Generating Momentum
Women Supporting Each Other in the Drive for Personal and Professional Success

A Note from the Editor

The month of March is designated annually as Women’s History Month. This year’s theme, chosen by the National Women’s History Project, is *Weaving the Stories of Women’s Lives*. To celebrate, the Committee invites you to view a visual timeline of the women who have helped shape the Medical School. This presentation is being shown all month long in the lobby of the Albert Sherman Center on the University Campus. For more information about the month, see the National Women’s History Project [website](http://www.umassmed.edu/deoo/index.aspx).

Also in celebration of Women’s History Month, Dr. Michelle Budig, author of *The Fatherhood Bonus & The Motherhood Penalty*, will be the featured speaker on Tuesday, March 3, from noon to 1PM in the Faculty Conference Room on the University Campus. Be sure to join us!

Do you have a story to share? Are you interested in writing about topics that professional women value? The newsletter is looking for contributors to write articles for the newsletter. No writing experience is necessary! Please send an email to the newsletter’s [mailbox](mailto:PWCNewsletter@umassmed.edu) to let us know of your interest.

The 3rd Dress for Success Boutique Sale is scheduled for April 23rd at the University campus. A clothing drive will be held in the weeks prior to the event. Look for collection areas on the South Street and University Campuses. We will be looking for women's suits and professional separates such as blouses, sweaters, and pants. Get an early start on cleaning out your closets by making a donation!
Ask a Busy Woman
Introducing Sherry Pagoto, PhD

By Kim Canty
Director, Individual Giving, UMMS/UMass Memorial Development Office

Have you done your plank today? That was the first question I asked UMMS Associate Professor Dr. Sherry Pagoto during our recent conversation. Her honest response was, “Not yet, but I will!” She began the “Plank A Day” revolution on Twitter - #PlankADay, which has grown to have over 10,000 users. After speaking with Sherry and learning about her life’s journey, I can assure you that a plank a day is nothing compared to her crazy schedule.

A licensed clinical psychologist, Sherry is also the co-founder of the UMass Center for mHealth and Social Media, an academic research center devoted to the application of mobile technology to health promotion and disease prevention. She is an expert in obesity, nutrition, fitness, depression/stress, and cancer prevention. Her specialization within clinical psychology is health psychology, the study of how our behavior and emotions impact our physical health. Her research focuses on behavioral determinants of and interventions for obesity and its related chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. She has been continuously funded by the NIH and/or CDC for 11 years and has published 120 papers in scientific journals including JAMA, NEJM, Obesity, JAMA, Internal Medicine, American Journal of Preventive Medicine, and American Journal of Public Health.

Why a career focused on obesity, nutrition, depression, stress and their impact on our overall health? During her childhood, there was a period where Sherry struggled with her weight. And, from the time she was a junior in high school she knew she wanted to be a psychologist - human behavior fascinated her. So she merged her love of health and behavior and made it her life’s work. She came to the medical school in 2004 from the University of Illinois at Chicago, where her boss told her to reach out to Dr. Judy Ockene, Ph.D., M.Ed., M.A, Chief of the Division of Preventive and Behavioral Medicine at UMMS. She did and the rest, as they say, is history.

As a behavioral scientist with expertise in digital health and social media, Sherry has consulted for notable companies including Apple, Sears, and Weight Watchers. Her work has been featured in Time.com, NPR.org, NBC News, Good Morning America, CNN.com, ABC News, Washington Post, Reuters and WebMD, just to name a few. Sherry never dreamed that so many industries could benefit from her expertise in obesity and using behavior as an intervention to control eating. Why social media? Sherry feels that it is time for behavioral scientists to show the impact of their work. Social media has helped make the world aware of the work she does. Especially in such a volatile funding environment, creating awareness is crucial to her continued success.

