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**5th ANNUAL TRANSPORT SYMPOSIUM**

# Advancing the Science of Community Engaged Research : Lessons Learned from Covid-19



**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Dr. Eliseo Perez Stable**

**DIRECTOR**

National Institute on Minority Health  
and Health Disparities (NIMHD)

## Welcome to the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual TRANSPORT Symposium

Community engaged research is often used to address health disparities. However, the scope of persistent disparities observed during COVID-19 and its associated events is unprecedented and calls for a renewed look at community engaged research as a science and not just a practice. Our goal is to create a scientific platform to advance the science of community engagement by identifying new models and frameworks for defining community, new methods of data collection, new methods to recruit and retain community partners in research development, addressing how tele-research can widen disparities, and stimulating new interest in the field. There are several symposia on centering community in research but there is not a lot of work on advancing the science, training, and developing of evidenced-based and theory-driven research.

Our goal is to also develop papers from this forum that can inform the science and to gather information that can inform grants. In order to advance the science, we have to consider the totality of COVID-19. It was not just a pandemic but a series of converging epic events that included a virus, social injustice, and political instability. These forces converged on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities causing new damage and unveiling existing trauma. **Our approach to community engaged research after these events cannot be the same.** This science must change. This requires community partners and researchers coming together with academic partners to drive a new community engaged science agenda.

TRANSPORT provides the perfect platform for this. It is a foundation for growing and developing a diverse biomedical research workforce. Our efforts focus on recruiting and training junior faculty, postdoctoral candidates and undergraduate students who

come from Brooklyn and other communities that are vulnerable to health disparities. The lack of minorities in science and medicine is one of the most important factors that produce health disparities, therefore, TRANSPORT is needed to fill this critical gap and to ensure that opportunities such as those provided through endowment income exist to support and retain qualified individuals from underrepresented groups into the health disparities research workforce.

As the only academic medical center in Brooklyn, Downstate is committed to identifying and training new investigators that reflect the sociodemographic composition of the communities to enable them to develop successful academic careers in health disparities research. This mission is consistent with the call to enhance the academic environment at Downstate that will lead to qualified scientific faculty with exceptional expertise in health disparities research. Thank you for attending and we hope you enjoy and benefit from the program.

## Transport Symposium Planning Committee

### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

**Wayne Riley, MD, MPH, MBA, MACP**

*President, SUNY Downstate Health  
Sciences University*

**Moro Salifu, MD, MPH, MBA, MACP**

*Professor & Chair, Department of Medicine,  
Director, Brooklyn Health Disparities Center  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

**Carla Boutin-Foster, MD, MS**

*Associate Dean, Office of Diversity Education  
and Research  
Professor of Clinical Medicine, Dept of Medicine  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

**W. Marcus Lambert, PhD**

*Associate Vice President for Research Strategy  
and Operations  
Associate Professor, Department of Epidemiology  
and Biostatistics  
School of Public Health  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

### SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH MEMBERS

**Aimee Afable, PhD, MPH**

*Associate Dean for Community Engagement  
Associate Professor of Community Health Sciences  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

**Marlene Camacho-Rivera, ScD, MS, MPH**

*Assistant Dean for Student Engagement  
and Success  
Assistant Professor of Community Health Sciences  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

**Azure Thompson, DrPH, MPH**

*Assistant Professor Department of Community  
Health Sciences  
Department of Health Policy and Management  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

### BROOKLYN HEALTH DISPARITIES CENTER (BHDC) MEMBERS

**Pamela D. Straker, PhD**

*Research Assistant Professor  
BHDC Director of Operations  
Department of Medicine/College of Medicine  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

**Lakia Maxwell, MSCH**

*Research Education Coordinator  
Project Staff Assistant  
Brooklyn Health Disparities Center (BHDC)  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

## 8:30-8:45AM | WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

### Wayne Riley, MD, MPH, MBA, MACP

President, SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University

TRANSPORT Principal Investigator

### Brooklyn Borough President's Office

Diana Richardson, Deputy Borough President

### TRANSPORT Principal Investigators

Moro Salifu, MD, MBA, MPH, MACP, Carla Boutin-Foster, MD, MSc, and Marcus Lambert, PhD

### TRANSPORT Scholar

**Opening Remarks - Portia Thomas, DNSc, RN-CNE, MPH**, Nurse Scientist and Postdoctoral Associate, Department of Medicine, Special Treatment and Research (STAR) program, Downstate Health Sciences University

## 8:45-9:15AM | KEYNOTE SPEAKER



## Dr. Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable

DIRECTOR

National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD)

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**Dr. Perez-Stable is Director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) and Principal Investigator in the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).** Dr. Pérez-Stable's research interests have centered on improving the health of racial/ethnic minorities and underserved populations, advancing patient-centered care, improving cross-cultural communication skills among health care professionals, and promoting diversity in the biomedical research workforce. Recognized as a leader in Latino health care and disparities research, Dr. Pérez-Stable has spent more than 30 years leading research on smoking cessation and tobacco control policy in Latino populations in the United States and Latin America.

NIMHD is the lead organization at NIH for planning, reviewing, coordinating, and evaluating minority health and health disparities research activities. NIMHD also promotes diversity in the biomedical workforce, supports research capacity at less-resourced institutions training underrepresented students and serving populations with health disparities, supports inclusive participation in all clinical research, and promotes information dissemination through regular electronic communications, public education outreach, and scientific presentations.

Since joining NIMHD in September 2015, Dr. Pérez-Stable has been cultivating the Institute's position on the cutting edge of the science of minority health and health disparities. Through this effort, the Institute has produced a collection of resources that guide and facilitate the conduct of research to promote health equity. These include the NIH Minority Health and Health Disparities Strategic Plan 2021-2025; the NIMHD Research Framework; the PhenX Social Determinants of Health Assessments Collection, a research toolkit; a collection of 30 science visioning Strategies to Promote the Advancement of Health Disparities Science; special journal supplements Structural Racism and Discrimination: Impact on Minority Health and Health Disparities and Addressing Health Disparities through the Utilization of Health Information Technology; and The Science of Health Disparities Research textbook, among other resources.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Pérez-Stable has positioned NIMHD at the forefront of the research response to COVID-19 health disparities by co-chairing three major new NIH-wide research programs and collaborating with other NIH institutes and centers. The two most prominent NIH-wide programs that have been established to promote health equity by reducing COVID-19 associated morbidity and mortality disparities experienced by

underserved and vulnerable communities are the Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL) Against COVID-19 Disparities and the Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics for Underserved Populations (RADx-UP) initiatives. In October 2021, Dr. Pérez-Stable was awarded a Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal (Sammies) with Gary Gibbons, M.D., Director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI). They received the COVID-19 Response Medal for their extraordinary role in fighting the pandemic in communities of color.

