

From Gaps to Gateways: Advancing Research on Chronic Conditions in Women

Program Booklet

May 11, 2026



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Event Overview

The Vivian W. Pinn Symposium honors the first full-time Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH), Vivian W. Pinn, MD, and is held every year during National Women's Health Week. This event serves as a critical forum for experts across sectors to communicate and collaborate for the advancement of women's health.

The 10th Anniversary Vivian W. Pinn Symposium, titled "From Gaps to Gateways: Advancing Research on Chronic Conditions in Women," will be held on Monday, May 11, 2026, from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM in a hybrid format at the Natcher/Ruth Kirschstein Auditorium. Marking a decade of convening leaders in women's health research, the symposium highlights progress made and identifies strategic opportunities to accelerate innovation across the research continuum.

Guided by the tagline, "Connecting science to society: advancing innovation across the research continuum to improve health for all," the event will convene researchers, clinicians, trainees, and public health leaders to examine persistent gaps in chronic conditions research affecting women and to advance actionable, interdisciplinary solutions. The program will feature scientific panels and a poster session designed to showcase emerging research and foster dialogue across intramural and extramural communities.

The objectives of the symposium are to:

- Highlight critical gaps in research on chronic conditions in women and identify priority areas for scientific advancement.
- Showcase innovative approaches that move discoveries from basic science to clinical and community application, strengthening translation across the research continuum.
- Promote interdisciplinary collaboration among NIH institutes, investigators, trainees, and external partners to address complex chronic health challenges affecting women.
- Elevate emerging research through a dedicated poster session, supporting trainee engagement and visibility of new findings.
- Strengthen the connection between research, policy, and community impact to improve health outcomes for women across the lifespan.

Speaker Biographies



Vivian W. Pinn, MD
Founding Director (Retired), ORWH
Senior Scientist Emerita, Fogarty
International Center, NIH

Vivian W. Pinn, MD was the inaugural full-time Director of ORWH, from 1991 until her retirement in 2011. Dr. Pinn was also NIH's Associate Director for Research on Women's Health from 1994 until her retirement. Under her leadership, this new office led the implementation of NIH inclusion policies for women and minorities in clinical research, developed the first and several subsequent national strategic plans for women's health research, and established many new research funding initiatives and career development programs, including interdisciplinary initiatives, in collaboration with NIH Institutes and Centers. During that time, she also established and co-chaired the NIH Working Group on Women in Biomedical Careers with the NIH Director. She has since been named a Senior Scientist Emerita at NIH's Fogarty International Center. She has presented her perceptions of women's health and sex research, health disparities, and challenges in biomedical careers for women and people of color to national and international audiences and has served as a mentor to hundreds of young women and men of all races. A special tribute by Senator Olympia Snowe on Dr. Pinn's retirement was published in the Congressional Record in November 2011. Senator Snowe commended Dr. Pinn's contributions during her NIH tenure. At the time of Dr. Pinn's retirement, the Association of American Medical Colleges honored her with a Special Recognition Award for exceptional leadership over a 40-year career.

She earned her MD in 1967 from the University of Virginia School of Medicine, the only woman and only minority in her class. She completed her postgraduate training in pathology at Harvard University's Massachusetts General Hospital.

She came to NIH from the Howard University College of Medicine, where she had been Professor and Chair of the Department of Pathology since 1982, the third woman in the United States to hold such an appointment and the first African American woman to do so. Dr. Pinn also previously held teaching appointments in pathology at Harvard Medical School and Tufts University, where she was also Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. Her professional area of focus in pathology was immunopathology, specifically renal and autoimmune diseases, and transplant pathology. She now holds the position of Professor at the University of South Florida's Institute for Advanced Discovery & Innovation.

She is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and was elected to the Institute of Medicine (now the National Academy of Medicine) in 1995. She served several terms on the National Academies' Committee on Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine and was a member of the National Academies committee that prepared the 2020 report titled *Promising Practices for Addressing the Underrepresentation of Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine: Opening Doors*. She is also a member of the National Academies' Roundtable on Black Men and

Black Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine. Dr. Pinn has written more than 200 scientific publications and book chapters, including forewords, and has given more than 500 keynote speeches, lectures, and presentations since 1991.

