**Women In Science Scholars Program**

**Spring Conference Highlights**

**Friday, March 3, 2017**

*Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club, Durham NC*

Marilyn Foote-Hudson, executive director of the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation, welcomed attendees to the Women in Science Scholars Program spring conference.

Marilyn reported that the Foundation’s annual report would be released in a few weeks and will highlight that the Foundation surpassed its goal of reaching $70 million in grant commitments. The annual report will be available online at ncgskfoundation.org.

She said the Foundation remains committed to the Child Health Recognition Awards program, which recognizes public health professionals for bettering the lives of children, and the Women in Science Scholars Program, which provides scholarships to students studying science and provides mentors to help guide them. The scholarships are provided to students by their colleges and universities through an endowment originally provided to the colleges and universities by the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation.

She noted that the United Nations declared February 11, 2017, the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, and held a program that featured scientists and policymakers from all over the world, talking about the importance of supporting women in scientific fields. She recognized mentors and faculty advisors present, and introduced the keynote speaker, Tejal Vishalpura, vice president for sales, primary care, at GSK.

KEYNOTE: Tejal Vishalpura, “The Power of Purpose & Perseverance…A Conversation with My Younger Self.”Tejal Vishalpura grew up in a rural farming community in India, and was raised by her grandmother until moving to the United States in her teens. She said her focus is on how to connect science to patients. She also is driven by encouraging young women to reach their potential.

She said that these qualities are behind success: persistence, failure, sacrifice, disappointment, dedication, hard work and good habits/discipline. She urged scholars to “find that thing you want to do…and let that propel you.” She also noted that the path to success is not straight—it is littered with failures. “If you don’t have failures and are not uncomfortable and feel too safe, then you aren’t growing.” She said science is all about “embracing failures,” and students should learn to persevere and surround themselves with friends and mentors “who are going to lift you up and give you courage to push past no.”

She advised students to “just be yourself,” and join a company, university, nonprofit or other agency that “allows you to be your best self.” “No one else is YOU and that is your power,” she said. Tejal is a Doctor of Pharmacy and health economist and is published in numerous peer-reviewed journals on the topic of cost and quality of healthcare delivery. Since joining GSK in 2009, Tejal has had a very strong and consistent track record of leading change through high performing, highly engaged teams and developing leaders across a breadth of complex roles in marketing, payer and sales leadership. She also highlighted the value of a partner and being accepting for how others do work at home. She urged the scholars not to feel guilty if you are working and away from your family – but to be in the moment when you are home, and those opportunities will create great memories for your family.

Renee Wooten, University Recruitment Account Manager at GSK spoke briefly during lunch. Renee Wooten talked about internships and other opportunities to gain experience and learn more about various aspects of science careers. She said the Future Leaders program, a rotational development opportunity, has 12 programs and is open to a variety of majors including STEM, and it may be a good option for seniors who haven’t yet decided what to do after graduating.

For juniors, she is recruiting for internships for summer of 2018. She urged them to talk to her now about internships because it’s a competitive environment, and waiting until fall may be too late. “These (internships) are not just a chance to build up your resume; they actually are a wonderful opportunity for you to see what fits your interests.”

Renee encouraged all scholars to reach out to her at [renee.m.wooten@gsk.com](mailto:renee.m.wooten@gsk.com) because if GSK doesn’t have an opportunity for them, she will share information she learns about other companies. As a University Recruitment Account Manager at GSK, Renee is responsible for developing and implementing recruiting strategies for the company’s early talent program. She has more than 25 years of Human Resources experience, including in the Healthcare, Finance and IT industries. Her career focus has been on college and diversity recruitment.

Lauren Matise, Business Development Manager, Metabolic Pathways & Cardiovascular, Worldwide Business Development, GSK’s Philadelphia office was the first afternoon speaker She shared her passion for oncology research in a presentation entitled “Got Grit? You’ll Need It for a Career in Science.” At GSK, she has held several marketing roles, one of which took her to London to lead the launch of a global health medicine for newborns in the developing world. Lauren is currently in Business Development, where she evaluates potential scientific opportunities to add to GSK’s current medicine portfolio.