## 9:35-10:30AM | PANEL 1

# What is Community Engagement? The Evolution of Community Engagement in Healthcare

MODERATOR

### **Azure Thompson, DrPH, MPH**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Community Health Sciences, Department of Health Policy and Management, School of Public Health, Downstate Health Sciences University*

DISCUSSANT

### **Adiebonye Jumbo PhD, ITIL / TRANSPORT Scholar**

*Assistant Professor & Clinical Coordinator Medical Informatics Program, Presiding Officer/ School of Health Professions, Downstate Health Sciences University*

## Panel 1 Speakers

### **Derek M. Griffith, PhD**

*Founder and Co-Director of the Racial Justice Institute  
Founder and Director of the Center for Men's Health Equity,  
Professor of Health Systems Administration and Oncology, Georgetown University*

### **Barbara A. Israel, DrPH**

*Professor, Health Behavior & Health Education  
Director, Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center  
School of Public Health, University of Michigan*

### **Thomas Ives Mackie, MPH, PhD**

*Associate Professor and Chair  
Department of Health Policy and Management/School of Public Health  
Downstate Health Sciences University*

### **Angela G. Reyes, MPH**

*Executive Director and Founder Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation*

## 10:30-10:35AM | 5 MINUTE BREAK

## 10:35-11:30AM | PANEL 2

# Community Engagement Models: How have we engaged the Community thus far?

MODERATOR

**Aimee Afable, PhD, MPH**

*Associate Dean for Community Engagement and Associate Professor, Department of Community Health Sciences, School of Public Health, Downstate Health Sciences University*

DISCUSSANT

**Qudsia S. Banu, MD/TRANSPORT Scholar**

*Associate Medical Director, Ambulatory Care Services, Brookdale Hospital and Medical Center*

## Panel 2 Speakers

**Adam Aponte, MD, MSc, FAAP**

*Chief Medical Officer East Harlem Council on Human Services, Inc  
Boriken Neighborhood Health Center*

**Ngozi Moses, MSc**

*Executive Director, Brooklyn Perinatal Network, Inc*

**Natasha Williams, EdD, MPH**

*Associate Professor, Institute for Excellence in Health Equity Center for Healthful Behavior Change Graduate Advisor, Population Health PhD Program Vilcek Biomedical Sciences, NYU Grossman School of Medicine*

**Porez Luxama, MS**

*Executive Director, Life of Hope*

**Christina Pardo, MD, MPH, F.A.C.O.G.**

*Vice Chair of Quality Improvement and Innovation  
Director of Health Equity, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology Downstate Health Sciences University*

## 11:30-11:35AM | 5 MINUTE BREAK

## 11:35AM-12:25PM | PANEL 3

### Future Directions and Capacity Building

#### MODERATOR

#### **Carla Boutin-Foster, MD, MSc**

*Associate Dean for Diversity Education and Research, Professor of Clinical Medicine, Dept of Medicine, Downstate Health Sciences University*

#### DISCUSSANT

#### **Marlene Camacho-Rivera, ScD, MS, MPH/TRANSPORT Scholar / Post-Doctoral Fellow Program Graduate**

*Assistant Dean for Student Engagement and Success, Assistant Professor of Community Health Sciences/ School of Public Health, Downstate Health Sciences University*

### Panel 3 Speakers

#### **Susan Beane, MD**

*Executive Medical Director, Healthfirst Clinical Partnerships*

#### **Zahirah McNatt, DrPH, MHSA**

*Assistant Commissioner*

*Bureau of Brooklyn Neighborhood Health, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene*

#### **Marilyn Fraser, MD**

*Chief Executive Officer*

*Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health*

*Research Associate Professor, Department of Medicine and the School of Public Health, Downstate Health Sciences University*

*Co-Director, Brooklyn Health Disparities Center*

#### **Avital Havusha**

*Vice President for Programs, New York State Health Foundation*

#### **M. Gabe Rodriguez**

*Executive Director of Development for Research*

*Downstate Health Sciences University*

#### **Victor D. Sutton, PhD, MPPA**

*Director, Preventive Health & Health Equity*

*Principal Investigator Community Engagement Center, Jackson Heart Study,*

*COVID -19 Health Disparity State Team Lead, Mississippi State Department of Health*

## 12:30PM | CLOSING REMARKS

#### **Moro Salifu, MD, MPH, MBA, MACP**

*Professor & Chair, Department of Medicine, Director, Brooklyn Health Disparities Center, Downstate Health Sciences University*



## Symposium Program Committee and Faculty

(ALPHABETICAL LISTING BY LAST NAME)

### **Aimee Afable, PhD, MPH**

**Dr. Afable is Associate Dean for Community Engagement and Associate Professor of Community Health Sciences in the School of Public Health at Downstate Health Sciences University.** She received her B.A. with Honors in International Relations from Brown University (1995). She received her M.P.H. and Ph.D. in public health from Tulane University (2003). Following her doctoral studies, Dr. Afable was a Post-Doctoral Scholar at the Institute for Health Policy Studies (2005-2007), University of California, San Francisco. For over 14 years, Dr. Afable's research has critically examined conceptual frameworks used to understand health disparities and health inequities. Her work has documented the declining health advantage with increasing stay among US immigrants, and has questioned the validity of the Healthy Immigrant Paradox. More recently, she is studying the causal role of physiologic stress response in race/ethnic disparities in poor metabolic and perinatal outcomes. Dr. Afable is also dedicated to serving Downstate and our local Brooklyn community. She is an investigator member of the Research Core of the Brooklyn Health Disparities Center. She is a board member of Live Light Live Right, the only tertiary-care childhood obesity program serving Brooklyn. She is evaluation consultant to Kings Against Violence Initiative (KAVI), a youth violence intervention program in Central Brooklyn.

### **Adam Aponte, MD, MSc, FAAP**

**Dr. Aponte is Chief Medical Officer for East Harlem Council for Human Services, Inc and Boriken Neighborhood Health Center.** He was born and raised in East Harlem, NY. He graduated the City College of NY and then attended Mount Sinai SOM where he received both his Medical Degree and did his Residency training in Pediatrics. He became board certified in Pediatrics in 1997 and began working with the Children's Aid Society. Early in his career Dr. Aponte was thrust into a leadership position and in May 2000, he was appointed Chair of Pediatrics for North General Hospital. There he formalized and created the Ambulatory Care Department and was appointed Chair. In August of 2004 he helped develop the North General D&TC and was appointed Medical Director. His clinical efforts have focused on elimination of health disparities particularly in minority and underserved communities as well as addressing the social influences of health. In 2008 he was recruited as Medical Director for an FQHC serving an extremely underserved community, Brownsville Brooklyn. There he implemented an Electronic Health Record, helped develop a Patient Centered Medical Home and gained accreditation as a Level III PCMH. In addition, he helped them gain recognition from NCQA for its Diabetes Program. In November of 2015 Dr. Aponte was appointed Medical Director for United Healthcare Community Plan for New York State. At United he worked to help serve the over 750,000 Medicaid recipients that they service in NYS. In July of 2019 Dr. Aponte was appointed CMO for the Division of Community care at NYC Health + Hospitals overseeing Health Home and Home Care services. Most recently Dr. Aponte rejoined the FQHC and now serves as the Chief Medical Officer for the Boriken Neighborhood Health Center in East Harlem, NY

## Qudsia S. Banu, MD

**Dr. Banu is Associate Medical Director, Ambulatory Care Services, at Brookdale Hospital and Medical Center.** She is a nurse scientist and postdoctoral associate at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University in the Department of Medicine, Special Treatment and Research (STAR) program. Her research aims to decrease HIV disparities among racial and sexual minorities by reducing barriers to engaging in HIV prevention methods and behaviors. Thus, her research program focuses on understanding and supporting decision-making surrounding HIV behaviors and risks among racial and sexual minorities in the Southern US. Current and upcoming studies are: 1) assessing the acceptability of telemedicine to provide HIV care services among Black and Hispanic sexual minority men (SMM); 2) exploring pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) decision-making among Southern SMM; and 3) increasing representation of minority populations in HIV interventional research. Dr. Banu earned her Doctorate in Nursing Science from Kennesaw State University, WellStar School of Nursing and is a certified nurse educator. She also holds an MPH with a focus on public health practices from the University of South Florida.

