

March 27, 2025 | 8:30am - 5:00pm | Center for BrainHealth - Dallas, TX

OPENING REMARKS



Oyinade Adefuye, PMP

Director of Program Management

Solid Biosciences

Oyinade Adefuye is a seasoned leader in the biotech industry with extensive experience in program management, strategic planning, and cross-functional collaboration. With a strong track record of managing complex projects and driving initiatives forward, Oyinade specializes in leading high-impact programs that bring innovative solutions to market.

Passionate about mentorship and career development, Oyinade enjoys sharing insights on navigating the evolving landscape of biotech and program management. With a keen ability to manage both internal and external stakeholders in matrixed environments, they bring a wealth of knowledge on effective leadership, process optimization, and strategic execution.

Outside of work, Oyinade is a proud mom who has mastered the art of balancing boardrooms and baby bottles. Whether leading a high-stakes project or chasing after a tiny explorer, she thrives in dynamic environments and embraces both roles with enthusiasm.



Natalie Bell, PhD

Postdoctoral Researcher

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Natalie is currently a fourth-year PhD candidate studying biomedical engineering at UTSW. She currently conducts research in diagnostic protocols for head injuries. Natalie obtained her engineering degree from East Carolina University. During her undergraduate studies, she conducted research in genetic toxicology, cryopreservation techniques, and control engineering which resulted in a patent, conference paper award and publication in Toxicology Sciences.

Additionally, during her internship at the National Toxicology Program Natalie received two intramural research fellowship awards and a travel award during her time there. Most recently she finished an internship with MEGIN which is a leading manufacturer of

magnetoencephalography, or MEG, which is a functional neuroimaging modality.

In addition to her internships she has also spearheaded many events one of which is celebrating its 10th year anniversary which is an annual toy drive "baskets for toys" at her high school.



Drew Strutevant, PhD

Scientist

CAGE Bio

Drew Sturtevant, PhD, is the Chair of the BioNTX Talent Network and a Scientist at CAGE Bio, Inc, where he is developing drug candidates for inflammatory skin diseases. In addition to his role at CAGE Bio, Dr. Sturtevant is a native Texan and is devoted to expanding the BioNTX Talent Network to provide scientists with the tools and resources they need to find careers in the life sciences in North Texas.

Previously, Dr. Sturtevant worked for Lantern Pharma in scientific communications/affairs. Dr. Sturtevant received a PhD at the University of North Texas in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, followed by a Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship at UTSW Medical Center, Department of Molecular Genetics, in the Co-Lab of Helen

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MAXIMIZING YOUR CAREER POTENTIAL: NETWORKING, RESUMES & LINKEDIN



Adriana Almodova

Program Coordinator

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Adriana earned a B.S. in Community, Family and Addiction Science from Texas Tech University in 2018, with special focus on developmental relationships within the family system. After completing her studies, her career began in student recruitment for prospective undergraduates from the DFW and East Texas areas. In this role, she helped lead a DFW regional team, establishing a large presence and strengthening the grass roots initiatives that helped many prospective first-generation students to their best fit educational experiences and academic scholarship opportunities.

Adriana joined the Graduate School in 2022, where she supported the recruitment and retention efforts. In September 2024, Adrianatransitioned to the Program Coordinator role

with the Graduate Career Development office, supporting Dr. Leah Banks in launching the highly anticipated BRIDGE Curriculum for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows, and created the weekly Career Compass newsletter that keeps trainees, faculty and staff informed about resources and events that support career development. In her free time, Adriana enjoys gardening, learning new recipes, catching a round of golf and spending time with her 3 dogs.



Leah Banks, PhD

Director of the Graduate Career Development Office UT Southwestern Medical Center

Leah earned a BS in Biology from Dillard University and a PhD in Biomedical Sciences, focusing on Biochemistry and Cancer Biology, from Meharry Medical College. She then completed her postdoctoral training at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Shifting her focus to higher education, Leah made a from being a bench scientist and became an Associate Director of Life Design at Johns Hopkins University, where she supported Biomedical Engineering undergraduates with career curricula, internship programs, and advising. She later joined UT Southwestern Medical Center where she is currently the Director of Graduate Career Development, where she's developed career and professional development curricula and programming as well as one on one advising for

graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

In her free time, Leah enjoys exploring Dallas, spending time with family & friends, and playing with her fur baby, Coltrane.



