



F O R



MSC  
MINORITY STUDENT CAUCUS

Celebrating over 50 years of  
service, advocacy, and community with  
the Minority Student Caucus



# Dear Reader,

Last year, 2021, marked the 50th anniversary of the Minority Student Caucus (MSC) at the Gillings School of Global Public Health. To continue celebrating this milestone, MSC launched a “50 for 50” showcase this year, where we are featuring—on social media and in this booklet—outstanding Gillings alumni and affiliates of color who are doing extraordinary work in public health. All individuals in this showcase were enthusiastically nominated by one or more members of the Gillings community, including past and current Gillings students, faculty, and staff.

*50 for 50 captures not just a moment in time, and not just what our incredible alumni/affiliates of color have accomplished over the last 50 years—it also captures who our community is and will continue to be for the next 50 years. Lastly, all of these individuals embody MSC’s mission: advocating for issues of concern to students of color in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and promoting research and programs aimed at addressing public health issues that affect people of color.*

For more information about MSC, please visit our website at <https://sph.unc.edu/students/minority-student-caucus/>.

In solidarity, power, and love,  
Minority Student Caucus

**MSC**  
MINORITY STUDENT CAUCUS



# Table of Contents

Marvell Adams Jr., MHA	4	Vijaya Hogan, DrPH	29
Cheryl Anderson, PhD	5	Lorenzo Neal Hopper, PhD, MPH	30
April Aviles, EdD, MPH	6	Renee M. Johnson, PhD, MPH	31
Stephanie Baker, PhD, MS, PT	7	Yuan Li, PhD	32
Bahby Banks, PhD, MPH	8	Winnie Luseno, PhD, MSc	33
Ronny Bell, PhD, MS	9	Maya Maroto, EdD, MPH, RDN	34
Kristin Z. Black, PhD, MPH	10	Hailey Mason, MPH	35
Larelle Bookhart, PhD, MPH, RD, IBCLC	11	Jessica Melton, MHA	36
Andre L. Brown, PhD, MPH	12	Yesenia Merino, PhD, MPH	37
Felicia A. Browne, ScD, MPH	13	Vann R. Newkirk II, MSPH	38
Ricky Camplain, PhD	14	Patsy M. Polston, PhD, MSPH	39
Mercedes Carnethon, PhD	15	Malika Roman Isler, PhD, MPH	40
Makala D. Carrington, MPH	16	Claire Sadeghzadeh, MPH	41
April P. Carson, PhD, MSPH	17	Carmen D. Samuel-Hodge, PhD, MS, RD, LDN	42
Theresa D. Chapple-McGruder, PhD	18	Delisha Stewart, PhD	43
Leslie Cofie, PhD, MA, MPH	19	Nick Sullivan, MHA	44
Brittany Cooper, MHA	20	Eyerusalem Tessema, MPH	45
Trinnette Cooper, MPH	21	Nicole Thomas, FACHE, MPH	46
Rachel M. Dean, MPH, RDN, LDN, IBCLC, RLC	22	Kimberly Parker Truesdale, PhD, MSPH	47
Pam Diggs, MPH	23	Carmina Valle, PhD, MPH	48
Justice Dove, MPH	24	Kristal Vardaman, PhD, MSPH	49
Krystal G. Garcia, MHA	25	Deshira Wallace, PhD	50
Cynthia M. Gary, MPH, PA-C	26	Kelley Wekheye, DrPH	51
Dana Weston Graves, MHA, FACHE	27	Minority Student Caucus	52
Margaret Takako Hicken, PhD, MPH	28	Minority Health Conference	53

# Marvell Adams Jr., MHA



Marvell Adams Jr. is an aging services professional with 20+ years of experience and passion in the field. Marvell's career began at Monroe Community Hospital, a large nursing home in Rochester, NY, where he trained and completed the requirements to become a licensed nursing home administrator. He remained in Rochester after his training as Administrator/COO for The Highlands at Pittsford, a senior living community affiliated with the University of Rochester Medical Center.

When the opportunity arose to serve Collington – A Kendal Affiliate, Marvell, a native South Carolinian, was happy to move back toward warmer climates. During his tenure as CEO, he led the successful restructuring of Collington's debt, development of a comprehensive strategic plan and oversaw the stabilization of independent living occupancy.

Marvell currently serves the residents, staff and board members of the Kendal System as Chief Operating Officer. Only the second individual in Kendal's history to serve in the role.

Marvell received his undergraduate degree in Political Science at the College of Charleston in South Carolina and soon thereafter earned his Master of Healthcare Administration from the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Marvell currently serves as a Director on the LeadingAge National Board, a national association of not-for-profit aging services providers. Marvell resides in Baltimore, Maryland, with his wife, Dr. Karoline Moon, 6-year-old girl/boy twins and 4-year-old daughter.



# Cheryl Anderson, PhD



Dr. Cheryl Anderson is Professor and Dean of the University of California San Diego Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science, with a joint appointment in the Department of Medicine Division of Nephrology and Hypertension.

She serves as Director of the UC San Diego Center of Excellence in Health Promotion and Equity. Dr. Anderson's research is focused on nutrition as a means to prevent chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, and diet-related cancers. This body of research aims to equitably improve human health and eliminate disparities in health that occur based on personal or environmental factors. Her work on dietary sodium, blood pressure, and cardiovascular health has influenced nutrition policy and behavioral strategies for the prevention and management of cardiovascular diseases and chronic kidney disease.

Dr. Anderson served on the National Academy of Medicine's Food and Nutrition Board and the 2015 US Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. She is the Chair of the American Heart Association (AHA) Council on Epidemiology and Prevention and the immediate past Chair of the AHA's nutrition committee.

She currently serves on the editorial board of *Circulation* and *Annual Reviews of Nutrition*. Dr. Anderson was elected to the U.S. National Academy of Medicine in 2016.

# April Aviles, EdD, MPH



April Aviles is a Southern-grown, Latina dedicated to anti-racist public health practice. She currently serves as the Director of Equity and Inclusion at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Over her 10+ years of experience in public health, April has played a critical role incorporating anti-racist approaches and promoting Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (JEDI) values within various non-profit organizations and city government agencies. She is a firm believer that just because things “have always been done this way” doesn’t mean they need to stay that way.

April is a proud first generation college graduate who earned her B.S. from Cornell University, a MPH in Maternal & Child Health at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and graduated this year with her EdD in Health Education from Columbia University, Teachers College.



