



Museum of Medicine and Biomedical Discovery

News and Updates

Spring 2025 / Issue 3

President's Corner



Dear Friends:

In order to create something wonderful, you need to fulfill 4 P's: attract accomplished, truly visionary **people**, develop an excellent **plan**, assemble a team that delivers high quality **performance**, and have a way to **pay** for it. In this month's Board Profile, we feature Dr. Dara Richardson-Heron, one of our founding board members as well as a visionary, whose wise counsel has been helping us since we began.

The feature article describes how we achieved the second P: converting an ambitious concept into an excellent plan. In it, we describe a 3-phase plan for the museum beginning with an interactive exhibit that will be displayed in an existing museum and

Board Profile: Dara Richardson-Heron



Dara Richardson-Heron, MD is President and CEO, of DRH Consulting, LLC, a strategic healthcare advisory organization, Executive Coach at The ExCo Leadership Group, Board Director at Caribou Biosciences, and Board Director at the Hastings Center.

What drew you to this project?

Richardson-Heron: Much of my career has been focused on advancing health and health equity. I see this project as another way to continue contributing to this effort. My medical training at Bellevue Hospital, the oldest public hospital in the U.S, was an inflection point, shaping me as both a physician and as a patient advocate. During my training, I witnessed first-hand how limited access to healthcare combined with a lack of trusted information and messengers led to significant health disparities and caused tremendous human suffering.

When first invited to join the inaugural leadership team of the Museum of Medicine and Biomedical Discovery to help design and actualize a first-of-its kind museum to "educate, Inform and inspire;" a

culminating with a brick-and-mortar, permanent home for the museum.

We now set our sights on achieving the last 2 P's: establishing a team to deliver this plan and identifying a way to pay for it. As sports legend Michael Jordan said, "There are people who want something to happen. There are those who wish it would happen. And there are those who make it happen."

At a time when there is growing uncertainty about the future of medicine and biomedical research, there has never been a more urgent need for a place where stories of scientific discovery and medical progress come alive. You can be someone who "makes it happen". **Please donate now to the Museum of Medicine and Biomedical Discovery.**

With hope and appreciation,

Mace Rothenberg, MD
President & Executive Director
Museum of Medicine and
Biomedical Discovery

museum where "future generations will be inspired to pursue careers that improve human health and life;" I was all in!

What do you think the major impact of the museum will be?

Richardson-Heron: It's my fervent hope the museum's major impact will be to present and simplify scientific information in a way that makes it accessible, relevant, exciting, inspirational and most importantly, something that every visitor can use.

In 2025, it continues to be incredibly disturbing to see people suffer and even die from diseases that are potentially treatable in their early stages or preventable altogether. Why? Because they simply don't have access to trusted, reliable and accessible information; they are confused by mixed messages and misinformation, they're not aware of new, innovative, and effective medical treatments, and/or they lack support to help with healthcare decision making.

Our hope for visitors is that they'll be not only be "wowed" by the experiences they have and information they learn during their time with us, but also leave with increased healthcare knowledge and the inspiration to learn more to help improve their own health and the health of their loved ones.

(Interview continued on next page)

Interview with Dara Richardson-Heron (continued)

What do you see as the biggest challenges in creating this museum?

Richardson-Heron: As with any endeavor of this magnitude, scope and scale (what is going to be in the museum; how big it will be, etc.) and having stable, long-term funding for development and operations will be the biggest challenges. One way to overcome this is to continue to engage our intended audience(s) and other key stakeholders to make sure that our design and development plans resonate, make the value proposition abundantly clear to donor prospects, and work to secure generous donors, foundations and other key stakeholders who are committed to the mission and vision of the museum. Certainly, fundraising is and will continue to be a key priority for the MMBD team. In addition, we will welcome donors at *all* levels to join us in this effort!

How is your experience helping you provide oversight and direction for the museum?

Richardson-Heron: My prior experiences are all uniquely relevant to the work we are currently doing at MMBD as we educate, inform and inspire others. The extensive knowledge and lessons I have learned from each of these experiences include:

- Being a trusted health care messenger and advocate at Bellevue Hospital in New York City
- Leading health education and wellness programs, advocating for equitable health care programs as executive medical director at Con Edison
- Advocating locally and nationally to advance equitable health care programs, policies, systems and infrastructure for people with cognitive and physical disabilities as chief medical officer at United Cerebral Palsy

- Providing strategic direction to design, develop and implement programs for breast cancer as CEO of the Susan G. Komen Foundation, NYC
- Playing a lead role in a landmark effort to advance engagement in biomedical research and increase diversity in clinical trials as chief engagement officer at the National Institutes of Health
- Leading global efforts to advance patient-focused programs and serving as a key spokesperson increasing awareness and information about COVID-19 as chief patient officer at Pfizer.

Tell me about what it's been like for you to explain medical and scientific advances to a non-technical audience. What works and what doesn't?

Richardson-Heron: One of the most incredible professors I ever had was blessed with the uncanny ability to break down very complex topics and concepts and make the proverbial “light bulb” turn on in someone’s head -- creating an “aha” learning moment for them. Some call this skill “simplifying complexity.” While this skill is incredibly valuable for professors, it's also useful for anyone charged with the responsibility of communicating a message, building trust and getting buy-in, particularly regarding complicated topics such as health and health care. He essentially cultivated an environment of excitement about learning for his students. I've worked very hard to emulate this wonderful skill throughout my life and career.