Sherry’s day begins when her 7-year-old daughter wakes her up. Once she gets her to school, she dives into her day, which includes 1 hour or more dedicated to exercise. Sherry’s advice is to treat exercise like a meeting. Guard it. Don’t dump exercise for work. Make “self-care” a priority as big as childcare and work. She does it for her daughter so she will be around to see her grow up. An avid runner and cycler, much of Sherry’s exercise is training for races. She has run the Chicago Marathon a couple of times and is training for her second 111-mile ride for the Pan Mass Challenge. Tired yet?

How does Sherry balance work and life? She doesn’t compartmentalize. She is a “blender.” Her recommendations for busy women: The “work/life balance” term presents a false dichotomy. Work is a part of life. So is family. So is taking care of yourself. They must coexist, not be rigidly segregated. Use small pockets of time efficiently. For example, she likes to catch up on email when under the dryer at the salon. That nagging feeling of guilt comes from society’s unrealistic standards for women to be everything to everyone. Let’s collectively ignore it. And my favorite...“You won’t fit as much in a suitcase if you pack it such that things don’t touch. When you layer you get more in there.” Words to live, and travel, by.

As a social media enthusiast, she has a couple of blogs - one on www.psychologytoday.com called Shrink and another at www.fudiet.com. They are both about how to live a healthy lifestyle. Also, #PlankADay has a page on FUDiet as well as on Facebook. Not surprisingly, #PlankADay is now a top 10 health hashtag on Twitter. So why not make 2015 the year of you, and start small, just a plank a day. And don’t forget to tweet Sherry!
Has anyone ever asked you what you do at work all day? You could certainly run down a long list of your responsibilities and tasks, but the truth is that at a very basic level (if you’re like most of us) what you really do for the most part all day is sit. Additionally, commuting to and from work, which can be a considerable amount of time for some, is spent sitting as well, and odds are that you also probably sit for a good part of the evening when you go home. It is estimated that the average person sits for 7.7 hours per day, and some for as many as 15.

Unfortunately, all this time in a chair or on a couch could be compromising your health and actually shortening your life. Research suggests that the cumulative impact of prolonged sitting is associated with diseases like diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity. Some have even gone so far as to suggest that sitting is the new smoking. To add insult to injury, even regular exercise does not seem to combat the negative effects of prolonged sitting.

Standing desks have increased in popularity over the last few years and are expected to become more commonplace in the future. Depending on your location, it might be possible to raise a section of your desk so that you can spend part of the day standing. This works best if you have a laptop with a docking station and a monitor. You can dock the laptop to work at the monitor while you’re sitting and then use the laptop on its own to stand for part of the day. Check with the facilities department at your location to see if this is possible. If so, there is a nominal fee involved.

There are, of course, much more expensive standing desks available. And some people, like Cosmopolitan editor-in-chief Joanna Coles, even use a treadmill desk and spend most of their day walking. A treadmill in your office or cube is probably out of the question, and a standing desk may be as well, but there are some steps (literally and figuratively) that you can take to reduce the effects of prolonged sitting.

- Take a short break at least once an hour. Set an alarm and at least stand up and stretch or march in place for 20 seconds. Talking on the phone is an ideal time to stand and move around a bit.
- Take several brisk walks throughout the day. About 10 minutes at a time is ideal, but even if you can only fit in a lap or two in the hallway, it’s better than doing nothing at all. You should aim for a total of at least 30 minutes a day.
- Some simple exercises you can do right from your chair:
  - **Shoulder stretches:** Sit up straight in your chair and reach your left hand over your head and touch your palm to the center of your shoulder blades. Reach your right hand up and grasp your left elbow. Apply gentle pressure and hold for 10 seconds on each side for two rounds.
  - **Side stretches:** Raise your right wrist over your head. Reach over your head with your left hand and pull your right wrist towards your left side, giving your right side a good stretch. Repeat twice on each side and hold for 10 seconds.
  - **Knee extensions:** With your feet flat on the floor and your back straight up against the chair, extend your right leg straight and hold for 5 seconds. Lower your foot and repeat on the alternate side. Do 10 – 15 repetitions on each side.