## Susan Beane, MD

**Dr. Beane joined Healthfirst in 2009, bringing with her extensive professional experience in managed care. As Vice President and Executive Medical Director at Healthfirst,** Dr. Beane focuses on care management and clinical provider partnerships, programs especially designed to improve the delivery of vital, evidence-based health care to our members. Dr. Beane is a strong proponent of collaborating with and engaging providers to improve health outcomes.

Dr. Beane leads Healthfirst in collaborating with major healthcare delivery systems, local,

and national policy experts on the design, implementation, and dissemination of innovative, outcomes focused models of care. Her research contributions span health of caregivers, obesity, and maternal health.

Prior to joining Healthfirst, Dr. Beane served as Chief Medical Officer for Affinity Health Plan for five years—during which time she helped Affinity's plan become a top performer in quality and member satisfaction. Before that, she worked at AmeriChoice and HIP USA, as Medical Director. Dr. Beane is a graduate of Princeton University and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.

In her role at Healthfirst, Dr. Beane leads a team that collaborates with major healthcare delivery systems and with local, and national policy experts on the design, implementation, and dissemination of innovative, outcomes focused models of care. Her research contributions span health of caregivers, obesity, community health collaboration, chronic care management and maternal health. In particular, Dr. Beane is expert in the benefits and challenges of the use of health insurance data to define populations and health outcomes.

## Carla Boutin-Foster, MD, MSc

**Dr. Carla Boutin-Foster is Associate Dean of the Office of Diversity Education and Research, Professor of Clinical Medicine, Department of Medicine at Downstate Health Sciences University.** In this capacity, Dr. Boutin-Foster oversees an array of pipeline programs - from middle school through undergraduate programs- designed to increase the number of underrepresented minority students in biomedicine and biomedical research. She develops medical education curriculum on health equity and social determinants of health. She chairs the Health Equity and Social Justice Work Group of the College of Medicine. In addition to her administrative role at SUNY Downstate, she teaches first year

medical students, trains junior faculty in research methodology, conducts research addressing health disparities and social determinants, sits on NIH study sections. She was PI and director of an NIMHD P60 Center of Excellence in Disparities Research and Community Engagement at Weill Cornell and chaired the Health Disparities and Equity Promotion Study Section of the NIH.

She was an investigator on a program project grant funded by the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) to identify attributes in the doctor-patient relationship that are most associated with health behavior modification in patients with coronary artery disease. She was the recipient of the Harold Amos Medical Faculty Development Award from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to study the role of social support in outcomes of patients with coronary artery disease. She was the recipient of a KO1 from the NHLBI to evaluate the impact of depressive symptoms, social support, and stress on health behavior modification in Latino patients with coronary artery disease. She is also co-investigator on an NHLBI program project to test the impact of a culturally-tailored educational program on medication adherence in African-Americans with hypertension. Dr. Boutin- Foster has expertise in community-based participatory research, qualitative research, randomized trial design, survey development, and culturally-tailoring interventions. She has published several peer-reviewed articles on her work. She has mentored junior faculty locally and internationally as part of the T32 Clinical Epidemiology Program at Weill Cornell. Her fellows have come from Nigeria, Tanzania, and Haiti.

## **Marlene Camacho-Rivera, ScD, MS, MPH**

**Dr. Camacho-Rivera is Assistant Dean for Student Engagement and Success and Assistant Professor in the Department of Community Health Sciences at SUNY Downstate's School of Public Health.** She is a graduate of the TRANSPORT Post-Doctoral Fellow Scholar Program. A social and chronic disease epidemiologist by training, Dr. Camacho-Rivera's research focuses on the role of social, cultural, and environmental factors in explaining racial/ethnic and socioeconomic disparities in chronic disease outcomes and chronic disease self-management in the areas of cancer, asthma, and cardiovascular diseases. Her work also explores patterns of and explanations for within group heterogeneity in chronic diseases among racial/ethnic groups, particularly Latinos, as well as community-based approaches to improving chronic disease disparities.

Previously, she has served as site PI of the NCI-funded Bedford-Stuyvesant and Bushwick Cancer Health Impact Program, a collaborative project between MSKCC and CCNY examining cancer-related health information seeking behaviors, as well as knowledge and attitudes towards cancer screening among Brooklyn residents. She has also served as a PI of a P20 pilot project examining the narrative experiences of South Asian head and neck cancer survivors, as part of the CCNY/MSKCC Translational Research Education and Training to Eliminate Tobacco Disparities (TREND) program. She has also served as an investigator and faculty mentor within the CCNY/MSK Partnerships to Advance Cancer Health Equity (PACHE U54) program, as well as the health disparities cluster of the Research Center in Minority Institutions (RCMI U54) at the City College of New York.

Dr. Camacho-Rivera received her bachelor's degree in Biology and Society from Cornell University and

her doctoral degree in Social Epidemiology from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, as a Harvard Presidential Scholar. She has additional training in maternal and child health, health policy and management, and cancer epidemiology. As a junior faculty member, she has received numerous training fellowships and awards through NHLBI, the National Hispanic Health Foundation and PCORI, and currently serves as a fellow through the NIMHD TRANSPORT program. Collectively, Dr. Camacho-Rivera's translational research informs the development, implementation, and evaluation of patient-centered approaches to improving chronic disease self-management among urban minority communities.

## Marilyn Fraser, MD

**Dr. Fraser is the Chief Executive Officer at the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health, a Research Associate Professor in both the Department of Medicine and the School of Public Health at the SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, and the co-Director of the Brooklyn Health Disparities Center.** In her previous capacities as the Deputy Director and the Associate Director for Research & Training, she was primarily responsible for overseeing the Institute's community outreach and research programs. Dr. Marilyn Fraser is a graduate of the Spartan Health Sciences University School of Medicine in St. Lucia, West Indies, where she maintained an enviable scholastic record. During her medical education, she was afforded the opportunity to be exposed to various types of health care delivery systems, within the United States and abroad. Her medical training has included work in the West Indies, Mexico and various US cities such as Kansas City, Washington, DC and New York City. Dr. Fraser is a former scholar of the NHLBI funded Summer Institute Program to Increase Diversity (SIPID, now known as PRIDE-CVD) in cardiovascular disease; and, she has participated as a faculty

member to train new scholars on the importance of community engagement in addressing health disparities.