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Cyonna Holmes, PhD

Global Pharma Strategy Leader, Ophthalmology, Rare Diseases and RNA Celanese

Cyonna Holmes, PhD serves as the Global Strategy Leader for Ophthalmology, Rare Disease, and RNA Programs within the Pharmaceutical & Medical Division at Celanese. She leads the business strategy for the VitalDose® Drug Delivery Platform in these portfolio areas where her responsibilities include setting and executing portfolio strategy, driving university partnerships and collaborations, marketing and commercial strategy, product positioning, and charting the technical roadmap.

Prior to this role, Dr. Holmes was a Consultant in the Life Sciences Practice in the

Los Angeles office at L.E.K. Consulting. There, she advised Biopharma and MedTech clients on business strategy for M&A, lifecycle management, new market entry, R&D planning, revenue forecasting and product launch. Her experience ranges from advising start-ups to fortune 500 Biopharma and MedTech companies.

She earned her BS in Bioengineering from Stanford University and her PhD in Biomedical Engineering from The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center where her work focused on the Delivery of RNA and therapeutic metabolites during heart transplantation procedures.



Andrew Klein, MBA

Chief Revenue Officer

Spike Neuro

With nearly two decades of experience in neuroscience research tools and biotech commercialization, Andrew Klein has played a pivotal role in advancing technologies for neural data collection and analysis. At Spike Neuro, he leads global sales and strategic partnerships for cutting-edge silicon carbide electrode technology. Prior to this, he served as Vice President of Sales and Marketing at Plexon Inc., where he drove international expansion and product innovation in electrophysiology acquisition systems, implantable devices, and optogenetics.

Andrew's expertise spans business development, neuroscience technology, and industry leadership. He holds an MBA from Southern Methodist University and a BS in Neuroscience from Bowling Green State University. His career has been defined by a passion for bridging the gap between scientific discovery and commercial success.

NAVIGATING THE CURRENT JOB MARKET



Andrew Dickhaut

Director of Life Sciences

Catapult Solutions Group

Andrew has been working in the staffing and consulting space for twenty years in multiple industries. He has been leading the Life Science division at Catapult since 2017 working out of our Boston office. One of his passions is partnering with startup organizations as a Talent Acquisition and Organizational Development Consultant to help them grow.

He has been a part of give biotech organizations in the Boston and San Francisco markets where he helped build out a best-in-class candidate experience, from the time a candidate views a job posting to the time they stepped foot in the door for their new position. Andrew also enjoys having the opportunity to meet with folks in academia and provide guidance on their transition to industry!



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Trey Putnam, PhD, RAC

C00

Osteal Therapeutics

Dr. Putnam is the Chief Operating Officer of Osteal Therapeutics in Dallas, TX. As COO, Dr. Putnam oversees the manufacturing, supply chain, regulatory, quality and project management functions.

Prior to Osteal Dr. Putnam was a Professor of Clinical, Translational and Regulatory Sciences at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center's Dallas Campus. Before TTUHSC Dr. Putnam served as the general manager of Cardinal Health's Scientific and Regulatory Consulting Division and was responsible for all strategic, managerial, and operational aspects of the business.

Dr. Putnam holds a PhD in Organic Chemistry and a Regulatory Affairs Certification from the Regulatory Affairs Professional Society.

FINANCIAL WELLNESS: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE



Andrell Adams, CFP, CPWA

Vice President, Financial Planning Director

Morgan Stanley Private Wealth Management

Andrell Adams is a Vice President and Financial Planning Director serving Morgan Stanley's Private Wealth Management practices across the Western Region. Drell is responsible for collaborating with Advisors to efficiently satisfy our clients comprehensive financial planning goals.

