

Vivian W. Pinn, M.D.
Associate Director for Research on Women's Health
Director, Office of Research on Women's Health
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Vivian W. Pinn, M.D., is the first full-time Director of the Office of Research on Women's Health in the Office of the Director of NIH, an appointment she has held since 1991. She is also the NIH Associate Director for Research on Women's Health. Dr. Pinn came to NIH from Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, DC, where she had been Professor and Chair of the Department of Pathology, and she has previously held appointments at Tufts University School of Medicine and Harvard Medical School. Dr. Pinn has been invited to present the ORWH's mandate, programs, and initiatives to many national and international organizations with an interest in improving women's health, the health of minorities, and careers in bioscience for women and minorities. One of her major efforts has been to raise the perception of the scientific community about the importance of sex and gender factors in basic science, clinical research, health care and public policy. She also is currently co-chair, along with the Director of NIH, of The NIH Working Group on Women in Biomedical Careers.

A native of Lynchburg, Virginia, she graduated from Dunbar High School as valedictorian of her class in 1958. Dr. Pinn earned her B.A. from Wellesley College and received her M.D. from the University of Virginia (UVA) School of Medicine in 1967, where she was the only woman and minority in her class. She returned to Massachusetts to complete her postgraduate training as a Research Fellow in pathology at Massachusetts General Hospital, during which time she also served as Teaching Fellow at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Pinn then joined the faculty of Tufts University School of Medicine and Tufts-New England Medical Center Hospital in 1970. In September 1982, when she moved to Howard University, she became the third woman to chair an academic department of pathology in the United States. She is a member of many professional and scientific organizations, in which she held many positions of leadership. She also served as the 88th President (and second woman president) of the National Medical Association during 1989–1990.

Dr. Pinn has received numerous honors, awards, and recognitions and has been granted nine honorary degrees of laws and science since 1992. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the NAS in 1995. She received an Alumni Achievement Award from Wellesley College in February 1993 and served on the Wellesley College Board of Trustees. She received the second annual Distinguished Alumna Award from UVA in September 1992, was honored by the UVA medical school as one of their Alumni Luminaries in 1998, and received the Walter Reed Alumni Achievement Award in 2007. She has been featured in a number of magazines, journals, and media presentations for her work related to women's health and research. In 2001, Dr. Pinn was honored by the establishment at the University of Virginia School of Medicine of the "Vivian W. Pinn Distinguished Lecture in Health Disparities." Among her other honors are the James D. Bruce Memorial Award from The American College of Physicians, the Catherine McFarland Award from the Medical College of Pennsylvania for distinguished service in women's health, The Association of American Medical Colleges Women in Medicine Leadership Development Award, and the Commonwealth Fund's Margaret E. Mahoney Award for Outstanding Service for work in advancing the quality of health care for women. She also received the President's Achievement Award from the American Medical Women's Association; The Dr. Dorothy I. Height Leadership Award for Carrying the Torch of the Earth Shaker and Dream Maker, from the Committee for the International Salute for the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Jacobs Institute. In 2007 Dr. Pinn was awarded the Walter Ridley Trailblazer Award from the University of Virginia; The University of Virginia Walter Reed Distinguished Achievement Award; and the First Women in Ophthalmology Leadership Award. In January 2008, Dr. Pinn was awarded the 2008 Strong Men and Women: Excellence in Leadership Award from Dominion Resources Services, Inc.