# Stephanie Baker, PhD, MS, PT



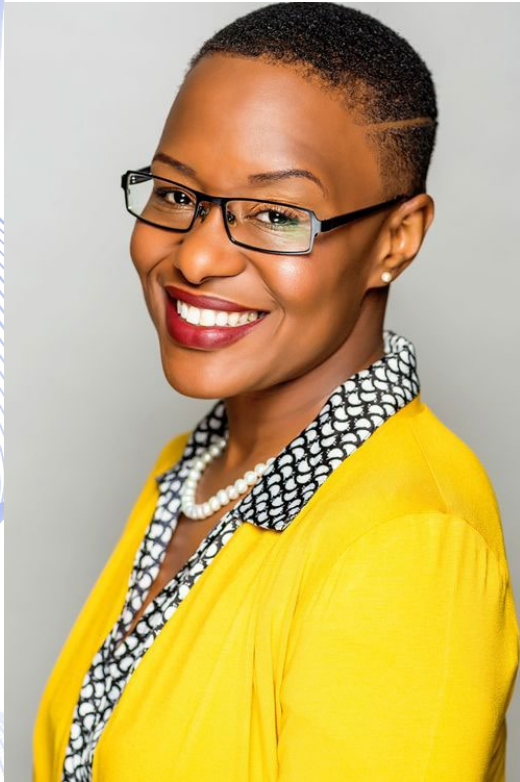
Dr. Stephanie Baker is an Associate Professor of Public Health Studies at Elon University.

She is a scholar activist, and her work uses a racial equity and anti-racism lens, combined with community-based participatory research approaches, to understand and address racial health inequities.

Her recent work, in collaboration with community partners, has focused on maternal and child health and reproductive justice outcomes for Black women and communities of color, racial inequities in cancer care, and community-academic partnership development and capacity building to address health inequities.

Dr. Baker is a member of the UNC Gillings Alumni Advisory Board and is an inaugural co-chair for the Board's Inclusive Excellence committee. She is co-founder and co-director of the H.E.R. Lab – Health Equity and Racism Lab and enjoys mentoring undergraduate students in research and career development.

# Bahby Banks, PhD, MPH



Dr. Bahby Banks, CEO of Pillar Consulting, a global program evaluation research firm, helps organizations assess the impact of their initiatives. In her role, Dr. Banks partners with grassroots, community-based and non-profit organizations to provide consultation on the development, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of their efforts. A scholar-activist committed to equity and inclusion, Dr. Banks actively engages leaders in strategic thought around health communication, community engagement and advocacy. Banks' work has led to a career that has spanned the Americas, Africa, Europe, and Australia, including contributions to the World Health Organization, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz, Instituto Promundo, and academic institutions across the United States. She currently serves as an adjunct assistant professor in the Public Health Leadership Program at UNC at Chapel Hill, and continues to invest in the next generation of public leaders through mentorship, training and practical experiences in their communities. Dr. Banks leads the ENVISION STEM Academy, an online community that offers didactic and experiential

learning for students from historically marginalized populations. To date, this work has been implemented with students enrolled in minority-serving institutions (MSI) and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) throughout the Southeastern United States and Puerto Rico.

Under Banks' leadership, Pillar Consulting has spearheaded efforts funded by the National Science Foundation, DuPont Foundation, deBeaumont Foundation, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, Duke Health, Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity at Wake Forest University, Facebook, Blue Cross Blue Shield NC, Duke Energy, United Way of the Greater Triangle and others. In 2020, Banks launched "Not A Host"(or "NAH"), a multimedia grassroots campaign designed to advance health literacy in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more at [www.notahost.com](http://www.notahost.com).

Dr. Banks was recently recognized with the Boston University School of Public Health Distinguished Alumni Award and was selected as the inaugural keynote speaker for the MPH@UNC Immersion Program. Dr. Banks received her bachelor of science in biology from Florida A&M University, master of public health in epidemiology and biostatistics from Boston University and doctorate of philosophy from the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

In her spare time, Dr. Banks enjoys trying new cuisine, traveling, spending time with family and friends, drumming, dancing and karaoke. Learn more at [www.bahbybanks.com](http://www.bahbybanks.com).



# Ronny Bell, PhD, MS

Ronny Bell, PhD, MS is Professor of Social Sciences and Health Policy in the Division of Public Health Sciences at the Wake Forest School of Medicine. Dr. Bell is also Associate Director of Community Outreach and Engagement and Director of the Office of Cancer Health Equity at the Wake Forest Baptist Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Dr. Bell received his undergraduate degree in Public Health Nutrition from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Public Health (1985) and his Master's (1988) and Doctorate (1993) in Foods and Nutrition from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Dr. Bell completed a post-doctoral fellowship in Gerontology and completed a Master's in Epidemiology (1996) from the Wake Forest School of Medicine.



From 1996 – 2016, Dr. Bell was a member of the faculty in the Department of Epidemiology at Wake Forest, and from 2006 – 2016, he served as Director of the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity. From 2016 – 2020, Dr. Bell served as Chair of the Department of Public Health in the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University and Program Director for the MPH program.

Dr. Bell is a native of Pembroke, NC and is an enrolled member of the Lumbee tribe of eastern North Carolina, and currently serves a Chair of the North Carolina American Indian Health Board. He also serves as Co-chair of the Prevention Subcommittee of the North Carolina Advisory Committee on Cancer Coordination and Control. He also serves as a member of the UNC Gillings Practice Advisory Committee. In 2019, he was appointed as Scientific Co-Editor for the North Carolina Medical Journal. He previously served as Chair of the North Carolina Diabetes Advisory Council and the Healthy North Carolina 2030 Task Force.

Dr. Bell lives in Greensboro with his wife, Natalie. They have three sons, Stephen, Benjamin (wife, Hannah) and Jonathan (who is a 2021 graduate of the UNC MSW program). They have a grandson, Everett, whom they love spending time with.

# Kristin Z. Black, PhD, MPH



Kristin Z. Black, PhD, MPH, is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Education and Promotion at East Carolina University. Dr. Black is committed to utilizing community-based participatory research, mixed methods, and racial equity approaches to understand and address inequities in reproductive health and chronic disease outcomes.

