COMMUNITY HEALTH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

2021 COHORT

THIS PROJECT IS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE MARGUERITE CASEY FOUNDATION.
The Satcher Health Leadership Institute (SHLI) aims to be the leading transformational force for health equity in policy, leadership development, and research. Rooted in the legacy of our founder, the 16th U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher, SHLI’s mission is to create systemic change at the intersection of policy and equity by focusing on three priority areas: the political determinants of health, health system transformation, and mental and behavioral health.

In conjunction with key strategic partners, SHLI enhances leadership among diverse learners, conducts forward-thinking research on the drivers of health inequities, and advances evidence-based policies; all in an effort to contribute to the achievement of health equity for all population groups.
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2021 COHORT
Ikenna Achebe MD, MPH, MA is a Community Health Coordinator at the Department of Sociomedical Sciences at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, an Assistant Research Scientist at the Department of Psychiatry at Columbia University, and an Assistant Professor with the Freedom Prep Program at the City University of New York, a program that offers justice-involved young people the opportunity to take introductory college courses and supports transition to college degree programs. He is also a Commissioned Officer in the Medical Services Corps of the United States Army Reserve and the Founder and Executive Director of the SOS Project, a Leadership Development Program for at-risk and justice-involved youth.

Ikenna’s areas of interests include interventions that reduce racial mental health disparities and stigma around mental health in communities of color, gun violence prevention programs, and the intersections of mental health and the justice system. His clinical interests include Anxiety Disorders, PTSD, and Depression, with a special emphasis on under-served communities and marginalized populations. Currently he is involved with several research projects, including one that is focused on engaging African American faith-based organizations in ways to increase mental health literacy, reduce stigma, and address socio-cultural barriers to care, another that focuses on identifying justice-system involved youth at risk for suicidal behavior, linking them to treatment and care, and reducing risk, and another project that oversees the dissemination of a health intervention that aims to reduce substance use, HIV and Hepatitis C risk behaviors, and recidivism among justice system-involved individuals and individuals with histories of substance use disorders.
Cheryl Avant, PhD, MHA, MBA is a medical sociologist. She earned a Master of Business Administration from Lincoln University, a Master of Healthcare Administration from Park University, in addition to a Ph.D. in Rural Sociology from the University of Missouri. Her research study focused on bias in the U.S. healthcare delivery system. Her interest includes disparities in access to quality health care as well as developing community-driven solutions to barriers to quality health care; simply, social determinants of health and healthcare leadership.

She is the former Chief for the Missouri Office of Minority Health and co-authored the State of Missouri’s – Office of Minority Health’s first health disparity report entitled, “Missouri Health Disparities Report: Promoting Health Equity and Reducing Disparities in Missouri,” for which she has presented the findings at National Conferences. She is an invited speaker on topics such as health disparities, inequities, public policy, professional and leadership development.

Dr. Avant is a member of the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and the Missouri NAACP State Conference Vice President and Health Committee Chair. She volunteers to work with youth in areas of personal growth and leadership development and has spearheaded several community-based healthcare projects. She is passionate about working with communities to reduce health disparities through teaching, professional development, research, and community outreach programs.
Lekesha Benson followed her passion to honor the legacy of her son, affectionately known as Vari, and left her position as the Children's Program Director at a local non-profit, to create The NOLA Network. Co-founded with her son, Jacory, The NOLA Network is actively advocating for and creatively crafting change within the healthcare and educational systems by highlighting disparities in care given and services received. As the organizations leader, Lekesha provides training and education to families, while working with educators and medical providers to recognize and dismantle implicit bias within those systems. Prior to launching the NOLA Network, Lekesha served under-represented communities and at-risk youth for over twenty years. Lekesha continues to serve by sharing her expertise as an ACEs Master Trainer, group facilitator, life coach, writer, and keynote speaker.

Corinnee Bogan is a current Master of Public Health Candidate at University of Delaware's Biden School of Public Policy. While pursuing her MPH, Corinne is working as a Graduate Research Assistant with the Center for Community Research and Service. She is working alongside the Medicaid Research Program focusing on the analysis of the Delaware Contraceptive Access Now (DeICAN) intervention, which aims to reduce unintended pregnancies, reduce Medicaid costs associated with unintended pregnancies, and support policy development that enables contraceptive access.

As a 2019-2020 National Health Corps AmeriCorps alum, Corinne spent a year in Jacksonville, FL, where she provided 1700 hours of direct service within the North Florida community. Here she developed a passion for community health by providing valuable health education classes to schools in northeast FL, hands-on assistance at child safety car seat checks as a CPS Technician, and later responding to COVID-19 through a variety of community-based activities. She is shaping a career focused on reducing health disparities through the use of evidence-based, social determinants of health strategies to improve health equity and advocate for comprehensive health policies.
Georgia Boles was born in Troup County, Georgia. After graduating from high school, she moved to Southwest Atlanta, Georgia. Currently, she is a Student Ambassador at Mercer University in Douglasville, GA. Georgia has 16+ years experience in managing a diverse group of employees. She has a certificate for contact tracing. Georgia's goal is to obtain a BA degree in Healthcare Leadership to become an Ambassador tech and educate others in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Malcolm Cunningham manages the Ebeid Center and the Ebeid Neighborhood Promise, focusing on the UpTown neighborhood in Toledo, Ohio. Both the Center and the Promise initiative aim to improve community health and wellbeing by addressing the upstream social determinants of health. His career to date reflects a few core questions: which interventions, supports, and funding structures are most critical to resilience? What does it take, at scale, to generate upward mobility and build health equity? What does it take, again, at scale, to mitigate the weathering and rapid aging that happen despite mobility and resilience?

