The Women in AMIA

UPDATE

Monthly E-Newsletter

CREATING A CLINICAL INFORMATICS FELLOWSHIP PIPELINE

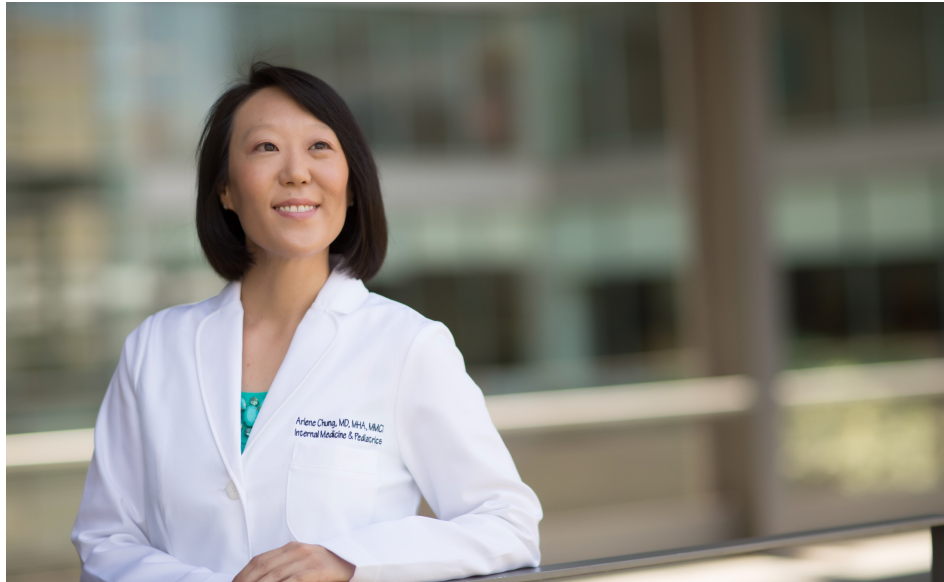**In this issue of the newsletter:**

- We spotlight Dr. Arlene Chung, founding director of the Clinical Informatics Fellowship Program at UNC Chapel Hill (p. 2).
  This is part of an ongoing series that will feature clinical informatics fellowship directors and explore ways to increase the representation of women in clinical informatics fellowship programs across the US.

- Please fill out the Women in AMIA Networking, Mentoring, and Lifecycle Survey (p. 4)

Previous issues of the WIA newsletter can be found on the Women in AMIA webpage here.

Steering Committee Members:

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Spotlight on Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors

Arlene Chung, MD, MHA, MMCi, FAMIA

WIA: *What is your current position and title?*

Arlene: I am currently an Assistant Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill School of Medicine, where I am an informatician, physician-scientist, and Associate Director of Health & Clinical Informatics. I am also the founding Clinical Informatics Fellowship Program Director at UNC Hospitals. At UNC Health, I serve as Medical Informatics Director of Digital Health Innovation & Patient Engagement, UNC Health, where I lead patient-facing tech and innovation development, implementation, and evaluation. I am also the Medical Director of Population Health Informatics for UNC Health Alliance, which is our clinically integrated network/ACO. Clinically, I practice as a med-peds outpatient primary care physician. I currently serve on the Women in AMIA Leadership and Awards Subcommittee.

WIA: *How did you first find out about clinical informatics?*

Arlene: I first found out about clinical informatics during the 2nd year of my NRSA Primary Care Research Fellowship training when it was approved to become a new ACGME accredited sub-specialty board certification through the American Board of Preventative Medicine and American Board of Pathology.

WIA: *What made you decide on a career path that includes clinical informatics?*

Arlene: During my fellowship, I had been conducting obesity digital health research using the first Fitbit that came out and Twitter. I realized then that I was much more excited about how technology innovations could be applied to improve patient's health and how to integrate patient-generated health data from devices and apps into clinical care than the obesity intervention itself. Although it was a bit of serendipity and good timing that led me to know about our field, I knew immediately that this was the right career path for me when I learned there was a field that encompassed the intersection between technology and medicine.

Spotlight on Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors, cont'd.

WIA: *What do you find most exciting about your work as a founding Clinical Informatics Fellowship Director?*

Arlene: The most exciting thing about starting a new ACGME-accredited Clinical Informatics Fellowship Program and serving as its founding Program Director is mentoring and training the next generation of physician informatics leaders. It's something I wish was available when I was training, so it's awesome to help trainees discover what's so great about our field and what ignites their interests in CI.

WIA: *Do you have any words of advice for medical students or residents who may want to consider a career path that includes clinical informatics?*

Arlene: Pursuing subspecialty training and certification in clinical informatics can open up numerous and diverse types of career opportunities. You can have several different roles while maintaining your clinical practice. I am but one of many examples of this. I truly believe that the future of medicine is and will continue to be built upon advances in clinical informatics, so our roles as physician informaticians will only grow in importance and in impact. I recommend finding mentors to help you find opportunities to be exposed to various aspects of the field so that you can find what you're passionate about. There are also 4th-year med student and resident electives at various fellowship training programs. I would recommend attending AMIA Annual Symposium or AMIA Clinical Informatics Conference as a trainee as well to get a sense of the depth and breadth of our field and for networking. Attending my first AMIA [meeting] solidified that clinical informaticians were definitely my people and that this was the right field for me! I also encourage trainees to check out the accredited CI Fellowship Programs across the country at https://www.amia.org/membership/academic-forum/clinical-informatics-fellowships.

WIA: *There may be medical students and residents out there who would be interested in a clinical informatics fellowship but aren't fully aware of this option. Do you have any ideas on how to reach out to this group?*

Arlene: In particular, I would encourage physician informaticians to help start Clinical Informatics Med Student Interest Groups at their medical schools, and to host informational seminars about our field and fellowship training opportunities. Mentors and advisors are critical in helping trainees with preparing and successfully applying for and matching into fellowship programs, especially since the field is still somewhat young.

WIA: *What is something about you that you'd like to share that most people don't know about?*

Arlene: I obtained an MHA with a concentration in HIT before med school. At the time, HIT was a new concentration and I was fortunate to work as a HIT consultant at American Management Systems, Inc. while applying to med school. Looking back, that was my first foray into the field that I hadn't realized existed.

Drop us a line!

Women in AMIA would love to hear from you about what's working, what's not and what to feature in future editions of the newsletter. We also have some questions for you: How are you dealing with COVID-19? In these trying times, how are you focusing on the positive?

Please email us at:
AMIA-2020womeninamiasteeringcommittee@ConnectedCommunity.org

WIA SUPPORT & RESOURCES SURVEY

The Women in AMIA Networking, Mentoring, and Lifecycle Committee would like to invite you to complete a five-minute survey. With the help of this survey, we will find resources to support women in informatics, connect them to the appropriate resources, and learn the impact of COVID-19 on women in informatics. Thank you very much for your participation!

You can visit the link below:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WIA_Nov-2020_NetworkSubComm

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