As Program Coordinator for the Institute's award-winning Black Pearls and Different Faces of Health programs, Dr. Fraser was instrumental in developing the programs into behavioral health intervention models. She was a co-leader of an investigative team of researchers supported by several NIH and CDC grants that has developed training curricula for hair stylists and barbers to educate their clients about breast, prostate and colorectal cancer, as well as cardiovascular disease (CVD) and HIV/AIDS risk reduction. She has served as the principal investigator (PI) for a New York University – Clinical & Translational Science Institute (CTSI) funded pilot study to train hair stylists to deliver CVD messages to their clients. Dr. Fraser has served as the Co-PI of the team of investigators responsible for conducting the Institute's ACCESS project to increase access to health and social services for formerly incarcerated individuals in Brooklyn, New York.

Dr. Fraser has leveraged her talents and assets in support of the collaborative work with the Brooklyn Health Disparities Center, a partnership between the SUNY Downstate Medical Center, the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health, and the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President, for which she serves as the Co-Director and a Principal Investigator. Dr. Fraser is also the Director of the Community Engagement Core of the NIH funded Center. In this capacity she uses her strengths in health disparities research training on behalf of minority youth and in CBPR methods in order to engage community organizations in health disparities research and related policy work. She also serves as the co-investigator of the Center's health disparities research projects to address HIV/AIDS and Obstructive Sleep Apnea in African American and Afro-Caribbean individuals.

Guyanese-born Dr. Fraser has received numerous awards including the Health Award from the New York State Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators, and the prestigious Fulbright Research Specialist award to develop and implement a climate change and public health internship program for secondary school students in Trinidad and Tobago. She was also the recipient of the Innovator Award from the Bedford Stuyvesant Family Health Center, the Community Award from the Nurses Association of the Counties of Long Island (NACLI), as well as an extraordinary woman of Downstate recognition. She was also nominated to serve on the nationally acclaimed Clinical & Translational Science Award (CTSA)'s Community Engagement Domain Task Force. Dr. Fraser was honored as a Power Woman in Brooklyn and received the special Health Award. She was also honored as the winner of the Crain's Heritage Healthcare Leadership Award and named one of Crain's Notable Women in Healthcare. Most recently, Dr. Fraser was honored as one of the CUNY School of Medicine's 2021 Strong Women in Medicine. Dr. Fraser regularly presents her work at scientific meetings, nationally and internationally, and is a co-author on several publications and a book chapter.

## Derek M. Griffith, PhD

**Dr. Griffith is the Founder and Co-Director of the Racial Justice Institute, Founder and Director of the Center for Men's Health Equity, and Professor of Health Systems Administration and Oncology, Georgetown University.** Trained in psychology and public health, Dr. Griffith's program of research focuses on developing strategies to achieve racial, ethnic and gender equity in health. He specializes in interventions to promote Black men's health and well-being and interventions to address racism in organizations and to mitigate the effects of structural racism on health. Dr. Griffith is a contributor to and editor of two books

– *Men's Health Equity: A Handbook* (Routledge, 2019), and *Racism: Science and Tools for the Public Health Professional* (APHA Press, 2019). He has been interviewed for and quoted in national news outlets such as *Ebony*, NPR, *The Washington Post*, and *The New York Times*. Dr. Griffith has provided expert review of reports from the World Health Organization and others.

He is the author of over 140 peer-reviewed manuscripts, and he has been the principal investigator of research grants from the American Cancer Society, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and several institutes within the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Griffith serves on the editorial boards of several public health and men's health journals, and he has been a guest editor of journal special issues or supplements on African American men's health, men's health equity, qualitative approaches to health equity research, and other topics. He has received three noteworthy honors: (a) Tom Bruce Award from the Community-Based Public Health Caucus of the American Public Health Association in recognition of his research on "eliminating health disparities that vary by race, ethnicity and gender", (b) he was named a Fellow of the American Academy of Health Behavior for his significant contributions to the field of health behavior research, and (c) he was named one of 1,000 Inspiring Black Scientists in America by the Cell Mentor's Community of Scholars.

## Avital Havusha

**Ms. Havusha is Vice President for Programs New York State Health Foundation.** As Vice President for Programs, Ms. Havusha plays a leadership role in developing and implementing the Foundation's goals and strategies. A key advisor to the President and CEO, she also has a central role in further developing the Foundation's program areas; identifying emerging opportunities and strategic

niches; building partnerships with other foundations; and ensuring quality and accountability.

At the Primary Care Development Corporation, PCDC, Ms. Havusha serves on the executive team and leads and directs the Performance Improvement Practice. In this role, she oversees operations, strategy, project execution, and business development for PCDC's capacity-building and technical assistance programs, supporting primary care practices and teams to provide patient-centered and coordinated care. Ms. Havusha was previously the Deputy Director of Programs at Public Health Solutions, overseeing large-scale health and human service programs in the areas of food and nutrition, reproductive health care, maternal and child health, and health care access. Earlier, she was the Policy Director for the Bureau of Health Planning in the Division of Health Care Access and Improvement at DOHMH, where she played a lead role in coordinating the department's response to federal and state health care reform and was a member of the leadership team that developed the Take Care New York policy agenda.

Ms. Havusha has also held roles at Yale University's School of Public Health and at an anti-hunger organization in Massachusetts. She received her Master in Public Health degree with a concentration in health policy and administration from Yale University and her bachelor's degree from Washington University in St. Louis.

## **Barbara A. Israel, Dr PH**

**Dr. Israel is a Professor in the Department of Health Behavior and Health Education in the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan.** She is also Director of the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center. She received her Doctorate in Public Health and Master in Public Health degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has published

widely in the areas of: the social and physical environmental determinants of health and health inequities; the relationship among stress, social support, control and physical and mental health; and community-based participatory research (CBPR). Dr. Israel has extensive experience conducting CBPR in collaboration with partners in diverse communities. Since 1995, she has worked together with academic and community partners to establish and maintain the Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center (Detroit URC). One of the goals of the Center is to foster and support the development of equitable community-academic partnerships focused on understanding and addressing health inequities in the city of Detroit. The Detroit URC has facilitated the establishment of numerous such CBPR partnerships affiliated with the Center, which are engaged in multiple NIH and Foundation-funded basic etiologic research, intervention research and training projects aimed at increasing knowledge and addressing factors associated with health inequities.

Dr. Israel is actively involved in several of these CBPR partnerships and projects examining, for example, the environmental triggers of childhood asthma and strategies for reducing them, the social and physical environmental determinants of cardiovascular disease, the impact of physical activity interventions on heart health, the translation of research findings into policy change, and capacity building for conducting CBPR and policy advocacy. Dr. Israel received the Excellence in Teaching Award at U-M SPH in 2007, the Harold R. Johnson Diversity Service Award, at U-M in 2013, and the Game Changer Designation, in the field of health behavior and health education, by the American Journal of Health Promotion (2015).

## Adiebonye Jumbo, PhD, ITIL

**Dr. Jumbo is Assistant Professor & Clinical Coordinator in the Medical Informatics Program and Presiding Officer of the School of Health Professions at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University.** She joined the School of Health Professions as Assistant Professor. Dr. Jumbo earned her bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems from Lehman College, Master's in Medical Informatics from SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, and a PhD in Biomedical Informatics from Rutgers University. Prior to joining Downstate, Dr. Jumbo held various positions in health care industry with expertise in large scale Electronic Medical Records implementation. She is also a Visiting Senior Lecturer at the Federal Polytechnic of Oil and Gas Bonny, Nigeria. Dr. Jumbo's research interests includes electronic medical record implementation, optimization, and usability, business intelligence, data analytic, using health technology to remediate public health issues, health care information system security, and application of machine learning in health care delivery.

