Rebecca Sheets, PhD (USA)

Board Member

Rebecca Sheets is a consultant for Grimalkin Partners and an Adjunct Professor at Catholic University of America, teaching core courses for a M.S. in Biotechnology Program in the Biology Department in the School of Arts and Sciences. She also serves on the board of the International Alliance for Biological Standardization.

In 2013, Rebecca Sheets retired from the U.S. Public Health Service in which she served as the Vaccine Scientific and Regulatory Specialist at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the National Institutes of Health. In this role, she formulated regulatory strategy for the Division of AIDS on pre-clinical development translating research concepts into HIV vaccine candidates suitable for human clinical trials. She also served as a subject matter expert on vaccine cell substrates and vaccine pre-clinical safety assessment, including toxicology. Further, she served the Vaccine Research Center in a similar capacity until 2012.

Rebecca Sheets obtained her B.S. degree in Biology from the California Institute of Technology; M.S. degree in Cellular, Viral, and Molecular Biology from the University of Utah School of Medicine, and Ph.D. in Pathology from the University of Southern California School of Medicine.

Dr. Sheets served for 9 years (1993-2002) as a Scientific Reviewer in the Viral Vaccines Branch of the Division of Vaccines and Related Products Applications, Office of Vaccines Research and Review, CBER/FDA. In 1994, to foster her commitment to public health, she became a Commissioned Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service (Scientist Category), in which she was promoted to the rank of Captain (CAPT) before retiring in 2013. She transferred to NIH in 2002.

Both at FDA and at NIH, she has striven to advance policy regarding vaccine cell substrates. Because of her virology background, a strong focus of this effort has been in regard to the adventitious agent tests. She also considers policy to apply the 3 R's – to reduce, refine, or replace the use of animals in product safety testing – to both adventitious agent tests and vaccine toxicology studies.