

WRITING HEALS & INSPIRES (WHI JOURNAL)

Rutgers University

Robert Wood Johnson Medical School

Women's Health Institute

Rutgers Health/RWJBarnabas Health

Mission: The journal hopes to gather up the voices of all individuals and to share their thoughts and ideas on ways to enhance global wellness & to inspire visionary paths on making a difference

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Writing Heals & Inspires

Foreword

It is with joy that I write this introduction to the first edition of our Journal, Writing Heals & Inspires (WHI Journal).

The Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School Women's Health Institute (WHI) remains committed to service, education and advocacy for all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs, sexual orientation or gender. As such, the WHI Journal was commenced to allow all individuals to have a voice and to express their thoughts regarding current topics that are inspiring and healing. Writing provides the opportunity to express feelings and reflections.

This first edition will highlight essays reflecting on the accomplishments of two amazing women trailblazers, Dr. Vivian Pinn and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Since one of the primary missions of the Women's Health Institute is to further the health of women through research, there is no one more esteemed in moving this forward than Dr. Vivian Pinn. She is truly an inspiration to all of us and is the reason she was chosen in the inaugural WHI Journal. And, with the recent passing of RBG, it became apparent that providing the opportunity to write about her would provide healing as we mourn her loss. As well, RBG had been a faculty member at Rutgers.

Among their many other contributions, these two women pioneers continue to have a great influence on women's professional growth and leadership in the workforce and in society. Truly, they are exemplary role models for all individuals and their voices inspire hope, resilience and the importance of achieving set goals. They exemplify what all individuals, especially women, can achieve through hard work and dedication to a specific purpose. Both women have been a monumental force in their professional fields. Along with their many years of hard work, they always found ways to give back and persevere.

As you read these essays, in honor of these two women, please find ways to renew your own sense of hope, beauty, and purpose. Remember to keep your light bright to assist others in finding their way to fulfillment, empowerment, hope, resilience, and success.

Juana Hutchinson-Colas, MD, MBA

The Two Pioneers

this issue of the WHI Journal is Dedicated to



Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Esq and Vivian W Pinn, MD

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Dr. Vivian Winona Pinn

Dr. Vivian Winona Pinn is a legend in medicine. She is a globally recognized physician, scientist, and pathologist. She is especially known for her advocacy of women's health issues and concerns, particularly for ensuring that federally funded medical studies include women. In addition, she has played and continues to play a major role in encouraging women to follow medical and scientific careers. Dr. Pinn was the first woman of color to chair an academic pathology department (Howard University College of Medicine) in the United States. We were most honored to recently have Dr. Pinn 'virtually' here on the Rutgers campus to share her experiences on women's leadership and on women's inclusion in clinical trials.

The essays that follow are in response to the prompt: "How has Dr. Pinn influenced, touched, and/or inspired you in your professional and/or personal growth?"



Original Painting by WHI Intern-Tara Mason

Dr. Pinn a True Trailblazer

by Elizabeth Araba Aikins

Dr. Vivian Pinn is a pioneer not only within her field but also for women across the globe and in all walks of life. Since being the only African American woman in her class to graduate from the University of Virginia School of Medicine in 1967, she has worked tirelessly to pave the way for the next generation of women and minorities in healthcare. Dr. Pinn's inspiring leadership led to her leadership roles in the NIH Institutes and Centers to develop new strategic plans for women's health research and funding initiatives.

What I admire about Dr. Pinn is how she courageously followed through with her passions even though the path to success was difficult. From segregated schools in the south to being the only African American woman in her medical school class, her journey was not easy or comfortable. For example, she became the full-time caregiver to her mother during her sophomore year of college. Despite these adversities, she ultimately graduated with honors from the University of Virginia School of Medicine. Dr. Pinn is indomitable-- when the world pushed her back, she pushed it back even harder; her grit is genuinely inspirational.

As evident by her early career success through academic pathology -- Dr. Pinn's vision stayed clear. Once appointed as the Director of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health, she continued to work towards improved healthcare for women while increasing the leadership positions in research and academics for other women.

With all the trails she has blazed, Dr. Pinn has impacted me personally through her drive for more women in research roles. As an undergraduate student for the past three years, I have been involved in Occupational Science research with an all-female team on campus. Sixty years ago, I would have never had the opportunity to step foot in a lab with my male counterparts, let alone be adequately published alongside them. She demonstrates what can be accomplished when you break glass ceilings and help those behind you.

As Dr. Pinn referenced in her commencement address given at the University of Virginia, "I learned then, and have confirmed as years go by, that we can either dwell in the smallness of slights or difficulties or rejoice in the larger meanings of life's experiences…" I follow suit from those words and take hold of every experience that comes my way because of women like Dr.Pinn who fought for their rightful place at the table to carry out their full potential.



Elizabeth Araba Aikins is a Junior at Purdue University studying Occupational Science & Public Health with a minor in Economics on track to graduate in May 2022. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a career focusing on women's health or global health. Outside of the classroom, Araba has passions for cycling, cooking, & learning new languages.

Dr. Pinn– Passion to Care for the Sick

by Dwayla M. Carty

I have had a passion from a young age to care for people who were sick to help them get better in any way that I could help. What inspired me to pursue medicine was being born with Hydrocephalus and the challenges I encountered. As an example, I have had many surgeries to fix my malfunctioned shunts. I've endured horrible headaches and overall, not always feeling 100%; struggling in my academics, because I had a hard time focusing and comprehending. I'm inspired to complete my degree and educational goal in becoming a doctor so that I can help children who were like me to get better; because I can identify, I know how it feels to be sick all the time. Another aspiration of mine in becoming a physician is to help the underprivileged who are not able to receive the proper medical care like most people who are privileged! By going into low-income communities here in America to provide care for people who are unable to get to the hospital to get treated for an ailment is my dream. As well, I would like to travel abroad to countries that do not have the proper medical equipment and sufficient team of doctors to provide care to villagers who have most likely never been seen by a doctor or healthcare worker before.

Growing up in church I was taught to serve and help those in need at a young age; I remain committed to the community by serving hot meals every weekend and on holidays to give away my clothes that I no longer wear to other children who needed them more. My prayer is to become a doctor who will inspire my patients and give them hope that despite their condition, they can achieve whatever they desire to be. Also, to encourage other people who may have a similar story as myself who want to pursue medicine to show them with faith in yourself and perseverance, you keep going no matter how hard it gets! Some years ago, I met a wonderful doctor and her husband who also practices medicine, who both took time out of their busy schedules to mentor me daily and show me what it is like to be a doctor. Both were very encouraging and always supported me while I was in school. I was able to shadow one of them in the Emergency Room at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, where I gained clinical experience interacting with patients, taking their vital signs and medical history.

After reading about Dr. Vivian Pinn and how she prevailed, in becoming a physician despite the circumstances she had to face growing up, in caring for her family members who were sick, I was in awe. Dr. Pinn never gave up even though she had to take some time off from school. She endured and kept going! I am inspired by Dr. Pinn, in many ways, to keep going even when challenges arise, no matter what--- just keep going! Dr. Pinn's story gives me hope to work harder in achieving my educational goal to become a physician. I too had to care for my adoptive mom who has been sick since I was in Middle/High School. She has diabetes and is dependent on insulin, often having issues with low blood sugar levels, as well as other health issues. All of my mom's medical issues were ongoing while I was in school and even now in college. Again, after reading Dr, Pinn's inspirational story I am hopeful that I will become a great doctor.

You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it. Maya Angelou)



Dwayla M. Carty is currently taking a gap year off from school but will be returning in the fall to finish her undergrad as a bio/pre-med student to become a doctor (Pediatric Neurosurgeon or Pediatric Psychiatrist). While attending Middlesex County College, she was part of the Empower program that mentored middle and high school students with their homework until graduation. As part of the Bonner program, she collected coats and canned foods for people in need, as well as serving meals at Elijah's Promise in New Brunswick. She also has had the great honor of helping build a home for a family in need through the Habitat for Humanity / MCC. Lastly, she was a mentor for the M.O.B (Minding Our Business) a non-profit organization designed to meet community needs by advancing the personal and vocational development of urban youth through entrepreneurship, education, and coaching/mentoring.

Dr. Pinn and Progress

by Zoee D'Costa

Throughout history, people of color have had to envision and then manifest roles that never existed for them before in spaces that have been intentionally exclusionary. Racism and gender bias are pervasive and entrenched in the medical field and the barriers to entry, especially as a minority, are numerous. Dr. Vivian Pinn not only overcame these barriers but paved the way for more people of color to follow in her footsteps.

As a first-generation, first-born woman of color, role models on the same path are scarce. We lack representation in the places where decisions are made. Dr. Pinn did not let the limitations of what existed before constrain what she could achieve. After attending Wellesley College, she graduated from medical school as one of the only women in her class and the sole Black woman. As a Black female doctor in the 1960s, her progressive choices garnered significant societal pushback but despite the prejudice she faced, she stood resolute. She became the first full-time director at the Office of Women's Health at the National Institute of Health, staunchly advocating for women's health and leading women-centered programs. Dr. Pinn pushed the limits on success in a field that has historically oppressed minorities of all identities and actively works to dismantle the institutional barriers in place to cultivate a more inclusive and equitable medical field.
She remains an exemplary role model for women seeking the same path.

For some, Dr. Pinn's path was viewed as impossible, and yet she took it. She continues to fight for progress and has enabled others to join her. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The arc of the moral universe bends toward justice." I believe that this moral arc ultimately bends because people push like Dr. Pinn pushed it. Though progress is slow and incremental, it is achieved through the tireless efforts of people like Dr. Vivian Pinn.



Zoee D'Costa is a second-year medical student at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. She graduated from Cornell University in 2018 as a Biology & Society Major with a minor in Psychology. In her free time, she actively works on promoting health equity for LGBTQIA+, POC, and Women's groups, staying active in the outdoors, and spending time with her friends and family.

What Constitutes a Good Doctor?
by Tamkeen Farmuz

What constitutes a good doctor? Is it knowing the ins and outs of textbook knowledge comprised of pathology, physiology pharmacology, and more? Is it possessing and applying the clinical skills required to resuscitate a patient in cardiac arrest. Or is it consoling families about their sick loved ones and giving comfort to patients in their last hour? The answer is all the above and more. Dr. Vivian Winona Pinn has embodied the entirety of what medicine requires a contributed even more. As a future doctor myself, studying internationally, Dr. Vivian Pinn's personal and professional life has deeply impacted my own life. It has encouraged me to face adversity head-on as a means for character building.

Dr. Pinn is an exemplary model of what it takes not only to be a good doctor, but also an inspiring individual who possesses the rigor, sincerity, and an unwavering refusal to accept failure. She demonstrates what it is to actively contribute to the health and wellness of society as a whole through her education, career, and personal life.