One heartwarming experience and affirmation I had personally came during my tenure as CEO at Susan G. Komen Foundation, NYC. In this role, I spoke regularly at local and national events and on local and national television with the goal of increasing awareness and knowledge about breast health, early breast cancer detection options and prevention. When I announced my personal decision to leave Komen after 4 years of service, I received hundreds of cards, letters, emails, many from people that I had never personally met, thanking me for my leadership and saying that the way I explained important health information and concepts helped to “save their life.”

A few key elements of communicating with audiences that have worked extremely well for me during my career that I will continue to use in my MMBD work include:

1. **Preparation:** Even if the topic is a familiar one, I always make an effort to expand my knowledge and seek out additional learning. I do this to make sure that I understand the topic well enough to be creative in my explanations, provide additional context, even tell a story to foster understanding, accessibility, trust and action, wherever appropriate.
2. **Getting to know my audience/meeting them wherever they are:** I am intentional about learning as much as I can about my audience. My goal is to find out what matters most to them, what they want to learn and how I can be most relevant, so that I can provide them with an optimal learning experience.
3. **Keeping it Simple and Concise** – It's really important to use clear, understandable, plain language that avoids acronyms and technical terms. It's equally important to only use the words necessary to get the message across.
4. **Engaging key stakeholders early and often** – It is very helpful to seek the assistance of others to help make sure that messages are clear, relevant and appropriate for the intended audience. In many of my prior roles, we took special care to leverage the expertise and insights of community organizations, “non-technical” individuals and colleagues in other areas to make sure that our messages resonated and had the intended effect.
5. **Providing a few “take aways” and a “call to action”** – At the conclusion, I reinforce a few key messages I want the audience to take away from the presentation. I also make sure that I give them something to reflect on and even something interesting and relevant to do to make sure that the message resonates and hopefully lives on long after the presentation.

A Roadmap for the Museum

A 3-Phase Plan for the Museum of Medicine and Biomedical Discovery



Over the past few months, we've worked on taking the innovative concepts for the museum and developing them into a formal plan, including a path to financial sustainability. The talented group from **Museum Insights** – Sara Zarrelli, Guy Hermann, and Jacques Brunswick – worked closely with the Planning Committee of the board – Susan Edwards, Donna Culver, Iris Grossman, and Mace Rothenberg – and spearheaded this effort. The process started by gaining a clear understanding of the museum's goals, target audience, and key experiences we wanted visitors to have. A landscape analysis was performed that examined existing science and medical museums and museums that utilized interactive and immersive experiences. The number of people who visited each museum and each museum's financial performance were evaluated, as well. The report concluded with a proposal for a 3 phase plan to create the Museum of Medicine and Biomedical Discovery:

Phase I: Exhibition Development: As a first step, MMBD will design and fabricate an exhibit that incorporates interactive and immersive elements and will be displayed at an existing museum. It will provide an important opportunity to field test this concept. We'll assess how people engage with the exhibit, obtain visitor feedback and determine if it achieved the museum's goals "To educate, inform, and inspire", and learn about what we can improve to make the experience even better.

Metrics to Advance to Phase II: Expansion and Dissemination: The next phase will involve scaling up to produce multiple exhibits that travel to several different locations and utilize a full spectrum of interactive technologies. In order to proceed from Phase I, there will need to be clear interest in and demand for additional exhibits as reflected by inquiries that come from other museums, science centers, educational institutions, and organizations about renting exhibits or seeking content. In addition, the MMBD will need to have successfully raised the funds to support hiring of additional staff and exhibit development and feel confident that fundraising can sustain the expanded organization. Finally, visitor studies must show positive changes in visitors' interest in biomedicine, understanding of scientific concepts, trust in medicine and other metrics to be determined.

This phase will increase general awareness of the museum and expand the MMBD's reach and impact. Additional staff will be brought on to create a curriculum and teacher resources, programming support, and toolkits for communities and organizations to engage in conversations about biomedical discoveries and medical advances.

Metrics to Advance to Phase III: Physical Home for the Museum: For the final phase, we will need evidence that this approach is sufficiently popular that people would be willing to come to the museum and that the museum's mission and objectives would be best met by having a permanent home. Working in concert with the host city and local supporters, a museum master plan and architectural designs would be developed. There would need to be confidence that adequate capital – estimated to be in the range of \$50-100 million - is available to support the construction and operation of the museum. An endowment to support operations and future growth would need to be in place.

The development of a museum plan represents a big step forward for the Museum of Medicine and Biomedical Discovery. It has given us a clear understanding of what we need to do, how we can do it, what we need to see at each step along the way to proceed to the next, and the resources we will need to accomplish it. Our full attention now turns to executing this plan with our focus and resolve. We are counting on you - our friends and donors - to support us on this journey!

[Visit our Website](#)

**We Can't Do This Without Your Support
Donate Today!**

Museum of Medicine and Biomedical Discovery | 2121 West Linden Avenue | Nashville, TN 37212
US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!