



**2022**

***ASPIRE ANNUAL CAREER SYMPOSIUM***

***A KALEIDOSCOPE OF  
BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE CAREERS***

# Agenda

## Morning Plenary Session

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9:00am      Networking from Here to There:  
Maximizing the Symposium Experience      Ashley Brady, PhD

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## Morning Concurrent Sessions

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### SESSION A

10:00am      Translational Medicine  
Sophie Thiolloy, PhD

11:00am      Patent Law  
Amanda Schnepf, PhD, JD

### SESSION B

10:00am      College Teaching  
Laurie Lemons, PhD  
Karen Meisch, PhD

11:00am      Medical Science Liaison  
Sydney Stoops, PhD

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## Lunchtime Plenary Sessions

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12:00pm      Industry      Pedro Garcia-Barrantes, PhD

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1:00pm      Understanding ORISE: Fellowship and Internship Opportunities  
for PhDs at National Labs and Government Agencies

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## Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

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### SESSION A

2:00pm      Government Administration  
Mohammed Aiyegbo, PhD

3:00pm      Business Development  
Lauren (Matisa) Bulsak, PhD/MBA

### SESSION B

2:00pm      Consulting  
Siwei He, PhD

3:00pm      Academic Administration  
and Research  
Mariena Silvestry-Ramos, PhD  
Celestial Jones-Paris, PhD

# Welcome to the 2022 ASPIRE Annual Career Symposium!

Join the conversation on  
Twitter  
#ASPIRECareerSymposium

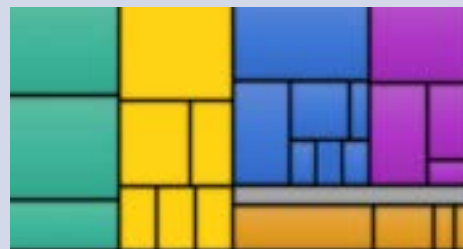
## How to read this program:

Each speaker is featured on a page with their bio and career highlights they submitted...



... three adjectives they would use to describe themselves to be successful at their role,

... and their daily job activities (what they do all day).



**9:00AM**



**Ashley  
Brady, PhD**

*Assistant Dean of Biomedical  
Career Engagement and Strategic  
Partnerships, Assistant Professor  
of Medical Education and  
Administration, BRET Office of  
Career Development ASPIRE  
Program*

**NETWORKING FROM HERE  
TO THERE: MAXIMIZING THE  
SYMPOSIUM EXPERIENCE**

10:00am

# Translational Medicine

# Sophie Thiolloy, PhD



**Sophie Thiolloy, PhD**

*Associate Director, Translational Medicine Neuroscience, Translational Medicine, UCB*

**Humble**

**Team Player**

**Strategic**

*Associate Director, Translational Medicine, UCB*

**5**

After getting a PhD in Oncology from Vanderbilt University investigating the contributions of specific proteases from the tumor microenvironment in breast-to-bone metastasis, Dr. Sophie Thiolloy, PhD, moved to the University of Chicago to assess the role of omental macrophages to ovarian tumor cell metastasis. Working in mid-size biotech and small start-up companies, she gained strong experience and understanding of drug development across different indications as well as the agility and hands-on attitude needed in a biotech environment. Dr. Thiolloy is currently working at UCB in the translational medicine neuroscience group where she is responsible for the translational medicine and biomarker plan to support the transition of therapeutic programs from a successful pre-clinical study stage to clinical proof of concept study phase. To this end, she works transversally with representatives of different functions (QCP, safety/toxicology, pharmacology etc) to build an integrative strategy and to ensure its endorsement in stakeholder meetings. She also reaches out to external KOLs to initiate collaboration to strengthen the translational medicine and biomarker plan of assigned projects.

*Director, Translational Medicine, Convert Pharmaceuticals*

**4**

*Senior Program Leader, Complix NV*

**3**

*Scientist, Pharmacodynamics/ Translational Medicine Team, Ablynx (Sanofi company)*