It has, admittedly, taken several years to elucidate these questions and determine how to answer them best. This career includes building schools in Malawi, developing youth health education camps in Rwanda, and establishing an urban farm that taught youth with mental illnesses how to grow and prepare organic food. These experiences were personally meaningful and professionally impactful; however, he moved towards population health to engender a macro understanding of soil-level work.

Regardless of where he intervenes, grounding his work in community voice and choice are guiding principles. Malcolm recently helped design a community engagement process that invested $2.8 Million in his childhood neighborhood, redlined in the late 1930s. Malcolm graduated from Ohio State with a BS in Psychology. Malcolm also dabbles in visual art, is a master urban farmer, and enjoys turning all of the things he grows or forages into either a galette or ice cream.
Alexis Grasso is a second-year student at The University of Texas at San Antonio studying Public Health with a concentration of Epidemiology and Disease Control. Alexis works as a Pharmacy Technician applying lessons in public health to ensure her patients are given the correct and adequate health education with their medications. Over the past few months, Alexis worked on one of the first long term care COVID-19 testing teams, implementing public health practices for safe and sound results.

Alexis is a student leader and Board of Directors representative in Texas HOSA- Future Health Professionals and regularly spends time on committees, plans leadership conferences as well as volunteers in health-promotion roles. In her free time, Alexis enjoys spending time with her dog, visiting new coffee shops and makes bouquets as a hobby.
Amari M. Green, MHA is a current Operations Administrative Fellow at Ochsner Health based in New Orleans, Louisiana. Originally from Atlanta, Georgia she received both her Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and her Master of Health Administration from Georgia Southern University. As an administrative fellow, Amari has served as Interim Site Supervisor for Louisiana COVID-19 State Testing/Site Lead for COVID-Vaccine Administration and has been involved in many projects surrounding Community Health Centers, Primary Care Access, and Population Health.

Amari is currently doing micro-rotations within Neuroscience, Women’s Health, Behavioral Health and Oncology to assist in addressing and managing health disparities. She is the current Community Outreach Chair for Ochsner’s Young Professional Association resource group is also an active member of The American College of Healthcare Executive (ACHE) and The National Association of Health Services Executives (NAHSE).

During her time in her MHA program, Amari served as a Health Policy and Management Teaching Assistant/Graduate Research Assistant. After completing her first year of didactic coursework within her graduate program, she attended a residency program at Emory Healthcare as the summer intern for the TEC- Office of Quality and Patient Safety. This project-based administrative residency experience not only solidified Amari’s interest in healthcare administration, but also reaffirmed her passion of improving healthcare delivery systems and processes. In her spare time, Amari enjoys spending quality time with her family and friends, attending festivals, trying new restaurants, and traveling.
Neiger Green-Patrick, MIDP, MBA, MS, is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (Haiti) and health solutions strategist with over 21 years of healthcare delivery expertise in the domestic and international health system markets. Neiger provides strategic advisement and leadership in developing, implementing, and evaluating health delivery models targeted at last-mile patients across the healthcare public health, and global health verticals. For almost a decade, Neiger has focused on improving quality delivery health outcomes through scenario planning and journey mapping of the patient/provider/payer experience by building and managing public and private sector cross-industry teams and aligning strategies with health system/government goals.

Before joining the Wellstar Health System, Neiger served as Senior Portfolio Manager, managing a wide-ranging portfolio of health information technology, customer success, and product development projects in Ebola Virus and Zika Virus affected countries: Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Puerto Rico. Currently, Neiger serves as an Enterprise Consultant (Oncology and Digestive Health Service Lines) for Wellstar Health System, a Board Member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and Executive Director and President of designated.health. designated.health is joining the fight against healthcare disparities by enabling virtual care solutions for vulnerable communities, accounting for their unique obstacles and the many opportunities to improve the care for those often overlooked. Given the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable communities, designated.health has the opportunity to provide a crucial and cost-effective healthcare solution at a time of acute need while also testing and validating a longer-term tool for high-quality remote healthcare delivery.
Jackie Leung, JD, MS is the Executive Director and a Public Health Advocate with the Micronesian Islander Community (MIC). Jackie’s responsibilities include community engagement, outreach, and education including COVID19 wrap around services, developing job training opportunities including healthcare interpreters and community health workers, and working in partnership with an academic nurse at Washington State University focusing on early childhood learning and development. She serves on multiple commissions and organizations including the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, the Asian & Pacific Islander Caucus for Public Health, and is a City Councilor. Jackie is a graduate student at Oregon State University majoring in Public Health – Global Health. In her free time, Jackie enjoys spending time with her family.
Wilson Manigat is clinical coordinator, health research specialist, and entrepreneur. Wilson is a proud graduate of Jackson State University (Bachelor of Science in Biology with a concentration on Pre-Medical studies) and his main areas of interest include community outreach, social justice, cultural humility, as well as diversity and inclusion. Wilson continued his academic advancement at Palm Beach Atlantic & Northcentral University to earn a Master of Science in Psychology with a focus on Mental Health and Marriage & Family Therapy.

