



## **MENTOR GUIDE: Career Advancement Through Community at Harvard (v.12.2021)**

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Welcome! We are so glad that you have agreed to be a **career mentor** in the Career Advancement Through Community at Harvard (CATCH) mentorship program for URiM Harvard medical students and residents. This short guide will introduce CATCH and describe specific issues that you may encounter in mentoring your CATCH mentee. A list of specific resources is provided at the end; your mentee has also been given this list. *If you encounter issues or problems beyond any you are comfortable handling, please reach out to us at [jbc@bwh.harvard.edu](mailto:jbc@bwh.harvard.edu) (subject line CATCH) and we can help.*

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Enhancing the diversity of the faculty workforce at Harvard-affiliated hospitals requires sustained attention to the academic pipeline. The CATCH program organized through the NIAMS P30-funded **Joint Biology Consortium (JBC)** provides local faculty mentors for junior members of our community who belong to underrepresented in medicine (URiM) populations. Medical students at Harvard Medical School and residents at Boston Children's Hospital (BCH) who self-identify as URiM are matched to volunteer faculty mentors at BCH and Brigham and Women's Hospital (BWH) for the purpose of career guidance and to ensure a welcoming environment for the mentee at Harvard. There is no expectation that you will teach your mentee clinical skills or assist them with a research project. The time commitment should be modest (we estimate ~2 hours per year) unless you decide otherwise, and we hope that you find the process interesting, meaningful, informative, and fun.

All mentoring is confidential. We request that pairs meet every 3-6 months for 2 years. Pairs may meet for less than 2 years if the mentee finishes training before then. Mentees may also attend optional professional and personal skill building workshops that will occur approximately 4 times a year, for which food or a food voucher will be provided, but mentors are not expected to attend these events.

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **URiM barriers to a career in academic medicine**

Identified barriers for URiM can be categorized into academic, financial, social, and emotional. The information below was developed through a systematic review of the literature and is summarized as follows.

**Academic:** URiM students and residents may come from backgrounds characterized by fewer opportunities in academic preparation and success, or by linguistic or cultural norms different from those traditionally dominant in medicine and academia. These differences may translate into lower USMLE scores, lower clerkship scores, and fewer research preparatory opportunities. Further, for these reasons, some URiM require additional guidance in "learning how to learn" and in time management skills. URiM individuals also often face the *minority tax* – an implicit or explicit expectation to participate in activities not expected for non-minorities, e.g. to serve on diversity committees, that take time away from efforts required for academic success.

**Financial:** URiM individuals often face budgetary concerns including: (1) debt, which can be especially problematic in the context of reduced household wealth; (2) financial burdens due to family-cultural expectations and responsibilities; and (3) lower incomes if providing care to financially marginalized patients (poorer payor mix). For these reasons, it can be challenging to afford medical studies, including supplemental costs not covered by financial aid such as commercial test preparation materials, and it may be difficult to make the financial choice to defer salary through prolonged subspecialty training and/or extended time in research.

**Social:** Social barriers included lack of *social capital* (i.e. networks within a community that help individuals to success and advance), extended family-cultural expectations, navigating the rigorous institutional environment and culture (explicit and unwritten rules) and the sociopolitical navigation of perceived affirmative action. In addition, Boston has an unfortunate reputation stemming from the desegregation-triggered busing riots of the 1970s, and remains to this day a highly segregated city. These barriers can make URiM individuals trained at Harvard reluctant to remain in the Boston area for further training or to pursue their academic careers.

**Emotional:** The *impostor syndrome* describes the feeling of self-doubt and personal incompetence that persist despite one's education, experience, and accomplishments. This syndrome is common in URiM, who may find it difficult to envision themselves in roles typically occupied by people from different backgrounds. Other important themes that emerge include emotional wellbeing, social isolation, ineffective self-reliance, and stress management.

### **Factors associated with academic success**

Fortunately, specific **academic** and **social factors** have been associated with academic success. (**Financial** and **emotional** support are largely outside of the realm of this mentorship program, but if you encounter them, please email us and we will help connect your mentee to appropriate resources, including those at the end of this guide.)