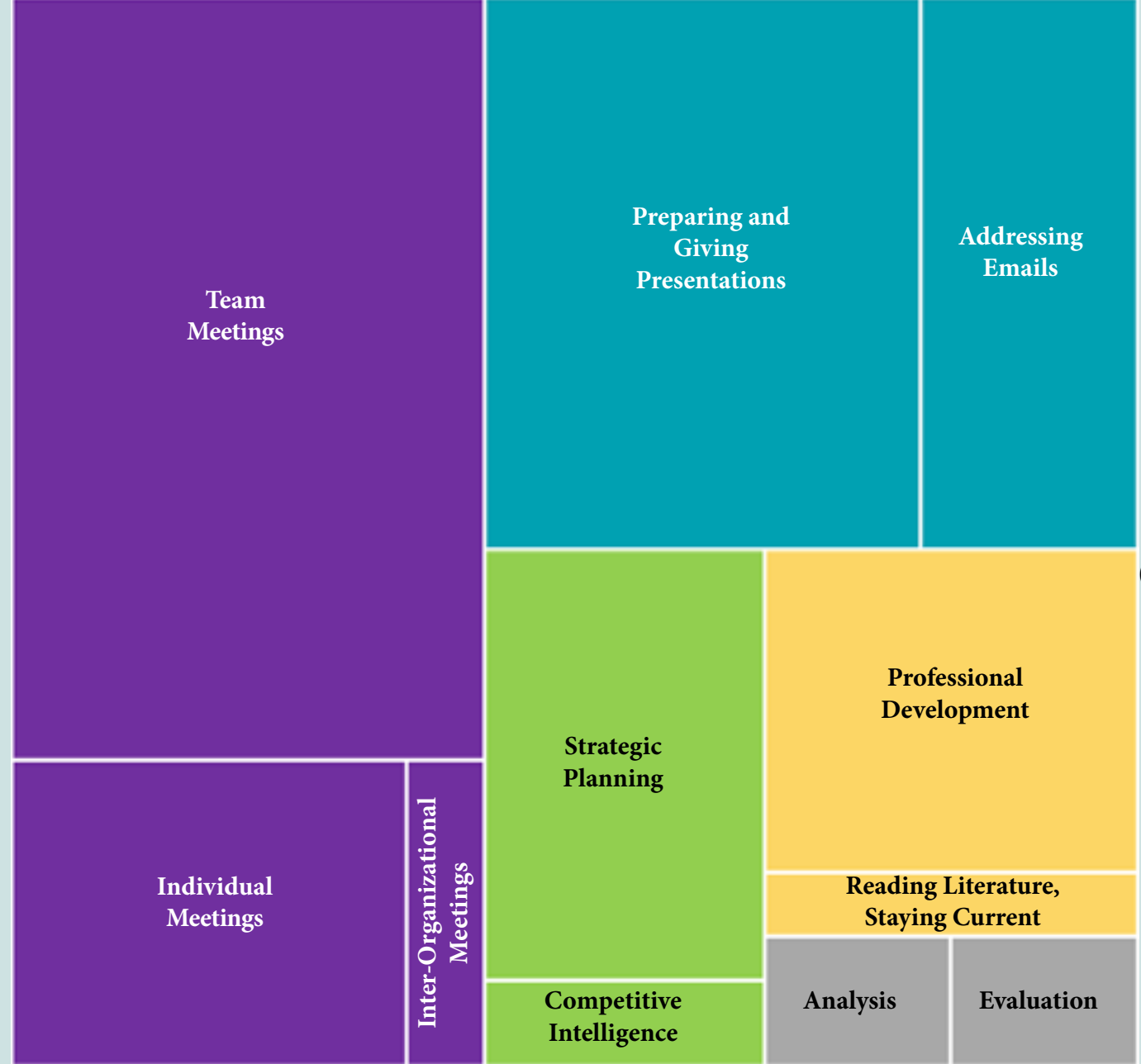
**2**

*Vanderbilt Graduate School*

**1**

## Managing Others

## Communication



**Business**

**Science**

**Other**

10:00am

College Teaching

Laurie Lemons, PhD



**Laurie Lemons, PhD**

*Associate Professor, Chemistry,  
Atlantic Cape Community  
College*

**Adaptable**

**Articulate**

**Enthusiastic**

Dr. Laurie Lemons, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Chemistry at Atlantic Cape Community College in Mays Landing, NJ. Dr. Lemons received her BS in Chemical Biology from St. Joseph's University and her PhD in Neuroscience from Vanderbilt University.

