

A.B.R.O.

The official bi-annual e-newsletter for the
Association of Black Radiation Oncologists

Edited by Karen Winkfield, MD PhD



Preparing to Spring Into Action

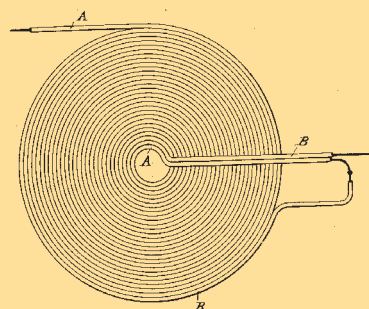
Letter from the Editor

The English language is full of words that have varied meaning depending on their part of speech or the context in which they are used. Take for example the word 'spring', which for those of us living along the Eastern coast of the United States, signifies a time of rebirth and renewal; the end of the long winter doldrums. How grateful we are to be moving towards brighter skies and warmer weather! But **spring (n)** also refers to a resilient helical coil, typically forged out of metal, that can be pressed or pulled but returns to its former shape upon released.

This issue of the ABRO newsletter celebrates several pioneers in the field of radiology/radiation oncology — both historical figures, such as Dr. Wheatland, and modern day pioneers like Dr. David Randolph. Their resiliency on display as life and career pressed and pulled them in many different directions — yet they did not lose sight of themselves or their goals. They laid a groundwork that enabled many of us to **spring (v)** forth into a medical discipline that is often associated with technology, but whose progress is actually driven by its greatest asset — a diverse body of physicians. The Chair's Corner of this issue also underscores the importance of self-awareness as a necessary prerequisite to **springing** forward in our careers as radiation oncologists.

The mission of ABRO is "to advance the professional development of its members and to promote diversity within the radiation oncology workforce through networking and mentoring." It is our hope that the articles contained herein will encourage you to keep stretching forward to reach your goals, and empower you to maintain your sense of self, despite any existing pressures.

"They laid a groundwork that enabled many of us to **spring (v)** forth into a medical discipline..."



— Tesla's BiFilar Coil

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Karen Winkfield, MD, PhD

CHAIR'S CORNER



[www.ohsu.edu/
radmedicine](http://www.ohsu.edu/radmedicine)

“On a global scale, more people from different cultures are connected on multiple levels than ever before in history.”

REFERENCES

Charles R. Thomas, Jr., MD

In this edition of the ABRO newsletter, I wish to comment on self-awareness as a prerequisite to building healthy professional relationships, especially for leaders. Anthony Tjan suggested three keys to developing greater self awareness: 1) formally get tested (i.e. Myers-Briggs) to understand the “core traits” that drive us, 2) watch yourself and compare your intentions with your actions, and 3) constantly observe the behaviors of others.¹ All ABRO members have developed this virtue to varying degrees, as a necessary survival tool.

W.E.B. DuBois reminded us that a veil exists which can potentially confound interactions with individuals,² whether they be colleagues, patients, and/or institutions. Following a series of experienced microaggressions,³ DuBois stated that he “had thereafter no desire to tear down that veil.” At some point, usually prior to entering middle school and certainly by the time one graduates from high school, the development of a ‘double consciousness’ becomes almost routine. DuBois defined this sensation as “a peculiar sensation... of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others.”

Increasing self-awareness may help us negotiate microaggressions. Constant refinement of self-awareness allows us to deftly negotiate our professional and personal journeys. Even more important is the ability to rapidly adapt to professional codes that may exist. Failure to recognize this unofficial curriculum can result in setbacks in one’s personal, social, and overall professional development. Mentors and coaches can help us recognize the unofficial curriculum. Sponsors can provide the political cover and vertical boost necessary to effectively execute tactics and strategies to meet one’s goals. The impact of sponsors (who may or may not themselves be aware of the veil we wear) is vastly under-appreciated.⁴

I believe that to be successful, or more aptly perceived as successful, one must be willing to engage strategies to remove the veil by establishing a level of personal connection and credibility throughout our professional interactions. A challenge is to identify appropriate strategies that can assist one’s ability to reinforce hard-earned trust. Practicing the ‘trinity’ of self-awareness — know thyself, improve thyself, and complement thyself,¹ — can lift the veil one interpersonal interaction at a time.

This is particularly important with the increasingly diverse population of the United States. On a global scale, more people from different cultures are connected on multiple levels than ever before in history. Essentially the world is becoming flatter.⁵ An accessory set of leadership skills is mandatory. A global CORE mindset may be required (Courage, Openness, Reflection, & Empathy).⁶ I believe that a global CORE mindset and the trinity of self-awareness are complementary. Such is the journey I have been on as radiation oncology departmental Chairman in Portland, stretching the traditional seams of our department beyond what may have ever been thought possible. Self-awareness is not easy, but it is necessary.

