



Experience | Commitment | Resources

2021 Report

Rush Mentoring Programs

Office of Faculty Affairs



The Rush University Mentoring Programs give future scientists structure and direction in their quest to become stars in their respective fields. More importantly, the program is interdisciplinary and personal, allowing researchers from various fields to come together and talk to one another. This sets us apart from many other places.”

Markus A. Wimmer, PhD

The Grainger Director of the Rush Arthritis and Orthopedics Institute

Professor and Associate Chairman for Research
Department of Orthopedic Surgery

Director, Joan and Paul Rubschlager Motion Analysis
and Tribology Laboratories



Rush Mentoring Programs: Investing in the Future

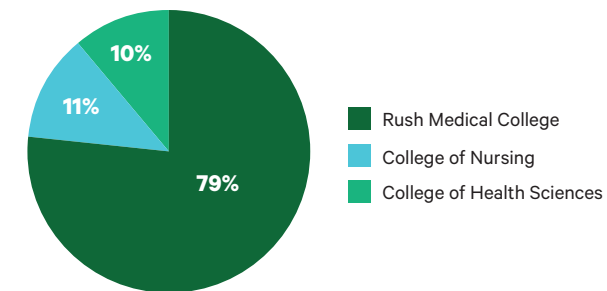
The Office of Mentoring Programs within the Office of Faculty Affairs helps facilitate career development and cultivates research independence. The program's success is measured by scholarly productivity, extramural funding, retention of junior faculty and placement of postdoctoral fellows who are prepared for their next career step.

Our program's mission is to support the success of Rush University's junior faculty who are working under the guidance of knowledgeable and committed mentors. An effective faculty mentoring program is a major asset in the recruitment of faculty and postdoctoral fellows, and is an essential investment for academic medical centers.

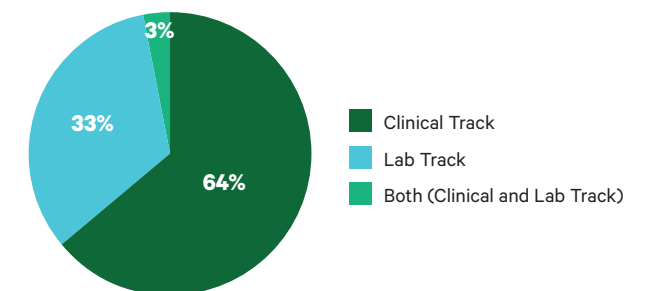
Demographics

Rush Mentoring Programs served 65 mentees from across Rush University during fiscal year 2021. Their demographic information is presented in the following graphs.

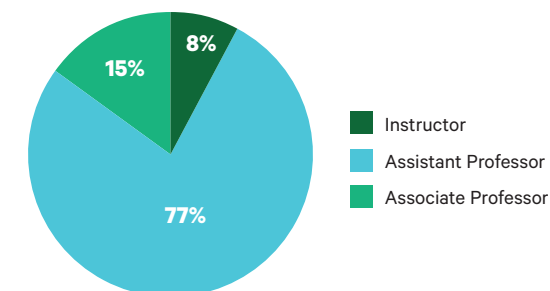
Mentees by College



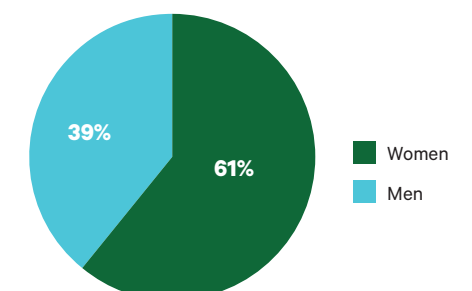
Research Tracks



Mentees by Rank



Mentees by Gender





“Mentoring is a two-way street. Like lighting a fire, it requires air and a spark, and when that happens it is a beautiful thing to behold. Watching someone’s career ascend is an incredibly satisfying dimension of academia.”

Christine M. Kennedy, RN, PhD, FAAN
The John L. and Helen Kellogg Dean, College of Nursing
Professor, Department of Women, Children and Family Nursing, College of Nursing
Associate Chief Nursing Officer, Rush Medical Center
Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Rush Medical College

Rush Research Mentoring Program: Resources

The Rush Research Mentoring Program (RRMP) focuses on faculty career development and provides a variety of resources to mentees and mentors in the program, which includes the following:

Cohn Fellowship Grant

Only RRMP mentees are eligible to apply for the Cohn Fellowship. The Cohn Family Foundation provides grant support that is distributed equally to five mentees who are selected through a competitive process. The Cohn Fellowship allows mentees to gather preliminary data for research proposals and continue engagement in research activities.

Editing Services

RRMP mentees and mentors who need help with their abstracts, manuscripts or grant applications are referred to experienced science writers for assistance.

Grant Writing Workshops

Participants will learn the different components of an aims page, logic flow of specific aims, critical best writing practices to enhance document readability to understand funding agency criteria and how to connect those criteria directly to their research goals. Both faculty members and postdoctoral fellows are eligible to participate in the Grant Writing Workshops. Over the past 15 sessions, there has been a total of 153 people who attended the Grant Writing Workshops.

