Most of you know that having a mentor is important to career progression, but do you know that having a sponsor is essential to moving “up” in your career to a leadership position? A sponsor is a powerfully positioned champion who advocates for you, and provides opportunities for stretch assignments that will catapult you into leadership roles. Sponsorship has been discussed in the corporate world, and is only beginning to be discussed in academia. This symposium will explore the role of sponsors and provide practical tips on how to develop sponsor/protégé relationships.

Welcome & Introduction to Sponsorship
Helen Yin, PhD
Associate Dean, Office of Women’s Careers, UT Southwestern

Panel Discussion
Panelists:
Deborah Diercks, MD, MSc
Professor and Chair, Department of Emergency Medicine, UT Southwestern

Susan Hernandez, MBA, BSN, RN
Associate Vice President, Chief Nursing Officer, UT Southwestern

Bruce Meyer, MD, MBA
Executive Vice President, Health System Affairs, UT Southwestern

Heidi Murray, CMP, CTA
Chief Operating Officer, Leadership Women, Dallas, TX

Sandra Schmid, PhD, MSEL
Professor and Chair, Department of Cell Biology, UT Southwestern

Moderated by:
Merridith Simpson, CDP
Manager, Diversity & Inclusion, UT Southwestern
**Helen Yin, PhD**  
*Associate Dean, Office of Women's Careers, UT Southwestern*

**Helen Yin** is Assistant Dean for the Office of Women’s Careers (OWC). The OWC functions as a part of the Office for Faculty Diversity and Development, providing a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the recruitment, career advancement and professional development of UT Southwestern faculty and trainees. Its mission is to expand and enhance women’s opportunities for leadership and advancement.

Among Dr. Yin’s goals is establishing effective mentoring programs for junior faculty; advocating for equity in pay and access to institutional resources; and implementing strategies to help UTSW administrators increase the number of female faculty in leadership positions. The OWC collaborates with the Committee on the Advancement of Women (CAW) and Women in Science and Medicine Advisory Committee (WISMAC) on selected projects.

Dr. Yin completed her B.A. from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts and her Ph.D. in Physiology from Harvard University. She is currently Professor and Vice Chair of the Department of Physiology and holds the Peter and Jean D. Dehlinger Professorship in Biomedical Science.

**Deborah Diercks, MD, MSc**  
*Professor and Chair, Department of Emergency Medicine, UT Southwestern*

**Deborah B. Diercks** is Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at UT Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Diercks manages the emergency departments of both the new Clements University Hospital and Parkland Memorial Hospital. Dr. Diercks joined UT Southwestern following 16 years as a faculty member at the University of California, Davis, where she most recently served as Professor of Emergency Medicine and Vice Chair for Research. There, Dr. Diercks also was Director of Regulatory Knowledge and Support for the institutional Clinical and Translational Science Awards Center.

A nationally renowned leader in emergency medicine, she has held numerous leadership positions within the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine, and was presented the Society’s 2014 Advancement of Women in Academic Emergency Medicine Award recently. Additionally, Dr. Diercks is a Senior Associate Editor of the Annals of Emergency Medicine.

A graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, Dr. Diercks earned her medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine. She went on to complete her residency training at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center, and later earned a master’s degree from the Harvard School of Public Health.
Susan Hernandez, MBA, BSN, RN
Associate Vice President, Chief Nursing Officer, UT Southwestern

Susan Hernandez is the Chief Nursing Officer for UT Southwestern. Formerly the CNO at Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt University, Ms. Hernandez has served for 20 years in a series of progressively responsible nursing practice and leadership roles at Vanderbilt Medical Center. As executive sponsor of the Vanderbilt Nurse Wellness Committee, she played a pivotal role in the implementation of work/life balance initiatives.

Ms. Hernandez joined Carell Children’s Hospital leadership in 2007 as an administrative director responsible for Critical Care teams including Pediatric Critical Care Unit, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Newborn Nursery, Respiratory Therapy, ECMO, and the Pediatric Emergency Department. She later assumed responsibilities for all inpatient services in the hospital, and in late 2010, she was named CNO and Associate Hospital Director with oversight for nursing and several ancillary areas.