Drell began his career in financial services in 2013 and joined Morgan Stanley in 2017. Prior to his current position, Drell operated as the Lead Certified Financial Planner for two fiduciary advisory practices based in the Dallas/Fort Worth, TX metro.

Drell graduated from the University of Missouri – Columbia, where he earned his

bachelor's degree in Personal Financial Planning. In 2019, Drell earned his Certified Financial Planning[™] certification, and, in 2023, he earned his Certified Private Wealth Advisor® designation. Drell is originally from Memphis, TN, spent 4 years in Kansas City, MO, and currently resides in Dallas, TX.



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NAVIGATING EMPLOYMENT LAWS FOR GROWING COMPANIES



Kristi Taylor, JD

Partner

Fragomen

The list of industries served by Partner Kristi Taylor is broad—it includes clients from the telecommunications, engineering, technology, architectural, engineering and transportation sectors, and, most recently, the biotechnology industry.

Kristi helps companies reimagine their immigration policies and programs—or develop them from the ground up if they're ready to document their policies and processes. They value Kristi for her keen ear—she listens deeply and attentively to understand their immediate immigration challenges, but also to familiarize herself with their risk tolerance, their internal corporate culture and their preferred communications style.

This initial analysis allows her to fit into place new program and policy elements that address her clients' strategic business objectives, including talent recruitment, employee retention, internal workforce development and due diligence for transactions and partnerships. She believes that even slight adjustments to immigration programs can make a difference in a fiercely competitive global marketplace.

Throughout her 23-year career, Kristi has developed particular experience defending employer sanctions cases, particularly in the I-9 space, for major corporate clients. She's helped Fortune 500 companies successfully manage actions launched by the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency and the Immigrant and Employee Rights Section of the Department of Justice. She also helps clients prepare pristine I-9 compliance programs and exploratory audits that mitigate the effect of investigations or avoid negative regulatory attention altogether.

Kristi is inspired not only by helping her clients achieve their goals, but also by the positive impact her work has on the lives of their individual employees. As a young immigration lawyer, she spent countless hours face-to-face with individual clients; the care and empathy she relied on then remains the animating force in her work today.



Paige Taylor, JD

Partner

Fragomen

Paige is a Dallas-based partner whose clientele includes prominent telecommunications, biomedical, pharmaceutical, artificial intelligence, general technology, chemical, energy, engineering, electronics and sports and entertainment companies.

Paige manages one of Fragomen's largest and oldest client relationships—the immigration program of one of the nation's largest telecommunications firms. She helped design its initial immigration approach nearly 25 years ago and has helped the company adjust and re-tool its program and policy through decades of transformative mergers, acquisitions and corporate dispositions.

That irreplaceable experience, alongside similar long-term representations of companies in other industries, has been of enormous benefit to her entire clientele, which includes enterprises of all sizes and policy needs. Paige has developed, implemented and managed countless PERM labor certification programs, managed H-1, L-1, TN, O-1 and J-1 non-immigrant visa programs and helped multinational enterprises adjust their immigration programs and policies to the demands of corporate reorganizations, mergers, name changes and layoffs. She has also developed a practice representing individual clients, including well-known professional athletes, entertainers, scientists, researchers and healthcare professionals.

Paige's entire career has been dedicated to immigration law, which she began practicing immediately after law school. In addition to her demanding private practice, she dedicates significant time and energy to pro bono work, especially challenging representations of U-visa applicants and clients seeking protection under the Violence Against Women Act.



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BALANCING ACT: MANAGING WORK-LIFE INTEGRATION



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Christopher Edwards, Sr.

Assistant Director, EDA - Biotech Grant

Dallas College

Christopher "Chris" Edwards is the Assistant Director of the \$8.7 million EDA Good Jobs Challenge Biotechnology Grant at Dallas College.

With over a decade of experience in higher education grants, he is a skilled communicator, TEDx speaker, and a driving force in building partnerships and ecosystems within biotech and beyond.

