



# Georgia CTSA

Georgia Clinical & Translational Science Alliance

## Community Engagement Program



**One Georgia: Advancing Health Equity Amidst a New Normal**

5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Forum

## Program and Abstract Book

# One Georgia: Advancing Health Equity Amidst a New Normal

*From Bench to Bedside to Curbside*



EMORY  
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SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



UNIVERSITY OF  
GEORGIA

## **About the Georgia CTSA – Community Engagement (CE) Forum Objectives**

Our theme this year is “**One Georgia: Advancing Health Equity Amidst a New Normal**” and is designed to emphasize research, policy, and practice approaches that advance healthier communities. This past year has brought on a unique set of challenges and opportunities in the health equity arena. By March 20, 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic had taken the lives of over 540,000 fathers, mothers, siblings, and children across the United States, and almost 18,000 people in our state.

In May 2020, while most of us were quarantined, we witnessed the horrific murder of George Floyd, who became the symbol of ongoing unjustified killing of blacks by white police across the country. This was the flashpoint of the Black Lives Matter Movement (BLM) and a racial reckoning that impacts us all -- personally and professionally. The intersection of COVID-19 and its sequelae and the BLM exposed much of historical and cultural racism and inequities, including health inequities. Since the advent of COVID-19, we have witnessed a disturbing rise in racist attacks on people of Asian descent, sometimes referred to as the “model minority” related to the politicization of COVID. It’s a reminder of the quote from Martin Luther King, Jr. from the Birmingham jail in 1963, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere...”. We have a moral responsibility to take direct action against unjust laws and practices. By extension, whether physicians or basic scientists or librarians or welders or housekeepers, we all have a responsibility to speak out and speak up on unjust practices. Dr. King also remarked, “The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people but the silence over that by the good people.”

The Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance’s Community Engagement (CE) Program is designed to support community-university research partnerships by connecting existing academic and community research programs, transforming research from a scientist-subject interaction to a more equitable research partnership, and training investigators in principles of community engaged and community-based participatory research. We will remain conscious of lessons learned from our COVID-19/BLM experiences as we strive to improve the health of all of our communities.

The goal of our Forum is to significantly improve health of our communities through the increase of the awareness of the importance of community and academic collaborative research with the following learning objectives. By the end of our Forum, we expect participants will be able to:

1. Identify at least one health systems change or policy change that has occurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and/or this time of racial reckoning.
2. Discuss innovations to improve community health in rural and urban settings, e.g., in digital health and technology.
3. Discuss at least one community-academic collaborative model designed to improve health in marginalized communities through community engagement.

**Georgia CTSA Executive Council**

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Supported by a grant from  
the NIH/National Center  
for Advancing Translational  
Sciences (UL1TR002378)

**Welcome Forum Attendees!**

On behalf of the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance (Georgia CTSA) Community Engagement (CE) Program and Steering Board, it is our pleasure to welcome you to the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Community Engagement Program Forum: *“One Georgia: Advancing Health Equity Amidst a New Normal.”* The 2021 Forum is being presented on a completely digital platform to ensure the health, safety and convenience of all attendees. Over the course of the two days, the conference will offer expansive knowledge and engaging activities that speak directly to the needs of Georgia, the southeast and entire nation. You will hear from eminent speakers and guests from all over the country and representing various disciplines from policy, research and practice in healthcare.

The Georgia CTSA is an inter-institutional magnet that concentrates basic, translational, and clinical research investigators, community clinicians, professional societies, and industry collaborators in dynamic clinical and translational research projects. The Georgia CTSA CE is designed to support community-university research partnerships by connecting existing academic community research programs, transforming research from a scientist-subject interaction to a more equitable partnership, and training investigators in principles of community-engaged and community-based participatory research.

This Forum is of the utmost importance for the Georgia CTSA and the future of continuous community engagement. This year embarks upon nearly 15 years of research, education and service to academic faculty and students and the health concerns for all citizens throughout the state of Georgia.

Though the conference is virtual, we encourage you to network with others, including program speakers, organizers and leaders, using available electronic mediums, like “chat,” as well as providing conference feedback through evaluation surveys. We ask you to think creatively, engage whole-heartedly and remain open to new strategies that challenge the state of our state and nation.

We applaud the Georgia CTSA CE Forum Planning Committee and Community Steering Board members, staff and volunteers for their tireless work in making this forum and your experience a memorable event. Our personal thanks to each of you for attending and sharing your phenomenal work and collaborative ideas.

With appreciation and gratitude,



L. Neicey Johnson, RN, BSN, Esq.  
Georgia CTSA CE Steering Board Chairperson  
Executive Director, VSNS, Inc.



Tabia Henry Akintobi, PhD, MPH  
Georgia CTSA CE Director  
Professor & Associate Dean  
Morehouse School of Medicine



March 19, 2021

Greetings,

It is with great pleasure and pride that I extend to each of you a heartfelt welcome to our 5<sup>th</sup> biennial forum.

Life as we have known it was totally disrupted in 2020 by a life changing pandemic. We witnessed the determination of healthcare providers fighting for the lives of patients while in many cases succumbing to COVID themselves. As we continue to do our part to combat these turbulent times in our nation, the members and staff of the Georgia Clinical & Translational Science Alliance have worked tirelessly to bring to each attendee a stellar program that will enlighten, motivate, and restore our shared mission to close health equity gaps in our nation.

I personally believe that as we all work to improve health in our communities, we are answering a higher calling. Our mission at Atrium health is "To improve health, elevate hope, and advance healing for all". As fellow healthcare leaders, I am certain that your personal missions encompass the same ideals and I salute you for your efforts.

In closing, thank you for your attendance and commitment to a healthier nation. I extend my best wishes to all attendees for an educational and enjoyable experience during this momentous event.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nikki T. Randall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nikki T. Randall, MPH  
Assistant Vice President  
Community Outreach & Civic Engagement

March 30, 2021

Welcome!

We are excited to have you join us for our *5<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Engagement Forum: "One Georgia: Advancing Health Equity Amidst a New Normal."* This Forum is intended to bring to the forefront some of the most pressing challenges and exciting opportunities posed to us today that affect all of our lives. In concert with its theme and the reality of 2021, the Forum will be fully virtual, with topics covered in the keynotes and panels ranging from digital transformation to amplifying voices to social and political determinants of health to immigrant health, all with the aim of creating connections between communities, researchers, healthcare practitioners, and academic partners. The virtual format will be designed to facilitate discussion, networking and collaboration amongst participants.

This is an exciting time for the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance (Georgia CTSA) and Community Engagement (CE). CE supports community-university research partnerships, obtains community input into university research, and increases health research in community settings in a manner that is responsive to the health needs identified by the community. The effort connects community-engaged research programs at Morehouse School of Medicine, Emory University, Georgia Institute of Technology, and University of Georgia. CE provides grants and workshops to community organizations and scholarships and mentoring to academic researchers. Perhaps never before have these efforts been both as vital to the fabric of our society and as imminently needed and highlighted as during the pandemic.

To gain the most out of this experience, we encourage you to network, share your expertise, knowledge, vision and ideas with others. We ask you to keep proactive and diligent in your work as your efforts help to shape the future of CE and community health in Georgia.

We thank the massive efforts from the CE Committee and Steering Board members, staff, and volunteers for the tireless and dedicated efforts in making this Forum and your experience memorable and meaningful. We especially must thank Gail McCray for her leadership and tremendous efforts in making this happen.

Sincerely,



Omer T. Inan, PhD  
Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Adjunct Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering  
Program Faculty, Interdisciplinary Bioengineering Graduate Program

**School of Electrical and Computer Engineering**  
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## Community Engagement

### Theme - One Georgia: Advancing Health Equity Amidst a New Normal

#### FORUM AGENDA – Day 1 *From Bench to Bedside to Curbside*

- 8:00 – 8:30**      **Morning Stretch - Stand & Expand for Life**  
Wendy Bojnowski, MBA, MS, MINDBODY Flourish Wellness by design  
**Morning Meditation**  
Karen L. Bennett, DPT, MDiv, General Assembly State Representative
- 8:30 – 8:40**      **Welcome and Purpose**  
Forum Co-Chairs:  
Nikki T. Randall, MPH Atrium Health Navicent *and*  
Omer T. Inan, PhD – Georgia Tech  
**Greetings** from Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms
- 8:45 – 8:50**      **Georgia CTSA, Community Engagement and Advancing Health Equity**  
Tabia Henry Akintobi, PhD, MPH, Morehouse School of Medicine
- 8:50 – 9:30**      **Barriers to Achieving Health Equity: The Nexus of Racism and COVID-19**  
Camara P. Jones, MD, PhD, MPH, Morehouse School of Medicine  
Moderator: L. Neicey Johnson, JD
- 9:35 – 10:15**      **The Double Edge Sword of the Digital Transformation: Enhancing Disparities or Improving Equity?**  
Robert M. Califf, MD, MACC  
Verily Google technologies and former FDA Commissioner  
Moderator: Omer, T. Inan, PhD
- 10:20 – 11:00**      **Our Secret Burden: Amplifying the Voices of Fibroid Sufferers**  
Winston Thompson, PhD, Morehouse School of Medicine,  
Tanika Gray Valbrun - Founder, “The White Dress Project” *and*  
Ayman Al-Hendy MD, University of Chicago  
Moderator: Tabia Henry Akintobi, PhD, MPH
- 11:00 – 11:10**      BREAK
- 11:10 – 12:10**      **Poster Presentations: Research, Policy, and Practice**  
Lead and Moderator: Alison C. Berg, PhD, RDN, LD, University of Georgia  
Judges:  
  - Rebecca Hardeman, PHR, SHRM-CP, Cooperative Extension, University of Georgia
  - Rowena W. Elliott, PHD, RN, CNN, AGNP-C, GS-C, CNE, LNC, ANEF, FAAN, Emory University School of Nursing

- Rakale C. Quarrels, PhD, Morehouse School of Medicine
- Tennille Leak-Johnson, PhD, MS, Morehouse School of Medicine
- Sharon A. Liggett, MPA, Archway Partnership, University of Georgia

**12:10 – 12:30**

**Rural Georgia - Stronger, Healthier**

Charles Owens, MSA, Georgia Rural Health Association

Moderator: Evonne R. Perdue

**12:30 – 12:50**

**Updates on COVID-19 vaccines, vaccinations, and trials**

Lilly C. Immergluck, MD, MS, Morehouse School of Medicine

Moderator: Rebecca Hardeman, PHR, SHRM-CP

**12:50 – 1:20**

LUNCH

**1:20 – 1:50**

**Creating Connections: Community and Academic Partnerships to Advance Health and Well-being in Georgia University of Georgia**

Sharon A. Liggett, MPA, Archway Partnership, University of Georgia

Henry N. Young, PhD – College of Pharmacy, University of Georgia

Moderator: Brian Rivers, PhD, Morehouse School of Medicine

**1:50 – 2:40**

**Identifying and Connecting Food Insecure Families with the Resources They Need: The Role of Pediatric Primary Healthcare Providers**

Jean Welsh, PhD. MPH, RN, Emory University *and*

Sofia Tenorio Martinez, MD, MPH Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta

