



Once Upon A Premie Inc.
Accelerating Health and Racial Equity in Black
Maternal and Neonatal Care Conference
November 17, 2022

SPEAKER BIOS



Abiola Animashaun-Amutah, MPH is a dedicated and experienced program manager, health policy analyst and strategic collaboration facilitator with notable leadership experience in Medicaid, health equity and maternal health disparity reduction programs. She has spent the last fourteen years serving as a public health champion for women, children, and other marginalized populations in the United States. Abiola currently serves as the Project Manager for the state's new Maternal Care Quality Collaborative in the Office of Population Health. In this role, she provides program management, policy development, data review and program synthesis support for NJDOH's State Maternal Health Innovation program (SMHIP), a HRSA-funded program focused on maternal health innovation strategies. Abiola also leads the state's Premature Birth Prevention Program (PBPP), a CDC-funded Preventative Health Block Grant program to improve maternal health and decrease the risk of preterm births for vulnerable infants.



Dr. Emilia Garcia, DNP, RNC-NIC is currently employed at Covenant Children's Hospital in Lubbock, TX in the role of Neonatal Program Manager, responsible for maintaining the standards of a Level IV NICU mandated by the State of Texas. Her passion is building a culture of clinical scholarship and the translation of evidence-based practices to the bedside to promote and advocate for equitable, respectful, and quality care for the neonatal population and their families. Prior to serving in this role, Emilia served the neonatal population as a bedside nurse, transport team member, and as a charge nurse at Covenant Children's NICU for 20 years. Emilia is currently a member of the following National and State Organizations: American Organization for Nursing Leadership, Texas Organization for Nursing Leadership, National Association of Neonatal Nurses, National Association of Hispanic Nurses, and Sigma Theta Tau International.



Dr. Mitchell Goldstein, MD, MBA, CML, FAAP was born in Hollywood, CA and has lived in Southern California for most of his life. He attended the University of Miami's Honor Program in Medical Education under an Isaac B. Singer full tuition scholarship, completed his pediatric residency training at the University of California, Los Angeles, and finished his Neonatal Perinatal Medicine training at the University of California, Irvine in 1994. Dr. Goldstein is board certified in both Pediatrics and Neonatal Perinatal Medicine. He is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital and emeritus medical director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Citrus Valley in West Covina, CA. He is a past president of the Perinatal Advisory Council, Legislation, Advocacy and Consultation (PACLAC) as well as a past president of the National Perinatal Association (NPA). Dr. Goldstein is the twice recipient of the annual Jack Haven Emerson Award presented to the physician with the most promising study involving innovative pulmonary research and the 2013 recipient of the National Perinatal Association Stanley Graven lifetime achievement award presented for his ongoing commitment to the advancement of neonatal and perinatal health issues. He is the editor of PACLAC's Neonatal Guidelines of Care as well as the Principal author of both the National Perinatal Association's 2011 Best Practice Checklist – Oxygen Management for Preterm Infants and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Prophylaxis 2012 Guidelines. Dr. Goldstein serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Perinatology as well as Neonatology Today, has represented the NPA to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) perinatal section, and is a moderator of NICU-NET, a neonatal listserv.

He is an executive board member and is on the nominations committee for the Section on Advances in Therapeutics & Technology (SOATI) of the AAP. Dr. Goldstein chaired the NPA National Conferences in 2004, 2008 and 2011 and continues to be active in conference planning as the CME Continuing Medical Education (CME) chair for PACLAC. His research interests include the development of non-invasive monitoring techniques, evaluation of signal propagation during high frequency ventilation, and data mining techniques for improving quality of care. Dr. Goldstein has also been a vocal advocate for RSV prophylaxis and "right" sizing technology for the needs of neonates. Dr. Goldstein's recent publications have included "Critical Complex Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD)" which was dual published in Neonatology Today and Congenital Cardiology Today, the "Late Preterm Guidelines of Care" published in the Journal of Perinatology, and "Safety and Quality: Are they compatible?" published in Neonatology Today.



Jenné Johns, MPH, is a national health equity thought leader, author and advocate for reducing healthcare disparities. While advocating for the needs of her own son, Jenné wrote, “Once Upon a Premie”, the first of its kind children’s book written for parents of preemies while in the NICU. A graduate of the Disparities Leadership Program at Harvard University Medical School, Jenné has over a decade of experience advocating for policy, and community changes to improve health equity and health outcomes for low-income communities. She also led quality improvement and health equity transformation strategies with the nation's largest health insurance companies. Jenné is President of Once Upon A Premie, Inc. and Founder of Once Upon A Premie Academy, the first and only virtual training academy focused on delivering health and racial equity educational programs for perinatal and neonatal healthcare professionals.



