

INVESTIGATOR INSIGHT



In this section, we highlight the human side of biomedical investigation, putting a few questions to a researcher at DMS-DHMC.

**Alice Givan, Ph.D.**  
**Research Associate Professor of Physiology**

*Givan develops methods for studying cells that have been activated by the presence of foreign antigens. She also directs the Englert Cell Analysis Laboratory at DHMC's Norris Cotton Cancer Center.*

**What are your primary research interests?**

My research career has been erratic for many reasons (some more interesting than others). I started out working on photosynthesis in unicellular green algae, then progressed to studying cells from transplant patients by flow cytometry. Now I am mainly collaborating with other scientists but also studying methods for identifying cells when they become activated.

**How did you decide to become a scientist?**

I don't remember any actual decision. I just remember that I always wanted to be a biologist.



**If you weren't a scientist, what would you like to be?**

An archeologist or, if I had any musical talent, the first violinist in a string quartet.

**What famous person, living or dead, would you most like to meet?**

Pete Seeger or Nelson Mandela or Abraham Lincoln or Martin Luther King.

**What are the last book you read and last movie you saw?**

Right now I'm reading *Birdsong* by Don Stapp. It's about birds, their songs, and the scientists who study them. I like the book because it hangs at the interface of science, anthropology, and philosophy. The last movie I saw was *Sabrina*—the old version. I liked it; who can't like anything with Audrey Hepburn and Humphrey Bogart.

**What's in your CD player right now?**

All "my" CD players are currently being used by other people, but what I like most is classical chamber music or jazz.

**Who were your scientific mentors?**

My first mentors were my parents. My father was an electrical engineer and high school teacher (he was the first person in his family to have a college education). My mother did not graduate from high school but was the wisest person I'd ever met. They took me to the botanical gardens to make collections of leaves. They took me to concerts, art museums, Ebbets Field, and Coney Island. And neither one ever suggested that I needed to choose between science and a "real" life. My first traditional mentor was Robert Conner, my undergraduate advisor. Science is based on the apprentice-scholar relationship, so I owe much of my approach to science to Dr. Conner.

**What's your favorite nonwork activity?**

Cooking, reading novels, watching baseball games, and doing just about anything with my children (who are no longer children).

**What about you would surprise most people?**

Perhaps the fact that I like cooking, reading novels, watching baseball games, and doing anything with my children.

**Would you change anything about your career?**

Perhaps I would have pursued my career with more determination—and not worked part-time when I could have been working full-time. However, I am still not sure that I would have been willing to give up all that time that I spent cuddling my kids.

**Finish this sentence: If I had more time I would . . .**

Read more, cook more, and start square dancing again.

**What do you ultimately want to discover?**

I think that science works mainly by informed chance, not by purpose. So I will refrain from answering this question.

**Two former DHMC section chiefs attain emeritus status**

Two longtime members of the Dartmouth Medical School faculty were named to emeritus status during the past year. And although life has thrown them each a curve ball, they're still in the game and swinging away.

**Dr. Barry Smith**, who was the head of obstetrics and gynecology for nearly 30



years—from 1976 to 2004—had anticipated spending time in retirement traveling with his wife,

MaryAnn, a retired nurse practitioner. But when she died this past February from a worsening heart condition, he decided it would be best if he returned to work and kept his mind busy despite his new emeritus status.

An alumnus of both Dartmouth College (Class of '59) and Dartmouth Medical School (Class of '60), Smith completed his M.D. and residency training at Cornell Medical College. In 1970, he returned to DMS and Mary Hitchcock and joined what was then the Section of Obstetrics and Gynecology, within the Department of Maternal and Child Health.

Six years later, he was named chief of the section and became a driving force behind its growth and eventual establishment as a department, with a residency program. In addition, Smith is credited with introducing gyne-