Valencia Miller, Med, SKIP (Saving Kids of Incarcerated Parents) *and*

Rhonda Holliday, PhD, Morehouse School of Medicine

Moderator: Tandeca King Gordon, EdD

**2:40 – 2:50**

**Reflections and Closing Remarks –**

Forum Co-chairs and Community Voices

**3:00 – 4:30**

**Bonus Session! For Grant Seekers**

**Finding Funding from Foundations – Introduction to Candid Resources**

Ivonne A. Simms, MEd, Candid

Moderator: Olga Lucia Jimenez, Georgia Department of Public Health

**Community Engagement**

**FORUM AGENDA – Day 2**

*From Bench to Bedside to Curbside*

- 8:00 – 8:30** **Morning Stretch - Stand & Expand for Life**  
Wendy Bojnowski, MBA, MS, MINDBODY Flourish Wellness by design  
**The Day’s Words of Inspiration**  
Hank Stewart, Poet Laureate
- 8:30 – 8:45** **Forum Co-chairs – Welcome Back, Reflections from preceding day. Introduction of Speakers – Nikki and Omer Greetings – State Senator Freddie Sims, Albany, GA**
- 8:45 – 9:25** **Social and Political Determinants of Health**  
Daniel E. Dawes, JD – Director, Satcher Health Leadership Institute, Morehouse School of Medicine  
Moderator: Nikki T. Randall
- 9:30 – 10:10** **Importance of Immigrant Health to a Healthy State**  
Alawode Oladele, MD, Dekalb County Board of Health  
Tina K. Nguyen, MPH, BPSOS  
Moderator: L. Neicey Johnson
- 10:10 – 10:50** **Challenges and Potential for Improving Equity in Health Research Using Digital Health Technology**  
Jennifer M. Radin, PhD, MPH  
Scripps Research and Translational Institute  
Moderator: Dwight Curry Anderson, DeKalb County Board of Health
- 10:50 – 11:00** **BREAK**
- 11:00 – 11:45** **Highlights of Georgia Community Health Worker Programs – The Georgia CHW Initiative**  
Christine J. Wiggins, MA, MCHES®, Georgia Department of Public Health  
Berneta L. Haynes, JD, Georgia Watch  
Lori Lacy, CST, RPhT, CHW, Barnes Healthcare Services and  
Christopher E. Ervin, MD, Young Adult and High School CHW Program,  
Morehouse School of Medicine  
Moderator: Adrienne S. Proeller, Morehouse School of Medicine  
**“Tested Positive November 30 And Surviving”** Greetings from  
Former Mayor and COVID-19 Survivor – William “Bill” Collins,  
Rome, GA



- 11:45 – 12:30**      **Continuing to Serve with the Challenges of COVID-19**  
**Georgia’s Aging Services in COVID Times**  
 Abigail “Abby” Cox, MSW, Georgia Department of Aging
- University of Georgia Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and Nutrition Education Programming for Limited Resource Audiences in Georgia**  
 Sarah T. Henes, PhD, RDN, LD, University of Georgia
- Ensuring Rural Community Voices are Heard: A Case of Assessing the Impact of the Healthier Together program during COVID-19**  
 Alexa J. Lamm, PhD, University of Georgia
- Promoting Healthy Relationships Across Georgia**  
 Ted G. Futris, PhD, University of Georgia  
 Moderator: Alison Berg, PhD, RDN, LD, University of Georgia
- Advancing Health Equity in Georgia – A Call to Action**
- 12:30 – 12:45**      **Achieving Health Equity**  
 Kim Schofield, D.MIN/ABD, CPC-ACC, Georgia State Representative  
 District 60-Fulton/Clayton/City of Atlanta
- 12:45 – 1:00**      **Equity -- our Saving Grace**  
 Nathaniel Smith, MS – Partnership for Southern Equity
- 1:00 – 1:10**      **Reflections and Closing Remarks –**  
 Forum Co-chairs, Nikki and Omer, and Community Voices

# **ABSTRACTS and POSTERS**

# GEORGIA CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE ALLIANCE (GEORGIA CTSA)

RESEARCH – POLICY – PRACTICE

**Poster Presentations – Thursday April 1, 2021, Time 11:15 AM**

Poster #	Time	Presenter	Abstract Title
	11:15 AM	Ali Berg, PhD, RDN,	Poster Introductions
1	11:17 AM	Venu Ganti	Enabling Wearable Pulse Transit Time based Blood Pressure Estimation for Medically Underserved Areas and Health Equity
2	11:24 AM	Rachel Stewart	Healthy Georgia Wellness Education
3	11:31 AM	Shilpa Krishnan	Identifying needs and barriers to stroke rehabilitation for minorities in metro Atlanta: A qualitative analysis
4	11:38 AM	Sivasubramanium Bhavani	Simulation of Scarce Resource Allocation Policies in Critically Ill Patients with COVID-19
5	11:45 AM	Briyanna Philip	The relationship between socioeconomic status and anxiety in African Americans with epilepsy
6	11:52 AM	Maisha Standifer	Up In Smoke & Age- Examining Medical Cannabis Use, Policy Implications & Treatment Options in Older Populations within Vulnerable Communities in Georgia
	12:00 PM	All Presenters	Q & A

*Poster Abstracts are on the following pages.*

## POSTER SESSION ABSTRACTS

#1

### **Enabling Wearable Pulse Transit Time Based Blood Pressure Estimation for Medically Underserved Areas and Health Equity**

Venu G. Ganti, Georgia Tech; Andrew M. Carek, PhD, Georgia Tech; Hewon Jung, Georgia Tech; Adith V. Srivatsa, Georgia Tech; Deborah Cherry, VSNS Inc. (Visions); Levather Neicey Johnson, VSNS Inc. (Visions); Omer T. Inan, PhD, Georgia Tech

Abstract Category: Research

**Background:** Noninvasive and cuffless approaches to monitor blood pressure (BP), in light of their convenience and accuracy, have paved the way towards remote screening and management of hypertension. However, existing noninvasive methodologies—which operate on mechanical, electrical, and optical sensing modalities—have not been thoroughly evaluated in demographically and racially diverse populations. Thus, the potential accuracy of these technologies in the very populations where they could have the most impact has not been sufficiently addressed. This presents challenges towards clinical translation, due to concerns of perpetuating existing health disparities.

**Methods:** Here, we present findings on the feasibility of a cuff-less, wrist-worn, pulse transit time (PTT) based device for monitoring BP in a diverse population that was recruited through a collaborative effort with a non-profit working with medically underserved areas (MUA) in Georgia. We compared the wearable PTT measurements to those from a finger-cuff continuous BP device over the course of several perturbations used to modulate BP. In addition, we created a novel data-driven beat selection algorithm to reduce noise and improve the robustness of the method

**Results:** Our PTT-based wrist-worn device accurately monitors BP in a diverse population (N = 44 subjects) with a mean-absolute-difference (MAD) of 2.90 mmHg. We further show the ability of our device to capture commonly observed demographic differences in underlying arterial stiffness.

**Conclusion:** Accurate BP estimation, using a convenient wearable device can empower users and facilitate remote BP monitoring in MUAs, thus providing widespread hypertension screening and management towards health equity.

#2

### **Healthy Georgia Wellness Education**

Rachel Stewart, University of Georgia; Lisa Jordan, University of Georgia; Terri Black, University of Georgia; Carrie Vanderver, University of Georgia; Becky Collins, University of Georgia; Susan Moore, University of Georgia; Laura Smith, University of Georgia; Georgeanne Cook, University of Georgia; Jackie Ogden, University of Georgia; Marnie Dekle, University of Georgia; Rachel Hubbard, University of Georgia; Denise Everson, University of Georgia; Kisha Faulk, University of Georgia; Alison Berg, PhD,

University of Georgia; Diane Bales, PhD, University of Georgia; Joan Koonce, University of Georgia; Elizabeth Andress, PhD, University of Georgia; Michael Rupured, University of Georgia; Pamula Turner, PhD, University of Georgia

Abstract Category: Program/Policy

Background/Purpose: Governments and community-based organizations rely on UGA Extension to provide education meeting insurance requirements for employee wellness training, and consumers are constantly searching for ways to lead healthier, happier lives. Agents and a Specialist collaborated to develop the Healthy Georgia Wellness Curriculum (HGWC), addressing six health and wellness domains: physical, mental, emotional, financial, environmental, and social.

Description: HGWC includes fourteen lessons that can be taught in 45 minutes or less without technology. Lesson plans include objectives, scripts, expansion points, handouts, activities, and evaluations. Topics include Physical Activity, Planning for Success, Adequate Sleep, Stress-less, Increasing Financial Capability, and more.

Results/Impact: Fifteen states, including Georgia, are teaching HGWC with great results. Over 1,070 adults completed HGWC, and 100% noted they gained knowledge, with 95% feeling extremely knowledgeable after the sessions. 90% of participants stated they would definitely use information received in class. 92% improved nutrition label reading knowledge, and 80% gained knowledge on the importance of eating less foods high in fat, sugar, and sodium. 85% intend to change behaviors, including keeping a sleep pattern record, using deep breathing exercises, decreasing sugary drinks, increasing physical activity, decreasing portion sizes, and managing their budget better.

90% of participants rated the financial benefit the class provided between \$50-\$99. After taking the class, 90% of participants indicated that they felt better, and 85% felt less stressed and more in control.

Conclusion: Currently, 54 agents from 15 states are conducting HGWC. Currently, HGWC is being translated into Spanish to reach a more diverse audience.

### #3

#### **Identifying Needs and Barriers to Stroke Rehabilitation for Minorities in Metro Atlanta: A Qualitative Analysis**

Christopher Kopreski, EMT, Emory University and Shilpa Krishnan PT, PhD, Emory University

Abstract Category: Research

Background: Ethnic minorities within the U.S. have been found to have higher risks for stroke and poorer functional outcomes after stroke rehabilitation compared to Non-Hispanic Whites. There is limited research addressing the disparities in discharge planning for the minority stroke population. This study aims to illustrate the

experiences, barriers, and needs of minority stroke survivors in accessing appropriate post-acute-care rehabilitation services.

**Methods:** 14 stroke survivors were recruited from the metropolitan Atlanta area via purposive sampling (African American n=5; Asian American n= 4; Caucasian n=5). This qualitative study utilized four focus group interviews which were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Thematic content analysis was conducted using NVIVO 12 software. Transcripts were independently coded and salient themes were captured.

**Results:** Stroke survivors experienced barriers to healthcare services following stroke (accessibility to care, continuity of care, finances, health literacy, utility of information provided) and unmet needs for healthcare services following stroke (additional information, care navigators, mental health services, support groups). 100% of African-Americans and Asian-Americans expressed need for additional information, compared to 60% of Caucasians. 80% of African-Americans expressed finances as a barrier to care, compared to 50% of Asian-Americans and 60% of Caucasians.

**Conclusion:** Healthcare providers involved in discharge planning can benefit stroke survivors by providing information and resources at appropriate health literacy levels that: 1) can be easily accessed throughout recovery; 2) include resources for emotional support; and 3) address long-term financial considerations. Policies should address systemic inequities faced by minority stroke survivors in their financial ability to access rehabilitative services.

#### #4

### **Simulation of Scarce Resource Allocation Policies in Critically Ill Patients with COVID-19**

Sivasubramaniam V Bhavani, MD, MS, Emory University; Yuan Luo, PhD, Northwestern University; William D Miller, MD, University of Chicago; Lazaro N Sanchez-Pinto, MD, Northwestern University; Chengsheng Mao, PhD, Northwestern University; Burhaneddin Sandıkçı, PhD, University of Chicago; Monica E Peek, MD, MPH, MS, University of Chicago; Craig M Coopersmith, MD, Emory University; Kelly N Michelson, MD, MPH, Northwestern University; William F Parker, MD, MS, University of Chicago

Abstract Category: Research

**Background:** The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has prompted policymakers to develop widely varying protocols to allocate critical care resources to prepare for a crisis of extreme shortage. The objective of this study was to determine the effectiveness and consequences of these critical care allocation protocols.

**Methods:** Critically ill adult patients hospitalized with COVID-19 from 8 different hospitals were included in this study. Six critical care allocation protocols were tested using Monte Carlo simulation applied to study patient data. The primary outcome evaluated was survival to hospital discharge under each of these protocols.

Results: The combined cohort (n= 1,026) had a median age of 61 (IQR 49.5-73) and was 41% Black, 25% White, and 26% Hispanic. Simulating a 50% ICU bed shortage, lottery allocation saved more lives than treating the sickest-first (40.4% vs. 35.6%). The New York (43.5%), Pennsylvania (46.1%), and Maryland (45.6%) protocols improved survival compared to a lottery. The Pennsylvania and Maryland protocols did not allocate any ICU beds to patients with severe pre-existing medical conditions and were less likely to allocate to older adults. Compared with a lottery protocol, Black patients were significantly less likely to receive ICU beds under the Maryland and Pennsylvania protocols, and less likely to receive a ventilator under all state protocols.

Conclusion: State allocation protocols could save more lives than a lottery but could create disparities in allocation. Simulation modeling can inform policymakers challenged with balancing the inherent ethical tradeoffs in scarce resource allocation.