She received her MPH (2011) and PhD (2016) in Maternal and Child Health from UNC Gillings. She also completed the NIH T32-funded Cancer Health Disparities Postdoctoral Program through the Department of Health Behavior. As a student, she served as the Minority Student Caucus co-president (2011-2012) and Minority Health Conference co-chair (2010-2011).

Dr. Black is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Equity Scholar for Action, member of the [Greensboro Health Disparities Collaborative](#), vice chair of the Gillings' Alumni Association Advisory Board, member of the Gillings' Public Health Foundation Board, and president-elect of the [Society for the Analysis of African American Public Health Issues](#).



# Larelle Bookhart, PhD, MPH, RD, IBCLC



Larelle Bookhart is an alumnus of the undergraduate program in Health Policy and Management, MPH-RD program in Nutrition, and the Mary Rose Tully Lactation Consultant Training Initiative at the Gillings School of Global Public Health.

She worked as a county level director of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) in Halifax County, NC where she led and managed the program, while also providing direct nutrition and breastfeeding services and counseling.

She completed her doctoral studies in Nutrition and Health Sciences at Emory University and is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Illinois at Chicago Center of Excellence in Maternal and Child Health and a Bridge to the Faculty Associate in Community Health Sciences.

Dr. Bookhart's research focuses on health care system policies and practices that influence early feeding practices, with a specific focus on breastfeeding, eliminating disparities, and providing equitable support.

# Andre L. Brown, PhD, MPH



Andre L. Brown, PhD, MPH, is an Assistant Professor of LGBT Health in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health. His research interest center of the intersection of race, sexuality, gender, and how these social factors affect HIV and depression outcomes among Black men who have sex with men (MSM). Dr. Brown's work frequently features mixed methods and community-based participatory research approaches.

Currently, Dr. Brown is a Co-Investigator on multiple research studies, including evaluations of a community health worker program to improve COVID-19 disparities, a social determinants of health accelerator programs to improve tobacco, social connectedness, and clinical linkage outcomes in LGBT communities, and problem-solving courts interventions to reduce drug overdoses and deaths. Dr. Brown is also a Co-Investigator on several epidemiological examinations of patterns of healthy aging among middle-aged and older MSM.

Dr. Brown is a native of Flint, Michigan, and a graduate of the Universities of Michigan and North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In his spare time, he enjoys playing and watching tennis and making baked goods.



# Felicia A. Browne, ScD, MPH



Felicia A. Browne, ScD, MPH is a Senior Research Social Epidemiologist at RTI International. She also serves as an Adjunct Assistant Professor in Health Behavior at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and Assistant Director of the Social and Behavioral Science Research Core of the UNC CFAR.

With a commitment to addressing health disparities locally and globally, Dr. Browne's research focuses on reducing HIV among key populations of African descent in the U.S. South and South Africa. Currently, she serves as an MPI on two NIDA-funded R01 projects. One study reached young African American women to adapt and test the mHealth delivery of an HIV risk-reduction intervention. The other, based in South Africa, is implementing a multilevel intervention to increase ART/PrEP among young couples.

Dr. Browne also has a NIDA-funded R21 project to address intersectional drug stigma to increase engagement in HIV services for African American adults.

# Ricky Camplain, PhD



Ricky Camplain, PhD (she/her/hers) is an Assistant Professor at Northern Arizona University Department of Health Sciences and an Epidemiologist at the Center for Health Equity Research.

Her research focuses on disease prevention and health promotion (physical activity and sedentary behavior) among incarcerated populations with a primary focus on understanding, in partnership with communities, the health needs of those at the intersection of being Indigenous and incarcerated. She employs epidemiologic methods to determine how culture, policy, and the social and structural determinants of health in the correctional system can impact health behavior and social justice.

She is also committed to ensuring opportunities for safe, fulfilling research experiences for undergraduate and graduate students during their time at Northern Arizona University and other institutions.



# Mercedes Carnethon, PhD



Mercedes Carnethon, PhD, Mary Harris Thompson Professor and Vice Chair of Preventive Medicine and Professor of Medicine (Pulmonary and Critical Care)

Dr. Carnethon is an epidemiologist who studies the burden and impact of chronic diseases, specifically cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes and lung disease. Dr. Carnethon and her team have described the contribution of health behaviors such as sleep, physical activity and diet play on the development and outcomes from chronic diseases including cardiovascular and lung disease. She has authored over 300 publications that appear in leading scientific journals in the fields of medicine and public health.

Dr. Carnethon is a leader in career development, serving as the Co-Director of the Center for Education and Career Development and the Associate Chair of the Appointments, Promotion and Tenure Committee and directing 2 training programs. She has been active in promoting public health messages during the COVID-19 pandemic having testified before the US Senate Committee on aging, the National Disability Forum and through multiple appearances on national and international news.

# Makala D. Carrington, MPH



Throughout her 5-year public health journey, Makala has accrued significant experience and worked at the local and federal levels of government to help improve the lives of those who need it most at institutions such as Johns Hopkins, ASTHO, and the CDC. These experiences have allowed her to discover her true passion for public health and defined her purpose as a future public health leader.

Makala has been awarded a unique opportunity to assist leaders in the field of injury and violence prevention and work alongside stakeholders and gatekeepers to promote, prevent, and improve the quality of life for diverse populations. Her experiences in the community have exposed the need for services that are humble to the cultural differences of a diverse population. Makala's goals are as broad as her record of service, but the unifying factor has always been her passion for mentorship. She is dedicated to influencing the next generation of leaders.

Makala received the 2019 APHA Trong D. Nguyen Memorial Award, 2020 Peter J. Sawires Memorial Conference Scholarship for commitment to the anti-violence field, and was honored to receive the 2020 UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health Rachel Stevens Scholarship Award in Public Health to recognize her commitment to leadership in the field of public health. While serving as a United States Air Force Reserve Officer, she continues her public health research at CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.



# April P. Carson, PhD, MSPH



Dr. April P. Carson is the Director of the Jackson Heart Study and a Professor of Medicine at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

Dr. Carson's research centers broadly on determinants of health disparities in diabetes and cardiovascular disease. She has extensive experience with several large observational cohort studies and has published on a range of social, clinical, and lifestyle factors related to the occurrence of diabetes and its cardiovascular complications.

A Georgia native, Dr. Carson completed her B.S. in Microbiology at the University of Georgia and her M.S.P.H. and Ph.D. in Epidemiology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

In addition to her leadership role with the Jackson Heart Study, Dr. Carson maintains an active research portfolio funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Institutes of Health and is a standing member of the Science of Implementation in Health and Healthcare study section.