Currently, Wilson is a student of the Complex Health Systems MBA program at Nova Southeastern University. Wilson has spent the better part of the last decade advocating and working directly with the underserved and underprivileged populations spanning from Prenatal to the geriatric population. Wilson's focus has always been on the betterment and improvement of the quality of lives for people of color. In 2019, Wilson was selected to serve on the board of West Palm Beach’s Mayor Keith James’s “Neighborhood First” committee. Additionally, in 2019 Wilson was able to present a detailed housing project he created to the State of Florida and its representatives in regard to curving Social Determinants of Health for the elderly population. The program has since been picked up by several long-term care insurance agencies.

While Wilson brings a dynamic background, he is most known for sharing a spirit of compassion and leadership as a native of South Florida. Wilson continues to work diligently within his community to utilize his experiences and expertise to inspire and empower the next generation who will cater even more to the disenfranchised areas of our communities.
Emeobong "Eme" Martin, MPH is the Regional Director for Health Systems with the Alzheimer's Association. In her role, she is responsible for building strategic partnerships with the top 25 healthcare systems and federally qualified health centers throughout the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia through a health equity lens. In addition to regional health system engagement, Eme also leads the partnership strategy with the Veterans Health Administration for the Association. Focusing on timely and early detection, she consults with health systems with customizing practices best suited for their patient populations.

A 2016 recipient of the National Minority Quality Forum’s 40 Under 40 Leader in Health Award, Eme has over a decade of experience working in healthcare organizations, serving in various positions in community health, health equity, and provider education and training at MedStar Health and Adventist HealthCare.
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**Nakesha Powell** is a Health Communications Specialist with the Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention (DHAP) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention where she works on the National Partnership Teams in which she establishes and manages partnerships with local as well as Fortune 500 companies to assist with workplace HIV prevention/education and stigma reduction. She holds dual degrees in Public Administration with an emphasis in public health management and Business Administration.

Powell spends both her days and nights ensuring the manifestation of her personal belief that “everyone deserves access to quality healthcare without regard to income or race.” She is the founder of HER Initiative, a non-profit which serves as a conduit of resources and health information for black women and girls and is a chartering member and former co-chair of the health committee for the National Council of Negro Women Greater Atlanta Section. Powell currently serves as co-chair for the Women’s Caucus Program Planning Committee for the American Public Health Association. She enjoys reading, traveling, and spending quality time with family. On any given day, Nakesha is sure to be somewhere impacting lives through mentoring and other civic engagement. She is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.
Ally Rooker, MPH is a Senior Project Coordinator in the Department of Community Health, Equity and Wellness at Henry Ford Health System in Detroit, Michigan. Ally’s holds a variety of responsibilities spanning administration, evaluation, coordination, and communications for several maternal and infant health initiatives, patient education and health communication projects, and system-wide community health strategies. Ally’s manages the communications of the nationally acclaimed infant mortality prevention program, Women-Inspired Neighborhood (WIN) Network: Detroit, works on the Community Health Worker (CHW) Hub team to integrate CHW’s throughout the system, and she is a key driver of the Community Health Needs Assessment process for the system.

Ally has coordinated Henry Ford’s efforts with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement to co-design solutions to Black maternal mortality alongside Detroit community partners and mothers and has helped lead the design and implementation of unconscious bias & respectful care trainings for all Women’s Health providers at Henry Ford Hospital and its service line. Ally earned her Master of Public Health degree in Health Behavior and Health Education at the University of Michigan School of Public Health and gained experience in sexual and reproductive health before joining Henry Ford Health System.
Frances Santiago-Schwarz, PhD is Professor of Molecular Medicine at the Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell and Professor, Elmezzi Graduate School, Northwell Health. She was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico and attended the University of Puerto Rico, where she obtained a B.S. in biology. She then graduated with a M.S. in Biology/Immunology from New York University and subsequently achieved a doctorate in Molecular Biology/Immunology at the University of Southern California, School of Medicine.

Throughout her career as an educator and biomedical research scientist, Dr. Santiago-Schwarz has been actively engaged in a variety of mentoring, diversity, and international humanitarian initiatives. These include developing a variety of student exchange programs; mentoring programs for trainees at all levels of biomedical education; emergency response relief efforts, and a variety of community outreach and educational programs. As Chair of Global Health Research at the Center for Global Health, Northwell Health, Dr. Santiago-Schwarz brings her collective professional experiences and expertise so as to help promote public health, research, and education in a global and diverse setting. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, her professional activities include a focus on the immunopathology of COVID-19, unraveling novel therapeutic opportunities for COVID-19 and, development of COVID-19 medical-educational alliances, again both locally and internationally. Some examples are: designing and conducting a collaborative on-line research course and mentoring activity featuring New York and Puerto Rican medical students; partnering with diversity-enhancing programs and medical students of color to develop a series of COVID-19 medical-educational workshops aimed at empowering underserved communities and optimizing their use of resources; in partnership with Puerto Rican and Ecuadorian institutions (including public health agencies), orchestrating a series of symposia and lectures focusing onCOVID-19 related education, clinical practicalities, and public health inequities.
Lynn Sherman serves as Director of Community Engagement at Baptist Health, where she leads community benefit initiatives that are designed to identify and address the unmet health needs in the community, set priorities and develop strategies to improve the health and quality of life for families where they live work and play. It includes providing community outreach programs with local faith-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, elder advocacy organizations, community health literacy for health disparities. She has worked in healthcare at Baptist Health for many years.

