I am nearing completion of my first year as a postdoctoral scholar in Primary Care in the Department of Pediatrics. As a public health researcher, my postdoctoral research focuses in areas of trauma-sensitive, trauma-informed care, resiliency, and protective factors geared at increasing child and youth thriving in order to mitigate negative health outcomes. I have been connected with the University of Pittsburgh since 2006. I came to Pittsburgh as a masters-level student, stayed to work in various research staff positions, went on to obtain my doctorate degree and am currently a postdoc. I completed both my doctoral degree in Epidemiology and my Master of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public Health. The connections I have built within and across the University during my tenure spans numerous schools across both upper and lower campus and includes the broader clinical community as well.

The career developmental activities available to Pitt’s postdoctoral students are incredible; I took full advantage of many of these activities during my doctoral journey. As a doctoral student I was proactive in seeking out career development and networking opportunities offered through Pitt’s Center for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Career Development. I served as an unofficial advocate for this Center by spreading the word of upcoming events and workshops to peers and faculty members in order to promote broader exposure and elicit greater attendance. As I worked full-time during my doctoral degree, the career and professional developmental opportunities offered by this Center were incredibly beneficial to me and indeed contributed to my current position as a postdoctoral scholar.

As a soon-to-be second year postdoctoral scholar, I would love to give back to the Pitt community by serving as an official advocacy voice for postdoctoral career development and networking opportunities through the University of Pittsburgh Postdoctoral Association (UPPDA) for 2020-2021. I have over 10 years of experience coordinating and managing research study operations at the University and thus I am well positioned to coordinate and manage the activities and events associated with this committee chair position. My experience across multiple schools within the University can be levered to help in identifying, advertising and executing new career and training opportunities for our postdocs.

If elected, one of the areas that I’d like to focus on in within this role, is to promote greater representation at UPPDA’s events from the broader Health Sciences and Humanities disciplines. I was and am often surprised when having attended the various career development opportunities offered through the University as a doctoral student and now as a postdoc, how few non-basic scientists are present. We are missing critical representation and voice from the diverse body that make up Pitt’s schools. I am committed to work to garner greater engagement at UPPDA’s sponsored events in order to reach and enrich the lives of all of our postdoctoral associates and scholars across the University. Given my long-standing tenure at the University and my connections across multiple schools and Divisions, I am well positioned to increase diverse representation. I am grateful for your consideration of my candidacy for the position of Career Development Chair. If selected, I will work hard to ensure that UPPA’s career developmental activities and events speak to what our postdocs need and desire!