

JeffPost

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Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

I have been a postdoctoral fellow at Thomas Jefferson University for more than 4 years. During this time, I have faced several challenges and supported many other postdocs in their journey. What I discovered along the way is that Thomas Jefferson University has an amazing network of services, specifically built around postdoc needs. Just as importantly, the postdoctoral community itself is a priceless resource for personal and professional development.

I conceived the JeffPost with the final goal of connecting postdocs with all the available resources, and empowering their postdoctoral experience at Thomas Jefferson University

Valentina Minieri

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Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

By Valentina Minieri



Members of the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs: Judith Lewis (left), Lisa Kozlowski (center), and Natalie Chernetz (right) discuss upcoming plans during a committee meeting. Photo by E. Irollo.

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs at Thomas Jefferson University is run by three charismatic women committed to postdoc assistance and support.

Dr. Lisa Kozlowski, Dr. Natalie Chernetz, and Ms. Judith Lewis help postdocs to navigate the institution and address potential challenges. They provide a central hub for professional development, knowledge sharing, and community building. To prepare postdocs for the next stage of their career, they organize events, networking opportunities, and training. They also work closely with administrators and human resources to implement salary and benefits guidelines.

The office doors are open 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday for:

- ✚ General counseling and mentoring
- ✚ Individual Development Plan
- ✚ Career Self-Assessment
- ✚ Contacts for Jefferson resources
- ✚ Conflict resolution
 - Address and manage conflicts
 - Negotiate difficult situations
- ✚ Networking contacts
 - At Jefferson
 - At other universities
 - Outside academia

**APPOINTMENTS ARE APPRECIATED
FOR INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING**

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The Interview: Lisa Kozlowski, PhD

Associate Dean. Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

By Valentina Minieri



Dr. Lisa Kozlowski's Biosketch

Lisa received her Ph.D. in Immunology from the University of Pennsylvania and did a postdoc at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, where she was also an officer in their postdoctoral association. She then found her true passion in helping others, especially

science trainees, to find the best fit for their future careers. This passion blossomed at *Science's* Next Wave, now part of ScienceCareers.org, where she worked as a Program Director. She later became a consultant, helping disciplinary societies and universities to provide career workshops to their students and postdocs.

Since October 2003, she has directed the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs at Thomas Jefferson University. Her responsibilities more recently have broadened to include graduate student affairs. She has developed and now teaches a course for students and postdocs, "Principles of Career Management: Diverse Biomedical Careers." Lisa is the faculty advisor for the Graduate Student Association of the Jefferson College of Biomedical Sciences, the Jefferson Business and Biotechnology Group, and the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association. She also works with Jefferson's Admissions Office on the recruitment of M.S. and Ph.D. students.

Locally, Lisa is a Past President and Past Vice-President of Programs of the Philadelphia chapter of the Association for Women in Science (AWIS-PHL). In May 2015, she was recognized for her mentoring of female graduate students and postdoctoral fellows receiving AWIS-PHL's Elizabeth W. Bingham Award.

Nationally, Lisa has served on the planning committee for the National Postdoctoral Association's Annual Meeting and was chair of the Distinguished Service Award committee for the 2009 and 2010 meetings. She is an editor and blogger for the American Society for Microbiology's Microbe Mentor. She is also a Past Chair of the Postdoctorate Leaders Section of the Association of American Medical Colleges' Graduate Research, Education and Training Group (AAMC's GREAT Group).

LISA'S PERSONAL MESSAGE TO JEFFERSON POSTDOCS

Hello Jefferson Postdocs,

It has been such a pleasure to direct Jefferson's Office of Postdoctoral Affairs for the past 14 years. As I said in the interview, it is the postdocs and students that continue to make my time at Jefferson so rewarding. To see a Jefferson postdoc move into a position in academia, industry, or somewhere in between lets me know that they had good training here at Jefferson. If there are more types of training that you feel are necessary to make a smooth transition into your next position, please let me know and we can work on creating the training or experience together. My office and I are here to help Jefferson postdocs in any way possible.

Lisa Kozlowski

Dr. Kozlowski met with JeffPost for an interview about her career path. The following is excerpted from that interview:

What motivated your transition from pursuing your postdoctoral studies to taking a position in support of postdocs?

When I accepted a postdoctoral position at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, I wasn't sure if I wanted an academic career. Three years of postdoc clarified that benchwork was not for me. I had other passions that I wanted to pursue. During these years I had joined the Postdoctoral Association at Hopkins, and I had the chance to see what was happening at the national level. As an advisor now to the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association, I feel a special affection for the group: the board is greatly committed and reminds me of old times.

When I finally decided to move out of my postdoctoral position, I had a few choices: I got an offer to work as a scientific writer, an offer to work in a grant office, and finally, an offer to be a program director for *Science's* Next Wave. This last offer attracted my attention the most. I spent the following years traveling around the country for *Science's* Next Wave, talking about career development for scientists. It was amazing, and I loved it!

In 2003, I moved to Philadelphia with my family, and I took on the big project of starting a Postdoctoral Office at Thomas Jefferson University. At that time, postdoctoral offices were not common. We were innovators in our field, and it was a rewarding challenge. I have been at Jefferson since then. I'm very happy to work for the Jefferson postdoctoral community as well as for graduate students.

What do you find most challenging in your work?

At Jefferson there are about 140 postdocs. Seventy percent of them are foreign national postdocs. For them, career planning can be even more of a struggle. If they took a wrong path, choosing a lab where they don't feel they belong, they can't easily move without risking their visa, with the consequent obligation of leaving the country. Many funding opportunities require at least a green card, limiting foreigner competitiveness. They also have very few possibilities to obtain a visa sponsorship outside of academia, and that reduces their professional opportunities, no matter their talent or qualifications. I have seen the challenges facing foreign postdocs up close, and I work constantly with the Office of International Affairs to advocate for them.

