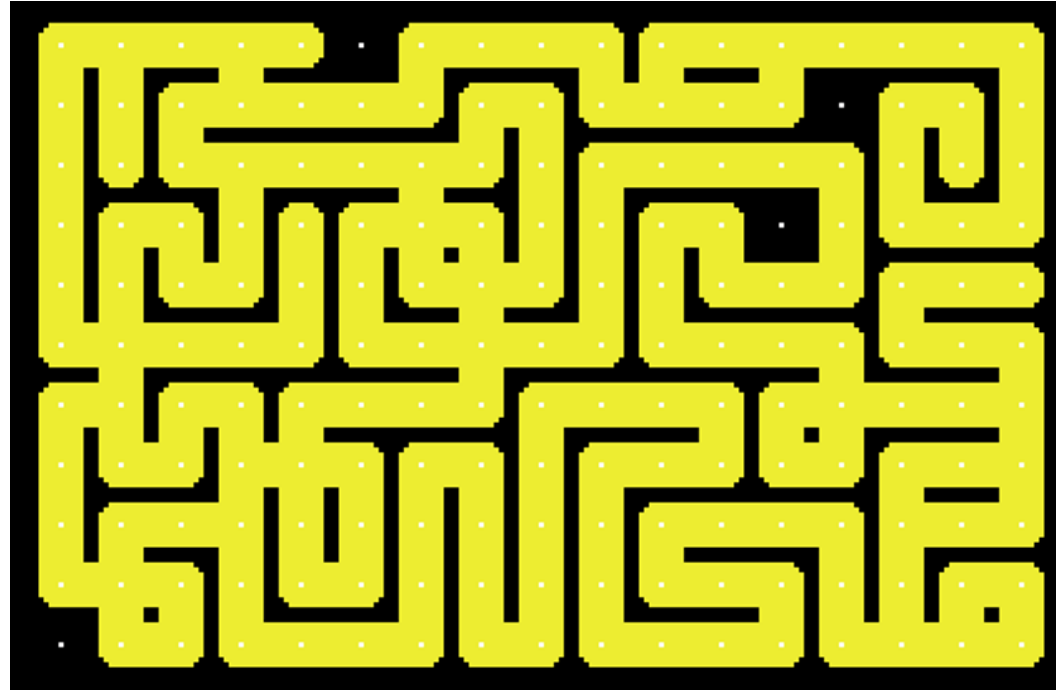


NORDP 2016



# Follow the yellow brick maze:

Planning your career path in Research  
Development

# Panelists

## **Joanna Downer**

Associate Dean for Research Development at *Duke University School of Medicine*

## **Dawn McArthur**

Director, Research and Technology Development Office, Child and Family Research Institute  
*BC Children's Hospital and University of British Columbia*

## **David Stone**

Associate Vice President for Strategic Innovation and Planning at *Northern Illinois University*

## **Joann Sullivan**

Director, Office of Research Development at *Medical University of South Carolina*