A native of Lynchburg, Virginia, and educated in segregated public schools, Dr. Pinn has received 17 honorary degrees of science, law, and medicine. The University of Virginia School of Medicine named one of its four advisory medical student colleges the Pinn College in her honor. In 2011, the Tufts University School of Medicine announced the Vivian W. Pinn Office of Student Affairs, and her former medical students dedicated a scholarship in her name, the Vivian W. Pinn Scholarship Fund, to give needy students an opportunity to study medicine at Tufts. Further, in December 2016, the University of Virginia School of Medicine announced the inaugural Pinn Scholars program to support and recognize midlevel faculty members for their efforts to take their research in novel directions. Dr. Pinn received the Alumna Achievement Award from Wellesley College and was an Alumna Trustee there. She has held leadership positions in many professional organizations, including as the 88th President of the National Medical Association (NMA), and is currently Chair of the NMA Past Presidents Council. Dr. Pinn serves on the boards of trustees/advisors of Thomas Jefferson University, the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson Health, the Tufts University School of Medicine, and the KGI School of Medicine.

Dr. Pinn has received more than 300 honors and awards. She was elected to Modern Healthcare's Hall of Fame, the first African American woman to be so honored, and was also a recipient of the New York Academy of Medicine Medal for Distinguished Contributions in Health Policy. Other honors include a special lifetime achievement award from the Drexel University College of Medicine's Institute for Women's Health in 2017 and service as the 2017–18 Leader-in-Residence at the Jepson School of Leadership Studies of the University of Richmond. In 2019, she was presented with the John D. Thompson Distinguished Visiting Fellow Award by the Yale University School of Public Health.

She more recently received the 2020 American Medical Association's Distinguished Service Award for her leadership in women's health, as well as the 2020 Alma Dea Morani Award from the Women in Medicine Legacy Foundation and the New York Academy of Medicine. She was also awarded the 2021 Distinguished Service Award from the Association of Pathology Chairs and was elected a 2021 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She was also included in Hearst's "Lift Every Voice" project, a celebration of Black lives.

Research!America awarded her the Outstanding Achievement in Public Health Award as one of its 2022 Advocacy Awards honorees. In honor of her efforts as a faculty member of the Tufts University medical school, Tufts University selected her as one of eight influential Black leaders for its 2022 project named "Leading While Black: A Legacy of Transformational Black Leadership at Tufts University."

NIH, NMA, and the National Women's Health Congress have established lectures in women's health in her name. Her oral history is included in the National Library of Medicine's exhibit on women physicians, "Changing the Face of Medicine"; in the University of Virginia's project named "Explorations in Black Leadership," conducted by Julian Bond; and in the HistoryMakers collection, which is now housed in the Library of Congress.



Janine Austin Clayton, MD, FARVO
*Associate Director for Research on Women's
Health*

*Director, Office of Research on Women's
Health (ORWH), NIH*

Janine A. Clayton, MD was appointed Associate Director for Research on Women's Health and Director of ORWH in 2012. Dr. Clayton has strengthened NIH support for research on diseases, disorders, and conditions that affect women. She is the architect of the NIH policy requiring scientists to consider sex as a biological variable across the research spectrum, a part of NIH's initiative to enhance reproducibility, rigor, and transparency. In 2021, Dr. Clayton was elected to the Board of Directors of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Before joining ORWH, Dr. Clayton was previously the Deputy Clinical Director of the National Eye Institute (NEI). As a board-certified ophthalmologist, Dr. Clayton has interest in research on autoimmune ocular diseases and the role of sex in health and disease. Dr. Clayton has a particular interest in ocular surface disease and discovered a novel form of disease associated with premature ovarian insufficiency that affects young women, setting the stage for her commitment to rigorous, thoughtful exploration of the role of sex in health and disease. She is the author of more than 120 scientific publications, journal articles, and book chapters. Her clinical research has ranged from randomized controlled trials of novel therapies for immunomediated ocular diseases to studies on the development of digital imaging techniques for the anterior segment.

Dr. Clayton, a native Washingtonian, received her undergraduate degree with honors from Johns Hopkins University and her medical degree from the Howard University College of Medicine. She completed a residency in ophthalmology at the Medical College of Virginia. Dr. Clayton completed fellowship training in cornea and external disease at the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins Hospital and in uveitis and ocular immunology at NEI.



Jayanta "Jay" Bhattacharya, MD, PhD
Director, NIH
Acting Director, Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention

Jayanta "Jay" Bhattacharya, MD, PhD, took the helm as 18th director of the National Institutes of Health, the nation's medical research agency, on April 1, 2025. President Trump nominated Dr. Bhattacharya for the position on Nov. 26, 2024, and the U.S. Senate confirmed him on March 25, 2025.

