


Mar 9th, 8:00 AM

# Speaker Biographies: 2018 Community Engagement and Research Symposium

Community Engagement and Research Symposium

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**CENTER FOR CLINICAL AND  
TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE**

# **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Engagement and Research Symposium**

**Friday, March 9, 2018; 8:00am - 3:00pm**

**Albert Sherman Center**

**University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, MA**

## **Presenter Biographies**

### **Keynote**

#### ***“Achieving Health Equity: The Role of Innovative Community Partnerships”***

**Renée Boynton-Jarrett** is a practicing primary care pediatrician at Boston Medical Center, a social epidemiologist and the founding director of the Vital Village Community Engagement Network. Through the Vital Village Network, she is supporting the development of community-based strategies to promote child well-being in three Boston neighborhoods. She joined the faculty at Boston University School of Medicine in 2007 and is currently an Associate Professor of Pediatrics. She received her AB from Princeton University, her MD from Yale School of Medicine, ScD in Social Epidemiology from Harvard School of Public Health, and completed residency in Pediatrics at Johns Hopkins Hospital. She is nationally recognized for expertise in the role of early-life adversities as life course social determinants of health. She has a specific interest in the intersection of community violence, intimate partner violence, and child abuse and neglect and neighborhood characteristics that influence these patterns. She was honored by the Massachusetts Public Health Association with the Paul Revere Award for outstanding impact on public health in 2015 and she is featured in the signature hour of "The Raising of America" documentary series.

#### **UMass Dartmouth Community Engaged Research Academy: Some Methods to Develop Inclusive CER**

**Robin A. Robinson, PhD, PsyD**, is a Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and Coordinator of the Community Engaged Research Initiative, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. She holds a PhD in Social Policy from Brandeis University and a PsyD in Clinical Psychology from George Washington University. Her research combines psychoanalytic theory and critical and feminist criminologies in the study of trauma, criminality, and social control of women and girls.

Most recently, she has been selected as a Fulbright Research Scholar to conduct research on sexual violence in Hungary. Professor Robinson's two-part, two-year research project entitled, "Beyond Obstacles, Toward Justice for Victims of Sexual Violence in Hungary," will examine underreporting of rape and sexual assault in the central European nation. Dr. Robinson's host institution will be the National Institute of Criminology of Hungary, Scientific Research Institute of the Supreme Prosecution. She will work with colleagues at the Institute throughout the two years.

Robin's other work extends to psychosocial analyses of literature and visual arts and social histories of women and crime, including an extended study of British women convicts transported to the American colonies, and the laws, policies, practices, and subterfuge that enforced their role as reproductive labor. Deeply committed to scholarship and praxis, she has also received many grants in support of research and scholarship in areas such as vicarious trauma and anti-violence workers, girls and violence, and teen relational violence, to combine theoretical research with extensive community engagement.

She is currently a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow, Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research and a Visiting Scholar, 2017 - 2018 at Brandeis University Women's Studies Research Center. Other visiting research appointments have included the Simon Visiting Professor at the University of Manchester School of Law; University of Cambridge; Institute of Criminology; Visiting International Scholar at the University of Uppsala in Sweden; the Mary Lily Research Grant from Duke University's Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture; Keele University; Social Science Research Institute; as well as recent work with the Montana State University Center for Health Equity in Rural Montana.

**Mary Hensel** established UMass Dartmouth's Office of Research Development to build research capacity by promoting collaborations, managing internal grants, disseminating funding opportunities and celebrating research achievements. She currently staffs UMass Dartmouth faculty teams assembling to address broad environmental, economic, health and security challenges. With AtKisson Training Group, Ms. Hensel provides grant-writing training for faculty in the arts and humanities and supports teams in large proposal development. In addition to six years in research administration, Ms. Hensel has over 25 years' experience in leadership fundraising, board and volunteer development and advancement communications. She has worked with diverse organizations including the University of Washington, the New York Philharmonic, Earthwatch Australia, The Trustees of Reservations and the American Cancer Society. A graduate of Williams College, she holds an MBA from University of Chicago Booth.