## **Tokesha Warner**

# Goals

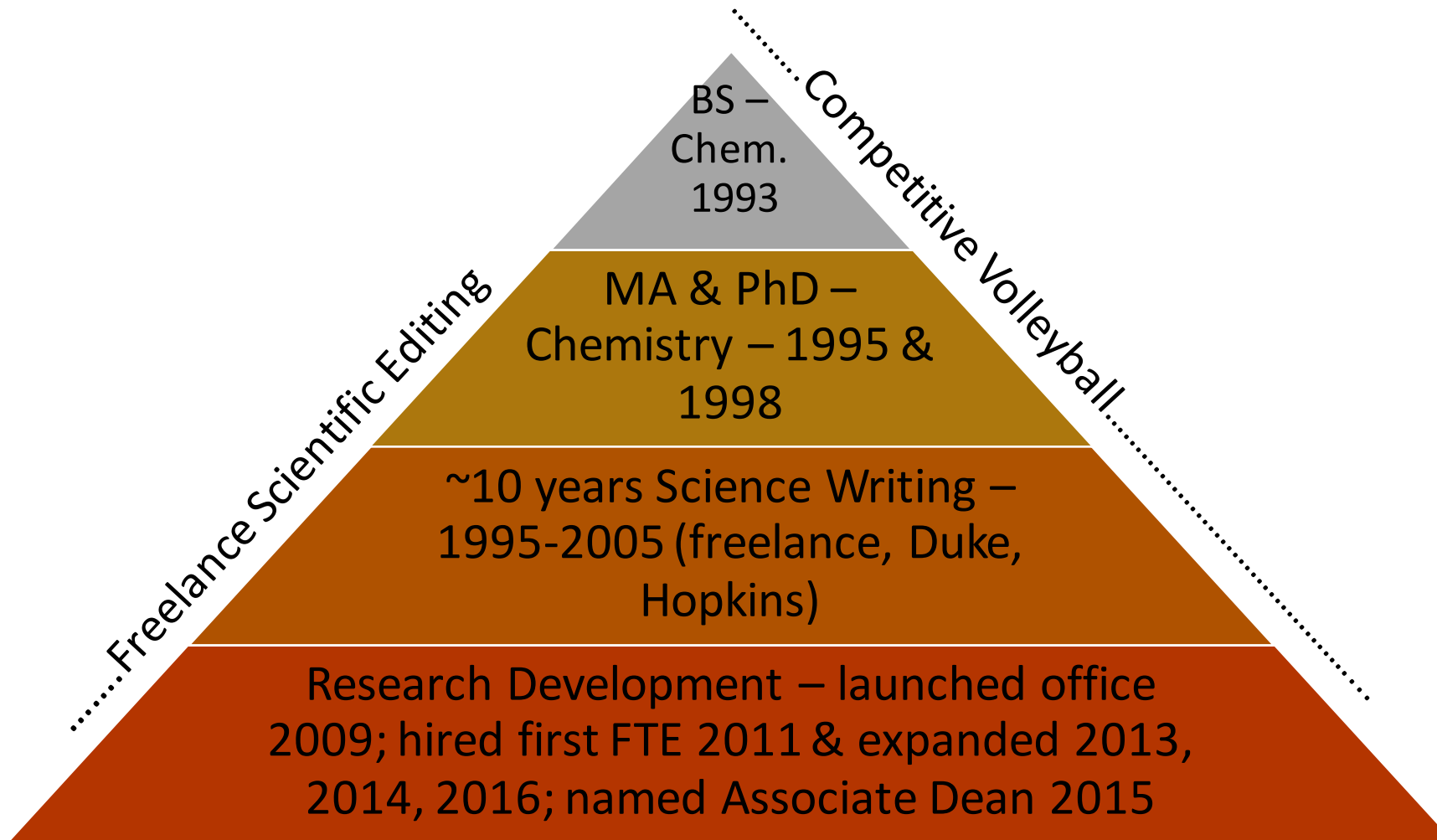
- What is available in RD career paths?
- What is the skill set?
- What are the trends?

# Follow the Yellow Brick Road

NORDP 2016

Joanna Downer, PhD  
Associate Dean for Research Development  
Duke University School of Medicine

# My path



# Personal tools

- In each position, look to use your existing skills and to build new ones by looking for and accepting new challenges.
  - If you want a path forward, you can't rest on your laurels or stay in a rut.
- Do excellent, high quality work all of the time.
- Take responsibility for your actions.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Build excellent relationships

# Strategic Skills Developed and Deployed

- Being able to **quickly get up to speed** in new areas of science,
- Being able to **sift** through everything I know to identify what the reader needs to know,
- Using my knowledge of the topic & understanding of the audience to **craft a compelling story and/or argument for that audience.**
- **Being responsible & trusted** with “hot” information.
- **Having diplomacy, tact, firmness, and fairness** in communication style.
- Identifying both problems **and** solutions.

# External tools

- “What Color Is Your Parachute” book and workbook
- Enneagram personality typing system (<https://www.enneagraminstitute.com/>), mentioned within “Parachute”.
- These tools (and others, no doubt) can both help you define what you want to do and help you shape your job to better align with these preferences.