Incorporating even just one or two of these techniques could be beneficial to your health, and obviously the more you do, the more you’ll benefit. Perhaps if you make this part of your regular routine, when someone asks what you do all day at work you can say that you sit AND you exercise.
Leading Effective Meetings, Part 3: Managing Challenging Group Issues and Topics

By Lori Phert, PhD
Professor of Medicine, Associate Chief of the Division of Preventive and Behavioral Medicine

In the prior two newsletters, we covered the four key tasks of the meeting facilitator and talked about some strategies for dealing with difficult people in meetings, one of the two common problems in leading effective meetings. In this issue, we focus on the other common problem: managing challenging group and topic issues. Just like dealing with difficult people, overall, the best approach is to: (1) BE PREPARED, keeping an eye out for signs of problems emerging, and (2) BE READY TO ACT.

RULE OF THUMB: Start with the most subtle approach, then increase force as needed.

The Group Keeps Repeating Points Made
Some find it helpful to keep track of ideas on a flip chart or white board to see what has already been discussed. Having minutes from prior meetings handy can help remind the group of points and decisions already made. You also can use active listening to restate ideas by saying “What I hear you saying is…” and repeat back a summary of what was said. If someone begins repeating an idea that was already covered, note that point has already been made and ask “Is there something new you would like to add?”

The Group Gets Stuck on or Confused About an Agenda Item
Check out with the group if it is stuck because it lacks sufficient information or clarity about the task or about how best to proceed. Then you can address the appropriate obstacle. Sometimes it can help to remind the group where it is on the agenda and what the specific objectives of the discussion are to help reorient the group. If all else fails, you may need to move off the topic and return to it later.

Conflict Arises: Divisive Topics, Non-Constructive Disputes
This can get out of hand quickly – there is a lack of listening, personal attacks or innuendos, and hostile tones of voice. It is important that you don’t become involved emotionally. React calmly and firmly, not with anger, and avoid taking sides. Encourage group members to keep their comments positive and constructive. Depersonalize the conflict, separating the issues from the people. It also can help to give group members a few minutes to jot down their ideas in a silent brainstorm before opening up to discussion. Keep members from evaluating ideas too quickly before all have been listed. Since conflict tends to magnify perceived differences and minimize similarities, look for and focus on common goals. It also can help to let the two sides vent. Acknowledge and summarize each side’s views and feelings to make sure everyone is clear. Stop the dispute as soon as it becomes non-constructive or insulting – note you are not likely to resolve their dispute so you will move on, and suggest the parties may want to talk about this in private.

Large Issues
Have you noticed that, sometimes, meetings focus only on immediate, urgent issues, and larger and more strategically important issues are often ignored? It helps to decide which meetings will be devoted to the larger issues or topics and ensure they are put first on the agenda for those meetings. You may invite leaders with responsibility for aspects of the larger issues to attend these selected meetings to provide the broader context for discussion. Think about how best to introduce and segment large issues into manageable parts, and consider bringing in a neutral facilitator for brainstorming big issues.

The Elephant in the Room
You notice the group is afraid to bring up a big, obvious problem that everyone knows about but no one wants to mention, avoiding an issue or topic that seems too difficult or “forbidden” to raise. What to do? Face the elephant directly. Sometimes just raising the issue gets the group moving again. If you’re not sure what the issue is, ask the group the nature of the problem. Let them know how important it is to bring up all options, concerns and issues, even if they are difficult. Let them know you won’t “kill the messenger” (and don’t!).

Spring 2015 • UMass Medical School Professional Women’s Committee • Page 4
Find the 30 names and words below, which all relate to this year’s Women’s History Month theme, *Weaving the Stories of Women’s Lives*. The words or names (the first or last name in bold) below appear horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. For information about each of the women included in the puzzle, see page 6. The solution appears on page 7.

