
JUNE 2021, ISSUE 15

The Women in AMIA

UPDATE

Monthly E-Newsletter



CLINICAL INFORMATICS FELLOWSHIP PIPELINE, PART 2

In this issue of the newsletter:

- We spotlight Dr. Ila Singh, founding director of the Clinical Informatics Fellowship Program at Baylor College of Medicine (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.
- For Your Informatics podcast excited to announce the first episodes of the #Forgotten No More series and the 'Summer Leadership Series' by the WIA Leadership Program (p. 5)

Previous issues of the WIA newsletter can be found on the Women in AMIA webpage [here](#).

Steering Committee Members:

Tiffani Bright, Wendy Chapman, Prerna Dua, Sabrina Hsueh, Xia Jing, Tiffany Leung, Allison McCoy, Omolola Ogunyemi, Margarita Sordo, Donghua Tao, Kelly Taylor (AMIA Staff), Rebecca Wilgus, Karmen Williams

Spotlight on Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors



Ila Singh, MD, PhD

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

Ila: I currently serve as Chief of Laboratory Medicine and Chief of Pathology Informatics at Texas Children's Hospital, and as Professor of Pathology and Immunology at Baylor College of Medicine. I am also the founding Director of the Clinical Informatics Fellowship program. Being a part of the Texas Medical Center allows me to collaborate with computer scientists and informaticists at Rice University, University of Texas at Houston, Houston Methodist Hospital and the University of Houston.

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

Ila: My clinical informatics journey was a gradual one. As a laboratory director, I led major upgrades to Laboratory Information Systems and helped develop mobile apps that provided information about lab testing. It was a lot of fun to develop algorithms and clinical decision support tools that guide test ordering and improve utilization management. While I was doing all of this, I realized that a significant amount of data in the electronic medical record comes from the clinical laboratories, and understanding how all of this data is organized and accessed would allow us to do things that could lead to better patient outcomes as well as greater operational efficiencies. Recently, I have really enjoyed collaborating with computer scientists to use machine learning for developing predictive tools that stratify patients by risk and help target clinical interventions. Lately, I have wanted to share the fun in informatics with others, so I set up an informatics grand rounds and the clinical informatics fellowship.

Spotlight on Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors, cont'd.

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

Ila: So far, much of my work as a fellowship director has revolved around setting up the program and getting ACGME accreditation. Along the way, I discovered how helpful the informatics community is. Program directors are very generous about sharing their experiences - what works well, what doesn't. That is exciting for me - to be part of a community of knowledgeable and collaborative people. Our first fellow just started, so I am really excited about that too!

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?*

Ila: Find out if there are fellowships or resident rotations in clinical informatics in your institution. See if you can do an elective rotation, or even just sit in on some of the didactics. Your EMR team can put you in touch with physician builders who may be able to show you what they do, and point you towards ongoing informatics projects. See if you can get involved in a project that interests you. Present your project at an AMIA conference or at the Pathology Informatics Summit. The PI summit has 'boot camps' for trainees on the first day of the summit - a great way to learn the basics before the conference begins. There are usually travel funds for trainees, and these meetings are a great place to meet other informaticists! Listen to the Women in AMIA podcast: For Your Informatics - an easy way to learn about what other informaticists do, and how they got to where they are today.

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

Ila: A couple of years ago, I started the TRUU-Lab initiative to develop laboratory test names that are easy to understand and standardized across health-care systems and scenarios. We recently received funding from the CDC and are working in close partnership with the FDA, CMS, ONC, CDC, various EMR and LIS vendors, reference laboratories, instrumentation-makers, and many US and international professional societies. We hope to create and widely disseminate test names that can clearly communicate what a test is for, minimize errors in ordering, and drive better test use.

WIA: *What do you do when you are not working on informatics?*

Ila: I paint on silk - inspired by the art of Zentangle. I put down fine lines of paint straight on the fabric, without a pencil drawing. The process needs a concentration that is almost meditative. It has been especially therapeutic during the pandemic.

Spotlight on Clinical Informatics Fellowship Directors, cont'd.



Two corners of a maze on a silk scarf, painted by Dr. Ila Singh



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

For Your Informatics

#FORGOTTEN NO MORE

...podcast series has finally arrived!!!

AMIA.ORG/AMIA-PODCASTS



The new episode of the Forgotten No More Series highlights **Marty Goddard**, the real creator of the Rape Kit. Dr. Leyla Warsame has a conversation with New York Times contributing journalist, Pagan Kennedy.

WIA Leadership Program grantees, Drs. Jessica Ancker, Aarti Sathyanarayana, Judith Dexheimer, Danielle Mowery, and Yuji Zhang, teamed up with For Your Informatics podcast to draw attention to the stories of historical women and how their contributions continue to affect today's world, including those whose contributions were not recognized at the time, corrects the historical record, provides inspiration for current generations, and suggests contemporary lessons for working scientists.

In collaboration with the FIERCE Team of the Women in AMIA Leadership Program, For Your Informatics presents...

For Your Informatics

Summer Leadership Series



- JUNE 30:** A GOOD LEADER
- JULY 14:** LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES
- JULY 28:** LEADERSHIP WISDOM
- AUGUST 11:** WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

As part of the Women in the American Medical Informatics Association (AMIA) Leadership Training Program, future leaders interviewed each other, leadership coaches, and leaders of AMIA for leadership advice. For Your Informatics podcast where we explore the limitless world of medical informatics showcases these short gems of information in our "Summer Leadership Series". You can find more information about the Women in AMIA Leadership Training Program at the following site (<https://sites.google.com/view/amiawomen/home>).

Interviews conducted by: Tiffany Harman RN, Adela Grando PhD, and Mindy Ross MD
Leadership Coaches: Clare Coonan MSW, Merida L. Johns PhD, Eugene Detmer PhD, William Hersh MD, Ross Koppel PhD, and Vimla Patel PhD
Participants: Melissa S. Briley PA-C, Ji won Chang MPH, Janice Davis BS, Polina Kukhareva PhD, Aarti Sathyanarayana PhD, and Donghua Tao PhD

Available at:
amia.org/amia-podcasts

The first leadership video gem is available now at www.amia.org/amia-podcasts

Listen and share today!