## Marcus Lambert, PhD

**Dr. Marcus Lambert is Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics and Associate Vice President for Research Strategy & Operations for the SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University campus.** In this role, Dr. Lambert focuses on initiatives to expand Downstate's extramurally funded research portfolio, particularly focusing on health disparities and public health research and training. Dr. Lambert is also contact PI of the TRANSlational Program Of health disparities Research Training (TRANSPORT), a \$10 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to form a translational health disparities research program, with a focus on recruiting and training underrepresented minority scientists.

Prior to SUNY Downstate, Dr. Lambert was Assistant Dean of Diversity and Student Life and Assistant Professor of Education Research in Medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine, where he led a \$2.4 million NIH-funded Initiative to Maximize Student Development (IMSD) Program to increase the number and enhance the success of Ph.D. students from underrepresented backgrounds. Dr. Lambert is a member of such national boards as Cell Press' Rising Black Scientists Award Academic Advisory Board and a member of NIH/NIGMS' Training, Workforce Development, and Diversity Study Section. Dr. Lambert received his Ph.D. in biomedical science from NYU Grossman School of Medicine and his B.S. from Howard University. He also holds an M.S. in Clinical Epidemiology and Health Services Research from Weill Cornell Graduate School.

Dr. Lambert is an expert in scientific workforce diversity. Trained in both biomedical and epidemiological research methodology, his research efforts focus on educational interventions that impact the scientific workforce, health inequities and individuals from historically excluded communities. Dr. Lambert's research group has examined the career goals of over 1300 postdoctoral researchers and the factors that influence commitment to or divergence from conventional academic research careers. His group proposes a model whereby motivations for academic careers are strengthened or weakened through self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and values during the postdoctoral training period, resulting in career goal persistence or the changing of a career intention.

Dr. Lambert also seeks to understand disparities across the scientific and public health training pipeline as one approach to achieving health equity and improving population health. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, his group provides trainees, mentors and academic institutions with data that can be used to improve the academic training path

and retain undergraduate, graduate, and postdoc trainees in the STEM and public health workforce.

## Porez Luxama, MS

**Mr. Luxama is the Co-founder and Director of Life of Hope (LOH)**, a multifaceted organization which provides invaluable direct services, youth and adult education, and advocacy to address several related issues that confront the immigrant and largely Afro-Caribbean community of Central Brooklyn: food insecurity, rent insecurity, provision of social services, economic development, and lack of access to quality health care, especially culturally sensitive maternal health services for immigrant women. Life of Hope also brings significant benefit to a community that is in need. We partner with other CBO's, local leaders, and elected officials to create lasting solutions to overcome the inequity and neglect that have for too long held this community back.

Mr. Luxama grew up in Haiti resides in the U.S. in the late 90s. One of eight siblings, he graduated from high school, went on to university. Upon graduating from Saint John's University with a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematical Physics, and a member of Sigma Pi Sigma including the inductions, student activity, and a keynote speaker of the SJU Physics Committee. He became a NYC Public Teacher in the early 2000s - a job he held for 17 years. Further his education, Mr. Luxama brings the leadership skills he gained while teaching in the NYC Public Schools, and working with CBO's as a community organizer, serving as senior program analyst and special mentor to local leaders to ensure the underserved becomes the SERVED. Amid these educational and political engagements, Mr. Luxama also pursued studies toward a Master's Degree in Public Education at Brooklyn College.

Mr. Luxama is an active leader and constantly advocate to build bridges to equity for youth and immigrant families. In addition, he has served as

a board member on multiple community-based organization to help develop their academia/ education, fundraising, government affairs, and communications. He partnered with city and state agencies to help that providing needed services to youth and immigrants from diverse backgrounds, including those who have traditionally been underrepresented. In recognition of his dedication to public service and civic advocacy, Mr. Luxama has dedicated his professional career to empowering others and to fight social injustice and has received numerous awards and commendations.

## Thomas Ives Mackie, MPH, PhD

**Dr. Mackie is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Policy and Management at the School of Public Health at the State University of New York (SUNY) Downstate Health Sciences University.** Trained as a medical sociologist and health services researcher, Dr. Mackie's research aims to bring new evidence to pressing mental healthcare policy and practice dilemmas confronted by children and their caregivers. His research is motivated by the rapid expansion of system-wide innovations that seek to address the well-documented gaps in access to quality pediatric and perinatal mental healthcare. As a mixed methods and interdisciplinary researcher, his work has examined an array of system-level innovations, including universal screening programs, healthcare provider supports (e.g., psychiatry access programs), and monitoring programs (e.g., prior authorization and drug utilization reviews). His work also leverages the decision and system sciences to improve the use of research evidence in the development, implementation, and sustainment of these innovations. Dr. Mackie has received over 6 million dollars in external funding from a diverse array of sponsors, including W.T. Grant Foundation, the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute, National Institute of Mental Health, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the Substance



Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Dr. Mackie also teaches graduate courses in U.S. Healthcare Policy and Management, Mixed Methods Research, and Mental Health Policy. He is deeply committed to an experiential pedagogy providing students opportunities for applying core concepts and skills through both case-based learning in the classroom and real-world applications as members of his research team. Dr. Mackie also served as the elected Health Policy Committee Chair for the Medical Sociology Section at the American Sociological Association and was competitively selected as a National Institute of Mental Health-funded fellow at the Implementation Research Institute.

Dr. Mackie most recently served as faculty at the Rutgers School of Public Health and as core faculty at the Institute for Health, Health Care Policy, and Aging Research at Rutgers. Dr. Mackie received a Joint-Doctorate in Social Policy and Sociology at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Brandeis University. He began his career in public health at the Boston University School of Public Health where he completed the Masters International program, which included service as an United States Peace Corps Volunteer in Lesotho.

## Lakia Maxwell, MSCH

**Ms. Maxwell is Research Education Coordinator, Project Staff Assistant, Brooklyn Health Disparities Center (BHDC), at Downstate Health Sciences University.** She received a Master's in Community Health at Hofstra University in 2016. Ms. Maxwell joined The Brooklyn Health Disparities Center in 2014 and serves as Research Education Coordinator. In that capacity, Ms. Maxwell provides support for the Center's Executive Team in submission of NIH and other grant proposals. She manages the financial expenditures and scholar recruitment processes

of the TRANSPORT endowment Program. She has developed and maintained web based and social media communications, brochures, pamphlets among many other products.

Ms. Maxwell is engaged in program planning and designing, as well as, the implementation of research activities. She is also the Internship coordinator and mentor for the BHDC'S summer mentor program, which consists of both high school and college students. Ms. Maxwell provides Program Evaluation, Survey Design, Graphic Design, Logic Model Development, SMART Goal and Objective Development, as well as Budget and Timeline Development in her roles. She has also assisted with and has a passion for both Community Based Participatory Research and Community Engaged Research. Additionally, Ms. Maxwell served as a professor at SUNY Empire State College where she taught "Introduction To Community and Public Health."

