

Frankfin Women

June 2018 Newsletter

I for one am taking a giant sigh of relief that June is over!! This was one of our biggest months of the year with respect to FW activities – we launched the [2018 Mentoring Program](#) with mentee and mentor briefing sessions and a huge celebratory kickoff event, as well as hosting our second networking event of the year, [Perfecting your Personal Pitch](#). Overlay that with LIFE also happening – i.e. the FW web server crashing, an overseas holiday with my little family, interstate work travel and a 2-year-old's birthday party (why did I choose to make a Women's Weekly birthday cake?!!) – and June was a tad stressful.

But...I survived – thanks to an amazing army of friends, family and colleagues who have my back. I couldn't have done it without my dad who flew down from Brisbane to help out with birthday party logistics; my husband who spent hours in a toddler splash pool in Hawaii while I was dealing with web server chat bots; the teams from University of Sydney and Macquarie Uni who went above and beyond as hosts of the first two FW Mentoring Program events; and FW team member Helena who manually booked nearly every ticket for our sell-out Personal Pitch event in lieu of web bookings.

I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter, which just happens to have articles from women in our field who also talk of the value of having people around you who have your back. We really can get through anything with the support of others.

Happy reading,

Melina and the FW team



What happened this month

- The Australian Academy of Science launched their [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scientist Travelling Research Award](#)
- The ABC announced their [Top 5 Scientists](#) for 2018 and, for the first time, they are all women – congratulations!
- Dates and locations for the next round of [Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities consultations](#) were announced
- Some amazing women in science were recognised for their achievements and contributions to their fields in the [Queen's Birthday 2018 Honours List](#)

- Congratulations to all the researchers honoured at the [NHMRC annual Research Excellence Awards](#) (which included quite a few friends of Franklin Women ☺!)
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Career Profile

Meet [Belinda Di Bartolo](#), Senior Research Fellow at SAHMRI (South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute) and The University of Adelaide. She is a mum of three amazing children and, while she knows she should be exercising, she would rather curl up on the couch and watch movies or read a good book! Belinda was also the successful recipient of the Round 1 [2018 Franklin Women Carer's Travel Scholarship](#) – congratulations!



What is your training in the health or medical science field? I graduated from The University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Medical Science (Hons) in 2002 and completed a PhD in Medicine at the Heart Research Institute (HRI) in 2009, specialising in vascular and lipid biology. I remained in Sydney during most of my post-doctoral career starting at the University of New South Wales and then returning to the HRI.

Tell us about your role, and how you became Senior Research Fellow at SAHMRI? Wanting to undertake independent research, I took up an opportunity provided by my old mentor to join him in the Heart Health Theme at SAHMRI. Partially funded by an Early Career Fellowship from the NHMRC, this position has given me such an amazing opportunity to pursue research that I am

passionate about and also to learn how to be an independent research leader.

What is one of your favourite projects you are currently working on? Do I have to pick one? They're all my favourite! I have been particularly interested in atherosclerotic plaque biology and how plaques are different in each person and how that difference should be identified and treated accordingly. My doctorate studies influenced my continuing research in lipid biology and the role of HDL or 'good cholesterol' in atherosclerosis. My newly developed interest is the presence of calcium in the arterial wall and how this contributes to disease progression. Calcification has received controversial attention with researchers and clinicians debating whether calcium is 'good or evil'. Identifying what causes calcification in arteries and how we can either prevent it or reverse it is the current focus of one of my research programs.

Congratulations! You were a recent recipient of the [Franklin Women Carer's Travel Scholarship](#)! Could you tell us a bit about what this meant for you, your family and/or

your career? Thank you! Receiving this scholarship was welcome relief for me as I had just travelled to an overseas conference. I relocated my family to Adelaide 3 years ago to begin my independent research career and that meant leaving my extended family behind – they were my great support network, especially when I needed to travel for work. Being able to attend conferences is an essential part of our careers as researchers for both the exposure and for the opportunity to meet new researchers and form successful collaborations. This scholarship gave me the peace of mind to know my children were in good hands and supported while their mum worked on her career!

