

## Group on Research Advancement and Development (GRAND) News and Business

### From Our Chair

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Richard Kennedy, PhD  
GRAND Chair  
2019-2020

In spite of the year being bisected by the COVID-19 pandemic, GRAND has continued to serve its members and our research communities. It has been my honor and pleasure to serve as chair of GRAND during this period. Early in the year the GRAND Steering and Program Committees met twice a month to both plan for our annual meeting and discuss topics important to our institutions. For example, we sent a letter to the AAMC Board of Directors and President Skorton advocating for greater emphasis on research; there is no doubt that this communication on behalf of GRAND had a significant impact on AAMC's strategic planning process. We also initiated discussions with David Skorton about the importance of Physician Scientists and the career development of all scientists; concurrently a session addressing this topic was organized for the AAMC Annual meeting in November and a new committee was formed to support directors of Physician

Scientist Training Programs. GRAND also provided several AAMC policy positions and responses to federal requests for information, including: the Association's [response to NIH on cohort hiring and inclusive excellence](#); to the [White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's Committee on Research Environments](#); and to [NIH for strategic planning for research infrastructure \(a letter submitted jointly by AAMC and the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges\)](#). Finally, the Program Committee established a timely and exciting program for our 2020 annual spring meeting, which unfortunately had to be cancelled because of the pandemic. Sessions led by thought leaders in critical areas such as diversity/inclusion, maintaining an effective workforce, sexual harassment, and new possibilities for using clinical data for research were organized with time made available for effective networking and attendee participation. Even though the meeting was cancelled, we have been able to reschedule some of these speakers for our monthly webinars, while others will hopefully be added to next year's program planning. During the last half of my tenure, we learned to function in our new reality and saw the GRAND community come together for community calls twice a week (with 60-90 people on each call). These calls made it possible for participants to share resources, information, and advice on topics such as safe and efficient approaches for returning to work. One GRAND member stated that the calls are a "tiny piece of sanity in a pretty crazy time".

### Outgoing GRAND Steering Committee Members

We sincerely appreciate your dedication and exceptional service on the GRAND Steering Committee!



**Curt I. Civin, MD**  
University of Maryland  
School of Medicine



**Antony Rosen, MD**  
Johns Hopkins  
School of Medicine



**Dushyantha Jayaweera, MD**  
University of Miami Miller  
School of Medicine



**Stephen P. Sugrue, PhD**  
University of Florida

## Incoming GRAND Steering Committee Members

It is our pleasure to announce the selections for the 2020-2023 GRAND Steering Committee.



**Connie Lee, PhD**  
University of Chicago



**Andrea Giuffrida, PhD**  
UT Health Science  
Center San Antonio



**Paul Hauptman, MD**  
University of Tennessee  
Graduate School of Medicine



**Andrew W. Taylor, PhD**  
Boston University  
School of Medicine

### 2020-2021 Program Committee Liaisons



**Celia Maxwell, MD, FACP**  
Howard University  
College of Medicine



**Michael Zwick, PhD**  
Emory University



**Timothy Schacker, MD**  
University of Minnesota

### GRAND Chair-elect 2020-2021



**Reginald W. Miller, DVM, DACLAM**  
Icahn School of Medicine  
at Mount Sinai

**Richard Kennedy** - It has truly been an honor to chair the GRAND Steering Committee this year with help from Kenira Thompson and Steve Sugrue. Today, I am happy to pass the gavel to Kenira; her energy, commitment and experience will ensure that GRAND continues to support our members, trainees and programs. Because of our current situation we will mail Kenira her gavel and personally recognize her when we meet again. I will continue to serve as past chair for the GRAND Steering Committee as Kenira assumes the chair and Reg Miller steps up as chair-elect and chair of the Program Committee.



**Kenira Thompson, PhD**  
GRAND Chair, 2020-2021

*In the last few years, research at Ponce Health Sciences University, along with life throughout Puerto Rico has been in repeated upheaval due to Hurricane Maria in 2017, devastating earthquakes in early 2020 and now like the rest of the world the COVID-19 pandemic. After rebuilding our research programs twice and now a third time, I can tell you that the resiliency of the community is crucial to pulling through and even with so much loss during this crisis we've seen that the rebuilding can reveal strength. In 2020 -2021 the GRAND community will be dealing with a social and economic environment that we have never seen and will be implementing solutions that we would not have imagined. I hope that GRAND can be a resource and a resilient community to help in that rebuilding process. I've highly valued the connection that GRAND has helped me form with you and I hope that I will be able to meet you at our spring meeting in 2021.*

One final note – As I pass leadership to Kenira and Reg, I want to acknowledge the dedication, effort and impact of the AAMC staff who support GRAND. These individuals are invaluable to the activities of our affinity group and the research needs of our institutions.

**Ross McKinney, Jr., MD** – Chief Scientific Officer  
**Philip Alberti, PhD** - Sr. Director, Health Equity Research & Policy  
**Rebekah Corlew, PhD** – Director, Constituent Engagement, GREAT, GRAND, GWIMS  
**Amanda Field, PhD** – Senior Science Policy Specialist  
**Stephen J. Heinig** - Director, Science Policy  
**Alexandra Ommaya, D.Sc** - Sr. Director, Clinical Effectiveness and Implementation Research  
**Emily Outtarac** – Sr. Administrative Associate

**Heather Pierce, JD, MPH** - *Sr. Director, Science Policy and Regulatory Counsel*  
**Tannaz Rasouli, MPH** – *Sr. Director, Government Relations*  
**Felisha Tankard** – *Constituent Engagement Specialist*  
**Christa Wagner** – *Senior Legislative Analyst*  
**Jodi Yellin, PhD** – *Director, Science Policy*

Please join me in a big **Thank You** for all they do.

- Richard

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