



Equity at the Table: Women Leaders in Healthcare, Research & Education

Panelists



Aimee Afable, Ph.D., MPH

Dr. Afable is Associate Dean for Community Engagement and Associate Professor of Community Health Sciences in the School of Public Health, Downstate Health Sciences University.

For over 14 years, Dr. Afable's research has critically examined conceptual frameworks used to understand health disparities and health inequities. Her work has documented the declining health advantage with increasing stay among US immigrants and has questioned the validity of the Healthy Immigrant Paradox.

Dr. Afable's current research program centers on action-oriented research. She partners with communities in the co-design of urban health interventions to address some of NYC's most pressing public health challenges including those that intersect with the US digital divide and the disproportionate burden of chronic disease and death among historically marginalized populations and communities. She currently leads two NIH studies that leverage community assets to inform the design of novel solutions aimed at reversing historical inequities in chronic disease and maternal death/morbidity in NYC.

Dr. Afable serves as a Board member for two local community-based organizations: Live Light Live Right and Kings Against Violence Initiative.



Amal Amar-Alattaby, DM, CNM, LM, OBGYN NP

Dr. Amar-Alattaby is a Certified Nurse Midwife and Women's Health Nurse Practitioner with nearly two decades of experience in women's healthcare. She earned her Master of Science in Midwifery from Stony Brook University in 2009 and a Doctorate in Midwifery from Jefferson University in 2023. She is committed to the midwifery model of care, emphasizing compassionate, evidence-based services to improve patient outcomes. Her clinical experience includes leadership, teaching, and mentorship roles in hospitals and private practices across New York.

Dr. Amar-Alattaby is a Clinical Assistant Professor and Clinical Coordinator for SUNY Downstate's Midwifery Program, where she oversees clinical sites and teaches courses on antepartum care, reproductive health, midwifery management, and healthcare policy.

Previously, she served as Director of Midwifery and Advanced Practice Nursing in Women's Health at NYU Langone Brooklyn Hospital, where she led

clinical services and promoted prenatal care. She is actively involved in community outreach, particularly among Brooklyn's Arab-speaking population, and advocates for breastfeeding education.

In recognition of her contributions, she received the American College of Nurse Midwives Outstanding Preceptor Award in 2020.

Through her leadership, clinical expertise, and community engagement, Dr. Amar-Alattaby continues to advance women's health and midwifery education.



Denise M. Bruno, M.D., MPH

Dr. Bruno is a distinguished leader in public health and pediatrics, currently serving as Chair and Associate Professor of the Department of Health Policy and Management at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University.

Dr. Bruno earned her Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey and a Master of Public Health in International Health from the Harvard School of Public Health. She completed her pediatrics residency at Children's National Medical Center and is board certified in pediatrics.

Prior to joining Downstate Health Sciences University, Dr. Bruno held many healthcare leadership positions, including Regional Medical Director of Brooklyn Child Health Clinics NYC, Director of Child Health Services at the Westchester County Department of Health, and Lead Clinician, SSC Pediatrics at All Kinds of Minds, NY.

With extensive training in pediatrics and public health, Dr. Bruno focuses on preventable diseases, particularly immunizations. She collaborates with

healthcare providers and communities to identify barriers to quality healthcare access, aiming to develop evidence-based interventions that enhance care accessibility and quality.

In her role at SUNY Downstate, Dr. Bruno teaches courses such as "Issues in the Health of Immigrant Populations" and "Health Promotion Seminar." Her research focuses on barriers to HPV vaccination, especially among racial and ethnic minority groups and immigrant populations. Her work has demonstrated the importance of tailored intervention strategies to address vaccine hesitancy. She also examines the impact of restrictive policies on immigrant families' healthcare access.

Her commitment to improving healthcare access and quality has significantly impacted public health policies and practices, particularly in underserved communities.