Her advice to scholars was to “keep your options open, keep an open mind, and do things that are outside of your comfort zone.” She also noted that her own career path took several twists and turns, and encouraged students to “think about all the different things you can do with science—you can do anything,” including business development, consulting, being in health technology, working on Wall Street or with insurers, in addition to lab research, practicing medicine or teaching.

She shared these tips with scholars:

1. Have a good support system. It can be family members, mentors or anyone you feel you can rely on.
2. Network. Learn about other people’s jobs. Do both deep networking with people you know well and can rely on and loose networking with people you don’t know as well but who may provide job tips.
3. Never, never, never give up. Failure is inevitable, she said.

She recommended a book called “GRIT,” which is about perseverance and passion for long-term goals. She summarized it this way:

1. Find your passion and persevere at achieving it ceaselessly, day in and day out.
2. Our goals in life should be hierarchical—have overarching goals, mid-level goals, low-level goals.
3. 80 percent of success in life is showing up. Effort counts twice: talent x effort = skill; skill x effort = achievement.
4. Your interests must be deliberately practiced. Have a purpose and have hope.
5. Failure is a part of life and growth—it’s how we deal with failure that defines us.
6. Grit grows—both from the inside out and from the outside in.

Kathryn Collison, MPH, MT; Scientific Director, US Medical Affairs, GSK (works with asthma and COPD medications in the Ellipta inhaler) shared her professional journey in a presentation called “Crossing Borders,” a journey that including being a medical technician in a hospital, a metrologist at LMSi, associate scientist at DuPont (where she learned about clinical trials), and clinical research scientist and scientific director at AstraZeneca. She has been with GSK since 2012.

She said the entire research and development process offers lots of opportunities for scientists: discovery (chemistry, biology), pre-clinical (animal studies); clinical development (scientists and physicians, clinical research associates), pharmacovigilance (patient safety), health economics, health outcomes, clinical quality management (compliance and auditing), and enablement/technology.

To get started, she advised that scholars:

1. Look at job descriptions of interest to learn what qualifications are needed.
2. Explore internships through the university, mentors, parents, internet job postings.
3. Network by introducing yourself to others, and when you get their business card, take a minute to jot down something interesting about them so you can remember your conversation and make future connections.
4. Find a mentor—as many as you can! She said to think about what you specifically want from a mentor relationship, because it can move in several directions, so ask for what you want/need (i.e., resume assistance, on-the-job learning, leadership or career advice, how to network).

She offered several suggestions about where to look for internships or job opportunities, and provided pharmaceutical links of interest.

Women in Science scholar Kaitlyn Brunworth highlighted her “Adventures in Spain.”Kaitlyn is a senior at Wingate University, where she studies biology, Spanish and international studies in addition to playing on the women's soccer team. Next year she will be attending medical school at the University of Colorado.

She spent a great deal of time traveling and exploring the outdoors while she grew up in Colorado, and said her parents instilled an adventurous spirit in her. She said that playing soccer allowed her to relate to people everywhere, including on a trip to Ecuador, because soccer is a popular sport in so many countries. She developed a passion for traveling, because it was a fun way for her to meet unique people and diversify her perspective.

Her first study abroad opportunity was a three-week Spanish immersion course in Costa Rica. The three weeks she spent there left her wanting to continue building upon her Spanish abilities, particularly because it would make her a better physician in the future, so she decided to then study abroad for a semester in Spain in spring of 2016.

She said that studying abroad in Europe helped her gain independence and self-confidence, and taught her the importance of building relationships with family and many other people. All of her best experiences in Spain came from the people she met there- from the doctor she shadowed, the local soccer team she played with, and her wonderful host family. Between how much she missed her family back home, but also how much she enjoyed building these new relationships abroad, she learned that life is better when shared with the ones we love. “Everything is about building relationships,” she said. Kaitlyn’s blog website is [www.kaitlynbrunworth.wordpress.com](http://www.kaitlynbrunworth.wordpress.com).

Marilyn Foote-Hudson wrapped up the spring conference by thanking all of the speakers and wishing the scholars well in finishing up the school year. **SAVE THE DATE** for the Women in Science Annual Meeting on **Monday, October 2, 2017**. Details will be sent closer to the date.