Mrs. Sherman is a strong community advocate. Under her leadership, the nationally recognized, Tipping the Scale Mentoring Adolescent Advocacy Mentoring Program has touched the lives of more than 1,900 teens and received national recognition. She coordinates the Annual Girls Empowerment Conference that serves more than 300 girls ages 9 – 18. She serves as chair of the Guardian ad Litem’ 4th Circuit, the Friends of Dallas Graham Public Library, and a member of 904ward Group, Inc. She serves as co-chair of the African American DEI Council and the DEI Community Transformation Team at Baptist Health. She’s a member of the local NAACP’s Health Committee. She is a former board member of the Jacksonville Urban League, Changing Homelessness of Northeast Florida, Northside Community Involvement, and Family Support Services of Northeast Florida. She was a recipient of the OneJax Humanitarian Award, Community Connections Celebration of Leadership award, and the Shirley Anderson’s Excellence in Mentoring Award. She was named one of Jacksonville Business Journal’s Health Care Heroes, a Leadership Jacksonville Alum 2011, and selected by the Jacksonville Business Journal as an elite African American Leader.
Kimberly C. Sherrod Barnes is a Program Manager for Charles Drew Health Center – Omaha Healthy Start Program. Her responsibilities involve leading a team focused on decreasing infant mortality, specifically for Black and Brown women. Additional responsibilities include program management, accounting for accurate data related to health disparities, fiscal management of grants, develop programmatic procedures, educational materials, and operational effectiveness reports, performance monitoring and establishing and maintaining collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders and community agencies.

Prior to her current position, Kimberly was a key player in decreasing out of home placements in the North Omaha Community within the Department of Health and Human Services Child Welfare System. This community in Omaha, NE is primarily African American. She serves on the Douglas County Health Department FIMR (Fetal Infant Mortality Review) Team. This team is a diverse group of medical and community experts who review summaries of case information, identify risk and protective factors present in the case, and make recommendations for community change related to Infant Mortality. She also serves on the Department of Health and Human Services Title 5 Steering Committee. Kimberly has a strong passion for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She is a current member of Inclusive Communities, LeadDIVERSITY cohort #2. Her passion is making sure Black and Brown people are at the table to change policies and procedures that directly affect the Black and Brown population. She is a mentor for the Nonprofit Association of the Midlands (NAM) – Rising Leaders Institute, (RLI). She also serves on the curriculum committee. Kimberly is a graduate of Nonprofit Association of the Midlands – Nonprofit Executive Institute, (NEI), class 12. She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Human and Social Service Administration from Bellevue University where she graduated with honors. She is a currently pursuing her Masters of Public Administration at Bellevue University. Kimberly’s hobbies include watching sports, reading, cooking and spending time with her life bonuses, her grandchildren - 3 grandsons and 1 grandprincess.
Joan E. Smith, DNP, MPH(c), APRN, FNP-C is a nurse practitioner with MedStar Washington Hospital Center working as an advance practice provider with responsibilities that include providing preoperative teaching and history taking for patients undergoing surgery, participates in formal and informal teaching to improve patient outcomes, and collaborates with surgeons, anesthesiologists, and pre-surgical team to optimize patient care prior to surgery. Joan is currently a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, National Black Nurses Association, American Public Health Association, and Maryland Responds Medical Reserve Corps. Joan holds a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree from Chatham University, a Master of Science in Nursing from Marymount University and Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Bowie State University. She is currently a graduate student at University of Maryland School of Public Health in Behavioral and Community Health. In her free time, Joan enjoys cooking and spending time with family and friends.
Jordan Stewart is a native of Baton Rouge, LA. She attends Southern University and A&M College. She is currently pursuing her bachelor's degree in social work, with plans to pursue a master's degree in August of 2021. She volunteers as a youth teacher and nursery worker at United Christian Faith Ministries. Through her work, Jordan has gained experience with mentoring youth and discovered her purpose. Jordan plans to be an advocate for at risk youth and the mental/behavioral health of adolescents. She is in her 2nd year of employment at the Louisiana Center for Health Equity as a Youth Development Program Assistant. Her duties include co-hosting and planning a youth violence prevention summer program and coordinating events and programs for at risk youth. Jordan also assists in grant writing, policy research, and record keeping for her job. She is honored and excited to be chosen for this opportunity. Lastly, Jordan believes this journey will be the boost into the next level of impact for the community.

Kayla Stephens is a Senior Laboratory Technician with Savannah River Site with responsibilities that include performing laboratory functions with hands-on remote sampling/characterization of a variety of materials such as solids, liquids and solutions which range from stable to highly radioactive. Kayla is currently a member of the Black Caucus of Health Workers (BCHW), an independent organization, officially affiliated with the American Public Health Association. Kayla holds a bachelor’s degree in Biology from the University of South Carolina-Aiken and an MPH from Purdue Global University. She is currently a doctoral candidate student at Capella University majoring in Public Health. Previously, she was a Public Health Analyst Intern at Georgia Cancer Center in Augusta, GA where she conducted extensive research on chronic disease data to assist with the execution of community health assessments in rural and urban counties of Georgia. In her free time, Kayla likes to travel and spending time with her family and friends.
Warren Thompson is currently a Professor in the Social Work department in the School of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers University-Newark and Community Organizer for Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District. Warren has a rich history of working with marginalized populations and has overseen the overall operations of multiple facilities that provide addiction treatment service, pro-social re-entry programming for individuals returning home from the criminal justice system and emergency shelter for our neighbors without addresses in the greater Newark, NJ area.