Graphic Consultation

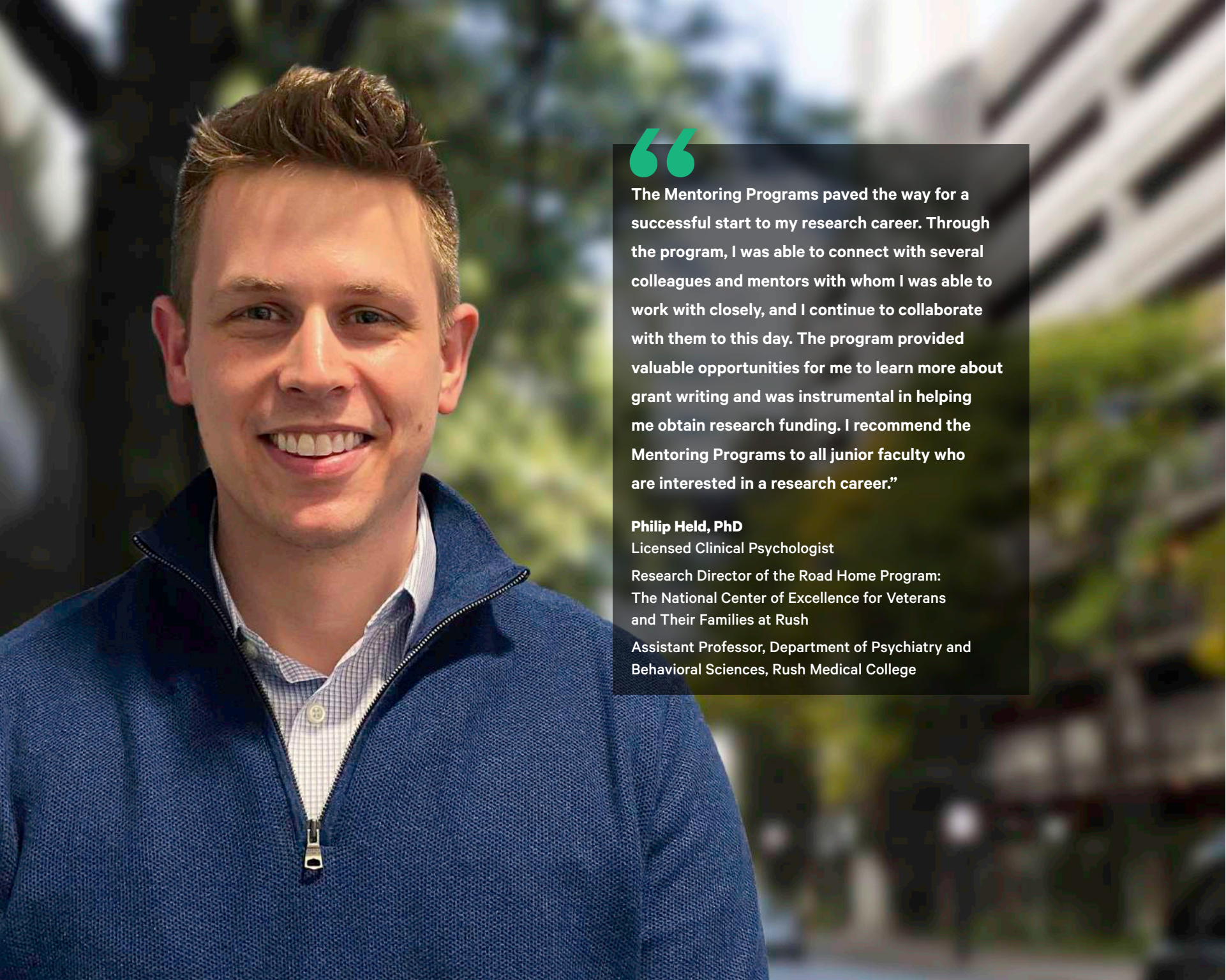
RRMP mentees and mentors who need help with creating graphs, figures or tables for their presentations and publications are referred to an experienced graphic designer for assistance.

Monthly Research Track Meetings

RRMP mentees have an opportunity to present at monthly research track meetings. Mentees present their research to mentees and mentors to solicit critical feedback.

Rush Mentoring Programs Annual Research Symposium

The Rush Mentoring Programs Annual Symposium highlights the excellent research that is being conducted at Rush. It offers a venue to stimulate interdisciplinary and interdepartmental collaboration. During the symposium in fiscal year 2021, there were 108 attendees, 24 poster presentations and 11 podium presentations.



“

The Mentoring Programs paved the way for a successful start to my research career. Through the program, I was able to connect with several colleagues and mentors with whom I was able to work with closely, and I continue to collaborate with them to this day. The program provided valuable opportunities for me to learn more about grant writing and was instrumental in helping me obtain research funding. I recommend the Mentoring Programs to all junior faculty who are interested in a research career.”

Philip Held, PhD
Licensed Clinical Psychologist
Research Director of the Road Home Program:
The National Center of Excellence for Veterans
and Their Families at Rush
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and
Behavioral Sciences, Rush Medical College

Seminars and Workshops

Several seminars and workshops are offered throughout the year to enhance the professional development of mentees and mentors. All of the seminars and workshops are open to all faculty members, postdoctoral fellows, staff and students at Rush. In fiscal year 2021, 26 seminars and workshops were offered. A total of 580 people attended the seminars and workshops.