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2. DuBois, W.E.B.: *The Souls of Black Folks*, 1903
3. Sue, Derald Wing: *Microaggressions and Marginality: Manifestation, Dynamics, and Impact*, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, 2010
4. Hewlett, Sylvia Ann: *(Forget a Mentor) Find a Sponsor: The New Way to Fast-Track Your Career*, 2013, Harvard Business Review Press, 2013
5. Friedman, Thomas L.: *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century*, Farrar Straus and Giroux (FSG), New York, 2005
6. Reeves, Arin N.: *The Next IQ: The Next Level of Intelligence for 21st Century Leaders*, American Bar Association, Chicago, 2010

Pioneer Profiles



David Randolph II, MD, Wake Forest, PGY3, the author shown at left with his father,

David Randolph I, MD

Dr. David Randolph, MD grew up in the rural town of Phenix, VA as 1 of 13 siblings. He completed his undergraduate education at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), then went on to receive his doctorate in medicine at Eastern Virginia Medical School. He began a Family Medicine residency but found his calling in Radiation Oncology. He completed Radiation Oncology residency at VCU and subsequently established a successful practice in Roanoke, VA. He currently practices in Richmond, VA.

Dr. David Randolph II was born in Lynchburg, VA during his father's Family Medicine residency. He received an academic scholarship to the University of Richmond (UR) and also joined the varsity basketball team. Like his father, he attended medical school at Virginia Commonwealth University (Medical College of Virginia) and is now a resident in Radiation Oncology at Wake Forest Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem, NC.

“I could write a dissertation about the innumerable reasons I value, respect, and love my father.”

To me, a PIONEER is a groundbreaker, someone who can establish a thriving environment and lead effectively in a previously unsettled territory. My father, **DAVID RANDOLPH**, is a pioneer in radiation oncology and the greatest man I have ever known. As I complete my second year of residency, I reflect on the impact he has had on my decision to specialize in radiation oncology. While his modesty and humility would never show it, his journey is extraordinary.

Many can say they came from humble means, but few have experienced it like he has. My father grew up in the rural town of Phenix, Virginia as one of thirteen children on a farm. His father only obtained a 4th grade education, literally built his home by hand and worked in a rock quarry to provide for his family. He once told me of how he and his brothers were sent to ask for moldy bread to feed their hogs at a nearby bakery, but ended up eating all the bread before they got home because having bread for the table from a bakery was so rare. As a child, my father suffered from asthma, but his family was too poor to afford medication. It was then that he decided to become a doctor and prevent others from suffering as he did. With his goal established, despite several teachers telling him it couldn't be done, he completed both college and medical school in a total of 6 years. While completing his residency in family medicine in Lynchburg, Virginia, he was introduced to radiation oncology and realized the opportunity and impact he could make treating patients with such a grave illness. He completed his residency at Virginia Commonwealth University and went on to practice in Roanoke, Virginia.

It was in Roanoke that he really settled into “uncharted territory.” There are very few Black radiation oncologists currently, and even fewer when he was beginning his career. When he applied for his first job, he was told to his face that no one would ever hire a Black radiation oncologist. And yet, he got the job. Once, while rounding, his patient remarked, “I am done eating, you can take my tray now.” He not only removed his patient's tray from the room but became that patient's favorite doctor and eventually close friend. Instead of reacting with anger and hostility, he used kindness and hard work to break down racial barriers. He turned his first practice into one of the most successful in the area and received numerous awards including Sharon Kohlengberg, Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation, and Lane Adams awards, all while at a hospital that would “never hire him”. He was able to use the negativity against him as fuel for his success. This has been one of the most important life lessons I have learned from him.

It is also his values and morals that have really inspired me. I have never met a more generous man in my life. From paying for his patients' hotel rooms during treatment to randomly buying meals for other families in restaurants and convincing the waiters to claim that it is “on the house,” I have never met another man who gives as openly and wholeheartedly as he does, with no desire for praise or recognition. His dedication to his patients is also inspiring. He gives his cell phone number to his patients and takes his time explaining their care in detail. Furthermore, his dedication to his patients is only surpassed by his dedication to his family. He literally drops whatever he is doing to put his family first, whether it be waking up from a deep sleep to critique his son's presentation on acoustic neuromas, to flying and/or driving all over the US during every free weekend to be with his children who live in three different states.