As an African-American woman in the United States of America in the 1960s, none of the odds were in her favor; and yet, she beat them all. Graduating as the only woman and the only African-American at the Virginia School of Medicine in 1963, she successfully set a precedent that showed that any barriers society ruthlessly forces upon you are meant to be eliminated — not succumbed to. In a time where an African American female doctor was unheard of, she did not stop there. In 1991, she became a full-time director at the Office of Women's Health at The National Institute of Health advocating for women's health and leading women-centered programs and funding research. Consequently, Dr. Pinn initiated the first crack in the perpetual glass ceiling for all People of Color (POC) and women to come after her.

Being a family-oriented person myself, Dr. Pinn's care for her ailing mother at a young age was an inspiring feat on its own. Bringing her own professional life to a halt, it highlighted her strong family ties and priorities. Her mother was misdiagnosed with arthritis from what was a metastatic bone cancer. Dr. Pinn's ambition to become a doctor only strengthened and in her own words states, "I wanted to be the kind of physician who paid attention to my patients, and didn't dismiss my patient's complaints…" I myself chose to become a physician because I recognize how important health is and more importantly, women's health.

Much like Dr. Pinn, I was in my 3rd year of medical school, at the age of 21, when my mother was diagnosed with a serious illness. Following the diagnosis, my once simple routine of classes and studying switched to a grueling schedule of university classes in the morning, doctor appointments in the afternoon, and attending to my mother's care in between. Finding spare time to study became increasingly difficult, but it eventually solidified my purpose in medicine. In the year I helped my mother regain her health, I knew then, more than ever, that my personal ambitions lie in highlighting often neglected, women's health issues. Now, in my final year of medical school, a research intern at Women's Health Institute at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, my goals are to contribute and bring awareness to women's health and provide wellness for people of all races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Dr. Pinn's journey holds testament that every adversity and struggle is a learning opportunity and means to further improve upon the lives of others.

An understood and unspoken mindset amongst immigrant families like my own, is that the American Dream will not be attainable for my parents. However, they will break their backs in pursuit of it for their children. Growing up in a predominantly white suburb of New Jersey, my skin color never fit in, my food smelled different, and my culture and religion were against the norm. Growing up where I did not feel welcome made me feel my dreams and opportunities for growth were limited. In the year 2020, in stark contrast to 1950-1960s — women of all races, religions, and backgrounds have made active strides in breaking the glass ceiling and paving ways for women like me, to be ambitious, to go to medical school, and to dream bigger.

Because of Dr. Vivian Winona Pinn's personal contribution to the medical field, it has been made possible for not only me but also for many more like me. Through her research and leadership roles, Dr. Pinn has been able to represent women, give other women a platform, reduce gender-related health disparities, and bring attention to women's health issues. Going further, I too, much like Dr. Pinn, strive to be an inspiration, uplift all the women around me, and make my own contributions to women's health and wellness.



Tamkeen Farmuz is an M5 studying at Dow International Medical College in Karachi, Pakistan. She is native to Toronto, Canada, and is eager to continue her medical career in the OBGYN specialty in the States after graduation in July 2021. She is a member of Dow International Patient Care Association (DIPCA) at her medical college -- an initiative that provides medicine and treatment to underprivileged patients. In her free time, she enjoys reading poetry, swimming, and volunteering at the local orphanage.

Dr. Pinn – A Pioneer who Transformed Women's Health

by Afsara Mannan

Dr. Vivian Pinn has not only been a pioneer in the field of pathology, but she also has transformed women's health and women's leadership in an everlasting way. Through advocacy, mentorship, and empathy, she continues to highlight women's health issues and concerns. Her life experience, including personal struggles and challenges she continues to see in women's healthcare, are still applicable to all generations of women. Initially, Dr. Pinn's childhood helped shape her interest to pursue medicine from an early age. Watching doctors take care of her sick grandparents invoked both curiosity and a passion to help others alleviate their pain. Likewise, her mother was diagnosed with bone cancer, causing her to stay home and take care of her full time before she continued on with medical school which furthered her commitment to medicine. However, this did not come without more challenges; the city school she attended was segregated and there were few or no female physician mentors. In fact, Dr. Pinn was the only African American and the only woman in her class when she attended medical school at the University of Virginia. This did not stop her from excelling in her studies and continuing to attain leadership positions such as the assistant dean of student affairs in addition to being a teaching fellow at Tufts University, Howard University, and Harvard University. Her interests in pediatric and pathology research eventually led her to be appointed as the first full-time director at the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health.

Furthermore, Dr. Pinn has addressed many gaps in women's leadership roles and argues that issues in women's health should be a scientifically directed effort rather than a dismissive area. Comprehensive knowledge is the key to solving underlying problems. In order to address the leadership gap, Dr. Pinn had led various initiatives such as developing a re-entry plan to help both male and female scientists to return to their fields after taking care of family responsibilities. Her efforts ultimately helped to increase career opportunities for both men and women. Dr. Pinn also advised women on the risks associated with heart disease along with necessary behavioral changes, and medication to allow them to take charge and be an advocate for their own health. This brought many positive changes to healthcare because more women were able to recognize signs of heart disease. Mentorship is extremely imperative as well; Dr. Pinn believes that both personal and professional development will be aided through mentors who can serve as good role models and encouragers for academic pursuits.

Dr. Pinn has inspired me to not only work hard through my personal academic journey but has elevated my passion to become a physician with the qualities and principles she embodies through her own work. Like Dr. Pinn, I aspire to empower women's health and find mentorship that can help me to contribute to the broader community and medical research as a whole. Oftentimes, I find that being the only woman in my research lab can be daunting, but like her, I will not let that stand in the way of my passion to create a positive impact and learn more about my field of interest. Moreover, her dedication to teaching and emphasis on building connections is inspiring to me. Overall, Dr. Vivian Pinn's knowledge and experience have contributed numerous advancements to women's health, especially by placing importance on developing programs that allow women to balance both career and personal responsibilities.



Afsara Mannan is a senior at Rutgers University pursuing a major in Public Health and a certificate in global health and policy. She is aiming to get a Masters in Biomedical Sciences and apply to medical school after she graduates. During her free time, she enjoys hiking on local trails and volunteering with urban design projects.

How Dr. Pinn has Inspired Me

by Tara Mason

Dr. Vivian Pinn was the first woman of color to be the Director of the Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) at the National Institutes of Health. Her unique contribution to the health world has had so many powerful impacts on women today. She has exemplified numerous roles in being a highly influential role model for younger women. Some of these roles include being a Professor & Chair of the Department of Pathology, an Associate Professor of Pathology, Assistant Dean of Affairs, a Teaching Fellow, and a significant leader in the National Institutes of Health at multiple medical schools (such as Harvard University, Howard University, and Tufts University). She is one of the most important voices for the American Medical Women's Association, because she executes her leadership efforts in implementing the inclusion of both women and minority groups. Her tremendous efforts with including women in the healthcare field has shown that anything could be possible for all women, especially when it comes to taking on leadership roles in the implementation of the healthcare world. The impact that she has shown was that women should always take a stand and follow their medical, science, and health careers no matter what obstacles we tend to face.

While being a legendary woman in today's society, Dr. Pinn has inspired, influenced, and empowered me to continue along my path in Psychology and Medicine. Observing her leadership efforts has taught me to always remain a leader embarking for positive changes in my career development. For example, watching her take action on any issue that women may face, whether that is exclusion from the healthcare world, has propelled me into pushing myself and striving beyond my limits as it is important to take every opportunity that presents itself. With her carrying so many different roles, it has given me the opportunity to never take anything for granted, whether it is anything involving my college studies, on the home front, and/or financial world. She has influenced me to always work hard in and out of school, because I have so much to offer to this world and it is time for me to teach people what they are capable of and to inspire them.

Most importantly, she was one of the most influential women to inspire me to use my voice more when it comes to presenting myself instead of remaining quiet inside of my shell. She has inspired me to focus on my strengths as a young woman and to channel my powerful gifts in sharing with the health community, due to advocating for all women; women of color; and in introducing more therapeutic and holistic healing approaches for us women to heal the world.

References:https://www.amwa-doc.org/faces/vivian-w-pinn-md/



Tara Mason is a sophomore at Rider University, majoring in Psychology with a minor in Spanish (on the Pre-med track) and plans to graduate in May 2023. After she graduates, she plans to further her education in Psychology by attending medical school. Outside of her academics, she enjoys doing meditation/yoga therapy, singing, drawing, dancing, and spending her leisure time with family and friends." Interests: Cultivating more holistic medicine approaches in healing + treating people with many disorders and in combating their traumatic lifestyles (more specifically in women and in children)

Dr. Pinn's Advancement of Women

by Patricia Moscicki

Dr. Vivian Pinn is an example of a woman who hurdled through barriers. As a female medical student, I am inspired by her story. Her biography is a sketch of how determination and resilience can be used with grace to reach the highest levels of professional fulfillment.

I find Dr. Pinn's list of professional appointments and the significance associated with them incredibly motivating. To be the first in a field is a challenge because of the lack of mentors and the presence of institutional barriers that discourage women. It is clear that Dr. Pinn was not afraid of being the first; and moreover, served as a mentor and example for those to follow. I do not doubt that Dr. Pinn met people who thought she was incapable, and while it is easy to say to ignore these people, in actuality, it is quite difficult not to internalize these thoughts. In medical school, we often speak about "imposter syndrome." This refers to the internal beliefs that we made it here by mistake and that we are not good enough to be in medical school or be physicians. Imposter syndrome is one thing when it is just internal, but another thing when corroborated by external rhetoric. I cannot say how Dr. Pinn combated such dialogues; however, her journey demonstrates what can be accomplished when we challenge historical structures. Dr. Pinn's accomplishments are a sentiment to her perseverance and resilience, despite societal factors.

Not only does Dr. Pinn's professional journey reach new horizons, but also her academic and policy interests abolish the limited understanding of women's health. Dr. Pinn's advocacy for women's health spans beyond the reproductive organs to encompass the whole body and other societal factors. At the beginning of her career, this was a novel idea. However, under her guidance, it has grown and prospered to new initiatives. No matter the specialty of medicine that I decide to pursue, I will hold Dr. Pinn's vision of a holistic understanding of women's health.

This is a conversation to be had not only with patients but also with fellow providers to further the idea of what women's health means. In reflection, Dr. Pinn's biography invigorates me to be brave when pursuing professional fulfillment while her advocacy challenges me to be a better health care provider.



Patricia Moscicki is a third-year medical student at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. She graduated from Colgate University in 2018 as a cellular neuroscience major with a minor in religious studies. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends and getting fresh air by running.

Dr. Pinn: A Template for Success Despite Obstacles by Smriti Nair

Women of color often pave their own path to success, having to rise above the systemic inequalities that they are faced with from the moment they attempt to steer their own life course. Dr. Vivian Pinn is a woman who unapologetically broke the mold of her time, to become not only the first woman of color to chair an academic pathology department but also to become a leading pioneer in women's health issues.