Warren's responsibilities have included ensuring that programmatic strategy provides effective evidence informed interventions designed for individual empowerment, promotion of public safety and the minimization of risk for any future criminal and/or anti-social behavior.

Warren has been active on many boards, panel discussions and community interests. He has participated in the NAACP conference; Seton Hall University Law School's Symposium on Reentry; NJ Center of Gun Violence Research conference and Rutgers University School of Social Work's Panel on Social Policy Advocacy. His social activism includes involvement on the U.S. Marshall's Fugitive Safe Surrender Advisory Board, Newark Prisoner Reentry Initiative Advisory Committee, Essex/Union County Reentry Task Forces, Essex County Drug Court Alumni Advisory Committee, Reentry Coalition of New Jersey, Integrated Justice Alliance, Newark Community Collaborative Board, Westfield Community Center Board, Essex County Homeless Trust Fund Board, Rowan University Criminal Justice Advisory Board and the Equal Justice USA Trauma Training for Law Enforcement/Community Committee. Presently, he is also serving as the chair of the Triumph Life Center Board of Directors.

Warren Thompson was raised and currently resides in Westfield, NJ. Warren is an alumnus of Rutgers University where he achieved his Bachelor of Arts and Master degrees from the School of Social Work as an advanced standing student in Non-profit and Public Administration.
Shreya Tripathi, MPH is a Public Health Professional with the New Jersey Department of Health, leading and supervising the contact tracing team to prevent the spread of COVID-19. She is also working with the Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, Division of Nutritional Sciences for Community-based Diabetes Education Program, examining the links between diabetes and healthcare with an emphasis on minority populations. Prior to this Shreya worked as a clinical nutritionist at the prestigious All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, India. She also worked as Adjunct Professor of Applied Nutrition at University of Allahabad, India. Shreya is the recipient of numerous awards and honors for distinguished performances including University Gold Medal for overall best performance, Vice Chancellors Award of Excellence as well as the prestigious 21st Century Public Health Scholar award. Shreya holds a bachelor’s and master’s degree in Nutritional Sciences as well as a second master’s degree in Public Health with Health Systems and Policy major from Rutgers University, New Jersey. Shreya is currently a member of American Public Health Association, The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Indian Dietetic Association. Shreya is a regular practitioner of Sahaja Yoga Meditation. In her free time, Shreya likes to paint, read, travel and explore different cultures.
Michael Austin Walker is a 2020 graduate of Morehouse College where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology (Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude). During his undergraduate years, Michael interned with the Morehouse Healthcare Telemedicine Program where he conducted extensive research on the health status of populations in rural Georgia to ultimately discover those most in need of telemedicine services. Additionally, while at Morehouse College, Michael served over 2,000 hours in areas related to Education, Public Health, and Homelessness in Georgia, South Africa, and the Dominican Republic. Michael is planning to apply to medical school this spring and aspires to become a nephrologist and global public health leader.
Allyson S. Belton, MPH is the Director of Education and Training for the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine. In this role, she is responsible for the content design, delivery, and evaluation of health equity-based leadership training programs for diverse learners, in alignment with the SHLI priority and focus areas (Health Systems Transformation, Political Determinants of Health, and Mental and Behavioral Health).

Additionally, she supports research centered on addressing disparities within underserved communities, examining approaches that extend from the individual to the family, to the community, up to systems and policies. For over a decade, Ms. Belton has worked in various capacities of clinical and social/behavioral research, allowing her to combine her scientific background with her interest in public and population health in order to address the various health disparities that affect diverse populations.

In her professional experience, Ms. Belton has examined areas such as cardiometabolic function in African Americans; primary care linkages in addressing mental and physical health outcomes of underserved populations; psychosocial resilience in African American women; community leadership development; and reducing health disparities within local, national, and international settings. She also holds a passion for educating diverse learners, focusing on leadership development, as well as advancing learners from elementary to college-age through the educational pipeline towards careers in health and medicine and in STEM-driven fields.

Ms. Belton received a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Spelman College and a Master of Public Health with a concentration in Health Promotion and Behavior from Georgia State University. She has long maintained a heart for working with people and her overall goal is to continue working within the public health sector to bring about better awareness towards optimal physical, mental, and emotional health. Her areas of interest are most related to addressing disparate mental health outcomes within communities of color by developing programs and community health initiatives to increase self-awareness of one’s own mental health; by empowering individuals towards improving one’s health through behavioral and lifestyle intervention; and by promoting helpful resources to assist with help-seeking behaviors.

Community Health Leadership Program: 2021 Cohort
Daniel E. Dawes, JD, a widely respected lawyer, author, scholar, educator, and leader in the health equity, health reform, and mental health movements, is director of the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia and a professor of health law, policy and management. He is also the co-founder of the Health Equity Leadership and Exchange Network (HELEN), which is a nationwide network of over 2000 governmental and non-governmental leaders and scholars focused on bolstering leadership and the exchange of research, information, and solutions to advance evidence-based health equity-focused policies and programs.

