

## **A RESEARCH AND MENTORSHIP PROGRAM IN LONG ACTING REVERSIBLE CONTRACEPTION (LARC): NORTH CAROLINA, MALAWI AND ZAMBIA**

### **PI: GRETCHEN STUART, MD**

The Society of Family Planning Research Fund Mid-Career/Mentor Award was instrumental in allowing the Principal Investigator, Dr. Gretchen Stuart, to transition junior faculty to successful independent investigators.

The Award ensured Dr. Stuart had the means to hire talented assistants, thereby allowing her to focus on the scientific and academic goals of her mentees. The mentor/mentee relationship was most productive with two faculty, who had been previous Fellows in Family Planning under the leadership of Dr. Stuart. Dr. Bryant successfully competed and/or completed four grants totaling close to \$500,000, and she successfully published six manuscripts, four of which she was first author on. Dr. Tang successfully competed for 10 grants totaling close to \$10 Million.

The Award also allowed Dr. Stuart to focus on strategic planning for family planning in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at University of North Carolina Medical School. Importantly, during this award period family planning successfully transitioned into a Division of Family Planning in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, under the leadership of Dr. Stuart as Division Director. This important administrative change ensures full administrative and financial autonomy for the Division under Dr. Stuart's leadership.

Some goals of the Award were not met. For instance, one mentee changed career focus soon after awarding of the grant therefore Dr. Stuart did not spend much time mentoring him. A mentor/mentee relationship proved harder to develop for Dr. Stuart and her proposed mentee in Lusaka, Dr. Chibwasha. Distance, and many administrative challenges for both parties impaired progress. However, despite the challenges, commitment and enthusiasm for future collaboration continues.

Given the great success we had making use of this mentor grant Dr. Stuart plans to apply for a second year of a Mid-Career Grant for the 2014 society of Family Planning grant cycle.