



iJOBS Career Panel: Non-Faculty Jobs for PhDs in Academia

Thursday, September 29, 2022

2:30 PM



Alexandra Walczak, PhD

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I'm a New Jersey native and graduated from Ramapo College with a Bachelors of Science in Biochemistry with a minor in physics. I graduated from Rutgers in 2016 with a PhD in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. My dissertation focused on microbe mineral interactions, specifically how microbes can obtain energy from sulfur minerals as chemolithoautotrophs. This meant I fed my microbes rocks for dinner. Since graduating I've worked at Rutgers as a Supervisor of Lab Operations for General Microbiology.



Christine A. Marshall, PhD

Instructor in Biology and Assistant Dean of Faculty
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A graduate of Smith College, Christine earned her doctorate in neurobiology and behavior from Columbia University, continuing her research as a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard Medical School before joining the faculty at Phillips Academy in 2008. During her time at Andover, she has led the Independent Research Program in molecular and cellular biology, designed interdisciplinary science electives, and incorporated inquiry-centered projects within the core science curriculum. An inaugural research fellow at the Tang Institute for Teaching and Learning, Christine was afforded the time and resources needed to develop SYNAPSE, a framework for supporting deep student learning while boosting equity and inclusion within the classroom. This past year, she stepped into the role of Assistant Dean of Faculty, leading faculty recruitment for the Academy in STEM.



Jessica McCormick-Ell, PhD

Director, Division of Occupational Health and Safety
Director, National Biosafety and Biocontainment Training Program
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Jessica McCormick-Ell has served as Director of the Division of Occupational Health and Safety (DOHS) at NIH since April 2020. As a senior advisor and subject matter expert to NIH leadership, Dr. McCormick-Ell oversees the NIH Occupational Medical Service, Technical Assistance, Safety Operations and Support, Biorisk Management, and Community Health branches tasked with supporting occupational health and safety at NIH sites across the United States. She also serves as Program Director for the National Biosafety and Biocontainment Training Program. In her tenure at NIH, Dr. McCormick-Ell has received numerous awards, including an individual NIH Director's Award, for her role in leading the NIH COVID-19 response. She earned a Ph.D. in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and prior to joining the NIH, was the University Biosafety Officer and Responsible Official at Rutgers.



Pragati Sharma, PhD

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As the Associate Director of Commercialization Funding, Pragati is responsible for Rutgers' two technology commercialization funding programs – TechAdvance™ and HealthAdvance™, the latter of which is partly sponsored by the NIH's Research Evaluation And Commercialization Hub (REACH) initiative. She represents Rutgers in the NIH's PACE: Proof-of-Concept Network Action Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, where she currently serves as the co-chair (2022). Pragati earned her Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology from Rutgers University and holds an MS (Honors) in Analytical Chemistry and a BS (Honors) in Chemistry, both from Panjab University, Chandigarh, India.



Tatiana Litvin-Vechnyak, PhD

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Tatiana Litvin-Vechnyak, Ph.D is the Associate Vice President of Innovation Ventures (IV) at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, a premier public research institution. Dr. Litvin-Vechnyak oversees the activities of technology transfer and new ventures groups focused on management of the intellectual property assets of the university in all areas including life sciences, physical sciences, engineering, and agriculture. Under her management, the IV group works closely with Rutgers researchers, academic and industry partners to manage intellectual property portfolios, evaluate, market and license new technologies to existing or startup companies. Dr. Litvin-Vechnyak has nearly 20 years of experience in IP management and over 10 years overseeing patenting and licensing related activities at Rutgers and other academic institutions. Before the merger with Rutgers University in 2013, she was the Associate Director of the Office of Technology and Business Development at UMDNJ. Prior to that, she was a Senior Licensing Associate at the Office of Technology Transfer and Business Development at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. Dr. Litvin-Vechnyak is an active member in various local and national professional organizations, speaks frequently about intellectual property and technology licensing, and has recently taught a course on commercializing innovation for the Rutgers Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. Dr. Litvin-Vechnyak holds a Ph.D in Pharmacology from the Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences, an undergraduate degree in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology from Clark University and is a Registered Patent Agent with the US Patent and Trademark Office.



Diane Ambrose, PhD

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Diane Ambrose, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of Research and Sponsored Programs at Rutgers, overseeing the central office responsible for pre-award administration. Pre-award research administrators represent Rutgers University to external sponsors. Activities involve managing proposal submissions, initial intake and set up of incoming awards, creation of outgoing subawards, and non-financial post-award management. Over the past 20 years, Dr. Ambrose has held many positions within research administration in a university setting, including in the research development, technology transfer areas and graduate education. She received her B.A. degree in chemistry from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, and her Ph.D. in pathobiology at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA. She was a post-

doctoral trainee at Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia, PA, prior to embarking on her career in research administration, and she has never looked back!.



Lisa Lyu, PhD

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Lisa Lyu is an Assistant Director of Licensing (Innovation Ventures, Office for Research) who is managing an IP portfolio comprising Physical Sciences/Engineering and Life Science technologies developed at Rutgers University. Prior to joining Innovation Ventures in 2015, Lisa was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Pharmacology at Rutgers RWJMS. Before that, Lisa was a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at Harvard University. Lisa has received a PhD degree in Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology from Rutgers University and UMDNJ. Lisa is a registered patent agent.



Tracy E. Scott, PhD

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Tracy Scott completed her PhD at Rutgers in Biomedical Engineering (BME) where she created a mathematical muscle fiber model to study myocardial stunning. After some time away from research she returned to Rutgers to complete a postdoc in BME where she worked on a tissue engineering scaffold that would contract when stimulated to aid in muscle tissue regeneration. Currently Dr. Scott is a Special Projects Coordinator with the School of Graduate Studies/Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences (RBHS) and is involved in many programs geared towards the betterment of the biomedical graduate students' experience at Rutgers, including initiatives to improve both diversity education and outreach.