Statistical Consultation

RRMP mentees and mentors who need help with the data analysis section of their applications will be referred to a biostatistician for assistance.

Writing Accountability Group

The writing accountability groups meet weekly to provide support and accountability for group members as they work toward increasing writing productivity. Group members share strategies for success and help one another set reasonable goals.

Extramural Funding

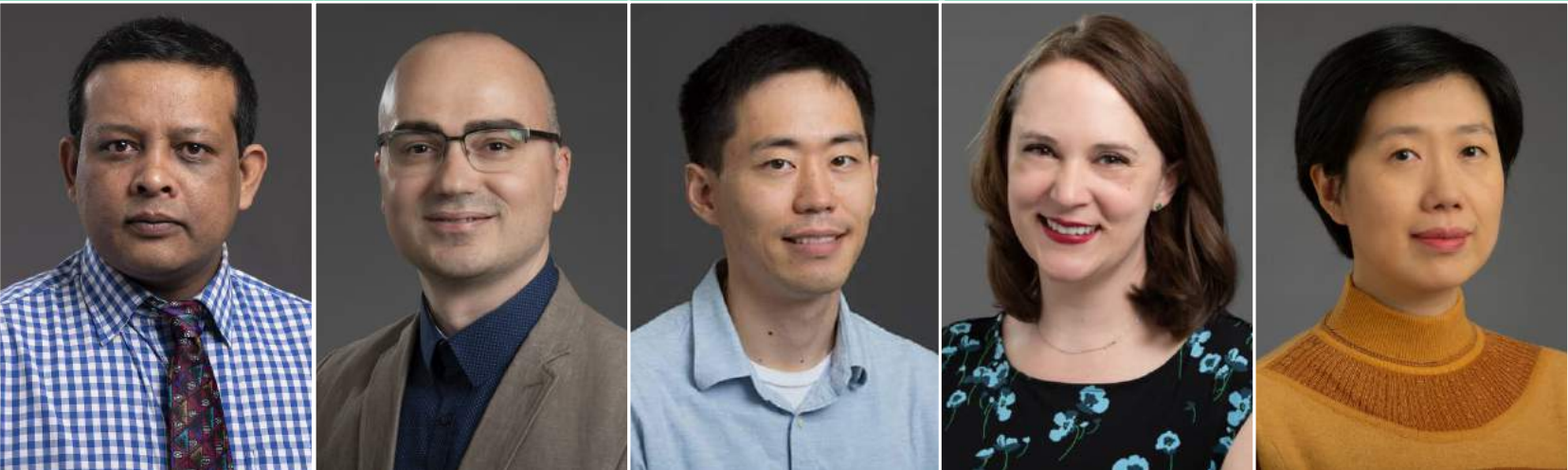
TYPE OF FUNDING	AMOUNT
Mentee as Principal Investigator	
Federal	\$12,484,650
Non-Federal	\$2,402,159
Total	\$14,886,809
Mentee as Co-Investigator	
Federal	\$5,927,520
Non-Federal	\$160,333
Total	\$6,087,853
Total Federal Funding	\$18,412,170
Total Non-Federal Funding	\$2,562,492
TOTAL	\$20,974,662

In fiscal year 2021, 35 mentees (total of 96 grants) reported funding, either as principal investigators or co-investigators. Fifty-nine grants were received from federal sources, including 57 from the National Institutes of Health and two from other federal agencies.

The table on the left hand side shows the distribution of grants as principal investigators and co-investigators. It also shows funding from both federal and non-federal sources. Additionally, mentees published 191 journal articles and presented 178 podium talks and 110 posters.

Rush Mentoring Programs

Class of 2021 Cohn Fellows



Vaskar Das, PhD

Assistant Professor
Department of Anesthesiology
Rush Medical College

Frank C. Ko, PhD

Assistant Professor
Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology
Rush Medical College

Klodian Dhana, MD, PhD

Assistant Professor
Department of Internal Medicine
(Division of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition)
Rush Medical College

Lai Wang, MD, PhD

Assistant Professor
Department of Internal Medicine
(Division of Rheumatology)
Rush Medical College

Colleen Stiles-Shields, PhD

Assistant Professor
Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
Rush Medical College

Cohn Fellows

Every year the Cohn Family Foundation provides grant support to junior faculty at Rush University who are mentees in the Rush Research Mentoring Program. The Cohn Fellowship allows mentees to gather preliminary data for research proposals and continue engagement in research activities.

As of June 30, 2021, 35 mentees had completed their Cohn fellowship. Below you can learn more about the Class of 2021 Cohn Fellows:

