

# Maryland's Eighth Annual Statewide Minority Health Disparities Conference - *Maryland's Health Workforce: Promoting Diversity and Strengthening the Pipeline*

October 4, 2011

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

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### Lieutenant Governor Anthony G. Brown

Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown has dedicated his professional life to public service. Elected alongside Governor Martin O'Malley in 2006 and reelected in 2010, Lt. Governor Brown leads the O'Malley-Brown administration's work to expand and improve health care, support economic development, help victims of domestic violence, increase access to higher education, and provide Veterans with better services and resources. Prior to serving as Lt. Governor, Anthony Brown represented Prince George's County for two terms in the Maryland House of Delegates, rising quickly to the position of Majority Whip. A Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves, Anthony Brown is the nation's highest-ranking elected official to have served a tour of duty in Iraq. Anthony is a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School and the proud father of two children – Rebecca (16) and Jonathan (11). He lives in Prince George's County.

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### Joshua M. Sharfstein, MD

Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein was appointed by Governor Martin O'Malley as Secretary of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in January 2011. In March 2009, President Obama appointed Dr. Sharfstein to serve as the Principal Deputy Commissioner of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the agency's second highest-ranking position. He served as the Acting Commissioner from March 2009 through May 2009 and as Principal Deputy Commissioner through January 2011. From December 2005 through March 2009, Dr. Sharfstein served as the Commissioner of Health for the City of Baltimore, Maryland. In this position, he led efforts to expand literacy efforts in pediatric primary care, facilitate the transition to Medicare Part D for disabled adults, engage college students in public health activities, increase influenza vaccination of

healthcare workers, and expand access to effective treatment for opioid addiction. Under his leadership, the Baltimore Health Department and its affiliated agencies have won multiple national awards for innovative programs, and in 2008, Dr. Sharfstein was named Public Official of the Year by *Governing Magazine*. From July 2001 to December 2005, Dr. Sharfstein served as minority professional staff of the Government Reform Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives for Congressman Henry A. Waxman. Dr. Sharfstein is a 1991 graduate of Harvard College, a 1996 graduate of Harvard Medical School, a 1999 graduate of the combined residency program in pediatrics at Boston Children's Hospital and Boston Medical Center, and a 2001 graduate of the fellowship in general pediatrics at the Boston University School of Medicine.

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### Garth N. Graham, MD, MPH

Dr. Garth N. Graham, MD, MPH, FACP is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health in the Office of Minority Health at the Department of Health and Human Services. The Office of Minority Health develops and coordinates Federal health policy that addresses minority health concerns and ensures that Federal, State and local health programs take into account the needs of disadvantaged, racial and ethnic populations. He was previously appointed a White House Fellow and special assistant to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. He founded the Boston Men's Cardiovascular Health Project, a project designed to identify behavioral explanations for decreased adherence to adequate diet and exercise by African American men. Dr. Graham was the Founding Senior Editorial Board Member of the *Yale Journal of Health, Law, Policy, and Ethics*, served on the Editorial Board of the *Yale Journal of Biology and Science*, *Public Health Reports* and a number of other guest editorial boards. He also served on the Public Health Executive Council of the Massachusetts Medical Society and the Board of Directors of Physicians for Human Rights. He is currently on the faculty of Harvard Medical School where he trained in Internal Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital and served as a visiting scientist at the Harvard School of Public Health. He has authored scientific articles and presentations on cardiovascular disease, HIV/AIDS and community medicine. Dr. Graham earned an M.D. from the Yale School of Medicine, where he graduated cum laude. He was inducted into the Alpha Omega

Alpha medical honor society and named a Yale President Public Service Fellow. He also earned an M.P.H. from the Yale School of Epidemiology and Public Health with a focus in health policy administration. Board Certified in Internal Medicine he is also a Fellow of the American College of Physicians. The *Business Network Journal* also named him one of the Forty Leaders Under Forty and *Modern Healthcare Magazine* named him one of the "Top 25 Minority Executives in Healthcare."



### **Carlessia A. Hussein, RN, DrPH**

Dr. Hussein is the director of the Maryland State Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (MHHD), a position she has held since 2004. The MHHD is established in state statute with the charge to promote the reduction of ethnic and racial health disparities in Maryland. She participates on a 2011 Maryland Disparities Workgroup charged with developing actions to reduce health care delivery system disparities. Dr. Hussein oversees development of the "Maryland Health Disparities Plan" and the "State Health Disparities Data Chartbook. The Chartbook presents minority health and health disparities trends and progress in disease-specific Black vs. White Disparity reduction. Her office funds health disparities demonstration projects in 24 jurisdictions throughout the State. Her Maryland experience includes administration of the Tobacco Settlement Funds from 2000 through 2010. She was elected President of the National Association of State Offices of Minority Health (NASOMH) in February 2011.



