!



Read more [here](#)



# WHMC FACULTY INTERVIEW:

## Jenna N. Skowronski, MD, FACC

Director, Cardio-Obstetrics at UNC Chapel Hill



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

I'm a first generation college student from rural Pennsylvania so I didn't have any clear paths to follow growing up and am very niche in what I do-- advanced heart failure and transplant cardiology with a particular focus on women's cardiovascular care & cardio-obstetrics and finishing my Masters in medical education. It's clear to me that I ended up here because of a combination of incredible mentorship, sponsorship, hard work, and luck. Along my training path as I found things I really loved, I tried to find people who understood and could help refine my vision for combining them. I was very fortunate to have mentors who helped me form innovative training pathways to get me to this point.

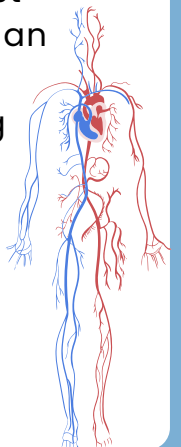
### What research or other work in women's health are you involved in currently?

I'm involved in a few different research projects, all focused on women's cardiovascular health- looking at contraception patterns and counseling in post-transplant patients, a project focused on peripartum cardiomyopathy that required advanced heart failure (LVAD or transplant), and hypertension control in the postpartum period.

I'm additionally very focused program building and expanding UNC's cardio-obstetrics program, including formalizing services we provide like inpatient and e-consults.

### Who inspires you academically or otherwise?

I am so incredibly fortunate to have an enormous list of people who inspire me, for a variety of reasons. Kathryn Berlacher, Jennifer Corbelli, and Melissa McNeil all trained me during my time at UPMC in Pittsburgh and are the pinnacle of what I could hope to achieve- not only have they blazed unique trails in sex-specific care but they are also amazing humans who lift people up with them. Within heart failure, people like Minnow Walsh and Michelle Kittleson have beautifully demonstrated how possible it is to blend women's health and heart failure as a career. And finally, my partner, who is also a heart failure doc, is simultaneously the most productive/efficient human I've ever met while also still really enjoying life- he makes me feel I like I can have it all because of how supportive he is.



UNC WHMC x Carolina Women's Center

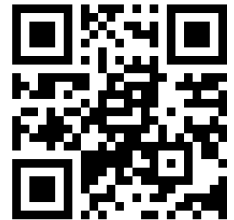
# NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY

## Women's Heart Health Lunch and Learn

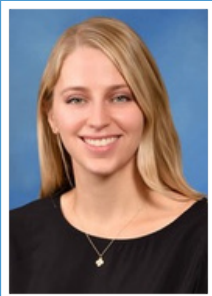
FREE  
FOOD!

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6TH  
12-1PM

ROPER HALL 4302



[zoom link](#)



### Jenna N. Skowronski, MD, FACC

Assistant Professor of Medicine  
Assistant Professor of Obstetrics & Gynecology  
Director, Cardio-Obstetrics at UNC Chapel Hill  
Advanced Heart Failure & Transplant Cardiology



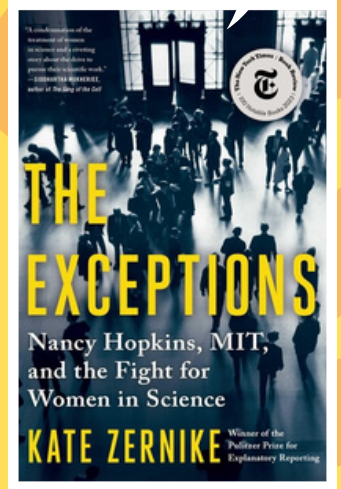
### Dr. Ganga Bey, P.h.D., MPH

Assistant Professor of Epidemiology  
Faculty Fellow, Carolina Population Center  
Faculty Fellow, Carolina Center for Population Aging  
and Health  
Faculty Fellow, Columbia Center for Interdisciplinary  
Research on Alzheimer's Disease

# STEM & SOCIETY

BOOK CLUB

 **Wednesdays 6:30 - 8:00 PM**  
**STEEL STRING BREWERY**  
books provided for *FREE* at first session



The Exceptions: Nancy Hopkins, MIT, and the  
Fight for Women in Science • Kate Zernike (2023)

**FEB. 11**

**SOCIAL**  
BOOK PICKUP

**FEB. 25**

**PART 1**  
RUDE AWAKENING

**MAR. 18**

**PART 2**  
THE REPORT

**APR. 8**

**PART 3**  
LEGACY & FUTURE

Join any time!