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

Dawes is an elected fellow of the New York Academy of Medicine and serves or has served on several boards, commissions, and councils focused on improving health outcomes and elevating health equity in the United States and around the world, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Federal Advisory Committee on Health Disparities, National Center for Civil and Human Rights - Health and Human Rights Institute Advisory Committee, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Policies for Action National Advisory Committee, the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health National Advisory Council, the Healthcare Georgia Foundation Board of Directors, the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities Board of Directors, the National League of Cities National Advisory Board, and the Children’s Mental Health Network National Advisory Council.
Nelson J. Dunlap, JD currently serves as the Public Policy Manager at Morehouse School of Medicine where he helps to lead the government relations and health policy initiatives of the institution. Along with this role at Morehouse School of Medicine, Mr. Dunlap also currently serves as the Senior Advisor for Legislative Affairs for the Health Equity Leadership and Exchange Network ("HELEN"). In this position, Mr. Dunlap directs the grassroots efforts of the network as well as oversees any research or reports published by the network. HELEN is a national network designed to bolster leadership and the exchange of ideas and information among communities of color and other vulnerable populations relative to the advancement of health equity in laws, policies, and programs.

While Nelson originally hails from Austin, Texas, he is a current resident of Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Dunlap graduated from Texas Tech University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and received his Juris Doctor from DePaul University College of Law.
David Hefner, EdD comes to Morehouse School of Medicine with more than 15 years of experience in higher education. As Vice President, Dr. Hefner oversees the strategic planning of the entire university. An award-winning journalist and communications professional, Dr. Hefner earned his bachelor’s degree in English from Morehouse College and his master’s degree in Mass Communications from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Dr. Hefner was a journalist and newspaper editor for seven years, earning three Outstanding Journalism Awards. In 1999, Dr. Hefner began his career in higher education, a journey that included positions as media relations coordinator, publications manager, associate vice president, and chief communications officer. In those positions, respectively, he served at a community college, two Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) – Meharry Medical College and Tuskegee University – and Mercer University, where he was the chief communications officer for the Mercer University Health Sciences Center, which includes the colleges of medicine, pharmacy, nursing and health professions. While at Mercer, Dr. Hefner was awarded two regional awards from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) for outstanding brand and communications development, and magazine publications. In his capacity as a senior communications officer, Dr. Hefner has been a chief advisor to presidents, senior vice presidents, and deans.
LaShawn M. Hoffman leads a boutique consultancy focused on smart community development, strategic neighborhood planning, community building and civic engagement, traditional and non-traditional land-use, community-engaged research, and successful, influential non-profit management. LaShawn works with clients to develop measurable indicators and outcomes to evaluate the social impact of their work. Hoffman & Associates aims to help non-profits, community development corporations, academic institutions, and government entities, develop innovative community development plans that improve the lives of all Americans by helping deserving communities one project at a time. The intersection of public health and community development is an important factor in LaShawn’s approach to comprehensive community revitalization and development. LaShawn’s public health leadership is evident through his appointments to local and national taskforce and committees, leading a diverse group of community advocates, academic partners, and agencies in strategies that reduce health disparities and promote partnerships using the community-based participatory research model. LaShawn has spearheaded a wide range of programs focused on community improvement and economic growth. LaShawn has stepped up to facilitate the community-based planning necessary to achieve sound conservation and growth strategies. He has navigated some of the most extreme fallout from the foreclosure crisis and recession to protect vulnerable homeowners and has promoted neighborhood preservation and socio-economic and cultural diversity through housing development, public health, social services, civic engagement, and advocacy. LaShawn is the Chairperson of the Morehouse School of Medicine Prevention Research Center Community Coalition Board. LaShawn was awarded the Loeb Fellowship at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design, class of 2015 for his achievement in community economic development.
Kisha B. Holden, PhD, MSCR is the Poussaint-Satcher Endowed Chair in Mental Health and Associate Director of the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM). Also, at MSM, Dr. Holden is Professor and Director of Research & Scholarship for the Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences; and Professor in the Department of Community Health & Preventive Medicine.

Dr. Holden earned undergraduate, masters, and doctoral degrees from Howard University in counseling psychology, and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Johns Hopkins University in both the School of Medicine and School of Public Health. She earned a Master of Science in Clinical Research degree from MSM. She has completed professional leadership development trainings at Brandeis University, the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), American Psychological Association (APA), and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). Prior to joining MSM, Dr. Holden held positions at Georgetown University, Kennedy Krieger Institute, Urban Health Institute, Children’s National Medical Center, and Evaluation and Research Associates, Inc. Dr. Holden serves on many national, regional, and local boards/committees; she is a reviewer for several academic journals; and she has received professional awards from various organizations and agencies.

She has been awarded millions of dollars in research funding from public and private sources; co-edited two books; developed several book chapters; published numerous articles in peer-reviewed academic journals; and served as a guest co-editor for Ethnicity and Disease and the Journal of Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved. Dr. Holden has provided numerous presentations at international, national, regional, and local professional conferences/meetings/symposiums/forums. Globally, she has studied and/or provided trainings in Greece, Italy, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Spain and various Caribbean countries (St. Lucia, Jamaica, Barbados, Grenada, Cuba, Haiti, & U.S. Virgin Islands).
Helen Holton, PhD, is an intersectional leader in business, public policy, and nonprofit sectors that has dedicated over 21 years of service in civic leadership (elected official) to the Baltimore City Council. She is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Dr. Helen Holton and Associates, a collaborative organization of forward-thinking minds that is committed to deepening engagements for better outcomes. Dr. Holton established this organization with the undergirding belief that investing in your talents, is the key to success.