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- Antonia Novello
- Arden Eversmeyer
- Barbara McClintock
- Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard
- Clara Barton
- Discover
- Educate
- Element
- Elizabeth Blackwell
- Florence Nightingale
- Gertrude Elion
- Gerty Cori
- History
- Invent
- Learn
- Lydia Villa-Komaroff
- Mabel Keaton Staupers
- Marie Maynard Daly
- Mary-Claire King
- Rita Levi-Montalcini
- Rosalind Franklin
- Sarah Hackett Stephenson
- Scholar
- Science
- Stories
- Sylvia Mendoza
- Teach
- Weaving
- Women
Clara Barton: Born in Massachusetts, she assisted surgeons on the battlefield during the Civil War and later founded the American Red Cross, serving as its first president.

Elizabeth Blackwell: The first woman to be awarded an MD degree, she subsequently founded a medical college for women in 1868, with coursework that emphasized sanitation and hygiene.

Mary-Claire King: Known for discovering BRCA-1, the gene responsible for breast cancer, she applied her knowledge of genomic sequencing to identifying victims of human rights abuses.

Gerty Cori: The Cori Cycle, a biochemical process, is named after this MD and Nobel Prize winner whose discoveries furthered our understanding of diabetes. She served on the National Science Foundation’s Board of Directors.

Alice Evans: Her discovery of an organism that causes undulant fever led to laws requiring milk pasteurization. She was the first woman president of the American Society of Bacteriologists.

Marie Maynard Daly: She is the first female African American to earn a PhD in chemistry and a pioneer in discoveries of the impact of cholesterol on arteries. She created a minority student scholarship at Queens College.

Gertrude Elion: Hoping to help find a cure for cancer after her grandfather’s death, she developed drugs for use against AIDS and leukemia and spent time at Duke University as a research professor.

Arden Eversmeyer: Founder of The Old Lesbian Oral Herstory Project that preserves the stories of lesbians born in the early 1900s to document their experiences and sacrifices. The collection is housed at Smith College and accessible to researchers.

Rosalind Franklin: Her scientific work led to discovery of the double helix structure of DNA. The National Cancer Institute established the Rosalind E. Franklin Award for Women in Science in her honor.

Rita Levi-Montalcini: Recipient of the 1986 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for her work advanced the understanding of nerve growth and degeneration. Her autobiography, In Praise of Imperfection, was published in 1988.

Barbara McClintock: Received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for her discovery of chromosomal transposition, which led to the understanding of antibiotic resistance and cancer cells.

Sylvia Mendoza: Author of The Book of Latina Women: 150 Vidas of Passion, Strength & Success, about the contributions of Latina women in fields such as science, politics, and art, she is a Women’s History Project featured speaker.

Florence Nightingale: She popularized the use of pie charts to communicate statistical data in her writings and is credited with developing a graphic called the Nightingale Rose Diagram, similar to today’s histogram or bar chart.

Antonia Novello: The first female and Hispanic Surgeon General, she brought attention to women with AIDS and neonatal transmission. She served as coordinator for AIDS research at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Christiane Nusslein-Volhard: A winner of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine and the Albert Lasker Award to Basic Medical Research, she researched the genes important to the development of the fruit fly as well as the process of blood creation in zebra fish.

Mabel Keaton Staupers: Author of No Time for Prejudice, she worked to gain inclusion of African American nurses in the Armed Forces Nurse Corps during World War II and helped to establish the first hospital to allow African American physicians to treat their patients.

Sarah Hackett Stephenson: Became the first female member of the American Medical Association in 1876. She published Boys and Girls in Biology and The Physiology of Women in the late 1800s.

Lydia Villa-Komaroff: A former member of the UMMS faculty and recipient of the Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Award, she is the 3rd Mexican-American woman in the US to receive a doctorate degree in the sciences.
Women’s History Month Word Search Solution

The Professional Women’s Committee (PWC) has purchased a number of books available for borrowing from the Lamar Soutter Library. For a complete list of publications, visit the PWC website.

Monthly Meetings

The committee meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 3PM. Contact Holly Brown via email or by phone at (508)856-3970 for more information.

Website

http://www.umassmed.edu/deoo/committees/committee-on-equal-opportunity-and-diversity/professional-womens-committee/