

## FALL/WINTER 2022 ISSUE

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### Committee Mission Statement

To develop and enhance the academic environment for women faculty and trainees through networking, mentorship, professional development, and advocacy.



### MEET MAIA HIGHTOWER, MD, MBA, MPH

**Executive Vice President  
and Chief Digital &  
Technology Officer**

Maia Hightower, MD, MBA, MPH, an internist and accomplished healthcare IT executive, has been named the University of Chicago Medicine's new Executive Vice President and Chief Digital & Technology Officer effective August 15, 2022.

Dr. Hightower is CEO and co-founder of Equality AI, a startup that helps clinical teams achieve health equity through responsible AI and machine-learning operations. Until January 2022, she served as chief medical information officer (CMIO) and associate chief medical officer at University of Utah Health. In that role, she led the enterprise's data warehouse, business intelligence/research applications and virtual care teams while being responsible for digital transformation strategy, governance and operations. She also was U of U Health's senior director for health equity, diversity and inclusion. Prior to her work in Utah, Dr. Hightower was CMIO and chief population health officer at University of Iowa Health Care and an associate medical director at Stanford Health Care in California.

In the inaugural role at UChicago Medicine, Dr. Hightower and her team will support the organization's mission by using new digital tools and information technology to improve clinical care and outcomes, expand patient engagement and retention, and enhance scientific research. Her leadership will be an essential to propelling the academic health system into the forefront of healthcare digital innovation.

Dr. Hightower earned a medical degree and a master's in public health from the University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry. She did residencies in internal medicine and pediatrics at the University of California, San Diego. She has an MBA from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. →

## MAIA HIGHTOWER, CONTINUED

**WC: What helped you develop leadership skills and be named to leadership positions throughout your career?**

MH: For me, it has been a combination of practical and educational experiences. For example, when I was looking at the leaders of my medical school, I didn't see anyone that represented my community that I am from or that looked like me. I was inspired to become a leader for active representation. As I moved forward in my medical education and training, I realized that in order for my impact to scale across an organization or beyond, I needed to have a seat at the table. With that, I was determined to volunteer for leadership roles when there were opportunities, even if it was difficult.

Over time, I learned to be comfortable being uncomfortable, especially as a woman of color. Once I had a seat at the table where there were people very different from me, initially I was quiet, but then I realized that I needed to be sure there was diversity in voice, which I think is one of the most valuable things that I bring to my position.

From an educational perspective, when I went to business school, I learned leadership skills and applied them in the academic center. My style of leadership is a framework-based approach; I find that having methodology has helped me become a more effective leader. That in combination with finding my voice and expressing opinions, has been important to my success.

**WC: What have been your experiences with mentorship throughout your career?**

MH: I have been very fortunate to have had mentors and sponsors which have helped me to be aware of leadership opportunities as well as to provide coaching for me on how to be a better physician and leader.

I try to be a sponsor for others in finding opportunities for my mentees. So much a part of being a strong mentor is recognizing the potential in others that they may not initially see in themselves and providing encouragement to help mentees to strive for the next step, especially in difficult situations.

**WC: What advice do you have for women faculty and trainees in the Department of Medicine?**

MH: Get comfortable being uncomfortable; this applies to all aspects of life including professional goals, parenting, leadership, exercise, etc. Over time, things that were uncomfortable in the past will not be uncomfortable anymore.

**WC: What are your goals and vision in your new role as UChicago Medicine Chief Digital & Technology Officer?**

MH: I want to ensure that we are leveraging what makes UChicago so special, but also providing what the world needs for digital health. My long-term goal is to launch a Center for Digital Health Equity. I want to change the way we approach digital health. Often in healthcare technology, we design solutions to address the problems of average users. However, I believe that the framework and solutions should be aimed towards those that are the most marginalized and vulnerable. My vision is to bridge the digital technology gap. ■



## WOMEN IN THE NEWS: FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

**Christine Bestvina, MD, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Section of Hematology/Oncology**

Dr. Christine Bestvina is an Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Section of Hematology/Oncology. She completed her medical degree at The University of Pennsylvania, followed by internal medicine residency at Duke. She then completed her hematology/oncology fellowship in the DOM. Dr. Bestvina is a busy clinician specializing in lung cancer.