### **Robert S. Gold, PhD, DrPH, FASHA, FAAHB**

Robert S. Gold is Founding Dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Maryland, College Park. He also serves as Professor in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health and founding Director of the Public Health Informatics Research Laboratory. Along with his 40 years experience in public health, Dr. Gold is nationally recognized as an expert in the application of advanced communications technologies to health education, ranging from interactive video and computer software, particularly for minority and other underserved audiences, to knowledge management, decision support, and expert systems technology. In addition, Dr. Gold has extensive training and experience in health-related research and evaluation for which he has received national awards. He has served in both public and private sector positions and has been responsible for planning, directing, and evaluating local through international programs. Dr. Gold's previous positions have included Vice President at ORC Macro International where he directed the Applied Human

Technologies Division, the principal component of the organization responsible for public health technology development; Director of the Prevention Policy Branch in the U.S. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and Representative for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Dr. Gold is an elected Fellow of both the American Academy of Health Behavior and the American School Health Association. He has received the Honor Award, the highest award of the national health education honorary association, Eta Sigma Gamma, and the John P. McGovern Medal for Distinguished Contributions to Health Education from the American School Health Association. In 2002 he was inducted into the Health Education Hall of Fame, and is currently President Elect of the Society for Public Health Education. He has published more than 10 books and 100 refereed journal articles. Dr. Gold earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and his Master of Science degree in Health Education from the State University of New York (SUNY) at Brockport, his PhD in Health Education with major emphases in computer science and research design from the University of Oregon, and his DrPH in Community Health Practice with major areas of study in epidemiology from the University of Texas Health Science Center, School of Public Health in Houston, Texas.



### **Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam**

Delegate Shirley Nathan-Pulliam has been a member of the Maryland House of Delegates since 1994 and represents District 10. She is the first Caribbean-born person and first Afro-Caribbean American Registered Nurse elected to the Maryland General Assembly. Delegate Nathan-Pulliam worked for many years as a quality assurance coordinator, head nurse and team leader at hospitals in Baltimore and currently owns and operates two health care companies that provide personal care services to clients in their homes and adult medical daycare services for the elderly and disabled. She has been a leading advocate for improved health care and health disparities reduction in Maryland. Delegate Nathan-Pulliam has sponsored hundreds of bills, including legislation creating the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities within the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She currently serves on several committees, including the Health and Government Operations Committee, Minority Health Disparities Subcommittee, Joint Committee on Health Care Delivery and Financing, and Maryland Medicaid Advisory Committee. Delegate Nathan-Pulliam holds an AA from Baltimore City

Community College, a BSN from the University of Maryland and a Masters in Administrative Science from The Johns Hopkins University, Carey Business School.

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### **Stephen B. Thomas, PhD**



Southern Illinois University in Carbondale.

Stephen B. Thomas, Ph.D. is professor of Health Services Administration in the School of Public Health and Director of the University of Maryland Center for Health Equity at the University of Maryland in College Park. One of the nation's leading scholars in the effort to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities, Dr. Thomas has applied his expertise to address a variety of conditions from which minorities generally face far poorer outcomes, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity and HIV/AIDS. He is principal investigator of the Research Center of Excellence on Minority Health Disparities, funded by the NIH-National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. He is also principal investigator, with Dr. Sandra Quinn, of the NIH National Bioethics Infrastructure Initiative: Building Trust Between Minorities and Researchers awarded in 2009. After completing his undergraduate degree in school health education at The Ohio State University, Dr. Thomas went on to earn his master's degree in health education at Illinois State University and later earned his doctorate in community health education from

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### **Sandra Crouse Quinn, PhD**



Investigator on a CDC funded national longitudinal study of public attitudes toward H1N1. Previously, she was the Principal Investigator on a CDC funded study on communication between postal workers and public health professionals during the 2001 anthrax attack. Her research interests include engagement of minority and marginalized communities in research; community advisory boards; and risk communication in emergencies and disasters with a specific focus on minority populations. Dr. Quinn recently served as the guest editor of a theme issue on emergency risk communication and pandemic influenza for the journal, *Health Promotion Practice*. Her research interests include engagement of minority and marginalized communities in research; community advisory boards; and risk communication in emergencies and disasters, with a particular focus on the implications for minority communities. Dr. Quinn received her PhD in Health Education from the University of Maryland. Prior to her doctoral work, she worked in mental health and substance abuse treatment in two local health departments in Maryland.