I could write a dissertation about the innumerable reasons I value, respect, and love my father. His effort and success as a pioneer in radiation oncology has expanded the field of opportunity for me and many others to expand upon. Considering the challenges he has faced, and what he has taught me and others in the field, I will never be convinced that a more amazing man exists nor a man more worthy of the title pioneer.

Pioneer Profiles *Continued*



Dr. Wheatland
in 1899.

Marcus F. Wheatland, MD

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2607959/?page=1>

<http://www.redwoodlibrary.org/research-projects/marcus-fitzherbert-wheatland-sr>

<http://www.nmanet.org/publications/January2011/Hist46.pdf>

DR. MARCUS FITZHERBERT WHEATLAND is considered the first African-American radiology specialist. He was born in the late 1860s in Bridgetown, Barbados. His mother paid for a private education, but Dr. Wheatland left school at the age of 12 and by 16 started an extensive sailing career. Between 1884 and 1887, he sailed across the Atlantic and up and down the American coastline several times. He arrived in Boston in 1887, "poor, sick with rheumatism, and a stranger," but was able to work and study with medical school in mind. On September 30, 1892, he began session 25 at the Howard University Medical Department and worked his way through his education as a boarding house and resort waiter. He received his degree in April of 1895, the same year that the NMA was founded. He became licensed to practice in Rhode Island, and began practicing in Newport later that year.

As the main authority on radiology in Newport, he possessed the first X-Ray Machine in the city, which cost him \$15. He provided X-Ray service to both the Naval Hospital and Newport Hospital where he was on staff. His practice was "for all classes of people, having among them some of the most distinguished Americans." He was estimated to have 90% white patients. He was a member of the AMA and was listed in their first *Medical Directory* in 1906. He also participated in a number of other local and national organizations.

Dr. Wheatland joined the NMA in 1908. One year later, he was elected President of the NMA during the 11th annual meeting in Boston. The day before his election, he presented his first lecture "The Diagnostic Value of the X-Ray in General Practice," with lantern slides. This is also the first documented formal radiation paper in the history of the organization.

In 1910, Dr. Wheatland was appointed to the Board of Trustees at Howard University. He was awarded an honorary Master of Arts degree in 1906 from Howard University and an honorary Doctor of Laws LLD degree from Wilburforce University of Ohio. He was listed in *Who's Who of America* in 1906 and remained listed during his lifetime. In 1994, "Dr. Marcus F. Wheatland Boulevard" was named as a "salute to a medical pioneer whose life was dedicated to opening the doors of Knowledge.



William E. Allen, MD FACR, and **Leslie L. Alexander, MD, FACR**, at the the first Allen Lecture of the Section on Radiology of the NMA in 1978.

written by Ashley Winkfield,
ABRO Intern

[http://www.jacr.org/article/S1546-1440\(10\)00282-6/abstract](http://www.jacr.org/article/S1546-1440(10)00282-6/abstract)

<http://www.acr.org/~media/ACR/Documents/PDF/Membership/Governance/ACR%20Presidents%20and%20Vice%20Presidents%2019702013.pdf>

DR. LESLIE L. ALEXANDER made medical history when he was elected as the first African American Vice President of the American College of Radiology in 1984. However, his journey started long before in Jamaica. Dr. Alexander was born in 1917 and later moved to Harlem in 1927. He began his education at Morris Brown College in Atlanta, but was drafted during World War II. He excelled and was promoted to lieutenant and awarded several medals.

Upon returning the United States, he completed his bachelor's in 1947 and his master's in 1948, both at New York University. He enrolled in medical school at Howard University, where he graduated in 1952. He completed his formal training and his radiology residency at Kings Country Hospital in Brooklyn in 1956.

At this time, Dr. Alexander opened a private practice in Brooklyn where he offered diagnosis, radiation therapy, and nuclear procedures. In 1969, he left private practice to accept a professorship at Kings County Hospital where he was director radiation therapy and nuclear medicine. In 1978, he moved to faculty of the school of medicine at the State of New York in Stony Brook, Long Island.

Despite his already impressive background, Dr. Leslie Alexander became an active member of local and national radiology societies. In addition to being on the ACR Board of Chancellors — of which he was the first Black member — and Vice President of the ACR, he served as the chairman of the Radiology section of the NMA, became a treasurer of the NMA, and served as an editorial board member and assistant editor of the JNMA. For his generous contribution to the NMA, he

continued on next page



DR. JENNIFER J. PARKER MD, PhD will be starting Radiation Oncology Residency at Northwestern Memorial Hospital; she is currently completing her PGY2 year in Radiology at Yale. Dr. Parker hails from Chicago, IL and is a graduate of Stanford's Medical Scientist Training Program where she completed a PhD in Chemical and Systems Biology. Her research examined and identified novel radiation-induced signaling changes in antigen presenting cells. She served on the Board of Directors of SNMA at Stanford for several years.