Dr. Terri Major-Kincade, MD, MPH is a double board-certified neonatologist and pediatrician with over 20 years’ experience as a clinician, perinatal health disparities advocate, and neonatal palliative care and perinatal hospice provider currently based in Dallas, Texas. A native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, she holds an MD MPH from the UCLA School of Medicine and completed her Pediatric Residency and Neonatology Training at UT Southwestern and UT Houston. She was first introduced to America as a young neonatologist featured on ABC’s Houston Medical who navigated balancing medicine, marriage and motherhood through both joy and tears in caring for her patients. She has expertise in health equity and racial health disparities and has led several outreach initiatives to improve maternal and neonatal outcomes through partnerships with the March of Dimes Texas. As a national thought leader in perinatal health disparities, Dr Terri serves as a National Board Member for the Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance where she leads their DEI efforts and Return to Zero-Hope Clinical Advisory Board where she advocates for Neonatal Bereavement Resources for marginalized populations and on the Pampers Womb to World National Advisory Board where she has developed several resources related to improved Black Maternal Health Outcomes. She is an Amazon Best Selling Author for her Book “Early Arrival: 9 Things Parents Need to Know About Life in the ICU Nursery” and recently launched her 1st Children’s Book, “Big Sis Visits the NICU.” Most recently Dr. Terri took a one-year sabbatical to complete formal training in Pediatric Hospice and Palliative Medicine. She looks forward to the day when every newborn is born healthy, and no family has to say goodbye to their baby.



Deidre McDaniel, MSW, LCSW is the President & Founder of Health Equity Resources and Strategies (H.E.R.S.). With over 20 years of experience in maternal & child health, Deidre McDaniel provides guidance to healthcare systems and public/private organizations on how to successfully implement and sustain equitable programs to address disparities. Deidre is also a PhD Candidate at Morgan State University, with research interests in antiracist healthcare practices and eliminating disparities in birth outcomes for Black women. As a licensed certified social worker, she has dedicated her career to improving health outcomes for women and children; and as a leader in the field, she utilizes effective communication, and sound content expertise to assist organizations with operationalizing their visions for creating innovative cultures of equity.



Julian Nixon is an award-winning STEM educator, speaker, diversity leader, thought leader, and NICU dad. He has engaged listeners and learners through TEDx stages, radio shows, national conferences, universities, and more. His impressive years of experience have allowed him to walk in the shoes of a college professor, community leader, children's hospital council member, diversity leader, author, and advocate. His hard work doesn't stop there. Mr. Nixon spends his off-hours writing his dissertation and enjoying time with his wife and daughter. He is currently the Director of Diversity & Inclusion for the College of Agriculture, Forestry & Life Sciences at Clemson University.



Dr. Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha PhD, MPH, CHES is the Julia A. Okoro Professor of Black Maternal Health in the Department of Public Health and Community Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine. Founder and Director of the Center of Black Maternal Health and Reproductive Justice, and the Maternal Outcomes for Translational Health Equity Research (MOTHER) Lab, Dr. Amutah-Onukagha's research investigates maternal health disparities, reproductive health and social justice, and HIV/AIDS as experienced by Black women. Her work has been presented in 45 manuscripts, 5 book chapters, a best-selling book on Amazon, a textbook on culturally responsive evaluation, and has been featured across media platforms including The Lancet, TEDx, USA Today, and MSNBC. Currently, she is Principal Investigator of two multi-year studies on maternal mortality and morbidity, an R01 funded by National Institutes of Health and an interdisciplinary grant on health equity funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Dr. Amutah-Onukagha lives in Massachusetts with her husband and two sons.



Ashley Randolph is the African-American mother of 3 preemies, founder of GLO Preemies (www.GloPreemies.org), co-Founder of the Alliance for Black NICU Families and Chair to California Perinatal Quality Care Collaborative. She is currently Mrs. America's Virtuous Woman. She is the author of her autobiography "Black, Pregnant, and Shamed" about her experiences with her 3 high-risk pregnancies and preterm births. It is her mission to provide continuous and complete family centered care to African-American families in low income communities nationwide.



