

## INTRODUCTION

Historically, many women in academic medicine have fallen victim to a “leaky pipeline” which favors men in professional advancement, resulting in their underrepresentation in leadership positions.

## PROJECT GOAL

To explore this at the Wayne State University School of Medicine (WSUSOM), we surveyed all WSUSOM clinical faculty at the associate or full professor level to identify what aspects of institutional support were most helpful and what aspects of their work and life experiences they considered to be the biggest obstacles to their attainment of promotion.

## METHODS

We distributed an anonymous online survey asking demographic and quantitative questions about career advancement to all nonvoluntary, clinically active academic faculty at the rank of associate or full professor at the WSUSOM. Mean ratings of institutional support systems were compared between men and women respondents using t-tests with Welch correction.

## RESULTS

- There were 73 responses from roughly 300 eligible faculty, 58 (79%) of whom met criteria for analysis.
- Women reported “Gender-specific networking” more helpful (mean 1.04) than men (mean 0.31) ( $t[38.8] = -2.62$ ,  $p = 0.0126$ ).

## RESULTS (CONTINUED)

- Among ranked obstacles, 74% of women ranked “Lack of interest and encouragement from institutional or departmental leaders” in the top 3 (mean ranking = 2.21) vs. 39% of men (mean = 3.42) and 67% of women also ranked “Lack of tangible commitment from institutional or departmental leadership (e.g. protected time)” (mean = 2.25) vs. 45% of men (mean = 2.91).



## CONCLUSIONS

Our main finding was that women faculty reported less support from their program and institution, particularly from institutional leadership and with regard to protected time. Further, women were more likely to rate gender-specific networking higher than men and less likely to rate support from a stay-at-home partner as beneficial to their career.