Dr. Bhattacharya, a renowned doctor, researcher, health economist, previously held a tenured professorship in the medical school at Stanford University in California. His research focused on population aging and chronic disease, particularly on the health and well-being of vulnerable populations. He has published over 170 research papers in peer-reviewed journals in medicine, epidemiology, health policy, economics, statistics, science policy, and public health, as well as a leading textbook on health economics.

During the pandemic, Dr. Bhattacharya coauthored the Great Barrington Declaration, which called for opening schools and lifting lockdowns while better protecting older populations who were most vulnerable to the disease.

Dr. Bhattacharya held numerous additional appointments at Stanford University, including courtesy appointments at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, the Stanford Freeman Spogli Institute and Stanford's Hoover Institution, and Economics Department. Previously, he conducted research at the National Bureau of Economic Research and the SPHERE Institute, a policy research firm. Before joining Stanford, he was an economist at the RAND Corporation and worked as a visiting economics professor at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Dr. Bhattacharya is a longtime NIH grantee and has served as a standing member of multiple NIH review committees. He earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in economics from Stanford University. He then completed medical school and earned a PhD in economics also from Stanford University.



Dr. Nicole Kleinstrueur, PhD

*Deputy Director for Program Coordination,
Planning, and Strategic Initiatives*

*Director, Division of Program Coordination,
Planning, and Strategic Initiatives*

Nicole C. Kleinstrueur, PhD, is the NIH Deputy Director for Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives. In this role, she leads the Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives (DPCPSI) within the NIH Office of the Director, which oversees NIH-wide programmatic research and strategic policy initiatives, including the NIH Common Fund and offices focused on women's health, data science, AIDS research, disease prevention, behavioral and social sciences, dietary supplements, and tribal health, among others.

Dr. Kleinstrueur is internationally recognized for her leadership in developing innovative, human-relevant research strategies that advance public health protection. Prior to her current position, she served as Director of the National Toxicology Program Interagency Center for the Evaluation of Alternative Toxicological Methods (NICEATM), within the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). She also served as Executive Director of the congressionally mandated Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods (ICCVAM) and as the US National Co-Coordinator for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Test Guidelines Programme. In these roles, she led interagency and international efforts to promote new approach methodologies (NAMs), reduce animal testing, and integrate computational modeling, artificial intelligence, and systems toxicology into regulatory science. Her work spans translational bioinformatics, predictive modeling, and quantitative risk assessment. She has authored over 150 peer-reviewed publications and received numerous honors, including the 2019 Society of Toxicology Achievement Award and the 2025 Enhancement of Animal Welfare Award, as well as multiple NIH Director's and NIEHS Merit Awards.

Dr. Kleinstrueur holds BS degrees in biomedical engineering and applied mathematics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a PhD in bioengineering from the University of Canterbury. She completed postdoctoral training in computational toxicology at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and holds adjunct faculty appointments at Yale University and UNC Chapel Hill. She is deeply committed to mentorship, public health protection, and scientific innovation that enhances the translation of biomedical research to real-world impact.

Panel 1: Basic & Translational Research



Eric Belin de Chantemèle, DSc
*Leon Henri Charbonnier Endowed Chair and
Regents' Professor
Vascular Biology Center
Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University*

Eric Belin de Chantemèle, DSc, is the Leon Henri Charbonnier Endowed Chair and Regents' Professor at the Medical College of Georgia, Augusta University. His research focuses on hypertension and cardiometabolic disease, including sex-specific mechanisms in obesity-related hypertension. His laboratory identified links between leptin and aldosterone production and contributed to understanding cardiovascular risk in people with HIV. He has authored numerous publications, leads NIH-funded projects, and is actively engaged in mentoring trainees who advance to independent research careers.

Current Grants: R01HL155265, R01AR082307, R01HL176323, R01HL175471, P01HL1605571



Montserrat C. Anguera, PhD
*Associate Professor
Department of Biomedical Sciences
School of Veterinary Medicine
University of Pennsylvania*

Montserrat Cecilia Anguera, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. She earned her BA from UC San Diego and her PhD from Cornell University, followed by postdoctoral training at MGH/Harvard. Her research focuses on X-chromosome inactivation and epigenetic regulation in immune cells, with an emphasis on mechanisms underlying female-biased autoimmune diseases such as lupus and systemic sclerosis. She leads federally funded research programs and contributes to interdisciplinary initiatives in immunology and epigenetics.