## Zahirah McNatt, DrPH, MHSA,

**Dr. Zahirah McNatt is the Assistant Commissioner for the Bureau of Brooklyn Neighborhood Health, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.**

Dr. McNatt oversees and manages the development, implementation, and evaluation of community-level and systems-level strategies in North and Central Brooklyn that aim to address health inequities. She also leads the Bureau's programming, planning, and recovery work to address racial and other social inequities resulting in premature mortality. Her work focuses on neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 due to histories of systemic and structural inequities driven by racism and oppression.

Dr. McNatt's expertise lies at the intersection of global public health, humanitarian systems, and human rights. She has more than 15 years of experience in the Americas, the Middle East, East

Africa, and Southeast Asia. Her work has spanned academic, non-profit and government sectors. Prior to her role at the Health Department, Dr. McNatt served as the Godley-St. Goar Chair of the Department of Community Health and Social Medicine and Assistant Professor at the University of Global Health Equity. Dr. McNatt also served as the Director for Leadership, Education and Practice at the Yale Global Health Leadership Institute. In these and other roles, Dr. McNatt has launched national programs to improve hospital quality in low and high-income countries, fostered effective partnerships with community-based organizations, schools and health centers, and conducted research on governance and accountability in health.

She has also championed health service improvements for refugee communities and centered efforts to improve prevention and treatment for noncommunicable diseases and mental disorders. Dr. McNatt earned her doctorate from Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health and her master's from the University of Michigan, School of Public Health.

## **Ngozi N. Moses, MSc**

**Ms. Moses, MSc is Executive Director of Brooklyn Perinatal Network, Inc. (BPN).** She is a public health executive, organizational strategist, and community health advocate with over 30 years of leadership experience. Since co-founding BPN in 1988, she developed it from a state-endorsed community task force of health service providers to a collaborative of community health organizations addressing the high and disparate infant mortality rates in low-income Brooklyn communities. Under her leadership, BPN developed, facilitated, and managed Community-based Organization (CBO) work to improve maternal and child health. BPN's work primarily targets vulnerable working-class community residents, enabling access to resources that mitigate social determinants of health. BPN's

strategies leverage collaborative relationships across the social and health service delivery system, affect public policy, and develop safety net social health program resources.

Trained in environmental, public, and community health, she entered public service in 1984 with the NYC DOH. She co-founded the Caribbean Women's Health Association Inc and the Prenatal Care Steering Committee, which advocated for the passage of the NYS Prenatal Care Assistance Program legislation offering free healthcare regardless of income to pregnant women. She is a founding member of the Commission on the Public Health System NYC, known for challenging public policies and actions that may compromise the public health care system. Through the Community Health Planning Workgroup, she led a partnership community health needs assessment - "The Need for Caring in North and Central Brooklyn", a report released March 2013, and "Hospital Crisis in Brooklyn".

Ngozi's contributions also include serving on several advisory forums including parent-teacher and faith-based associations, food support programs, immigrant/refugee support, personal/professional development work, language/cultural competency work; and public policy/advocacy for the NYS Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT)/Health Disparities Workgroup, NYS the State DOH Minority Health Council and several Brooklyn elected officials. While on the MRT, she advocated for CBOs to acquire health information technology (HIT) capacity, resulting in a DOH cross-state Perinatal HIT demonstration initiative. She currently leads advocacy to introduce the evidence-based Pathways Community HUB program model, helping CBOs to more effectively coordinate their work addressing social determinants of health with a financially sustainable strategy.

**Christina Pardo,  
MD, MPH, F.A.C.O.G.**

Dr Pardo is Vice Chair of Quality Improvement and Innovation, Director of Health Equity, Clinical Assistant Professor, in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Downstate Health Sciences University. Dr. Christina Pardo, MD MPH is a board-certified obstetrician and gynecologist, community advocate and public health professional. She attended Howard University as a pre-medical student and became actively involved in social and disparity issues in underserved communities. She graduated with honors with a B.S. in Biology in 2004. She then attended Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School in New Jersey, and completed a Master's in Public Health in International Health at Boston University. With an interest in women's health and working with underserved and immigrant communities, she completed her residency in Obstetrics & Gynecology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn NY.

Following residency training she joined the faculty at Stony Brook University where she co-founded the Global Women's Health program. Her interests in health disparities, social determinants of health and equity led her to return to SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University where she started a new Division of Health Equity in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology and serves as the Vice Chair of Quality Improvement & Innovation. She works actively with community-based organizations and has a focus of practically integrating equity into both clinical practice and education. Dr. Pardo is also the Director of Development and Strategic Planning for Life of Hope where she founded the 'Sante Se Lavi' program, who's aim is to address the unique barriers of care faced by immigrant communities.

**Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, M.D.**

Dr. Perez-Stable is Director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) and Principal Investigator in the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Dr. Pérez-Stable's research interests have centered on improving the health of racial/ethnic minorities and underserved populations, advancing patient-centered care, improving cross-cultural communication skills among health care professionals, and promoting diversity in the biomedical research workforce. Recognized as a leader in Latino health care and disparities research, Dr. Pérez-Stable has spent more than 30 years leading research on smoking cessation and tobacco control policy in Latino populations in the United States and Latin America.

NIMHD is the lead organization at NIH for planning, reviewing, coordinating, and evaluating minority health and health disparities research activities. NIMHD also promotes diversity in the biomedical workforce, supports research capacity at less-resourced institutions training underrepresented students and serving populations with health disparities, supports inclusive participation in all clinical research, and promotes information dissemination through regular electronic communications, public education outreach, and scientific presentations.

Since joining NIMHD in September 2015, Dr. Pérez-Stable has been cultivating the Institute's position on the cutting edge of the science of minority health and health disparities. Through this effort, the Institute has produced a collection of resources that guide and facilitate the conduct of research to promote health equity. These include the NIH Minority Health and Health Disparities Strategic Plan 2021-2025; the NIMHD Research Framework; the PhenX Social Determinants of Health Assessments Collection, a research toolkit; a collection of 30

science visioning Strategies to Promote the Advancement of Health Disparities Science; special journal supplements Structural Racism and Discrimination: Impact on Minority Health and Health Disparities and Addressing Health Disparities through the Utilization of Health Information Technology; and The Science of Health Disparities Research textbook, among other resources.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Pérez-Stable has positioned NIMHD at the forefront of the research response to COVID-19 health disparities by co-chairing three major new NIH-wide research programs and collaborating with other NIH institutes and centers. The two most prominent NIH-wide programs that have been established to promote health equity by reducing COVID-19 associated morbidity and mortality disparities experienced by underserved and vulnerable communities are the Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL) Against COVID-19 Disparities and the Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics for Underserved Populations (RADx-UP) initiatives. In October 2021, Dr. Pérez-Stable was awarded a Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal (Sammies) with Gary Gibbons, M.D., Director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI). They received the COVID-19 Response Medal for their extraordinary role in fighting the pandemic in communities of color.

## Angela G. Reyes, MPH

**Ms. Reyes is Executive Director and Founder, Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation.**

Angela started DHDC in 1997 from her living room “because [she] was tired of burying children”. Ms. Reyes was born in Southwest Detroit, and continues to reside there as a community activist for over 30 years. As a teenager, Angie, began working with ‘at-risk’ and gang-involved youth. She is the mother of four adult children, and has seven grandchildren.