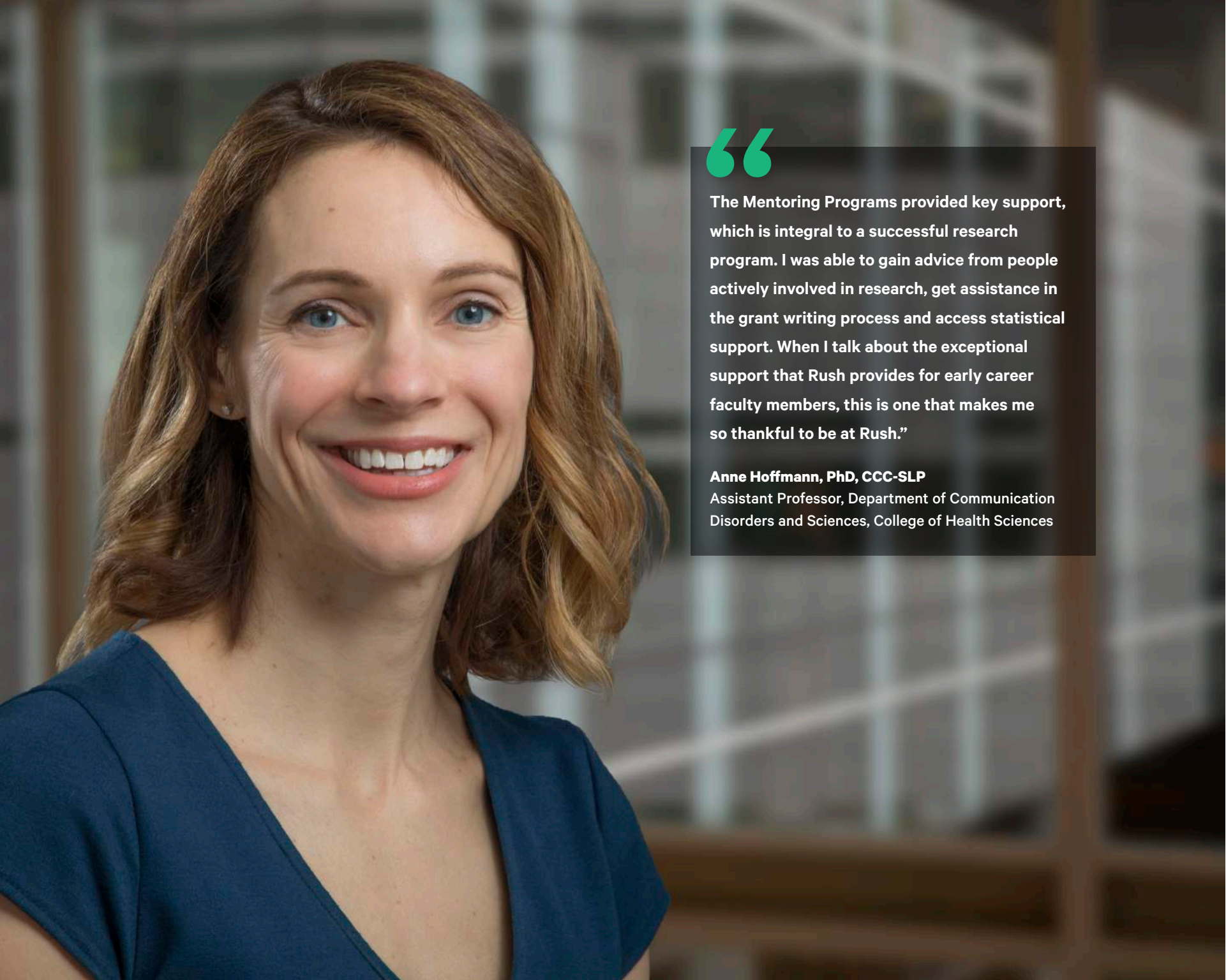
Vaskar Das, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Department of Anesthesiology at Rush Medical College and is participating in research with Asokumar Buvanendran, MD; Jeffrey Kroin, PhD; and Robert McCarthy, PharmD. He is currently working on National Institutes of Health funded pain research as a co-investigator. His research has focused on new non-opioid treatments for acute and chronic pain by following the key energy sensor AMPK (adenosine mono-phosphate activated kinase) and the pain-relieving effect of the ketamine metabolite (2R,6R)-hydroxynorketamine. His Cohn Fellowship research had assessed the pain-relieving efficiency and mechanisms of AMPK activators in peripheral tissue injury pain.

Klodian Dhana, MD, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Department of Internal Medicine (Division of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition) at Rush Medical College. He joined Rush University in July of 2018 after completing his postdoctoral training at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. His research focuses on the epidemiology and the prevention of chronic diseases. Notably, he investigates the role of clinical and lifestyle risk factors on cognitive health and Alzheimer’s disease. The Cohn Fellowship enabled him to determine the impact of lifestyle factors, such as diet and physical activities, in slowing the rate of cognitive decline among stroke survivors as they age.

Frank C. Ko, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology at Rush Medical College. His research interest is in the musculo-skeletal system, with particular emphasis on determining the source and mechanisms of bone regeneration. He uses state-of-the-art imaging and genetic approaches to trace several anatomically distinct skeletal stem cells during bone healing. His Cohn Fellowship research had further expanded on this work, which had enhanced our understanding of bone regeneration and led to the development of novel therapies to improve orthopedic care, such as joint replacement or fracture healing.

Colleen Stiles-Shields, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Section of Community Behavioral Health and the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Rush Medical College. Her research focuses on using digital mental health technology to improve mental and behavioral health for the pediatric populations, particularly for those in underserved communities. Her Cohn Fellowship research focused on amplifying the voices of teens and caregivers of teens from the West and South Sides of Chicago. Namely, determining the unmet mental and behavioral health needs of teens and their communities, as well as exploring teen and caregiver smartphone uses and concerns to inform clinical research efforts to better reach and serve teens through the delivery mechanisms of apps and smartphones.