## #5

### **The Relationship Between Socioeconomic Status and Anxiety in African American with Epilepsy**

Briyanna Philip, Spelman College; NaSiya Taylor, Spelman College; Alexis Bell, Morehouse School of Medicine; Demetrius Geiger, MPH, Morehouse School of Medicine; Rakale C. Quarells, PhD, Morehouse School of Medicine

Abstract Category: Research

Background: Epilepsy is the condition of recurrent, unprovoked seizures. People with epilepsy are more likely to have low socioeconomic status, and barriers such as employment discrimination and access to doctors make epilepsy a difficult condition to live with. Previous studies indicate that people with epilepsy are twice as likely to have anxiety, but the relationship between education level and anxiety remains unclear. The purpose of this study is to examine whether anxiety differed by education level in people with epilepsy

Methods: A total of 82 people with epilepsy completed baseline measures from the Project UPLIFT study. In addition to basic demographic information, anxiety levels were assessed over the past two weeks using the 7-item generalized anxiety disorder (GAD-7) measure.

Results: Among the 82 African Americans who participated, about 70% of participants were women and 30% were men, with ages ranging between 19 to 64 years. Majority of the participants had above a high school education level (87.8%) and annual income levels less than \$25,000 (58.5%). While majority of the participants had minimal to mild anxiety levels (70.7%), there was no significant difference in anxiety per education level ( $F=1.25$ ,  $p=0.297$ ).

Conclusion: The lack of difference in anxiety levels by education level may be due to high anxiety levels being common among this population. Also, the uncertainty of when seizures may occur likely contribute to anxiety levels. Future studies should consider investigating seizure frequency and type of seizure with anxiety.

## #6

### **Up In Smoke & Age-Examining Medical Cannabis Use, Policy Implications & Treatment Options in Older Populations within Vulnerable Communities in Georgia**

Maisha Standifer, PhD, MPH, Morehouse School of Medicine

Abstract Category: Program/Policy

**Background/Purpose:** MSM recognizes the need for scientific research to demonstrate the safety and efficacy of medical cannabis use in the 65+ population. MSM is currently conducting basic and clinical science research in the area of the cannabinoid and endocannabinoid spectrum. This pilot project will advance the spectrum literature by incorporating characteristics of the MSM Tx™ scholarship by engaging across the translational continuum (basic to population-based scientists) to develop, implement, evaluate and disseminate innovative science. **Project Objective:** To conduct a mixed-methods qualitative study to understand perceptions and opportunities to provide education on the benefits of medical cannabis use and numerous treatment options for chronic pain management in vulnerable older populations. The study will also explore the impact of national and state-wide cannabis policy implications on the use of medical cannabis in the target communities.

The proposed project: 1) engages the community, from the inception of the research concept and identifies potential community needs, strengths and implications/impact or research, through community-based participatory research partnerships and collaborations; 2) convenes interdisciplinary teams (non-academic-industry, agency, and policy partners) to prioritize multi-level translation, dissemination and proof of impact strategies associated with policy, research and evaluation; 3) broaden the evidence-based studies through data-driven proof of impact on health equity in underserved or special populations and the 65+ population.

**Results/Status/Conclusion (Expected):** Findings will indicate the need to continue to support community-based research and policy education efforts on the benefits of medical cannabis use, and treatment of pain in disadvantaged older populations throughout Georgia.



## **Speaker Biosketches**

### *Alphabetical Listing*



#### **Dr. Ayman Al-Hendy, MD, PHD, FRCSC, FACOG, CCRP**

Dr Ayman Al-Hendy is currently a Professor (Tenure) and Vice Chair (Research), Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Advisor to Dean of Medicine, Pritzker School of Medicine, University of Chicago (UC). Dr. Al-Hendy is a Gynecologist and Endoscopic Surgeon at UC Medical Center, Chicago, Illinois with a busy practice that focuses on serving women with symptomatic uterine fibroids and premature ovarian insufficiency. Dr. Al-Hendy graduated from Banha Faculty of Medicine, Zagazig University, Banha, Egypt in 1986. After 1 year of internship at Banha University Hospital, he headed to Finland to earn his PhD in Molecular Medicine from University of Turku, Turku, Finland. He then gained additional postdoctoral training in gene/cell therapy and clinical molecular genetics at McMaster University and McGill University in Canada, before completing clinical residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at University of Saskatchewan and fellowship training in laparoscopic surgery at Toronto University, both in Canada. Dr. Al-Hendy is double board certified by the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada and The American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology. In United States of America, Dr. Al-Hendy held various faculty positions at University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, Texas, Meharry Medical College/Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, and Medical College of Georgia, Augusta, Georgia, before moving to Chicago, Illinois.

Dr. Al-Hendy utilizes the methods of basic, translational, clinical and community research to address important medical diseases. Dr. Al-Hendy medical research interests focus on developing novel therapies including gene and stem cell therapy for Premature Ovarian insufficiency, Endometriosis, and particularly Uterine Fibroids. He is currently researching the utility of various nutritional supplements as possible non-surgical therapy for uterine fibroids which impact negatively women health worldwide and burden resources through the high rate of Hysterectomy especially in women of color. Recently, Dr. Al-Hendy isolated and characterized surface marker specific stem cells from human and rat fibroid lesions as well as adjacent at risk myometrium and

normal myometrium and is utilizing these valuable tools to understand the role of developmental epigenetic re-programming and early life adverse environmental exposures in adult onset of uterine fibroids especially in women of color. After ample preclinical work on utilizing human bone marrow mesenchymal stem cells to treat animal models of chemotherapy-induced premature ovarian failure, Dr. Al-Hendy started a clinical trial to translate such innovative approach to women suffering from premature ovarian insufficiency with early encouraging results

<https://clinicaltrials.gov/ct2/show/NCT02696889>,

<http://uicscience.tumblr.com/post/172036377983/dr-ayman-al-hendy-professor-of-obstetrics-and>

In 2010, Dr. Al-Hendy was awarded the American Society of Reproductive Medicine's (ASRM) 2010 Ira and Ester Rosenwaks Award for his significant contribution to the field of translational Reproductive Biology. In 2014 he received the alpha Omega alpha clinician scientist of the year award by the Medical Honor Society and in 2015 the President Achievement Award as well as Rogerio A. Lobo Award from the Society of reproductive Investigations (SRI). Dr. Al-Hendy research is funded by various agencies including NIH (NICHD, NIEHS, NIMHD, ODS, OD, NCCR), USDA, and other national and international organizations. He has served as Chair of the NIH Integrative Clinical Endocrinology and Reproduction (ICER) IRG 2013-2015 and also serves on numerous other committees with organizations such NIH, ASRM, SRI and as Co-Editor-in-Chief of The SRI Journal, Reproductive Sciences as well as on several editorial boards of high impact Reproductive Biology journals. Dr. Al-Hendy has published more than 201 peer reviewed publications in high tier peer reviewed scientific journals, above 360 presentations in national and international meetings, and has edited 5 medical books.



### **DWIGHT CURRY ANDERSON**

Dwight Curry Anderson has worked in the HIV/AIDS advocacy field for twenty years now. Being a former educator for Atlanta Public Schools, that experience garnered Mr. Anderson the ability to relay technical subject matter in a way that clients of HIV services could understand. Mr. Anderson has advocated and lobbied in Georgia and in Washington, DC on behalf of Georgia clients of HIV services. He has also organized conferences, seminars, and educational forums to inform clients of the best ways to

improve health disparity outcomes. He has worked with the Ryan White Planning Council, Fulton County Department of Health, and the HIV Jurisdictional Prevention Planning Group for Fulton and DeKalb Counties. This often entailed working as an intermediary between clients and providers. Currently Mr. Anderson is the Patient Navigator at a Ryan White clinic for DeKalb County Board of Health, along with being a facilitator for a support group for HIV Positive individuals through the Fulton County Board of Health.

Dwight Curry Anderson holds a bachelor's degree in English from Ohio State University, with a minor in Black Studies, and has taken non-degree curriculums in Teacher Certification at the University of West Georgia, and Georgia State University. He has also embarked on numerous trainings in HIV related subjects like testing procedures, counseling and facilitation, and education.



**TABIA HENRY AKINTOBI, PHD, MPH**  
**GEORGIA CTSA - CE DIRECTOR**

**PROFESSOR**

Professor of Community Health and Preventive Medicine, Associate Dean of Community Engagement and Director of Evaluation and Institutional Assessment at Morehouse School of Medicine. As Principal Investigator of a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded Morehouse School of Medicine Prevention Research Center Dr. Henry Akintobi demonstrates leadership in local, national and global community-based participatory approaches and research addressing health disparities. She leads or collaborates in several federal and privately-funded initiatives that model community-driven research, including but not limited to the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance, The Georgia Center for Diabetes Translational Research and the Morehouse School of Medicine/ Tuskegee University / University of Alabama at Birmingham Comprehensive Cancer Center Partnership. Her public health leadership is also evident through appointments to national taskforces designed to shape the science and practice of effective community-based participatory and translational research and collaborations bridging the gaps between basic, clinical and community-based stakeholders to address disparities and advance health equity. Among them include the National Institutes for Health National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences Collaboration and Engagement Taskforce Lead Team, designed to advance team science

towards becoming a major academic model through more equitable community-academic partnership -from conceptualizing to dissemination. Her research and public health interests in maternal and child health, diabetes and cardiovascular risk reduction and HIV/AIDS prevention are guided by training in public health social epidemiology, social marketing and community based participatory research and evaluation.



**KAREN LEEPER BENNETT, DPT, MDIV**

Karen Leeper Bennett is a native of Richmond Virginia. She earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Therapy from Howard University, a Master of Science Degree in Exercise Physiology from Georgia State University, a Master of Divinity Degree from Candler School of Theology at Emory University and a Doctor of Physical Therapy Degree from Alabama State University.

Bennett moved to Georgia in 1985 and has resided in DeKalb County since that time. In 2012 she was elected to serve in the Georgia General Assembly as State Representative of District 94; representing citizens in both DeKalb and Gwinnett Counties. In this capacity, she serves on some of the most influential committees to include Health and Human Services, Economic Development and Tourism, Regulated Industries and Code Revision. Bennett was elected by her peers to serve during the 2019-2020 legislative term as the Chairperson of the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, the largest black caucus of its kind in the United States. Most notably, Representative Bennett co-authored the historic Hate Crime Legislation in 2020, HB 426, removing Georgia from one of five remaining states without a hate crime bill. Additionally, Representative Bennett has sponsored legislation to improve Health Disparities, provide for tax incentives for employees who hire dis-advantaged and disabled veterans, improve funding for Kinship Care providers and increase provider rates for therapists to provide Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy to children with special needs, to name a few.

Professionally, Dr. Karen Bennett is a licensed Physical Therapist and is the President and CEO of Metro Therapy Providers, Inc. in DeKalb County; a pediatric therapy provider service offering physical, occupational and speech therapy to her clients since 1990. The Atlanta Business League, Black Enterprise Magazine and the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia have recognized Dr. Bennett for her entrepreneurial endeavors.

Dr. Bennett is a life member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., a life member of the DeKalb NAACP, a member of the DeKalb Chapter of National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) and the Order of Eastern Star. She has served as a member of the 100 Black Women of DeKalb County, the Physical Therapy of Georgia Board of Directors and other civic and professional boards. She is a graduate of Leadership DeKalb and the DeKalb Neighborhood Leadership Institute.

Bennett has served Georgia as an advocate for children with special needs and their families for over 30 years. She has served the state of Georgia as a member on the Continuous Quality Improvement Committee for the Department of Community Health (DCH) and as a co-founder of the Tri-Alliance (PT, OT and SLP), which serves as an advisory group to DCH, DPH, BCW and CMOs, an advisor to the Physical Therapy Association of Georgia, Babies Can't Wait and Early Head Start. In addition, she has served on the Green Space Bond Fund and Land Use Committee for DeKalb County. Most recently, Bennett was appointed to serve on the DeKalb County Charter Review Commission and the Fulton DeKalb Hospital Authority (FDHA).

Dr. Bennett has mentored many in the area of leadership development and public policy. In her capacity as chairperson of the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus, she launched the first ever 'Young Leaders Policy Summit' and was successful in raising thousands of dollars in fundraising for scholarships and securing grants.

In addition to working as a professional and community advocate, Bennett is an Ordained Itinerant Elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church since. Since 2009, Reverend Dr. Bennett has served as a Senior Pastor to churches serving Georgia in the Sixth Episcopal District of the AME Church.

Reverend Karen Bennett and Leroy Bennett are the proud parents of two adult children; Jabari, an attorney in Florida and Asha, a clinical laboratory scientist and biologist in Atlanta. Reverend Bennett's love for God, family and others is exemplified in all aspects of her life through her ministry, public and community service. Reverend Bennett believes that "Only What You Do For Christ Shall Last".