### **Communicating to Engage**

**Nikki Spencer, MSW/MPH**, is the Community Project Manager, Women's Health Unit, Boston Medical Center at Boston University Clinical and Translational Science Institute. As Community Project Manager of the BU CTSI Community Engagement program, Nikki Spencer supports efforts to empower investigators, community members, patients, and other research stakeholders to work together as equal partners. She draws on her background in health communication, public health, and social work to help researchers use every-day language in support of authentic communication and partnerships. Her prior work includes project coordination and development in both community based organizations and academic settings in Boston and St. Louis. She received her Master's in Public Health and Master's in Social Work from the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis.

**Jennifer Pamphile** is a Community Engagement Coordinator with the Women's Health Unit (WHU) and the Boston University CTSI. She joined the Unit in 2015 as a Bilingual Research Assistant and in 2017, was promoted to the position of Community Engagement Coordinator. Prior to joining the WHU, Jennifer worked with underserved youth in Cambridge through the Massachusetts Promise Fellowship with AmeriCorps. Her work with the youth combined with her experience in clinical research inspired her to return to her Alma Mater, Northeastern University, to work on her Masters of Public Health in Urban Health.

### **Building Healthy Communities in the Dominican Republic; A Mixed-Methods Approach towards Engaging the Community**

**Camille Lundberg** is a senior undergraduate student at Clemson University studying Spanish and International Health with a concentration in community development. She has worked with this Creative Inquiry research project since Fall 2016. This spring, Camille will travel to Las Malvinas II in the Dominican Republic with other members of the project. In addition to this research project, Camille serves as treasurer for the Language and International Health Society and student organization "Tigers Building Healthier Communities Abroad," and is an active member of her service fraternity Alpha Phi Omega. She plans to graduate in December 2018 in hopes of volunteering with the Peace Corps and attending graduate school.

**Fatema Bhagat** is a senior studying Spanish and International Health with an emphasis on health administration at Clemson University. She first got involved with the Building Healthy Communities Creative Inquiry Project in 2016 and as a result has become dedicated to health issues in low resource communities. Fatema is excited to travel to the Dominican Republic this spring for the next phase of data collection in Las Malvinas II. Fatema has also worked with Spanish speaking communities in a health care setting during an internship in Seville, Spain. At Clemson, Fatema serves as the president for the Language and International Health Society. She will graduate in August and aspires to become a midwife in rural regions in the future.

**Katherine Brown** is a senior studying biology at Clemson University, and will graduate this May. She has been involved with community development research since 2015 under Dr. Moore de Peralta at Clemson. In 2017, she presented a poster on her research in the Dominican Republic at the Association for Community Health Improvement Conference in Denver, Colorado. After graduation, Katherine plans to attend medical school at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine-Greenville. She hopes to use her experience working with community development in the Dominican Republic to improve access to healthcare on both a local and global level after receiving her MD.

### **Overcoming the Challenges of Obtaining Funding by Working Together**

**Dr. Linda Silka** is a social and community psychologist by training, with much of her work focusing on building community-university partnerships. She has several decades of experience in leading community-university research partnerships on environmental, economic development, and environmental health issues. Dr. Silka was the former Director of the University of Maine's Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center and is now Senior Fellow at the University of Maine's George Mitchell Center for Sustainability Solutions. Prior to moving to the University of Maine, Dr. Silka was a faculty member for three decades at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, where she directed the Center for Family, Work, Community, served as the Special Assistant to the Provost for Community

Outreach and Partnerships, and was Professor of Regional Economic and Social Development. Research partnerships she has facilitated include the NIEHS-funded Southeast Asian Environmental Justice Partnership and the New Ventures Partnership, the HUD-funded Community Outreach Partnership Center and Diverse Healthy Homes Initiative, and the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Community Leadership and Empowerment. Silka teaches graduate courses on grant writing and community-stakeholder partnerships.

### **Building Partnerships within Communities to Address Social Determinants of Health and**

**Elise Audrey Carpenter, MD, PhD** is core faculty at Lawrence Family Medicine Residency and coordinates the Health Systems Management curriculum and the 4th year area of concentration in Health Systems Leadership. The residency is located at Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, which is a FQHC and teaching health center in Massachusetts. As a primary care provider she sees patients in Lawrence, MA, an industrial city north of Boston with a large Caribbean Latino population, mostly Dominican. Dr. Carpenter enjoys practicing primary care in a city with a vibrant history of immigration and political action. She is interested in social, political, and historical movements that have advanced the health of the underserved and marginal both locally and globally. She has done a Kraft Fellowship in Community Health focusing on the clinic's superutilizer project and her PhD is an ethnographic examination of Botswana's HIV drug delivery program during its inception from 2002 to 2004.

