

**A Career in Government: Michelle Jones-London**  
Program Director, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

**What made you decide to leave the bench and pursue a career in government?**

"My decision to go the Federal Government happened after I did my postdoc at the University of Pennsylvania. And there I realized that while I had some success and loved doing research at the bench, I really wanted to do more outreach and interaction with people and that administration or specifically grant administration or program administration, was something that I had a desire to do. And one of the programs they have with the government is the Emerging Leaders Program\* that allows people with advanced scientific degrees to then come in, get two years of training and then transition to administrative positions. So that's how I was able to work my way up to becoming a Program Director."

**What is your favorite part of the job?**

"The most exciting part about my job is, I think, everything. The fact that I am an African American woman who is a neuroscientist and now I'm at the premier NIH institute for neuroscience, helping to shape, implement and develop programs to address diversity issues is just energizing and exciting. And it really fulfills my basic need that I've always had to really help people and to give back and be able to use my science degree on top of that"

**What does a typical work day look like?**

"So a typical day is just not typical! I deal with inquiries from graduate students, postdocs wanting to know more about our programs. I can have workshops that I'm developing to bring in new investigators or workshops to help with grant writing and proposal development. Also you could be listening in to study section reviews to hear how some of your applicants are doing in terms of their grant review process, so a typical day just isn't typical. It varies and I think that keeps the job fun too."

\*Currently, the NIH utilizes the Pathways Program to offer 3 "paths" to Federal civilian employment for students and recent graduates. Discover the opportunities at this link: <http://www.jobs.nih.gov/vacancies/student/>

\*\*For more information about various career path choices, please visit [www.sfn.org](http://www.sfn.org). Continue the discussion and network with other neuroscientists on [NeurOnLine](http://www.NeurOnLine.org)\*\*