*Adjunct Teaching Experience*

**4**

*TA experience during graduate school*

**3**

*Graduate school, Vanderbilt*

**2**

*Tutoring/TA experience during undergrad education*

**1**

**Other**

**Communication**

Preparing and Giving Presentations

Addressing Emails

Committee Meetings

Hiring and Interviewing

Coaching, Mentoring

**Teaching**

**Managing Others**

10:00am

# College Teaching

# Karen Meisch, PhD



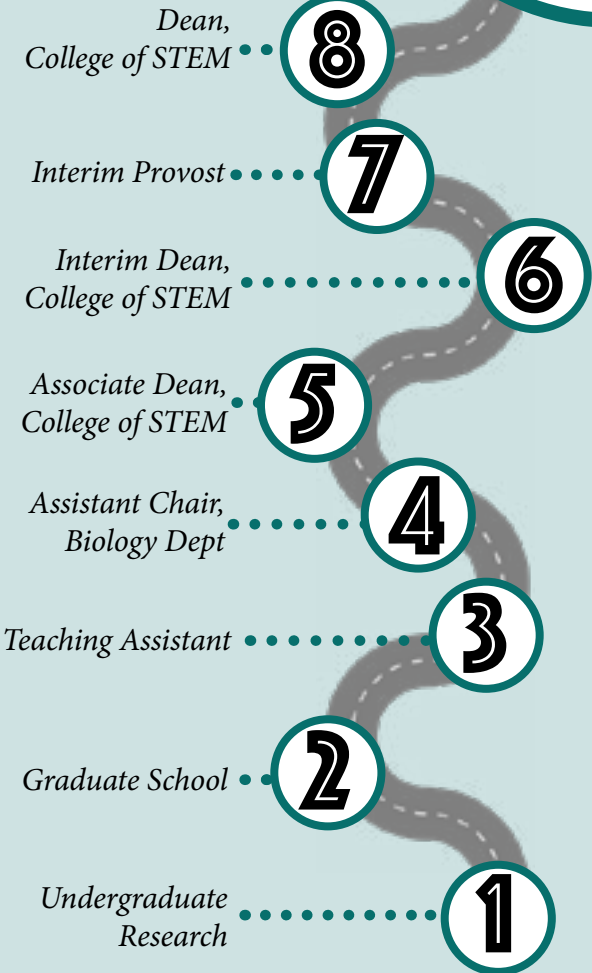
## Karen Meisch, PhD

Dean, College of STEM,  
Austin Peay State University

Leader

Passionate

Resourceful



Dr. Karen Meisch, PhD, is the Dean of the Austin Peay State University College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Meisch arrived at Austin Peay in 2007 as assistant professor of biology. She went on to serve as assistant chair of the Department of Biology, as the associate dean of the College of STEM for four years, and as the interim dean for the last three years. Meisch earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Ashland University in Ohio and her PhD in biological sciences from Vanderbilt University.

Business				Managing Others			Other		
Strategic Planning		Program Management		Individual Meetings	Team Meetings		Networking		
Operations and Logistics		Financial Operations (writing grants)		Hiring and Interviewing		Coaching, Mentoring		Professional Development	Reading Literature, Staying Current
				Committee Meetings	Client Meetings	Training Others on the Job			
Forecasting, Reporting		Business Development	Competitive Intelligence	Legal	Inter-Organizational Meetings		Travel		
				Preparing and Giving Presentations		Addressing Emails	Responding to Phone Calls	Writing	Analysis
				Communication				Science	

11:00am

# Medical Science Liaison

## Sydney Stoops, PhD



### Sydney Stoops, PhD

Associate Director, Senior Medical Science Liaison, US Medical Affairs, Incyte Corporation

Adaptable

Curious

Organized

- 8 Associate Director, Senior MSL, Incyte
- 7 Medical Science Liaison, Incyte
- 6 Extensive networking with MSLS, participation in local bio-organizations
- 5 Staff Scientist, MRI Global (Contract Research Org)
- 4 Postdoctoral Fellowship, Scripps
- 3 Entrepreneurship Course, VC Internship during Graduate School
- 2 Vanderbilt Graduate School
- 1 Undergraduate Summer Research Internship with diagnostics start-up

Dr. Sydney Stoops, PhD, is an Associate Director, Senior Medical Science Liaison at Incyte supporting the company's oncology portfolio. She currently covers the Upper South region of Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia but has previously covered the Gulf Coast and Midwest territories since she joined Incyte in 2017. Beyond the traditional MSL role, she is a Field Strategy Lead, GVHD Program, and Clinical Trial Field Lead for the GRAVITAS Development Program, Mentor, and recently completed a one-year commercial rotation with the company's Market Access group.

Prior to her time at Incyte, Dr. Stoops served as a staff scientist with MRIGlobal, developing a new business stream – biopharmaceutical analysis – for the Pharmaceutical Sciences group. Dr. Stoops received her PhD in Pharmacology in 2012 from Vanderbilt University under the mentorship of Dr. Craig Lindsley, PhD, and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at The Scripps Research Institute. During her PhD at Vanderbilt, she spent a year interning with a local venture capital firm, TriStar, and completed a five-week course at The Graduate School of Business at Stanford: Stanford Ignite – Powering Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

### Other

Scientific Education; Disease State, Portfolio, and continued MSL training (either through team or individual training sessions)