**Raman Nohria, MD** is a physician resident at the Lawrence Family Medicine Residency Program and board eligible for family medicine. Dr. Nohria obtained his undergraduate degree from Case Western Reserve University with a B.S.E in Biomedical Engineering in 2010 and received his Doctor of Medicine degree from Lewis Katz Temple University School of Medicine in 2015. He will be completing his family medicine residency in 2019 in Lawrence, MA. Dr. Nohria's current scholarly focus in his residency is on the intersection of community medicine, social determinants of health, and clinical health-care systems. He is currently working on a food insecurity project, which engages with clinic patients to create a shared understanding of patient needs and experiences around food insecurity. The goal of this project is to utilize patient feedback to drive the strategic vision of food insecurity interventions that are conducted by the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center and to foster a partnership with patients for these interventions.

**Shannon Meyers** is a Master of Public Health candidate, pursuing her degree at the Boston University School of Public Health College. She received her B.S. in Public Health from the College of Charleston in 2015. She has spent her practicum working with the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, where she focused on root causes of food access and insecurity in Lawrence, MA.

### **“It Takes a Village:” Innovative multi-sector collaboration to improve Public Health through Positive Youth Development program implementation, evaluation and data analysis**

**Patty Flanagan** is the Director of Wellness and Health Equity at the YWCA Central Massachusetts. She holds a BA from the College of the Holy Cross and a Certificate in Community Human Service Management from Clark University. A YWCA employee since 1978, Patty's program experience includes aquatics, synchronized swimming, fitness and youth development.

Patty strives to develop and administer programs and initiatives to address disparity and inequity in health, education, income and power, serving vulnerable populations, with a passion for the YWCA Mission of empowering women, eliminating racism and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. Areas of focus include Women's Health and Safety, Youth Development and Education, Health Equity and Community Health, and she maintains community relationships to provide and enhance services to underserved populations including low-income patients, communities of color, homeless populations, youth and others. Flanagan is one of four local partners featured in a case study in JPHMP's 21 Public Health Case Studies on Policy and Administration, published in early 2018.

**Judi Kirk** was born and raised in Wilmington, DE where she graduated from the University of Delaware with a BSPE, Physical Education in 1976 and a MSPE, Measurement and Evaluation, 1982.

Judi has held professional positions with Girls Incorporated of Delaware as Physical Education Instructor, Teen Program Coordinator and Director of Special Programs; Chesapeake Bay & Montachusett Girl Scout Councils as Manager of Outdoor Programs, Girls Incorporated of Worcester as Associate Director, YWCA Central Massachusetts as Director of Health Promotion Services and is currently the Director of Community Impact for Boys & Girls Clubs of Worcester & YouthConnect.

As Director of Community Impact, Judi facilitates a consortium of 8 Executive Partners from BGCW, Girls Inc., Friendly House, United Way of Central MA, Worcester Youth Center, YMCA, YWCA, and YOU, Inc. along with 40 additional Supporting Partners to provide high quality neighborhood-based recreational, educational and cultural activities to isolated and underserved Worcester youth aged 5 – 24 with focus on the middle school years. The goal of the consortium is to establish a seamless, inclusive youth serving system modeled on best practice and built on a framework that delivers positive outcomes for health, education, and family stability to youth in Worcester's highest need neighborhoods.

Other community engagement activities include: co-founder of Safe Homes: providing mentoring, resource development, clinical support, advocacy, and drop-in and recreation programs for LGBTQ youth; Thomas Jefferson Award for Grafton Street School; recognition as a Research Fellow at Tufts Medical School: Building Capacity for Community Engagement, Community Based Participatory Research; as well as many leadership roles with Worcester Women's History Project, the Camp Marshall 4-H Center, the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, The Health Foundation Community Outreach Committee; Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester (CHNA 8) and currently serves as the Chair of the City Managers Commission on Youth and Chair of the Board of Trustees at the Bridge of Central MA.

