

# Dr. Joan St. Onge Completes Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine Program

Joan St. Onge, M.D., M.P.H., senior associate dean for graduate medical education and faculty affairs at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, has become the fourth faculty member from the Miller School to complete the Hedwig van Ameringen Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine® (ELAM) program.

The program was launched in 1995 to expand the pool of women candidates qualified for leadership positions in academic medicine and other health care fields. Sixty women completed this year's course as part of ELAM's 27<sup>th</sup> cohort.



Joan St. Onge, M.D., and her ELAM Learning Community

"This program teaches you to be a better leader," Dr. St. Onge said. "Although all of us are good at what we do, the program



takes it to the next level in important subjects from strategic planning to understanding the finances of an academic health center pertaining to the clinical, academic, and research enterprise."

## Key Takeaways

During the yearlong course, Dr. St. Onge connected with faculty members in a variety of specialties from institutions across the country. Lessons included navigating complex industry dynamics, resource allocation, addressing emerging issues in leadership and academic health administration, strategies for managing professional growth, research-based evaluation, effective negotiation and more.

Dr. St. Onge also worked with a team to develop a longitudinal action project focused on mentoring clinical educators in their early career stages. She is currently implementing the program at the Miller School and is conducting background research to better understand the target group's needs.

"This group can get left out when it comes to formalized mentoring," Dr. St. Onge said. "They aren't on the tenure track, nor do they have a research portfolio, which can have them feel a bit left out. I looked at their needs with the program's goal of a mentor/mentee format meeting four to five times a year for specific skill development sessions."

## Equity Focus

When ELAM was founded, there were only three women deans of medical schools and no women deans of dental schools. At present, women make up 50 percent of medical classes, and many are on track to become leaders in their field. The Miller School has risen to the challenge, and women hold various key



leadership roles, such as senior associate deans of student affairs and medical education, department chairs, and program directors, but there is still work to be done throughout the country.

"We focus on equity because women and those who are currently underrepresented in medicine need to be at the table in decision making," Dr. St. Onge said. "We know that diversity adds to the overall success of the organization. Adding different voices and perspectives makes institutions more productive, innovative, and successful. It is also very important for our faculty, residents, and students to see women lead and succeed in their careers."

## **Network of Talented Women**

Now an ELAM graduate, Dr. St. Onge joins other alumna from the Miller School, including Omaidia C. Velazquez, M.D., professor and chair of the DeWitt Daughtry Family Department of Surgery; Lilian Abbo, M.D., professor of clinical medicine and past president of Women in Academic Medicine; and Sylvia Daunert, Pharm.D., M.S., Ph.D., the Lucille P. Markey Chair of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

"Being a part of ELAM allowed me to hone my skills and expand my knowledge, and provided me with key topics and information. This is very valuable not only to me but to other faculty as well, no matter what their career level," Dr. St. Onge said. "In ELAM, you not only learn, but you form a network of other very talented women leaders from around the country. It was a great experience. Special thanks to Dean Ford for sponsoring me and for his support throughout my time at ELAM."

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