**ALISON (ALI) C. BERG, PHD, RDN, LD**

Alison (Ali) C. Berg is an Associate Professor and Extension Nutrition and Health Specialist in the Department of Foods and Nutrition at the University of Georgia (UGA). Dr. Berg is also a registered dietitian nutritionist licensed in the state of Georgia. As a

State Extension Nutrition and Health Specialist, she leads chronic disease prevention and management and nutrition programming delivered by UGA Extension agents (community-based educators). She develops and revises curricula, trains Extension agents to be competent and effective nutrition and health educators, and evaluates the impact of educational programs

Dr. Berg's research explores the impact of Extension programs on health behavior change across the lifespan, focusing on diet quality, physical activity, weight management, and cancer screening behaviors. Dr. Berg also studies implementation of Extension programs, such as the National Diabetes Prevention Program and Extension's Cooking for a Lifetime of Cancer Prevention program, to understand factors that influence uptake, effectiveness, and sustained implementation of these evidence-based and practice-tested interventions.

Dr. Berg serves in the Community Engagement Program of the Georgia CTSA, facilitating collaborations between researchers and Extension, participating in and leading translational research projects, and supporting various CE community-focused capacity building activities.



### **WENDY BOJNOWSKI, MBA, MS**

Wendy is an experienced worksite wellness consultant, health and wellness coach and program instructor, health promotion speaker and fitness instructor. Her company, MindBody Flourish, designs and delivers employee wellness programs that promote organizational cultures of health. Wendy passionately endorses “whole person health” and an integrative approach to health and well-being that employs mind-body practices, positive psychology and neuroscience. She is certified to teach yoga, including chair-based yoga, tai chi for arthritis and falls prevention and is a Certified Koru Mindfulness Instructor. She also has training in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and other meditation practices. Wendy is a certified facilitator for evidence-based diabetes and chronic disease self-management programs and a Lifestyle Coach for the CDC's year-long Diabetes Prevention Program.

Wendy is a graduate of Emory University in Atlanta and received an MBA and an MS in Management from Georgia State University. She is a National Board-Certified Health & Wellness Coach and holds a Worksite Wellness Specialist designation from the National

Wellness Institute. She has been a Community Coalition Board member of Morehouse School of Medicine's Prevention Research Center since 2016.



### **ROBERT M. CALIFF, MD, MACC**

Robert M. Califf, MD, MACC, is the Head of Clinical Policy and Strategy for Verily and Google Health for Verily and Google Health. Prior to this Dr. Califf was the vice chancellor for health data science for the Duke University School of Medicine; director of Duke Forge, Duke's center for health data science; and the Donald F. Fortin, MD, Professor of Cardiology. He served as Deputy Commissioner for Medical Products and Tobacco in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) from 2015-2016, and as Commissioner of Food and Drugs from 2016-2017. A nationally and internationally recognized leader in cardiovascular medicine, health outcomes research, healthcare quality, and clinical research, Dr. Califf is a graduate of Duke University School of Medicine. Dr. Califf was the founding director of the Duke Clinical Research Institute and is one of the most frequently cited authors in biomedical science.



### **WILLIAM "BILL" COLLINS, Former Mayor, Rome, GA and COVID-19 Survivor**

Faith and Bill Collins were listed in Rome News Tribune in 2010 as one of Rome's Power Couples. They have worked together for the past 42 years and have been married that same amount of time. They are the proud parents of two grown children: William II and Sara; three grandchildren: Tyler, Marquez, and Faith. Bill Collins is a Rome City Commissioner where he served as the first African American Mayor. They started their

small business in October of 1979 in a small building on Martha Berry Blvd. Bill had a vision to help those that needed a job to become a productive member of this community that could give back. He hired ex-cons that no one else would hire. This proved to be a very vital part of the community because there were so many people that needed jobs in order to stay released.

Today, Bill still helps the community by employing not only men, but women also that needs a second chance. He understands that their company is a stepping block to help them to get in another position to be hired at other companies. He feels honored to have been a part of their growth and stability in life. During summer months, Bill hires high school students that are 17 years old or older to work with them to allow them the opportunity of not just receiving a check but understanding how a small business operates.

Bill serves on several boards where he has a commitment to the community. He serves as a Member of the Board for Kelsey Aycock Burrell Center where he has also served as Chairman of the Board where they give out Christmas boxes to those in need. He serves on the Tallatoona Board of Directors where he helps people to get assistance for heat in the winter and help with power bills during the summer. Bill serves on the Rome/Floyd County Commission on Children and Youth. He is also affiliated with the Progressive Roman Organization that gives students scholarships. He is a member of Life of Jesus in Action Church where he serves on the Building Fund Committee. Bill is also a member of the Noon Optimist Club, Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce, Rome Rotary Club, and Northwest Georgia Minority Business Association. Bill is best described a “gregarious”. Webster defines gregarious as being marked by an inclination to associate with others.....preferring the commonality of community vs. being alone.....instinctive preference for a social vs. a solitary existence.....extravert vs. introvert.



**ABIGAIL "ABBY" COX, MSW**

Community Engagement / Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services

Abby Cox is the Assistant Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services (DAS). In this capacity she administers a statewide system of programs and services that assist older individuals, at-risk adults, persons with disabilities, their families and caregivers achieve safe, healthy, independent and self-reliant lives. She works closely with other aging and disability agencies and



organizations to effectively and efficiently respond to the needs of vulnerable Georgians. As Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Aging Services, Abby manages critical programs that keep older and disabled Georgians safely in their homes and communities such as home and community-based services, Adult Protective Services and the Aging and Disability Resource Connection.

Before beginning her work with DAS, Abby was the Executive Director of the Georgia Gerontology Society (GGS), which is the largest state organization of multidisciplinary professionals in the field of aging. Abby began her career in Gerontology in 2005 with the Georgia Division of Aging Services. Abby received her MSW and Gerontology Certificate from the University of Georgia and her B.A. from Sewanee University. She serves on the ADvancing States Board of Directors, the Georgia Clinical & Translational Science Alliance (GA CTSA) Community Steering Board and is a Georgia Alzheimer and Related Dementias (GARD) Advisory Council Member.



**DANIEL E. DAWES, JD**

Daniel Dawes, a widely respected scholar, researcher, educator, and leader in the health equity, health reform, and mental health movements, is executive director of the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia and a professor of health law, policy, and management. He is also the co-founder of the Health Equity Leadership and Exchange Network (HELEN), which is a nationwide network of over 2000 governmental and non-governmental leaders, researchers, and scholars focused on bolstering leadership and the exchange of research, information, and solutions to advance evidence-based health equity-focused policies and programs. Among his many achievements, he was an instrumental figure in shaping and enacting the Mental Health Parity Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act, the Affordable Care Act, and other federal policies.

Dawes's research focuses on the determinants or drivers of health inequities among under-resourced, vulnerable, and marginalized communities and is the pioneer of a new approach to examining inequities, the political determinants of health. He brings a forward-thinking, inclusive, and multidisciplinary approach to health policy, authoring two groundbreaking books, *150 Years of ObamaCare* and *The Political Determinants of Health*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press, which have received critical acclaim and rave reviews. Dawes currently leads several major health equity projects in

the United States, including several intended to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on communities of color such as the U.S. Health and Human Services Department (HHS) NIMIC grant to establish a national COVID-19 resiliency network (NCRN), as well as a project with Google.org, CDC Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Contakt World, and Gilead Sciences to create a comprehensive health equity tracker.

Dawes is an elected fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine, and serves or served on several boards, commissions, and councils focused on improving health outcomes and elevating health equity in the United States and around the world, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Federal Advisory Committee on Health Disparities, the National Center for Civil and Human Rights - Health and Human Rights Institute Advisory Committee, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Policies for Action National Advisory Committee, the National Football League/National Football League Players Association's National Committee on the Racial Disparities of COVID-19, the National Medical Fellowships Primary Care Leadership Program's National Advisory Committee, the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health National Advisory Council, the Healthcare Georgia Foundation Board of Directors, the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities Board of Directors, the National League of Cities National Advisory Board, the CDC Foundation's Community COVID Coalition Advisory Group, and the Children's Mental Health Network National Advisory Council.

He is the recipient of several national awards and recognition, including the American Public Health Association's Award for Significant Contribution to Public Health, the American Psychological Association's Exceptional Leadership in Advocacy Award, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Health Equity Champion Award, the National Medical Association's Louis Stokes Health Advocacy Award, Families USA Health Equity Advocate Award, the NMQF Minority Health Leader Award, Presented the Key to the City of St. Petersburg, Florida for national leadership advancing health equity, the Gift of Life MOTTEP Healthcare Vanguard Award, and the Caribbean Exploratory Research Center of Excellence Service Award. Dawes' work focuses on addressing the systemic barriers that prevent the U.S. from becoming what it could be: among healthiest nations in the world.



**ROWENA W. ELLIOTT, PHD, RN, CNN, AGNP-C, GS-C, CNE, LNC, ANEF,  
FAAN  
GEORGIA CTSA - CE CO-INVESTIGATOR**

Dr. Elliott is an Associate Professor at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University. She has 39 years of experience as a registered nurse and 23 years as a nurse educator. Her clinical expertise is in gerontological and nephrology nursing. As an educator, she has taught on the associate, baccalaureate, master's and doctoral levels. Her research focus and interests include prevention of chronic kidney disease in older adults and engaging nursing students to provide health education in the older adult community. She is a board-certified adult-gerontological nurse practitioner, certified nephrology nurse (CNN), and certified nurse educator (CNE). She has a wide range of leadership experience as a nurse academician. She was the Director of the first LPN-ADN fast-track nursing program at Alcorn State University. That leadership position served as the foundation for future leadership positions, which included Director of Student Affairs (University of Mississippi), Director of the Adult-Gerontological Nurse Practitioner Program (University of Southern Mississippi), Department Chairperson of Advanced Practice Nursing (University of Southern Mississippi), and Associate Dean of Program Development and Evaluation (Alcorn State University). She currently serves as the Director of the Traditional BSN program at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University.

Dr. Elliott served on the Board of Directors for the American Nephrology Nurses Association (ANNA) as National Secretary and became ANNA's first African-American and doctoral-prepared National President in 2011. She served on the Board of Directors for the Association of Black Nursing Faculty/ABNF (2018-2020) and was the Associate Editor of the ABNF Journal. Dr. Elliott was President of the Georgia Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association from 2018-2020. Dr. Elliott is a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing and was recently selected as a Fellow in the NLN Academy of Nursing Education. Dr. Elliott just completed a two-year term on the CNEA National Nominations Committee representing MSN Nursing Programs (2018-2020) and is currently a Commissioner on the Board of Commissioners for NLN CNEA. She also serves on the Nomination Committees for the American Academy of Nursing and Association of Black Nursing Faculty.



**CHRISTOPHER E. ERVIN, MD**

Dr. Christopher Eric Ervin is active in community-driven work and an advocate for health, wellness and social justice. He presently works at Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) in the Department of Family Medicine as the Program Manager for Community Engagement. He is the Director of Operations for Morehouse School of Medicine Student-run Free Clinic, the H.E.A.L Clinic (Health Equity for All Lives), and the HRSA-funded CHAMPS program (Community Advanced by Medical Practice Superstars). And until recently, was program manager for the MSM High School and Young Adult Community Health Worker Program. Dr. Ervin has served as a consultant for local nonprofits and as an advisor to the Black Women’s Health Imperative. Dr. Ervin also serves on the Georgia HIV Prevention and Care Council, serving as chair from 2016 – 2018, and has recently been appointed to the Georgia Department of Public Health Community Health Worker Advisory Board and the Dekalb CURDSE (Center for Urban Research, Development, Sustainability, and Evaluation) Community Action Board.



**TED G. FUTRIS, PHD, CFLE**

Ted G. Futris, PhD is a Professor in Human Development and Family Science and a State Extension Family Life Specialists at the University of Georgia. He has a Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. For the past 21 years, Dr. Futris has provided statewide and national leadership in the creation and dissemination of evidence-informed programs to support

healthy relationships among youth and adults. Through the University of Georgia's Cooperative Extension System, Dr. Futris provides training and support to community-based partners across Georgia in family life education. His research focuses on the implementation and evaluation of educational programs designed to promote healthy couple relationships and stable homes for children. His research and outreach programming has been funded in excess of \$27M from federal and state sources. Dr. Futris has published over 60 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters as well as over 175 technical reports and outreach publications. To learn more, visit <http://www.fcs.uga.edu/people/bio/tfutris>.