Travel

Reading literature, staying current

Professional Development

### Managing Others

Client Meetings

Inter-Organizational Meetings	Team Meetings	Training others on the job
	Individual Meetings	Coaching, Mentoring

Addressing Emails	Responding to Phone Calls
	Preparing and Giving Presentations

### Communication

11:00am

Patent Law

Amanda Schnepf, PhD, JD



**Amanda Schnepf, PhD, JD**

*Patent Attorney,  
Parker Highlander PLLC*

**Adaptable**

**Hard-Working**

**Organized**

Amanda Schnepf, PhD, JD, joined Parker Highlander after completing a PhD program in Molecular Biology at Vanderbilt University, a postdoctoral fellowship in Molecular Virology at Vanderbilt University, and a postdoctoral fellowship in drug development at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Prior to her graduate studies, Dr. Schnepf earned a B.S. in Cellular and Molecular Biology from the University of Texas at Austin, and a degree from the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science based at the University of North Texas. Her research experience at St. Jude focused on high-throughput screening of spliceosome inhibitors for cancer therapy and anti-influenza drugs, both in close collaboration with medicinal organic chemists. During her postdoctoral fellowship at Vanderbilt, Amanda developed an innovative confocal microscopy-based assay to quantitatively analyze the binding of broadly neutralizing antibodies to HIV-1 virions. This research had profound implications for the relationship between maturation of the viral core and the exposure of broadly neutralizing regions of the HIV-1 surface glycoprotein during the HIV-1 life cycle. During her dissertation research at Vanderbilt, where she was awarded the University Graduate Fellowship, Dr. Schnepf quantitatively analyzed mRNA splice variant production and identified the biochemical mechanism of an Isolated Growth Hormone Deficiency Type-2 causing mutation.

Upon joining Parker Highlander, Amanda has focused on end-to-end biotechnology patent prosecution both nationally and internationally, freedom-to-operate analyses, and patentability analyses, focusing primarily in the areas of molecular biology, next generation sequencing, cancer therapeutics, biologics, stem cell biology, diagnostic analysis, and second medical use pharmaceuticals. Dr. Schnepf also has experience managing national and international IP portfolios and works with pharmaceutical companies, start-up companies, and universities.

Member, Parker Highlander PLLC

8

Associate, Parker Highlander PLLC

7

University of Texas School of Law

6

Patent Agent, Parker Highlander PLLC

5

Scientific Advisor, Parker Highlander PLLC

4

Postdoc, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

3

Postdoc, Vanderbilt University

2

Vanderbilt Graduate School

1

**Communication**

**Other**

**Writing**

**Reading literature, staying current**

**Professional Development**

**Training Others on the Job**

**Client Meetings**

**Addressing Emails**

**Responding to Phone Calls**

**Legal**

**Business Development**

**Managing Others**

**Business**



**NOON**

**Industry**

**Pedro Garcia Barrantes, PharmD, PhD**



**Pedro Garcia Barrantes, PharmD, PhD**

*Senior Research Scientist, Medicinal Chemistry, Vertex Pharmaceuticals*

**Efficient**

**Team Player**

**Flexible**

*Early Career Board, J Med Chem*

**8**

*Scientist, Vertex Pharmaceuticals*

**7**

*Postdoc, MIT*

**6**

*Vanderbilt International Student Program*

**5**

*Graduate School, Vanderbilt*

**4**

*Masters, Organic Chemistry*

**3**

*Research Professor, University of Costa Rica*

**2**

*Pharmacy School*

**1**

Dr. Pedro Garcia Barrantes, PharmD, PhD, is Senior Research Scientist in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry at Vertex Pharmaceuticals. In his role, Dr. Garcia Barrantes has contributed to the advancement of small molecules drug discovery projects from hit to lead optimization, and candidate nomination. His current responsibilities revolved around early research projects, closely collaborating in close cross-functional teams to identify therapeutic strategies for reare diseases that could have an impact in the quality of life of patients. Dr. Garcia Barrantes received a PharmD and a master in Organic chemistry from the University of Costa Rica, and stayed as research professor in the Pharmacy School after graduation. There, he coordinated the Medicinal Chemistry courses while carrying independent research on bioactive natural products. He later pursued his PhD studies in Chemical Biology at Vanderbilt University as an International Scholar (VISP) under the guidance of Dr. Craig Lindsley, PhD, and being part of the Vanderbilt Center for Neuroscience Drug Discovery. Dr. Garcia Barrantes conducted postdoctoral research within Tim Jamison's group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Dr. Garcia Barrantes has been recognized by American Chemical Society C&EN as part of the "Talented 12" class of 2018 and he is currently a member of the Early Career Board of the Journal of Medicinal Chemistry.