Dr. Quinn is the Associate Dean for Public Health Initiatives, Professor in the Department of Family Science, and Senior Associate Director of the Center for Health Equity at the School of Public Health, University of Maryland at College Park. She is the Principal Investigator on Building Trust between Minorities and Researchers: A Bioethics Research Infrastructure Initiative funded by the National Institute for Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), NIH and co-Principal Investigator on the Research Center of Excellence in Minority Health Disparities, also funded by NIMHD. Prior to her move to the University of Maryland in fall 2010, she was the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and Education (2002-2010) and Professor at the Graduate School of Public Health, University of Maryland. From 2008-2010, she was the Co-Principal Investigator on a 5 year, CDC funded Preparedness and Emergency Response Research Center, Public Health Adaptive Systems Studies, which focuses on public health systems' capacities to respond to disasters and emergencies. From 2009-2010, Dr. Quinn was the Principal

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### **LaToya M. White, MPH**



Health Leads, LaToya worked with Healthy Carolinians, an office of the North Carolina Department of Health that works to reduce health disparities by supporting community partnerships that address issues such as access to quality care, chronic illness, and child healthcare. In 2003 LaToya joined AmeriCorps, serving for two years with the National Aids Fund. During her service, she organized community HIV testing and political advocacy efforts for HIV/AIDS awareness and comprehensive sex education, and managed a teen peer educator group focused on HIV/AIDS education and prevention among youth. In her time with Health Leads, LaToya has grown the Washington, DC program's reach threefold, to serving nearly 1,000 low-income families annually in the National Capitol Region. She oversees a cohort of 80 undergraduate volunteers at her site and has recently expanded the program to the University of Maryland. Believing firmly in the power of volunteerism, LaToya has launched a variety of learning opportunities for student volunteers in addition to the family advocacy role at the Health Leads Desk, including the Resource Team doing community outreach to identify resource opportunities for families, a health care professionals shadowing program at Children's National Medical Center's community health centers, and an internship program for graduate students.

LaToya White is the Executive Director for Health Leads Washington, DC. She joined the organization in 2007 with a public health background in HIV/AIDS, community and minority health, social justice, and health disparities. While earning her Master's in Public Health from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, LaToya focused her work on the sexual health of African American college students, researching the social and environmental factors that contribute to attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors concerning sex. She also chaired UNC's annual Minority Health Conference in 2007, "AIDS at 25: It's Time to Deliver". The conference brought together top researchers, community leaders, and advocates to discuss the effects of HIV/AIDS among minority communities in the United States. Prior to joining



### **Alison Page, MSW, LICSW**

Alison Page serves as the Social Worker for the Children's Health Center at Children's National Medical Center. In this capacity, she provides case management services for medically at-risk children and their families, provides community resources and information, and coordinates multi agency services for families. Prior to her work at Children's National Medical Center, Alison spent six years working as a Child Life Specialist. Alison has her Masters in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University and a graduate certificate in Non-profit Management from George Mason University.

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### **Ryan Elza**



Ryan Elza, a Junior at the University of Maryland, is a triple major in Anthropology, Italian, and Classics. He aspires to obtain his doctorate in classical archaeology and one day become a professor of archaeology. He first came to Health Leads during the fall semester of his sophomore year. Immediately excited by the program's impact, that same semester he laid down the foundations for what was to become the University of Maryland College Park Chapter of Health Leads. Over the past year he has worked closely with LaToya White, Executive Director of Health Leads DC, as well as professors in the School of Public Health, and the Honors College, College Park Scholars, and Federal Semester programs, preparing for the official launch of the chapter during the Fall 2011 semester. Ryan grew up in a small rural community of Carroll County, Maryland. He first heard about the organization from a friend who had been volunteering with the organization at the George Washington University. He was initially drawn to Health Leads because of their work with low-income families and people of a culturally diverse background, as well as their initiative to change the way health care is delivered, having been exposed to the flaws of the health care system at a very young age. He is driven by the struggles he has faced as a member of a low-income family and the prevailing poor health of his sister.

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### **Norma I. Poll-Hunter, PhD**

Norma I. Poll-Hunter, Ph.D., is Director of the Human Capital Portfolio within Diversity Policy and Programs (DPP) at the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). In this role, Dr. Poll-Hunter leads a portfolio of career development programs and initiatives with a focus on diversity and inclusion across the medical education continuum starting at the early stages of the premedical pipeline to professional development for faculty. She serves as the Co-Deputy Director for the Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP), a national pipeline program to increase diversity in medicine and dentistry. She also leads initiatives focused on cultural competence in medical education, and research and evaluation projects related to pipeline programs and diversity in the health care workforce. Her research interests are in the area of the career development of racial and ethnic minorities, cultural competence, and diversity in the health professions. Prior to the AAMC, Dr. Poll-Hunter practiced as a psychologist at a regional hospital in Upstate New York. Following receipt of her B.A. from Lehman College, City University of New York, Dr. Poll-Hunter attended the University of Albany, SUNY, where she earned her Ph.D. in counseling psychology.