Passionate about education and policy, she received her Master’s in Public Health from The University of Michigan and is known for her expertise in critical policy issues that impact not only Southwest Detroit neighborhoods, but common issues facing other urban areas. Angela has addressed international and national audiences sharing best practices in resolving community issues, including cultural awareness, youth gangs and violence, substance abuse, immigration, educational reform, community-based participatory research, policy development, and community organizing.

## Wayne J. Riley, M.D., MPH, MBA, MACP

Dr. Riley was appointed by the President of The State University of New York (SUNY) Board of Trustees as the 17th president of SUNY Downstate Medical Center currently known as SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University in January of 2017, one of four academic medical centers (AMC) in the SUNY System, and the only SUNY AMC in New York City.

Before Dr. Riley’s appointment at Downstate, he served as clinical professor of Medicine and adjunct professor of Health Policy at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. Prior to Vanderbilt, Dr. Riley served as the 10th president, chief executive officer, and professor of Medicine at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee.

Dr. Riley is an academic primary care general internist with more than 25 years of progressive senior executive level management, policy, and leadership experiences in academic medicine, patient care, research administration, academic health center administration, health care management, health policy, biotechnology, the corporate sector, government service, advocacy, and organized medicine.

Dr. Riley earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from the Morehouse School of Medicine, a Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology with a concentration in Medical Anthropology from Yale University, and a Master of Public Health degree in health systems management from the Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. He also earned a Master's in Business Administration from Rice University's Jesse H. Jones Graduate School of Business. Dr. Riley completed his residency training in internal medicine at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas where he rose from instructor of medicine to vice president and vice dean for Health Affairs and Governmental Relations. He also held an associate professorship of Internal Medicine.

Dr. Riley was most recently appointed Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the New York Academy of Medicine, whose mission is to influence and encourage action in urban health focusing seeking health equities in the areas of healthy aging, disease prevention, and the elimination of health disparities. Dr. Riley is the first black board chair the in the organization's 173-year history.

Dr. Riley is also immediate past president and president emeritus of the American College of Physicians (ACP). He has served as chair of the prestigious National Academy of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences as an elected member of the Administration of Health Services, Education, and Research, and is recognized as a master of ACP. Dr. Riley also served as a member and secretary treasurer of the Society of Medical Administrators, a member of the American Clinical and Climatological Association, and as a member of the Sullivan Alliance to Diversify the Health Professions.

In 2019, Dr. Riley was appointed Co-Chair of the SUNY Student Mental Health Task Force which focuses on early interventions and exploring existing practices and public health approaches across the

nation to address the mental health needs of SUNY students.

Dr. Riley is the recipient of numerous awards and honors including election to Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society, the Arnold P. Gold Medical Humanism Honor Society, and the Delta Omega Public Health Honor Society. He also received the SUNY Downstate Ailanthous Award for Outstanding Public Health Leadership, a Doctorate of Humane Letters (D.H.L.) honorary degree from SUNY Downstate Medical Center and a Doctorate of Science honorary degree from Tuskegee University.

A Brooklyn resident, Dr. Riley was appointed in May to the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MEDPAC) a nonpartisan Congressional agency that provides

the U.S. Congress with analysis and policy advice on the Medicare program. He also currently serves on the boards of the Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, the YMCA of Greater New York, New York Academy of Medicine, and the Arnold P. Gold Foundation.

## M. Gabriel Rodriguez

**Gabe is Executive Director of Development for Research at Downstate Health Sciences University.**

Mr. Rodriguez is Executive Director of Development for Research at SUNY Downstate. He has over 20 years of experience in successfully cultivating, soliciting, and retaining major philanthropic support for leading health care institutions, including the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University, Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, and ACRIA (now part of GMHC). Most recently, Mr. Rodriguez led major gift fundraising as Director of Development for the Department of Medicine at Mount Sinai Health System. At Mount Sinai, Mr. Rodriguez played a key role in strengthening its research capacity in support of addressing and

eliminating health disparities and racial inequities in health sciences.

## **Moro Salifu, MD, MBA, MPH, MACP**

**Dr. Salifu is tenured Professor of Medicine and Chairman of the Department of Medicine and Director of Brooklyn Health Disparities Center at State University of New York Downstate Health Sciences University in Brooklyn.** He is also the Edwin C. and Anne K. Weiskopf Endowed Chair in Nephrology and Transplantation. He has served as fellowship program director since 2003, division chief of nephrology, and director of the kidney transplant program at SUNY Downstate since 2008. He has trained and mentored many residents and fellows, across different institutions in New York and in several other States. He is also Principal Investigator for the Downstate NIMHD endowed program known as TRANSPORT (Translational Program of Health Disparities Research Training) in which he serves as a mentor for URM trainees and participates in providing resources for their career advancement.

Board-certified in internal medicine and nephrology, Dr. Salifu is known for his outstanding research, and clinical and administrative skills. He is highly respected within the Downstate community as well as in the national nephrology community. He is a productive investigator whose research interests include vascular biology, chronic kidney disease progression, and kidney transplant outcomes. He is the recipient of numerous grants including being the principal investigator of a multi-million-dollar award from the National Institutes of Health to advance the work of the Brooklyn Health Disparities Center, promoting health disparities/health equity research in all fields and foster collaborations between stakeholders that will result in research addressing health disparities.

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Dr. Salifu was

Chair of the Faculty Redeployment Workgroup to ensure adequate staffing to address the rapidly expanding patient volume at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University. Dr. Salifu was also a member of the Telehealth Workgroup that rapidly implemented telehealth services in mid-March 2020. SUNY Downstate was declared a COVID-Only Institution on March 20, 2020. As a result, all other non-COVID related on-site services were closed with early adoption of telehealth for those previously on-site services. SUNY Downstate is located in one of the epicenters of COVID-19 in Brooklyn. During the surge, Downstate rapidly created a biobank of blood specimens collected from 3000 patients. Dr. Salifu currently serves as the Chair of this biobank committee. He has recently been recruited to serve as Chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force of the NY Chapter of the American College of Physicians, an organization for which he has achieved Master Status.

Dr. Salifu is the recipient of numerous awards, including best educator of the year, Best Doctor US News and World Report, Castle Connelly Top Doctor, Worldwide Registry of Executives and Professionals, Kings of Kings County, just to name a few. He has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals nationally and internationally. He also is a member and journal reviewer for Nephrology and Transplant societies and has served on many local and national professional committees. He is the past president of the New York Society of Nephrology for the 2013-14 academic year.

## **Pamela D. Straker, PhD**

**Dr. Straker is Research Assistant Professor, BHDC Director of Operations, Department of Medicine/ College of Medicine, at Downstate Health Sciences University.** She is a licensed psychologist who has also had significant experience in management of, consultation to, and implementation of programs for non-profit organizations and programs serving

populations in which the greatest health disparities have existed. Dr. Straker has had significant experience in interfacing with community-based organizations, private funders, policy makers, and governmental entities, and has taught on the undergraduate and graduate levels. Dr. Straker served as a Trainer and Program Coach at Yale University for Emotional Literacy within the Psychology Department, has provided consulting services to the primary and higher education systems, and has served as a psychologist peer reviewer for the Optum Health/United Health Group.

