

# Perspectives



Where the world comes for answers

From the Office of Faculty Development



HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL  
TEACHING HOSPITAL

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***Perspectives* begins 2021 with a discussion on leadership with Dr. Kevin Churchwell, Boston Children's President and next CEO who will begin his new position on 4/1/21**

## **Kevin Churchwell, MD, on Leadership Skills: Continual Learning and Adaptation to Challenges**

### ***When did you decide you wanted to be a leader?***

The decision to be a leader at times isn't based upon what you decide, but what the situation dictates. I believe many of my leadership skills are based upon not what I decided to do but by what issues/problems I needed to solve that required me to step up as a leader. As my journey as a physician leader progressed, I was increasingly asked to manage problems or deal with difficult situations, and the more situations I dealt with and solved, the more I was asked to solve other issues. Over time, solving different issues made me realize what talents I had that could be developed to make me a better leader.

### ***What skills did you need to learn?***

One of the key skills that I felt that was very important was learning how to listen. Very often, leading means listening to others around and not allowing your own voice to drown out great ideas and important information. The ability to listen to others is a skill I still work on, as well as listening for the right things. What information do I need to gather? Who has the best thoughts and the best ideas in solving a problem or moving the hospital forward?

The example that comes to mind is an instance during a code situation early in my attending career, where the patient didn't survive. I took time afterwards to reflect on what happened and my leadership during the event. I realized I had done more directing than listening to the room. I knew I could do better and I believed that listening better would lead to better outcomes.

***Dr. Churchwell discusses the challenges of 2020, the ongoing pandemic in 2021, and how faculty can prepare for leadership roles on p.2***



**Kevin Churchwell,  
MD**

## **Carlos Estrada, MD, MBA, Appointed Chief of the Department of Urology**

Dr. Estrada succeeds Dr. David Diamond and has assumed the role of Urologist-in-Chief and President of Boston Children's Urological Foundation, Inc, and Board member. See article on p.4.



## **Director's Perspectives, by S. Jean Emans, MD**

As we enter mid-winter, let's refresh ourselves with the prospect of turning the corner on COVID-19 with vaccine distribution. While our lives were upended this past year, everyone's willingness to innovate the way we practice medicine, teach, and conduct research can be applauded. Let's continue to think creatively regarding our professional responsibilities and our worklife balance in 2021. We have highlighted innovation in this February issue; please see Dr. Churchwell's column on leadership (pp. 1 & 2) and our article on the American Sign Language workshops (p.3). Look for opportunities in your immediate environment to develop an innovative or creative approach: does your clinic need a new outreach program or your research lab a reading club? We can become innovators through circumstance! See back cover for our discussion with Elissa Weitzman, ScD, on "Making Science in Fiber Arts," a meet-up group open to the BCH community and an under-the-radar way to encourage problem-solving.

### Kevin Churchwell, MD, on Leadership Skills: Continual Learning and Adaptation to Challenges, continued

#### *What have been the biggest challenges in the past year? What are the biggest challenges for 2021?*

The biggest challenge in the past year, which will continue into 2021, is our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been a one in a hundred-year global emergency and our response to it has been all encompassing. Our response has involved all aspects of the hospital, impacting how we take care of patients, how we protect each other from the virus, how we work in the hospital or remotely, how patients and families access us, and how we communicate information both internal to Boston Children's and to our external community. We've adapted to every challenge, and we will continue to address new changes through 2021. As we come out of COVID-19, we'll continue to evolve in how we take care of patients, work together, build on our opportunities for remote work, tele-medicine, and how we communicate.

#### *What would you recommend to others who are starting their careers and want to be leaders?*

Continue to do the best and learn as much as you possibly can in the job you are currently doing. I think if you're working to be a physician, work to be the absolute best physician you can possibly be. In doing that, you'll have incredible experiences, meet great mentors and develop a fund of knowledge that will continue to support your career and your opportunities as a leader.

### Update from the Office of Health Equity and Inclusion

The Second Annual BCH Medical Staff Organization Visiting Professor in Health Equity and Inclusion was Maria Trent, MD, MPH, FAAP, FSAHM, Chief of the Division of Adolescent Young Adult Medicine and Professor of Pediatrics, Public Health and Nursing at Johns Hopkins University Schools of Medicine, Public Health and Nursing; and Bloomberg Professor of American Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Dr. Trent, who completed her fellowship in Adolescent Medicine at Boston Children's, gave Pediatric Grand Rounds on December 9, 2020, titled "Understanding the Impact of Racism on Child and Adolescent Health and Preparing for a Better Future," which reviewed recommendations from a 2019 American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement about how to ameliorate the effects of racism within pediatric health care of which Dr. Trent is first author.