# Theresa D. Chapple-McGruder, PhD



Dr. Chapple-McGruder assumed the role of Public Health Director at the Village of Oak Park on May 3, 2021. As director of Oak Park's state-certified local health department, Dr. Chapple-McGruder oversees an operation that is one of only four municipal health departments in suburban Cook County certified by the state to provide public health programming.

A governmental and applied epidemiologist, Dr. Chapple-McGruder has spent the majority of her career at local, state, and federal health agencies, and with organizations that directly support governmental public health.

During the COVID-19 crises she has helped school districts craft reopening plans and provided expert consultations to recreational sports teams, news media operations, and community-based organizations to help flatten the infection curve and promote vaccination.

Prior to assuming her role, she led the Women's Health Data and Evaluation team at the Health Resources & Services Administration in Rockville, Maryland. Dr. Chapple-McGruder lived in Oak Park from 2005 to 2009 while pursuing a doctoral degree at the University of Illinois-Chicago. Her education also includes a master's degree in public health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Clark University in Atlanta.

The Oak Park Department of Public Health is responsible for protecting the community's health from preventable death, disease, illness, and injury. In addition, the department identifies community problems and potential epidemics, develops health policies, enforces local ordinances and links residents to or provides a wide range of direct services. Services provided locally include health assessments and screenings, education, prevention services, case management, nursing, counseling, and access to other community resources.



# Leslie Cofie, PhD, MA, MPH



Dr. Leslie Cofie is an Assistant Professor in the department of health education and promotion at East Carolina University.

He completed his PhD at UNC-Chapel Hill Gillings School of Global Public Health, and received both his MA in Medical Anthropology and MPH from Case Western Reserve University.

The core of his research focuses on understanding and addressing the root causes of health inequities experienced by vulnerable populations. His work has included evaluation of a maternal and child health services quality improvement project in rural Ghana; evaluation of a patient navigator program to improve HPV vaccination among low-income, racial/ethnic minority, and immigrant serving clinics in Southern Texas; and national level examination of cancer health disparities experienced by U.S. immigrants.

Most recently, Dr. Cofie has been a co-PI and evaluator on a National Library of Medicine Health Disparities Resources grant promoting digital inclusion and health information literacy for farmworkers in North Carolina.

# Brittany Cooper, MHA



A graduate from UNC Chapel Hill with a Master's in Healthcare Administration, Brittany Cooper is a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator in North Carolina and Virginia.

She is a talented leader who uses her expertise in strategic operational management to navigate nursing home facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Continuing in her passion, Brittany is the Owner and CEO of Aver Solutions, Inc. a healthcare staffing, home health care, and consulting services company.

Someone who lives with severe eczema that once left her hospitalized for five days, she considers herself an "eczema warrior." She seeks to empower other people with the disease and let them know they are not alone.

Brittany is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. She is an honoree of Fayetteville's Top 40 under 40, and she received the Fayetteville Branch NAACP Woman of the Year award. Currently, Brittany resides in Chesapeake, VA with her 17-month-old daughter.



# Trinnette Cooper, MPH



Trinnette Cooper is the Director of Philanthropic Advising Services at ABFE. Previously, she was Gillings' Manager of Inclusive Excellence and Outreach, and Staff Advisor to the Minority Student Caucus and Minority Health Conference. She takes a holistic approach to student support, student advocacy, and student success!

Trinnette shows up to many students as a mentor, coach, confidant, cheerleader, accountability partner and friend. She intentionally works to promote student wellbeing - including normalizing therapy and advocating for other self-care practices in academia. During her nine years at Gillings, Trinnette served as a university program administrator of programs dedicated to promoting academic success, professional development and degree completion. Throughout her career, her professional and personal work has been committed to the success of students, specifically students of historically underrepresented and underserved identity groups and the analysis, evaluation and assessment of programs throughout and across the academic pipeline.

For over seven years, Trinnette served as the MSC staff advisor; working with students in this capacity is a major highlight of her career in higher education. She is 100% invested in getting students to being whole, healthy, and happy individuals.

# Rachel M. Dean, MPH, RDN, LDN, IBCLC, RLC



Rachel M. Dean serves as a Registered Dietitian and International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. Her passion for nutrition began after recognizing and becoming saddened by the fact that many individuals were suffering from ailments that likely could have been prevented. In 2010 she began providing maternal and pediatric nutrition counseling through government programs, hospitals and outpatient clinical settings. Over the years she has provided services throughout the country and has conducted trainings both locally and internationally.

Rachel studied Nutritional Sciences at Penn State University. Further curiosity in preventative measures for optimal health sparked her interest in learning more about feeding and the periods of infancy and young childhood. Rachel returned to school in 2012 and earned a Master's in Public Health from the Department of Maternal and Child

Health at the UNC Chapel Hill, where she also completed her lactation training through the Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute.

Around 2017, she began to feel that although the experiences she gained were extremely valuable, there were still gaps in service and many families in the community that still needed support. Rachel now serves as the owner of Harmony Nutrition & Lactation, where she supports parents of color and helps them feel comfortable with nourishing themselves and their little ones. Rachel is particularly passionate about decreasing racial health disparities and achieving health equity among all people. She helped create and was the Program Director for the first two cohorts of the Lactation Consultant Training Program at Johnson C Smith University, the first Pathway 2 training program implemented at a historically black college/university in an effort to help diversify the field of lactation. She also serves as the Executive Director and Cofounder of Queen City Cocoa B.E.A.N.S., a nonprofit organization that assists new and expectant families of color in improving their overall quality of health and achieving a more balanced lifestyle through nutrition and lactation education and support.

Rachel is committed to life-long learning and providing excellent quality of care. She feels her roles are highly rewarding and loves being able to motivate and assist individuals and families in improving their overall health and well-being.



# Pam Diggs, MPH



Pam Diggs serves as Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. In this role, Pam leads and executes the company's DEI strategy, programs and learning initiatives to create a more culturally aware and inclusive workforce. As the daughter of two cancer survivors, Pam has focused her passion on work that advances health equity, addresses root causes of avoidable differences in health and centers the voices of those closest to the solutions.

Combining her passion for social justice and more than 15 years of experience working within multiple sectors, Pam is also a leading consultant on health equity principles and practice, mitigating bias, and organizational, policy, and system change.

