

2019 Refugee Wellness Conference

Distinguished Presenters

Welcoming Remarks

Elija Johnson, BA



Elijah Johnson, Deputy County Executive, oversees the Human Services agencies in Prince William County. He provides administrative oversight of all human services agencies, including Community Services, Area Agency on Aging, Department of Social Services and Housing and Community Development. Mr. Johnson assists in the management of state-supported human services agencies providing assistance in Prince William County, and works with the many community non-profits who provide invaluable service to Prince William County residents. “Human Services is the third largest area of government in Prince William County after schools and public safety,” said Corey Stewart, Chairman of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors. “The Board recognizes that it needs someone who can help our human service agencies meet the needs of our residents and

manage the multiple funding sources for human services, which often include state and federal revenues. Mr. Johnson was a clear choice to fill this role and make certain Prince William County continues to meet the needs of the community.”

Mr. Johnson has served Prince William County for the past seven years as Director of the Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD). During Mr. Johnson’s term as director of OHCD, he led the division from “Troubled” status by the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development to “High Performer” in two years.

Prior to working in Prince William County, Mr. Johnson served as the Housing Programs Supervisor with the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority. He is a graduate of Hampton University with a B.A. in Mathematics, and resides with his wife in Herndon, Va.

Plenary Speakers

S. Hughes Melton, MD, MBA, FAAFP, FABAM

Dr. S. Hughes Melton was appointed by Governor Ralph Northam in 2018 to lead DBHDS and transform Virginia's system for people with behavioral health and developmental disability. Dr. Melton and his nearly 7,000 team members lead an agency that stewards \$1.06 billion to operate fourteen state hospitals, collaborate with forty locally run community services boards and license over 800 private providers.

Previously, Dr. Melton served as the Chief Deputy Commissioner of Public Health and Preparedness at the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). Prior to his role at VDH, Dr. Melton served from 2012-2016 as a VP in the Virginia Market of Mountain States, a not-for-profit, 13-hospital health system serving Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee. Dr. Melton co-founded C-Health, P.C. in Lebanon, Virginia in 2000 and in 2012 started HighPower, P.C. a patient-centered addiction treatment clinic in Russell County, Virginia.



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The American Academy of Family Physicians selected Dr. Melton to be the 2011 Family Physician of the Year for his work in Southwest Virginia.

Dr. Melton earned his medical degree at the University of Virginia and completed his family medicine residency in 1996. He is board certified in both family medicine and addiction medicine. In 2012, he earned his MBA from the University of Virginia Darden School of Business. When not working with his leadership team, he enjoys running, biking, aviation, church activities and spending time with his wife Sarah and two daughters Maggie and Claire.

Dr. Lauren R. Powell, MPA, PhD



Dr. Lauren Powell currently serves as the Director of the Office of Health for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She has an established track-record as a community-engaged social epidemiologist, and champion for racial and health equity. Dr. Powell recently completed her Master's in Public Administration at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical and Population Health Research at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Her undergraduate degree was completed at Xavier University of Louisiana with a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry. Dr. Powell is passionate about understanding how public health organizations can better address the social determinants of

health, Dr. Powell leads public health and healthcare organizations on strategies to infuse health equity into all practices, with an emphasis on systems-driven solutions.

Dr. Powell is passionate about mentorship and community engagement. She actively seeks opportunities to help mold and encourage the next generation of leaders in health equity.

Plenary – Regional Community Health Assessment

Moderator

Alison Ansher, MD, MPH

Dr. Alison Ansher is an Obstetrician-Gynecologist in Manassas, Virginia. She received her medical degree from University of Maryland School of Medicine and has been in practice for 30 years in Obstetrics & Gynecology, Obstetrics, and Public Health & General Preventive Medicine. Dr. Ansher also serves as a Health Director at the Prince William Health District for the Virginia Department of Health. She has established and directed clinics for tuberculosis and Women's Wellness and maternity care in the Prince William Health District. She has written numerous articles for local newspapers on health-related topics and continues to participate in many seminars and workshops on various health issues, specifically women's health. Dr. Ansher has written and received several health-related grants focusing on emergency preparedness, health equity and chronic disease issues from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, NACCHO, Community Tobacco Prevention and Cessation, March of Dimes, Postpartum Diabetes Prevention, Health and Human Services (HHS) Preventive Health, and *Urban Areas Security Initiative* (UASI).



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Panelists

Gloria Addo-Ayensu, MD, MPH



Gloria Addo-Ayensu, MD, MPH is the Director of Health for Fairfax County. In this capacity she provides overall leadership and direction for public health programs in the county and serves as the official health advisor to Fairfax Board of Supervisors, Health Care Advisory Board and the Human Services Council. She is a visionary leader with a passion for promoting community resiliency and creating innovative, practical and sustainable community-based approaches to public health challenges. She has led a number of regional and state public health initiatives in the areas of health literacy, emergency preparedness, obesity prevention and health equity, as well as served on a number of national committees, including NACCHO's Public Health Preparedness Essential Services Committee and two Institute of Medicine committees on personal protective

equipment for healthcare workers to prevent transmission of pandemic influenza or other viral respiratory infections. In 2016 Dr. Gloria was a recipient of the A. Heath Onthank Memorial Award, the highest honor the county bestows upon its employees.