Rachelle Crescenzi, PhD
*Associate Professor, Radiology and Medical
Imaging*
University of Virginia

Rachelle L. Crescenzi, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Radiology and Medical Imaging at the University of Virginia. She leads a translational imaging research program focused on reducing the burden of lymphatic disease. Her work centers on development of Sodium, Adipose, and Lymphatic Translational (SALT) MRI to evaluate sodium storage and lymphatic clearance in conditions such as lymphedema and lipedema. Through NIH-funded clinical studies, her goal is to advance noninvasive imaging tools that improve diagnosis, monitoring, and treatment of lymphatic disorders.

Current Grants: R01HL155523; R01HL157378; R35HL184172

Panel 2: Clinical Research



Jonna L. Morris, PhD, RN
Assistant Professor, School of Nursing
University of Pittsburgh

Jonna Morris, PhD, RN, is an Assistant Professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing and a faculty member of the Center for Sleep and Circadian Science. Her research examines sex differences in obstructive sleep apnea, with a focus on improving recognition and management in women. She studies symptom identification and measurement and develops strategies to support initiation and adherence to CPAP therapy. Her work aims to translate sleep science into improved diagnostic accuracy and more effective treatment approaches for women.

Grants: NHLBI & ORWH R01HL170675 (PIs: Morris/Mazzotti)



Karen Schliep, PhD, MSPH
*Associate Professor,
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine
University of Utah*

Karen C. Schliep, PhD, MSPH, is an Associate Professor at the University of Utah specializing in life-course reproductive epidemiology. Her research examines how gynecologic conditions, pregnancy complications, and cardiometabolic and psychosocial factors influence long-term reproductive and cardiovascular health. She has led NIH-funded studies on endometriosis and cardiovascular outcomes and contributes to methodological advances in electronic health record phenotyping and data science. Her work integrates epidemiology, clinical insight, and population health approaches to improve women's health outcomes.



Rebecca Arend, MD, MPH

*Endowed Professor of Gynecologic Oncology,
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
University of Alabama at Birmingham*

Rebecca Arend, MD, MPH, is the Associate Director for Clinical Trials at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) O'Neal Cancer Center. She is additionally the Endowed Professor of Gynecologic Oncology at UAB. Her work focuses on translational research in gynecologic cancers, including targeted therapy, chemoresistance, immunotherapy, and precision medicine. She leads and contributes to multiple clinical trials and institutional research programs. Her research aims to improve treatment strategies and outcomes for patients with gynecologic malignancies through integration of laboratory and clinical investigation.

Panel 3: Social and Behavioral Sciences Research

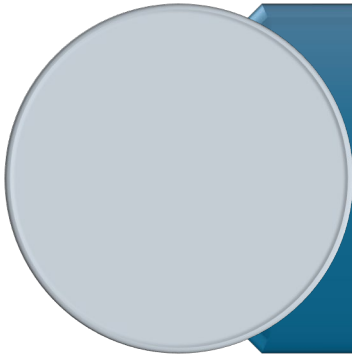


Holly J. Jones PhD, RN, MSN, APRN-CNP, FAHA

*Associate Professor
The Ohio State University*

Holly J. Jones, PhD, RN is an Advanced Practice Nurse, nurse scientist, and Associate Professor at The Ohio State University. She earned her BSN from the University of Cincinnati and her MSN and Family Nurse Practitioner certification from the University of San Diego. Dr. Jones has practiced in primary care, community health, and acute care settings, specializing in adult care and disease prevention. She completed her PhD at the University of California San Francisco where she focused on symptoms management and stress in midlife women. Her NIH funded program of research centers on the role of stress reduction on cardiovascular risk factors and the adoption of healthier lifestyle behaviors, with the goal of improving heart health in midlife women. Dr. Jones is committed to advancing evidence based, person centered strategies that empower women to optimize their cardiovascular well-being into older age.

Grant: R21NR021060



Mehret Birru Talabi, MD, PhD
Associate Professor of Medicine
University of Pittsburgh

Mehret Birru Talabi, MD, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh and a rheumatologist specializing in women's and reproductive health. Her research focuses on health services and outcomes across the reproductive life course for patients with autoimmune disease. She leads and collaborates on federally funded studies addressing pregnancy outcomes and care delivery. Her work integrates clinical care, epidemiology, and health systems research to improve outcomes for patients with complex chronic conditions.