As an original thought leader, Dr. Holton is a subject matter expert in the power of inclusion, resilience, and respect. She brings authentic truth, beliefs, and perspectives to situations without personal attachment. She speaks to what’s not being said from a sincere space of curiosity and inquisitiveness. The intention is to evoke a deeper level of real, vulnerable, and honest engagement in the work we do with leaders, teams, and organizations. The result is a stronger ROI (Return on Investment) and an optimal IRR (Internal Rate of Return) produced from the investment in human capital to build and strengthen more inclusive, resilient and respectful environments.
Jammie Hopkins, DrPH, MS, MSCR is a health disparities researcher, administrator, and wellness practitioner that is committed to operating at the intersections of policy, research, and practice to promote healthy lifestyles and eliminate health disparities among vulnerable populations. Jammie earned a BS in Exercise Science from University of California, Davis; a MS in Kinesiology from California State University, Fullerton; a Doctor of Public Health degree (DrPH) from the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health; and a MS in Clinical Research from Morehouse School of Medicine. In 2013 he completed a Health Policy Leadership postdoctoral fellowship in the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine.

He is currently staff member within the Satcher Health Leadership Institute and holds a faculty appointment in the Department of Community Health and Preventive Medicine. He also serves as a clinical specialist in the Optimal Health and Wellness Clinic at Morehouse School of Medicine. Dr. Hopkins’ research centers on the dissemination and implementation of “healthy by default” physical activity, healthy eating, and other lifestyle behavioral strategies in various settings (community, workplace, health systems, schools). He is particularly focused on the training and strategic engagement of peer wellness coaches, and improving clinical/organizational/community linkages to physical activity, healthy eating, and stress management assets. He is also a personal fitness trainer and founder of WORK IT OUT Wellness, a wellness consulting business based in Atlanta, GA. Dr. Hopkins currently serves on executive advisory boards for Impulse Group Atlanta and the Yancey/Edgley Fellowship for Health Promotion, Physical Fitness, and Community Health Education.
Kofi A. Kondwani, PhD is an Assistant Professor in the Departments of Community Health and Preventive Medicine and Family Medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia USA. He chairs the Global Health Task Force, instructs in the Faculty Development Program and is the Course Director for the Introduction to Complementary and Alternative Medicine and Cross Cultural Communications in Health courses.

Dr. Kondwani received his Ph.D. in Psychophysiology from Maharishi International University in Fairfield, Iowa. Dr. Kondwani has served as the Transcendental Meditation (TM) treatment provider in four randomized clinical control trials supported by the National Institutes of Health, Department of Defense, and the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine. These research projects have investigated the physiological, psychological, and behavioral effects of meditation on stress, behavior, hypertension and cardiovascular disease primarily in African American populations.

For more than thirty years, Dr. Kondwani has taught Consciously Resting Meditation techniques in academic research settings and as a preventive or treatment strategy in hospitals, health clinics, public and private schools, businesses and prisons. His research includes the effect of meditation on stress, elevated blood pressure, and left ventricular.
Shelia A. McClure, Ph.D. is the Senior Associate Dean for Research Development at Morehouse School of Medicine, a position she has held since 2016. In this role she focuses on cultivating collaborative, extramurally funded research programs through identifying viable funding opportunities that align with institutional strategic goals and expand the research portfolio of the institution. She plays a role in the development and implementation of institutional strategies, policies and procedures related to research development. She also provides technical support and guidance to faculty, students, post-docs and residents in the development of grants, contracts and agreements in support of research at the institution.

Prior to joining the Morehouse School of Medicine, Dr. McClure was a Senior Program Official the National Institutes of Health for 14 years, and most recently served as Chief of the Office of Research Training and Capacity Building in the Division of Scientific Programs at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. During her tenure at the NIH, she provided leadership and guidance in planning, developing, implementing, managing and evaluating research programs designed to: increase and diversify the biomedical research workforce; increase institutional research capacity; increase the efficiency with which scientific advances are translated into improvements in health outcomes particularly in communities most likely to experience health disparities and health inequities; and facilitate collaborations through partnerships and networks.
Monica L. Ponder, PhD, Assistant Professor, Health Communication in the Department of Communication, Culture and Media Studies, Howard University. Dr. Monica L. Ponder is an Assistant Professor of Health Communication in the Department of Communication, Culture & Media Studies, Howard University. As a scholar activist, Dr. Ponder has led many successful public health initiatives including advocating for the establishment of lactation rooms (pods) at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport – the world’s busiest airport, as well as leading plans for lactation support services for the 2017 National Women's March (Washington, DC). As a lifelong learner and practitioner, Dr. Ponder leverages, in her teaching, her 10+ year career in health communication at the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Ponder views the classroom as a safe space and hopes that, through this process, students become aware of their own power as scholar activists, empowered learners, and as emerging public health change-makers. Dr. Ponder holds BS and MS degrees in Chemistry from Clark Atlanta University, a MSPH in Epidemiology from Emory University and a PhD in Communication from Georgia State University.

Dr. Ponder’s research interests are focused on organization-level health and crisis communication practice. The goal of her research is to advance traditional health communication practice from operating solely at the individual level of behavior change into one that centers cultural perspectives and environmental context in its design.