Marlene Camacho-Rivera, ScD, MS, MPH

Dr. Camacho-Rivera is an Assistant Professor and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in the Department of Community Health Sciences at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University. She holds a BS in Biology and Society from Cornell University, an MPH in Health Policy and Management from Tufts University, and ScM and ScD degrees in Social Epidemiology from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

A social epidemiologist, Dr. Camacho-Rivera's research examines structural and social determinants of chronic disease disparities among urban racial and ethnic minority communities. She explores within-group differences in chronic disease outcomes among Latino populations and develops community-based interventions to improve prevention and self-management.

Committed to strengthening the public health workforce, she integrates structural and social determinants of health into training programs for future professionals. She teaches courses on urban health and community intervention research, focusing on health disparities and evidence-based solutions.

Dr. Camacho-Rivera's work has been recognized nationally. She received the Herbert W. Nickens Faculty Fellowship from the Association of American Medical Colleges for her efforts to address inequities in medical education and healthcare. Additionally, she was awarded a SUNY Prepare Innovation Seed Grant for research on COVID-19 preparedness.

Her scholarship, research, and leadership exemplify a dedication to health equity, chronic disease prevention, and fostering a diverse and well-trained public health workforce.



Shushawna DeOliveira, DHA, MPA

Dr. Shushawna DeOliveira is Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Program Operations and Quality is a distinguished leader in healthcare education and academic administration. As Associate Dean and Associate Professor for Program Operations and Quality in the School of Health Professions at SUNY Downstate, she drives strategic initiatives that enhance academic quality, streamline operations, and support student success.

Dr. DeOliveira's career at SUNY Downstate spans leadership roles in enrollment, graduate medical education, and institutional operations. She previously served as Assistant Dean for the Office of Graduate Medical Education, collaborating with faculty and leadership to strengthen residency programs. Her expertise in curriculum development, accreditation, and program evaluation has positioned her as a key figure in ensuring institutional excellence.

An innovative educator, Dr. DeOliveira is a SUNY Online Teaching Fellow known for redesigning interdisciplinary courses to foster inclusive, dynamic learning environments. Her research explores healthcare education, cultural competency, and student success, and she actively mentors students in research and professional development.

Beyond academia, Dr. DeOliveira is deeply committed to community engagement, participating in health fairs, student outreach, and admissions initiatives. She holds a doctorate in leadership from Central Michigan University and is widely recognized for her work in systems design, regulatory compliance, and faculty development. Through her leadership, she continues to advance institutional effectiveness and shape the next generation of healthcare professionals.



Teresa Y. Smith, M.D., MSED, FACEP

Dr. Teresa Smith is the Interim Chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at SUNY Downstate and a Clinical Emergency Medicine professor who works clinically at the University Hospital of Downstate and Kings County Hospital. Previously, she was the Designated Institutional Official (DIO), overseeing approximately 1,000 house staff physicians across the campus for four years.

Dr. Smith has dedicated her career to championing diversity, equity, and inclusion in medicine. She has authored numerous articles addressing DEI and the diversification of the physician workforce. She has been a consultant to accreditation agencies and state and national governmental bodies for her expertise.

Dr. Smith was honored as one of the National Minority Quality Forum's 40 Under 40 Minority Leaders in 2019. In 2022, she led the institution in receiving the ACGME's Barbara Ross-Lee, DO Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Award. In 2023, she was awarded a Josiah

Macy Foundation President Grant for her efforts to create inclusive clinical learning environments. She also received the Dr. Dale Blackstock Award in Teaching and Excellence for her dedication to mentoring medical students and trainees.

Dr. Smith earned her undergraduate degree from Spelman College before pursuing her M.D. at NYU School of Medicine. She completed her residency in emergency medicine at NYU/Bellevue Hospital, where she gained extensive clinical training. To further specialize, Dr. Smith completed a fellowship in Emergency Ultrasound at SUNY Downstate. Later, she earned a Master's in Medical Education from the University of Pennsylvania and is pursuing a Master's in Business and Health Service Administration from SUNY Oswego.