**Academic:** Academic achievement, development of professional skills (e.g., grant and manuscript writing), opportunities for research authorship, development and delivery of scientific and didactic presentations and faculty career intention at medical school graduation have all been associated with academic success.

**Social:** Building social capital with peers and senior faculty have been associated with academic success.

### **MENTOR ROLE**

A mentor is a teacher, coach, counselor, and advocate. Examples of the roles of a CATCH mentor include helping with goal setting and self-reflection, providing an orientation to the complex world of academic medicine, helping to ensure that the mentee feels welcome in the community, making introductions and serving as a sponsor to expand the mentee's developmental network. Set mutual expectations and responsibilities at the onset of relationship. Agree on confidentiality and no-fault termination.

Mentees are responsible for initiating contact with you, scheduling meetings and setting the agenda for these meetings. However, many may feel reluctant to impose upon your time, and for this reason, you may from time to time find it useful to take the initiative. See below for potential discussion topics and opportunities for your meetings.

### **Discussion Topics:**

- Career goals

- Specific ways to achieve career goals
- Barriers / hurdles your mentee has encountered
- Navigating the Harvard professional environment
- Clinical direction (for example, what residency / fellowship to choose)
- Research project
- Research mentor
- How to acquire clinical skills
- How to apply for grants or other funding
- Community service
- Concerns related to personal finances, loans, and other financial matters
- Questions about parenting / childcare
- Managing stress
- Other personal / family concerns

**Potential Opportunities:**

- Make introductions to others who could help your mentee
- Helping your mentee to identify a career direction
- Helping your mentee to identify a research direction, project, and/or mentor
- Educational opportunity
- Speaking opportunity
- Publication opportunity
- Funding opportunity (for a project)
- Leadership opportunity
- Community service opportunity
- Financial / personal resource opportunity
- Opportunity to help your mentee with his/her/their own stress, health, or well-being

**WHY RETENTION OF URiM IS IMPORTANT**

The benefits of having URiM faculty include a greater breadth of thought and life experience as well as an enhanced ability to take care of a diverse patient population. While recruitment of URiM is important, retention of high-quality students and residents in the Harvard system is especially cost-effective. Faculty development such as professional skill development and academic career advising with mentoring has been associated with an increase in the retention of URiM faculty.

**EVALUATION**

We would appreciate your help with our program evaluation. We are using these evaluations to measure program satisfaction. The study entails filling out short, anonymous surveys every 6 months during participation in CATCH. We are obtaining additional longitudinal measures through our mentee survey. You may opt out at any time by emailing [jbc@bwh.harvard.edu](mailto:jbc@bwh.harvard.edu), subject line: CATCH.

## RESOURCES

Please see below for links/information to financial/emotional/academic resources.

### **AMIGO (ACR/CARRA Mentoring Interest Group for Pediatric Rheumatologists)**

AMIGO is a pediatric rheumatology mentoring program. The program supports the career development of fellows and junior faculty in pediatric rheumatology via educational services, facilitated networking, and most importantly a one-on-one mentoring program through which interested mentees are matched with mentors at other institutions.

*\*Has great mentoring resources: toolkit, checklist\**

<https://www.rheumatology.org/Get-Involved/Mentoring/AMIGO>

“AMIGO: a novel approach to the mentorship gap in pediatric rheumatology” *J Pediatr.* 2014 Feb;164(2):226-7.e1-3. doi: 10.1016/j.jpeds.2013.11.006. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24461154/>

“Efficacy of an Interinstitutional Mentoring Program Within Pediatric Rheumatology.” *Arthritis Care Res.* 2016 May;68(5):645-51. doi: 10.1002/acr.22732. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26414673/>

### **Counseling and Mental Health Services**

CAMHS Cares Line 24/7

FOR STUDENTS ONLY!

Are you a student who needs to talk with a counselor right now about a mental health concern?

Call (617) 495-2042

Select the CAMHS Cares option to speak with a counselor 24/7.

<https://camhs.huhs.harvard.edu>

### **Employee Assistance Program**

Harvard's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers free, confidential help for all Harvard employees and their adult household members. You can reach the EAP any time for personal or work-related concerns at 877-EAP-HARV (877-327-4278).