### **Angela D. Anderson, MA, RT**

Angela D. Anderson is the Dean of Health Sciences at Prince George's Community College. Prior positions at PGCC include Chair of the Allied Health Department and Radiography Program Director. Ms. Anderson's educational background includes an undergraduate degree from Thomas Jefferson University and a graduate degree from George Washington University. She has over 20 years of experience in health sciences education and administration.

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### **Carol D. Eustis, MEd**

Carol D. Eustis is the Dean of the School of Health Professions at the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) Essex Campus. She has served in various academic and leadership capacities at CCBC for more than 40 years. Ms. Eustis's other professional activities include Board Membership on the Governor's Workforce Investment Board, the Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare, and the "Who Will Care?" Initiative. She is also an active member of the National Network of Health Career Programs in Two-Year Colleges, the National Council of Instructional Administrators, and the Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions. Ms. Eustis received a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. She holds a Master of Community Health and a Master of Education degree from Towson University.

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### **Allan Noonan, MD, MPH**



Dr. Allan Noonan is the Dean of the School of Community Health and Policy at Morgan State University. The school includes an accredited public health program which has graduated students at the Masters and Doctoral level for several years; an accredited undergraduate nutritional sciences program; and a recently implemented nursing program with bachelors and masters level students. In this role he is leading the effort to build the first accredited 'School of Public Health' at a Historically Black University. Prior to coming to Morgan, Dr. Noonan served as a senior advisor in the Office of the Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS). He has been a proactive public health professional for more than thirty years, working as a developer and implementator of public health programs at the local, state, national, and international level, and retired as a rear admiral from the USPHS. He has worked in epidemiology, maternal and child health, public health administration, and the training of health professionals – always mindful of strategies to improve the health status of the underserved. He has served as the Secretary of Health for the state of Pennsylvania; The Regional Health Administrator responsible for the public health service programs in six Midwestern states; and the Director of the Department of Health in the District of Columbia. Throughout his career, Dr. Noonan has played key roles in efforts to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes.

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### **Marcella A. Copes, PhD, RN**



Marcella A. Copes, Ph.D., R.N. Dean and Professor, Helene Fuld School of Nursing, Coppin State University has been the academic leader and directed or supervised undergraduate (BSN and RN to BSN), graduate (Family Nurse Practitioner and post masters certificate), allied health programs (Health Information Management) and a community nurse managed clinic for more than 25 years. As a health care advocate she has conducted research in the areas of parenting and social support and the relationship between economics, the environment and obesity since 1980. Since 2000 Dr. Copes has received funding continuously to increase the number of minorities in nursing and to support student, faculty and curriculum development. A graduate of the University of Delaware she has been instrumental in the development of community-university partnerships and leveraging these partnerships to create funding streams for resources to support academic programs. Dr. Copes, who is nationally recognized for her leadership and

achievements in the areas of development, recruitment and curriculum revisions, serves on several boards including Maryland General Hospital Board of Directors, and Wayland Baptist Church Community Development Corporation. She has been the architect and driver in building the capacity and infrastructure of the Helene Fuld School of Nursing by increasing undergraduate and graduate enrollment. As Dean for the School of Nursing, Dr. Copes is implementing the State of Maryland and region's sole baccalaureate Health Information Management program. In addition to her professional commitments, Dr. Copes is a mentor to teenage single mothers in the community to assist them in acquiring the knowledge, skills and abilities to be the best mother they can be. She also assists them in continuing formal education and work opportunities to provide optimal environments for their child (ren). During her time as Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Coppin State University, Dr. Copes developed programs that not only gave a voice to student concerns but addressed them in a way to guarantee success. Despite her busy and sometimes challenge schedule as a academician, community leader and mother, Dr. Copes devoted time to meet with young women on campus to inspire and encourage them to achieve their goals. Dr. Copes has secured funds to empower underserved students to continue in their education. She has covered the cost for tuition, books and has even ensured that personal bills, such as utilities, are paid so that students are able to focus on their education. She has received numerous awards and honors including Who's Who in Nursing and Health Care in 2002, and 100 Extraordinary Nurses, Sigma Theta Tau, Gama Beta Chapter in 1996. On May 11, 2009 Dr. Copes was recognized as one of Maryland's Top 100 Women for 2009.