Regarding her research, Dr. Bestvina is a clinical trialist focused on the interplay between immunotherapy and radiation. Under the mentorship of **Dr. Steve Chmura**, she co-leads the COSINR clinical trial of ipilimumab, nivolumab, and stereotactic body radiation therapy for metastatic non-small cell lung cancer. Additionally, she is the medical oncology co-PI for the national trial run through the Alliance: "A Randomized Phase II/III Trial of Modern Immunotherapy-Based Systemic Therapy, with or without SBRT for PD-L1-Negative, Advanced Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer." Exploring the same principal of synergistic radiation and immunotherapy in small cell lung cancer, she co-leads with **Dr. Aditya Juloori** the clinical trial DARES: A Phase II Trial of Durvalumab and Ablative Radiation in Extensive-Stage Small Cell Lung Cancer. This is a multicenter study led by the University of Chicago.

Regarding translational efforts, Dr. Bestvina led a research project with **Dr. Misha Tran** (Section of Hospital Medicine) on the concordance of ctDNA and tissue molecular profiling, which found discordance in over 50% of paired samples at time of progression. Previously this had not been published, and has implications for clinical practice in lung cancer. Additionally, she has worked with **Chuan He, PhD**, on the methylation of ctDNA in patients with EGFR lung cancer.

On a personal note, Dr. Bestvina has a 16 month-old daughter. She and her husband, gastroenterologist Dr. Harold Boutte, are foodies and cocktail enthusiasts. She is a runner, and recently took up cycling after a biking trip in Italy. ■



## TRAINEE SPOTLIGHT



### Internal Medicine Academic Half Day: Reproductive Health Series Mary Acosta, MD and Lauren He, MD, Internal Medicine Chief Residents

Academic Half Days are built into the Internal Medicine curriculum as a way of highlighting important multidisciplinary topics within medicine that overlap with other specialties. The Internal Medicine Residency Program held a Reproductive Health Series this year. This included small group break-out sessions led by different leaders in Women's Health, including **Dr. Jen Rusiecki** (Assistant Professor of Medicine), **Tamar Polonsky** (Associate Professor of Medicine, Director of Preventive Cardiology), **Catherine Hennessey** (Family Planning Fellow, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology), **Rebeca Ortiz-Worthington** (Assistant Professor of Medicine), and **Maya Faison** (Chief Resident, Internal Medicine-Pediatrics). We also held a program-wide lecture on contraception by **Dr. Hillary McLaren** (Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology) as well as an overview on the STAMPP HTN – systemic treatment and management of postpartum HTN program by **Dr. Sarosh Rana** (Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Section Chief of Maternal-Fetal Medicine). The residents had a great time learning more about the different aspects of reproductive health and current measures being taken at the University of Chicago Medicine to improve the health of our patients. ■



## NEW FACULTY



### TENZIN CHODEN, MD Assistant Professor of Medicine (Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Nutrition)

Dr. Choden earned her medical degree from Eastern Virginia Medical School and completed her residency at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital. She completed GI fellowship at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and an advanced fellowship in IBD at The University of Chicago. Dr. Choden's interests lie in the care of older IBD patients and investigating the role of frailty in IBD.



### HEATHER LEEPER, MD, MS Assistant Professor of Medicine (Geriatrics & Palliative Medicine)

Dr. Leeper earned her medical degree from Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. She completed her residency at the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics and her fellowships at the Mayo Clinic and the University of Illinois College of Medicine Peoria. Dr. Leeper has a special interest in neuro-palliative care.



### ZAINAB OBAIDI, MD Assistant Professor of Medicine (Nephrology)

Dr. Obaidi received her MBBS from the University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates and completed her residency training at Southern Illinois University. She is a recent graduate of the Nephrology Fellowship Program at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Dr. Obaidi's clinical interests are focused on glomerular disease and thrombotic microangiopathies.