Chris and his wife of 14 years live in Grand Prairie, TX, with their five sons, ages 4 to 12.



Lorena Saelices, PhD

Co-Founder

AmyGo Solutions

Dr. Lorena Saelices Gomez is an Assistant Professor at the Center for Alzheimer's and Neurodegenerative Diseases – Department of Biophysics at UT Southwestern Medical Center. Inspired by her family's battle with Alzheimer's disease, she has dedicated her career to untangling the molecular mechanisms behind amyloid diseases.

In addition to her academic and research accomplishments, Dr. Saelices Gomez is a pioneering entrepreneur. She is the founder of AmyGo Solutions—a dynamic spin-off dedicated to translating novel biomarkers into clinical diagnostics for systemic amyloidosis. With AmyGo Solutions, she is actively bridging the gap between cutting-edge laboratory research and real-world patient care, striving to move a groundbreaking

biomarker from the bench to the clinic.

Balancing her professional life with her personal responsibilities, Dr. Saelices Gomez is also a single mother of twins. Her journey reflects scientific progress and entrepreneurial spirit but also resilience and commitment to both her family and the advancement of women and minorities in science. As a dedicated mentor and advocate, she continues to inspire future generations by championing inclusivity, innovation, and perseverance in STEM.



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AI & AUTOMATION: FUTURE-PROOFING YOUR SKILLS



Pamela Dannheim

Corporate Trainer

Catapult Solutions Group

Pamela Dannheim is the Corporate Trainer at Catapult Solutions Group, bringing over four years of experience in the staffing industry. She began her career in recruiting and sales before transitioning into training, system implementation, and process optimization.

Pamela leverages Al-driven tools to enhance efficiency and innovation, training over 50 professionals to succeed in staffing. She also leads automation, data analytics, and process improvement initiatives, ensuring scalability and effectiveness in talent acquisition.

SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES OF BUILDING A BIOTECH STARTUP



Vaibhav Bommareddy

Co-Managing Director

Nucleate Texas

Vaibhav Bommareddy is a 2nd year MD/PhD student at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. His research interests are related to neurodegeneration and aging biology, with hopes to develop therapeutics that target these disease mechanisms.

He is also the current Co-Managing Director of the Nucleate Texas at Dallas chapter and is excited about the major growth happening in the North Texas life sciences space. On his time off he enjoys exploring the Dallas food scene and reading new sci-fi novels.



Lauren D'Angelo, MBA

C00

Alpha Cognition

Ms. D'Angelo brings 25 years in pharmaceuticals marketing, sales, and operations, with broad reaching clinical experience across 15 products within nine therapeutic areas.

She has deep experience in small and large organizations from pre-commercialization to launch and post-launch, with demonstrated success building commercialization and launch plans for US and global markets, and managing P&L.

She has developed and led 20+ launch plans and successfully launched 15 products, new indications, and line extensions, in varying leadership roles.

She was recognized as a 2023 PharmaVoice Top 100 Industry Leader, Medical Marketing & Media's (MM+M) 2022 Woman of Distinction, MM+M's 2017 Woman to Watch, and was selected as one of Pharmaceutical Executive's Emerging Pharma Leaders for 2020.



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Cara Forsberg, PhD

Director of Commercialization & Business Development UT Southwestern Medical Center

Cara Forsberg, Director of Commercialization & Business Development at UT Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW), focuses on facilitating and accelerating the commercial adoption of technologies developed at UTSW.

She received her BS from The University of Michigan and Ph.D. in Molecular Microbiology and Microbial Pathogenesis from Washington University in St. Louis. Following her postdoctoral training at the University of Washington, she held various scientist roles at NanoString Technologies and Adaptive Biotechnologies in Seattle, Washington, prior to joining UTSW.



Rose Pedretti, PhD

Co-Founder

AmyGo Solutions

Dr. Rose earned her BS in Biochemistry from Nazareth University in 2020 and recently completed her PhD in Molecular Biology at UT Southwestern Medical Center in the laboratory of Dr. Lorena Saelices.