What conference did you attend? And what benefits did you gain from your participation? I attended Vascular Discovery: From Genes to Medicine (previously named ATVB/PVD) in San Francisco. I had two abstracts accepted and I'm on the ATVB Early Career Council Committee and we run early career sessions every morning of the conference – these sessions range from round table discussions about various aspects of a scientific career to how to hold difficult conversations and speed networking. It is such a long distance to travel every year so I make it a priority since I'm on the committee and the benefits far outweigh the distance – it's such a great meeting with fantastic interactive poster sessions and opportunities to network and form collaborations. Plus it's always nice to catch up with friends and colleagues that I have to wait a whole year to see!

What advice do you have for other women in the sector who are trying to juggle caring responsibilities with interstate or international conference participation? (Besides applying for the FW Carer's Travel Scholarship of course!) Of course the FW Carer's Scholarship ☺ but there are often options through the universities that support similar applications, and Capstone Editing also provide carer's scholarships, so it's worth investigating. I think the hard part is picking which conference you want to attend because, while we'd like to go to all of them, it just isn't possible! I try to attend a national and an international conference every year but it is tricky when you need to find care. Find yourself a good network of trusted carers – whether they be family, friends or child care workers and choose the essential conference that will provide the maximum amount of benefit for you.

Do you have any side interests or passions that you are looking to develop? I am very interested in the careers of early–mid career researchers in science and more specifically those of women and mothers in science who really do struggle with self-promotion and advancing their careers – much like myself! As a mother of three children under the age of 6 I really admire those who have succeeded in not only maintaining an active scientific career but also climbing that ever-elusive leadership ladder. I'm on the EMCR working group for SAHMRI and was part of the self-assessment team for SAHMRI's application for the SAGE Athena Swan award this year. The gender imbalance at the top tier across academic Australia really strikes a chord with me.

What food have you eaten too much of in your life? Pasta! It's my absolute weakness – being Italian and growing up eating pasta means it really pulls at my heart strings and I enjoy the nostalgia that comes with eating it. Although I do have to talk myself out of ordering it everywhere I go!

The **Franklin Women Carer's Travel Scholarship** is awarded twice a year to female researchers to assist with additional expenses related to child care when travelling

for national or international conferences. Applications for Round Two 2018 (for conference travel between 1 July and 31 December 2018) will open next month (July).

Musings from one of our 2018 mentees

Earlier this month we officially commenced the [2018 Franklin Women Mentoring Program](#)! The launch event provided the opportunity for mentors and mentees to meet for the first time, and we were thrilled by the buzz in the room. To provide some first-hand insight into what it's like to start a program like this, here's one of our 2018 participating mentees, [Jodie Ingles](#):



Nanette Herlihen
@nanherlihen

Following

Always trust your HR Manager
[@jodieingles27](#) enjoy the program - then you
can say I told you so 😊 [@CentenaryInst](#)
[@CSHeartResearch](#)



The HR manager at Centenary Institute, [Nan Herlihen](#), is an absolute treasure. She accosted me in the hallway one day and said: “Jodie, you must participate in the next Franklin Women mentoring program!”. I politely started backing away, rambling some excuse about how busy I am and I just couldn't fit it in...But she was insistent! She pursued me for a couple of weeks, even getting other senior people in Centenary to work on me. The main barrier in my mind was having someone planted in my life to tell me that I'm doing this research career thing wrong and should be doing this, that and the other.

I have never followed a traditional path. I was a genetic counsellor, who decided to do a PhD (genetic counsellors didn't do this in 2007!). Not only that, I was working in a basic science institute, doing research that involved talking to patients, collecting surveys and creating patient cohorts. To so many, I have had to justify that I am a real scientist. I also decided not to go overseas, choosing to stay in the same research program, and keep working with my beloved families, making use of the comprehensive resources I've developed, like the Australian Genetic Heart Disease Registry, and working with the most amazing and inspiring people. And I don't regret that for a second.

I have had countless people inflict 'hallway mentoring' on me, where, with the best intentions, they tell me this is all wrong. I should be moving away from my comfort zone, and the group I am so embedded in. That I can never truly be independent unless I go it alone. If I want to be a real scientist, that is. So I will be honest and say the thought of formal mentoring scared the pants off me! But I decided to take the plunge and submitted my application for the FW Mentoring Program, and my experience so far has proven me completely wrong! Our first mentee's workshop was brilliant, and meeting my mentor (who seems perfect!) at the launch event this month has given me a lot of hope that this will be a truly amazing experience.