Kamila Alexander, PhD, MSN/MPH, BSN, BS, RN
Associate Professor, School of Nursing
Johns Hopkins University

Kamila A. Alexander, PhD is Associate Professor and inaugural holder of the Natalie and Wes Bush Rising Professorship at Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. She is also Director of PhD and Postdoctoral Programs and Chair of the Mid-Atlantic Center for AIDS Research Nursing Initiative. Her research focuses on the intersecting epidemics of intimate partner violence and HIV among Black women and girls. She is Associate Editor of the 2nd edition of *Intimate Partner Violence: A Health-Based Perspective*. Her work informs policy strategies to enhance protection, safety, and health promotion practices in research and clinical practice.

Grants: R25NR021776; R01NR021528; R25HD116250

Panel 4: Implementation Science



David Chambers, DPhil
*Deputy Director for Implementation
Science, Division of Cancer Control
and Population Sciences
National Cancer Institute*

David Chambers, DPhil is Deputy Director for Implementation Science in the Office of the Director in the Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences (DCCPS) at the National Cancer Institute (NCI). Dr. Chambers manages a team focusing on efforts to build and advance the field of Implementation Science through funding opportunities, training programs, research activities, dissemination platforms, and enhancement of partnerships and networks to integrate research and practice.



María E. Fernández, PhD
*Vice President of Population Health
and Implementation Science
University of Texas Health Science Center
at Houston*

María E. Fernández, PhD, is Vice President of Population Health and Implementation Science at UTHealth Houston and Co-Director of the Institute for Implementation Science. Her research focuses on developing, evaluating, and disseminating interventions to improve health and reduce disparities, particularly in underserved populations. She has led numerous large-scale studies in cancer and chronic disease prevention and contributes extensively to the advancement of implementation science through research, leadership, and publication.

Current Grants: U54CA280804, U54CA284109, 1UM1TR004906, R01HL175636, R01HG013851, T32CA057712, R24AI191867, R21CA301364



Danielle Parrish, PhD
*Steve Hicks Professor in Addictions and
Substance Abuse Services,
School of Social Work
University of Texas at Austin*

Danielle Parrish, PhD, is the Steve Hicks Professor at the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work and Associate Director of the Health Behavior Research and Training Institute. Her research focuses on developing scalable interventions to address substance use and prevent alcohol- and substance-exposed pregnancies among vulnerable populations. Drawing on clinical experience, she designs and evaluates programs for youth and women facing barriers to care, with an emphasis on implementation and real-world impact.

Current Grants: R01DA050670

Panel 5: Multisector Partnerships and Innovation



Tania Nayak Kamphaus, PhD
*Associate Vice President, Science Partnerships
Director, Patient Engagement
Foundation for the National Institutes of Health
(FNIH)*

Tania Kamphaus, PhD, is a scientific leader at the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH), where she directs patient engagement efforts and oversees programs across metabolic disorders, inflammation and immunity, and women's health. She leads initiatives to integrate patient perspectives across the full research lifecycle and develops multi-stakeholder public-private partnerships involving NIH, FDA, nonprofit, and industry collaborators. Her portfolio includes target validation programs within Accelerating Medicines Partnerships and projects in biomarker development across several disease areas. Trained in molecular genetics and cell biology, her work focuses on strategic, collaborative approaches that advance translational and patient-centered research.



Victoria Shanmugam, MBBS, MRCP, FACR, CCD
*Director,
Office of Autoimmune Disease Research in the
Office of Research on Women's Health
National Institutes of Health*

Victoria Shanmugam, MBBS, MRCP, FACR, CCD, currently serves as the director of the Office of Autoimmune Disease Research in the Office of Research on Women's Health (OADR-ORWH). Dr. Shanmugam is an experienced physician-scientist, rheumatologist, and academic leader. She graduated from Oxford University with a B.A. in physiology and completed her medical degree at Imperial College School of Medicine in London, graduating with honors in medicine. She is a member of the Royal College of Physicians in London. Dr. Shanmugam completed the Internal Medicine Residency and Rheumatology Fellowship at Georgetown University and joined the faculty of Georgetown University School of Medicine in 2007. Dr. Shanmugam subsequently served as chief of rheumatology at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. She was the inaugural chair of the Clara Bliss Hinds Society for Women in Medicine and Health Sciences and served as chair of the Research Committee for the School of Medicine and Health Sciences. Dr. Shanmugam is widely respected in the field of autoimmune diseases, having served in multiple leadership roles for the American College of Rheumatology.