**Science**

**Communication**

At the "bench" doing actual research

Addressing Emails

Preparing and Giving Presentations

**Managing Others**

Individual Meetings

Team Meetings

Competitive Intelligence

**Business**

Analysis

Operations and Logistics

Reading literature, staying current

**Other**



**1:00PM**

**UNDERSTANDING ORISE:  
FELLOWSHIP AND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR PHDS AT NATIONAL LABS AND GOVERNMENT  
AGENCIES**

**Leslie Fox**

ORISE STEM Workforce Development  
Section Manager – Outreach and Engagement

**Will White**

ORISE STEM Workforce Development,  
Section Manager – ORISE Programs at CDC

**Bill Scheib**

ORISE STEM Workforce Development,  
Project Manager – ORISE Programs at FDA

**Jeannette Bouchard**

ORISE STEM Workforce Development  
Group Manager =

Join us at the ORISE Roadshow to learn more about internships and fellowships at ORISE! The presentation will spotlight biomedical science opportunities at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and will also include general information about searching and applying for opportunities. ORISE program managers will be available for questions and discussion.

The Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) connects talented and diverse college students, recent graduates, postdocs, and faculty to programs closely aligned with the interests of a variety of research facilities, including those managed for the U.S. Department of Energy and 20+ other federal agencies. These best-in-class research and technology programs are key to the preparation of the next generation of our nation's STEM workforce.

Last year, ORISE administered appointments for ~10,000 participants and currently offer 700+ open opportunities. You can apply year round at Zintellect, a searchable database of research and technology internships and fellowships, or by downloading the free ORISE GO mobile app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. And don't forget to follow us at #ExperienceORISE to learn more.

2:00pm

Consulting

Siwei He, PhD



**Siwei He, MD, PhD**

*Project Lead/Consultant,  
BCG (Boston Consulting Group)*

**Adaptable**

**Insightful**

**Passionate**

*Project Leader,  
BCG*

**5**

*Consultant,  
BCG*

**4**

*Summer programs  
at consulting firms*

**3**

*Vanderbilt  
Graduate School*

**2**

*Formidable  
undergrad  
research*

**1**

Dr. Siwei He, MD, PhD, is a BCG project leader with experience across health care, retail, and technology industries. Dr. He has been with BCG since 2019. Prior to his time at BCG, Dr. He received his PhD in Neuroscience from Vanderbilt University as well as trainings in clinical medicine. His expertise is in digital transformation, digital marketing, go-to-market strategy, and operations.

**Managing Others**

Client Meetings	Individual Meetings
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**Communication**

Preparing and Giving Presentations	Writing
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Team Meetings	Training Others on the Job	Inter-Organizational Meetings
	Hiring and Interviewing	

Addressing Emails
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Travel	Professional Development	Strategic Planning	Program Management
	Networking		

**Other**

**Business**

2:00pm

# Government Administration

## Mohammed Aiyegbo, PhD



### Mohammed Aiyegbo, PhD

Health Science Administrator (Scientific Review Officer), National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID)

