Career Profile – Nisha Cavanaugh, PhD

What is your current title and how long have you worked in your current job?
Director of the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs at NC State; 2 months

Where did you get your PhD and what discipline was it in?
University of Colorado at Boulder in Biochemistry

Did you do a postdoc?
Yes, at NIEHS in RTP

What are your main daily responsibilities?
- Provide professional development and career development programs for postdocs
- Provide Responsible Conduct of Research training for graduate students and postdocs
- Collaborate with local community (faculty, administrators, deans, etc.) and broader community (corporations, industries, other universities, federal agencies, etc.) to ensure postdocs have a meaningful and educational experience at NC State as well as prepare them for careers/jobs in the future
- Advocate for postdocs

What are the keys to success in your career field?
- Working with people and wanting to help graduate students and postdocs achieve their career goals
- Having organizational skills, multitasking, project management skills, networking

What were the most important factors in choosing your career path?
- Being passionate about helping others
- Advocating for scientists
- Having a flexible work schedule and not having a “routine” (each day is different!)
- Wanting to learn about a variety of PhD careers and educate others about the opportunities they have

What 1 or 2 pieces of advice do you have for people who want to land a job like yours?
- To get involved with graduate student or postdoc associations
- To attend workshops and seminars on various PhD careers or professional development