**REBECCA HARDEMAN, PHR, SHRM-CP**

Community Engagement / Clayton County Extension

Rebecca Hardeman currently serves as the County Extension Coordinator and Director of the University of Georgia Clayton County Extension. In this role, she provides leadership and management to county professionals in three (3) program areas and administrative oversight for program enhancement, resource allocation, and fiscal compliance. With over 20 years of experience educating on topics from personal and professional development to financial literacy, she is a life-long learner always desiring more knowledge.

She holds a bachelor's degree in economics and mathematics and a master's degree in higher education administration. Rebecca has served as an educator in many capacities including as a professor, college administrator, and Extension agent. Her philosophy has always been motivating and empowering for job success while continuously encouraging for personal growth.



**BERNETA L. HAYNES, JD**

Berneta is the Senior Director of Policy and Access at Georgia Watch. An attorney and champion of energy equity and healthcare access, Berneta brings a unique mix of legal advocacy work, writing expertise and innovative use of digital journalism to impact pressing consumer issues. Her work centers specifically on ensuring access to affordable, quality healthcare for all Georgians, closing opportunity gaps and increasing access to the financial mainstream, and improving access to clean energy to improve the health and financial well-being of low-income families and communities.

Berneta received a J.D. from University of Iowa College of Law, a B.A. in English, Psychology, and Writing from Drury University, and a Master's in English from University of Iowa. Her interest in energy equity, public health, and healthcare access stems from her liberal arts background and research around intersections of race, class, and gender in American culture.



**SARAH T. HENES, PHD, RDN, LD**

Dr. Sarah Henes has been a Registered Dietitian for 23 years with expertise in clinical and community practice and research in working with overweight adults, youth and their families, and in promoting nutrition behavior change. As the University of Georgia (UGA) State Coordinator for EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program), her work focuses on both adult and youth nutrition programming and curriculum implementation for low income families, collaborating with other UGA Extension and Department colleagues (i.e. SNAP-Ed, 4H), and developing a variety of community partnerships throughout the state for nutrition, health, and wellness. Dr. Henes is also involved in clinical and community research, with a primary focus on working with underserved and low income youth and families. One of her current

projects, the FoodMASTER Initiative, teaches math and science concepts through food and nutrition. FoodMASTER is led by Dr. Melani Duffrin (PI, Northern Illinois University), and is a collaboration of researchers from Illinois, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, North and South Carolina (also known as the Deep South Network). The goal of this NIH SEPA grant (Science Education Partnership Award) is to support STEM learning for underserved, minority youth through informal learning environments.



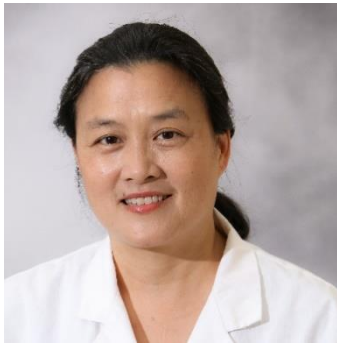
### **RHONDA HOLLIDAY, PHD**

Dr. Rhonda Conerly Holliday is an Associate Professor the Department of Community Health and Preventive Medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine. She received her BS in Psychology from Morris Brown College (Atlanta, GA) and her MA and PhD in Developmental Psychology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Her main research interests are minority health issues, health disparities, health equity and community based participatory research. She has a particular focus on HIV and substance use prevention among adolescent and adult populations who have experienced incarceration. She has conducted research in the United States, South Africa, and Swaziland. She currently serves as the PI for the Morehouse School of Medicine's Prevention Research Center Core Research Project: Take Charge: Implementing a Campus and Community HIV Testing Strategy to Reduce the Burden of HIV/AIDS in Vulnerable Populations.

Dr. Holliday currently serves as the Co-Director of the Community Liaison Core for the Deep South Research Center on Minority Aging Research, housed at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, providing training and technical assistance on community engaged research. She also serves as the Community Engagement Core Director for Center for Translational Research in Health Disparities at Morehouse School of Medicine, working with multidisciplinary teams to interface with communities to address health disparities and health equity.

Dr. Holliday serves on the Board of Directors for the Academic Consortium for Criminal Justice Health, where she co-chairs the Racial and Social Justice Workgroup. She also co-chairs the Anti-Racism Workgroup for the Prevention Research Centers. She is an American Psychological Association Health Equity Ambassador and serves as the chair of the Social and Behavioral Institutional Review Board at Morehouse School of Medicine.



**LILLY C. IMMERGLUCK, MD, MS**

Dr. Immergluck is Professor and Physician Scientist at Morehouse School of Medicine and currently serves as Morehouse School of Medicine's site Principal Investigator for its participation in the US COVID-19 Prevention Network, which includes the COVID-19 Vaccine Clinical Trials. Dr. Immergluck is a practicing general pediatrician, pediatric infectious disease specialist, population health service researcher and serves on the Executive Board for the Section on Infectious Diseases for the American Academy of Pediatrics. Currently, she is Professor in the Department of Microbiology/Biochemistry/Immunology and Director of the Pediatric Clinical & Translational Research Unit of Morehouse's Clinical Research Center. Dr. Immergluck also holds an adjunct appointment as Associate Professor at Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health.

Dr. Immergluck has spent over 20 years studying antibiotic resistant bacterial infections and vaccine preventable conditions. Over the last decade, she has used spatial statistical modeling to look at socio ecological conditions which contribute to health disparities in children and young adults.

Dr. Immergluck completed her undergraduate studies at Northwestern University, medical degree from The Ohio State University, her pediatric residency and infectious diseases fellowship at the University of Chicago, where she was also selected as a fellow of NIH's Pediatric Scientist Development Program. In 2013, she received a Master of Science in Clinical Research from Morehouse School of Medicine. She remains committed to serving patients who are primarily from medically underserved areas, finding ways to close the gap on health inequities which impact primarily children and young adults, and teaching the next generation of diverse biomedical researchers and physicians.





**OMER T. INAN, PHD**  
**GEORGIA CTSA - CE CO-INVESTIGATOR**

Community Engagement / Georgia Institute of Technology  
Assistant Professor, School of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Adjunct Assistant Professor, Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering  
Omer T. Inan (S'06, M'09, SM'15) received the B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees in electrical engineering from Stanford University, Stanford, CA, in 2004, 2005, and 2009, respectively.

He joined ALZA Corporation (A Johnson and Johnson Company) in 2006, where he designed micropower circuits for iontophoretic drug delivery. In 2007, he joined Countryman Associates, Inc., Menlo Park, CA where he was Chief Engineer, involved in designing and developing high-end professional audio circuits and systems. From 2009-2013, he was also a Visiting Scholar in the Department of Electrical Engineering, Stanford University. Since 2013, Dr. Inan is an Assistant Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology. He is also an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering.

His research focuses on non-invasive physiologic sensing and modulation for human health and performance, including for chronic disease management, acute musculoskeletal injury recovery, and pediatric care. Dr. Inan is an Associate Editor of the IEEE Journal of Biomedical and Health Informatics, Associate Editor for the IEEE Engineering in Medicine and Biology Conference and the IEEE Biomedical and Health Informatics Conference, Invited Member of the IEEE Technical Committee on Translational Engineering for Healthcare Innovation and the IEEE Technical Committee on Cardiopulmonary Systems, and Technical Program Committee Member or Track Chair for several other major international biomedical engineering conferences.

He has published more than 125 technical articles in peer-reviewed international journals and conferences and has six issued patents. Dr. Inan received the Gerald J. Lieberman Fellowship in 2009, the Lockheed Dean's Excellence in Teaching Award in 2016, the Sigma Xi Young Faculty Award in 2017, the IEEE Sensors Early Career Award in 2018, the Office of Naval Research Young Investigator Award in 2018, and the National Science Foundation CAREER Award in 2018. He was a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) All-American in the discus throw for three consecutive years (2001-2003).



**THERESA R. JACOB, MD, FAAFP**

Theresa R. Jacobs is a board-certified family medicine physician providing the highest quality comprehensive health care to the uninsured and underserved, at-risk populations at Oakhurst Medical Centers. She serves as the clinician chair for the Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, which is the governing body for Federally Qualified Community Health Centers (FQHC) in Georgia. There are 129 FQHC sites scattered throughout the state, servicing over 300,000 Georgians.

Theresa is a scholar who earned an Associate Degree of science in industrial chemistry from Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI; a Bachelor's of Science in microbiology from Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI; and her Medical of Doctorate Degree from Michigan State University College of Human Medicine, East Lansing, MI. She completed her residency in Family Medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine where she served as chief resident for one year. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians. She and her sister (Crystal Horhn) are the founders of The John and Sally Horhn Foundation (JASH), a non-profit organization that is committed to helping disadvantage children excel academically.



**OLGA LUCIA JIMENEZ**

Community Engagement / Patient Navigator Program Manager

Olga Lucia Jimenez is the Patient Navigation Program Manager of the Georgia Breast and Cervical Cancer Program at the Department of Public Health. She currently oversees the implementation Patient Navigation Program statewide. Mrs. Jimenez has over 25 years of experience, working first as Promotora/Community Outreach Worker at Fulton County Health District and then working as a health educator in the breast

and cervical cancer field. She has vast experience working with underserved populations, including ethnic minority groups, women with disabilities, and the lesbian population. Before joining the Department of Public Health, Mrs. Jimenez managed the Patient Navigation Program at the American Cancer Society. She provided oversight to a cadre of 11 client navigators (community health workers) located throughout the state of Georgia. These Patient Navigators provide/provided education, support, and assistance to low-income women in getting their breast and cervical cancer screening. In 2009, Mrs. Jimenez served as the President of the Hispanic Health Coalition of Georgia Board of Directors. She co-authored Con Amor Aprendemos! and BRIDGES curriculums (both ACS Curriculums). Mrs. Jimenez was responsible for providing training to CHWs and Promotoras and supported them with guidance and leadership regarding implementing the programs. She holds a bachelor's degree in science. She is originally from Colombia and moved to the states in 1985.



**L. "NEICEY" JOHNSON, RN, BSN, ESQ.  
CHAIRPERSON, Georgia CTSA - CE Steering Board**

Neicey Johnson, registered nurse and attorney, is the chairperson for the Georgia CTSA Community Engagement Steering Board, member of the CTSA External Advisory Board, and a former co-chairperson for the its 4<sup>th</sup> biennial Forum. The core of her success is in her compassion for people and a zeal for community engagement and continuous learning. She is the founder and executive director of a Georgia non-profit organization, VSNS, Inc. (Visions). Having launched nationally modeled programs aimed at healthy minds, bodies and spirits, Neicey has touched over 1 million lives. Her proven track record in changing the lives of others is anchored at her belief that to change one's circumstance requires a change in the way one thinks. Neicey's life purpose is to provide an environment where persons are empowered to improve their health and economic status through education and skills development. Under her leadership, organizations have executed programs that enable their participants and employees to overcome barriers to success, embrace innovation and move beyond the "now." by simply understanding themselves and how to interact with others to minimize and resolved conflict.

Neicey is an active participant of several community-based business Boards and a frequent volunteer. Her work's focus is on community Health Disparities in Elimination

of Social Determinants of Health. She is a graduate of the University of Alabama at Birmingham (bachelor's in nursing) and Birmingham School of Law. She is currently licensed to practice law and nursing in the southeast as well as a licensed Georgia Mediator. She holds many certifications including those as a facilitator and trainer; Langevin, Diversified Development Dimensions International and Six Sigma Black Belt.



### **CAMARA PHYLLIS JONES, MD, MPH, PHD**

Dr. Jones is a family physician and epidemiologist whose work focuses on naming, measuring, and addressing the impacts of racism on the health and well-being of the nation. She recently completed tenure as the 2019-2020 Evelyn Green Davis Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University.

She is also a Senior Fellow at the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at the Morehouse School of Medicine; an Adjunct Professor at the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Health Education and the Department of Epidemiology; and an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Morehouse School of Medicine in the Department of Community Health and Preventive Medicine.

Past roles include Assistant Professor at the Harvard School of Public Health in the Department of Health and Social Behavior, Department of Epidemiology, and Division of Public Health Practice (1994 to 2000); Medical Officer at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the Division of Adult and Community Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (Research Director on Social Determinants of Health and Equity, 2000 to 2010) and in the Division of Epidemiologic and Analytic Methods for Population Health, Office of Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Services (2010 to 2014); and President of the American Public Health Association (2015 to 2016).