Pam earned a B.S. degree in Chemistry from UNC-Chapel Hill in 2003 and M.P.H. degree in Health Behavior and Health Education from the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Public Health in 2007.

# Justice Dove, MPH



Hello, my name is Justice Dove. I am a current first-year medical student at PCOM-South Georgia. I am currently a Student Ambassador, Health Career Collaborative Co-director, Opportunities Academy Lead Mentor, and the President and founder of the OBGYN club on the campus.

At UNC, I discovered my love and passion for Maternal Health. I brought that passion to this private medical school based in a rural county in GA.

My main goal with starting the OBGYN club was to help find ways to improve maternal health in the rural towns around me. Our club has already helped develop initiatives centered around creating equitable standards for students with children. We are also developing programs that will help to provide equitable maternal care in the surrounding area. Thanks to all my mentors at UNC that helped make my dream of becoming a physician a reality.



# Krystal G. Garcia, MHA



Krystal G. Garcia serves as the Director of Policy and Research to the Mayor's Office Health and Human Services for the City of Boston. Ms. Garcia is extremely passionate about advancing equity-centered policies, community-engaged research, healthcare, and social services quality improvement, and elevating the well-being of those who have disproportionately disparate health outcomes.

Before joining the City of Boston, Ms. Garcia was a health services consultant at John Snow, Inc. (JSI) where she led projects aimed at mitigating the risks and harms of problem gambling, substance use disorders, and infectious and chronic diseases. Prior to her role as a consultant, Ms. Garcia was a health services researcher and served as a social services provider to community members throughout Boston.

Krystal Garcia holds a bachelor's in psychology and public policy from The City College of New York and a master's in health policy and management from the Gillings School of Global Public Health at the University of North Carolina.

# Cynthia M. Gary, MPH, PA-C



Ms. Gary is a native of Greenwood, S.C. and has lived in the Raleigh–Durham area for several years. She has over 20 years of public health experience. She received her bachelor’s degree in biology from Shaw University and master’s degrees from UNC–Chapel Hill (health behavior and health education) and Duke University (physician assistant studies).

She has worked with not-for-profit and public health organizations as a community health educator where she helped organize multiple health promotion programs focusing on chronic diseases as well as the importance of preventative care. Currently, she is a physician assistant at Johnston County Public Health Department serving patients with socioeconomic challenges. She provides medical care to children and adults and finds women’s health especially rewarding. She has served as a medical volunteer with international health organizations in Honduras, Uganda, Tanzania, Peru, and Ukraine.

Ms. Gary is also an active volunteer with the N.C. Medical Society where she works with other medical providers to promote leadership in medicine and be an advocate for health equity. Apart from her career, Cynthia is an avid writer, dancer, and triathlete. She also enjoys crafting to raise money for various charitable causes including a scholarship that she started in memory of her mother.



# Dana Weston Graves, MHA, FACHE



Dana Weston Graves is the President of Sentara Princess Anne Hospital, a 174-bed acute care hospital in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Sentara Princess Anne Hospital is a comprehensive healthcare destination with recognition by U.S. News & World Report and is home to Virginia's only Ornish Lifestyle Medicine Program. Prior to her role at Sentara, Graves served as the president & CEO of UNC Rockingham Health Care, formerly known as Morehead Memorial Hospital, in Eden, North Carolina. Her professional experience includes consulting, strategic planning, policy advocacy, and public speaking.

Dana received a Master of Healthcare Administration degree from UNC – Chapel Hill and a Bachelor of Science degree in Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology from Emory University. She is a Fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and currently serves on the Board of the YMCA of South Hampton Roads. Her recognition & awards include Emory University Alumni 40 under Forty, National Association for Health Services Executives (NAHSE) Young Healthcare Executive of the Year Award and President's Award, Triad's Most Admired CEOs, and the UNC Gillings School of Public Health Alumni Leadership Award.

Originally from St. Louis, MO, Dana enjoys living in Hampton Roads with her husband, Cornelius, and their two young sons.

# Margaret Takako Hicken, PhD, MPH



Margaret Takako Hicken is trained as an interdisciplinary social demographer and social epidemiologist. She earned her MPH from UNC-Chapel Hill and her PhD from the University of Michigan. Further, she recently completed a K01-funded career development award for training in population and statistical genetics.

Dr. Hicken is a tenured member of the faculty at the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research. Through her research, she focuses on the interrelated nature of cultural and structural racism and their roles in maintaining racial health inequities through molecular mechanisms. For example, in multiple NIH R01-funded projects, she examines the role of historical and contemporary racial violence and control and environmental hazards in relation to DNA methylation patterns.

She is also the faculty director of the University of Michigan RacismLab, an interdisciplinary research collective of scholars who study racism through a critical lens.



# Vijaya Hogan, DrPH



Dr. Vijaya Hogan is a nationally known perinatal epidemiologist. She was a member of the DHHS Secretary's Advisory Committee on Infant Mortality (SACIM), has served as a Program Officer at the WK Kellogg Foundation, was Professor in the Department of Maternal and Child Health at the Gillings School of Public Health at UNC-Chapel Hill, and was the lead epidemiologist on the Preterm Delivery Research Group at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In her career, she has worked at the community, state, and federal levels, in public and private sector, in academia, and has worked both domestically and globally. She conducted research and authored several papers relating to understanding and addressing health inequities in perinatal outcomes. She currently works as an Independent Consultant.

She is utilizing her expertise to build the capacity of MCH and other public health organizations in their implementation of strategies to effectively address social determinants of health and to attain health equity.

# Lorenzo Neal Hopper, PhD, MPH



Dr. Lorenzo Neal Hopper is the son of Neal Hopper and Sandra Young. During his undergraduate tenure at UNC, Dr. Hopper was named Mr. Black Student Movement and was inducted into the Order of the Golden Fleece for his student leadership and service to the UNC students and community.

Dr. Hopper earned a Master of Public Health degree from East Carolina University in 2013 and enrolled in the Maternal and Child Health PhD program later that year. He was selected as a predoctoral Trainee in the Carolina Population Center in 2013 as well as an APHA MCH Student Section Fellow in 2015. He served as Co-President of the Minority Student Caucus and sat on the Dean's Council board during his tenure as a student representative.

Dr. Hopper earned his PhD in 2020 and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Public Health Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.



