

Women's History Month: Meet Heather L. Yeo, MD

For Women's History Month we are celebrating current and former Damon Runyon scientists.

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Heather L. Yeo, MD, a Damon Runyon Clinical Investigator, is an Assistant Professor of Surgery and Public Health and Assistant Attending Surgeon at New York-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. She specializes in the comprehensive care of colorectal cancer patients. Heather took her passion for comprehensive patient care and developed a mobile app to track patients' mobility and data regarding their pain, fluid intake and dietary factors in order to improve the patient's overall care.

Heather's need to understand how things work developed while growing up in Oregon and exploring the great outdoors. Her father was a surgeon in their small town. She would often go on rounds with him at the hospital and observe firsthand how he developed relationships with each of his patients. He cautioned her about the challenges she may face as a woman in medicine. She admits it took her a while to realize that being a physician and scientist was what she wanted more than anything, no matter the challenges.

Damon Runyon's support has been instrumental to her career. It opened doors to networking events in the tech industry and mentorship opportunities, and gave her the freedom and independence to work on her patient care app.

We can mentor young women. I strongly believe that visible young women and minority STEM leaders help increase the pipeline. If you can see it...you can be it!

As a mentor herself, Heather is an active member of the Association of Women Surgeons and nominates women for awards and leadership positions. Her advice to young women pursuing a career in STEM (especially her daughter, Bella) is to "find what you love, be curious about how things work, and know that a career in STEM can be anything you make it to be."

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