My approach, given my past experiences, is to go 1000% at everything so that I can without doubt prove to people I am a real scientist. This I will admit is a rather exhausting way to work, and I look forward to rethinking a more balanced approach to work. I have nothing left to do but say THANK YOU to our HR manager, Nan, for not giving up on me...and yes, you were right!

Jodie is an early career researcher and cardiac genetic counsellor, working with families with inherited heart diseases and sudden cardiac death in the young. She has a 9-year-old son who keeps things real, and she might just spend too much time fluffing around on [Twitter](#).

Honour a Woman with an Order of Australia

Earlier this month the Queen's Birthday Honours List was announced. Although multiple brilliant women were acknowledged for their contributions to their respective fields, it also served as a reminder to us of our [#FWPledge](#) and how important it is for us to continue nominating fellow women for awards. So, to tell us more about another fantastic initiative aimed at achieving gender equity in Australian honours, [Honour a Woman](#), here's [Carol Kiernan](#):



I marched in International Women's Year in 1975, an enthusiastic, idealistic university student advocating for equal pay for equal work. Women's studies courses were popular and we celebrated women in history, science, all sorts of arenas while voraciously consuming the works of feminists like Kate Millet and Susan Brownmiller. At the same time, on 14 February 1975, [Orders of Australia](#) were established to recognise 'men and women whose actions have set them apart and enriched our community'. But did you know that every year, since 1975, men have consistently received over 70% of these awards? Re-invigorating my 70s feminist fervour in 2017, together with two other

feminists Elizabeth Hartnell-Young and Ruth McGowan OAM, we founded *Honour a Woman* to establish gender equality in the Order of Australia: **50/50 by 2020**.

Gender inequality in the Australian Honours system begins with fewer nominations for women. Men nominate men and women nominate men in greater numbers than they nominate women. Australian Honours at the higher levels are predominantly conferred on older men from Anglo-Saxon backgrounds, while women are clustered in the lowest, Medal of the Order (OAM), category. John was the most common name in the 2018 Australia Day honours followed by David, Peter, Michael, Ian and so on.

It's heartening to know that you can start a movement on [Facebook](#) with two other women you didn't know beforehand, connecting with thousands across Australia, towards a common goal of gender equality in the Australian Honours! Victoria has already appointed an awards officer focused on nominating women and we're working to establish similar mechanisms in other states. We're also lobbying for gender targets to be applied to the existing quotas at all levels of the Order of Australia. We're confident on achieving 50/50 in 2020 and we look forward to celebrating more extraordinary women honoured in our community.

So what can we do to help in achieving 50/50 in Australia Honours 2020?

- You can [nominate a woman](#) for an Order of Australia
- Please also like and follow our [Facebook page](#)
- If you need more help in completing the nomination, Our Community provides an excellent resource, [Advancing Women](#).

[Carol Kiernan](#) is an Intelligence and Communications consultant working to achieve safer and more empowered communities. She commutes between Melbourne and Manila and enjoys connecting with women on feminist issues.

We are loving right now...

Introverts!! Putting yourself out there isn't easy for most folk, whether it be for awards, scholarships, leadership opportunities or simply asking for help. But for introverts this can be downright exhausting! So here are some of our favourite tips and tricks for thriving in the workplace as an introvert:

- Check out these tips for adaptation and stress relief for [introverts in an extrovert orientated workplace](#)
 - This [podcast](#) has some great practical tips for thriving in the workplace, and how extroverts can better support and understand introverts (with reference to Susan Cain's fantastic [TedTalk](#) 'The power of introverts')
 - One for the managers out there, [five tips to support your introverted employees](#), as organisations rely on the knowledge and productivity of us quiet achievers
 - Try one of these [16 introvert battery chargers](#) whenever you feel all peopled out
 - And finally, remember sometimes it's ok to take [Jim's approach](#) 😊
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We want to include your contributions in our newsletter. If you are doing something, or know about something, that you think other women in our field would be interested in, drop us a [line](#). We are all about sharing, promoting and collaborating between women in our field. Don't be shy, it might bring about a great opportunity! Want to receive our newsletters directly to your inbox? [Subscribe here](#).