Her thesis research focused on developing clinical tools to detect and treat systemic protein misfolding diseases, particularly transthyretin amyloidosis. She is currently a Postdoctoral Scholar in the Saelices laboratory, where she continues her research on novel blood-based biomarkers for transthyretin amyloidosis.

In addition to her academic work, Dr. Rose is the Co-Founder of AmyGo Solutions, a company dedicated to advancing and commercializing technologies developed during her PhD, with the goal of improving patient outcomes in systemic amyloidosis. Outside of her research, she enjoys traveling, weightlifting, running, baking, and spending time with her two cats, Luna and Pumpkin.

BUILDING CAREERS OPPORTUNITIES IN BIO-PHARMA MANUFACTURING



universities and companies.

Jon Weidanz, PhD, MPH

Senior Associate Vice President for Research

The University of Texas at Arlington

Jon Weidanz, MPH, PhD is the Associate Vice President for Research, Professor with tenure, College of Nursing and Health Innovation and College of Engineering, and a member of the Multi-Professional Center for Health Informatics at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA).

He founded the North Texas Genome Center at UTA in 2018 and served as its director until 2022. Dr. Weidanz has broad experience and interest in biotechnology with particular knowledge and expertise in immunology and immunotherapy research and product development. He has more than 60 peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and published conference proceedings and has been an invited speaker at more than 50 conferences,

While at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, he was named as a Distinguished Professor and recognized for his teaching accomplishments, receiving the prestigious President's Excellence in Teaching Award and the Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching Award.



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Joseph Payne President & COO **Scorpius BioManufacturing**

Joe Payne is the President and Chief Operating Officer at Scorpius BioManufacturing. He has over two decades of biopharma industry experience, including at both biopharmaceutical companies and CDMOs, including companies like Teva Pharmaceuticals (Manager, Operations & Risk Assessment), Alcami Corporation (VP, Quality & Regulatory), and Tergus Pharma (VP, Quality & Compliance).

He joined Scorpius in 2023 as VP of Quality and Regulatory Affairs. He has participated in 40+ regulatory inspections and has extensive knowledge of global regulatory agency requirements. Joe has a broad range of experience in drug development, operational execution, and executive management in addition to QC and compliance.

MAXIMIZING OPPORTUNITIES WITH STAFFING AGENCIES



Taylor Culbertson

Account Executive

Catapult Solutions Group

Taylor Culbertson is a seasoned staffing professional with over five years of experience at Catapult Solutions Group, specializing in Life Sciences, BioTech, and Technology. With a deep understanding of industry trends and workforce needs, Taylor has successfully partnered with leading organizations to connect top-tier talent with critical roles that drive innovation and growth. Taylor's expertise lies in talent acquisition, client relationship management, and strategic workforce planning, ensuring that both candidates and companies find the perfect match.

Whether it's sourcing specialized professionals for cutting-edge biotech firms or identifying skilled technologists for high-impact projects, Taylor's ability to align talent with opportunity has made a lasting impact in the staffing industry here in DFW. Taylor is committed to building long lasting relationships and delivering exceptional staffing solutions to continue driving success for both clients and candidates and making a difference in the ever-evolving landscape of Life Sciences, BioTech, and Technology recruitment.



Andrew Dickhaut

Director of Life Sciences

Catapult Solutions Group

Andrew has been working in the staffing and consulting space for twenty years in multiple industries. He has been leading the Life Science division at Catapult since 2017 working out of our Boston office. One of his passions is partnering with startup organizations as a Talent Acquisition and Organizational Development Consultant to help them grow.

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Chris Lester Chief Sales Officer

Catapult Solutions Group

Chris Lester is the Chief Sales Officer at Catapult Solutions Group with 15 years of experience in the staffing industry. Known for his strategic leadership and ability to drive business growth, Chris has a proven track record of building high-performing sales teams, fostering strong client relationships, and delivering innovative workforce solutions. As an executive at Catapult Solutions Group, he is dedicated to helping organizations scale efficiently by aligning top talent with business needs.