Articulate

Creative

Diligent

Scientific Review Officer Role, NIAID

5

Research Scientist, involved in business development, NYU

4

Postdoc, NYU

3

Vanderbilt Graduate School

2

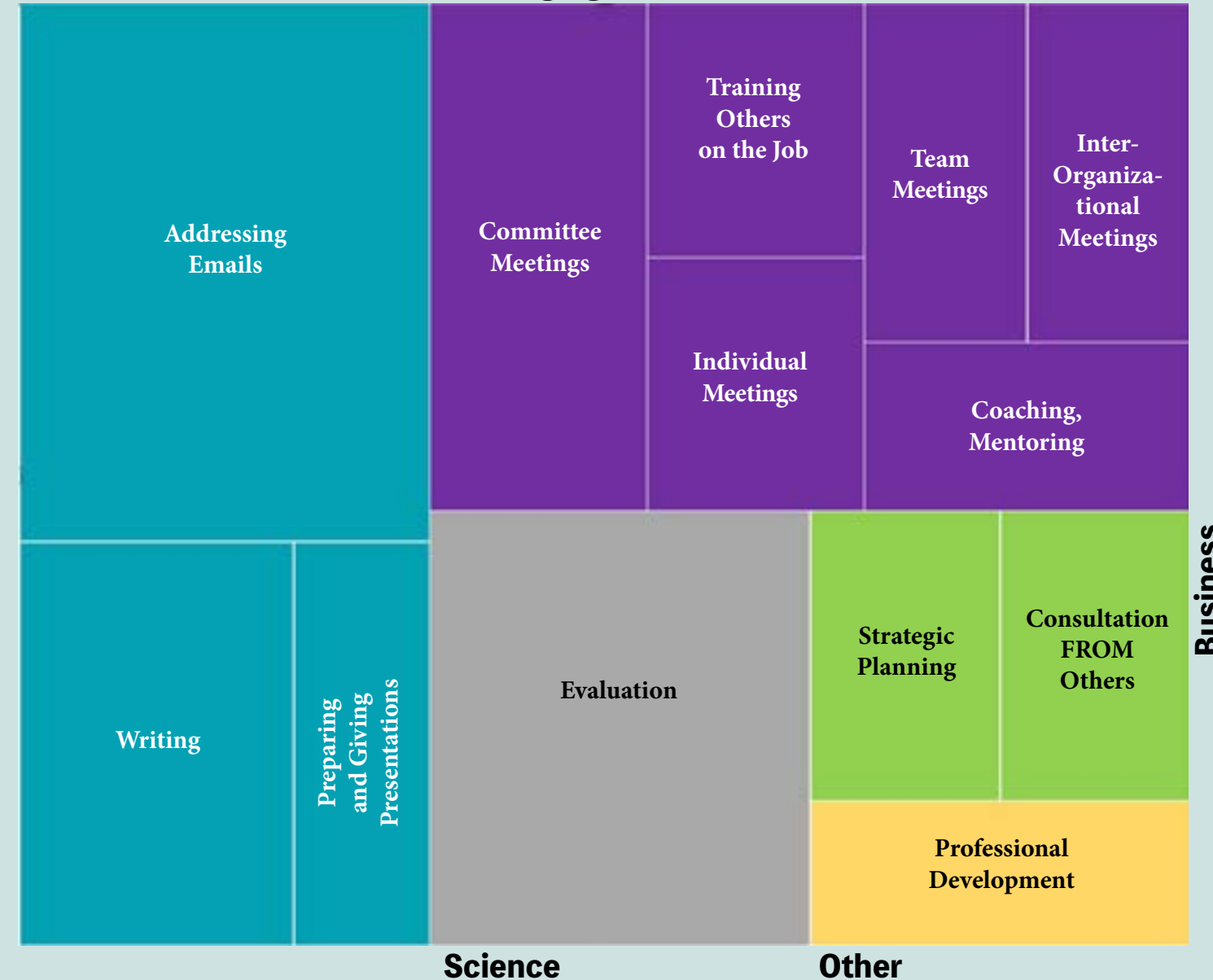
Vanderbilt Summer Science Academy

1

Dr. Mohammed Aiyegbo, PhD, is a Health Science Administrator (Scientific Review Officer) with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in Bethesda, MD. He has been in this role since 2019 and recently served as the Acting Deputy Branch Chief for Microbiology Review Branch B. Previously Dr. Aiyegbo was a research scientist with NYU Langone Health in greater New York City, managing projects for the production of HIV Vaccine Immunogens. Dr. Aiyegbo received his PhD from Vanderbilt in Microbiology and Immunology in 2013. His research focused on the efforts to elucidate the mechanism of viral inhibition by anti-rotavirus antibodies. This research resulted in two first-author publications. His postdoctoral fellowship with NYU School of Medicine utilized structure-based computational and molecular analysis to design vaccine immunogens for HIV and Zika. He also designed and performed experiments aimed at repurposing FDA-approved drugs for Ebola during the epidemic in West Africa. His interest in research was first piqued while working as a Clinical Laboratory Research Assistant in the Medical Research Council Unit in The Gambia, prior to attending Berea College in Berea, KY, where he majored in Biology, Cell, Molecular, and Systems. While enrolled at Berea College, Dr. Aiyegbo spent two summers performing undergraduate summer research at Vanderbilt as part of the Vanderbilt Summer Science Academy.

### Communication

### Managing Others



3:00pm

# Academic Administration

## Celestial Jones-Paris, PhD



### Celestial Jones-Paris, PhD

Senior Project Manager, Vanderbilt Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (VICTR), VUMC