# Renee M. Johnson, PhD, MPH



Renee M. Johnson, PhD, MPH is Associate Professor & Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Department of Mental Health at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

She earned her master's and doctoral degrees at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, and conducted postdoctoral work at Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health.

Her research addresses the mental and behavioral health of adolescents and emerging adults, with a focus on youth in low-income, urban areas. She has expertise in substance use, community violence, and the public health response to the overdose crisis. Dr. Johnson has published more than 100 articles in public health journals and is an Associate Editor for JAMA Pediatrics.

She is a member of the College on Problems of Drug Dependence, the Society for the Advancement of Violence & Injury Research, and the Society for Prevention Research.

# Yuan Li, PhD



Dr. Yuan Li earned a BS degree from Chengdu University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, China, and a PhD from City University of Hong Kong.

She started her career in UNC-CH as a postdoctoral associate with Dr. Susan Sumner in 2017, and served as the manager in the UNC Nutrition Research Institute's Metabolomics and Exposome Laboratory in 2019. In 2020, she became an Assistant Professor in the Department of Nutrition and the Nutrition Research Institute.

Dr. Li employs cutting-edge “omics” methodologies for biomarker(s) discovery and is interested in studying the mechanistic insight of disease and wellness to inform intervention strategies. She is a co-investigator of the NIEHS-funded Human Health Exposure Analysis Resource (HHEAR) program and the recently funded NIH Common Fund Nutrition for Precision Health Metabolomics and Clinical Assay Center (NC NPH MCAC), where she will identify nutritional dark matter and study their linkage to human health and wellness.



# Winnie Luseno, PhD, MSc



Dr. Winnie Luseno is a Senior Research Scientist at Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE), Chapel Hill Center, NC.

She has a PhD in Maternal and Child Health from UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and an MSc from University of Wisconsin at Madison.

Dr. Luseno uses social and behavioral sciences approaches to understand and change health behaviors to improve health outcomes. Her work focuses on populations at-risk for or living with HIV and spans issues including ethics, sexual and reproductive health, substance use, and domestic violence. Her studies have highlighted important gaps and ethical issues in HIV research and programming among adolescents.

Dr. Luseno is currently Principal Investigator on a National Institutes of Health funded study to develop and evaluate a digital intervention to address stigma among pregnant adolescents in Kenya living with HIV. She is a native of Kenya and lives in Raleigh with her family.

# Maya Maroto, EdD, MPH, RDN



Dr. Maya Maroto is Vice President of Federal, State, and Municipal Partnerships at the Partnership for a Healthier America (PHA). Dr. Maroto serves on the PHA leadership team and is working to cultivate partnerships with federal, state, and local governments to expand PHA's current and future programs in pursuit of food equity.

Prior to joining PHA, she held positions at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) and at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) where she managed award-winning nationwide nutrition education and outreach initiatives.

She is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) and has a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership from Morgan State University, a Master of Public Health in Nutrition from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Food Science from Auburn University.



# Hailey Mason, MPH



Hailey Mason (she/they) is a double Tarheel (C/O '19 and '21) from Rockingham, North Carolina. She received a master's degree in public health from the Gillings School of Global Public Health where she served as Co-President of the Minority Student Caucus and as the inaugural Inclusive Excellence Program Coordinator. She began her professional career creating and facilitating public health training, education, and research opportunities for faculty, staff, students and continues to do so in her current work at Duke University. She's excited to continue integrating wellness and healing-informed approaches into her work within and beyond Duke.

Hailey's work is centered around creating spaces where faculty, staff, and students of color, their families, and their communities can grow and flourish unapologetically. She considers herself a creator, educator, and perpetual learner who strives to be intentional in all she gives to and receives from this world. Some of the things she enjoys most in this life include family, friends, creating and consuming art, binge-watching TV, and a nice seafood boil with *sweet\** tea on the side.

# Jessica Melton, MHA



Jessica Melton is the President and Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Suburban Hospital. Suburban Hospital, a member of Johns Hopkins Medicine, is a non-profit, 222 bed Level II Trauma Center located in Bethesda Maryland that provides complex acute care services to communities across the National Capital Region of MD, VA and Washington DC.

Prior to joining Suburban, Jessica served as the COO at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital. Jessica additionally held progressive leadership roles at Duke University Hospital including Vice President (VP) of Medical, Surgical, and Critical Care Services, VP of Emergency Services and Patient Flow, and Director of Disaster Preparedness.

Jessica received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and her Master of Healthcare Administration, with a certificate in Community Preparedness and Disaster Management, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Additionally, Jessica earned her certification as an International Coaching Federation executive coach from North Carolina State University.



# Yesenia Merino, PhD, MPH



Yesenia Merino, PhD, MPH is the CEO of Ardorpoint Consulting and an adjunct assistant professor at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

She previously served as the director of inclusive excellence education and training at Gillings, where she conducted mixed methods research on institutional racism and academic public health, taught about structural racism and health, and delivered trainings on inclusion and antiracism to improve the inclusive environment at the Gillings School.

Merino is a graduate of the Department of Health Behavior at Gillings.

# Vann R. Newkirk II, MSPH



Vann R. Newkirk II is a senior editor at The Atlantic, and the host and co-creator of the Peabody Award-winning Floodlines, a narrative podcast about Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath.

For years, Newkirk has covered voting rights, democracy, and environmental justice. Prior to working in journalism, Newkirk worked as an analyst with the Kaiser Family Foundation. Newkirk was a 2020 James Beard Award Finalist, a 2020 11th Hour Fellow at New America, and a 2018 recipient of the American Society of Magazine Editors's ASME Next Award.

He received his MSPH from the Health Policy and Management Department of the Gillings School of Global Public Health at UNC-Chapel Hill in 2012, and was a Gillings Merit Scholar. He received his bachelor's degree from Morehouse College in 2010.



# Patsy M. Polston, PhD, MSPH



Dr. Patsy M. Polston completed her MSPH (2011) and PhD (2015) from the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering with a minor in Health Behavior. As a student at Gillings, she had the honor of serving two-terms as the co-president of the Minority Student Caucus (MSC) (2009–2011) and as co-president of the Student Government (2014–2015).

Currently, she serves as the faculty advisor for MSC and is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Behavior. Dr. Polston teaches an MPH core course that prepares students for “public health practice by introducing fundamental leadership skills necessary to advance equity and recognize and address bias in organizational settings.”