As a first-generation medical student, I resonated with several elements of Dr. Pinn's story. While I grew up wanting to be a doctor, I didn't know many doctors that shared my skin tone, my ethnicity, or a similar background. Dr. Pinn's story was even more striking is the fact that she didn't know a single doctor of her race or gender, and yet she never let this get in the way of her dream to become a doctor. The most appealing part of being a doctor is to have the privilege of being a part of an individual's journey towards better health. This is a value that Dr. Pinn emphasizes, and one that I often remind myself of when the journey seems overwhelming. What is most inspiring about Dr. Pinn is the versatility that her career showcases. Dr. Pinn has made strides in research and academic medicine, attends to her patients with care and patience, and also has been able to teach the next generation of doctors at the prestigious institutions of Harvard Medical School and Tufts University School of Medicine. Over the years, Dr. Pinn has accumulated numerous honors and awards that have served as a testament to her dedication to medicine. From reading about Dr. Pinn, I've realized that I would also like to have a multifaceted career that integrates patient care, public health, and academic medicine.

Dr. Vivian Pinn is a figure who embraces the values of autonomy, individuality, and unbridled ambition, urging others to not "let difficulties make you small, a complaining spectator of life—but rather let a vision for your own life make you great, a vital participant of life". Unfortunately, women are too often predisposed to the default view of being spectators in their own lives. They are given opinions on what careers are most conducive to motherhood, what kind of appearance will best relay good character, and are taught that femininity is equated with being passive responders to patriarchal social standards. The result of these pressures is the overwhelming underrepresentation of women in the STEM field, especially in positions of leadership. Dr. Pinn encourages young women to challenge this statistic, and to pursue careers in STEM and research, using one's difficulties to shape and fuel ambition.

Dr. Vivian Pinn's advances for women come not only in her encouragement of women entering the STEM field but also in regards to women's health. Dr. Pinn is part of the current movement that rejects the traditional "bikini" model of women's health, which fails to acknowledge health disparities faced by women that are not related to reproductive or breast-related illnesses. Her work emphasizes the need for a discipline-wide focus on holistic women's health that considers the impact of gender on chronic illness, and why such gender-based disparities exist. Her advances in this area will undeniably serve as the foundation for new research studies, better diagnostic practices, and heightened clinician awareness. As a future medical practitioner, advances in this field would allow me to provide better care to my patients by better understanding the contributing factors to chronic illness.

In the accomplishments of women who look like us, sound like us, and have faced struggles similar to ours, we find an understanding of our own potential. By idolizing the pioneers of the fields we hope to join, we seek to understand how we can accomplish and become all that they are. Women like Dr. Pinn, who establish unprecedented female leadership in notoriously under-represented institutions, pave the way for an entire generation of women who will follow in the footsteps of our pioneers to advance our entire demographic.



Smriti Nair is a first-year medical student at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. She received her bachelor's degree in biology at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, and enjoys reading, playing tennis, and playing the guitar in her free time.

Dr. Pinn, a Modern-Day Inspiration

by Catherine Nyajure

Dr. Vivian Pinn is an African American woman trained as a pathologist with a focus on diagnostic and therapeutic services. Dr. Pinn has many, many years of experience.
Despite the difference in time from when she started her career until now, Dr. Pinn's life and work experience shed light on some of the social issues present during her time that still exist today. The most significant point of influence from Dr. Pinn's life and career is the fact that she managed to succeed even though others like her, women and African Americans, did not do the same.

For instance, Dr. Pinn was the sole woman and African American student in her class to graduate from her institution. I am touched by her drive to always want to be a doctor from childhood and her tenacity to work towards attaining the same. I think that there is much to learn from her as a person as well as a doctor. Dr. Pinn seems to have been focused on attaining her set goals. She also seems to have been a person intent on thriving despite being in a challenging situation.

Professionally, I admire her achievements through the years. I think she managed to make a mark in the medical industry. She set the pace for other African American women with dreams of doing great things in the medical field. One of her inspiring professional achievements is the fact that she was the initial African American woman to act as chairperson of an academic pathology department, at Howard University College of Medicine.

It is obvious that Dr. Pinn was a woman driven by much more than just academic excellence. I think that all STEM women regardless of race can use their life and professional experience as a stepping stone to gain inspiration to achieve great strides in the medical field.



Catherine Nyajure is an honors student at Rutgers University pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health and has maintained a place on the Dean's list her whole college career. She chose her major due to her passion for improving community health outcomes through prevention programs. Currently, she is an intern at the Women's Health Institute of the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School where she is conducting research on the role of music in healing victims of sexual assault. She is actively involved in volunteerism and has raised money for various organizations in Kenya such as, Homabay Orphanage which educates and houses children whose parents have died as a result of HIV/AIDS and Fountain of Hope which provides an annual supply of sanitary towels to girls from low-income families, so that they can attend school uninterrupted. After her graduation in January 2020, she would like to work in the field of public health for a local or international organization and eventually pursue a graduate degree in global health or Epidemiology.

Dr. Pinn–Breaking Boundaries in Medicine

by Krishna Patel

Taking a look back at the history of Medicine and Healthcare, I am astonished by the progress that many individuals have been able to make over the years. One such individual Is Dr. Vivian Pinn. Dr. Pinn has pushed the boundaries of Women's Health and has inspired many people, especially women, to pursue a career in medicine.

Born in Virginia in 1941, Dr. Pinn faced many obstacles involving gender and race throughout her life; however, she did not let this stop her from fulfilling her dream of becoming a doctor. In 1967, Dr. Pinn graduated from the University of Virginia Medical School as the only African American and the only woman in her class. Her achievements did not stop there. In 1982, she was the first African American woman to chair an academic pathology department at Howard University. And in 1991, she was the first director of Research on Women's Health at NIH.

Dr. Pinn's accomplishments speak for themselves. Fighting through racial and gender adversities, she showed the world that anything is possible. What is truly inspiring about Dr. Pinn is the resilience and strength that she has shown to achieve those accomplishments. During her sophomore year in college, Dr. Pinn had lost her mother due to an undiagnosed cancerous bone tumor. It was at this point where she stated that she wanted to be a doctor "who paid attention to patients and didn't dismiss their complaints." It is this mindset and ideology that motivates me to pursue a career in medicine. I too believe that the most important thing a doctor can do is listen to a patient and understand their problems. It is important not to judge a person based on their race, gender, identity, etc. As Dr. Pinn reminds us, heart disease is the leading cause of death not only in men but also in women. And as a result, it is important to continue to research and educate women on the prevention of heart disease too.

Overall, Dr. Pinn has dramatically impacted medicine for the better. Through her personal struggles and her accomplishments, she has shown us that medicine and health is not limited by things such as gender and race.



Krishna Patel is a recent graduate of Rutgers University with a B.A. in Biology and a minor in Health and Society. As an undergrad, he partook in research at the Cancer Institute of NJ, studying the role of p53 in tumor development. He is currently working as a medical scribe and is applying to medical school with hopes to specialize in surgery.

Dr. Pinn– Learning about a Health Care Hero

by Evan Perkiss

Until recently, I had never heard of Dr. Vivian Pinn. However, having learned about her experiences and achievements, I am now in awe of her. Growing up in Lynchburg, Virginia, during the 1940s, Dr. Pinn wanted to be a doctor since she was four years old. At that time, the vast majority of the doctors she knew were men (NLM, 2003). Although society most likely considered it impossible for an African American woman to become a doctor, Dr. Pinn's family pushed her to study hard to achieve her dream.

In 1967, Dr. Pinn was the only African American and only woman in her class to graduate from the University of Virginia School of Medicine. In 1982, she chaired the department of pathology at Howard University College of Medicine, becoming the first African American woman to chair an academic pathology department in the United States.

Following this, Dr. Pinn became the first full-time director of the National Institutes of Health's Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH). According to her, the biggest obstacle that she, her staff, and her colleagues faced was demonstrating that "pursuing issues of women's health is a scientifically directed effort. And not something that should be held with disdain, but something to be applauded" (NLM, 2003).

Dr. Pinn's accomplishments inspire me to overcome personal barriers. As someone on the Autism Spectrum, I have faced many obstacles. In May, I will be getting a Bachelor of Science in Public Health, which some people thought was impossible for me.

Hearing about Dr. Pinn makes me more determined to succeed and helps demonstrate that people should not be restricted by gender, race, sexual orientation, identity, or disability.

Reference: National Library of Medicine. (2003, October 14). Changing the Face of Medicine | Vivian W. Pinn. Cfmedicine.
https://cfmedicine.nlm.nih.gov/physicians/biography_254.html



Evan Perkiss expects to complete his BSPH with a concentration in health promotion and education through Kent State University in May 2021. His academic interests include public health issues related to health disparities. In his spare time, Evan enjoys reading, playing board games, traveling, and ice skating.

Dr. Pinn: Reframing American History
by Ashley Vincent

The August 16, 2019 issue of The New York Times Magazine inaugurated its '1619 Project,' a major initiative (from The New York Times) with the stated goal "to reframe American History by considering what it would mean to regard 1619 as our nation's birth year." The year, 1619, when a ship arrived in the British colony of Virginia, carrying a cargo of 20 to 30 enslaved Africans. And,1619, the era of chattel enslavement. For such an enterprise to 'make it' the participation of black Americans was a sine qua non, of those who bear the consequences of slavery. In addition to essays on different aspects of contemporary American life, the issuecontains literary works, some deeply impassioned, that highlight a key moment of African American history. I must confess that I am disappointed that the name of Dr. Vivian Pinn does not appear on the list of the contributors, although two of them each penned an article on health care deficit when it comes to treatment of minorities and blacks in particular.

In any case, who is Dr. Vivian W. Pinn? A preeminent physician, researcher, educator, author of several articles in peer-reviewed journals, administrator combined, and, lest we forget, a committed feminist well ahead of her time, as if to belie the old dictum, that we are all bound by the mood and temper of our time. Well, as they say, the exception confirms the general rule. Dr. Pinn at times felt her race, especially in college, but as Zora Neale Hurston said almost exuberantly in her essay "How It Feels to Be Colored Me," she had "no separate feeling about being an American citizen and colored. I am merely a fragment of the Great Soul that surges within the boundaries. My country, right or wrong." She felt like a black woman with a mission.