Aaron Pawlyk, PhD
*Obstetric and Pediatric Pharmacology and
Therapeutics Branch (OPPTB)*
*Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of
Child Health and Human Development*

Aaron C. Pawlyk, PhD, is Chief of the Obstetric and Pediatric Pharmacology and Therapeutics Branch (OPPTB) in the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)'s Division of Extramural Research. OPPTB supports research and training to advance the safe and effective development and use of therapeutics for pregnant women, lactating women, and children, with an emphasis on clinical pharmacology to improve dosing, safety, and effectiveness. He oversees funding mechanisms—including grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and OTAs—and leads work at the science–policy interface, supporting activities under the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act (BPCA) and guiding PRGLAC follow-up and implementation, including a National Academies study on legal, ethical, and regulatory policy issues for research involving pregnant and lactating women.



Mary Bouxsein, PhD
Department of Orthopaedic Surgery
Harvard Medical School

Mary L. Bouxsein, PhD, is the Maurice E Mueller Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery and co-director of the Center for Musculoskeletal Research at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Bouxsein's research spans both preclinical and large clinical studies, applying biomechanical principles to advance understanding of the factors that contribute to bone health and skeletal fragility. She initiated and co-leads the landmark Study to Advance BMD as a Regulatory Endpoint (SABRE), which changed the paradigm of drug development in osteoporosis by gaining FDA approval for the use of bone mineral density as a surrogate endpoint for fractures in new trials of anti-osteoporosis treatments. Dr. Bouxsein is an established leader in bone health and osteoporosis, having served as the President of the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research, Board Member of the International Osteoporosis Foundation and member of the Advisory Council for the NIAMS. She has published over 425 peer-reviewed manuscripts and 30 book chapters.
Current Grants: P30AR075042, R25DK135989, R01DK122581, R01AG06667



Meghan Pennini, PhD
*Director, Translational Science
Foundation for NIH*

Meghan Pennini, PhD is an immunologist with experience leading cross-sector programs to advance vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics. She is Director of Translational Science, Inflammation and Immunity at the Foundation for the NIH, overseeing efforts to improve outcomes in chronic inflammatory, autoimmune, and infectious diseases. Previously, she developed programs to reduce sepsis morbidity and mortality and coordinated federal responses to infectious diseases, including avian flu, Ebola, mpox, and COVID-19. Her research focuses on immune responses and therapeutic development. She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Maryland and her PhD from Case Western Reserve University.

Federal Partnerships



Dorothy Fink, MD
*Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of
the Assistant Secretary for Health*
*Director, Office on Women's Health in the Office
of the Assistant Secretary for Health*
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Dorothy Fink, MD is Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), Deputy Assistant Secretary for Women's Health and Director of the Office on Women's Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Fink brings to OASH extensive experience treating women's health issues. She is board certified in endocrinology, internal medicine, and pediatrics, and is recognized as a physician leader on topics such as diabetes, nutrition, and bone health. Previously, her clinical practice focused on women from adolescence through menopause and beyond. She is a nationally certified menopause practitioner and an expert on estrogen.

Dr. Fink has done extensive research related to women's health, including evaluation of blood markers to assist in the diagnosis of hypothalamic amenorrhea and investigating the role of diabetes in women's skeletal health. Dr. Fink has presented at national meetings on polycystic ovary syndrome, the female athlete triad, and other bone-related conditions. Most recently, Dr. Fink practiced at the Hospital for Special Surgery and New York Presbyterian Hospital, Cornell University, where she served on the faculty and worked with women to attain optimal health, treated metabolic bone conditions, and improved patients' diabetes care prior to surgery.

As a Georgetown University undergraduate focusing on health studies, Dr. Fink developed a passion for public health. She received her medical degree from Georgetown University School of Medicine. She completed her combined internal medicine and pediatrics residency at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. She then completed a National Institutes of Health post-doctoral fellowship in endocrinology and metabolism at the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. During her fellowship, Dr. Fink was selected as a Women's Health Scholar and worked at the Center for Menopause, Hormonal Disorders and Women's Health. She has published numerous peer-reviewed articles on a variety of topics, including thromboembolic disease, diabetes, and osteoporosis.