### JADE PAGKAS-BATHER, MD, MPH Assistant Professor of Medicine (Infectious Diseases & Global Health)

Dr. Pagkas-Bather earned her medical degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago and completed her internal medicine residency training at MacNeal Hospital. She is a graduate of the infectious diseases fellowship program at the University of Washington where she also earned her MPH in epidemiology. Dr. Pagkas-Bather is interested in HIV prevention efforts among minority men who have sex with men (MSM) using pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). She is also interested in ways to combine PrEP with other STI prevention strategies among this population through community outreach, and collaboration with local organizations in order to make HIV and STI prevention efforts more patient-centered and less stigmatizing.

## NEW FACULTY, CONTINUED

**MEGAN PROCHASKA, MD, MPH**  
**Assistant Professor (Nephrology)**

Dr. Prochaska received her medical degree from The University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine and is a graduate of the Department of Medicine's Internal Medicine Residency Program. She completed her fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Prochaska's clinical interests are in kidney stones, chronic kidney disease, electrolyte disorders and other general nephrology. Dr. Prochaska's academic interest is in epidemiology of kidney stones and physiologic mechanisms for urine acidification and supersaturation as they relate to kidney stone risk.

**AARTI VENKAT, PHD**  
**Assistant Professor of Medicine (Biomedical Data Science)**

Dr. Venkat received her doctorate degree from The University of Chicago. The goal of Dr. Venkat's research is to develop computational infrastructure and pipelines for large omics datasets to ultimately understand the genetic basis of diseases. She is particularly interested in studying fundamental problems in biology and disease with practical impact on healthcare.

**REBECA ORTIZ WORTHINGTON, MD**  
**Assistant Professor of Medicine (General Internal Medicine)**

Dr. Ortiz Worthington earned her medical degree from The University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine and is a graduate of the Department of Medicine's Internal Medicine Residency Program. She completed her fellowship at UPMC and VA Pittsburgh Healthcare. Dr. Ortiz Worthington has a special interest in women's health and medical education.

**ELIZABETH ZAVALA, MD**  
**Assistant Professor of Medicine (Geriatrics & Palliative Care)**

Dr. Zavala received her medical degree and completed her residency at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She completed her fellowship at Rush University Medical Center. Dr. Zavala's interests are focused on the care of older adults with urinary incontinence.

**PATRICIA ZUCCARO, MD**  
**Assistant Professor of Medicine (Infectious Diseases and Global Health)**

Dr. Zuccaro earned her medical degree from Northwest Ohio Medical University. She completed her residency at Case Western Reserve University – MetroHealth Medical Center and her fellowship at University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center. Dr. Zuccaro is interested in the prevention of healthcare-associated infections and clinical research interventions.

**NEW  
APPOINTMENTS**

**Lisa Vinci, MD** – Associate Vice Chair for Wellness and Engagement  
**Dayle Davenport, MD** – Associate Dean for Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, PSOM

**RECENT  
PROMOTIONS**

Promoted to the rank of Professor – **Amber Pincavage, MD – GIM**  
Promoted to the rank of Associate Professor – **Mengjie Chen, PhD – Genetic Medicine**

**HONORS AND AWARDS****NAMED PROFESSORSHIPS:**

**Bana Jabri, MD, PhD** – Sara and Harold Lincoln Thompson Distinguished Service Professor

**Karen Kim, MD** – Sara and Harold Lincoln Thompson Professor

**Monica Peek, MD, MPH** – Ellen H. Block Professor for Health Justice



## NATIONAL/REGIONAL APPOINTMENTS/ ELECTIONS, HONORS, AND AWARDS

**Monica Peek, MD, MPH** – Elected to the National Academy of Medicine

**Michelle Josephson, MD** – Elected 2023 President, American Society of Nephrology (ASN)

**Arlene Chapman, MD** – Elected to the American Clinical and Climatological Association

**Wendy Stock, MD** – Elected as Councilor for the American Society of Hematology



## 2022 DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE AWARDS

### EDUCATION AWARDS:

Clinical Teacher of the Year: **Jeanne Farnan, MD, MHPE (HM)**

Postgraduate Education: **Neda Laiteerapong, MD, MS (GIM)**

Medical Resident Teaching Awards: **Kamala Cotts, MD (GIM) & Krysta Wolfe, MD (P/CC)**