Her research interests explore the intersection of environmental and social determinants of health and involve understanding and addressing health inequities. Dr. Polston recently served as co-investigator for two community-based projects centered on reducing COVID-19 disparities that have disproportionately placed communities of color at greater risks for morbidity and mortality.

# Malika Roman Isler, PhD, MPH



Malika Roman Isler, PhD, MPH is currently the inaugural Assistant Vice President for Inclusive Practice, guiding institutional strategy and assessment for inclusive and equitable practices at Wake Forest University. In addition, she served as the inaugural Director of Wellbeing, leading the development, institutionalization and collective impact of Thrive – Wake’s comprehensive approach to wellbeing.

Prior to her tenure at Wake Forest, she served on the faculty of the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine, and as an administrator and faculty lead with the NC Translational and Clinical Sciences Institute (NC TraCS). In these capacities, Malika was on the investigative team for federally and institutionally funded projects and centers in the areas of health equity and community engagement.

Across her professional endeavors, Malika demonstrates extensive experience integrating research and practice, creating behavior change interventions, developing strategic plans that guide culture change, and defining assessment tools to ensure research and practice effectiveness.



# Claire Sadeghzadeh, MPH



Claire Sadeghzadeh (saw-deg-za-day) (she/her) is a second generation, interracial Iranian American who was born and raised in West Virginia.

Claire currently works as an Evaluation Specialist at the UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. She specializes in engaging people with lived experience in participatory research and design thinking methods and working collaboratively with community partners to implement and evaluate public health strategies to prevent chronic disease.

She is committed to holding complexities in public health systems with curiosity and care, and she enjoys cultivating and facilitating meaningful learning spaces for research practitioners and community members.

Claire received her Master of Public Health in Health Behavior in 2018 from Gillings School of Global Public Health.

# Carmen D. Samuel-Hodge, PhD, MS, RD, LDN



Dr. Samuel-Hodge is an Associate Professor in the Department of Nutrition at the University of North Carolina Gillings School of Global Public Health, the Evaluation Core Director at the UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Duke University School of Medicine, and embedded faculty at Granville Vance Public Health, a Rural Academic Health Department.

Her research targets chronic diseases that disproportionately affect African Americans and other minority populations. This research includes clinical and community-based diabetes self-management training programs for African Americans with type 2 diabetes, behavioral weight loss programs for low-income women, and lifestyle interventions that engage with participants to change their eating habits and physical activity behaviors. Dr. Samuel-Hodge co-leads two research projects funded by the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, to test a Southern-style Mediterranean dietary pattern for weight loss and cardiovascular disease risk reduction.



# Delisha Stewart, PhD



Dr. Delisha Stewart earned a B.S. degree at the University of Dayton and a Ph.D. from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), both in Biochemistry.

She's completed postdoctoral training at the University of Delaware, studying prostate cancer ontology and therapeutic development, at UAB investigating Notch signaling in osteosarcoma, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) using genomics to study breast cancer microenvironment-immune crosstalk related to inflammation and clinical subtype aggressiveness, and finally at RTI International, incorporating metabolomics to interrogate cancer progression and treatment response outcomes.

In 2017, she joined the faculty at UNC-CH in the Department of Nutrition as an Assistant Professor and works at the Nutrition Research Institute. Her research focuses on the impact of different nutritional states on genetic-, environmental- (i.e., obesity) and inflammation-driving metabolic programs that fuel cancer progression, contribute to poor chemotherapeutic treatment responses and result in disparate health outcomes.

# Nick Sullivan, MHA



Nick Sullivan, MHA serves as the Vice President of Psychiatry and Mental Health Institute for Novant Health. As the vice president, Nick is responsible for strategic, operational, and financial performance of all behavioral health based activity within Novant Health.

He has a personal passion for mental health advocacy and increasing dialogue about disparities in underserved communities. Nick serves on the board of Eustress, a Charlotte based non-profit.

Nick received both his BA in Public Policy and his Masters of Health

Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He also received his Certificate in Clinical Informatics from the School of Information and Library Sciences during his master's program.

Nick is a member of UNC Alumni Association Board and was named one of Charlotte's "40 under 40" by the Charlotte Business Journal in 2017 as well as 66 Leaders under 40 by Modern Healthcare Magazine in 2019. Nick was most recently recognized by the Mecklenburg Times with an Icons & Phenoms award, showcasing and celebrating the work of regional leaders across the greater Charlotte metro community.

Nick is married to fellow Gillings alum Yamira Maldonado-Sullivan and is the proud father of 14 year old Paige Sullivan, author of Embrace Your Cape, a children's book focusing on encouraging bravery for children with difficult and challenging healthcare obstacles.



# Eyerusalem Tessema, MPH



Eyerusalem Tessema is a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Specialist at Bixal. In this role, she provides monitoring, evaluation and research support to USAID, International NGOs and other clients globally.

Prior to joining Bixal, Eyerusalem worked at Save the Children for 5.5 years and led Monitoring, Evaluation and Research for youth employment programs in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Vietnam, China, Mexico and Italy.

She has over eight years of experience in program management and monitoring and evaluation in the US and globally in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe in education, youth employment and public health.

Eyerusalem has a Master in Public in Health Behavior and a Bachelors of Art in Anthropology and Sociology from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is originally from Ethiopia and currently lives in Washington, D.C. In her free time, Eyerusalem enjoys exploring the DC area, taking Latin Dance classes and trying new recipes.

# Nicole Thomas, FACHE, MPH



Nicole Thomas, FACHE, is hospital president of Baptist Medical Center Jacksonville, responsible for the operational and strategic direction of the largest hospital in the health system. Thomas joined Baptist Health in 2011 and in 2016 was named Baptist Medical Center South's president, becoming the first female and first African American to lead a hospital in Baptist Health's history.

Through the years, Thomas has held several system roles at Baptist Health, including co-chairing its diversity, equity, and inclusion council; chairing its transformation council; stepping in as interim chief human resources officer; and serving as senior vice president of specialty services overseeing neurosciences, orthopedics, and oncology, with primary executive responsibility for the formation

of Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center in 2015. Prior to joining Baptist, she was assistant vice president of Physician Operations for St. Luke's Episcopal Health System in Houston, and operations administrator at Mayo Clinic Jacksonville.

A fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives, Thomas was named among Modern Healthcare magazine's Top 25 Minority Executives in Healthcare in 2018 and 2020 and one of 70 African American leaders in health care to know by Becker's Hospital Review in 2020.