Stephen Hearing, MD, MPH, FACPM

Dr. Stephen Haering became Alexandria Health Department's Director in August 2010. He previously served as the Health Director for the Lord Fairfax Health District (which includes Winchester, Virginia and the surrounding area) since 2008. Dr. Haering, a board-certified specialist in preventive medicine and general public health, earned an undergraduate degree in biology from Duke University, his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Louisville School of Medicine, and his Master of Public Health from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. He completed his internship in Family Practice at San Joaquin General Hospital in Stockton, California, and worked for several private practices for 13 years. In 2003, Dr. Haering joined the Manatee County (Florida) Health Department as a senior physician. In addition to his clinical duties, he led the county's tuberculosis program and implemented a number of innovative programs and practices in disease prevention and health promotion.



Dr. Haering completed a preventive medicine residency at Johns Hopkins University between 2005 and 2007. Upon completion of his residency, Dr. Haering was selected as Chief Resident for the Preventive Medicine Residency for 2007-2008. Dr. Haering has conducted primary research on food security in the city of Baltimore, and he was the primary author of a synthesis of the scientific literature on food security in U.S. urban centers.



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Reuben Varghese, MD



Dr. Varghese promotes disease control and prevention and overall community health as chief of the Public Health Division of Arlington County, Virginia. Varghese began his career at a health maintenance organization, where he served as internist. He served as chief of the Medical Affairs and Surveillance Branch of the Food Safety and Inspection Service at the Department of Agriculture (USDA) from 2004 to 2005. From 2000 to 2002 he was an epidemic intelligence service officer for CDC. While at CDC, he was part of a team sent to New York City to monitor latent health effects caused by 9/11—an asset to a community such as Arlington, which also was directly affected on 9/11. Prior to his work at USDA, Dr. Varghese was director of the Three Rivers Health District

based in Middlesex County, Virginia, from 2002 to 2004. He received his M.D. from Brown University and has an M.P.H. from the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health.

Guest Speakers

Bill Briggs, MSW

Bill Briggs has been a Behavioral Health and Wellness Specialist for Arlington County Department of Human Services' Child and Family Services Division since 2016. He holds a BSW in Social Work from Western New England College and a Master's in Social Work from Springfield College. Bill provides education and community outreach on mental health promotion, substance use prevention, as well as suicide prevention, throughout Arlington. Bill is trained in both Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid. He is also the Co-Chair of the Suicide Prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia (SPAN) LGBT working group and an adult ally on the Arlington Teen Network Board



Rebecca Hester, PHD



Rebecca J. Hester is an assistant professor in the Department of Science and Technology at Virginia Tech's College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. Dr. Hester's holds a BA from U.C. Berkeley, and an MA and PhD from U.C. Santa Cruz. Dr. Hester's scholarship focuses on body politics, global health, immigration, and the cultural politics of health and medicine. Her recent research examines what is considered to constitute "biological danger" and the politics of attempts to preempt, prevent, and eradicate such danger. She will be teaching foundations of social medicine; issues in humanities, science, and technology; and monsters, zombies, and cyborgs. Hester's expertise extends to global health, Latin American Migration, Socio-cultural Studies of Health and Medicine, Critical Security Studies

and Critical race and gender studies.

Dr. Hester authored *Bodies in Translation: Public Health Promotion in Indigenous Mexican Migrant Communities in California* in *Translocalities/Translocalidades: Feminist Politics of Translation in the Latin/a Américas.*" (2014), which she co-edited. Dr. Hester was awarded Best Dissertation in Latino Studies,



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Latino Studies Section Dissertation Award Committee, Latin American Studies Association, 2010; Chancellor's Post-Doctoral Fellow, Latina/Latino Studies Program, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign 2009-2010; and President's Dissertation-Year Fellowship, University of California Santa Cruz, 2007-2007. Dr. Hester's sponsored research has included Mary Moody Northern Endowment, Galveston, TX; "A Qualitative Research Project to Document Community Opinions on Welcoming Central American Refugee Children into the Galveston Community," 2014. National Institutes of Health, Health Disparities Research Loan Repayment Program, "Power and Medicine: Exploring Curricular Innovations for Addressing Health Disparities," 2011-2013. Harris and Eliza Kempner; "Hear Our Voice: Capturing the Perspective of St. Vincent's Patients," 2011-2011. Programa de Investigación en Migración y Salud (PIMSA), University of California Office of the President, California and Mexico, "Health Promotion in Indigenous Mexican Communities in Oaxaca and California," 2006-2008.