**Maria Trent, MD,  
MPH, FAAP,  
FSAHM**

The Annual MLK Observance took place on January 14, 2021 under the direction of the MLK Committee Chair, Karol Jordan, and the entire MLK Observance Committee. In addition to honoring the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., there was a keynote by Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, who represents Massachusetts' 7th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, and a presentation of four 2021 Black Achiever Awardees: Tyonne D. Hinson, DrPH, MSN, RN, NE-BC, Director, Nursing Diversity Initiatives and Nursing Career Lattice Program; Annette Correia, OT, Manager, Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy; Lanessia Lane, Materials Management Coordinator, Cardiology; and Keshanda Chinn, Senior Radiographer, Cardiology.

The 2021 LGBTQ Health Awareness Month programming will be a collaboration with the Office of Health Equity and Inclusion, LGBTQ & Friends and the Rainbow Consortium on Sexuality and Gender Diversity. Educational and research programming will take place virtually throughout the month of March. See the Office of Health Equity and Inclusion intranet page for more information.

### Congratulations to Dennis Spencer, MD, PhD, Recipient of 2021 HMS Harold Amos Diversity Award

Dennis Spencer, MD, PhD, Instructor in Pediatrics in the Division of GI-Nutrition, has received the 2021 HMS Harold Amos Diversity Award which honors HMS/HSDM faculty who have contributed to moving the HMS/HSDM community towards diversity goals. A virtual ceremony is set for March 30, 12:30 PM; a Zoom link will be distributed by the Office of Faculty Development.



**Dennis Spencer,  
MD, PhD**

**Wellness Tips by Faculty for Faculty**  
**by Lauren Mednick, PhD, Assistant Professor of**  
**Psychology in the Department of Surgery - how**  
**to create resilience in response to both work-**  
**related and COVID-19 challenges**

- Remember to maintain the basics: get sufficient sleep, find a realistic exercise plan that you enjoy, and nourish yourself with healthy foods. Take care of yourself so you can care for others.
- Every Friday, if possible, review your priorities for the following week and organize your to-do list
- When facing a large or ambitious project, it is best to start with small, incremental steps that are not intimidating; for example, rather than drafting an entire article, you decide to prepare the introduction or write out an outline
- When dealing with a setback, ask yourself to “find the positive;” what can I learn from this dilemma and how can I go forward?
- Find a supportive community that sustains you and try to deal with any difficult moments with some good humor



**Lauren Mednick, PhD**



**Katie McCarthy, MBA**

**Introduction to American Sign Language**  
**Workshops**

In 2020, the Office of Faculty Development with the co-sponsorship of the Department of Otolaryngology, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program, and Human Resources, initiated a workshop series on introductory American Sign Language taught by Katie McCarthy. The series quickly reached full registration capacity and we plan to continue offering these important classes that assist BCH faculty and staff in communicating with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing patients and families through 2021. You can preview each week’s lesson on short videos; each session is designed and taught by Katie McCarthy. For information on the video links or the next workshop series, email [ofd@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:ofd@childrens.harvard.edu).

**About the instructor:** Katie McCarthy, MBA, has been the Coordinator of Outreach and Support Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at Boston Children's Hospital since 2014. The DHHP outreach program extends care beyond the clinic to help ensure each child’s well-being and access to opportunities that stimulate development. Katie coordinates family-centered events, support groups for parents and children of all ages, educational workshops, training opportunities, and collaborative efforts towards inclusion in the community. Katie has been Deaf since birth and is bilingual in American Sign Language and English. She has been involved in the non-profit sector for more than eighteen years, first in marketing and management and now in outreach and education.

- *Week 1 - Fingerspelling, Names, and Introductions; Cultural highlight: Arbitrary and descriptive name signs*
- *Week 2 - Numbers and Families; Cultural highlight: The journey towards small d or Big D*
- *Week 3 - Healthcare terminologies and dialogue; Cultural highlight: How to navigate best communication practices*
- *Week 4 (February 2 and 4): Healthcare terminologies and dialogue; Cultural highlight: How to navigate best communication practices*
- *Week 5 (February 9 and 11): Healthcare terminologies and review; Cultural highlight: The Deaf Goodbye"*

## Update from the Medical Library, by Chloe Rotman, MLIS, Manager, Library Services

In honor of Black History Month - and in recognition of how leisure reading can reduce stress and even the symptoms of burnout (see <https://bit.ly/3cJyXGp>) – the Medical Library is pleased to give our recommendations for exciting new works by Black authors. All titles link to ebook requests through the Minuteman Library network.