Thomas is a member of the board of directors for the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's Jacksonville branch and was recently named to the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. She is also on the board of directors of Tiger Academy in Jacksonville and serves on the OneJax Advisory Board. Thomas serves on the senior advisory council of the Florida chapter of the National Association of Health Services Executives and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She is a graduate of Leadership Jacksonville, a past chair of the Go Red for Women campaign of the American Heart Association and Women in Local Leadership for the United Way of Northeast Florida.

A recipient of numerous awards and recognitions, Thomas was named a Woman of Vision by Girls Inc., Woman on the Move by ONYX magazine and a Woman of Distinction by the Northeast Florida Girl Scout Council. She also has been named a Woman of Influence by the Jacksonville Business Journal, a Woman with Heart by Volunteers in Medicine and is a Pinnacle Award recipient of the Jacksonville Image Awards. Thomas has a Master of Healthcare Administration from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where she was a Minority Merit Scholar and Institute for Diversity in Healthcare Management Scholarship recipient. She received a Bachelor of Science in Public Health Administration from Dillard University in New Orleans.



# Kimberly Parker Truesdale, PhD, MSPH



Kimberly Parker Truesdale received her MSPH (1997) and PhD (2000) in Epidemiology from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is currently a Research Associate Professor in the Nutrition Department at UNC.

Dr. Truesdale's research focuses on examining the cardiometabolic consequences of obesity and energy imbalance; analyzing anthropometric, diet and physical activity data; and coordination of multi-center trials and project management.

Dr. Truesdale is the Research Director of the Research Coordinating Center for the Disparities Elimination through Coordinated Interventions to Prevent and Control Heart and Lung Disease Risk (DECIPHHeR) Alliance.

She also serves as the Director of the Behavioral Assessment subcore of the UNC Nutrition Obesity Research Center; Chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee in the Nutrition department; member of the Gillings Inclusive Excellence Committee; and co-instructor for Developing, Implementing and Evaluating Public Health Solutions (SPHG 722).

# Carmina Valle, PhD, MPH



Carmina Valle, PhD, MPH is an assistant professor of nutrition at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and member of the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Her interdisciplinary research focuses on digital behavior change interventions to address disparities in cancer. Her research addresses: strategies to improve nutrition, physical activity, and weight management in cancer survivors, with an emphasis on young adults; implementing behavioral interventions related to cancer control with potential for scalability and dissemination using technology; and optimizing tailored health communications and innovative interventions to improve cancer prevention behaviors.

Dr. Valle's research has been funded by the National Cancer Institute and the National Heart Lung National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

She completed her postdoctoral training in cancer health disparities at UNC, received a PhD in nutrition from the Gillings School of Global Public Health, an MPH from the Drexel University School of Public Health, and a BS in Biology from Yale University.



# Kristal Vardaman, PhD, MSPH



Kristal Vardaman (MSPH 2005) is a health policy professional with over 16 years of policy analysis and program evaluation experience in the public and private sectors.

She is currently a Policy Director at the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC), a legislative branch agency in Washington, DC, that advises Congress on the Medicaid program. She leads a team of analysts focused on long-term services and supports, dually eligible beneficiaries, and social determinants of health. Prior to MACPAC she worked at the Government Accountability Office, exploring issues spanning Medicare, Medicaid, and public health.

After earning her MSPH from the Gilling School's Department of Health Policy and Management in 2005, she started her career at Avalere Health, a consulting firm, focusing on Medicare post-acute care payment policy.

Dr. Vardaman earned her PhD in Public Policy and Public Administration from George Washington University in 2019.

# Deshira Wallace, PhD



Deshira Wallace is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Behavior at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Her research is focused on examining the effects of structural and psychosocial stressors on type 2 diabetes prevention and management among U.S. Latines and in Latin America. Further, she uses an intersectionality framework to examine risk factors, coping behaviors, and health outcomes, particularly among Latines and Latin Americans of African descent in an aim to further unpack health inequities within the Latine and Latin American population.

Dr. Wallace earned her Ph.D. in Health Behavior from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her BA in Environmental Science and Policy from Duke University.



# Kelley Wekheye, DrPH



Kelley Wekheye, DrPH has provided statistical support to biotech and pharmaceutical companies related to development programs for early and late phase clinical trials for over 20 years.

Dr. Wekheye has overseen statistical aspects of the design and analysis of clinical trials, including project management, statistical analysis, and data interpretation for clinical trial reporting and publications. She has provided Biostatistical Oversight and/or directly contributed to individual clinical studies, multi-protocol programs, New Drug Applications, and investigational new drug safety updates as the Statistical Lead. She has experience in various Therapeutic Areas, including Psychiatry, Neurology, Inflammation, Pain, and Oncology.

Her skillset also includes working within a cross-functional team environment and providing statistical guidance and mentorship to other Biostatisticians. Kelley has served as a Biostatistician at various levels in the CRO environment. In early February 2022, she started a new position as Director, Biostatistics at Mersana Therapeutics.

# Minority Student Caucus

## Graduating executive board members



**Juhitha Chinthapatla**

*Secretary*

*Master of Science*

*Nutrition*



**Adriana Parker**

*Taking Responsibility to Increase  
Access and Diversity (TRIAD)  
Co-Chair*

*Master of Public Health*

*Health Behavior*



**Vanessa Amankwaa**

*Co-President*

*Master of Public Health  
Health Equity, Social Justice and  
Human Rights (EQUITY)*



**Khadijah Toumbou**

*Publicity Chair*

*Master of Public Health*

*Health Equity, Social Justice and  
Human Rights (EQUITY)*



**Emmanuel Saint-Phard**

*Education and Community Action  
(ECA) Co-Chair*

*Master of Public Health*

*Health Behavior*



**Isabel Lu**

*Education and Community Action  
(ECA) Co-Chair*

*Master of Public Health/Reg-  
istered Dietitian*

*Nutrition*



# Minority Health Conference

## Graduating planning committee leaders



**Takhona Hlatshwako**

*Conference Co-Chair*

Bachelor of Science in Public Health

*Health Policy and Management*



**Phong Dinh**

*Communications Co-Chair*

Master of Healthcare Administration

*Health Policy and Management*



**Talia Kieu**

*Fundraising Co-Chair*

Master of Science in Public Health

*Health Behavior*