Ms. Hernandez has earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, a Bachelor of Science in Education, and a Master of Business in Health Care Administration.

Bruce Meyer, MD, MBA
Executive Vice President, Health System Affairs, UT Southwestern

Bruce A. Meyer is the Executive Vice President for Health System Affairs and Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at UT Southwestern. As the Health System Affairs EVP, he is responsible for overseeing the entire UT Southwestern clinical enterprise including the University Hospitals, Faculty Practice and contracts with clinical partner institutions.

Previously he served as Vice-President for Medical Affairs and Executive Director of the Faculty Practice Plan at UT Southwestern. Prior to coming to Dallas, he was Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and the CEO of the Faculty Practice at UMass Memorial Health Care.

He has served on numerous national and institutional committees and is an oral Board examiner for the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. He has been selected to the "Best Doctors in America" since 1999. He received his undergraduate education at UT Austin, his medical degree from UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, and his M.B.A. from the University of Tennessee.
Heidi Murray is the Chief Operating Officer of Leadership Women, a 35-year old nonprofit, social enterprise educational corporation headquartered in Dallas, Texas that develops programs and initiatives to advance women in leadership. Their mission is to help women learn more, lead better, and leave a positive legacy. Heidi is a strong advocate for increasing the presence of women in the C-Suite, partnering with organizations across various industries.

Heidi began her career in special events management at the John. F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, and has held a number of senior leadership positions during her 11-year tenure with Omni Hotels. Heidi also has served as the National Director of Sales for a Destination Management Company, producing national conventions and special events across the U.S.

Heidi was introduced to Leadership Women in 2004 and has been very involved in the development of women’s careers. Heidi consults with a variety of corporate and non-profit organizations throughout the U.S. and internationally. Heidi serves on the Dallas Convention & Visitors Bureau’s Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Committee. Heidi holds degrees in Communications and Psychology from the University of North Florida.

Sandra Schmid, PhD, MSEL
Professor and Chair, Department of Cell Biology, UT Southwestern

A leader among scientists, Sandra Schmid, was named Chair of the Department of Cell Biology in 2011. Dr. Schmid is committed to mentoring young scientists and gives career development and time management seminars to postdoctoral fellows and junior faculty nationwide. Her research focuses on clathrin-mediated endocytosis, the major pathway for uptake into the cell, with a particular emphasis on the GTPase dynamin.

Dr. Schmid was co-founding editor of Traffic, Editor-in-Chief of Molecular Biology of the Cell, and is a past president of the American Society for Cell Biology (ASCB). Her awards include an ASCB/ WICB Junior Career Recognition Award, an NIH MERIT Award, and the William C. Rose Award from the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. She is a Fellow of AAAS.

Dr. Schmid earned her doctorate at Stanford University and a Master of Science in Executive Leadership at the University of San Diego. She came to UT Southwestern from The Scripps Research Institute, where she served as Professor and Chairman of the Department of Cell Biology. Dr. Schmid is holder of the Cecil H. Green Distinguished Chair in Cellular and Molecular Biology.
Merridth Simpson, CDP
Manager, Diversity & Inclusion, UT Southwestern

Merridth Simpson is the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Manager for UT Southwestern Medical Center. She assists with the strategic development and implementation of the Institution’s D&I strategy, ensuring that D&I are essential components of the Institution’s core missions. Merridth guides the Institution in leveraging D&I to improve patient care, eliminate health disparities, educate the next generation of physicians, and impact advancements in medical research.

Prior to joining UT Southwestern in 2013, Merridth held leadership positions at Raytheon, an aerospace and defense contractor, in their Intelligence and Information Systems (IIS) business segment. During her 12 years there, she led initiatives spanning human resources, diversity and inclusion, and engineering operations.

Merridth streamlined Raytheon IIS’ performance development and employee engagement programs, and spearheaded community outreach efforts in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). She established core D&I training, grew the maturity of nine Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), and steered several diversity councils. Merridth is a Certified Diversity Professional (CDP) and holds a Bachelor of Science in Human Relations and Business.

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