Sally Haskell, MD, MS
*Deputy Chief Officer, Office of Women's
Health*
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Sally Haskell, MD, is Deputy Chief Officer for the Office of Women's Health in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). An internal medicine physician with more than 30 years of experience, she has held multiple national leadership roles focused on advancing care for women Veterans. She served as Acting Chief Officer from July 2023 to December 2024 and previously was Deputy Chief Officer for Clinical Operations and National Director of Comprehensive Women's Health from 2013 to 2023, where she led implementation of policy and operations for comprehensive women Veterans' healthcare nationwide. Dr. Haskell has directed major policy initiatives, clinical innovations, staffing enhancements, and evidence-based quality improvement efforts. She has also overseen development of electronic health record tracking systems and other programs that have strengthened care delivery across VHA. Earlier in her career, she served as Women's Health Medical Director for VA Connecticut and VISN 1. Her background spans clinical care, education, and health services research, with more than 150 publications. She continues to practice primary care internal medicine at VA Connecticut, mentors Women's Health Research Fellows as Co-Director of the VA Connecticut Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health and is a Professor of Medicine at Yale School of Medicine. Dr. Haskell completed her MD, MS, and residency at Emory University.



Eliza Heppner, MPA
*Associate Administrator (Acting),
Maternal & Child Health Bureau*
*Health Resources and Services
Administration*

Eliza Heppner, MPA is the Acting Associate Administrator of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). In this role, she provides leadership, policy direction, and oversight for programs that promote and improve the health of mothers, infants, children, adolescents, and families, including children and youth with special health care needs. Ms. Heppner has served in multiple senior leadership roles within HRSA, including Acting Deputy Associate Administrator in the Bureau of Health Workforce, Senior Advisor in the Immediate Office of the Administrator, and Director of the Office of Strategic Initiatives. She holds a Master of Public Administration from the University of Vermont and a Bachelor of Arts from Wells College.



Kristen Honey, PhD, PMP
*Chief Data Officer, Office of the National
Coordinator for Health Information Technology
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

Kristen Honey, PhD is a Senior Executive Service leader at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she leads public-private partnerships and serves as LymeX Program Manager in the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT. She designs and scales national collaborations across government, industry, academia, foundations, and patient communities to address chronic disease, accelerate diagnostics, and improve care. A serial co-founder of initiatives including LymeX, CancerX, PandemicX, and KidneyX, she has helped mobilize significant external investment to advance AI-enabled solutions for kidney disease, tickborne illness, Long COVID, ME/CFS, and related chronic conditions that often disproportionately affect women. She previously served as HHS Chief Data Officer, leading the Office of the CDO from 2025 to 2026. In that role, she achieved full compliance with federal open data requirements, expanded HealthData.gov, and strengthened enterprise data governance to support interoperable, AI-ready systems. During COVID-19, she contributed to development of HHS Protect and supported national testing and diagnostics data efforts. Dr. Honey has held leadership roles at OMB, OSTP, FDA, and the Department of Energy. She earned her PhD from Stanford University and also holds degrees from UC Santa Cruz and Stanford.



Djenaba Joseph, MD, MPH, CAPT, USPHS
*Acting Director, National Center for Chronic
Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

CAPT Djenaba Joseph, MD, is acting director of the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP). In this role, Dr. Joseph leads an executive team that sets the strategic direction for the center's portfolio, which focuses on preventing chronic disease and promoting health through data access, health interventions, screening support, and cost-effectiveness measurement. Prior to this role, Dr. Joseph served as an Epidemic Intelligence Service officer in the Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) from 2005 to 2007 and was the medical director of the Colorectal Cancer Control Program from 2009 to 2021. She was the chief medical officer at the Arcadia Community Based Outpatient Clinic in the Atlanta VA Medical System before returning to CDC as chief of the Program Services Branch in DCPC. Most recently, she served as the acting division director for DCPC.



CDR Tina Pattara-Lau, MD, FACOG
*Maternal and Child Health Consultant,
Office of Clinical and Preventive Services
Indian Health Services*

CDR Tina Pattara-Lau, MD, FACOG leads the Maternal and Child Health program for the Indian Health Service (IHS), where she directs a multidisciplinary team of subject matter experts, develops national programs and policies, and partners with federal, tribal, and community organizations to expand access to culturally safe care. She began her IHS career in 2015 as an OB/GYN in Arizona, serving American Indian and Alaska Native communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she developed modified clinical guidelines, including telehealth prenatal care and multidisciplinary simulation training for Obstetric Readiness in the Emergency Department (ObRED).