Lee Hopkins, MSW

Lee Hopkins is the Virginia Senior Manager for Services. Lee is a social worker with nine years of experience in providing holistic case management services in arenas including healthcare, immigration, domestic violence, and more. Prior to moving into this position, she served as CASA's Maryland healthcare manager and had previously worked for Tahirih Justice Center supporting immigrant women and for non-profits based in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Lee lives with her husband Roger in Falls Church.

Courtney Martin, MPH



Courtney Martin is a Prevention Specialist for Arlington County Department of Human Services' Child and Family Services Division. She holds a BS in Psychology from Virginia Tech and a Master of Public Health degree with a focus on Social Determinants of Health from the University of South Florida. Courtney works to provide education and community outreach on mental health promotion and substance use prevention, as well as her passion, suicide prevention, throughout Arlington. She also works on regional mental health and suicide prevention initiatives through the Suicide Prevention Alliance of Northern Virginia's (SPAN).

Heather Martinsen, MSW, ICPS

Heather Martinsen is a Certified Prevention Specialist and has worked in the field of substance use prevention and mental health promotion for over nineteen years. Heather is currently the Behavioral Health Wellness Supervisor in the New Horizons Program at PWC Community Services. Her mission focuses on promoting mental health and preventing substance abuse. She works diligently in the community building collaborative partnerships to increase resources and initiatives focused on underage and high-risk drinking, drug use, tobacco, mental health issues, and family wellness. Heather facilitates the Prevention Alliance of Greater Prince William and is on the Board of the Community Coalitions of Virginia. She earned her Master of Social Work degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in 2009. She is currently coordinating the local opioid misuse/use prevention initiatives through a federal grant



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and is focused on initiatives at the intersection of trauma-informed care, mental health and substance use.

Linh T. Nghe, MEd



Mr. Nghe has 20 years of post-master's clinical experience in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Virginia in providing college counseling, community behavioral health and home-based services. He began with Arlington County DHS, Children Family Services Division in 2007 as a Bilingual Therapist and became a supervisor in 2008. He currently serves as Arlington County's Prevention Director.

Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, BS, MA, MPhil

Krish is the President and CEO of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services. She previously served in the Obama White House as Policy Director for First Lady Michelle Obama and at the State Department as Senior Advisor under Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Secretary of State John Kerry. Krish has committed her career to public service because she knows how differently life could have turned out. Krish was 9-months old when she and her family escaped a country on the brink of civil war and built a life in Maryland. Her parents came to this country with no jobs and \$200 in their pockets.

Krish is a graduate from Woodlawn High School in Baltimore County and then attended Yale College, where she earned a Master's degree in Political Science and a B.S. in Molecular, Cellular & Developmental Biology, graduating magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. She was a Marshall Scholar at Oxford University, where she received an M.Phil. in International Relations, before returning to Yale Law School, where she served on the Yale Law Journal.

Krish's interest in public service and grassroots politics began at an early age. In elementary school, Krish went knocking door to door with her mother in support of Senator Barbara Mikulski when she won her historic first race for the Senate. In college, Krish worked for another great public servant when she spent her summer back from college working for Senator Paul Sarbanes.

Krish recently finished serving as Policy Director for Michelle Obama and led the First Lady's signature Let Girls Learn initiative. Previously, she served as Senior Advisor at the State Department under Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Secretary of State John Kerry where she coordinated development and implementation of multiple programs including those concerning refugees and migration, engagement with religious communities, the legal dimensions of U.S. foreign policy, and regional issues relating to Africa and the Middle East. She worked closely with PRM, Consular Affairs, Health & Human Services and the Department of Defense. Before joining the White House, Krish worked at McKinsey & Company, where she consulted for Fortune 100 companies, practiced law at Jenner & Block in Washington, DC, clerked for Chief Judge Michael Boudin on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, and taught at Georgetown University as an adjunct.

Krish and her husband, Collin O'Mara are the parents of a young daughter, Alana.



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Rebecca Sutter, DNP, APRN, BC-FNP-CHHS



As a doctorally trained and credentialed Family Nurse Practitioner, Dr. Sutter established and managed a faculty driven nurse-managed clinic from 2003-2012, in collaboration with a large community college nursing program. These clinics provided comprehensive primary and preventive health services across the lifespan and served low income, immigrant populations. This model was unique in that it also provided community-based learning experiences for undergraduate nursing students. Currently, Dr. Sutter serves as the Mason and Partners Clinic Director and has successfully launched numerous academic nurse managed health centers where she has become an expert in the bridge model of care. She uses the academic nurse managed clinics, which are strategically located in medically underserved areas (MUA), to utilize this model of care. She provides services to an underserved and vulnerable population and conducts translational research on evidence-based care for vulnerable populations.