### **Kieth Plowden, PhD, CRNP-PMH**

Dr. Keith Plowden is Department Chairman of Nursing at Bowie State University. Dr. Plowden has maintained a commitment to community services through practice and research. He has received funding from several federal agencies to conduct research with hard to reach individuals, specifically urban African American men. His first study, funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research, studied the health seeking behaviors of urban African American Men. This study led to being funded in the area of HIV/substance abuse prevention and prostate cancer prevention intervention in urban men. With his research, he has proven the African American men are not hard to reach but a misunderstood group who are hardly reached and has worked to change the image of urban African American men. Through his work, he identified a need to address mental health issues among urban individuals and received a post master's certificate as a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. In this role, he has focused his practice on incarcerated individuals with the goal of reducing recidivism rates among urban African American men. Additionally, he continues to practice as a Nurse Practitioner in the area of acute psychiatry. Through his work, Dr. Plowden has mentored hundreds of students in the area of urban health research, clinical practice, and policy. Through his mentoring, his work continues to impact individuals in nursing as well as other disciplines.



### **Monica McCann, MA, MPH**

Monica McCann, MA, MPH is the Workforce Diversity Director for the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (MHHD), Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. She is responsible for managing MHHD's initiatives aimed at increasing the diversity and cultural competency of health professionals in the state of Maryland. Previously, Ms. McCann was employed by a national healthcare labor union where she served as a policy analyst focusing on health disparities as well as issues affecting long-term care service providers, the senior population, and persons with disabilities. She also served as a program analyst at the University of California, Los Angeles Center for Research, Education, Training and Strategic Communication on Minority Health Disparities. While

there she co-wrote a white paper that proposed the development of university-wide certificate program in health disparities. Ms. McCann is a graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles with a Master of Public Health degree in Health Policy and Management and a Master of Arts in African Studies. She received a Bachelor of Arts in International and Comparative Studies from the University of Miami, Florida.



### **Bonnie Braun, PhD**

Bonnie Braun, Ph.D. is a Professor in the Department of Family Science and Extension Family Policy Specialist for the University of Maryland Extension. Between 2008 and 2011, she served as the first Herschel S. Horowitz Endowed Chair and Director of the Center for Health Literacy and continues to serve as a Faculty Scholar. The Center is located in the University of Maryland-College Park School of Public Health. Dr. Braun is currently working on an NIH grant with colleagues at the University of Maryland and UCLA Dental Schools to assess oral health literacy as a formative stage in refining dental student education. For two years, she's focused on core health message creation and dissemination among rural, low-income mothers in 14 states to better understand the conditions under which these mothers will respond to the messages by taking action to improve their health or that of their children. She and Dr. Olivia Carter-Pokras are working with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to create an integrated cultural and health literacy competency teaching resource for preparation or continuing education of health professionals. More information about Dr. Braun and the Horowitz Center available at:

<http://www.sph.umd.edu/fmsc/people/SchoolofPublicHealthUMDDepartmentofFamilyScienceB.Braun.htm> and

<http://www.sph.umd.edu/literacy/>



### **Olivia Carter-Pokras, PhD**

Olivia Carter-Pokras, Ph.D., Associate Professor in Epidemiology at the University of Maryland College Park-School of Public Health, has conducted health disparities research in the Federal government and academia for 3 decades. The previous Director of the Division of Policy and Data in the DHHS Office of Minority Health; Dr. Carter-Pokras has been recognized by the Governor of Maryland, Surgeon General, Assistant Secretary for Health, and Latino Caucus of the American Public Health Association for her career achievements to improve Latino health care quality, and racial and ethnic data. Her research has played a critical role in national recognition of health disparities experienced by Latinos. Dr. Carter-Pokras is the Principal Investigator for a NIH/NCMHD conference grant to support an annual meeting of the National Consortium for Multicultural Education for Health Professionals, and a NIH/NICHD R21 grant to study Oral Health of Latino and Ethiopian Children and Their Mothers. She conducts health assessments of Latinos in Maryland and the District of Columbia in close partnership with local government and community based organizations, and is the research

director for the CDC-funded University of Maryland Prevention Research Center. Dr. Carter-Pokras has published more than 52 peer-reviewed journal articles, 12 book chapters, 1 book and 8 reports which have been cited over 1050 times. Recognized areas of expertise according to BiomedExperts include Hispanic Americans, Socioeconomic Factors, Health Services Accessibility, Health Surveys, Health Status Disparities, and Communication Barriers. Dr. Carter-Pokras is an elected fellow of the American College of Epidemiology, and serves on the Policy Committee of the American College of Epidemiology, the Education Board of the American Public Health Association, and the Institute of Medicine's Committee on Advancing Pain Research, Care, and Education. Dr. Carter-Pokras lectures on epidemiologic methods, chronic disease epidemiology, cultural competency and health disparities to public health, dental and medical students.