Think of a coincidence if you will, Dr. Pinn was born in Halifax, Virginia, would you believe? Yes, the then English colony, which was destined to receive the first cargo of African slaves. From an early age, she encountered suffering in family members and developed a sustained desire to be a doctor, something in the '40s that was tantamount to a fanciful, chimerical dream. But, against all odds, she became one, and a successful one. To quote again Hurston, from now on, "the world to be one and nothing to be lost." Dr. Pinn is an amalgam of multiple talents. She is a woman with an intellectual, professional, and social conscience, with an uninterrupted mission, boundless empathy, endless efforts, to care for the underprivileged, to encourage young black women to dare to emulate pioneers like her, and enter perhaps the noblest of professions—medicine, to serve the community, more urgently than before, with the pandemic-related plethora of anguish and sorrow. Now in the twilight of her life, Dr. Pinn remains committed to service, as much as possible, to social justice, to help develop strategies for addressing social determinants of health and increase equity across communities. She remains a source of inspiration for all, notably for us, female African American aspirant physicians.

In closing this short essay, much too short, given the richness of Dr. Pinn's contribution to the advancement of medicine, and, we should not shy away from saying to the advancement of people of color and the building of a better world, I would like to borrow an observation from the famous essayist F. Scott Fitzgerald, which seems most appropriate to recapitulate the multiple talents of this extraordinary woman. "The test of first-rate intelligence," writes the author of The Crack-Up "is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function. One should, for example, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet determined to make them otherwise." This attitude, this conviction, this philosophy permeates Dr. Pinn's entire life, from early childhood until now. Dr. Pinn's invaluable teaching is that life is something you dominate if you are any good, an a Prmation of Fitzgerald's aphorism, that life easily yields to "intelligence and effort, or to what proportion could be mustered of both."



Ashley Vincent is a third-year student and researcher at the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) in Piscataway, New Jersey. She studied physician perspectives on HPV vaccinations in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health in New Brunswick, NJ. Ashley currently serves as the Region IX Parliamentarian of the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) and is a committee member within the New Jersey State Society of Anesthesiologists (NJSSA). She hopes to pursue training in clinical anesthesia after completing her medical degree at RWJMS in 2022.



Introduction and Overview to Ruth Bader Ginsburg

by Jeana Wirtenberg, Ph.D.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a brilliant, remarkable woman with an indomitable spirit, and exceptional character and leadership traits we all can strive to emulate. She was a trailblazer who dedicated her life to the quest for human rights and gender equality, and through her work, all people are the better for it. Ginsburg's legislative accomplishments showed that what is good for women is demonstrably also good for men. We owe her the highest debt of gratitude for her enduring commitment to the nation's highest ideals, and are humbled to have this opportunity to pay tribute to her life and her work in this journal.

Ginsburg argued six gender discrimination cases before the Supreme Court, winning five, and she was very strategic about how she went about it. Instead of trying to end gender discrimination all at once, she focused on specific discriminatory statutes and built on each successive victory. Further demonstrating her strategic approach as well as her pragmatism, she sometimes selected male plaintiffs to show that gender discrimination is equally harmful to both men and women. Even her word choice of "gender" instead of "sex" was strategic. One example that we all benefit from today is in 1971 when the Supreme Court extended the protections of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to women.

Ginsburg was also well known for her searing dissents such as in Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. (2007) where her dissenting opinion has been credited with inspiring the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which was subsequently signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2009.

RBG also had a quick wit and sense of humor. When she was asked when there will be enough women on the Supreme Court, she famously replied, "When there are nine."

There is no doubt that the career opportunities women and girls have today are huge compared with what they would have been were it not for Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Yes, women now lead companies, governments, hospitals, Universities, and courtrooms. Yet, while the tide may be turning for women, there is still quite a ways to go. Only 11% of heads of state and 7% of CEOs in the Fortune 500 are women. Women still earn $.81 cents for every dollar earned by men, with women of color earning even less. To address these challenges, the Rutgers Business School's Center for Women in Business advocates and supports enhanced workplace practices in businesses and organizations designed to empower women to succeed as business leaders.

The Center identified some interesting and hopeful signs based on recent research regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the roles of men and women. Since COVID-19 the Center noted an increase in men's contribution to parenting and caring labor in the home, accompanied by a concomitant weakening of traditional stereotypical gender-based norms and expectations. The increase in men's unpaid work within the home may accelerate progress toward gender equity. Research conducted by the Center suggests it may have already enhanced productivity and satisfaction for working mothers. Moreover, more women than ever before are primary breadwinners and the number of women who out-earn their husbands continues to rise. Many signs point to emerging from this pandemic with less distinct gender norms that may neutralize the stigma of the mommy track, making retention and promotion in the workforce easier for women.

In the pages that follow, we have fourteen heartfelt and inspiring essays by a diverse group of women and men, sharing their thought-provoking viewpoints. We invite you to peruse these pieces and use them as an opportunity to reflect for yourself about the life and commitment of this extraordinary woman we were blessed to have experienced in our lifetime. What can we learn from her? How can we all dedicate ourselves to being our better selves in service of the generations of women and men to come?

Supreme Court Justice

Ruth Bader Ginsburg(RBG)

Ruth Bader Ginsburg paved the way for many generations of women in the workforce and their careers. RBG became the second female justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Of note, she had her first professional position here at Rutgers University after her graduation from Columbia Law School. She was a faculty member at the Rutgers University Law School before moving to New York City and taking a position at Columbia University, where she became its first female tenured professor. She served as the director of the Women's Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union during the 1970s and was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in 1980. Named to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1993 by President Bill Clinton, she continued to argue for gender equality in such cases as UnitedStates v. Virginia.

The essays that follow are in response to the prompt: "What would you have asked Ruth Bader Ginsburg if you had the opportunity to have coffee with her—and what do you think her response would be?"



RBG – Champion for Women's Rights

By Dwayla M. Carty

"Each time a woman stands up for herself, without knowing it possibly, without claiming it, she stands up for all women." Maya Angelou

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg spent most of her career fighting for equal rights for women, that we should be equal to men and that the law should do the same. If I was given the chance to have had coffee with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I would have asked her, has the Women's Rights movement changed from when it first came about until now? If so, how? And do you agree with the change; and, to what extent do you think we have achieved equality of the sexes?

I believe Justice Ginsburg's response would be, yes, there has been a huge change from when she was fighting until now. For example, there are more women taking on leading roles than there were years ago; women in Government, we have become Corporate leaders, doctors, lawyers etc. Justice Ginsburg might say again although we have come a long way with women being equal to men, she may say that both sexes should be paid the same for doing the same work. For example, Doctors, if they both perform the same procedure on their patients; their techniques may be different, but the outcome is still the same; then their pay should be equivalent to each other! However, Justice Ginsburg would say there is still more work to be done. I also believe Justice Ginsburg would say she is proud of the women who followed her example as well as other powerful women who have come before us, to continue the fight for women's rights!

"There is no limit to what we as Women can accomplish." Former First Lady Michelle Obama



Dwayla M. Carty is currently taking a gap year off from school but will be returning in the fall to finish her undergrad as a bio/pre-med student to become a doctor (Pediatric Neurosurgeon or Pediatric Psychiatrist. She had attended Middlesex County College where she was able to be a part of the Empower program, where she and other students mentored middle school as well as high school students with their homework and helped them stay on track so that they were able to graduate. Also, at MCC, she joined the Bonner program where she helped serve our community by collecting coats and canned foods for people in need, as well as serving meals at Elijah's Promise in New Brunswick. She also had the great honor of helping build a home for a family in need through the Habitat for Humanity / Middlesex County College. Lastly, she was a mentor for the M.O.B (Minding Our Business), a non-profit organization designed to meet community needs by advancing the personal and vocational development of urban youth through entrepreneurship, education, and coaching/mentoring.

RBG– Inspiration and Courage for Justice

by Rachel Christensen

E. B. White once stated, “I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.” To recognize the problems in society that need changing it is necessary to evaluate the flaws of the world around us. For many individuals desiring to make a positive impact in the world, focusing on these flaws and other barriers can be demoralizing and derail progress.

If given the opportunity to have coffee with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I would ask her how she maintained the inspiration and courage to continue striving for justice in the face of a seemingly resistant and deep-rooted system. If I were to imagine Justice Ginsburg’s response, I believe she would first question whether improvement and enjoyment of the world are mutually exclusive. To contribute to a movement bigger than oneself can instill an immense sense of purpose, pride, and inspiration within an individual. To make meaningful and long-lasting change that betters the lives of others can be incredibly rewarding. In this way, improving the world can be both selfish and selfless. Identifying work that simultaneously improves the world and provides personal enjoyment plays a central role in sustaining inspiration and motivation.

Second, I believe Justice Ginsburg would encourage individuals to identify the unique skills and characteristics they possess and to employ those strengths to implement change. Feeling as though the perspectives and abilities a person has to offer are valued and essential to a team can make working towards progress feel more meaningful and prevent feelings of discouragement.

Finally, I anticipate Justice Ginsburg would advise young advocates to become educated on the history of the movement and the monumental progress that has been made since its beginning. To see the distance already traveled may put current obstacles in a different, less daunting perspective. The extraordinary individuals who previously dedicated their lives to achieving this progress should spark inspiration in those currently aiming to do the same. Since the start of her career, Justice Ginsburg’s actions, words, and spirit have acted as a driving force for aspiring leaders and advocates throughout the world. Undoubtedly, her legacy will continue to do so for generations to come



Rachel Christensen is a third-year medical student at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. After completing her BS in neuroscience in 2015, she spent three years working with the Pediatric Mood, Imaging, & Neurodevelopment lab as a research assistant studying the biological markers of pediatric psychopathologies. Her primary interests include child and adolescent psychiatry, dermatology, and women's health, which she is looking forward to integrating into her career as a physician.

RBG– An Enlightening Latte by Tamkeen Farmuz

Ruth Bader Ginsburg. A name that has been cemented into American history, politics, and government for many years to come. Not just a name, a woman who fearlessly trekked her way to the Supreme Court of Justice fighting for women's equality. Ginsburg, standing shoulder to shoulder surrounded by the same men who were afraid to see her succeed. She unabashedly took up space in a male-dominated room and gave marginalized members of society a voice — a chance to be seen, a chance to be heard.

If I could have a cup of coffee with Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I would ask what advice she has to offer to the ambitious, young women of upcoming generations who much like her, seek to advocate and bring awareness to gender and race-related disparities. How I imagine Justice Ginsburg would answer this is with two of her notable quotes.

In a speech to Stanford students, she said, "If you want to be a true professional, you will do something outside yourself, something to repair tears in your community, something to make life a little better for people less fortunate than you." Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a living example of advocacy to the maximum extent. She used her education and status to elevate not just her life, but the lives of women all across The States. I would like to think she would articulate how imperative it is to use the privilege of your education, degree, skill set, and occupation to further uplift people around you who have been, in contrast, denied that privilege. With her poignant roles in advocacy, I believe she would stress upon the social responsibility that upcoming generations have to help marginalized communities— hear and understand them, and use knowledge, position, and power to advocate accordingly.