Tiffani Simmons is a practicing attorney for over twelve years, licensed in both the states of New York and New Jersey. Currently, Tiffani holds the role of Assistant Attorney General and Syndications Counsel at the Office of the Attorney General of the State of New York where she specializes in affordable housing. Tiffani has long been an advocate for marginalized and low-income communities. Previously, Tiffani held positions at Goldman Sachs and Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy, LLP, a large international law firm. Tiffani received her J.D. from Hofstra University School of Law and her B.B.A. from Temple University, Fox School of Business. Tiffani is a mom of two young children, including a baby boy who was born at 32 weeks gestation and stayed 22 days in the NICU. Having struggled with postpartum depression after the births of both of her children, Tiffani is passionate about creating improvements in the area of perinatal mental health for all moms, especially black moms who often suffer from "weathering" and experience inequitable treatment when attempting to obtain healthcare. Tiffani has held many titles over the years but the title that she is most proud of is "mom" and now, she gets to add "NICU mom" to her resume.



Selena Tisdale is the Founder/ Director of Eli Collins Foundation For Premature Babies. Selena founded Eli Collins Foundation in 2016 after the loss of her son who was born premature, and her 5 month journey. She decided she wanted to be able to assist other families along their preemie journey.



Dr. Valencia P. Walker, MD, MPH recently joined Nationwide Children's Hospital as Associate Chief Diversity and Health Equity Officer. She also holds joint appointments as Associate Division Chief of Health Equity and Inclusion for the Division of Neonatology and Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the Department of Pediatrics at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. A practicing neonatologist, she champions the elimination of maternal and infant health inequities. Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther tapped Dr. Walker to join Celebrate One's Strategic Planning Operational Working Group which focuses on decreasing infant mortality rates, particularly for Black babies in the Columbus, Ohio area. A physician leader within organized medicine, Dr. Walker was newly elected to the Executive Committee of the AAP's Section on Minority Health Equity and Inclusion, in addition to her current position as Program Chair for the Section. Previously, she served as president for the Association of Black Women Physicians, a nonprofit organization dedicated to diversifying the physician workforce, advocating for under-resourced communities and promoting health equity. Dr. Walker completed her undergraduate studies at Florida A&M University and obtained her medical degree from Emory University School of Medicine. She finished a Pediatrics residency at UT Memphis and a Neonatology fellowship at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. Prior to joining Nationwide Children's Hospital, she was an Assistant Dean of Equity and Diversity Inclusion for the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and received a MPH in Health Policy from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.



Jatesha "Jaye" Wilson, LPN is a multifaceted social entrepreneur. She is a Community Health Nurse (LPN), dynamic public speaker, published author, thought leader and the Founding President and CEO of Melinated Moms. In her professional career, Jaye applied the power of advocacy through lobbying on the state and federal level as a community health advocate for marginalized communities. Gaining a strong understanding of the importance of advocacy, Jaye applied these principles to grow the community of Melinated Moms. Of all her titles and accolades, the proudest title she holds is mother. She is the mother to two brilliant girls who motivate her to continue to change the world every day. That desire continues to serve as the organization's foundation and legacy.

MODERATOR



TaRhonda Thomas comes to Action News from Denver, Colorado. She joined the team as a reporter in February 2019 and was named Action News' first Race and Culture Reporter in March 2021. Before working in Denver, TaRhonda was an anchor and reporter in Richmond, Virginia. She also reported and anchored in Colorado Springs after beginning her television career in Morgan City, Louisiana. TaRhonda is an alumna of Louisiana State University (Geaux Tigers!) and earned her Master's Degree in Media, Film and Journalism Studies from the University of Denver. TaRhonda is also a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. The Louisiana native has earned national and regional recognition including awards from the Associated Press, Edward R. Murrow Awards, Heartland Emmys and the National Association of Black Journalists. When she's not reporting the news, TaRhonda spends countless weekends cheering for her three children in their never-ending sports and activities. She enjoys spending time with her husband (a Philadelphia-area native), exercising, reading (historical non-fiction is a favorite), shopping and visiting her parents in Louisiana.

EMCEE



Racquel Williams is KYW's Community Impact reporter. She comes to us from Beasley Media New Jersey where she served as News Director and Morning News anchor for their New Jersey cluster, as well as Brand Manager and Assistant Digital Program Director for WCTC, where she hosted the community affairs program "Community Outreach." Racquel began her radio career at her college station at Fairleigh Dickinson University and went on to several New Jersey stations including New Jersey 101.5, where she served as afternoon anchor for a decade. Other stops include New York's FM News 101.9 and iHeartMedia's 710 WOR and the national 24/7 News Source. Racquel has won several awards from organizations such as the Associated Press, New Jersey Broadcasters Association, and Garden State Association of Black Journalists. She is currently a member of the New Jersey Society of Professional Journalists and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Racquel lives in South Jersey with her husband, their two daughters and pet Holland Lop bunny, Bennie.