Strategic

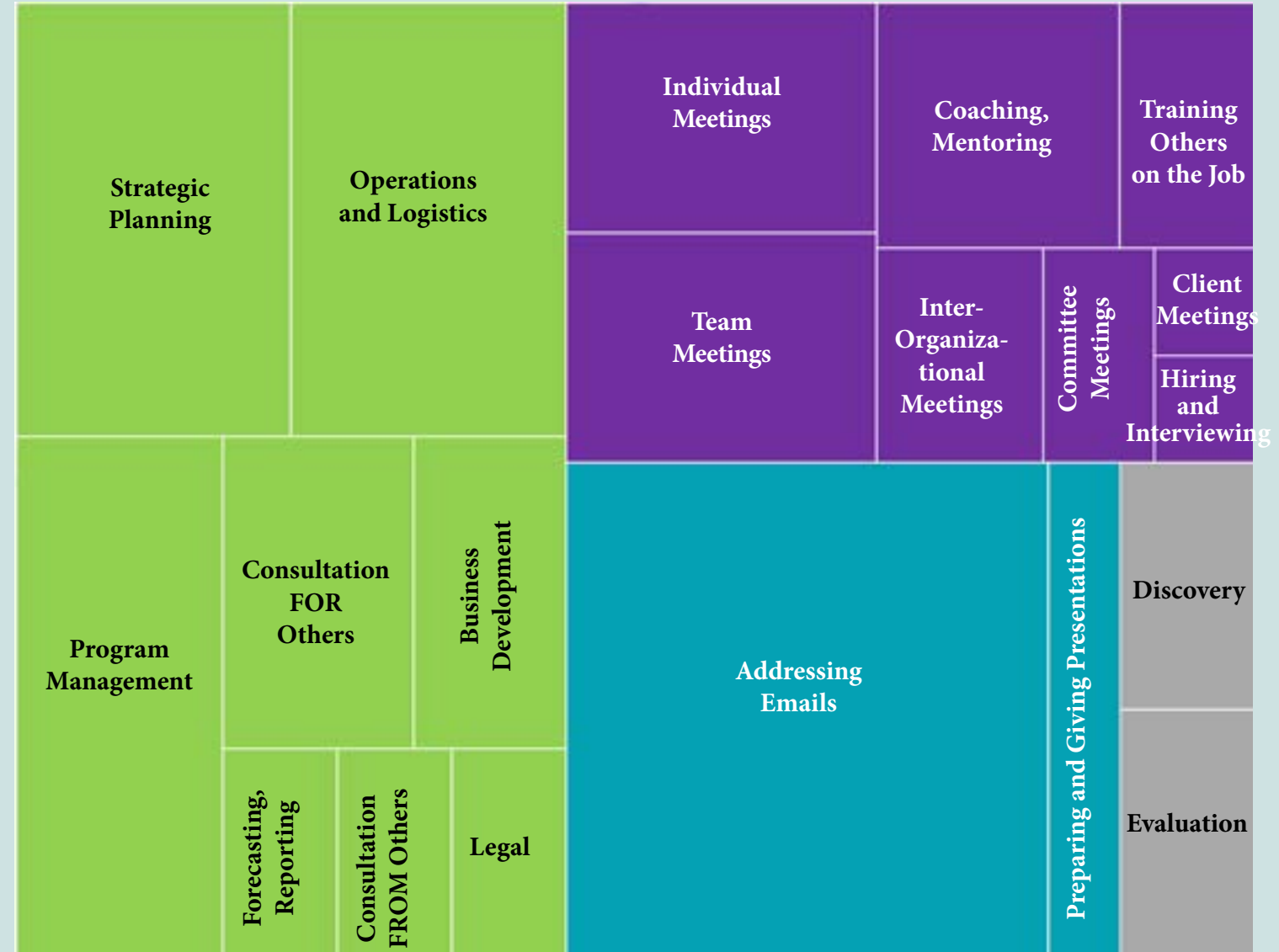
Team Player

Diplomatic

Dr. Celestial Jones-Paris, PhD, is a Senior Project Manager for the Vanderbilt Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (VICTR). She works with her team to manage operational and infrastructure components of translational shared resources, including VUMC's de-identified biobanking program BioVU. She facilitates resource access and development for investigators that come from basic science, clinical, and industry backgrounds. Often Dr. Jones-Paris has to break down complex activities that involve cross-departmental and cross-team support and forecast them into discrete and prioritized tasks while maintaining perspective of overall goals and objectives. She finds satisfaction in streamlining and optimizing interdependent business processes that help advance biomedical research. Moreover, she is passionate about the trust and integrity that patients have when deciding to participate in research and is equally considerate of community and regulatory matters while addressing research matters. Beyond specific management duties, Dr. Jones-Paris also participates in several committees that assemble experienced professionals for strategic planning and action, such as the Vanderbilt Rigor, Reproducibility and Transparency Working Group, the Automated Biospecimen Storage Facility Operations Advisory Committee, and the VUMC Racial Equity Task Force- Racial Bias and Racism in Research Workgroup. Dr. Jones-Paris received her PhD in Pathology at Vanderbilt University with additional training in translational research from the HHMI VUMC Certificate Program in Molecular Medicine. She received her B.S. in Biochemistry with a Minor in Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management from Indiana University. Her extramural training also included undergraduate research lab projects, a pharma internship, graduate leadership positions, co-chairing an international conference, and a science policy internship.