Further, I think she would remind the fast-paced generations of today that, "Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time." For upcoming generations who want to lead onto a path of advocacy and reform, I believe Justice Ginsburg would advise them to be patient. In a time where information is a tap away, it is that much more essential to steady yourself and consequently remind yourself that social justice and change has been in the works for over a hundred years, and continuing forward, there will always be more work to do. So, with that, comes the understanding that valuable change will be brought upon by being persistent, steady, and most of all patient.

This is not the only question I would have for Justice Ginsburg, but I guess I will have to save those for another coffee date…



Tamkeen Farmuz is an M5 studying at Dow International Medical College in Karachi, Pakistan. She is native to Toronto, Canada, and is eager to continue her medical career in the OBGYN specialty in the States after graduation in July 2021. She is a member of Dow International Patient Care Association (DIPCA) at her medical college -- an initiative that provides medicine and treatment to underprivileged patients. In her free time, she enjoys reading poetry, swimming, and volunteering at the local orphanage.

RBG– What do you call female Judge?

by Evyatar Kanik

"What do you call a female Judge?"

After being stared at blankly by someone who has much better things to do than sit and talk with me, I'd answer with the punchline, "Your Honor." The late Justice Ginsburg's may or may not have appreciated the humor, and no doubt had already dealt with too many men with bad jokes seeking applause. In my defense, though, the point is that the 'joke' and its punchline are nonsensical today. Through the significant efforts of leading physicians, scientists, and legal scholars, the glass ceiling has been broken and it isn't surprising to see women in high profile jobs anymore.

Speaking with the "Notorious RBG" would be an incredible honor, and getting a laugh out of her would be a bonus. Yet having coffee with an esteemed fellow member of the tribe would be wasted without understanding how the culture of her faith affected her career. The judge had been essential in legally defending minority rights and curbing workplace discrimination. Understanding how the law affects the unprivileged often put her in the minority opinion. In the face of adversity, having that special empathy with others rightfully makes her a hero. As to why, she'd likely say that standing with the disadvantaged is a Jewish ideal. In the Mishna, a seminal book of Jewish writing, Hillel famously states, "Wherever there are no people, strive to be a person," speaking to this exact principle of standing for justice in spaces without representation.

Both RBG and Dr. Vivian Pinn changed the game for minorities in professional fields. Jewish and African American women have had the trail blazed for them through the efforts of these women, and even in my brief experience, I see how things have shifted. It's evident in my undergrad studies, where more than half of the students in my pre-med courses are women, my work, where in recent years there has been an influx of dangerously competent women EMTs, and in my community, where Orthodox Jewish women wearing head coverings and skirts go to grad school to become lawyers, doctors and scientists. Beyond just changing the demographics of health care providers, the progress inspired by RBG and Dr. Pinn can be seen in action as well. EMTs are educated to respect the communities they serve, and the importance of privacy and accommodation for those in the health care field is rightfully managed.

Unfortunately, my lame joke isn't extinct yet. But, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Dr. Pinn have shown that while easier said than done, with nothing but determination and some chutzpa, doors will open and the world can change.



Evyatar Kanik is a rabbinical student and junior at Rutgers University studying Biotechnology and pre-medicine. He volunteers as an EMT and has worked with COVID CARE FORCE during the pandemic.

RBG– An Icon

by Jaineel Kothari

From becoming the first female tenured professor at Columbia Law School (where she graduated top of her class) to becoming a voice championing women, the LBGTQ+ communities, disabled populations, and all human rights, RBG was an icon. If given the wonderful opportunity of having coffee with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I would not have a shortage of questions to ask. However, one thing I would love to know more about would be her collegiality and lifelong friendship with her ideological opposition, justice Antonin Scalia, who did not share Justice Ginsburg's views on constitutional interpretation. I find this especially important in today's hyper-partisan environment where political differences are viewed as inherent human flaws rather than topics of debate and compromise.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg fervently fought for the recognition of same-sex marriage as a constitutional right and headed the first same-sex marriage in America, a view with which Scalia disagreed. Given their significant ideological distance, Ginsburg and Scalia agreed on the lowest rate of cases between any of the justices on the bench. However, outside of the bench, the two were best friends. I believe that Justice Ginsburg would focus on her personal relationship with Scalia and indicate that their legal disagreements created a special bond. The intellectual challenge she received from her colleague, likely prompted her to strengthen the legal underpinnings of her arguments.

Despite her dissent with Scalia's school of thought, it still represented some of the ideas that Americans held. Not only did their healthy debate and deep friendship provoke stimulating conversation, but it also provided a medium through which two sides of America could have productive conversations about meaningful reform. The unlikely pair also elucidates that despite their antagonism in politics, they were able to foster a synergistic relationship through many other ways. Ginsburg and Scalia often spent New Year's together with their families, shared a love of opera, traveled the world, and even rode an elephant together in India! Their respect, admiration, and openness for one another's opinions created a relationship that extended far beyond the tribunal leading to Derrick Wang's creation of an opera as an ode to their friendship. RBG, in her supreme court appointment acceptance speech, quoted Justice Oliver Holmes and mentioned these three gentle reminders as her guiding policies: "First, intellectual honesty about the available policy choices; second, disciplined self-restraint in respecting the majority's policy choice; and third, principled commitment to the defense of individual autonomy even in the face of majority action." These are principles that can be applied to all fields of life to understand what is in the realm of possibility for change, to respect the opposition, and to make one's voice heard. Mutual respect for intelligence and progress cultivated this unusual but exemplary friendship.



Jaineel Kothari is a Chancellor's Global Healthcare Scholar and third-year medical student at Rutgers, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. He graduated from Rutgers University where he majored in Molecular Biology & Biochemistry and Psychology. He has a passion for preventative medicine in global health care and advancements in global surgery.

RBG- Paving the Pathway for Women

by Katharine Little

I know a lot of women who cried the night Ruth Bader Ginsburg died, and I bet you did too. This grief was felt across the country, and for many women, I believe, this grief was muddled with fear for their reproductive rights. When Justice Ginsburg died on September 18th, 2020, from my perspective, she left behind a nation battling an epidemic of fake news and political extremism at the same time it was battling Covid-19. I feel that the Supreme Court appeared one of the only constants, standing apart from the partisan frenzy in Washington, and RBG was maintaining a delicate ideological balance of power on the Court. It is my belief that her death provided a window of opportunity for her to be replaced with a conservative judge, Amy Barrett, and to tip the court to the right, something that I believe the President oversaw during the brief time period after she was laid to rest. Again, I believe that it is tragically ironic that Ginsburg's legacy of campaigning for women and the underprivileged is in danger of being undone by women without her vision-- women who walk through the Supreme Court doors that RBG opened and the possibility that these doors may be closed again.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg is still an inspiration to many. After graduating top of her class from Columbia Law School, she co-founded the ACLU's Women's Rights Project where she worked to strike down sexist laws by way of the courtroom. By the time she was appointed to the Supreme Court, she had already argued six cases in front of the-- five of which she won. She had a razor-sharp legal mind, and she fought for the rights of women and disenfranchised communities in landmark decisions concerning rights to access to contraceptives, rights to equal pay, abortion rights, and voting rights, though in some cases, she was often outvoted. Much like Dr. Vivian Pinn, to whom this issue is also dedicated, RBG spent her life fighting to grant women and minorities the same two rights as non-minority men: one under the law and the other in medical research. Now more than ever before, I believe we need people like these two women to fight for women: in the courts, in Congress, and at the National Institute of Health. I am extremely grateful to Justice Ginsburg and Dr. Pinn for being pioneers in their respective fields. Because they paved the way, many other women can and will follow in their footsteps and become nationally acclaimed lawyers and doctors. More importantly, from my perspective, Dr. Pinn and RBG made sure that women were spoken for in a time when the powers that be would have ignored women.



Katharine Little is an undergraduate History major and aspiring teacher at Rutgers University Honors College, New Brunswick, Class of 2022. In her free time, she enjoys indoor gardening, going on car rides, and spending time with loved ones.

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RBG– Teaching Women Inner Strength

by Tara Mason

With Ruth Bader Ginsburg being the second female Supreme Court Justice in history, she has definitely taught all women to channel their inner strength and power to communicate and push through their challenges. She has articulated a strong presence by using her voice to speak about the true importance of gender equality, gender discrimination, and the rights of workers. She had never missed a day of arguments even while undergoing chemotherapy for pancreatic cancer and after surgery for colon cancer. Ginsburg is an important role model because she teaches us people (especially women) to advocate for a fair solution, no matter how much energy is being put into that situation. She had always exemplified a strong attitude and leadership towards pushing for social change.

If I had the wonderful opportunity to be on a coffee date with Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I would ask her about her opinion on whether women are still being treated the same in the 1900s compared to the 2000s. Although there is an obvious answer to this question with how women are treated throughout the justice systems compared to men (still unequal), I would still want her to elaborate more on her deepest thoughts and feelings, and to provide examples of how her opinion is shown in the justice system today.

Also, I would ask her about other factors that affect how women are treated in the country, including factors such as discrimination and patriarchy. I feel that Ginsburg will touch upon these issues with great reasoning. Since women "seem" to be less qualified and less competent than men, patriarchy has presented strong and intelligent women as a problem, rather than as a gift in this world. It would be interesting to hear what she would say on these intense issues that women in society tend to face.

Her knowledge and wisdom will always continue to inspire me as I am learning more about her and her history with the government/court systems. It is purely amazing to view her role in the systems because she has demonstrated that she can stand her ground and be a leader in times of adversity. Just thinking about this inspires me to continue to help others, to be leadership-oriented, to get an education, to look deep within, and to break generational biases as much as possible.



Tara Mason is a sophomore at Rider University, majoring in Psychology with a minor in Spanish (on the Pre-med track) and plans to graduate in May 2023. After she graduates, she plans to further her education in Psychology by attending medical school. Outside of her academics, she enjoys doing meditating/yoga therapy, singing, drawing, dancing, and spending her leisure time with family and friends." Interest: Cultivating more holistic medicine approaches in healing + treating people with many disorders and in combating their traumatic lifestyles (more specifically in women and in children)

RBG – A Role Model for Family and Career

by Patricia Moscicki

I imagine having the privilege to sit down for coffee with Ruth Bader Ginsburg to go like this: I walk into the shop, I trip on the way to the table, I somehow knock the chair over and, of course, I spill coffee on myself or on Justice Ginsburg. In the midst of my excitement induced chaos, I am able to ask a question. As a young female who is currently a third-year medical student hurdling closer towards the ledge where I must pick what specialty I want to pursue, I would have to ask Justice Ginsburg about how to pursue a successful career and still be satisfied in other parts of life like family. For a young woman, the two ideas seem to be incompatible with a career-threatening family and family threatening career. From the glimpses the public got into her personal life, it seems as though RBG was fulfilled in both.

