



The Transition From Fellow to Faculty

TREVOR LENTZ: I came to DCRI for fellowship because I was really intrigued by the multidisciplinary and collaborative nature and environment within DCRI. It provided an opportunity for me to expand the footprint of the work that I was doing in musculoskeletal research and pain research, as well. It was a really attractive opportunity for me to come and learn from experts in different fields outside of my own, to be able to take some of those lessons from those experts in those different areas and apply them to the pain research that I was doing.

MARAT FUDIM: So DCRI offers, together with Duke as a medical institution, a very unique experience, as it gives not only access to the patient bedside, the site-based research that is available at Duke which I, you know, I do a lot in as well, but in combination the DCRI now allows you to bring all of those three components together and apply the trial experience that you have, bringing the trial on paper, executing it through funding.

JENNIFER RYMER: It was just such a wonderful time to learn so much real world experience about research that is just was just really invaluable period of time for me.

DANIEL EDMONSTON: The fellowship program just really supported me in so many ways, through the didactics, through collaboration, through mentorship, through training opportunities with the School of Medicine. And all of these really factored strongly into me becoming an increasingly competent clinical investigator, but I think more importantly, it factored into me becoming a much more confident investigator.

TREVOR LENTZ: I really enjoyed the experience in my fellowship, so I decided to stay on as faculty to continue a lot of those collaborations. I felt it was a good opportunity and environment for me to grow as a junior faculty learning from people that were not only within my own area of expertise, but also outside of my area of expertise would give me opportunities to grow into new areas to expand the type of work that I was doing so that it would ultimately increase the impact.

MARAT FUDIM: I was lucky enough to be awarded also the ACC Doug Zipes Distinguished Young Investigator Award this year. So that was a great experience and I think, comes to show what opportunities the DCRI provides its young investigators. You know, I've done a lot of my work as fellow; I mean, I was not on faculty at that time point. But again, comes to show that the DCRI, in combination with Duke, provides a lot of opportunities to do work that otherwise seems to be impossible or too expensive or too crazy.

JENNIFER RYMER: So I have an incredible mentorship team of people that are really well known within the cardiovascular community.

Those people are helped me during my DCRI fellowship to start asking my own questions and developing grant material that then led to a career development award during DCRI fellowship and gave me some salary support during that period of time, as well as several other grants that were great project support for pilot work.



And so what that's meant is that I was able, as junior faculty, to get two pilot grants from foundations that have allowed me to increasingly do my own work. And it's really important, I think, because the fellow faculty transition is difficult. And to have people that are really supporting you and still helping you walk through that process and develop your own ideas and develop your own writing and help you become an independent investigator, that's ultimately I think, the goal of the DCRI and I certainly have gotten to experience that over the last couple of years.

MARAT FUDIM: I'm grateful to have been given the resources where you can just call up somebody, whether it's a statistician, a coordinator, somebody who knows regulatory stuff—having that at arm's length is very, very important for a successful research career.

And I think that's what DCRI provided, and I hope to give that to the next generation of researchers to give them my perspective, my exposure to research and try to communicate it back.

DANIEL EDMONSTON: Another excellent example of how the DCRI embodies this commitment to train the next generation is my experience with soon after my transition into faculty, the incredible amount of support I've had from more senior DCRI faculty in helping me to be a better mentor to the trainees that I now get the opportunity to mentor. And it's incredibly valuable to have these senior colleagues serving as co-mentors and modeling for me how best to serve as a primary research mentor when I reach that stage in my career.