### Fiction:

Such a Fun Age by Kiley Reid  
 The Vanishing Half by Brit Bennett  
 Transcendent Kingdom by Yaa Gyasi  
 Take a Hint, Dani Brown by Talia Hibbert  
 Black Buck by Mateo Askaripour  
 Real Life by Brandon Taylor

### Nonfiction:

Parable of the Brown Girl: The Sacred Lives of  
 Girls of Color by Khristi Lauren Adams  
 Homie: Poems by Danez Smith  
 Wow, No Thank You: Essays by Samantha Irby

## Carlos Estrada, MD, MBA, Appointed Chief of the Department of Urology, continued from p. 1

Carlos Estrada, MD, MBA, HMS Associate Professor of Surgery, began his career at Children's as a Pediatric Urology Fellow, became a member of the faculty in 2006, and has assumed leadership roles in both research and clinical areas. In 2008, Dr. Estrada received an OFD/BTREC/CTREC Faculty Career Development Award to pursue his research project on tissue engineering; he and Joshua Mauney, PhD, are credited with developing the novel silk-based bilayer scaffold. In 2010, he became the Director of the BCH Spina Bifida Center which is now designated as a National Spina Bifida Patient Registry center. In a 2/2/21 memo to the Boston Children's community, Sandi Fenwick, CEO, and Kevin Churchwell, COO and President, lauded Dr. Estrada's leadership: "Dr. Estrada has consistently embodied our commitment to world class care, teaching, innovation, and the belief that we can always be better and do *more* for the patients and families we serve."



Carlos Estrada, MD, MBA, in one of his many roles at Boston Children's

## News from the Archives, by Alina Morris, MLIS

As the hospital celebrates Black History Month, the Archives Program would like to highlight **Dr. Laurel Eugene Keith**, Boston Children's Hospital's first African American resident in Pediatrics. "The dean provided me with a scholarship of \$500 in 1948, a significant amount during those days, and I very much needed and appreciated it. And as the first African American resident in pediatrics at Children's, Dr. Charles Janeway provided valuable guidance and advice," recalled Dr. Keith in *Against All Odds: The Legacy of Students of African Descent at Harvard Medical School Before Affirmative Action, 1850-1968* (2004). Dr. Laurel E. Keith grew up in Cassopolis, Michigan. During World War II, he trained as a bomber pilot in Alabama as part of the group known as the Tuskegee Airmen. He graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1952. He was granted an "opportunity fellowship" by the John Hay Whitney Foundation to complete advanced work in pediatrics at Boston Children's Hospital for his final year of study in 1955. He went on to work in pediatric private practice in Chicago and served on the clinical faculties at Children's Hospital of Chicago until retirement in 1998. Dr. Keith died of Alzheimer's disease in 2007 at the age of 86.

BCH Medical Staff Group, 1956 (Laurel E. Keith sits in the front row, 3rd from right)



## Meet the “Making Science in Fiber Arts” Founder and Meet-up Group

*Introduction to Elissa Weitzman, ScD, Associate Professor of Pediatrics in the Division of Adolescent Medicine and the founder of the “Making Science in Fiber Arts” meet-up group:*



Elissa Weitzman, ScD

**How long have you been an avid knitter and how has the craft benefitted you?** I picked up knitting when my children were in middle school (they are in high school and college now) – we were trying to “teach them math” at the dining room table at night – which I think should be outlawed by the Geneva Convention (it’s torture for parents and children). I found after dinner math really stressful and wanted to do something with my hands that would keep me present and also calm. We stopped trying to teach them math, but the knitting stuck. I have always loved color and fabric. Knitting provides a gorgeous, tactile and super creative outlet to my day. I love the entire enterprise – making and giving knitwear, finding and supporting artisans who spin and dye fiber, the community of knitters which is quite global and always feels local.

**What occurs during a virtual “Making Science in Fiber Arts” meeting?** We are pretty laid back –right now, with everything remote, we get online, get comfortable, and talk about our lives and our knitting as well as work projects – all while knitting or crocheting.

A few of Dr. Weitzman’s projects; if you would like information about the next meet-up, email [ofd@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:ofd@childrens.harvard.edu)



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