EMED Mentorship Award: **Navneet Cheema, MD (EM)**

### CLINICAL AWARDS:

Outstanding Clinical Service Award: **Iazsmin Ventura, MD (Rheum)**

Patient Satisfaction: **Mindy Schwartz, MD (GIM)**

### CLINICAL AWARDS (CONTINUED):

Procedure Activity: **Uzma Siddiqui, MD (GI)**

Evaluation & Management: **Sarah Stein, MD (Derm)**

Overall Clinical Activity: **Uzma Siddiqui, MD (GI)**

### SPECIAL AWARDS:

Diversity Award: **Sonali Paul, MD, MS (GI)**

Leif B. Sorensen Research Award: **Arshiya Baig, MD, MPH (IM)**

Arthur Rubenstein, MD Mentorship Award: **Sonali Smith, MD (Heme/Onc)**



## 2022 BSD DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS

Distinguished Leader in Diversity and Inclusion – **Monica Peek, MD, MPH**

Distinguished Investigator – **Bhakti Patel, MD**

Distinguished Leader in Program Innovation – **Tia Kostas, MD**

Distinguished Educator and Leader – **Stacie Levine, MD**



## NEW FEDERAL/SELECT NON-FEDERAL GRANTS

**Arlene Chapman, MD** – Whole-Room Calorimeter (1 S10 OD028674-01A1)

**Arlene Chapman, MD** – MRI Risk Classification in Children and Young Adults with ADPKD (1 R56 DK133427-01)

**Bana Jabri, MD, PhD** – Tissue Destruction and healing in Celiac Disease (1 RC2 DK133947-01)

**Karen Kim, MD** – Illinois Colorectal Reduction Campaign (IL-CRC) (IDPH)

**Mai Tuyet Pho, MD** – Promoting remote harm reduction and secondary services in rural settings (PROMOTE) (1 R01 CA273914-01)

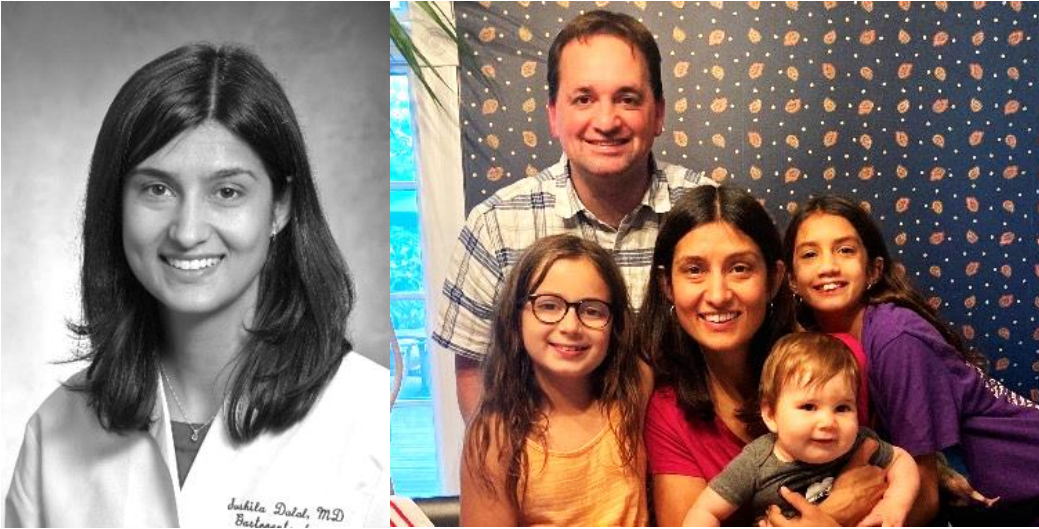
**Rochelle Naylor, MD** – Patient-centered adaptive clinical decision support for implementing precision medicine for maturity-onset diabetes of the young (American Diabetes Association)

**Anna Volerman Beaser** – iACTIVATE: Investigators Advancing via Coaching at the Transition to Independence: a Value-Adding Team Experience (1 R01 GM147154-01)



## THE BALANCING ACT:

HOW DO WOMEN BALANCE ACADEMIC SUCCESS WITH HOME AND PERSONAL LIFE? WHAT ADVICE WOULD WOMEN GIVE OTHER WOMEN?