At the CDC, Dr. Jones led the development and inclusion of the six-question “Reactions to Race” module on the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, and the organization and formalization of the CDC Racism and Health Workgroup as an official CDC scientific workgroup. As President of the American Public Health Association, she launched the 25,000-member association and its 54 state affiliates (with another 25,000 members) on a National Campaign Against Racism.

She is currently a member of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Roundtable on Black Men and Black Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine; the National Board of Public Health Examiners; the Board of Directors of the DeKalb County [Georgia] Board of Health; and a faculty member of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education's Quality Improvement: Health Care Disparities Collaborative.

Dr. Jones earned her BA in Molecular Biology from Wellesley College (1976); her MD from the Stanford University School of Medicine (1981); her Master of Public Health from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health (now the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health) (1982); and her PhD in Epidemiology from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health (1995). She also completed residency training in General Preventive Medicine at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health (1981 to 1983) and residency training in Family Practice at the Residency Program in Social Medicine at Montefiore Medical Center (1983 to 1986).



**LORI LACY, CST, RPHT, CHW**

Lori Lacy is the Director of Community Pharmacy Enhanced Services for Barnes Healthcare Services, a specialty pharmacy providing pharmacy, chronic condition management and post-acute services. Barnes is headquartered in Valdosta, Georgia and provides services to the Southeast. Lori has spent 23 years with Barnes Healthcare Services.

Lori has helped launch and grow their specialty pharmacy, managed the wound care and healing practice, the infusion sales market in South Georgia and North Florida, and managed the retail and infusion business. Most recently as the Director of Enhanced Services she is expanding chronic disease education along with medication management within community pharmacies. She is accomplishing this by building and leading the new division within Barnes Healthcare consisting of community health workers focusing on rural lives and the health equity thereof driving increased patient outcomes as it relates to chronic disease management.

Barnes Healthcare Services with over 100 years of experience, put people first to deliver innovative, holistic solutions to put their patients on a pathway to greater health.



**ALEXA J. LAMM, PHD**

Dr. Alexa Lamm is an Associate Professor of Science Communication in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication at the University of Georgia. She is a social psychologist that explores the evaluation of programmatic and organizational change using quantitative and qualitative methods. Dr. Lamm has served on multiple state, regional, and national interdisciplinary teams receiving over \$47M in financial support of their efforts and she has published over 170 refereed scientific papers and journal articles. She is currently serving as the evaluator of a \$5M CDC-funded project dedicated to improving physical activity, access to healthy food and positively impacting food policy in five at-risk Georgia counties using community coalitions to catalyze change. She and her team have worked diligently to overcome COVID-19-related challenges collecting data and showcasing the impact extension efforts and community collaborations can have on health initiatives when faced with adversity.



**TENILLE LEAK-JOHNSON, PHD, MS**

Tennille Leak-Johnson, Ph.D., M.S., molecular geneticist and epidemiologist with an interest and expertise in identifying and evaluating genomic risk factors, and multiomics of complex diseases in admixed populations. Dr. Leak-Johnson is the Executive Research Coordinator of the Cardiovascular Institute, and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Physiology at Morehouse School of Medicine.

The results of Dr. Leak-Johnson's research have been published in leading journals like Nature, Nature Genetics and New England Journal of Medicine. Her most notable findings published in Annals of Human Genetics includes the identification of a novel

gene associated with diabetic nephropathy in two large African American case-control cohorts.

Dr. Leak-Johnson received her doctorate in Molecular Genetics and Genomics from Wake Forest University School of Medicine (2007). She is also the first African American to complete her Ph.D. in the program. Subsequently, she furthered her education by earning a M.S. degree in Epidemiology from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health (2010).



**SHARON A. LIGGETT, MPA**

Sharon Liggett serves as a state-wide Public Service and Faculty member with the University of Georgia Archway Partnership to connect community-identified needs to Higher Education resources. She leads the stakeholder engagement platform for collaborations and partnerships related to health and wellness initiatives across Georgia, and is a member of the Community Engagement Function with the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance, using a wide range of engagement strategies including community-based participatory research. Ms. Liggett earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida and a Master of Public Administration from The Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida.



**SOFIA TENORIO MARTINEZ, MD, MPH**

Sofia Tenorio Martinez is a Wellness Data Analyst at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta in the Child Advocacy Department. She received her MD from the Monterrey Institute of

Technology and Higher Studies in Mexico before starting her MPH at Emory University in 2018. She graduated in 2020 with a focus on Epidemiology and the Maternal and Child Health Certificate. Her work has focused on Child Obesity and Nutrition, including working on Food Insecurity and Early Care Feeding Practices. In the Child Advocacy Department, she currently works in the Obesity and, Injury and Illness pillars.



### **VALENCIA H. MILLER, MED**

Valencia Miller is the Founding Visionary and CEO of SKIP Georgia Chapter, Inc. (Save Kids of Incarcerated Parents). SKIP Georgia Chapter, Inc is a non-profit, 501(C)(3) organization operating in the Greater Atlanta Metropolitan area since 2017. The parent organization, SKIP, Inc., started in 1976 and was based on the research around children of inmates who are in “At Risk” situations. The mission of SKIP Georgia Chapter, Inc is two-fold: (1) to stop the cycle of generational incarceration by providing innovative educational programs and a network of supportive services to children of incarcerated parents and their families who are “At-risk” and impoverished and/or homeless, and (2) to increase public awareness of the underlying problems of these children as victims.

Valencia has worked in the criminal justice field for over 10 years and as a result of her work, children of incarcerated parents in Georgia receive high learning and educational services, with support, to counter the cycle of generational incarceration. The Georgia Chapter serves a target audience of 150-200 at-risk youth and families each year. Through Valencia’s leadership, SKIP Georgia has conducted workshops, trainings, and provided referrals to community resources to reduce the health and education disparities of at-risk children and their families. SKIP Georgia continues to demonstrate experience serving the community and conducting successful educational programming, focus groups, and community awareness addressing underlying issues of trauma resulting from parental incarceration. Valencia’s many years of leadership as a community and educational programs developer have qualified her as a sought after, master strategic planner of programs. She is a certified life coach and business professional who is passionately involved in various initiatives for the improvement of academic achievement, family empowerment, and business operations excellence. She holds a B.A. degree in Business Management from Clark Atlanta University and a Master’s in Education from Central Michigan University. She and her husband reside in the Atlanta area.

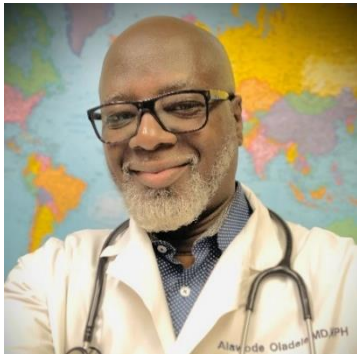




**TINA K. NGUYEN, MPH**

Ms. ‘Tina’ Khuyen Nguyen received her Master of Public Health from East Tennessee State University Graduate School of Public Health and Bachelor of Arts from Sewanee: The University of the South. Since 2015, Ms. “Tina” Khuyen Nguyen has worked with diverse stakeholders to address the needs of underserved minority communities in Georgia. As a first-generation Vietnamese American, Ms. Nguyen is aware of the health disparities and difficulties many Asian Americans and immigrants struggle with. Her work focuses on improving access to healthcare services and promoting preventative health behaviors among the Vietnamese and Asian American communities. During her time as a Program Manager at BPSOS-Atlanta – a nonprofit organization that serves Vietnamese community in Georgia, she successfully attained over \$1.8 million dollars from funders such as the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Healthcare Georgia Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, and Komen Atlanta. Grants from these federal, state, and local foundations allowed Ms. Nguyen and BPSOS-Atlanta to fund and implement programs that provide social services access, domestic violence survivor support, and affordable healthcare access to the community at large.

She is an aspiring writer and currently volunteers on the Georgia Clinical & Translation Science Alliance Community Steering Board, DeKalb County Board of Health Emergency Preparedness Medical Reserve Corps, BPSOS-Atlanta Board, and ETSU Prescription Drug Abuse/Misuse Works Group.



**ALAWODE OLADELE, MD, MPH**

Alawode Oladele was born in Nigeria. He has an MD degree from Morehouse School of Medicine and a Master of Public Health from Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. He completed his internship, residency and fellowship at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia. He currently works in Public Health both at the local level and in the International setting. He is the Medical Consultant of County Wide Services at the DeKalb County Board of Health in the State of Georgia where serves as a USCIS Civil Surgeon in addition to providing travel health consultations and directing the medical services in both the refugee health program, and the tuberculosis program. He is also the CEO and President of both Premiere International Health Care Inc., and GIANT Non-Profit Inc. He is involved in several HIV, emerging diseases and community health projects in, the Caribbean, West Africa, East and Central Africa. In addition, he serves on the Board of Directors of several organizations and works with numerous US based and international organizations.

Some of his other areas of interests include working on social justice issues (including but not limited to: economic development; community development; environmental justice; human rights; human development; and social change).



**CHARLES F. OWENS, MSA**

In August 2015, Mr. Owens received Direct Appointment as Associate Clinical Professor for Georgia Southern University's Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health (JPHCOPH)

and the Director of the Center for Public Health Practice & Research. Under faculty appointment, he provides instruction in the JPHCOPH Health Policy & Community Health Department focusing on health care finance and policy. As the Director for the JPHCOPH Center for Public Health Practice & Research facilitates the integration of the JPHCOPH academic resources into local, state and national fields for application in communities and areas of research. He administers various grant programs targeting specific areas of public health including but not limited to, Public Health, hospitals, Emergency Medical Services, needs assessment, program evaluation, strategic planning, health systems planning and various other components within health and health care arenas.

With professional experience over the past 28 years holding a variety of health care leadership positions, Mr. Owens has worked with health care organizations across the entire continuum of care. Prior to joining Georgia Southern University, Mr. Owens served as the Executive Director of the Georgia Department of Community Health's State Office of Rural Health and Primary Care Office. Mr. Owens provided oversight to various programs focusing on improving the health care delivery system and health of Georgians in underserved communities. Mr. Owens was appointed to Governor Nathan Deal's Rural Hospital Stabilization Committee. He also serves on the Board of the Georgia Rural Health Association, the Georgia Public Health Association and the Georgia Primary Care Association Internal Review Board. Previously he received appointment by Kathleen Sibelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to serve on the 2012-2013 Human Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Negotiated Rulemaking Committee for Designation of Medically Underserved Populations and Health Professional Shortage Areas, and he has held a variety of leadership positions in rural hospitals.

Mr. Owens obtained his Master's in Science majoring in Accounting from Georgia Southwestern College in 1992. He previously obtained his Bachelor's of Science majoring in Marketing from Valdosta State College in 1990.



**ALLISON PENN, EDD, MED**  
**Georgia CTSA – CE CO-INVESTIGATOR**

Allisen Penn is the Associate Dean and State Program Leader for Extension and outreach in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences for the University of Georgia.

She leads the college to fulfill the land-grant university mission to provide Georgia's residents, businesses, and communities access to quality educational experiences and the institution's knowledge base. Dr. Penn works with leaders of the other UGA colleges and units to successfully apply research to meet the state's priority needs through Extension faculty located in all 159 counties. She also serves as the co-chair of the Georgia Clinical Translational Science Alliance Community Engagement function to address health and wellness needs, particularly in rural and underserved populations, by strengthening and expanding research collaboration with faculty from various disciplines.

Dr. Penn has over 30 years of experience in the Land-Grant University Cooperative Extension System. Before accepting her current position on August 1, 2019, Dr. Penn was a regional program leader for the University of Tennessee (UT) Extension with responsibilities for family and consumer sciences and 4-H in 31 counties in middle Tennessee. She began her career with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service. Over a 22-year career, she served as an Extension Agent in four counties; Associate District Director with leadership and administrative responsibilities for Extension agents and programs in the Ouachita District; and as a Leadership Specialist and Associate Professor directing a division-wide faculty leadership program.

Dr. Penn received her doctorate in higher education from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and holds a master's degree in counseling and a bachelor's degree in home economics from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.