<https://hr.harvard.edu/employee-assistance-program>

[https://my.kgalifeservices.com/?org\\_code=harvard](https://my.kgalifeservices.com/?org_code=harvard)

### **Harvard Catalyst Profiles**

Contact, publication, and social network information about Harvard faculty and fellows.

<https://connects.catalyst.harvard.edu/profiles/search/people>

### **NIH Loan Repayment Programs**

The NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) are a set of programs established by Congress and designed to recruit and retain highly qualified health professionals into biomedical or biobehavioral research careers. The escalating costs of advanced education and training in medicine and clinical specialties are forcing some scientists to abandon their research careers for higher-paying private industry or private practice careers. The LRPs counteract that financial pressure by repaying up to \$50,000 annually of a researcher's qualified educational debt in return for a commitment to engage in NIH mission-relevant research.

<https://www.lrp.nih.gov>

**Office of Clinician Support (Boston Children's Hospital)**

Available for a variety of clinician services. Call Administrative Coordinator Liz Robinson at 617-355-6705, or reach out directly to david.demaso@childrens.harvard.edu or [Lauren.coyne@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:Lauren.coyne@childrens.harvard.edu).

**Office of Faculty Development (Boston Children's Hospital)**

To facilitate the career advancement and satisfaction of Harvard Medical School (HMS) faculty at Boston Children's Hospital, fostering careers of all junior faculty, and increasing leadership opportunities for women and minorities.

*\*Has great mentee's checklists\**

<https://www.childrenshospital.org/research/office-of-faculty-development>

**Office of Recruitment & Multicultural Affairs**

ORMA focuses on the recruitment and support of medical students who are from groups historically underrepresented in medicine (URIM) and those who identify as LGBTQ. ORMA approaches this work with an intersectional lens. Personal and academic advising are available to ORMA students from the Director and the Faculty Advisors.

<https://meded.hms.harvard.edu/office-recruitment-multicultural-affairs>

**Office of Scholarly Engagement (OSE)**

The HMS Office of Scholarly Engagement (OSE), previously Scholars in Medicine Office (SMO), supports students as they pursue research, service, clinical training and enrichment opportunities in Boston, across the country and around the world.

<https://meded.hms.harvard.edu/about-scholarly-engagement>

**Office for Diversity Inclusion and Community Partnership (DICP)**

The mission of the Office for Diversity Inclusion and Community Partnership (DICP) is to advance diversity inclusion in health, biomedical, behavioral, and STEM fields that builds individual and institutional capacity to achieve excellence, foster innovation, and ensure equity in health locally, nationally, and globally.

<https://dicp.hms.harvard.edu>

**Ombuds Office**

The Ombuds Office provides its visitors with a highly confidential and informal forum in which to help them to clarify their concerns, identify their goals and consider all of their options in managing or resolving their concerns. The Ombudsperson serves students, faculty, staff and trainees of Harvard Medical School, Harvard School of Dental Medicine and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and is independent in structure, function and appearance. The Ombudsperson does not serve as an advocate for any party to a dispute. However, an Ombudsperson does advocate for fair treatment and processes. Some typical concerns brought to the Ombuds Office include work/learning environment and performance, fear of retaliation, professional misconduct, authorship, sexual harassment and discrimination. Any issue may be brought to the Ombudsperson.

<https://hms.harvard.edu/departments/ombuds-office>

**Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)**

The PSLF Program forgives the remaining balance on your Direct Loans after you have made 120 qualifying monthly payments under a qualifying repayment plan while working full-time for a qualifying employer.

<https://studentaid.gov/manage-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service>

**Physician Health Services (PHS) of the Massachusetts Medical Society**

Physician Health Services, Inc. is dedicated to improving the health, well-being, and effectiveness of physicians and medical students while promoting patient safety. This is achieved by supporting physicians through education and prevention, as well as assessment, referral to treatment, and monitoring.

<https://www.massmed.org/phshome/>

**Work/Life Resources**

Work/Life programs for employees.

<https://hr.harvard.edu/worklife>