**SUSHILA DALAL, MD**

**The Balancing Act:  
Gastroenterologist  
and Mom**

### PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Dr. Sushila Dalal is an assistant professor of medicine in the section of Gastroenterology specializing in inflammatory bowel diseases. She has a particular interest in pre-conception counseling and sexual dysfunction in IBD as well as in the transition for pediatric to adult GI care for IBD patients. She participates in translational research in ulcerative colitis patients who have undergone total colectomy and have a J pouch.

### WORK-LIFE BALANCE

I have three children (ages 11, 8, and 15 months). My husband is a data scientist, and since the start of the pandemic, works from home full time. I am fortunate that he is able to do most of the school and daycare drop offs and pick-ups. We are both from the northwest suburbs and our parents are able and willing to provide emergency childcare when needed. I try to make my time at work as efficient as possible. I chose to leave as early as I can, and do some of the computer work later in the evening and or earlier in the morning so that I can maximize my time with the kids.

### ADVICE

- 1. Time is one of your most valuable commodities and isn't unlimited.**

I try to keep in mind how much time various commitments will take me to do them and how much they would potentially take me from family time before saying yes or no.

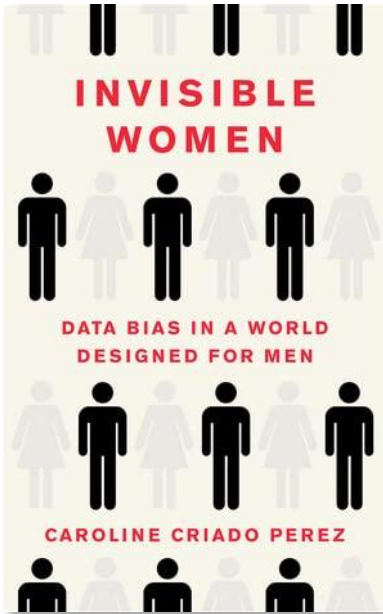
- 2. It may not be possible to balance all the things you want to do in your career and personal life at once,**

but it may be possible to do many different things at different times throughout your life. When my first daughter was born, I stepped away from research to focus on building my clinical practice and spending time with her. As my clinical practice is now more developed, I feel more able to focus on pursuing research goals. ■





## BOOK CORNER



*“Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed by Men”* by Caroline Criado Perez is a sweeping review of how scientific research and data systematically excludes females and has resulted in a world that is custom-made for only one sex. Caroline Criado Perez is a British journalist with a master’s degree in Gender Studies from the London School of Economics and a feminist activist. She has led numerous campaigns to increase female representation, including a remarkable effort to ensure that at least one historically prominent woman was displayed on an English banknote. This book is her first, and encyclopedically categorizes different areas in society with data bias.

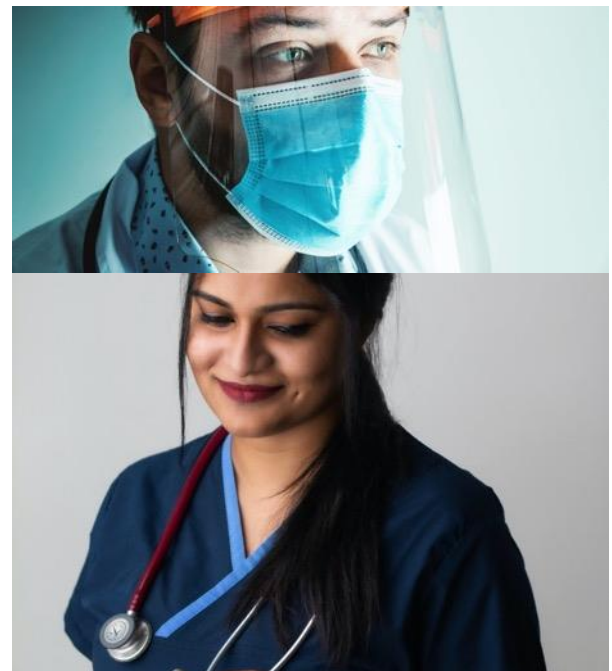
The book is structured into six broad parts in a total of 16 chapters. **Each part focuses on a distinct aspect of life – daily life, workplace, world of medicine, planning, and public life.** This book is full of well-researched examples of sex bias. One interesting example is the sex-based difference in injury from car accidents –females have a 47% higher likelihood of being seriously injured and 17% higher likelihood of dying than males. She traces the cause of this difference to car crash test dummies being based on the average male. In particular, the section on medicine is fascinating. **One example of sex bias she provides is the process of generic drug approvals, which are generally tested in males who have more stable hormone levels.** This book can be seen as biased, presenting only the views of a sex-biased world, but when the world has been focused on one sex for so long, a little 262-page book deserves attention. This book is highly recommended, especially for females who are wondering why they don’t seem to fit in the world, and males who are interested in widening their world view, and all scientists who are interested in health equity.

