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Dr. Kizzmekia S. Corbett is a research fellow in the Viral Pathogenesis Laboratory at the National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Vaccine Research Center, where she works under the direction of Deputy Director, Dr. Barney S. Graham. She received a BS in Biological Sciences, with a secondary major in Sociology, in 2008 from the University of Maryland – Baltimore County, where she was a Meyerhoff Scholar and a NIH undergraduate scholar. She then enrolled at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, from where she obtained her PhD in Microbiology and Immunology in 2014. A viral immunologist by training, Dr. Corbett uses her expertise to propel novel vaccine development for pandemic preparedness. Appointed to the VRC in 2014, Dr. Corbett now serves as a scientific lead for coronavirus research. Her work focuses on developing novel coronavirus vaccines, including mRNA-1273, a leading candidate vaccine against the virus that causes COVID-19. In response to the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic, the vaccine concept incorporated in mRNA-1273 was designed by Dr. Corbett's team from viral sequence and rapidly deployed to industry partner, Moderna, Inc., for FDA-approved Phase 1 clinical trial, which unprecedently began only 66 days from the viral sequence release. Following promising results in animal models and humans, mRNA-1273 was recently shown to be 94.1% effective in Phase 3 trial and has received Emergency Use Authorization from the FDA. Alongside mRNA-1273, Dr. Corbett's team boasts a portfolio which also includes universal coronavirus vaccine concepts and novel therapeutic antibodies. Additionally, Dr. Corbett spent several years working on a universal influenza vaccine, which is slated for Phase 1 clinical trial. In all, she has fifteen years of expertise studying dengue virus, respiratory syncytial virus, influenza virus, and coronaviruses. Along with her research activities, Dr. Corbett is an active member of the NIH Fellows Committee and avid advocator of STEM education and vaccine awareness in the community.