From reading some of RBG's past interviews, I think RBG would answer by first firmly affirming that we can, and should, have both. RBG's personal life fueled her professional life, while her professional life stimulated her personal life. Her descriptions of her marriage emphasized how partners rise together with her husband being her biggest advocate and her biggest critic citing that she would not have made it to the court without him. She famously said, "I attended class and studied diligently until 4 in the afternoon; the next hours were Jane's time... AfterJane's bedtime, I returned to the law books with renewed will. Each part of my life provided respite from the other and gave me a sense of proportion that classmates trained only on law studies lacked."

I think RBG would emphasize boundaries but not necessarily balance as balance means that two things are keeping each other level but neither are at maximum. I believe that RBG would say to pick the people that we surround ourselves with wisely and to not be afraid to leave people that do not work with our goals. Start small and prove to others around you that you can do it—even if that means your first law job is in Sweden. Most likely, she would also state that it is ridiculous that this conversation is thought to be a concern only for women.

A fierce advocate for equal rights, RBG would hold that men should want this same principle. Justice Ginsburg stands as an astounding example for both men and women of how to reach the highest level of self-fulfillment.



Patricia Moscicki is a third-year medical student at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. She graduated from Colgate University in 2018 as a cellular neuroscience major with a minor in religious studies. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends and getting fresh air by running.

RBG – Equality for All Individuals

by Catherine Nyajure

Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a US Supreme Court justice, national treasure, feminist icon, and history-making jurist. She was the second woman to have a seat as a judge on the nation's highest court. Ruth Bader Ginsburg faced sexism throughout her career, but that did not weigh her down. She was great at what she did and vouched for equality and fought against gender discrimination. Ruth Bader Ginsburg defended her thoughts that no law or policy should deny women equal opportunity to aspire, participate, archive, and contribute to society based on their talents and capacities. This essay is about the million-dollar question I would ask Ruth Bader Ginsburg if I met her.

If I had an opportunity to be on a coffee date with Ruth Bader Ginsburg, I would inquire on whether she thinks women should receive the same punishment/consequences as men for breaking the law. For it to be equal treatment, it should be based upon positive and impact situations. Biologically, women are smaller framed than men, limiting them in comparison to what men can physically do. I would love to see her reasoning at hand and how she would defend her argument.

I am confident that playing the victim is not an angle she would use to win her case. She would use facts to dismiss the case or develop a solution that would uphold equality in such a case scenario. If she lost on her argument, she would make it clear to everyone that it was a case that she did not have the upper hand from the beginning and that it also was justifiable.

Being among the minority in most of her life, the probability of being attacked with such contradicting factors before is high (Ellington et al., 1998). Having to oppose, discriminate, or improve an already deployed policy needs a bright, factual person. Someone good at reasoning with other people and also good at convincing. Ruth Bader Ginsburg has a lot of experience, and she is likely to be familiar with any type of question thrown her way.

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Catherine Nyajure is an honors student at Rutgers University pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health and has maintained a place on the Dean's list her whole college career. She chose her major due to her passion for improving community health outcomes through prevention programs. Currently, she is an intern at the Women's Health Institute of the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School where she is conducting research on the role of music in healing victims of sexual assault. She is actively involved in volunteerism and has raised money for various organizations in Kenya such as, Homabay Orphanage which educates and houses children whose parents have died as a result of HIV/AIDS, and Fountain of Hope which provides an annual supply of sanitary towels to girls from low-income families, so that they can attend school uninterrupted. After her graduation in January 2020, she would like to work in the field of public health for a local or international organization and eventually pursue a graduate degree in global health or Epidemiology.

RBG–Overcoming All Obstacles

by Krishna Patel

Being a Supreme Court Justice is perhaps one of the greatest accomplishments that one can achieve, and being only the second woman to do so, Ruth Bader Ginsburg is truly an extraordinary person. Born in 1933, Ginsburg began her career as a law clerk in 1959. From there, she worked her way up to Supreme Court Justice in 1993. Throughout her time in the Supreme Court, Ginsburg has impacted the country in many different ways such as launching the American Civil Liberties Union Women's Rights Project. While her accomplishments are outstanding, what really surprised me was the conditions under which she did them.

Ginsburg had undergone surgery and chemotherapy for colon cancer the same year she was appointed Supreme Court Justice. In 2009, she underwent surgery and chemotherapy for pancreatic cancer. In 2014, she had a heart procedure and stent placed in her right coronary artery. And in 2020, she passed away due to the reemergence of pancreatic cancer for which she was undergoing chemotherapy. As you can see, not only did Ginsburg face gender inequalities by being only the second woman to be appointed Supreme Court Justice, but she was also fighting a long and difficult battle with cancer. So, if I were given the opportunity to talk with Justice Ginsburg, I would ask one question: "What motivated you to keep working and not quit?"

From learning about Justice Ginsburg's life and what she worked towards; I would imagine her answer to be as follows – "I did it because I knew I could make an impact on others." She had spent most of her legal career as an advocate for gender equality and women's rights. By working hard and showing the world that she can fight through all odds, I believe she hoped to inspire many more women to strive for greatness. She wanted to show the world that gender does not limit a person from achieving their goals. She set an example for the world by working until the very end and I believe she would want us to do the same.



Krishna Patel is a recent graduate of Rutgers University with a B.A. in Biology and a minor in Health and Society. As an undergrad, he partook in research at the Cancer Institute of NJ, studying the role of p53 in tumor development. He is currently working as a medical scribe and is applying to medical school with hopes to specialize in surgery.

Letter to RBG

By Zoe Reich

Dear Ruth Bader Ginsburg,

I would love to have met you at my local coffee shop. It is a sweet little place called Scouts in my small town's main street. The place has a lovely vibe which many would call hipster. The people there would have gone into shock seeing you, in a good way. At this meeting, I would love to chat with you about your experience as an amazing Jewish woman and mother. My dad is Jewish, and as you would know Judaism is passed through the maternal line, therefore, I am not technically Jewish. However, I choose to celebrate Jewish holidays, while holding this religion in my heart. I would speak about how I adored your documentary because of how motivational it was. From there, I would share how impressed I was by your dedication and determination to be healthy after many fights with cancer. I might even express my familial history with cancer, how three of my grandparents passed away from it. At that point, my voice could shake slightly as I declared that to be my reason for wanting to go into science. You would receive me compassionately knowing the power of relationships with your grandchildren. We would move away from the basic conversation starters and end up with me asking a question dear to my heart.

How did you balance home life, mental health, passions, physical health, and work life while becoming not only the first Jewish Supreme Court Justice and the second woman Supreme Court Justice? This question is the keystone for any woman trying to live out their ambitions in a world where they almost have to make a decision between being a good mother or a good professional. You would respond with a smile on your face and tell me your story. With a nice explanation, you would elucidate how you met your husband, had your children, graduated from college and law school, and eventually become a Supreme Court Justice. You would tell me how later in your life you would frequent the gym with your personal trainer to keep physically fit and work as a Supreme Court Justice to keep mentally fit, showing your prioritization. From there, you would tell me about your grandchildren, in a happy manner, far from bragging. You may even end up showing me your collection of jabots after discussing how you were motivated by issues important to you like women's rights. With a far off look in your eyes, you would probably mention your spouse and how he balanced you, reminding me to find a person that balanced me. The last idea you would share would be about relationships with those who have opposing views to you. You would say something like "reacting in anger or annoyance will not advance anyone's ability to persuade" or "you can disagree without being disagreeable". At that you would offer to buy me a tea and I would recommend you check out the beautiful trail down the street. Enjoy this lovely day, I would say while waving goodbye.

Sincerely, Zoe



Zoe Reich is a freshman at Rutgers University pursuing a double major in English and Microbiology with a minor in Public Health. She hopes to become a physician-scientist where she could eventually work in a lab and teach. In her free time, she loves to read

RBG – Power of Books & Conversation
by Rachael Sampson

As a teenager, I waited tables at the namesake coffee shop of the small town where I grew up. It was assumed that because you grew up in that town, you'd stay in that town. But that town didn't have a hospital and I dreamed of becoming a doctor. So, I waited tables and I poured cups of coffee and I saved my money and I studied. Oh, how I studied! Ruth Bader Ginsburg once said, "*Never underestimate the power of a girl with a book*." Or in both of our cases, many, *many* books.

I learned from that coffee shop too, though. I learned how to connect with people and how to pick up on the nuances that make each one of us unique. Consider for instance, the seemingly minor detail of how one takes their coffee. Knowing what seems so trivial on the surface actually paved the way to forming some of my closest confidences in people. As a physician today I practice Obstetrics & Gynecology, one of the most intimate and personal specialties in medicine. I recall another famous quote from Justice Ginsburg: "*I would like to be remembered as someone who used whatever talent she had to do her work to the very best of her ability*."

To start off my conversation with the Justice, I would ask her: "how do you take your coffee?" Because in my experience, born out of the tiniest of coffee shops and with the biggest of dreams, the best dialogue will follow.



Dr. Rachael Sampson is board certified in Obstetrics & Gynecology. She is a graduate of the University of Connecticut and completed her medical education training at New York Medical College. Dr. Sampson is a member of the Gold Humanism Honor Society. Her passion for women's health and wellness encompasses patient care, scholarship, and community involvement.

RBG – Breaking Stereotypes
by Sameen Siddiqui

Ruth Bader Ginsburg had been a Supreme Court Justice for 27 years when she passed away in 2020. The same year, I turned 21 years old and am only starting to find my footing in a very political world. As young as I am, I have already come to understand that not all spaces were made with my comfort in mind. As a Muslim woman who wears the hijab, in most rooms, I stick out. There are many places I go where no one else looks like me, and imposter syndrome kicks in. Workplaces, classrooms, and even extracurricular clubs I was so keen to join end up making me feel discouraged and as though my peers only see me as the "Muslim girl". Trying to succeed in places where you feel like the diversity token can seem fruitless at times.

When these feelings of discouragement arise, I think of RBG and all the glass ceilings she broke. RBG graduated from Cornell University at the top of her class and went on to start her law studies at Harvard Law School, in which she was one of 8 women in a class of 500. I wonder what it must have been like for her when she sat in classes that she knew she was immensely qualified for while many of her peers just saw her as a woman and not an academic.

Even the law school's dean chastised the 8 women for taking the places of a "qualified male." When her husband took a job in New York, Ruth Bader Ginsburg ended up transferring to Columbia Law School, where again, she finished at the top of her class.

I wish I could sit with RBG and listen to her retell her stories of those days in which those around her attempted to make her feel inferior for her gender and how she found it in herself to persevere. I would like to believe that she would tell me that no one can tell you that you don't belong somewhere where you earned your place. Surely, no one can tell Ruth Bader Ginsburg that she wasn't qualified for all her positions. She continually shattered records, becoming the first female member of The Harvard Law Review, the first female tenured professor at Columbia University, and of course, famously the second-ever female appointed to be a Supreme Court Justice. RBG spoke about how at times it was hard to make people pay attention to her as a female attorney in the 1960s and 1970s.