### **EVONNE R. PERDUE**

Evonne has been a businesswoman in the greater Atlanta area for many years. Her business ventures include a child care center, print shop and presently a partnership since 1985 in a beauty/ barber salon. Evonne is passionate about volunteering, beginning as a teen working in her neighborhood, church and school. She joined the American Business Women's Association over 30 years ago. She is Director of the "Weight Loss =Equal= Health Gain" Challenge, a community-based nutrition, exercise and life changing program designed to meet the emerging needs in the community, specifically public health and social issues of obesity and unhealthy eating/lifestyle habits from a domestic perspective.

Her volunteer experience includes: volunteer facilitator/lead support group instructor at CHHC Overcomer's Ministry; (prepared group meetings weekly and directed class in sharing and going forth in family aide to addicted family member); a past Alternate Atlanta Planning Advisory Board Member for NPU-Z; Thomasville Community Development Corporation Secretary; Thomasville Heights Community Association member; Satcher Community Health Leadership Institute graduate.



### **ADRIANNE SERRANO PROELLER**

Adrienne Serrano Proeller is a Community Health Worker (CHW) with Morehouse School of Medicine Prevention Research Center (PRC) and Community Engagement Coordinator for The Center for Translational Research in Health Disparities at MSM. Her role as a CHW at Morehouse School of Medicine has included community outreach and education on a number of projects, including the REACH Healthy Corner Stores and Safe Routes to School initiatives, as well as the PRC's Community Health Needs and Assets Assessment. She is also the community health worker for the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance, where she works on capacity-building projects for CHWs across the state.

Adrienne currently serves as the Georgia Ambassador to the National Association of Community Health Workers (NACHW). She is a graduate of Loyola University of New Orleans and her background includes 6 years as a senior writer in Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech and 8 years as Senior Manager of Corporate Communications for Turner Broadcasting System, Inc. She is actively involved in many community-based organizations in SW Atlanta, where she has lived for 10 years.



## **RAKALE COLLINS QUARELLS, PHD**

Dr. Rakale Collins Quarells is a Behavioral Scientist and an Associate Professor of Community Health and Preventive Medicine at the Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) and an adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Behavioral Science and Health Education in the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. She also served as the Associate Director of the MSM Cardiovascular Research Institute, overseeing population science research. Dr. Quarells also serves as course director for the MSM, Emory, GA Tech, and UGA's joint course titled: Community Engagement and Health Disparities in Clinical and Translational Research.

Dr. Quarells joined MSM in July 2000 following the completion of a two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship in Chronic Disease Epidemiology and Prevention at the Stanford Prevention Research Center in the Stanford University School of Medicine. Dr. Quarells received her Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in personality psychology from Howard University in Washington, D.C. Dr. Quarells' primary research focuses on utilizing community engagement to enhance the prevention and self-management of chronic diseases (including cardiovascular diseases and epilepsy) among African Americans.

Dr. Quarells has been the recipient of National Institutes Health funding, including her Career Development Award (K-01) from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute as well as funding from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke of the National Institutes of Health. These two awards funded her Families Implementing Good Health Traditions for Life (F.I.G.H.T. for Life) study. This pilot intervention resulted in reductions in cardiovascular risk among Black families through the increase in physical activity and fruit and vegetable consumption. Building on that study, Dr. Quarells was funded to conduct the FIGHT Against MetS study, another family study to address metabolic syndrome among Black families. In 2012, Dr. Quarells served as the principal investigator of the Minority Health Genomics and Translational Research Bio-Repository Database Network (Minority Health-GRID), a \$13 million NIH funded, multi-site research study with multiple aims designed to create a minority focused research network, link health information with genetic data, and assess genetic, personal, and environmental factors associated with severe hypertension. Dr. Quarells recently expanded her research interests to explore the self-management in epilepsy when she received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the Adapting Evidence-Based Epilepsy Self-Management Programs for Blacks in Georgia study. Using a community-engaged approach, this project adapted and replicated the Project UPLIFT, a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy program for

depression, among African Americans with epilepsy. Taking the lessons learned from that project, Dr. Quarells recently received funding to also adapt the Project UPLIFT intervention for Black men with heart failure and depression.



**JENNIFER RADIN, PHD, MPH**

Dr. Jennifer Radin is an epidemiologist and clinical researcher with the Digital Medicine Division at Scripps Research Translational Institute, where she conducts research to improve disease prediction and prevention by incorporating digital devices and platforms. She is currently the PI on DETECT, an app-based research study that seeks to understand if data from wearable devices can provide early indications of viral infections, such as influenza and COVID-19. She has over 10 years of epidemiological and digital health experience and has worked with both the CDC and Naval Health Research Center on respiratory disease surveillance, vaccine effectiveness, and diagnostics. Jennifer received her doctoral degree in Epidemiology from the University of California, San Diego and San Diego State University. She also holds a Master of Public Health degree, specializing in Epidemiology of Microbial Diseases, from Yale University and a bachelor's degree in Biology from the College of William and Mary.



**NIKKI RANDALL, MPH**

Nikki T. Randall was born and raised in Macon Georgia, the youngest of five children born to the Honorable William C. and Laoretta Fults Randall. She attended Bibb County Public Schools and is a graduate of Tennessee State University in Nashville TN, where

she received a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, she also holds a Masters of Public Health from Mercer University School of Medicine.

Ms. Randall, a third generation elected official, made history in 1999 by becoming the first African American female to be elected to the Georgia General Assembly from Middle Georgia. She retired from the Georgia General Assembly in December 2016. She currently serves as the Assistant Vice President of Community Outreach & Civic Engagement at Atrium Health Navicent. Ms. Randall serves on the boards of the Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia, and Crisis Line Safe House of Middle Georgia.

Ms. Randall is a distinguished alumnus of Leadership Macon (1998) & Leadership Georgia (2004). She is also an active member of the Democratic Party of Georgia, Healthcare Businesswomen's Association, Macon Chapter of the LINKS, Incorporated, and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. Randall is member of the Beulahland Bible Church, where she works with the single's ministry, Beulahland Abroad Ministry, Women of Worship ministry and sings in the Women's choir. When she is not working, she enjoys reading, mentoring rising political leaders, and volunteering with senior and youth organizations.



**BRIAN M. RIVERS, PHD, MPH**

Morehouse School of Medicine Dr. Rivers is Professor and Director of the Cancer Health Equity Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM). Dr. Rivers is nationally and internationally recognized as a leader in health disparities research and a retired member of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Advisory Council on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NACMHD). Dr. Rivers is an active member in the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) community and serves in several leadership capacities. Dr. Rivers is a behavioral scientist with a broad background in implementation science and public health, with specific training and expertise in methodologies commonly used to addressing health disparities. The goal of Dr. Rivers' program of research is to contribute to advancing cancer health equity, both nationally and globally. More specifically, Dr. Rivers research portfolio has endeavored to expand the application of population-based intervention science to understand how to address cancer health disparities in clinical and community-based settings, using multilevel, multisectoral approaches, such as medical mobile applications and/or Community Health Workers/Patient Navigators.



Currently, Dr. Rivers is leading several large randomized controlled trials, funded by Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) and NIH National Institute on Minority Health and Health (NIMHD R01, to evaluate and characterize digital mobile technology usage and acceptability for education and care coordination among African American men diagnosed with prostate cancer. Dr. Rivers is a Multiple-Principal Investigator for the NIH National Cancer Institute (NCI) funded PACHE U54 Cancer Research Partnership between MSM, Tuskegee University, and the University of Alabama-Birmingham O'Neil Comprehensive Cancer Center (UAB CCC). Dr. Rivers also serves as the Director of the Integrating Special Populations Core of the NIH National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS) funded Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance. Dr. Rivers has presented his novel and innovative research findings in diverse settings including the First Congress on Oncology Clinical Trials (Lagos, Nigeria), Movember International Prostate Cancer Consortium (Queensland, Australia), The Atlantic Magazine, The People vs Cancer, South by Southwest (SXSW) conferences, and the National Press Foundation.



## **DARRELL SABBS**

For over four decades, Darrell Sabbs has served the communities of Southwest Georgia through hard work and determination, driven by the shared belief that “service is the rent we pay for living.” From teenagers to the eldest members of society, his focus has remained strong – to recognize the struggles of the underserved and to provide tools to help them ensure a healthier future for themselves and their families.

Darrell currently serves as Community Benefits Coordinator for Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital (PPMH) in Albany, Georgia. His work with the hospital includes identifying ways to impact community health, with particular focus on the underserved. He works closely with the hospital’s Network of Trust, a national award-winning in-school, interactive outreach program for pregnant and parenting teens in rural Southwest Georgia.

Darrell played a key role in developing health initiatives for “Men on the Move,” a faith-based partnership of more than 30 institutions designed to help Southwest Georgia men. His work with both underserved men and women led to the creation of two of Phoebe Putney’s most successful health events – a Women’s Health Fair and a Men’s Health Fair. More than 300 individuals attend each event annually. For many, these

events empower participants to take control of their lifestyle and well-being. For even more, it is the first time they speak to a physician or nurse face-to-face and learn that they, too, can receive healthcare no matter how poor or underserved they may feel. They leave with tools to improve their lives and the lives of those around them.

In 2003, in large part a result of Darrell's commitment, Phoebe Putney was awarded the coveted Foster G. McGaw Prize for excellence in community service. He is also the recipient of a 2020 Joseph D. Greene Community Service Award from the Healthcare Georgia Foundation.



**KIM SCHOFIELD, D.MIN/ABD, CPC-ACC**

Rep. Kim Schofield, State House Representative District 60 was elected to the Georgia Assembly in 2017 and serves on the Small Business Development, Interstate Cooperation and the Health and Human Service Committees. She serves as Chaplain of the Georgia Legislative Black Caucus and an appointed member to the Atlanta Commission on Women. Rep. Schofield holds leadership positions as State Lead for the National Caucus of Environment Legislatures and National Organization of Black Elected Legislative Women. As a public servant Kim lives out her core values of Access, Action and Accountability. She is a member of the national Patient Centricity and Patient Engagement Liaison

Kim's professional career spans across healthcare, financial, transportation, education and non-profit agencies. Kim has over 15 years in consulting, coaching, teaching, training workshops and engagement seminars bringing alignment within Political, Corporate, Community, Law Enforcement, Healthcare and Faith-Based organizations.

Kim is a small business owner. As a personal development strategist, her coaching practice, Other People's Potential coaching works with individuals and organizations to position each for maximizing their capacity.

Kim holds a Bachelor's Degree and Masters in Theology and Organizational Leadership. In 2021 she will hold a doctorate from Oral Roberts University. In her health policy work, Kim was appointed by and Chairs Governor Nathan Deal's, "Georgia Council on Lupus Education and Awareness." She holds a federal appointment to the Health IT Policy Committee and crafts legislative policy recommendations to the National

Coordinator for Health IT as a framework for the development and adoption of a nationwide health information infrastructure.

Kim has authored several articles and has been a reoccurring guest on television, radio and other media outlets. Kim is the proud mother of her daughter, Kyler, a 2012 graduate of Duke University; current Assistant Director in Film and Television and member of the Directors Guild of America.

Her recent initiatives, Crucial Conversations: Connecting Law Enforcement with the Community They Protect and Serve and Understanding Invisible Disabilities in the Workplace have been gaining traction and recognition in corporate America, academic institutions, faith based and non-profit organizations.

Kim has authored several articles and has been a reoccurring guest on television, radio and other media outlets.



**GEORGIA SENATOR FREDDIE POWELL SIMS**  
**District 12, Southwest Georgia, Albany area**



**IVONNE A. SIMMS, MSED**

Ivonne has over 15 years of comprehensive experience developing strong relationships with students, school leaders, and peers to expand educational access. In addition, she has a talent for teaching that has translated successfully from the middle school math, to adult GED classes, to freshman seminar at a community college.

More recently, as regional manager for a national nonprofit, Ivonne was the face and voice in the Southeast. She managed relationships with over 30 independent schools, numerous organizations, and over 500 families annually. She enjoyed supporting students and their families through their educational journey, and the organization enjoyed tremendous growth under her leadership. Ivonne has now brought her eloquence, humor, and natural gift for connecting with people, to Candid. Making the world better has always been a motivation in her work.