In her role with BHDC, she provides administrative coordination, project management, development, instruction, and support for the Center and its researchers. As well, she oversees all Center HR, finances, facilities/space planning, and grants administration. She has strengthened the integration of BHDC's Cores, worked on the recruitment of other SUNY Downstate researchers, and has assured the Center's dissemination of information. As well, she has participated in the expansion of the Center's collaboration with researchers and departments outside of the Center. She provides administrative oversight for the TRANSPORT endowment Program. Dr. Straker holds a doctoral degree in School-Community Psychology from Hofstra University, where she also received a master's degree and has achieved alumna status at Columbia University's Executive Level Institute for Not-for-Profit Management. She earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Rochester.

### **Victor D. Sutton, PhD, MPPA**

**Dr. Sutton is Director, Preventive Health & Health Equity, Principal Investigator, Community Engagement Center, Jackson Heart Study, and COVID -19 Health Disparity State Team Lead, Mississippi State Department of Health.** Victor D. Sutton directs the Office of Preventive Health

and Health Equity after having served as MSDH's Preventive Health director for many years. Dr. Sutton provides operational and fiscal oversight to the Bureaus of Community and School Health and Chronic Disease, the Delta Health Collaborative, and the Injury and Violence Prevention program. The Office of Preventive Health and Health Equity works to promote evidence-based programs that focus on policy and environmental change, and works with schools, faith-based organizations, health care systems, worksites, municipalities and communities. Dr. Sutton manages the programmatic planning, implementation, and evaluation of federal and state grants.

Dr. Sutton's career in public health extends over a decade in professional roles with the Mississippi Department of Human Services' Office of Children and Youth, the New York Department of Labor, and non-profit organizations, including the Community Organization for Health Awareness (COHA). As Director of COHA, Dr. Sutton developed a mentoring network that addressed health and education among at-risk youth in the juvenile system.

His research interests are varied and include leadership, cardiovascular health, obesity, health disparities, physical activity, community-based corrections, and community and economic development.

### **Portia Thomas, DNSc, RN-CNE, MPH**

**Dr. Portia Thomas is a Nurse Scientist and Postdoctoral Associate at Downstate Health Sciences University in the Department of Medicine, Special Treatment and Research (STAR) program.** Her research aims to decrease HIV disparities among racial and sexual minorities by reducing barriers to HIV prevention methods and behaviors. Current and upcoming studies are: 1) assessing the acceptability of telemedicine to provide HIV care services among Black and Hispanic

men who have sex with men (MSM); 2) exploring pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) decision-making among Southern MSM; and 3) increasing representation of minority populations in HIV interventional research. Dr. Thomas earned her Doctorate in Nursing Science from Kennesaw State University, WellStar School of Nursing and is a certified nurse educator.

### **Azure Thompson, DrPH, MPH**

**Dr. Thompson is Assistant Professor in the Departments of Community Health Sciences and Health Policy and Management in the School of Public Health.** She holds a DrPH and MPH in Sociomedical Sciences from Columbia University and a B.A. in journalism from Howard University. Prior to her appointment in the School of Public Health, Dr. Thompson was Associate Director of Policy Research and Analysis and Research Scientist at The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse. She has also been on faculty as an Associate Research Scientist in Psychiatry and a scholar in the NIH ORWH's career development program in women's health and addictive behaviors at Yale University, a NIMH postdoctoral trainee in mental health services research at Rutgers University, a NIDA predoctoral trainee in drug abuse research at the National Development and Research Institute, Inc. and a W.K. Kellogg Fellow in Health Policy Research.

Dr. Thompson's research focuses on the social determinants of substance use and related psychiatric problems, with a particular emphasis on racial/ethnic minority women in urban settings. She is particularly interested in studying life course risk and protective factors associated with substance use among black women, and the intersection of these factors with neighborhood and policy environments. Through this research, she seeks to inform the development of programs and policies that contribute to the elimination of health disparities, particularly those related to addiction. She is

currently conducting research on the determinants of tobacco use among young adult black women, including an examination of the influence of exposure to tobacco marketing and access to tobacco retail on tobacco use behaviors. She does this research by conducting epidemiological studies using nationally representative data sets, as well as studies using primary data collected through survey, qualitative and field research methods.

### **Natasha J. Williams, EdD, MPH, MSW**

**Dr. Williams is assistant professor in NYU Langone's Department of Population Health and a member of the Institute for Excellence in Health Equity. Graduate Advisor, Population Health PhD Program, Vilcek Biomedical Sciences, NYU Grossman School of Medicine.** Since joining the faculty, her work has focused on social and structural determinants of health and community-engaged approaches to achieve health equity. She received a K23/Career Award funded by the NIH to study sleep disparities and social determinants of poor adherence to treatment for obstructive sleep apnea among Non-Hispanic Black and Non-Hispanic White adults. Dr. Williams has led and contributed to more than 70 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters on sleep disturbance and chronic conditions. She serves as chair of the Science and Research Committee for the Society for Behavioral Sleep Medicine and topic chair for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, Sleep Special Interest Group. She is a multiple principal investigator on two NIH-funded, COVID-related projects as part of the NIH Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics-Underserved Populations (RADx-UP); site principal investigator on the COVID-19 Citizen Science Study funded by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute; and co-investigator for community engagement on the NIH's RECOVER: Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery initiative at NYU Langone.



## CME Disclosure Summary

SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University Office of CME (OCME) and its affiliates are committed to providing educational activities that are objective, balanced and as free of bias as possible. The OCME has established policies that will identify and mitigate all conflicts of interest prior to this educational activity. All accredited providers are required to mitigate and disclose to the activity audience the relevant financial relationships of the planners, presenters, and authors involved in the development of accredited content. An individual has a relevant financial relationship if he or she has a financial relationship in any amount occurring in the past 24 months with an ineligible company whose products or services are discussed in the accredited activity content over which the individual has control. **All of the relevant financial relationships listed for these individuals have been mitigated.**

**The following faculties reported no relevant relationships with any organization that could be perceived as a real or an apparent conflict in the context of the subject of the presentation.**

Aimee Afable	Avital Havusha	Christina Pardo
Adam Aponte	Barbara Israel	Eliseo Perez-Stable
Qudsia Banu	Adiebonye Jumbo	Angela Reyes
Susan Beane	Marcus Lambert	M Gabe Rodriguez
Carla Boutin-Foster	Porez Luxama	Victor Sutton
Marlene Camacho-Rivera	Thomas Ives Mackie	Portia Thomas
Marilyn Fraser	Zahirah McNatt	Azure Thompson
Derek Griffith	Ngozi Moses	Natasha Williams

**All of the relevant financial relationships listed for the individual(s) below have been mitigated.**

### PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Moro Salifu	Pamela Straker
Aimee Afable	Lakia Maxwell
Carla Boutin-Foster	Azure Thompson
Marlene Camacho-Rivera	Edeline Mitton
Marcus Lambert	Judith Ruddock

### RELATIONSHIPS

NONE

# Accreditation & Designation Statement

Downstate Health Sciences University is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

Downstate Health Sciences University designates this live activity for a maximum of **3.75 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)<sup>TM</sup>**. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

## ADA Statement

**Special Needs:** In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University seeks to make this conference accessible to all. If you have a disability which might require special accommodations, please contact e-mail [ocme@downstate.edu](mailto:ocme@downstate.edu)