— Summary by Neda Laiterapong, MD, MS

## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN FEEDBACK FOR IM RESIDENTS

Billick, M., Rassos, J. Ginsburg, S. (2022). Dressing the part: Gender differences in residents’ experiences of feedback in internal medicine. *Academic Medicine*, 97(3), 406-413.

In this qualitative study conducted in Canada of IM PGY1-3 residents at one program in Toronto, the authors’ objective was to assess the difference in experience and response to the experience between men and women IM residents of being assessed and receiving feedback. Residents participated in focus groups, grouped by level of training and gender. The authors found that the experiences of receiving feedback between men and women were very different. **Women noted that much of the feedback they received targeted “dressing the part” (i.e. wearing a white coat, stethoscope and demure clothing). They also received conflicting feedback regarding lack of and/or too much assertiveness.** Both of these themes were reported rarely by men. The authors conclude that feedback given by supervising physicians to residents is often outside of standard measures, particularly for women reflecting gender bias. They also suggest that their findings support opportunities for interventions aimed at acknowledging, understanding, and addressing gender bias. As physicians working in an academic environment, we should be aware of these biases when assessing and providing feedback to learners. ■



## RECENT DOM WOMEN'S COMMITTEE EVENTS

DOM WC Grand Rounds – 10/25/22. Valerie E. Stone, MD, MPH, Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Department of Medicine, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School. "Advancing Diversity and Anti-Racism: A Framework and Strategy for Academic Departments of Medicine"

Dr. Stone used practical examples from her leadership role as Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) at Brigham to motivate attendees to make similar changes at UChicago Medicine. She reviewed a list of over 40 Anti-Racism Priorities for Brigham's Residency Programs including having **24 hour interpreter access, publishing annual data for the percent of Black/Latinx students, residents, faculty and staff, and allowing underrepresented in medicine residents to participate in hiring committees.**

Dr. Stone noted the importance of leadership committed to supporting these changes both financially and politically. She participated in a small group session afterward with the Departments' Women's and Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committees where she reviewed her own path through medicine.



## UPCOMING DOM WOMEN'S COMMITTEE EVENTS

### MacLean Ethics Gender Equity Lecture Series

January 11, 2023 "Gender Equity and DEIB at Dartmouth Health" by Joanne Conroy, MD CEO and President Dartmouth Health

January 18, 2023 "Publish or Perish: Women as Authors and Peer Reviewers in Pediatrics" Lainie Ross, MD, PhD

January 25, 2023 "Panel on Allyship in Gender Equity" by Shikha Jain, MD, AB '03 from Rush, Jeremy Yardley, MD from Brown and David Smith, PhD from Hopkins

February 1, 2023 "Thriving in Medicine: Navigating Adversity in Healthcare" Stella Safo, MD, MPH Assistant Clinical Professor Founder Just Equity for Health Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

February 8, 2023 "Gender equity in medical education: Flourishing or Floundering?" Holly Humphrey, MD '83, MACP President Josiah Macy Foundation

Lecture series held both virtually and in person in P117 from noon to 1pm.

To register for events check website <https://macleanethics.uchicago.edu> ■



## WOMEN AT THE FOREFRONT EDITORIAL BOARD

Julie Oyler, MD  
Adriana Segura Olson, MD, MA.Ed  
Annette Westerberg  
Nancy Zavala