What do you find most rewarding?

Mentoring! I follow graduate students from their recruitment to their thesis defense and beyond. I also like to follow postdocs to see what their next step is. Several years ago, one of my postdoctoral mentees, Dr. Denise Fitzgerald, moved to Belfast, Northern Ireland, where she got a faculty position at Queen's University. Recently she received an Outstanding Leadership Award. I am extremely proud of her achievements. She strongly believes that mentoring is important for postdocs and invited me to speak with her senior administrators about starting a postdoc office at Queen's University. I'm happy to report that they agreed to fund the office and their first director started recently.

The Jefferson Postdoctoral Association

By Megha Verma and Valentina Minieri

The primary goal of the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association (JPA) is to enhance the postdoctoral experience at Jefferson through scientific training, mentoring, extracurricular activities, and social events both on-campus and off-campus. The JPA organizes technical skills seminars, career development workshops, the postdoctoral fellowship application program, and many social events dedicated to postdocs.

JPA also collaborates with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs in planning the annual Speed Networking Event and the Jefferson Postdoctoral Symposium.

Want to learn more? Have new ideas for programming? Want to get involved? Contact us at: JPA@Jefferson.edu.



The JPA Executive Board

The JPA Executive Board:



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President



Megha Verma
VP Career Development



Valentina Minieri
VP of Communication



Elena Irollo
VP Social Affairs



Kalyan Golla
Treasurer



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Giacomo Casella
Secretary

UPCOMING EVENTS

Technical Skills Seminar Series

Keyence Microscope: hands-on workshop
Thursday, March 29, 12:00-2:30 pm, JAH M23

Singh Center for Nanotechnology site visit
Thursday, April 5, 9:30-11:00 am, 3205 Walnut St.

**Charles River Laboratories:
Rodent production, breeding and genetics**
Tuesday, April 17, 1:00-2:00 pm, JAH M23

Social Events

Easter Eggs Decoration

Wednesday, March, 28, 4-5 pm, Room 469 JAH
Snacks will be served

Check out upcoming events on the JPA website.

STAY TUNED

Save the date! The JPA is pleased to announce the
12th Postdoctoral Research Symposium (PRS)
Thursday, June 7

Want to organize the 2018 PRS and the PRS Career Lunch Roundtables with us? Join the PRS Planning Committee. This will be an amazing opportunity to develop leadership skills, work with a team, and expand your network inside and outside of academia.

For information, contact: prs@jefferson.

The Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center: NCI-designated Cancer Center

By Elena Irollo

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), as part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), recognizes the most prestigious cancer research institutions as NCI-designated, for their scientific leadership, resources, and research activity.

The NCI currently recognizes 49 Comprehensive Cancer Centers, 13 Cancer Centers, and 7 Basic Laboratory Cancer Centers with the prestigious NCI designation. A Comprehensive Cancer Center meets the NCI standards for cancer prevention, basic laboratory research, and clinical trials. A Cancer Center meets one of the above standards while a Basic Laboratory Cancer Center conducts only laboratory research and does not provide patient treatment. Competitive centers must demonstrate during an intensive review process that they have a critical mass of high quality, collaborative research, strong institutional support, a highly qualified director, appropriate facilities, and the capacity to fulfill the cancer center's research objectives.

The Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center (SKCC) of Thomas Jefferson University has been an NCI-Designated Cancer Center since 1996. Recently, SKCC received a NCI-designation renewal, thanks to the incredible work led by Dr. Karen Knudsen, SKCC Director. The institute is ranked 20th in the nation in the cancer specialty by U.S. News & World Report, is recognized as a Melanoma Center of Excellence by the Melanoma Hope Network, and is annually awarded approximately \$72 million in grants for cancer research.

Postdocs work in all of SKCC's program areas - Cancer Cell Biology & Signaling, Molecular Biology & Genetic, Prostate Cancer, Breast Cancer, Gastrointestinal Cancer - and contribute in meaningful ways to the progression of the most advanced oncology research.

Singh Center for Nanotechnology Technical Skills Seminar Series (TSSS) site visit

By Megha Verma

The Singh Center for Nanotechnology is located in University City, Philadelphia. The Center, part of the University of Pennsylvania, houses 4 facilities that encompass cutting edge equipment for nanoscale fabrication, measurement, and characterization. The building itself is an impressive piece of architecture, specifically designed by Weiss/Manfredi to host advanced laboratories.

On April 5, from 9:30 am to 11:00 am, the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association (JPA) has organized a site visit that includes a facilities tour and the following seminars on Nanotechnology in Medicine:

- ✚ Overview of the Singh Center and its contribution in the Life Sciences by Noah Clay
- ✚ Neuroengineering and Fabrication of Implants for New Materials by Dr. Flavia Vitale
- ✚ Microfluidics: Point of Care Diagnostics, Centrifuge-Free, Plasma/Serum Separation Method and Devices, Biomems Devices and Biosensor Technology by Dr. Changchun Liu
- ✚ pH Sensitive Nanoparticles for Drug Delivery by Dr. I-Wei Chen

All interested postdocs and M.S. and Ph.D. students are welcome to join. The event is free. Registration is required at Eventbrite.



The Singh Center for Nanotechnology. Photo by F. Nati

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THANK YOU

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Thank you to Lisa Kozlowski and her team for the time they dedicate to us and the constant commitment to Jefferson's postdoctoral community.

CALL FOR WRITERS

Do you want to publish an article in JeffPost?

Contact valentina.minieri@jefferson.edu and ask for the newsletter guidelines.