She is the creator of The Henrietta Hypothesis, an interdisciplinary model for crisis communication. It is a 16-construct model aptly named “The Henrietta Hypothesis” in honor of Henrietta Lacks' iconic healthcare case. This scholarship offers crisis communication recommendations for public health and health care organizations seeking to understand, reach, and engage historically marginalized and under-represented groups during public health emergencies.
Ebony Respress, MPH currently serves as an Associate Project Director for the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine. In an effort to advance the mission of health equity for underserved populations, she provides substantive programmatic leadership, consultation, guidance, and assistance to the institute. In addition, Ebony is responsible for planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating program activities to ensure surveillance and epidemiologic program and project success. She also provides advice and assistance in the development and implementation of procedures, methods, and strategies for obtaining and using surveillance, epidemiologic, and programmatic data to describe program processes and outcomes, morbidity and/or mortality, and the results of a surveillance program or project.

Ebony’s academic background is rooted to applied epidemiology; however, she focuses her attention on the social drivers of the inequalities in health regarding underserved populations. Ebony has subsequently pursued her doctoral training in sociology, with a concentration in health. Ebony believes that by examining the social drivers of health outcomes, she can help to improve the overall health of the American people.
Latrice Rollins, PhD, MSW is the Assistant Director of Evaluation and Institutional Assessment at the Morehouse School of Medicine Prevention Research Center. She provides evaluation management and support for academic and community-based programs focused on public health workforce development programs, and reducing health disparities in various areas, including behavioral health and maternal and child health.

She served as a program analyst in the United States Department of Health & Human Services' Office of Inspector General, where she was responsible for leading national evaluations to identify fraud, waste, and abuse of federal resources, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public health and human service programs. In 2013, the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services honored her with an award of distinguished service for her evaluation of CDC’s Vaccines for Children Program. She has also developed publicly available, organization-wide reports for Congress and various Federal and State agencies, and peer-reviewed publications and book chapters. She has given presentations to academic, community, and government audiences, and national media outlets, such as USA Today. Latrice received a Bachelor’s in Sociology from Spelman College and a Master’s and Doctorate in Social Work from the University of Georgia.
Maisha Standifer, PhD, MPH is the Health Policy Director for the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine. She has over 15 years of applied health program administration, evaluation and research expertise, including health policy development and analysis, mixed methods research and examining health disparities and inequalities domestically and globally. Previously, she worked at the James A. Haley Veterans Administration Hospital in Tampa, Florida as a Research Specialist, Program Administrator and Study Investigator for Research and Development Services. Dr. Standifer’s current research advances the science of health information technology and patient-centered care to improve vulnerable veteran populations. Her training as a Medical Anthropologist and public health practitioner has allowed her to apply unique insight within disparate and medically underserved populations. Her research focuses on the intersections between culture, health, and vulnerable communities. Her expertise is in qualitative and quantitative methods, research and evaluation, community engagement, women’s healthcare, along with implementation and health services research.

Dr. Standifer is also an Assistant Professor, and a Co-Investigator on multiple federally funded studies. Her research portfolio furthers production of community-based participatory research to create culturally-tailored interventions that empower disenfranchised populations to make healthy informed decision-making life choices.
**Jareese Stroud, MPH** is a Public Health Specialist with over 17 years in implementing national educational programs and policies to improve vulnerable communities. As the Associate Project Director at the Satcher Health Leadership Institute, she provides direction and oversight for the Community Health Leadership Program (CHLP) and Co-Directorship for the Political Determinants of Health Virtual Learning Laboratory Initiative (PDOH). Both programs train leaders to create actionable steps that alleviate disproportionate outcomes impacting vulnerable populations, by developing responsive strategies utilizing a health equity-focused lens. In addition, Jareese concentrates her research expertise in SHLI’s core areas to include political determinants of health, health system transformation, and mental and behavioral health. Within these sectors, she examines the impact of systemic oppression and challenges minority populations encounter, as a result of not being able to obtain equitable opportunities. Employing the PDOH framework and Community-Based Participatory Research approach, Jareese is able to convene community members and key decision-makers to develop strategies for improving the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. She embodies the SHLI vision to be the leading transformative force for health equity. As public health issues become more complex, Jareese is committed to training diverse leaders to apply innovative/novel approaches in addressing emerging challenges.

A native of Chicago, Illinois, Jareese has lived in Atlanta, Georgia for over 23 years. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication from Morris Brown College and Master of Public Health from the University of New England. She has enjoyed developing her professional repertoire at MSM for over 20 years, where she remains actively engaged in building pathways of success for vulnerable communities to not only survive but thrive.
**Mahia Valle, BSBA** is the Senior Communications Specialist for the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine. Ms. Valle has over seven years of healthcare administration experience and more recently four years of experience working in the higher education field as a digital marketer and recruiter. In her current role, Mahia was tasked with strategically revitalizing the SHLI brand, which includes the logo, website, newsletter, videos, and social media presence from the ground up. Furthermore, she works on various projects with external partners and collaborators as the communications point person for the department. In addition, she manages communications for the Health Equity Leadership & Exchange Network (HELEN).

Born in the Dominican Republic and raised in New York City, Mahia is a graduate of Franklin Pierce College in New Hampshire and is in her final semester of her MBA in Complex Health Systems with NSU Florida.
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