### **NATHANIEL SMITH, MS**

Nathaniel Smith serves as Founder and Chief Equity Officer of the Partnership for Southern Equity (PSE), which advances policies and institutional actions that promote racial equity and shared prosperity for all in the growth of metropolitan Atlanta and the American South. Among PSE's notable accomplishments was the creation the American South's first equity mapping and framing tool, the Metro Atlanta Equity Atlas, and co-authoring numerous reports including: "Growing the Future: The Case for Economic Inclusion in Metropolitan Atlanta", and "Employment Equity: Putting Georgia on the Path to Inclusive Prosperity". PSE also led a coalition of diverse stakeholders to support a \$13 million transit referendum that expanded Atlanta's metropolitan transit system into a new county for the first time in 45 years. Smith's advocacy activities were instrumental in the ratification of a 15 percent set aside of Atlanta Beltline Tax Allocation District (TAD) dollars for the development and maintenance of affordable workforce housing within the Atlanta BeltLine Planning Area - \$250 million dollars over the 25-year lifespan of the Atlanta BeltLine TAD.

A child of Civil Rights Movement and Atlanta native, Smith holds a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies from Morehouse College and a Master of Science from the New School. Among his many accomplishments, The Huffington Post honored Nathaniel as one of the eight "Up and Coming Black Leaders in the Climate Movement" in 2017. Nathaniel was also named to the Grist 50 by Grist Magazine in 2018 and the Atlanta 500 by Atlanta Magazine in 2019 and 2020, and designated one of the 100 "Most Influential Georgians" by Georgia Trend magazine in 2018, 2019 and 2020. His work was also featured in the U.S. News and World Report, Chronicle of Philanthropy, Nonprofit Quarterly, Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Atlanta Voice and others. The Partnership for

Southern Equity (PSE) is the recipient of the inaugural Health Equity Award from Healthcare Georgia Foundation.



### **HANK STEWART, POET LAUREATE**

If you say, Emmy Award Winning, Best-selling Author or Poet Laureate, you have to be talking about Mr. Hank Stewart. Stewart a poet, author, activist, philanthropist, humanitarian, motivational speaker. Stewart is celebrating over 25 years as an artist. Stewart's talent has afforded him unique opportunities to recite his work to the mother of the civil rights movement Mrs. Rosa Parks, to the (Former) First Lady Michelle Obama. Stewart has written and performed commercials for The McDonalds Corporation and WAGA-Atlanta Black History spots which resulted in the attainment of 2007 Emmy, Promax, and Gabby Awards.

The year of 2003 was good for Stewart, he collaborated with bestselling author Kendra Norman-Bellamy and Co-Authored two bestselling novels, loosely based off of poems Stewart had written, 3:57 AM and The Morning After. Also in 2003, Stewart was commissioned by the Coca-Cola Company to write and perform a special piece for the Essence Music Festival and he became the first poet to perform on the main stage in front of 90,000 people. Stewart had the honor of performing on The Trumpet Award which aired in over 150 countries. When listening to Stewart's work without a doubt you hear the influence of Stewart's mother and spiritual guidance growing up in Jacksonville, Florida.

Stewart's appreciation and respect for Civil Right's Legends, their sacrifices, and cherish having the luxury of sitting at the feet of Dr. Joseph Lowery, Mrs. Xernona Clayton, Ambassador Andrew Young, Dr. C.T. Vivian, Dr. Charles Steele, Congressman John Lewis, Attorney Janice Mathis, Dr. Thomas Todd and of course his mentor Dr. Cameron Madison Alexander. Those conversations have been captured are regurgitated into Stewart's poetry. Stewart's poetry on Love, History and Spirituality will indeed move you to new heights. Stewart prides himself on not being a one-dimensional poet, so you will hear poems on sensitive subject matters such as Breast Cancer, Domestic Violence, Sex/Human Trafficking, Adultery, etc. Stewart has 5 books of poetry 6 CDs, two novels, a DVD and a coffee table book commemorating his 25 years as a poet and his latest work a children's book "I know who I am." Stewart believes serving others is imperative that's why he co-founded The Stewart Foundation with

Gwen Mason. The foundation is a youth leadership organization, developing A Leader of Tomorrow (A.L.O.T.) where they have impacted thousands of youth/students since 2006. Stewart has registered thousands of voters and helped reshape local, state, and national elections.

In 2016 Congressman Hank Johnson recognized Stewart's work and declared him Poet Laureate of the 4th Congressional District of Georgia. Stewart's latest Venture him hosting his own TV show called "The IT Factor" where Stewart interviews some amazing people with that "IT" factor. Stewart has many honors, awards, and recognition. Stewart, a Father to Austin O'Connell Stewart, Friend to many, A Brother to humanity, A History Maker, but most importantly a child of God.



**WINSTON THOMPSON, PHD**  
**Chair, Department of Physiology**  
**Morehouse School of Medicine**

Dr. Winston E. Thompson is Professor and Chair of the Department of Physiology, Director of the Mentoring Academy Program and Director of Research in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree (A.B.) in Biology from Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania in 1986 and a Master of Science degree in Endocrinology from Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey in 1998. In pursuit of becoming a research scientist, he received a joint Ph.D. degree in Cell Biology and Developmental Biology from Rutgers University and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Piscataway, New Jersey in 1993. Later that year, Dr. Thompson joined the faculty of the Department of Cell Biology as a Post Doctoral Fellow in the laboratory of Dr. Everett Anderson, the James Stillman Professor of Comparative Anatomy and Professor of Cell Biology, at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Thompson has also received training as an Embryologist at the world-renowned Marine Biological Laboratories, Wood Hole, MA. Currently, Dr. Thompson's laboratory is committed to the study of women's reproductive health and infertility. This is a major public health focus that includes Endometriosis and Uterine Fibroid. Uterine fibroids (UF; leiomyoma) are benign smooth muscle tumors originating from the myometrium. It is the most common pelvic tumor that occur in ~80% of women. UF caused morbidities exert a tremendous health toll, impacting the quality of life of women of all ethnicities, especially women of color. African American women are two to three times more likely to get fibroids than White women. We are addressing the question where uterine fibroid

comes from. We are testing the hypothesis that DNA mutations in stem cells leads to UF. He has served on a number of study sections as a reviewer for National Institute of Health and Department of Defense Breast Cancer Program. Currently, he is a member of The Integrative and Clinical Endocrinology and Reproduction Study Section.



### **TANIKA GRAY VALBRUN**

Tanika Gray Valbrun is an award-winning Journalist and Non-profit leader. After her personal struggles with uterine fibroids, Tanika’s desire to support herself and other women inspired her to create The White Dress Project, a non-profit organization on a mission of to raise global awareness about the uterine fibroid epidemic through education, research, community, and advocacy.

By sharing her personal story, Tanika has encouraged thousands of women across the world to speak up, be their own best health advocate and no longer suffer in silence. As such, The White Dress Project is made up of women with impactful fibroid journeys, who are uniquely positioned to educate, empower, and support those who are managing life with fibroids.

Most women with fibroids do not like to wear white because of the heavy bleeding related to the condition. Tanika makes it her message to highlight that the “white dress” is not a fashion statement but a movement. It is an emblem of hope and strength for women who are suffering from fibroids and a reminder that we will find a cure. As the founder of The White Dress Project, Tanika has successfully worked with doctors, health advocates and elected officials in multiple states to get legislation passed declaring July as “Fibroids Awareness Month”. Recognized as a thought leader and patient advocate for uterine health, she has also spoken at various events domestically and internationally.

Tanika’s thought leadership has led to many partnerships between The White Dress Project, universities, consumer brand, medical industry, and policy makers to amplify awareness and education about uterine treatment options. Tanika has also partnered with physicians in South Africa and Nigeria to amplify patient advocacy specifically as it relates to uterine fibroids.

Additionally, working with national health advocates, doctors and Tony-award winning actress, Renee Elise Goldsberry, Tanika produced a stellar movie screening of the Oprah

Winfrey produced and Emmy-nominated, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*. The event highlighted the life of a medical icon, Henrietta Lacks, and brought together community members to amplify the importance of uterine health awareness.

In addition to encouraging women to be their own health advocates, Tanika works as a Senior Content Producer for CNN where she has been awarded three coveted Peabody Awards for her contributions in journalism. Tanika works closely with CNN's 1200 media affiliates and manages multiple projects including national and international newsgathering, and demonstrating strong editorial and legal judgment through investigating, pitching and developing stories to serve all of CNN's and HLN's platforms. She is the recipient of Georgia Trend's and Atlanta Business Chronicle's "40 under 40" Awards.

Tanika holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Mass Communications with a concentration in Broadcast Journalism from Florida International University and University of Maryland with a Certification in Radio and Television and Women's Entrepreneurship from Cornell University.



**JEAN A. WELSH, RN, MPH, PHD**

Dr. Welsh is nutritional epidemiologist and associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics, Emory School of Medicine. Dr. Welsh has more than 25 years' experience developing, implementing, and evaluating public health and nutrition programs. Her research agenda has, for more than a decade, been focused on identifying and modifying diet and diet-related risk factors that increase children's risk of obesity and chronic disease, and on building the research and programmatic collaborations needed to develop effective risk-reduction strategies. Dr. Welsh serves as the Research Director for the Strong4Life Initiative at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta where programmatic and research efforts are focused on reducing obesity prevalence among Georgia's children.





**CHRISTINE J. WIGGINS, MS, MCHES®**

Christine J. Wiggins is a public health practitioner and health educator with 15 years of experience in strategic planning and implementing and facilitating community and statewide programs. Christine began her career working with a community serving organization, moved to hospital administration, and eventually transitioned into public service, at both the federal and state levels. With a passion for strengthening and educating minority communities, Christine has done an extensive amount of work around partnership development and collaboration, as well as addressing health issues from an equity lens. Currently, she is a Deputy Director for the Georgia Department of Public Health, Chronic Disease Prevention Section. In this role she manages the Office of Healthy Behaviors, which includes the Georgia Tobacco Use and Control Program, SNAP-Ed, the Healthy Communities Initiative and the Community Health Worker Initiative.

Previously, Christine served as the Health Disparities Initiatives Director for the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (MHHD) and prior to that, the Community Outreach Advisor for the HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH). She was a contributing author for the National Stakeholder Strategy for Achieving Health Equity and was very instrumental with the establishment of 10 regional health equity councils across the country.

A native of Pottstown, PA, Christine received her B.A. in Health Sciences from Lincoln University (Lincoln University, PA) and a M.S. in Health Administration and in Health Education from Saint Joseph's University. She is also a Master Certified Health Education Specialist (MCHES). Christine relocated to Georgia in 2015 and now lives in the Atlanta metro region with her husband and three children.



**HENRY N. YOUNG, PHD**

Henry Young is the Interim Department Head of Clinical and Administrative Pharmacy at the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy. Dr. Young serves as the Kroger Associate Professor in Community Pharmacy and Director of the Pharmaceutical Health Services, Outcomes, and Policy Graduate Program. He has focused his scholarship, teaching, and research on applied behavioral and social sciences designed to predict and influence health behaviors, outcomes, risks, and/or protective factors. Dr. Young studies medication use, health communication, and health outcomes, specifically as they relate to minority, rural, and underserved populations. Along with his work at the College of Pharmacy, he is the Co-Director of the Integrating Special Populations Function in the Georgia Clinical and Translational Science Alliance. Dr. Young also serves on the UGA Presidential Task Force on Race, Ethnicity, and Community.

His Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Sciences-Pharmacy Administration is from the University of Florida in Gainesville, FL.

# Acknowledgements

Our sincerest gratitude goes to each and everyone who contributed to making this forum an experience that will promote community-academic equity in research and ultimately improve the health of all Georgians.

## Poster Presentations

### Judges

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# Georgia CTSA Resources

Georgia CTSA: <https://georgiactsa.org/>

## Community and Academic Database

<https://georgiactsa.org/community/partner-database/index.html>

The Georgia CTSA supports translational and clinical research across our member institutions. As part of this effort, our Community Engagement Program (CE) functions to be a statewide leader in community engaged and translational research through facilitating relationships among diverse stakeholders that work together to advance population health.

In an effort to foster this mission, we have created a database of community and university partners across Georgia that is publicly available to facilitate collaborations. Explore this searchable database to find potential partners or connect with those doing work on health topics that may be of interest to you. You can sort, filter, and search by institution/organization, department, last name, county, health topics, or type (community or academic).

Along with your search of this database, we also encourage you to engage CE in support of your projects. We provide a variety of services to support your search and/or community team. Use the portal to find more information and to submit a request. A member of the Community Engagement Program will follow up to discuss next steps.

**This Program is Supported by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number UL1TR002378. “The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.”**