Something inside of her knew to not give up then and I strive to have that same air of persistence within myself. So when imposter syndrome is festering about, I will remember the famous words of RBG herself; "women belong in all places where decisions are being made."



Sameen Siddiqui is a senior at Rutgers University pursuing a major in Healthcare Administration and minors in History and Psychology. She hopes to get a Masters in Health Administration and pursue a career overseas. She works as a Medical Scribe and enjoys volunteering with the Special Olympics and painting in her free time.

RBG – Opera Star making Supreme Sounds
by Diane Uniman

"What would you have asked Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG) if you had the opportunity to have coffee with her—and what do you think her response would be?"

Q: If I had a chance to ask RGB a question over a cuppa Joe, I would have asked her "If you hadn't become an attorney, what career would you have pursued?"

A: In my imagination RBG would have answered "opera singer." But there's more than an imagined alternate calling behind her caffeine-inspired answer; there's a musical metaphor. Her answer goes beyond the notes, beyond the lifestyle, beyond the passion for the art of singing itself. Her response to me goes to the heart of the power of music to connect us to our common core.

It's widely known that RBG had a passion for opera, as did her colleague on the Supreme Court, Antonin Scalia. It is also widely known that these two justices were on polar opposite sides of the coin in worldview, often in their decisions, and in so many other ways. She was the Amazon Rain Forest Journey to his Antarctic Adventure. Yet their love of opera was one of the tight sinews, one of the golden threads of shared joy that bound them together in a forever friendship. RBG knew that, experienced that, and she would have respected and liked that aspect of singing opera, that power of the art to connect the heart and bring people together that would have informed this career choice.

As an appellate attorney myself, and an opera singer myself, I am highly attuned to the power of singing to connect people from heart to heart. Like people laughing over a common joke (bonding happens!) or gazing at adorable puppy photos (bonding happens!) there's a powerful connection when together people experience the sonorous sobbing from heartache of loyal Liu in Turandot, or the grief-stricken pain of abandonment in Madama Butter y. Opera is art and art is Gorilla Glue. Opera is the supreme appellate argument for human connection.

Thus, I imagine that opera-lover RBG, understanding that our differences make us human and that art moves us to null and void the adversarial aspects of our differences, I believe RBG would have chosen to become an opera singer had she not become an attorney.
Knowing RBG, as an opera singer, she still would have reigned supreme.



Diane Uniman, aka Princess Diane von Brainisfried is a criminal appeals attorney-turned writer of screenplays and musicals which have won over 50 awards. Her book, Bonjour, Breast Cancer – I'm Still Smiling…Wit, Wisdom and Optimism for Beating the Breast Cancer Blues won the Independent Author Medal for best Non-Fiction in the Medical/Health category. She gives corporate and private-sector seminars on happiness, optimism and positivity. She sings opera for the sheer joy of it, and sang with the New Jersey State Opera Chorus.

Concluding Remarks: With Special & Heartfelt Thanks to Dr. Vivian Pinn

The Women's Health Institute, along with many other sponsoring groups and the Journal of Women's Midlife Health, was honored to have Dr. Vivian Pinn join us for a panel discussion that occurred on November 30, 2020. Dr. Pinn presented to a national audience her insights on women—the pathways that she helped pave in supporting their attaining leadership roles and in their being included in clinical trials. This journal would not be complete without recognizing this incredible presentation that Dr. Pinn provided to all attendees and to officially thank her. (The panelists and organizing committee of the Dr. Pinn event are noted in the agenda below).

Dr. Pinn is a globally recognized pioneer and leader in the medical sciences. In 1991, Dr. Pinn became the first permanent director of the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The only woman and the only woman of color in her class at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, she went on to become the first woman of color in the United States to chair an academic pathology department, at Howard University College of Medicine.

She was the visionary who led NIH efforts to include women and minorities in clinical research. She also focused on sex differences research, from cellular to translational research to the implementation of healthcare. Over the course of a long and fruitful career, she has received more than 300 awards and was the first African American to be named to Modern Healthcare's Hall of Fame.

In addition, The American Medical Association (AMA) presented Vivian W. Pinn, M.D., (who they named as a groundbreaking academic and public health official), with the Distinguished Service Award. The award honors a member of the AMA for meritorious service in the science and art of medicine And, just one week ago, she was awarded The Alma Dea Morani, MD Renaissance Woman Award. This recognizes an outstanding contemporary pioneer in the medical sciences. Recipients demonstrate professional excellence, a thirst for knowledge, and service beyond their medical practice or scientific endeavors. The major points of the panel discussion are included in a special series in the Journal of Women's Midlife Health.

In conclusion, on behalf of the entire editorial team, we hope that you have enjoyed reading the first edition of the WHI Journal. We also hope that you were inspired, and if dealing with issues detracting from your wellness, healed as well.

Gloria Bachmann, MD, MMS

Dr. Vivian Pinn: Sharing her insights on women's leadership and women's participation in clinical trials

A Panel Discussion

Panelists:

Gloria A Bachmann MD, MMS*, received her AB cum laude from Rutgers, her MMS from Rutgers Medical School and her MD from the University of Pennsylvania. She completed her Ob/Gyn training also at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Bachmann is currently at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School as a Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Director of the Women's Health Institute, the Associate Dean for Women's Health and the Medical Director of the PROUD Gender Center of NJ. She has been active in many NIH trials as an investigator, co-investigator and principal investigator, including the major study in menopausal hormonal therapy, entitled the Women's Health Initiative.*

Sherri-Ann M. Burnett-Bowie, MD, MPH*, received her AB cum laude in Biochemical Sciences at Harvard College; her MD at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine; and her MPH at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Dr. Burnett-Bowie completed primary care internal medicine residency and endocrinology fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). Dr. Burnett-Bowie is an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School (HMS) and a clinical investigator in the MGH Endocrine Unit, where she is the site principal investigator for the SWAN Study, a multi-site, 24-year longitudinal study of menopause. Promoting diversity and inclusion is her core mission and shapes her educational focus and administrative roles. Dr. Burnett-Bowie is an Associate Director of the MGH Center for Diversity and Inclusion and the Director of Multicultural Affairs for the MGH Department of Medicine.*

Sioban D. Harlow, PhD*, received her BA from University of California at Berkeley and her PhD from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health. Dr. Harlow is a Professor of Epidemiology and Global Public Health at the School of Public Health and a Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Michigan Medicine, University of Michigan. She is founding editor of the journal Women's Midlife Health. She previously served on the Scientific and Technical Advisory Group, Division of Reproductive Health Research, World Health Organization. Her research focuses on understanding patterns of menstrual function and gynecological morbidity across the lifespan, including most recently leadership in studies of the natural history of ovarian aging, development of a staging system for reproductive aging, and studies of the interface between ovarian aging and chronic disease. Internationally, she works on the impact of global trade and export production on women's health and on the health impacts of conflict-related gender based violence. She is the site principal investigator for the SWAN Study, the multi-site, multi-racial/ethnic 24-year longitudinal study of menopause.*

Organizing Committee:

Charletta Ayers, Gloria Bachmann, Joan Bennett, Dana Bigelow, Qiana Brown, Sherri-Ann M. Burnett-Bowie, Valerie Fitzhugh, Sioban D. Harlow, Juana Hutchinson-Colas, Jacqueline Litt, Kamana Misra, Patrician Whitley-Williams, Nancy Woods

Event Sponsors:

Association for Women in Sciences (AWIS) NJ Chapter, The Journal of Women's Midlife Health, Rutgers Douglass College, Rutgers Office for Promotion of Women in Science, Engineering and Mathematics, Rutgers RWJMS Office for Inclusion and Diversity, Rutgers The SURE MatCH Group at the Center for Prevention Science, Rutgers RWJMS Women's Health Institute

Editorial **Board Members' Bios**

Gloria A. Bachmann, MD, MMS

A national and internationally recognized physician who has moved health care to the next level in many areas that include women's advocacy, menopause, perinatal issues and obstetrical safety, sexual health, LGBTQ+ wellness, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives, One Health and gynecologic pain syndromes. She is Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Associate Dean for Women's Health and the Director of the Women's Health Institute at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. In addition, she is the Medical Director of the PROUD Gender Center of NJ and in this role has a focus in promoting sports activity for LGBTQ+ individuals. She also is an appointed committee member on the NJ Women's Commission on Reentry Services for those who have been imprisoned. She is a respected clinician, a valued mentor, a prolific researcher, and a sought after educator. She has a long history of being the principal and co-principal investigator on several NIH clinical trials. Data derived from her participation in multiple research trials has added extensively to the literature and to many advances in medical care. She is a graduate of Rutgers University and the Perlman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

Chris Babu

An American novelist best known for his young adult sci-fi trilogy *The Initiation*, published by Permuted Press/Simon & Schuster. He's also a regular public speaker and currently sits on the advisory boards of two financial technology startups. Prior to becoming an author, he was a mortgage-backed securities trader on Wall Street for nineteen years. In addition to the two summers spent at Yale Medical School, Chris has a B.S. in Mathematics from MIT and resides on the east end of Long Island with his wife, daughter, and Great Dane.

Allison Cabinian

A Clinical Research Coordinator at the Women's Health Institute. She graduated from Stevens Institute of Technology with BS in Chemical Biology and University of Santo Tomas- Faculty of Medicine and Surgery. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends. She is an MD who has devoted her professional life to research.

Kayo Denda

The Head of the Margery Somers Foster Center and Librarian for Women's Gender & Sexuality Studies at Rutgers New Brunswick Libraries, as well as an affiliate faculty of the Women's & Gender Studies Department. She serves as a liaison to the Institute for Women's Leadership, Institute for Research on Women, Center for Women's Global Leadership, and Douglass Residential College. Her librarianship focuses on identifying and providing digital access to unique women's collections. She coordinated the creation of the award-winning *Center for Women's Global Leadership Poster Collection*, successfully included in RUcore: Rutgers Community Repository. Her publications include the co-authored monograph *Douglass Century: Transformation of the Women's College at Rutgers University* and articles published in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, and *portal: Libraries and Academy*, among others. She is the recipient of Smithsonian Fellowship in Museum Practice at the Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access, the Career Achievement and the Significant Achievement Awards in Women's Studies Librarianship from the American Library Association, Association of College and Research Libraries and the Douglass Medal from the Associate Alumnae of Douglass College. She has an MLS and MA degrees from Rutgers University.

Juana Hutchinson-Colas, MD, MBA

An Associate Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, she is a graduate of Downstate Medical College at the State University of New York. She is a full-time faculty at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School since 2008. Dr. Hutchinson-Colas is board-certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and has subspecialty board certification in Female Pelvic Medicine and Reconstructive Surgery (FPMRS), as well. She is the chief of the division of FPMRS at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. Her practice focusses on patients with incontinence, bladder dysfunction and voiding issues, prolapse, other pelvic disorders and fistulas. She also provides consultation and pelvic surgery for transgender men. She is a member of the Gold Humanism Honor Society. Her passion for a person's health and wellness encompasses patient care, scholarship, and community involvement. Dr. Hutchinson serves on several committees, including the APGO Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee and the Self-Assessment Fellows Exam committee at AUGS. As well as a member and House of Delegate representative at the National Medical Association, she also holds membership in the American Urogynecologic Society (AUGS), International Urogynecologic Association, and Association of Professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics (APGO, among others.