Lai Wang, MD, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Division of Rheumatology in the Department of Internal Medicine at Rush Medical College. Her research interest focuses on combining genetic, biochemical, cell and molecular biology approaches to explore underlying mechanisms and innovative interventions in musculoskeletal disorders and injuries. Her current research in the Laboratory for Translational Research in Osteoarthritis focuses on molecular pathways of osteoarthritis pain, as well as the role of intra-articular sensory innervation in the onset and progression of osteoarthritis. Her Cohn Fellowship research project had investigated on whether peripheral neuronal Notch signaling contributes to joint pain in a murine surgical model of osteoarthritis.



The Mentoring Programs provided key support, which is integral to a successful research program. I was able to gain advice from people actively involved in research, get assistance in the grant writing process and access statistical support. When I talk about the exceptional support that Rush provides for early career faculty members, this is one that makes me so thankful to be at Rush.”

Anne Hoffmann, PhD, CCC-SLP
Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences, College of Health Sciences

Additional Mentoring Programs

The Office of Mentoring Programs offers three programs that complement the Rush Research Mentoring Program, which provides additional professional development and resources to faculty members.

Rush Educational Mentoring Program

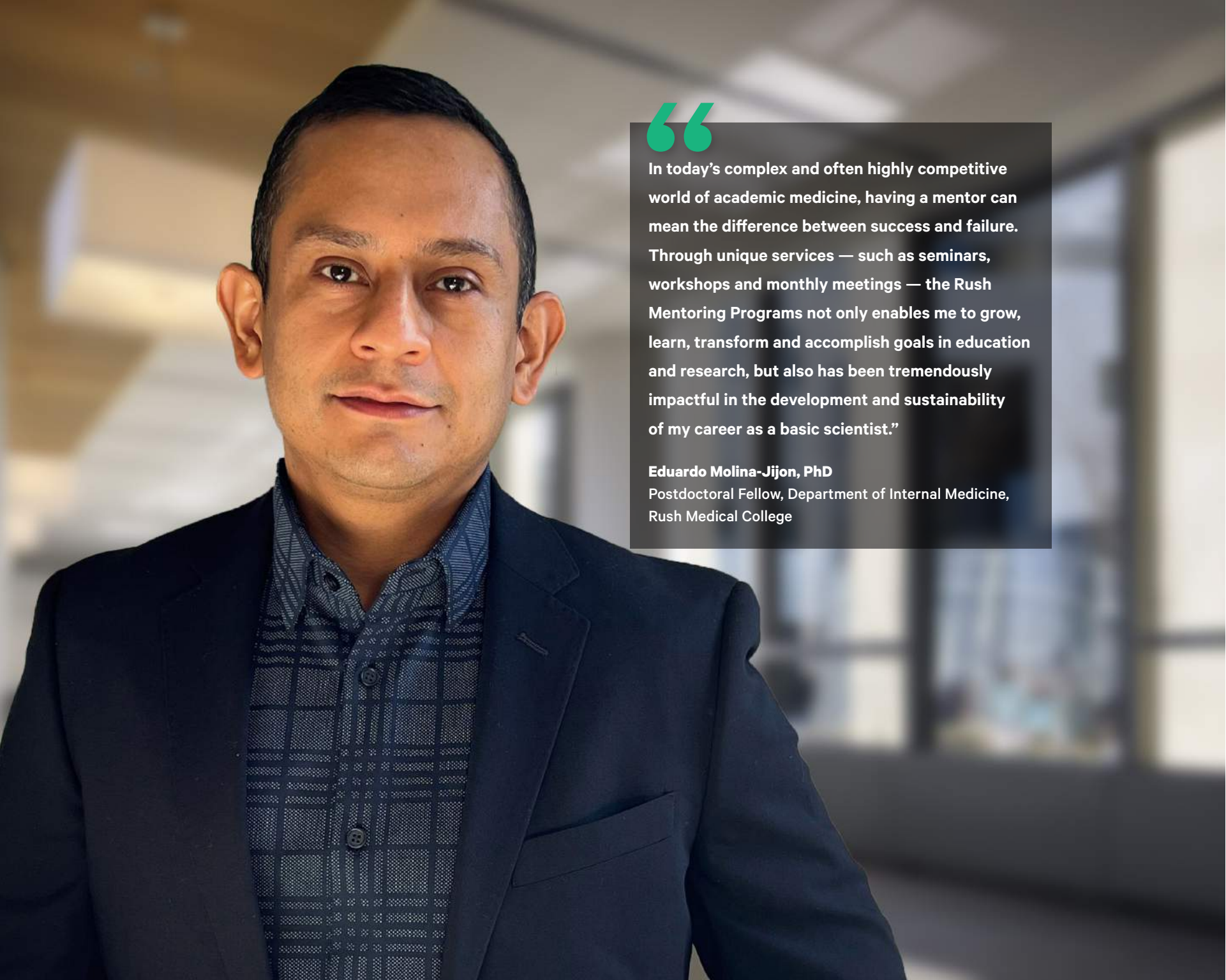
The Rush Educational Mentoring Program was established to help educators at Rush University and John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County to build and strengthen their teaching portfolios. Even educators need additional training and borrowed wisdom. This program offers a Teaching Excellence Bootcamp that is offered on an annual basis. This bootcamp provides intensive training to help educators take their teaching skills to the next level. Below you will find more information about the Teaching Excellence Bootcamp.