ALEXANDER from page 4

received a Distinguished Service Award. Additionally, the federal government to the US Food and Drug Administration's Center appointed Dr. Alexander for Devices and Radiological Health, where he served for over a decade.

In 2003, the year after he passed, the NMA established an annual lecture in Dr. Alexander's memory. Our own Karen Winkfield, M.D. Ph.D. gave the 2013 Dr. Leslie Alexander Memorial Lecture. His son, Major General (Dr.) George A. Alexander, established a scholarship at Howard University in memory of his father. Throughout his life, Dr. Alexander contributed to the authorship of more than 150 scientific published papers.

Shout Outs



Dr. Hanna

Nevine Hanna, MD

a second year Radiation Oncology resident at UC Irvine has just been awarded with 2 honors for the past RSNA meeting in December. She was selected as the recipient of the 2013 AAWR Research and Education Foundation Member-in-Training Award for Outstanding RSNA Presentation in Radiation Oncology for her paper entitled, "Feasibility of Simultaneous Integrated Boost Gamma Knife Planning For Malignant Gliomas and Brain Metastases," which she presented at the RSNA meeting in December. She was also chosen by the RSNA Scientific Program Committee to receive the RSNA Trainee Research Prize for the research project "Feasibility of Simultaneous Integrated Boost Gamma Knife Planning For Malignant Gliomas and Brain Metastases" in the category "Resident."

Darrion Mitchell, MD, PhD

a Holman Pathway resident at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics in Iowa City, Iowa, was one of three residents nationally to be awarded the 2013-2014 ASTRO Resident/Fellow in Radiation Oncology Research Seed Grant award. Dr. Mitchell is researching the use of epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition (EMT) as a therapeutic target in prostate cancer.



Dr. Mitchell



Dr. Halyard

Michele Y. Halyard, MD

at Mayo Clinic in Arizona, has been named Vice Dean of the Mayo Medical School. Dr. Halyard will be responsible for undergraduate medical education activities on the Arizona campus and will coordinate Mayo Medical School academic, curricular, and administrative activities and programs in Arizona.

Lori Pierce, MD, FASTRO

was chosen to receive the 2013 American Association for Women Radiologists' (AAWR) Marie Skłodowska-Curie Award. The award is presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the field of Radiology or Radiation Oncology. Dr. Pierce is a Professor of Radiation Oncology and Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs at the University of Michigan. She was selected for both her contributions to clinical breast cancer research and her leadership at her home institution and nationally. She is currently on the Board of the American Society of Clinical Oncology ASCO, is a Komen for the Cure Scholar, a member of the Steering Committee of the Early Breast Cancer Trialists' Collaborative Group at Oxford University, and was inducted as a Fellow to ASTRO in 2010.



Dr. Pierce

Upcoming Conferences

SNMA

April 16–20, 2014
Washington, DC

ASCO

May 30–June 3, 2014
Chicago, IL

NMA

August 2–6, 2014
Honolulu, HI

ASTRO

September 14–17, 2014
San Francisco, CA

RSNA

November 30–December 5, 2014
Chicago, IL

ASH

December 6–9, 2014
San Francisco, CA



Thank you to everyone who attended the 2013 ABRO Reception in Atlanta, GA! The event was held at Sweet Georgia's Juke Joint and sponsored by Elekta and the Atlanta-based members of ABRO. (From L to R): Reception organizer, Dr. Karen Godette; Dr. Erich Randolph; Elekta representative; Dr. Darlene Gabeau; Dr. James Benton; Dr. Sheree Brown; Dr. Leslie Holmes; Dr. Karen Winkfield.



Dr. Dwight Heron, UPMC
and Dr. Leslie Holmes,
Radiotherapy Clinics of Georgia

Residency Match

Simon Brown — Medical University of South Carolina
Match: **Oregon Health & Science University**

Melissa Liriano — University of Maryland
Match: **University of Maryland**

Catherine Mercado — Georgetown
Match: **University of Florida**

Chika Nwachukwu — Mayo
Match: **Stanford University**

Nasar Onyeuku — Wake Forest
Match: **University of Maryland**

Courtney Pollard — University of Virginia
Match: **M.D. Anderson Cancer Center**

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of the ABRO Newsletter.



Interested in getting more involved with **ABRO**?
We are looking for anyone interested in helping with the
newsletter, student recruitment, and other areas.
Please contact us at black.radoncs@gmail.com