

North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation Women in Science Scholars Program Annual Meeting Summary, Monday, October 6, 2014

Marilyn Foote-Hudson, executive director of the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, welcomed guests from across the state and reported highlights of the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation's achievements in the past year. Grants include those made under the traditional grant program as well as Ribbon of Hope grants. Since 1987, the Foundation has made grants totaling nearly \$64 million. She encouraged all attendees to spread the word about the Ribbon of Hope grant program, which provides one-time \$25,000 grants to nonprofits for programs that promote science, health and education. Information is online at www.NCGSKFoundation.org.

Marilyn noted that the Foundation also continued its strong support for the Child Health Recognition Awards program, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, and the Women in Science Scholars program, which now has 30 colleges and universities participating. She thanked the students and faculty in attendance, and recognized the GSK volunteer mentors for their roles in making the program so successful over the past two decades.



Marty St. Clair, PhD, an HIV virologist for GSK, talked about her research and contributions to the development of HIV drugs to treat AIDS. Her keynote titled "[Thirty Years of HIV Drug Development: Hope, Pride, Success](#)" compared the current Ebola crisis with HIV/AIDS in 1981, noting that people are fearful of how Ebola is contracted, much as they were fearful about the spread of AIDS three decades ago. She gave a history of HIV/AIDS discoveries and drug development, describing her experiment with AZT in petri dishes. She also impressed upon the audience the fast-track approval process of AIDS drug treatments in the FDA. Today, GSK is still working on AIDS drugs, particularly DTG (dolutegravir), a new integrase inhibitor.



Marty St. Clair talks with students about their career expectations.

After lunch, Marilyn Foote-Hudson introduced the afternoon sessions. She noted that internship experiences are a valuable part of career development and highlighted the importance of hands on experience to help determine career paths. She provided several tips about applying for internships:

- Update your resume with all your “math and science related” courses, and add volunteer and relevant experiences.
- Make sure your resume is clear and concise – one page is best.
- Note on your resume your awards, including that you are a *NC GlaxoSmithKline Women in Science Scholarship Recipient 2014-15*.
- Don’t single out one place for an internship – seek many and varied opportunities.
- Remember that you will be competing with the rest of the world for positions, as GSK accepts applications on a global scale.
- Take extra care to make sure your resume is accurate and well presented, and has no typos or errors. Check all possible web sites for positions, under the careers section.
- Finally, January is the best time to start looking for an internship, so make a note and talk this over with your mentor(s) and advisor in the next few months if you are serious about an internship.

Three North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation Women in Science Scholars shared their summer internship experiences at GSK.

Charlotte Merkley, Senior, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, is receiving her Bachelors in Science degree in Chemistry. She said she is applying to master’s programs in organic chemistry, and hopes for a career in pharmaceutical research. Her internship centered on antibody binding molecule research, specifically in research to create ligands. She said she did a lot of reading and research, and learned to understand new synthetic mechanisms and use new equipment. She told her fellow scholars that her internship offered valuable experience as well as networking opportunities.



Robyn Pescatore, Senior, Wingate University, hopes to pursue a doctorate in chemistry. She worked in the peptide group as an intern, conducting research to make the process greener. She explained the procedure she used to swell the resin, deprotect it, wash it and couple it. She said her internship gave her a realistic experience of working in a lab.



Ashlyn Henson, Senior, Appalachian State University, a chemistry major, worked as an intern researching the optimization of copper-assisted Click chemistry. She said her internship illustrated the value of research for her, and increased her knowledge of a corporate lab and about being persistent.

Jennifer Cockrell, GSK associate scientist, RTP Analytical Chemistry, RD Platform Technology & Science, shared her journey from being a Women in Science Scholar to GSK intern to a current GSK employee. Jennifer was a summer intern in 2009, and after obtaining her master's degree, completed a nearly year-long internship. She said her first internship gave her a taste for a career "behind a bench," and also provided valuable interview experience, an introduction to hands-on organic chemistry and to scientific public speaking and publishing. Her graduate schooling showed her that she enjoyed being a teacher in the lab and in the classroom, as well as publishing research. Her second internship broadened her skills and allowed her to be more innovative, and explore science outside the classroom. She said she learned more about making effective presentations and public speaking, and also about the value of collaboration.



Her reflections and advice to Women in Science Scholars includes:

- Work toward fulfilling your passion – everything else will fall into place.
- Seek opportunities to strengthen your knowledge and capabilities.
- Be innovative!
- Network, network, network!

SAVE THE DATE! The Women in Science Scholars' program Spring Conference will be held on March 27, 2015. Details will be sent later. Contact Dawn.L.Lloyd@gsk.com for any questions about the Women in Science Scholars Program.