# Where might I go from here?

- Definite: continue finding and meeting new challenges – at work & outside of work
- Possible:
  - Continue doing what I'm doing
  - Continue moving up within my institution (narrowly or broadly defined)
  - Move to a narrower role at my institution (i.e., something smaller than the School of Medicine)
  - Move to a different institution
  - Switch to contract work or consulting

# **Follow the Yellow Brick Road**

## ***Finding a path and 'home' in research development***



**Dawn McArthur, PhD**  
Director, Research & Technology Development

# My path

## Early adventures in nature



## Propelled by

- curiosity, creativity, exploration, and wanting to figure out how things work
- love of learning, literature, architecture, nature, and the 'doing' of science

## Research in comparative physiology & metabolism



BSc (Hons) Zoology (*cold tolerance*)  
MSc Zoology (*control of breathing*)  
PhD Zoology (*control of metabolism*)  
*[plus English/French lit/language  
in undergrad and grad school]*

PDF in Biochemistry (*obesity/stress*)  
PDF in Physiology (*obesity/diabetes*)

## Research Development CFRI / University of BC (2003 – present)



## Research Development

## Research Grants Facilitation Simon Fraser University (1999 – 2003)



# Perspectives on the road taken

## **Why/how I decided to do RD full-time**

- I had honed related skills, from undergraduate through PDF
- I had an exceptional opportunity, in a unique place and time, to build a career focused on using these key aspects of knowledge and training
- I get to integrate 3 of my favourite things – scholarship, language, architecture – and to learn new things about the world, think in new ways, and build with ideas and words, every single day
- Over the past 17 years, I've done much of what faculty do, but for 'fun'

## **Aptitudes, skills, and “what I like best”**

- curious learner interested in nearly everything
- integrative, lateral, pattern-seeing thinker
- highly trained and experienced researcher
- love experimenting and solving difficult problems
- reasonably high tolerance for chaos and the 'not knowing'
- somewhat organized and somewhat renegade
- prefer high level of autonomy

# Finding your path and 'home'

## **Ask yourself -**

### **What do I like best to do?**

*eg, planning, doing, leading, integrating, collaborating, competing, reading, writing, drawing, working with numbers/money, organizing, teaching, providing service, helping people, working alone, ...*

### **What are my best aptitudes and skills?**

*eg, people, data, numbers, words, pictures, ideas, thinking, synthesizing, planning, organizing, doing, leadership, teamwork, altruism, ambition, ...*

### **How do I think, and when do I think best?**

*eg, concepts/details, slowly/quickly, quietly/loudly, linearly/laterally, abstractly/creatively/concretely, in silence/chaos, ...*

### **Which aspects of research development are most appealing?**

*eg, service, research design, building teams, project management, budgets, texts, graphics, communication, training, policy, partnerships, strategic planning, ...*

# Tokeshia L. Warner, M.H.A.

## **MOM**

- B.A, M.A.- English: rhetoric and Composition
- Adjunct Professor, Developmental Studies
- Observational wall flower

## **DAD**

- B.S. – Business Administration
- Manager, General Services Administration (federal)
- Center of attention, social butterfly

You've got to know when to hold 'em  
Know when to fold 'em  
Know when to walk away  
Know when to run

The Gambler (1978)

Kenny Rogers

# 16 years at Vanderbilt University

Title	Dept/ School	Length	Funding agency
Program Manager, Alumni Relations	Institute for Global Health	3.6 yrs	NIH Fogarty International Center
Research Coordinator	General Pediatrics	1 yr	State of Tennessee
Research Assistant III, Assistant Project Coordinator	School of Nursing	1 yr	Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee Foundation
Program Coordinator, MIND Training Project (LEND grant)	Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics	7.5 yrs	NIH Maternal and Child Health Bureau
Program Coordinator, A Better Nashville	Pediatric Critical Care & Anesthesia	1.5 yrs	Memorial Foundation
Alumni & Development Assistant	Peabody College of Education	1.4 yrs	



# Strengths I bring

- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Compelling writer (concise)
- Networking
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Attention to detail
- Work smarter, not harder
- Strategic, process oriented thinker
- High risk, high reward