Open to everyone



**STEEL STRING BREWERY**

106A S Greensboro St  
Carrboro, NC  
27510





HOSTED BY WHMC AND FAMILY MEDICINE INTEREST  
GROUP



[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/BDHXDP5T](https://tinyurl.com/BDHXDP5T)

## JOIN US

JAN 24<sup>TH</sup>, 9:30 - 11:30AM

FEB 21<sup>ST</sup>, 9:30 - 11:30AM

MAR 7<sup>TH</sup>, 9:30 - 11:30AM

APR 18<sup>TH</sup>, 9:30 - 11:30AM

MAY 16<sup>TH</sup>, 9:30 - 11:30AM

*UNC's first multidisciplinary*

# WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

**Collaborate, Innovate, & Unite:  
The Future of Women's Health  
Research at UNC**

## SAVE THE DATE

**SEPTEMBER 17TH, 2026**

8:30-4:30 PM

This symposium will serve as an interdisciplinary platform for early-career researchers to showcase their work, engage in meaningful discussion, and build long-lasting collaborations that will advance the field of women's health.

**Abstract submissions open  
March 1st through June 30th**



SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Pathology and Lab Medicine

**TIBBS**

UNC | Training Initiatives in Biomedical & Biological Sciences



**Women's Health  
Multidisciplinary  
Consortium**



# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: MAAME INC.'S FIRST FOODS COMMUNITY PANTRY

## WE NEED HELP WITH

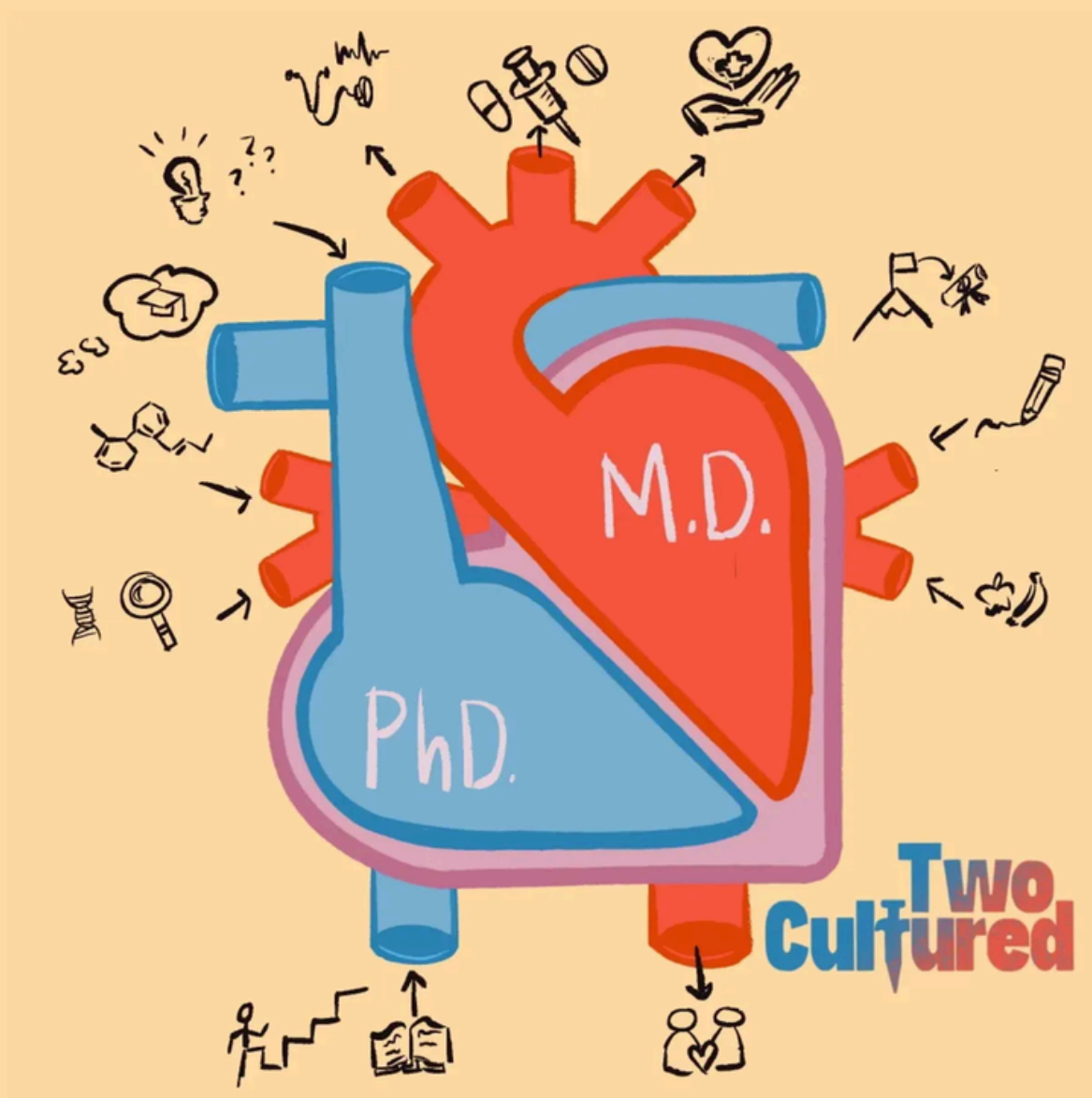
- Helping organize and pack fresh produce boxes
- Distributing boxes to families in need
- Providing support during pantry events