RESILIENCE & TRIUMPH: STORIES OF GROWTH IN UNCERTAIN TIMES



Drew Strutevant, PhD

Scientist

CAGE Bio

Drew Sturtevant, PhD, is the Chair of the BioNTX Talent Network and a Scientist at CAGE Bio, Inc, where he is developing drug candidates for inflammatory skin diseases. In addition to his role at CAGE Bio, Dr. Sturtevant is a native Texan and is devoted to expanding the BioNTX Talent Network to provide scientists with the tools and resources they need to find careers in the life sciences in North Texas.

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Hobbs, MD, and Jonathan Cohen, PhD.



Lauren Adegoke, MS

Member Engagement Facilitator BioNTX

Lauren is the Member Engagement Facilitator for Bio North Texas, a trade association dedicated to supporting and expanding the life science and bioscience community in the North Texas region. Previously, she served as the Chief of Staff at Black Women in Science and Engineering (BWISE) as a fellow. Before that, she was a Process Development Scientist at AbbVie, where she spearheaded validation studies and contributed to the development of Skyrizi, one of AbbVie's popular drugs, during her time in their Co-op program.

Lauren holds a Bachelor's degree in Biomedical Engineering with a concentration in Biological Sciences and Neuroscience from the University of North Texas (UNT). She

continued her education at UNT, earning a Master's degree in Biomedical Engineering in December 2022.

After serving as a Program Manager at HAKing Innovation, where she taught grade school students about STEM and mentored high school and college students, she became passionate about inspiring young Black women to take bold steps in their STEM careers, with the goal of "leveling up" in the field.



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Michael Dugan, PhD Integrated Product Development Associate Rho. Inc.

Michael Dugan, originally from Austin, TX, completed a BS in Neuroscience at UT Dallas in 2016. His undergraduate research focused on learning and memory in rats in the lab of Dr. Lucien Thompson.

In 2018, he began training towards his PhD at the UT Austin Waggoner Center for Alcohol and Addiction Research, in the lab of Dr. Robert Messing. Michael's Ph.D. training focused on characterizing therapeutic targets in the brain for the treatment of alcohol use disorder. After completing his PhD in 2023, Michael continued as a Postdoctoral Researcher under Dr. Messing until May 2024 when he accepted his current role at Rho.

As an Integrated Product Development Associate, Michael supports Rho's clients with full product pipeline development for new drugs and biologics. His responsibilities include researching current literature to assist in the design of clinical studies, contributing to investigational drug brochures; summarizing animal and clinical studies, and drawing conclusions as to the potential safety of the drug under study. He also assists in writing documents to support regulatory submissions including, clinical study protocols and reports, clinical trial authorizations (INDs, CTAs), marketing authorization applications (NDAs, BLAs, NDSs, MAAs), and device authorizations (IDEs, 510Ks, PMAs), while interfacing with sponsors to manage submission timelines and content.



Saif Nirzhor, PhD

Medical Science Liaison

Tempus Al

Saif is a data-driven oncology specialist with more than a decade of experience in preclinical and clinical research, biotech strategy consulting, and technology commercialization. With a PhD in Oncology, he has led projects in academic labs, industry R&D settings, and emerging startups—bridging complex genomic data, innovative therapeutics, and real-world evidence to advance patient care.

As a Medical Science Liaison at Tempus AI, he integrates his expertise in clinical oncology, bioinformatics, translational research, and stakeholder engagement to advance AI-powered precision medicine, translating molecular insights into impactful patient outcomes.



Carly Wilder, PhD, MS

Business Development Manager

UT Southwestern Medical Center

Carly recently started a new position as a business development manager at UTSW in the Office of Technology Development. Prior to joining UTSW, she worked as a postdoc in Biotherapeutics Discovery at Boehringer Ingelheim.

She received her PhD in Pharmaceutical Science from UT Austin and MS in Toxicology and BS in Biology from UW in Seattle.