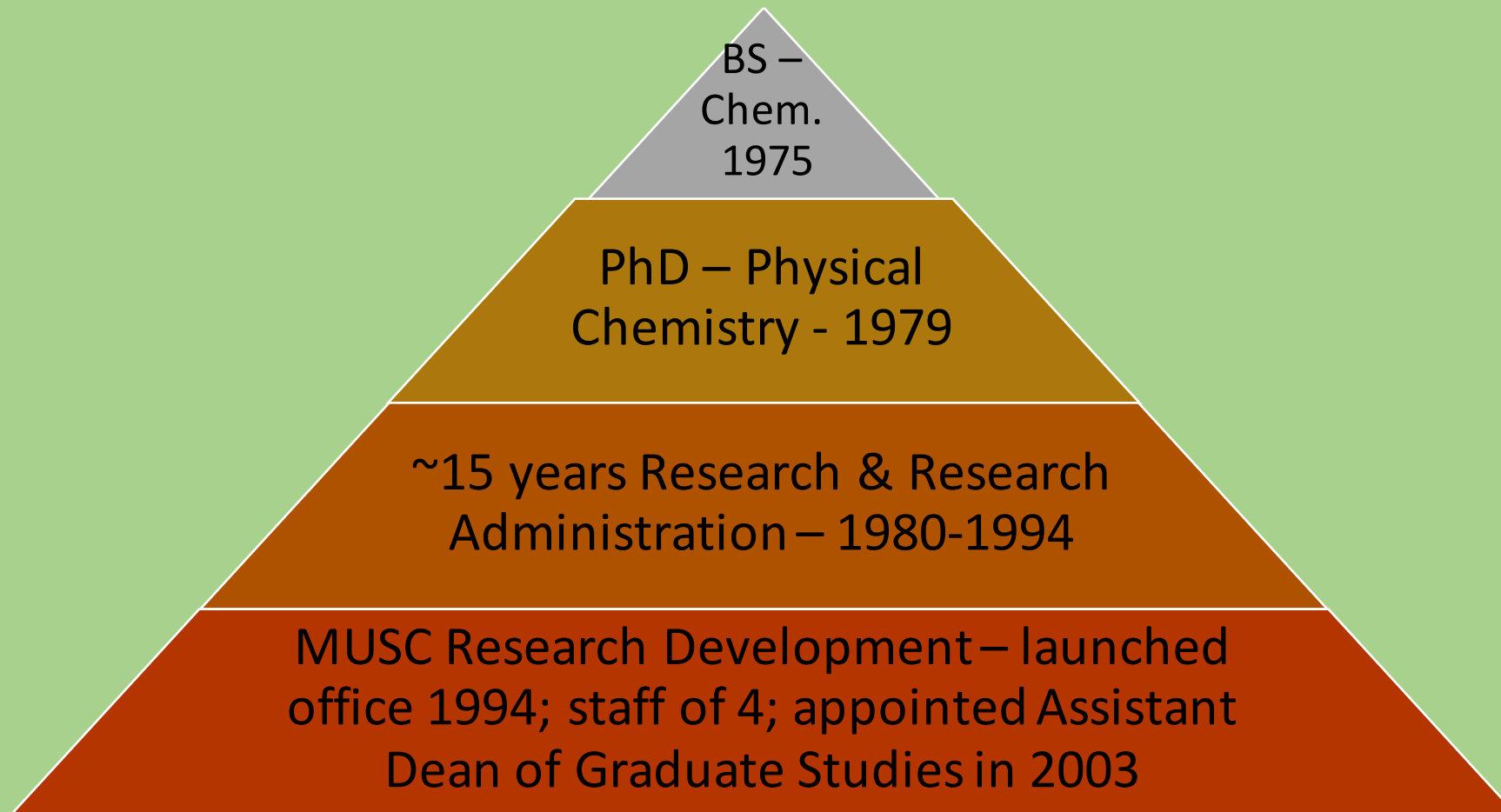
# The (Yellow Brick) Road Less Traveled

Joann Sullivan, PhD

Director, Office of Research Development  
Asst Dean, College of Graduate Studies

May 25, 2016

# My path



Serendipity

or

Conscious Choice?

	Serendipity	Conscious Choice	Outcome
Graduate / Postdoctoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worked in large research group</li> <li>• NSF EPSCoR Program initiated</li> <li>• Passion for undergrad and grad education</li> <li>• EPSCoR program expands to all federal agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aptitude for writing / editing</li> <li>• Accepted parttime administrative position as state coordinator</li> <li>• Implemented undergrad research program at USC</li> <li>• Opportunities to work on writing/editing proposals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Became the “go-to” person for editing manuscripts</li> <li>• Expanded my professional network</li> <li>• Gained experience and “relational intelligence”</li> <li>• First proposal was funded – I was hooked!</li> </ul>
RD Career	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD Office is created at MUSC</li> <li>• Doubling of NIH budget</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to MUSC</li> <li>• Gravitate towards institutional research training grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “wins” that established ORD reputation</li> <li>• Become resident “expert”</li> <li>• Appointment in College of Graduate Studies</li> </ul>