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### **Lavanya Vasudevan, PhD**

Lavanya Vasudevan is a graduate student in the Masters of Public Health program at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (BSPH). She is a cell biologist by training and received her Ph.D. in Biochemistry, Molecular and Cell Biology from Cornell University. Prior to attending BSPH, she worked as a postdoctoral scholar at the University of California, San Francisco, studying the molecular pathways in cancer. Lavanya is the recipient of two travel awards from international molecular and cell biology societies as well as the Young Investigator award from the Department of Molecular Medicine at Cornell for her Ph.D. dissertation research. Lavanya became interested in public health during a volunteer experience in Ghana where she helped implement a mobile phone-assisted cardiovascular teaching tool to help health workers in rural clinics to diagnose and treat patients with hypertension. She is currently working to develop a mobile vaccination database in

Bangladesh in collaboration with her advisor at BSPH, Dr. Alain Labrique. Lavanya is also one of the student coordinators for the newly launched Global mHealth Initiative (Gml) at Johns Hopkins University. Lavanya has strong interests in applying mHealth tools for chronic disease prevention and management as well as for epidemiologic surveillance in the future.

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### **Jacqueline Yvonne Higgins**



Jacqueline Higgins currently serves as a Medicaid Health IT Specialist for CMS/Center for Medicaid, CHIP, Survey and Certification. In her role she is responsible for Communication and Outreach for the Medicaid EHR Incentive Program. Prior to joining CMS, Jacqueline worked as a Health Communications Specialist on the 2009 H1N1 pandemic response and seasonal influenza campaign at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia. Prior to the CDC, Jacqueline spent several years in the pharmaceuticals industry where she served as a sales professional, marketing product manager and medical education specialist in bone metabolism (osteoporosis), CNS, cardiovascular, rheumatology and oncology disease states. Jacqueline was born and raised in Jamaica, West Indies and moved to the New Jersey where she attended and graduated from Rutgers University.

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### Miryam C. Gerdine, MPH



Ms. Miryam C. Gerdine is a Public Health Analyst in the Office of Health IT and Quality (OHITQ) within the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA). She is the HRSA Government Task Lead on the congressionally mandated report on "Understanding the Impact of Health Information Technology in Underserved Communities and those with Health Disparities." Before, joining HRSA Miryam was at the Office of Minority Health (OMH), Division of Policy and Data. In her five years at OMH, her responsibilities included staffing several HHS committees such as the HHS Health Information Technology and Underserved Populations workgroup, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Healthcare Reports Interagency workgroup, the National Center for Vital and Health Statistics (NCVHS) Subcommittee on Populations, the Women's Health Coordinating Committee and several of the Healthy People workgroups, including the Health Communications and HIT, Family Planning and the Adolescent Health workgroups. Miryam's first HIT project was in 2005, when OMH and AHRQ co-sponsored the Roundtable on Health Information Technology and Health

Disparities for Limited English Proficiency and Low Literacy Populations. Miryam was also the OMH lead staff for the National Health Information Technology Collaborative for the Underserved, being implemented by OMH grantee, SHIRE; which was launched in June of 2008. Miryam also provided technical assistance on the NCVHS publication "Eliminating Health Disparities: Strengthening Data on Race, Ethnicity, and Primary Language in the United States". Miryam has also worked on the last six AHRQ National Healthcare Disparities Reports. Miryam also staffed the OMH leadership on the National Partnership for Action to End Health Disparities initiative. Miryam's career at Health and Human Services (HHS) began in 1996, with the support of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI). She was selected the Edward Roybal Public Health Fellow and her placement was the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP). Miryam has been working at HHS for the last 15 years. Prior to moving to DC, Miryam was a graduate student in Social Work at Boston University. She is a 1993 graduate of the Pennsylvania State University (PSU). While at PSU, she was the recipient of the PSU Hispanic for Academic Progress Scholarship and the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund. She is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and has completed the Certificate in Health Disparities and Health Inequalities. In the Fall 2009, Miryam was asked to serve as an Advisor to the Hopkins Center for Health Disparities Solutions and was elected President of the American Public Health Association (APHA), Latino Caucus for Public Health. She has been an APHA member since 1996 and has had previous leadership roles within the Latino Caucus and APHA.

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### Damon L. Davis



Damon Davis serves as Special Assistant in the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT. He joined the department in 2009. Mr. Davis works on the Consumer eHealth program to educate individuals about the benefits of health IT focusing on innovative approaches to engage consumers in their own health. Formerly he led several communications and strategic coordination efforts for ONC's grant programs including Regional Extension Centers, Beacon Communities, State Health Information Exchange, Workforce Development, SHARP, and the Innovations efforts of the office. He is also the lead for special projects that highlight advances in health IT adoption, meaningful use, and healthcare innovations. Projects vary widely from each of the ONC grant programs, to the Direct Project, CONNECT, and collaborations with external stakeholders. In this capacity he cultivates relationships with operational and staff divisions within the department as well as with external stakeholders. In collaboration with ONC's health disparities work group, Mr. Davis is responsible for special projects that focus on minority groups in order to make sure that health IT advancements are shared with equal opportunities for all health care providers, patients, and health IT professionals. Prior to his work with ONC, Mr. Davis consulted on private sector projects and

government contracts for nearly 15 years with a focus on software system testing, management, and implementation. In the private sector these included serving a variety of domestic and international clients dealing with computer system modernization for major telecommunications providers. In the government space clients included Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS) the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and the Dept. of Defense (DOD). Mr. Davis holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Hampton University and a Masters of Business Administration from Loyola College of Maryland.



