



# Strategies for New Faculty Success

---

- **Sean Joe, PhD, LMSW**
  - **Assistant Professor and Director**
  - **Emerging Scholars Interdisciplinary Network**
    - **University of Michigan**
  - **SSWR Doctoral Student Panel**
    - **January 17, 2008**
    - **Washington, DC**





## Sean Joe, Founder and Director

---

- Area of Research: Preventing suicide and self destructive behaviors among black adolescents.
- Current Position: Assistant Professor School of Social Work & Department of Psychiatry
- Faculty Associate, Program for Research on Black Americans
- NIMH Funding: K01



# Exciting Time for Principled Scholarship

---

- Many young investigators, particularly of scholars of color seek to pursue scholarship and careers in the academy with the ultimate goal of giving something back to their own communities, especially in the form of knowledge and sound practice to address the chronic social inequalities, health & mental disparities, oppression, and discrimination which communities of color continue to face, despite decades of targeted public policy and intervention strategies.

- “Excellent scholarship is a prerequisite for social change”

○

-W. E. B. DuBois



**Emerging Scholars Interdisciplinary Network**



# The Decision

---

- You are probably starting to think about the next step in your research career.
- For some of you, this may mean a position as researcher in a think tank or non-academic institution.
- For others, this may mean a faculty position at a university or medical center.





# The Academic Route

---

- You will have to decide whether a tenure track or non-tenure track position is better suited to your personal goals and ambitions.
- There are no universally right answers to these questions, but there are well-tested strategies for finding and obtaining the right academic appointment.
- Evidenced-based approaches for obtaining tenure.





# Important Questions

---

- What do I want and need from my job?
- How do I go about finding a job?
- How can I ensure that my achievements and capabilities will be recognized?
- How will I choose among the offers I receive?
- How can I ensure that the resources I need to launch my career are included in the job package?
- How can I increase my chances of getting promoted and obtaining tenure?





# Consider Postdoctoral Training

---

- Opportunity for additional training (statistical, methods, theory)
- Refine your research agenda
- Publish! Publish ! Publish!
- Improve grant writing skills
- Mature as a professional





# Know What You Want

---

- Your chances of having personal success will be greater if you have your own needs and wants firmly in mind.
- For example, consider the following questions:
  - Do you need to be working at a top-rated institution, or would a less-intense atmosphere be acceptable or even preferable, given your talents and ambitions?
  - Do you want to devote yourself exclusively to research, or would you prefer some combination of research and teaching or clinical practice?
  - Do you want or need to be in a particular area of the country? Do you prefer an urban, rural, or suburban location?
  - Will personal responsibilities, or your spouse's or partner's professional needs, set limits on your search?





# Setting and Monitoring Your Goals

---

- Publishing goals
- Research Projects
- Teaching
- Mentoring and Service
- Personal
  - Health
  - Family





# Universal Currency: Articles

---

- First 3 years are critical!!!
- Set your goals for publishing
- Consider delay starting intervention research project if data analysis is more likely to occur after first 3 years
- Travel is important, but be selective





# Mentoring and Consultation

---

- Know the difference between mentoring and consultation
- Seek out productive people
- Encourage plain talk versus the higher level ability of abstract advice
- Seek out opportunities to address your weaknesses (methods, etc)
- Not all advice is good advice (including from senior colleagues)





# Managing the Complexity

---

- Consider the Laboratory Framework
  - Focus the identity of your work
  - System for managing student involvement and training
  - Learning administrative skills you will need as your career progresses
- Teaching
  - Develop personal standards
    - Find a balance between personal standards and teaching to evaluations
  - How many “preps” for a good tenure application
  - Invest the time into your preparation





# Good Citizenship

---

- Get advice on what meetings are most important, i.e., understand the norms of your institution
- Journal and Grant Review (periodic) is very helpful
- Association involvement is useful, but keep it limited.





# Joe's Principles

---

- Dream Big...Set High Goals
- 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Author Rule
- Science and Service shouldn't be extracurricular
- Too early to get caught up in the politics of personal ambition, particularly others ambitions
- Accept positions at organizations that has no model or framework for supporting junior scholars at your own peril
- A healthy Sean is a productive Sean!!!
- Have plans, but life requires flexibility
- Avoid the performance enhancing trainings for things you are less likely to use (ego check)





**Thank You!**



**Emerging Scholars Interdisciplinary Network**