Teaching Excellence Bootcamp

In fiscal year 2021, the Offices of Faculty Affairs and Mentoring Programs offered a four-day Teaching Excellence Bootcamp. Faculty members from all four of Rush’s colleges led the lectures and discussions, which helped create effective instructional programs and reach teaching objectives. This bootcamp was open to all Rush University and John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County faculty members. All participants who completed this bootcamp received continuing education credits and a certificate. More than 180 faculty members have participated in all Teaching Excellence Bootcamps.

The outcomes of the bootcamp are directly related to Rush’s I CARE values:

- I: Innovation** — Participants were given the opportunity to bring new ideas and methods to their teaching.
- C: Collaboration** — Participants had worked in multidisciplinary teams throughout the bootcamp.
- A: Accountability** — Participants completed projects to demonstrate what they had learned and their ability to implement it in practice.
- R: Respect** — Participants from different backgrounds and experiences had learned to respect opinions from other people.
- E: Excellence** — Participants will demonstrate excellence in their teaching.



“

In today’s complex and often highly competitive world of academic medicine, having a mentor can mean the difference between success and failure. Through unique services — such as seminars, workshops and monthly meetings — the Rush Mentoring Programs not only enables me to grow, learn, transform and accomplish goals in education and research, but also has been tremendously impactful in the development and sustainability of my career as a basic scientist.”

Eduardo Molina-Jijon, PhD

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Internal Medicine,
Rush Medical College

Rush Postdoctoral Mentoring Program

The Rush Postdoctoral Mentoring Program facilitates community building for postdoctoral fellows at Rush University. At the local level, it provides education to assist new postdoctoral fellows transitioning to Rush and supports those who are leaving Rush as they embark on new careers. It is a community where postdoctoral fellows can share ideas and socialize with their peers.

This program has a postdoctoral committee that comprises of Rush postdoctoral fellows who meets once a month to organize career development seminars, workshops and social events. They collaborate with institutions such as the University of Illinois at Chicago, Northwestern University and the University of Chicago to create a Chicagoland postdoctoral fellow community.

We are the Rush University representative for the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA). The Office of Mentoring Programs supports the national goals of NPA. Since Rush is a sustaining member of the NPA, all postdoctoral fellows are encouraged to join the NPA free of charge.

What Is the National Postdoctoral Association?

The National Postdoctoral Association is a member-driven, nonprofit organization that provides a unique, national voice for postdoctoral scholars. Since 2003, the organization has committed to enhance the quality of the postdoctoral experience in the United States. Visit the National Postdoctoral Association’s website for full details: www.nationalpostdoc.org.

Some Postdoctoral Seminar Topics

- Communication Between Scientists and Clinicians
- Creating Your Elevator Speech
- Green Card Process for International Employees or Researchers
- How to Navigate the Public Media’s Translation of Your Science
- Toolkit: Transition From Academia to Industry

In fiscal year 2021, we had a total of 64 postdoctoral fellows and 10 postdoctoral seminars.



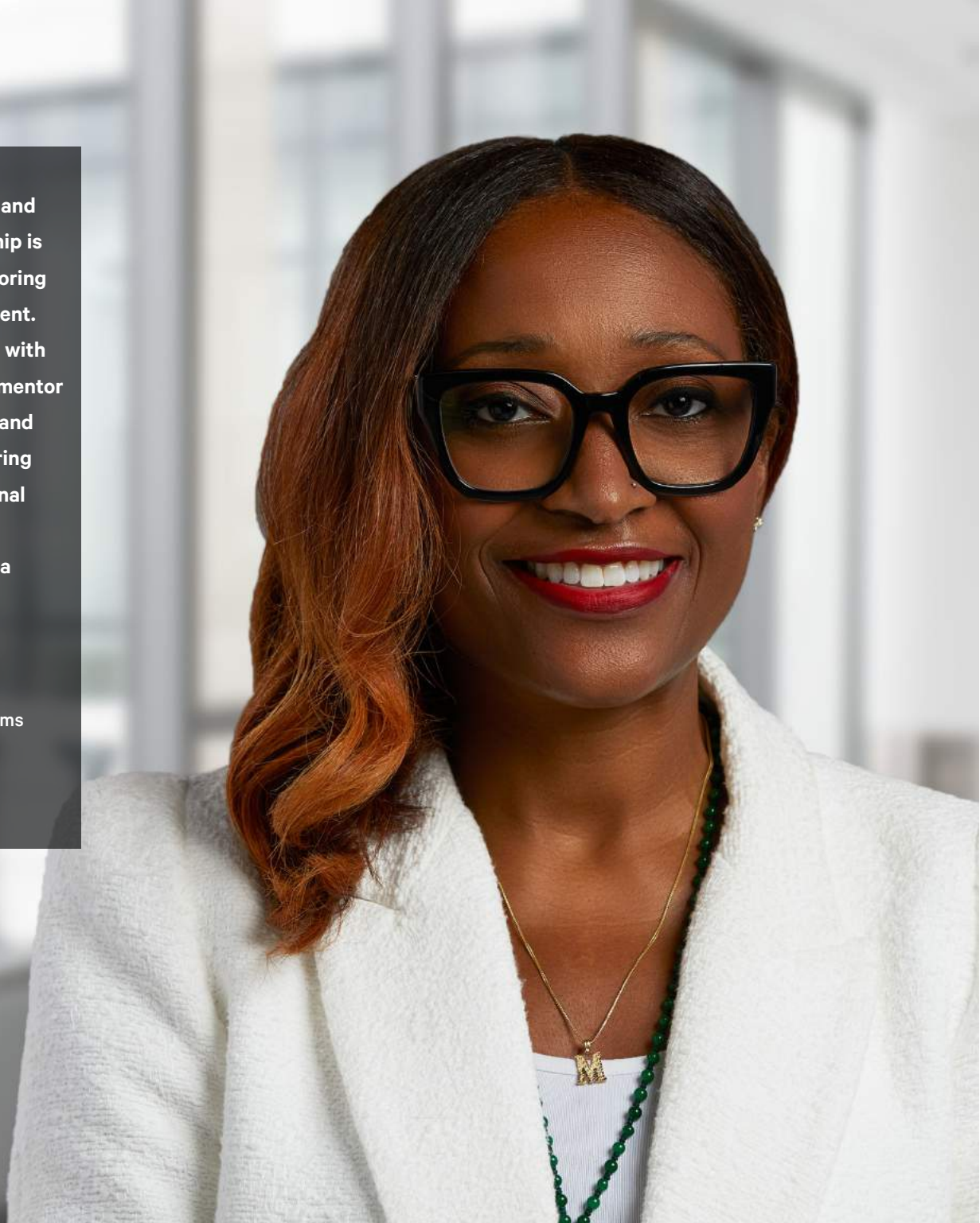
Strategic initiatives are needed to recruit, retain and promote diversity in nursing academia; mentorship is one of many essential initiatives. The Rush Mentoring Program creates an engaging research environment. The program promotes opportunities to network with interprofessional colleagues, facilitates mentee/mentor relationships with nationally recognized leaders and hosts grant writing workshops. The Rush Mentoring Program recognizes the importance of professional research support for early stage and mid-career investigators, and is an important component of a successful academic research career for women of color.”