## INTERESTED IN JOINING US?

<https://maameinc.org/volunteer/>



check out this podcast hosted by a WHMC member



**Two Cultured** is a science podcast created by a group of graduate students from UNC Chapel Hill, created with one mission: to make science more accessible and approachable for everyone. Each episode features conversations with scientists about their research—what they study, why it matters, and how it shapes the world around us—while also highlighting the human stories behind the science. With curiosity, warmth, and a sense of fun, our hosts Kavya and Akshi aim to break down barriers between the lab and the public, showing that science isn't just for scientists—it's for anyone who's curious about how the world works.

Listen on [SPOTIFY](#)

# Into the Unknown: Autistic Females' Mental Health Experiences During Perimenopause



As part of the Autism, Mental Health and Perimenopause (AMP) study, the Harrop Lab has openings for student researchers interested in women's health and neurodiversity.

The AMP study uses a three-pronged, mixed-methods approach (online surveys, interviews, daily diaries) to characterize mental health challenges and health care experiences during perimenopause in autistic women.

More information regarding the study can be found [here](#).  
If interested, please email Dr. Harrop at [clare\\_harrop@med.unc.edu](mailto:clare_harrop@med.unc.edu)





## Are you interested in extra pain medication during your IUD insertion?

2/3rd of volunteers in this research study will receive extra pain  
medication for their IUD insertion

Who can participate?

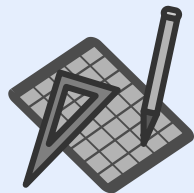
- Women ages 18+
- Planning an IUD insertion
- Able to spend 3 hours for their appointment at UNC Hospitals-  
Hillsborough campus

If chosen for the study, you will receive a giftcard for participating.

Contact our study coordinator to schedule your screening and IUD appointment!

**(910) 683-0178**

Mentor enrollment is **NOW OPEN** and we need your help in engaging the thinkers, makers, and doers of the next generation! The NCSSM Mentorship Program has partnered with Duke, NC State, UNC and many other organizations to serve over 3,600 high school seniors since 1980. Please join us in 2026-2027 as together we continue to impact NCSSM students from around the state!



NCSSM

The North Carolina School of Science and Math (NCSSM) is a two-year public high school that serves both online and residential students from North Carolina. It is one of the 17 constituent institutions of the UNC System.