### Business

### Managing Others



### Communication

### Science

Science Policy Internship, Life Science TN

8

Mentoring Students in Research Labs

7

HHMI/Vanderbilt Certificate Program in Molecular Medicine

6

Vanderbilt Graduate School

5

Internship, Cook Pharmica

4

Undergrad Biochemistry Research Labs

3

Indiana University Biochemistry Bachelors, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management Minor

2

Upward Bound Math & Science

1

3:00pm

# Academic Administration

## Mariena Silvestry Ramos, PhD



### Mariena Silvestry Ramos, PhD

Manager, Electron Microscopy, Cornell University

Curious

Team Player

Technical

Manager, Center for Materials Research (CCMR), Cornell University

6

Manager, Center for Structural Biology, Vanderbilt

5

Staff Scientist, New York Structural Biology Center (NYSBC)

4

Postdoc, protein NMR

3

Vanderbilt Graduate School

2

Great Undergrad Experience

1

Dr. Mariena Silvestry Ramos, PhD, is a Research Specialist/Facility Manager in electron microscopy at Cornell University's Center for Materials Research (CCMR). She trains, assists, and consults with users on a variety of projects. Prior to joining Cornell, Dr. Silvestry Ramos worked as a manager at Vanderbilt University's Center for Structural Biology (2013-2015), a staff scientist at the New York Structural Biology Center (2011-2013), and dabbled briefly into the world of protein NMR as a postdoc at the University of Western Ontario in London, ON (2009-2011). Her background is in single particle analysis of human adenovirus by cryoEM.

Besides science, Dr. Silvestry Ramos is interested in education, computer and media literacy, consulting, and music. She is active on Twitter and enjoys posting pictures of gnarly things she sees on the microscopes. Dr. Silvestry Ramos also enjoys photography; she is fluent in Spanish (her mother tongue) and knows a thing or two about surviving a plane crash.

"I can summarize my job best as: you have a question and need a way to place something inside a microscope to image it. My job is to determine the feasibility of the project and how to get from the bulk sample, to the final picture. I also work as a fairy labmother: procuring supplies, diagnosing issues, troubleshooting, answering questions, and ideally, making (some) wishes come true."

### Managing Others

Training Others on the Job

Individual Meetings

Team Meetings

### Science

At the "Bench" doing actual research

Addressing Emails

Responding to Phone Calls

Analysis

Evaluation

Reading Literature, Staying Current

Professional Development

### Communication

### Other

3:00pm

# Business Development

## Lauren (Matise) Bulsak, PhD/MBA



**Lauren (Matise) Bulsak, PhD/MBA**

*Director, Business Development, Strategic Planning & Commercial Operations, US Oncology, GSK*

**Adaptable**

**Articulate**

**Strategic**

Marketing Director, Professional Launch Lead, GSK

**5**

Marketing Director, Early Commercial, GSK

**4**

Post-MBA Esprit Rotational Program, GSK

**3**

Health Care Management MBA Program, The Wharton School

**2**

Cancer Biology PhD Program, Vanderbilt

**1**

Lauren (Matise) Bulsak, PhD/MBA, is currently a Director of Business Development, Strategic Planning, and Commercial Operations for U.S. Oncology at GSK. She currently works with senior leadership on evaluation and recommendation of business development opportunities, strategic initiatives, performance reporting, and operational planning across the oncology portfolio. Prior to her role, Dr. Bulsak has held increasing roles of responsibility across the oncology R&D-commercial continuum spanning business development, payer, early commercial and brand marketing. She also was the commercial launch lead for a global health neonatal medicine for 48 developing countries at GSK headquarters in London. During Dr. Bulsak's time as a scientist at Vanderbilt in the lab of Hal Moses, MD, her dissertation research focused on mechanisms of breast cancer metastasis, particularly to the lung. Dr. Bulsak also worked in product development at NextGxDx (now Concert Genetics), a startup focused on simplifying genetic testing ordering for hospitals.

Dr. Bulsak holds a B.S. in biology from Wake Forest University, a Ph.D. in cancer biology from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, and an MBA from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

### Business

### Communication



#### Note from Dr. Bulsak:

I spend ~50% of my time in meetings, but those meetings are related to business development, competitive intelligence, strategic planning, etc. - they aren't independent of each other. I likely spend ~30% of my time focused on business development activities, inclusive of evaluation, competitive intelligence, etc. I spend 40% of my time working on leadership and performance presentations and focusing on strategic business planning. And I likely spend the remaining ~30% working on strategic initiatives and operational activities.