Monique Reed, PhD, RN, FAAN

Associate Professor, Department of Community, Systems and Mental Health Nursing, College of Nursing

Assistant Dean, Generalist Education

ANA-Illinois Vice President (2020 – 2022)



Rush Women Mentoring Program

The Offices of Faculty Affairs and Mentoring Programs established the Rush Women Mentoring Program to sustain a comprehensive program that helps Rush’s female faculty members pursue career goals within a supportive and engaging environment. In addition, this program helps provide female faculty members with the skills needed to help them manage a wide range of interpersonal and professional interactions.

The Rush Women Mentoring Program Meets the Following Goals:

- Assists female faculty members in their promotion through the academic ranks and into leadership positions
- Facilitates the development of policies and concrete tools to promote work flexibility and work-life balance
- Fosters a coherent system of professional development that accounts for individual needs and career pathways
- Increases visibility of female faculty members and their successes within the Rush community
- Uses peer mentoring to nurture a sense of community among female faculty members
- Uses reinforcement of infrastructure to add to the scholarly knowledge of learning styles in the medical sciences

The Rush Women Mentoring Program Has Two Facets:

1. Junior female faculty members are matched with senior female faculty members based on their profile preferences survey. Guidelines are provided to help maximize their meeting productivity and create objectives based on mentees’ specific needs. The relationship is driven by the junior faculty members. Currently, we have approximately 60 junior-senior faculty member pairs. The junior-senior faculty member pairs meet every six months to discuss about challenges that they had encountered, how the program can improve and celebrate successes.
2. The program enhances a sense of belonging among female faculty members by bringing together program members and the Rush community once a month for a seminar series focused on professional development. More than 1,000 people have attended the seminar series since the program had started. The Rush Women Mentoring Program is starting new initiatives to retain and advance more female faculty members at Rush.



It is tempting to put your first mentor on a pedestal as the ultimate role model. However, for an effective lifelong mentorship, it is like in the African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Different mentors have different strengths.”

Alfonso Torquati, MD, MSCI, FACS
Helen Shedd Keith Professor and Chairperson,
Department of Surgery, Rush Medical College



Faculty Development Bootcamps

The Offices of Faculty Affairs and Mentoring Programs is deeply committed to offering outstanding opportunities for the professional growth of our faculty. We have created innovative, continuing education-eligible bootcamps that address crucial leadership and professional issues for faculty in different stages of their careers.

To support the professional growth of our faculty, the Offices of Faculty Affairs and Mentoring Programs offered bootcamps designed for all stages of an academic career. In fiscal year 2021, we offered a three-day Early Career Faculty Development Bootcamp for early career (instructors and assistant professors) faculty members and a three-day Mid-Career Faculty Development Bootcamp for mid-career (associate professors and professors) faculty members.