## THE NCSSM MENTORSHIP PROGRAM IS SEEKING MENTORS FOR 2026-2027!

Mentors partner with the NCSSM Mentorship Program to offer an experience for our rising seniors **to actively engage in a research project and present the project through program deliverables.** Options for program timelines include:

**Summer:** 8:30AM-4:00PM Mon.-Fri., from Jun. 9-Jul. 16 (with one week break over June 29-July 3<sup>rd</sup>)

**Academic Year:** 1:00PM-4:00PM Tues. & Thurs., from Aug.-Mar. (with break in Dec./Jan.)

**Extended:** Includes both summer and academic year



**3600**

NCSSM graduates have participated in Mentorship since 1980

**70%**

of Mentorship students have their **first research experience** in Mentorship

**200+**

mentors participate per year, including research team members such as **grad students/postdocs/research associates**

**Mentor enrollment is open now, learn more!**

*To be successful in the program and the course assignments, students will need an active role in a research project.*

## Interested?

Learn more at the **NCSSM Mentorship Website!**

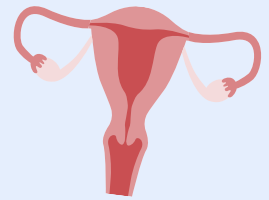
If you have questions or would like to schedule a time to meet with the Mentorship and Research Director, Sarah Shoemaker, don't hesitate to reach out ([shoemaker@ncssm.edu](mailto:shoemaker@ncssm.edu)).



# Job Opening: Clinical Research Scientist (PhD) in Longevity and Women's Health



Hours & Location: Part-time, Remote



## About Us:

Women's Health Platform includes a concierge medical practice whose mission is to reimagine healthcare for women 35+ and dramatically improve women's health around the menopause transition. We are expanding our clinical research team and seeking a PhD-level scientist with expertise in women's health, longevity, and translational research to join our multidisciplinary team of in-house MDs and PhDs, as well as our Medical Advisory Board led by Dr. Stephanie Faubion at Mayo Clinic.

## Position Summary:

The Clinical Research Scientist will play a central role in advancing our work on optimizing women's health spans. Responsibilities will include directly supporting patient-facing needs by answering clinical questions, conducting supplement and personal care product reviews, and performing advanced literature analyses to inform personalized care recommendations; designing clinical protocols for our medical practice in collaboration with our team of front line physicians to translate the latest research into clinical practice; conducting in-depth reviews of emerging longevity therapeutics and interventions; and evaluating and vetting diagnostic tools and technologies for integration into patient care. The scientist will also contribute to scientific publications and collaborate closely with a multidisciplinary team of MDs, PhDs, and external research partners to translate findings into clinically actionable insights.

## Qualifications:

- Ph.D. in health sciences, physiology, epidemiology, biomedical sciences, biostatistics, pharmacology, or a related discipline
  - Demonstrated expertise in women's health and/or longevity research
  - Ability to translate complex findings into clinically actionable insights
- Expertise in leveraging AI tools for literature reviews, research, and writing
  - Expertise in quantitative research methods
- Ability to analyze clinical and biomarker data using advanced statistical methods



## Compensation:

Commensurate with experience.

## How to Apply:

Please submit a cover letter, one-page resume, and brief overview of availability to [marina@erawomenshealth.com](mailto:marina@erawomenshealth.com). Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled





## **The Carolina Women's Health Research Network- Connecting for Discovery, Collaboration & Impact**

Building on the momentum of past successes, the Office of Research Development, and the NC TraCS Institute at UNC–Chapel Hill are excited to reconnect with researchers across campus. This event is an opportunity to strengthen relationships, celebrate shared accomplishments, and explore new funding and collaborative possibilities.

**February 25, 2026**

**10:30am- 12:00pm**

**Brinkhous-Bullitt Bldg, Room 219**

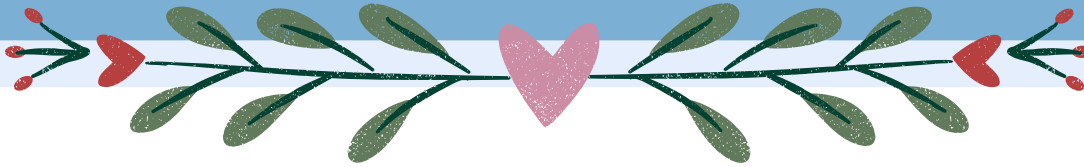
Here's what we have planned:  
Lightning Talks from UNC Researchers  
TraCS Pilot Funding Updates  
Federal agency priority updates  
Networking time

