



# RSA News

Spring 2021



## From the RSA Council Co-Chairs

Spring is finally here! Though we have not been together in person for 14 months, the RSC has continued to meet monthly, and we have made great strides in building upon the three key areas that the Council designated as our agenda for the year: enhancing 1) Research Scientists' visibility, connectivity, and contribution to the community, 2) Research Scientists' access to HSPH training offerings and 3) diversity, inclusion, and belonging within the RS community. In this newsletter we are excited to share progress on these three goals and highlight a sample of the important research being done by HSPH Research Scientists that impacts diversity, inclusion, and belonging in areas of health.

Kind regards, Jeremy Furtado & Kerry Ivey  
(2020-2021 RSA Council Co-chairs)

## RSA Updates

### HSPH RSA is making strides towards promoting a more diverse and inclusive community:

- The initiation of the Research Scientist/PostDoc/Research Associate mentorship program, where RS provide mentorship support to post docs to help them succeed at HSPH, prioritizing those from underrepresented minorities. If you are interested in being a mentor and to learn more please visit <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/faculty-affairs/rsa-pda-ra-mentorship-program/>
- The RSA has appointed a member of the council (Dr. Kerry Ivey) to represent the voices of RS in fostering cultures of diversity, inclusion, and belonging. Dr. Ivey sits on the Deans Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (DACDI <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/dacdi/>), and the Strategic Planning Group that guides their direction (<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/dacdi/dacdi-working-groups/>). DACDI is charged with three major activities:
  - Support implementation of strategic diversity & inclusion priorities for the Harvard Chan School
  - Assess and provide critical feedback on the implementation of specific programs and activities in the space of diversity and inclusion
  - Support establishment of organizational unit cultures grounded in ongoing diversity, inclusion, and belonging learning & evidence-based practices

### Promoting the essential skills of RS to the HSPH community, and beyond:

We have established a skill sharing platform where HSPH RS can advertise their skills and areas of expertise with the purposes of facilitating collaborations between RS and other researchers in the HSPH community and to recognize the contributions RS make to research at HSPH. A summary of the skills of each RS will be collated on the HSPH website, which the RSA will then promote and advertise to all sectors of the HSPH community. We anticipate that this program will enhance collaboration requests and help to establish RS as an integral part of the HSPH research community. A link to the form was sent to all RS in an email on 5/6—please fill it out!

**Interested in joining the RS Council for the FY2021-2022? We are looking for 5 new members. Representation from the Departments of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Health Policy and Management, Epidemiology, and Immunology and Infectious Diseases is especially desired! Open meeting Friday May 21 at 1pm for those interested in learning more!**



### **Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Research and Activities Research Scientists are Involved in:**

**Anne Lusk** (Research Scientist, Nutrition) produced a website to provide free information about electric vehicle charging to middle- and lower-income individuals (<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/electric-cars/>). Much information exists on having someone install an electric vehicle charger inside a garage. Middle- and lower-income individuals are less likely to own a garage but, if they have a driveway, they could install an electric vehicle charger on the side of their house or on a post in the driveway. Funding was provided by the Hamilton Company Charitable Foundation and assistance by the Department of Nutrition and Brett Otis.

**Aedin Culhane** (Sr Research Scientist, Biostatistics) is co-chair of the Bioconductor Community Advisory Board, which recently coordinated members of the Bioconductor community to provide hands-on training courses at the Human Heredity and Health in Africa (H3Africa) virtual conference. Workshops were provided using a cloud computing training platform (Orchestra) and it was inspiring to be able to deliver training in Africa over this virtual platform. Bioconductor is an open-source, open development software project widely used in statistical analysis of bioinformatics, immunology, microbiology and single cell genomics data. The H3Africa is a consortium of Wellcome trust and NIH funded science in Africa (<https://h3africa.org/index.php/consortium/>)

**Jeremy Furtado** (Sr Research Scientist, Nutrition) is serving on the Department of Nutrition's Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging Committee. This group is working closely with Chief Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Officer, Lilo Barbosa, to promote diversity, inclusion, and belonging across the department and the Harvard Chan community. While not quite a year old, the committee has already made strides toward understanding the perceptions and experiences of the students, staff, academic appointees, and faculty in Nutrition; implementing hiring practices that encourage applicants from a diverse community of talent; and working toward creating a culture in which all members of our community feel welcome, supported, and poised for success.

### **New RS appointments (11/20 & 03/21)**

**Mary Piper**, Biostatistics

**Zach Ward**, Center for Health Decision Science

**Wesley Wong**, Immunology and Infectious Diseases

**Marianna Cortese**, Nutrition

**Daniel Escudero**, Epidemiology

**Meagan Farrell**, Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies

**Mark Giganti**, Center for Biostatistics in AIDS Research (CBAR)

**Linda Harrison**, CBAR

**Rachel R. Jolivet**, (Senior RS) Global Health and Population

**Claire Perner**, Epidemiology

**Jack Wolfson**, (Senior RS) Environmental Health

**Junhao Zhu**, Immunology and Infectious Diseases

### **Promotions**

**Robert Shaw**, Senior RS, Immunology and Infectious Diseases (11/20)

**Danielle Braun**, Senior RS, Biostatistics (01/21)

**Sean Brummel**, Senior RS, CBAR (03/21)

**CONGRATULATIONS ALL!!**

### **The RSA Award FY2021-2022!!**

Need some money to cover research related costs? Travel to a conference or in need of software or hardware? Apply for the RSA Award. Application submission opens June 1<sup>st</sup> and due June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Dates to Know**

**Thursday 05/20/2021, 1-2pm**

RSA Seminar Series: Drs. Emily Burger and Linda Vesel will present their work! Zoom invite will follow.

**Friday 05/21/2021, 1-2pm**

RSA Council open meeting for any RS who wants to learn more about the RSA Council

**Friday 06/11/2021, 1-2pm**

Dr. Natalia Linos, Research Scientist and Executive Director of the FXB Center for Health & Human Rights at Harvard University will lead an interactive session to discuss her work, her career path, and her vision for the Center under her direction. More details will be shared via email soon!

**Tuesday 06/15/2021, 3pm**

Stories of Juneteenth: A Conversation with Ms. Opal Lee on the history of Juneteenth in her life, and story-telling focused on her personal journey to establish Juneteenth as a national holiday.