Editorial **Board Members' Bios (continued)**

Jacquelyn Litt, PhD

Dean of Douglass Residential College and the Douglass Campus and is Professor of Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. Litt received her Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania. Her career and leadership have focused on advancing women in higher education, particularly through her leadership on promoting faculty women in STEM, enriching the Douglass curriculum and programs, and holding other academic leadership positions. Her research addresses poverty, racism, and motherhood and she has published two books and dozens of articles and presentations. Awards include Women of Change award from AAUW/New Jersey, "Outstanding Achievement in Scholarship" from the American Sociological Association, and "Leaders in Faculty Diversity" at Rutgers. She was also honored with a Joint Legislative Resolution from the NJ Senate and General Assembly, honoring her leadership of Douglass Residential College and her research on women's issues that have made a positive impact on the lives of women and children.

Amy Papi

Has held the position of registered governmental affairs agent for the state of NJ as an Associate Advisor for Political Strategy, as Executive Director for NJ Advisory Council on Safety and Health, representing WC Petitioner Attorneys, Labor & Physicians. She has served as Chief of Staff to both Senator Barbara Buono and Assemblyman Peter J. Barnes, Jr. and in this capacity oversaw the drafting of legislation, organizing public appearances, coordinating community activities and overseeing office staff. She is active in many community organizations including the Coalition for Healthy Communities (Wellspring Center for Prevention). At Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) she is a Women's Health Institute (WHI) member and Gender Center of NJ. Through her efforts, the bill legislating Maternal Health Awareness Day every January 23rd was passed. She is now instrumental in legislative efforts regarding the NJ One Health Task Force. She also is an Auxiliary Board Member of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, a licensed Property, Casualty and Health Insurance Producer, a member of the East Brunswick Zoning Board and a member of the East Brunswick Commission on Aging. She has been honored by the NJ General Assembly Women's Caucus during "Women's History Month" Received joint resolutions from the Senate and Assembly, Commendations from Congressman Pallone, Middlesex County Board of Chosen Commissioners, Resolution from Senator Patrick Diegnan and several advocacy recognition awards including WHI Recognition Award.

Nancy Phillips, MD

A Board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist, Associate Professor and Director of the Center for Vulvovaginal Health in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology & Reproductive Science at Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS). Her clinical interest is in vulvovaginal health, with an emphasis on vulvodynia. Other areas of interest include menopause and hormone therapy and pelvic pain. She has authored and co-authored many peer-reviewed articles and book chapters in this field, including an on-line Prologue teaching review on vulvovaginal atrophy for the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She is also involved in clinical research in areas of vulvodynia, vulvovaginal atrophy and the vaginal microbiome. She serves on RWJMS Internal Review Board for clinical research, and is a reviewer for UptoDate and several journals, including the Journal for Sexual Medicine and the 'Grey Journal. She is a graduate of Villanova University and Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Margaret Rees MA, DPhil, FRCOG

Has an international reputation of leadership in women's midlife health and is the Executive Director of the European Menopause and Andropause Society. A gynecologist, she is Editor in Chief of Case Reports in Women's Health and Emeritus Editor of Maturitas. Her expertise has been recognized nationally and internationally, by appointments to a Readership in Reproductive Medicine at Oxford University; and visiting Professorships at Glasgow University and at the Karolinska Institute in Sweden and the University of Turku in Finland, and an Adjunct Associate Professorship at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, New Jersey. Margaret Rees also has a longstanding, unique portfolio of experience of research and publication ethics. She chaired a National Health Service IRB, was on the Oxford University and Northumbria University IRBs and is now a member of the Open University IRB. She is on the advisory board of the UK Research Integrity office. She was on the Council of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Editorial **Board Members' Bios** (continued)

Mary Rorro, DO

A cum laude graduate with Honors in Music from Bryn Mawr College, she received the College's first Performing Arts Prize. She was Chief Resident and Resident of the Year (from Pfizer) during her psychiatry residency at Harvard Medical School and completed an Addiction Psychiatry Fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital. She cares for veterans in the NJ Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and is also a musician, composer and poet, and writes narratives and poetry based on themes of posttraumatic stress disorder and war to help veterans in their journey toward healing. Her work has been therapeutic for her patients and has been published in numerous journals. The story about her career blending medicine and music, "The Greatest Gift" will be featured in the book "Becoming Doctors: 25 Years Later," in 2021. As Chair of the Music and Medicine Committee of the American Medical Women's Association, she composed "Physicians Healers," the Centennial theme song for the American Medical Women's Association. She developed a video based on her songs "Physicians Healers and Healthcare Heroes," to honor healthcare heroes treating patients with COVID-19 around the world. Her music and arts program for veterans, "A Few Good Notes" will be highlighted during the 75th Anniversary year of the Veteran's Health Administration in 2021. She is the recipient of a Jefferson Award, the nation's oldest and most prestigious recognition program of the US Senate.

Mark S. Schuster, PhD

Has been at Rutgers over 20 years and teaches in several departments. Dean Schuster is affiliate faculty in the Graduate School of Education; American Studies; Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Psychology. He teaches undergraduate and graduate courses on sport, gender and sexuality; transforming bodies and identities; and the *HER*story of LGBTQAI+ Through Film. He created *Project Civility* at Rutgers with Dr. Kathleen Hull and the *Sport and Sexuality Project* two years before Tyler Clementi came to Rutgers. Dean Schuster has been on the steering board of the PROUD Gender Center of NJ and the lead on two Colloquiums: one on Transgender Identities in Active and Veteran Military Services at Rutgers. He received his Bachelor's in English and Communications from SUNY Plattsburgh, an MBA from the University of New Hampshire, and a Master's in Sport Psychology and Cultural Studies of Sport concurrently with his Ph.D. coursework in Higher Education from the University of Iowa. Mark has been a keynote speaker on: civility and the intersection of sport and race, gender and sexuality at the national and international level.

Calvin Schwartz

Graduated Rutgers Pharmacy in 1969 and spent 12 years in community pharmacy. In 1983, he began a sales and management career with Luxottica Group (world's largest eyewear company) Spent 25 years working under the Del Vecchio family who stressed leadership, sales, support. Near the end of his time at Luxottica, he published (2007) a first novel 'Vichy Water', a coming of age story. Spent a year learning publishing, networking, social media, blogging and became a journalist for two New Jersey magazines. Calvin is the co-host and producer at NJ Discover. Six years ago, Calvin began 'giving back' to alma mater, Rutgers, by being on campus 160 times a year, engaging in networking, panel discussions and mentoring up to 14 Rutgers students in Communication and Media each semester. He serves on Advisory Committee of the Women's Health Institute at Rutgers RWJ Medical School, NJ Digital Newspaper Project at Alexander Library, Rutgers Business School Blockchain Hub Board of Advisors and Advisory Board of Angelightfilms.org and Marlboro Township Environmental Commission. Currently finishing his second novel and has launched a specialized interview channel on YouTube, "Conversations with Calvin; We the SpecIEs."

Heather Turock

A Certified Fundraising Executive, she has over ten years of experience in nonprofit organizations, most recently as Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Keystone College. Prior to that she was Executive Director of the Muscular Dystrophy Association in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Heather has served on the Board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals and is a frequently sought-after speaker on broad ranging funding topics. She has made presentations to various groups, including, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education in the Northeastern United States on topics such as *Capital Campaigns, Donor Acquisition and Engagement, and Fundraising Management and Leadership.* Heather holds a graduate certificate in Human Behavior from Harvard University, where in May 2021, she will also complete her Master of Liberal Arts Degree in Psychology. Her passion is for creating opportunities for equity, diversity, and inclusion for marginalized and underserved Emerging Majority populations with a particular emphasis on justice systems and their lack of attention to the treatment of women, the subject she is pursuing in her master's project.

Editorial **Board Members' Bios (continued)**

Diane Young Uniman

Aka Princess Diane von Brainisfried is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and received a JD from Seton Hall University Law School. Diane's a criminal justice appeals attorney-turned writer of screenplays and musicals. Her work has been featured at Lincoln Center's Broadway's Future Series, was accepted into Fringe/NYC, and Tony Award-winning producer Ken Davenport's Rave Festival. She has won over fifty awards for her screenplays and musicals and an ASCAP award for legal writing. Her first book, *Bonjour, Breast Cancer–I'm Still Smiling…Wit, Wisdom and Optimism for Beating the Breast Cancer Blues* was an Independent Author Medal winner for best Non-Fiction Medical/Health category, an International Book Awards Finalist, and a Living Now Evergreen Book medalist for "world-changing books honored for their contributions to positive global change." Diane is a certified positive psychology life coach and gives humor-filled corporate and private-sector seminars on strategies for happiness and wellbeing. Diane was a facilitator at Miami's first World Happiness Summit and is the Women's Health Institute's optimism expert. She is also an opera singer and sang with the New Jersey State Opera Chorus. Diane is an advanced student at the New York School of Practical Philosophy.

Jeana Wirtenberg, Ph.D.

An Associate Professor of Professional Practice in the Management & Global Business Department, Rutgers Business School. She leads the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative for the Business School and is Associate Director of the Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation (RICSI).* She is lead editor and author for ***The Sustainable Enterprise Fieldbook: Building New Bridges***, first and second editions (Greenleaf, 2008; Routledge, 2019), and author, ***Building a Culture for Sustainability: People, Planet and Profits in a New Green Economy*** (Praeger, 2014). Previously, Jeana was HR Director for Development, Quality and Organization Effectiveness at Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG), and held leadership positions in AT&T Human Resources. Jeana started her career at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and led the Women's Research/Social Processes team at the National Institute of Education. She received her Master's degree and Ph.D. in Psychology from UCLA.

*Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation (RICSI)

In order to build a stronger, healthier, more sustainable world, the Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation (RICSI) prepares a new brand of business leaders to leverage business as a force for good. Today's corporations need to have a social purpose — not only for their license to operate but also because, as studies show, socially responsible businesses outperform their peers. Corporate leaders are developing innovative business models to solve social challenges and positively impact their bottom line. The RICSI provides current and future business leaders with the tools and skills to drive Corporate Social Innovation. A sample of this can be seen in the Future of Work after COVID-19 report, *An Unprecedented Opportunity for Corporate Social Innovation: The Future of Work and COVID-19,* published Fall 2020 and written by members of the RICSI Student Advisory Board.

For more information, please visit:

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Women's Health Institute Website:
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