**Laurie Ross** is an Associate Professor of Community Development and Planning in the Department of International Development, Community, and Environment at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. She is also director of the Youth Work Practice professional certificate program at Clark. She received her BA and MA at Clark University (1991; 1995) and her Ph.D. in public policy from the University of Massachusetts Boston. Ross engages in community-based action research projects in Worcester on topics such as youth and gang violence, youth and young adult homelessness, and youth worker professional education. Ross is the research partner for the Worcester Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, chaired by Mayor Petty and City Manager Augustus. In 2016, she published a book with Routledge entitled, Dilemmas in Youth Work and Youth Development Practice. Since 2000, Ross has directed the HOPE Coalition, a youth-adult partnership coalition designed to reduce youth violence, substance use, and promote positive adolescent mental health and youth leadership in Worcester. Ross is President of the Worcester Youth Center Board of Directors.

**Grace Sliwoski** has been working with the REC (Regional Environmental Council) since 2010. A native of Worcester, MA, she coordinated REC's youth urban agriculture program, YouthGROW, for 7 years and was instrumental in developing a year round curriculum for the program. She is currently the Director of Programs at REC and oversees its three signature food justice programs including the UGROW network of over 60 community and school gardens, YouthGROW, and the Community Farmers Markets. She is active in local and state coalitions working on youth employment and currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Center for Nonviolent Solutions. Heather was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Psychology from SUNY New Paltz in Upstate New York. She then went on to attend Clark University to pursue her PhD in Developmental Psychology, where her research focused on immigration and parenting. Worcester quickly became home to Heather as she settled her roots in the city, particularly in the LGBT community. In 2013 she co-founded the LGBTQ organization Airspray, which continues to be wildly successful, throwing monthly queer dance parties and other LGBTQ cultural/nightlife events around Worcester. In 2015, she started the Worcester chapter of the FemSex Feminist Workshop, a peer-facilitated discussion group on issues of sexuality and gender. Realizing her true passion was centered in community development and social justice activism, she decided to pursue a career in the nonprofit sector in Worcester, landing at the United Way of Central Massachusetts as a Community Relationship Manager. In addition to her fulfilling job, Heather remains civically engaged and active in the community, particularly in the arts and education. She is on the Board of Directors of ArtsWorcester, Safe Homes LGBT Youth Center, and is a Trustee for the Worcester Public Library Foundation.

**Heather Mangione** was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Psychology from SUNY New Paltz in Upstate New York. She then went on to attend Clark University to pursue her PhD in Developmental Psychology, where her research focused on immigration and parenting. Worcester quickly became home to Heather as she settled her roots in the city, particularly in the LGBT community. In 2013, she co-founded the LGBTQ organization Airspray, which continues to be wildly successful, throwing monthly queer dance parties and other LGBTQ cultural/nightlife events around Worcester. In 2015, she started the Worcester chapter of the FemSex Feminist Workshop, a peer-facilitated discussion group on issues of sexuality and gender. Realizing her true passion was centered in community development and social justice activism, she decided to pursue a career in the nonprofit sector in Worcester, landing at the United Way of Central Massachusetts as a Community Relationship Manager. In addition to her fulfilling job, Heather remains civically engaged and active in the community, particularly in the arts and education. She is on the Board of Directors of ArtsWorcester, Safe Homes LGBT Youth Center, and is a Trustee for the Worcester Public Library Foundation.

**Nikki Nixon, M.S.,** Epidemiologist, is an alumna of the University of Massachusetts Amherst; Ms. Nikki Nixon earned both her undergraduate and graduate degrees in Public Health Sciences. As a young professional, Ms. Nixon has dedicated her career to improving the health of underserved population. She has done this directly through interning at a community-based organization that provides HIV/AIDS counseling and education as well as substance use treatment services to intravenous drug users in Springfield and indirectly by serving as the Compliance Officer at a community health center to ensure employees comply with state and federal government rules and regulations. In her current role as the Epidemiologist for the Worcester Division of Public Health/Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA), Ms. Nixon supports the offices of Community Health, Nursing, Environmental Health and Emergency Preparedness by researching, analyzing and reporting health data focused on influencing policy and shaping programs. Ms. Nixon plays a pivotal role in coordinating the Regional Youth Health Survey administered in five of the alliance school districts, including the Worcester Public School district. In addition, she serves as Co-Chair of the Research and Evaluation Sub-Committee for the Greater Worcester Community Health Improvement Plan.