Kaveeta Vasisht, MD, PharmD
*Associate Commissioner for Women's
Health
Food and Drug Administration*

Kaveeta Vasisht, PhD, PharmD is the Associate Commissioner for Women's Health at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). She is responsible for directing the Office of Women's Health (OWH) at the FDA through scientific programs, research, education and outreach efforts. Prior to joining the Office of Women's Health, Dr. Vasisht served as Deputy Director for the Division of Clinical Trial Quality in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research's Office of Medical Policy. There, she led multi-stakeholder collaborations to improve clinical trial design, quality, and methodologies across the agency. She began her FDA career in the Office of New Drugs as a clinical expert in the Division of Metabolism and Endocrine Products, contributing to multidisciplinary review teams. Dr. Vasisht is board certified in internal medicine and adult endocrinology. She completed her residency and fellowship in endocrinology, diabetes, and metabolism at the University of Chicago Hospitals, where she also served as a clinical instructor. She holds a Doctor of Pharmacy degree and completed a hospital pharmacy residency, in addition to earning her medical degree from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She has received multiple honors, including the 2023 Health Public Service Visionary Award.



Berlina Wallace-Berube, MACP, MEd, LPC, NCC
*Senior Public Health Advisor, Center for
Substance Abuse Treatment*
*Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
Administration*

Berlina Wallace-Berube, MAPC, MEd, LPC, NCC is a Senior Public Health Advisor at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) where she leads initiatives focused on women’s behavioral health; children, youth, and families; eating disorders; and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASD). Ms. Wallace-Berube co-leads the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Substance-Exposed Pregnancies Workgroup and serves as a SAMHSA Alternate Representative on the Interagency Coordinating Committee on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (ICCFASD). Previously, she was a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellow and held senior leadership roles as the Director of the Primary Care Office, and Director of the Division of Behavioral Health, Alcoholism & Drug Dependency Services at the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Health. She is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC) and a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC).



Elizabeth M. Yano, PhD, MSPH
*Director, Health Services Research
Center for the Study of Healthcare
Innovation, Implementation & Policy*
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Elizabeth M. Yano, PhD is Director of the VA HSR Center for the Study of Healthcare Innovation, Implementation & Policy at the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System. She is also Professor-in-Residence and Endowed Chair in the Department of Medicine at the UCLA Geffen School of Medicine, and Professor-in-Residence in the Department of Health Policy and Management at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health. She is widely recognized for research on organizational factors affecting quality of care and patient experience in VA primary care and women’s health, as well as for advancing evidence-based quality improvement and implementation of new care models. Dr. Yano directs the National VA Women’s Health Research Network, overseeing a consortium of more than 480 researchers and stakeholders, and co-leads a Women’s Health Practice-Based Research Network spanning 77 VA medical centers. Her work focuses on accelerating the design, conduct, and application of research to improve women Veterans’ health care and inform policy. A VA HSR Senior Research Career Scientist Awardee, she has received numerous honors, including the VA Under Secretary for Health Award for Outstanding Achievement in Health Services Research and UCLA Fielding School’s Breslow Lifetime Achievement Award. She has published over 325 papers and led federally funded research for more than 30 years.

Honoring Dr. Pinn



Devon Valera, MA
Collections Manager and Curator
Office of NIH History and Stetten Museum

Devon Valera is a curator and collections manager at the Office of NIH History and Stetten Museum. She first joined the office as an intern in 2021 and transferred to a permanent position after receiving her MA in Museum Studies from George Washington University in 2022. She manages ONHM's object collection which contains over 4,500 historical artifacts from across NIH history. In addition, she supports the senior curator in educational outreach, historical research, and exhibition production.



Loren E. Miller, PhD
Senior Curator
Office of NIH History and Stetten Museum

Loren E. Miller, PhD, is the Senior Curator at the Office of NIH History and Stetten Museum (ONHM). She comes to ONHM from the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History & Culture, where she was a museum specialist and contributed to exhibitions, collecting, publications, and public programs. As a curator and historian at the National Library of Medicine from 2012 to 2016, she worked on a wide range of highly successful exhibits, teaching plans, and digital content. Throughout her career, Miller has collaborated with a broad range of museums and cultural institutions in a curatorial capacity, some of which include the National Building Museum, the National Park Service, and the Securities Exchange Commission Historical Society.

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Chair, Panel 2: Clinical Research

Shari Feirman, PhD, Office of Research on Women's Health, NIH
Chair, Panel 3: Social and Behavioral Sciences Research

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The NIH Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH)

Established in September 1990, the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) serves as the focal point for health research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). For over 35 years, ORWH has worked across NIH and beyond to advance our understanding of biological and social factors influencing women's health and disease, support individuals in biomedical careers, and stimulate research to improve overall health.