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Elias A. Zerhouni MD
Director
National Institutes of Health
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Dear Drs. Pinn and Zerhouni:

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) and the Ruth Jackson Orthopaedic Society (RJOS), representing over 19,000 Board certified orthopaedic surgeons and researchers, welcome the opportunity to respond to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Office for Research in Women's Health (ORWH) request for agenda input for the "Women in Biomedical Research: Best Practices for Sustaining Career Success" workshop in Spring 2008.

As we understand, comments are being sought to identify best practices for ensuring success for women throughout their careers. This is one of the efforts that the NIH Working Group on Women in Biomedical Careers has undertaken to ensure innovative strategies and actions that will help women achieve career advancement in the biomedical research field.

Both the AAOS and the RJOS believe that this workshop is a useful activity for developing, mentoring, and ensuring success in the field. As members of professional medical societies, we also offer our expertise and would be delighted to offer suggestions for AAOS or RJOS faculty to participate in this important meeting. Additionally, we would like to send representatives from our respective societies to attend.

We believe the preliminary agenda comprehensive and agree that it should include discussions on federal funding opportunities, childcare policies, recruitment and flexible work schedules. We do however, encourage you to consider including the following points for inclusion:

1. **Mentoring:** We encourage your consideration of the development of programs to identify young talent and opportunities for these types of programs to continue. Further, we encourage discussion on life-long access to female mentors throughout

one's career. To ensure the success of this discussion, it is important to include information on how to find a mentor and serve as a mentor.

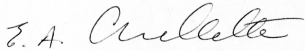
2. **Female Researcher Timeline of Accomplishments:** We believe you should encourage the development of individual career timelines, including the completion of goals and degrees. It is also of particular importance to discuss the unpredictable life stressors that female researchers experience which may have that impact their careers including births, deaths and divorce.
3. **Financial Resources:** Many young researchers now experience a delay in receiving NIH grant funding until several years into their professional careers. It is imperative to include strategies for obtaining funding from a variety of sources. It is also of paramount importance to include a session on grant management and budget strategies.
4. **Human Resources Information:** Recruiting and hiring grant managers, data managers, and statisticians can be a maze to the novice researcher, especially when funding these positions through several sources of income. Including a session and information on how to negotiate institutional human resources and hiring systems would be invaluable.
5. **Encouragement of Women in Specialized Surgery:** As representatives of women in specialized surgery, we encourage the inclusion of women in this field. The number of women in general surgery residency programs is higher than that in the specialized surgical residency programs.

Again, the AAOS and the RJOS thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. We look forward to valuable partnerships with the NIH in the future. If you have any questions about our comments, please feel free to contact either one of us or Christy M.P. Gilmour, AAOS Manager, Medical Research, Office of Government Relations, at 847-384-4323 or gilmour@aaos.org.

Respectfully submitted,



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AAOS Women's Health Issues Advisory Board



Anne Ouellette, MD
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