Shannon (Shay) Walter, DNP, MSN, RN, NE-BC, CPHQ

Dr. Shay Walter is Director, Quality and Performance Improvement Department of Quality, Risk, Regulatory, and Safety, and a dedicated nurse leader focused on patient safety, quality improvement, and healthcare innovation. As Director of Quality and Performance Improvement at University Hospital at Downstate (UHD), she leads initiatives that enhance care delivery, staff engagement, and hospital efficiency.

Dr. Walter began her career as a night shift staff nurse after earning her BSN from Temple University. She advanced to charge nurse, night supervisor, and manager of a progressive care step-down ICU, demonstrating strong leadership. While earning her MSN in Leadership, she championed patient safety initiatives, including fall prevention, CAUTI/CLABSI reduction, and hospital-tiered huddles.

In 2023, she assumed her current role, driving continuous improvement efforts. She created

“Thankful Thursdays,” a bi-weekly newsletter celebrating patient commendations and peer recognition. She also leads UHD’s LiveOnNY organ and tissue donation programs and chairs the Safety & Quality Council (SQC), mentoring MSN and DNP students in performance improvement and leadership.

Dr. Walter’s expertise spans progressive care, ICU, and outpatient settings. She holds multiple certifications, including Nursing Executive (NE-BC), Certified Professional in Healthcare Quality (CPHQ), and Lean Six Sigma specialist. Her DNP research on Chlorhexidine Gluconate (CHG) bathing to reduce CLABSIs was published in an academic journal. She actively collaborates with SUNY Downstate’s College of Nursing and will complete a Clinical Quality Fellowship Program (CQFP) this Spring.

Moderators



Diahann Billings-Burford, J.D.

Diahann Billings-Burford is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of RISE (Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality), a nonprofit organization that leverages the power of sports to promote social justice and improve race relations. Throughout her career, she has been a nationally recognized change agent, working across sectors to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion.

A Brooklyn, New York native, Billings-Burford attended Poly Prep Country Day School. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Yale University in 1994 and a Juris Doctor from Columbia Law School in 2002.

Before joining RISE, Billings-Burford held significant roles in public service and the private sector. In 2009, she was appointed by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg as New York City’s first Chief Service Officer, leading NYC Service, an initiative promoting volunteerism and civic engagement. Following public service, she

served as Executive Director of Cultural Investments and Vice President of the Time Warner Foundation, directing philanthropic strategies and employee community engagement programs.

As CEO of RISE, Billings-Burford collaborates with sports leagues, athletes, educators, and community leaders to develop programs addressing systemic racism and championing social justice. Under her leadership, RISE has expanded its impact, using sports as a platform to inspire dialogue and societal change.

Her dedication to community engagement and social equity has earned her recognition as a transformative leader committed to harnessing sports to build a more inclusive, equitable society.



Andrea Shapiro Davis, J.D.

Ms. Andrea Shapiro Davis is a seasoned public servant with a distinguished career in public administration and higher education. She currently serves as Senior Advisor to the Mayor and Director of Public Service Engagement for New York City, a role she assumed in January 2022 under Mayor Eric Adams.

Prior to her appointment, Ms. Davis held leadership roles at the City University of New York (CUNY), serving as Interim Vice Chancellor for University Advancement and Associate Vice Chancellor for Corporate, Foundation, and Major Gift Development. In these roles, she was instrumental in fostering partnerships and advancing the university's mission. Her commitment to public service is evident in her tenure under Mayor Michael Bloomberg, where she served as Special Advisor to the Mayor, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Appointments, and Executive Director of the NYC Commission on Women's Issues. She played a pivotal role in shaping policies that addressed key urban challenges. Ms. Davis's legal career includes experience as an Assistant District Attorney in Queens County

and private practice, providing her with a strong foundation in legal affairs.

She earned her undergraduate degree from Queens College and a Juris Doctor from Hofstra University School of Law.

Throughout her career, Andrea Shapiro Davis has been dedicated to enhancing public service, promoting diversity, and fostering educational advancement, making her a key figure in New York City's civic landscape.