### **Dwyan Y. Monroe, BA**

Since January 2011, Ms. Dwyan Y. Monroe has taken her more than 17 years' experience as a Community Health Worker into a Community Health Outreach Advocate/Consultant working with organizations such as Baltimore Healthy Start, the International Society of Hypertension in Blacks, and Common Health Action providing program development, training, and research experience in Baltimore City and Washington, DC. Before venturing into consulting, she was appointed Community Health Liaison for a pharmaceutical supported program called the Community Health Partnership (CHP); a Baltimore Citywide program that developed partnerships among healthcare providers, community and faith-based organizations and patients in an effort to decrease healthcare disparities. Ms. Monroe has continued to facilitate the Community Health Action Team of Baltimore; an outreach coalition that encourages health resource networking, supports quality health initiatives by providing health

presentations and programs and promotes health policy that will encourage equal access for all. In 1997 she began her career to become a Community Health Interventionist and Project Coordinator of community-health programs addressing chronic diseases such as hypertension and cardiovascular disease at the Johns Hopkins University's Schools of Medicine and Nursing in Baltimore, Maryland. In 2006 she was appointed the Director of the New Jersey Community Health Worker Institute, A statewide HRSA funded initiative of the New Jersey Area Health Education Center, an affiliate program of UMDNJ-School of Medicine. While working as a Community Health Worker in Maryland she became the president and co-founder of the Community Outreach Workers Association of Maryland, Inc. (COWAM). COWAM was formed to maximize the legitimacy of outreach workers in Maryland. As a result Ms. Monroe has been involved with national CHW movements to recognize, train and professionalize CHWs through the Center for Sustainable Health Outreach, a joint initiative with the University of Mississippi and Georgetown School of Law, the American Public Health Association's CHW Section, and through an active role of the newly formed American Association of Community Health Workers( AACHW). Ms. Monroe is a graduate of Hampton University, Hampton, Va. with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

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### **Perry Chan**



Perry Chan is the Senior Program Coordinator for the Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) of Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services in Maryland. Mr. Chan is responsible for AAHI's day to day operation. His duties include planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of all health programs and services under AAHI. Perry also provides assistance on budget management, grant monitoring, and other administrative and management related tasks of AAHI. Mr. Chan is a workgroup participant of Equity and Social Justice and Quality Service Reviews - department-wide initiatives. Mr. Chan has a strong interest in promoting health among Asian Americans and reducing health disparities. Perry received his Bachelor's of Science degree in Community Health from the University of Maryland. Currently, Perry chairs the NIAMS Multicultural Initiative's AAPI workgroup and serves as an advisory board member for the Adventist Healthcare's Center on Health

Disparities and the National Children's Study (NCS) in Montgomery County, MD.

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### **Sonia E. Mora, MPH**



Sonia Mora is the Administrator of the Suburban Maryland Welcome Back Center, one of ten Centers across the country assisting internationally trained health professionals to reincorporate into the health field and a recipient of the prestigious E Pluribus Unum award of the Migration Policy Institute. The Center is part of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services where Sonia also serves as the Manager of the Latino Health Initiative. For the past twenty years, Sonia has been a leader working with racial/ethnic minority communities on numerous cutting-edge health issues in the areas of workforce development; access to health services; health promotion; data collection analysis, and reporting; and policy development. Sonia has successfully provided services in several areas related to health disparities and has provided technical consultation to community-based organizations in the development, implementation, and evaluation of culturally and linguistically appropriate programs serving Latino communities. She has also served as technical consultant to numerous national and international organizations in the

development, adaptation, and translation of health education materials for Spanish-speaking audiences. Sonia received a bachelor's degree in Health Sciences from Marymount University and a Master in Public Health from Walden University. She is currently the Chair of the Health Committee for Governor O'Malley's Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

