Amanda Lindgren : (she/her) is a **Senior Specialist**, Engineering supporting technology transfers and day to day operations for vaccine products. She received a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering with a biomedical concentration from Michigan State University. Since joining Merck in 2014, Amanda has supported vaccine and biologics manufacturing at the Elkton, Virginia, and West Point, Pennsylvania sites. Her experience spans drug substance and drug product operations, including purification, fermentation, formulation and filling, process validation, investigations, change control, and the transfer of manufacturing processes and technical knowledge to international partners. She also runs a subcommittee for the Women's Network at her company.

Athena Lago: I studied biochemistry during my undergrad at Villanova University class of 2020. I had graduated during the pandemic so I decided to get my Master's Degree in chemistry at Villanova while jobs were uncertain. I joined the Kraut research lab where my thesis was on understanding the molecular mechanism behind the 26S yeast proteasome protein degradation. There, I gained substantial experience in vector cloning, construct design, protein expression, purification, ubiquination and assay development. I joined Merck's infectious disease and vaccines department in 2022 right after I completed my masters degree, and my title was Protein Purification Specialist. I worked on the same team for 4 years and was promoted to my now role as **Senior Scientist** in protein purification and characterization.

Caitlin Gee (she/her): is a **Senior Specialist**, Engineering supporting the tech transfer of a vaccine to our external partner in Brazil. She received a BS in chemical engineering from Cornell University in 2017, and a Masters of Engineering from Lehigh in 2023. She has spent her entire career in the Merck Manufacturing Division, supporting manufacturing processes across two sites (Elkton, VA and West Point, PA) and several products. She has supported both drug substance and drug product areas in various stages of development.

Vanessa Marrero: , PhD, is a **pharmaceutical marketing and scientific strategy leader** with more than 15 years of experience translating complex science into strategies and experiences that engage healthcare professionals. She began her career in medical communications, where she held roles spanning scientific writing, strategic consulting, and content leadership across a broad range of therapeutic areas. Since joining Merck & Co. in 2017, Vanessa has held progressively broader roles across medical education, global marketing communications, scientific strategy, and global marketing, supporting products from pre-launch through launch and lifecycle management. Today, she leads Merck & Co.'s Congress Strategy and Operations Center of Excellence, where she is building an enterprise approach to congress planning and execution that brings together Commercial, Medical Affairs, Compliance, Legal, and Procurement. She holds a PhD in Genetics and Development from Columbia University and a BA in Molecular Biology from Princeton University.

Surabhi Dutta: is an **Associate Principal Scientist** with a multidisciplinary career spanning statistical programming, clinical data and analytics, health informatics, AI, digital transformation, and technology modernization. She holds a Doctor of Health Informatics and an MS in Biomedical Informatics from Rutgers University and brings experience across the pharmaceutical industry in clinical research, regulatory submissions, analytics, and technology-enabled transformation. Her interests include responsible AI, EHR and real-world data research, and applying emerging technologies to advance clinical research and improve how scientific work is conducted. Surabhi is passionate about continuous learning and mentoring women in STEM and enjoys sharing her own evolving career journey to encourage graduate students and early-career scientists to stay curious,

explore opportunities beyond traditional career paths, and recognize how their experiences across science, data, and technology can create meaningful impact.

Melina Le: (she/her) is an **Engineering Specialist** supporting the Sterile Liquids Pilot Plant, whose mission is to design the manufacturing procedure for new vaccines to support clinical trials. She received a BS in chemical engineering from Georgia Tech in 2021 and started her career in the Merck Manufacturing Leadership Development. Over the past six years, she has worked in several jobs, including: manufacturing design and scaleup of new medicines and vaccines, managing project portfolios across 30+ manufacturing lines for the vaccine network, designing supply chains for new products, and most recently, managing a team of 25 union employees on the factory floor to ferment, purify, and sterilize the cells used for several vaccines.

Stephanie Kovnat: , PharmD, RPh, is an **Associate Director of Marketing** at Merck, where she leads Scientific Strategy for the U.S. HIV PrEP business, focused on scientific narrative development and key opinion leader engagement, medical education, congress strategy, and scientific communications. She brings a unique blend of clinical and commercial experience across pharmaceuticals, diagnostics, vaccines, and healthcare, most recently leading Clinical Marketing Strategy for a U.S. molecular diagnostics portfolio in infectious disease, sexual health, and women's health at Waters Corporation, with a focus on HPV and cervical cancer prevention, before returning to Merck. She previously worked on Merck's HPV vaccines franchise as a postdoctoral PharmD fellow. Stephanie began her career in marketing before pursuing pharmacy, with experience ranging from consumer and healthcare marketing to frontline patient care at CVS Pharmacy. Her nontraditional path fuels her passion for connecting science and business, building meaningful relationships, and showing others that rewarding careers don't always follow a linear path.