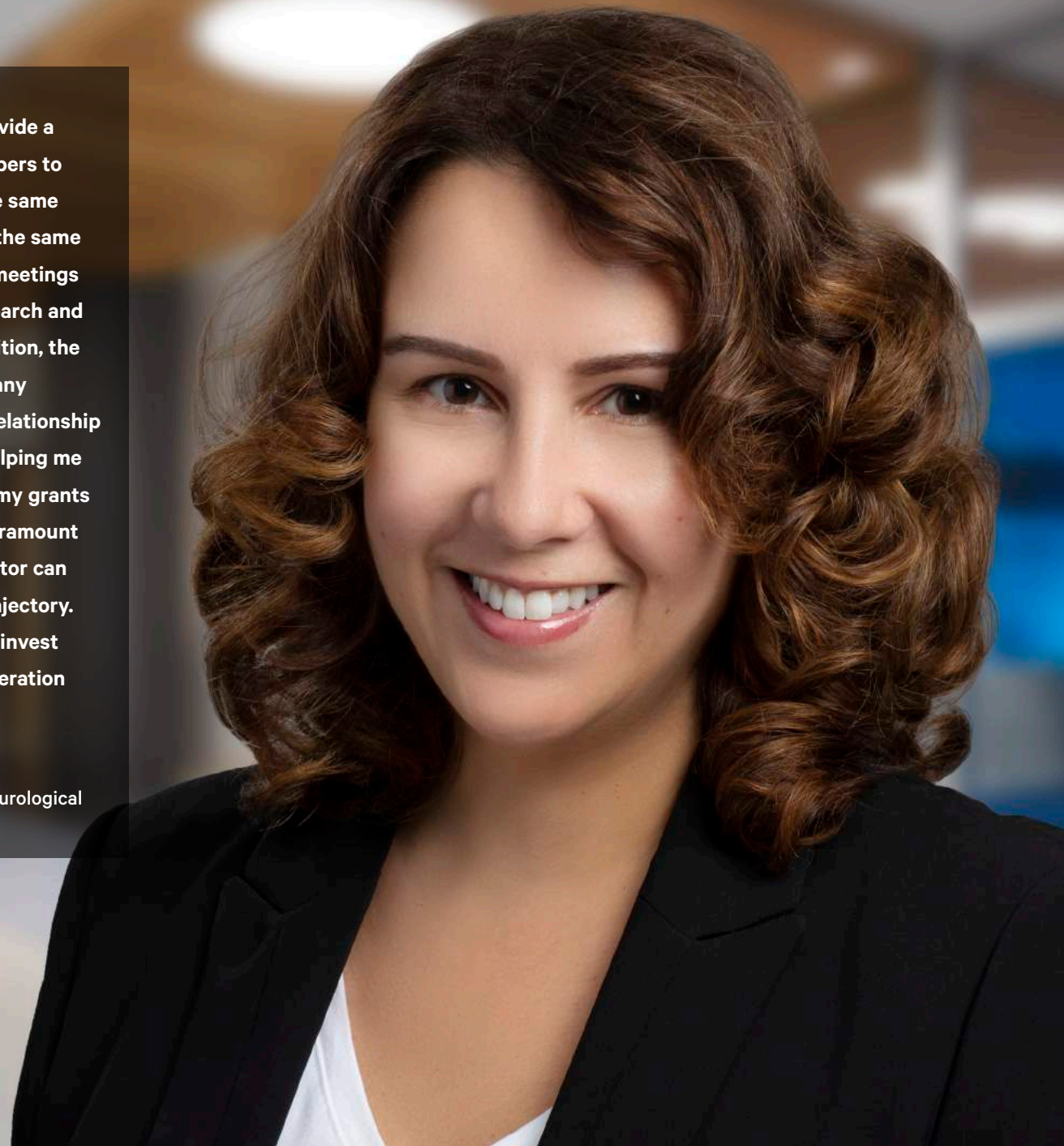
The bootcamps focused on gaining leadership skills and experience, creating a strong portfolio of academic achievement and finding a balance between one's professional and personal life. These faculty development bootcamps will continue to be offered on an annual basis. More than 200 faculty members participated in the early and mid-career faculty development bootcamps.

“

The Rush Mentoring Programs provide a great opportunity for faculty members to network with others who are at the same stages of their careers and facing the same challenges. Lab and clinical track meetings provide a platform for sharing research and establishing collaborations. In addition, the Rush Mentoring Programs offer many resources. I developed a working relationship with a medical illustrator who is helping me create schematics and figures for my grants and manuscripts. Mentorship is paramount for success in academia and a mentor can completely change one's career trajectory. I have great respect for those who invest their time into fostering a new generation of scientists and physicians.”

Liudmila Romanova, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Neurological Sciences, Rush Medical College



Office of Faculty Affairs

Armour Academic Center
600 S. Paulina St., Suite 1044
Chicago, IL 60612

faculty_affairs@rush.edu
www.rushu.rush.edu/about/faculty-affairs

Office of Mentoring Programs

Armour Academic Center
600 S. Paulina St., Suite 1037
Chicago, IL 60612

mentoringprograms@rush.edu
www.rushu.rush.edu/mentoringprogram



Susan Chubinskaya, PhD

Vice Provost
Office of Faculty Affairs
(312) 942-6306
susanna_chubinskaya@rush.edu



Amarjit S. Viridi, PhD

Director
Office of Mentoring Programs
(312) 563-3146
amarjit_viridi@rush.edu



Jeannette Hui, MPH

Academic Program Coordinator
Office of Mentoring Programs
(312) 563-3130
jeannette_hui@rush.edu



Rush Medical College • College of Nursing • College of Health Sciences • The Graduate College