**If you are interested in presenting a lightning talk,  
please contact Kelley Cardone at  
[kelley\\_cardone@unc.edu](mailto:kelley_cardone@unc.edu).**

**[REGISTER HERE](#)**







# MONTHLY CALENDAR



UNC  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

## FEBRUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6 National Wear Red Day 12-1pm	7
8	9	10 	11 STEM & Society Book Club Social 6:30-8pm	12	13	14  Valentine's Day
15	16 President's Day	17	18 	19 Journal Club w/ Dr. Coyne	20	21 NC Diaper Bank 9:30-11:30
22	23	24	25 STEM & Society Book Club Discussion 6:30-8pm 	26	27	28

## HAPPY BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Celebrating black women in STEM

**Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson** - first African-American woman to earn her PhD at MIT in 1973.

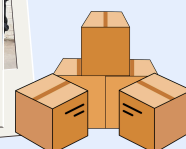
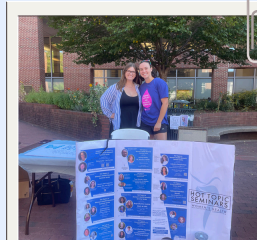
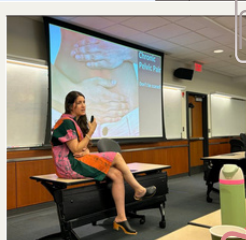
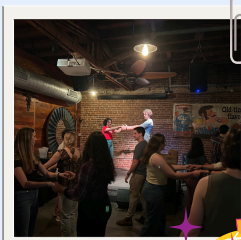
**Katherine Johnson** - Mathematician whose calculations in orbital mechanics were crucial to moon landing in 1969.

**Dr. Gladys West** - Mathematician whose models helped develop the modern GPS.





# COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD



Last semester was filled with community-building activities and learning together – we can't wait for more in 2026!

## WHMC BOOK RECOMMENDATION OF THE MONTH

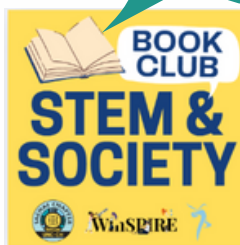
Available through [UNC library](#).

### The Exceptions: Nancy Hopkins and the Fight for Women in Science

by Kate Zernike



thoughts?  
come discuss!



Dr. Nancy Hopkins is a renowned molecular geneticist whose work at MIT advanced the understanding of cancer pathophysiology.

Despite her intellect and scientific contributions, Hopkins struggled to advance in her career in the 1990s. Frustrated, she compared notes with her few fellow female colleagues at MIT. These 16 women uncovered a pattern of sexist treatment where female scientists were assigned smaller lab spaces, awarded smaller grants, earned lower salaries, and held less prestigious committee roles than their male counterparts. As scientists do, they compiled their findings and presented them to MIT's president. He couldn't ignore this obvious systemic problem and committed to change, inspiring other universities to follow suit. Zernike's recount of these 16 women's heroism is described as "infuriating" but a "riveting" and "inspiring" read.

Fact  
or  
Fiction  
?

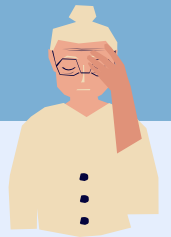
**WOMEN CAN SHOW MORE  
ALZHEIMER'S BIOMARKERS  
THAN MEN—YET HAVE  
HEALTHIER-LOOKING BRAINS**

This JAMA study found that women had higher levels of Alzheimer disease-related pathology than men, including greater amyloid- $\beta$  and tau burden.

Despite this increased pathology, women showed relatively preserved brain structure, with greater cortical thickness in Alzheimer-vulnerable regions and lower white matter hyperintensity volume compared with men, suggesting possible early neurobiological resilience.

Overall, the findings indicate that sex differences in Alzheimer pathology extend to diverse populations and highlight the importance of considering sex and genetic risk in early detection and prevention strategies.

Read more [here!](#)



## 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