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### **Gloria Lawlah**



Gloria G. Lawlah former State Senator of Maryland continues to serve the State of Maryland after 20 years of dedicated service in Annapolis. A native of Newberry, South Carolina, Secretary Lawlah was appointed Secretary for the Maryland Department of Aging in February of 2007 by Governor Martin O'Malley. A graduate of Hampton University and Trinity College, her career in public service started with teaching in the D.C. Public Schools for 30 years where she rose to the rank of Administrator with the D.C. Public Schools Central Office. Secretary Lawlah served as a member of the Maryland House of Delegates from January 1987 until January 1991, representing District 26 in Prince George's County. She was elected State Senator in November of 1990 and was appointed to the Maryland Commission on Aging in 2002. Her legislative prowess and leadership are legendary. From public safety to health and education; Secretary Lawlah has left her mark on some of the most far reaching legislation that the State of Maryland has seen in its long history. College financing, environmental affairs, redistricting, emergency medical response, legislative prayer and transportation are just a few of the issues she has tackled as a public servant as well as serving with distinction in the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland as Vice Chair, President of the Women Legislators of Maryland Foundation, Inc., and the Statewide Empowerment Zones for Seniors Commission where she served as chairperson. She is currently serving on the Executive Board as Secretary of the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities and President of the White Rose Foundation, Inc. A recipient of many awards and honors, she most recently received the Phenomenal Women Community Leadership Award from the National Dental Association.

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### **Ellen Flowers-Fields**



Ellen Flowers-Fields is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Division of Workforce Development & Adult Learning at the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations. Ellen has over 20 years of progressive professional experience in the field of workforce development and human capital management. She is credentialed as a Global Career Development Facilitator from the Center for Credentialing and Education and holds a B.A. in Marketing & Business Management from Pace University in NY. Prior to this position, Ellen served in Maryland as the Director of Regional Economic Development for the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland, and as the Executive Director for Southern Maryland Works managing federal and state programs designed to assist in the skills training and employment of adults and youth.

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### **Claudia Baquet, MD, MPH**



Claudia Baquet, M.D., M.P.H. is professor of Medicine and Associate Dean for Policy and Planning at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. Dr. Claudia R. Baquet serves as an advocate for better health care, including issues relating to the health needs and models for underserved communities, telemedicine and rural health initiatives. Dr. Baquet also serves as director of the Maryland Area Health Education Center Program, director of the Center for Health Policy/Health Services Research and director of the Center for Health Disparities. In 2003, she became director of the University of Maryland Comprehensive Center for Health Disparities. Dr. Baquet seeks to reduce and eventually eliminate health disparities. Dr. Baquet received her M.D. in 1977 from Meharry Medical College, Tennessee, and her M.P.H. in epidemiology in 1983 from Johns Hopkins University, School of Hygiene and Public Health. Her residency was in pathology at St. Louis University and Wadsworth Veterans Administration Hospital. Dr. Baquet served as the Associate Director for the Cancer Control Science Program and Director of the Special Populations Research Branch at the National Cancer Institute for 8 years and as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health at the U.S. Public Health Service.



### **Lynne Gilli, EdD**

Lynne Gilli currently serves as the Program Manager for the Career and Technology Education Instructional Branch at the Maryland State Department of Education where she has held progressively responsible positions since 1982. She holds a doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and her master's and bachelor's degrees are in vocational-technical education from the State University of New York at Utica/Rome. Lynne is a frequent presenter at state and national conferences and has had several journal articles published. Her responsibilities at MSDE include providing leadership to implement high quality Career and Technology Education programs for secondary and postsecondary learners. She also serves as the state coordinator for High Schools That Work (HSTW). Lynne is currently leading efforts to implement Maryland's State Curriculum in Personal Financial Literacy Education. Her many years of experience with the Maryland State Department of Education provide her with a broad knowledge and understanding of public policy issues impacting education, particularly in preparing students

for success in both college and careers.

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### **Ronald M. Hearn, PhD**

Ronald M. Hearn is the founding executive director of the Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH), a workforce intermediary organization that provides an array of services to citizens of the Baltimore region and to its member health care organizations. During his five-year tenure, Dr. Hearn has expanded BACH's membership to include both acute and long-term care organizations. In fall 2009, BACH's efforts expanded regionally to incorporate surrounding Baltimore County, Maryland. Under Dr. Hearn's leadership, BACH was awarded one of nine national grants from the Robert Wood Johnson and Hitachi foundations for the Jobs to Careers project, and received American Relief and Recovery Act funding through a grant from the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development. Recently, the organization was chosen to work with the Maryland Hospital Association to administer the Baltimore area's Foreign-Trained Professionals program. Before accepting his current position,

Dr. Hearn was vice president of student services at Burlington County College in southern New Jersey. Previously, he served as vice president of business and continuing education at Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) where he worked closely with Baltimore's health care providers to increase the number of new frontline workers and provide training opportunities to upgrade skills of existing workers. Prior to that position, he was dean of workforce development and business services at Anne Arundel Community College in Maryland. Dr. Hearn serves on numerous education and economic development committees in Maryland and is active in the National Fund for Workforce Solutions. He is also a national speaker on BACH's role in workforce development. He holds a doctorate in counseling and student development from The American University.

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