



# Speaker Profiles



**Alison Betty** is the co-founder of Betty & Smith, a Washington, DC-based consulting firm specializing in political and issue-based strategic communications and management. She concentrates on consumer-oriented and values-based health care communications. Her current and former clients include: the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the David and Lucile Packard foundation, AARP, Washington Health Plan Finder, Maryland Health Connection, Vermont Health Connect, DC Health Link, the Department of Health and Human Services, Bipartisan Policy Center, Enroll America, Zero to Three, the American Hospital Association, American Medical Association, and University of Washington Medicine. Ms. Betty was previously a partner at GMMB, a strategic communications firm. Prior to that, she worked in non-profit fundraising and sponsorship for Share Our Strength, an anti-hunger organization, and the National Campaign to Protect Youth violence. Ms. Betty holds a bachelor's in political science from Indiana University, Bloomington.



**Meg Bostrom** is a veteran communications strategist with a unique perspective resulting from her rich and varied experiences as communicator, public opinion analyst, advertising agency executive, and political consultant. As cofounder of the Topos Partnership, she has researched public opinion and analyzed communications strategies on a wide range of social issues.



**Frederick Cerise** is President and Chief Executive Officer of Parkland Health & Hospital System. Prior to joining Parkland, Dr. Cerise served as Vice President for Health Affairs and Medical Education of the Louisiana State University System. From 2004 to 2007, Dr. Cerise was Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals. He began his career at the Earl K. Long Medical Center, Baton Rouge, Louisiana between 1991 and 2004 as an LSU Clinical Faculty member in Internal Medicine. From 2010 to 2016 he served on the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured and currently serves on the Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission. Dr. Cerise holds a bachelor's degree from University of Notre Dame and earned his Medical Degree at Louisiana State University in New Orleans. He completed a residency in Internal Medicine at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. In 2011, he earned a master's degree from the Harvard University School of Public Health.



**Ali Glazer** works with Whole Whale’s marketing and advertising team to help nonprofits use social platforms and digital advertising strategies to increase their reach and impact. During her time at Whole Whale, Ms. Glazer has executed digital advertising campaigns for organizations including Greater Than AIDS, Cancer Research Institute, National Stroke Association and more. She has spent over \$300,000 in ad dollars to drive impact through resource distribution, volunteer recruitment, and the growth of online communities. Certified in Google AdWords and Google Analytics, she has managed over \$1.5 million of Google AdWords grant dollars, helping nonprofits grow and measure the metrics that matter most. She has successfully maxed out the grant and increased conversion rates for over 10 nonprofits, in one instance increasing volunteer registrations by over 250% in just 3 months. She also trains clients and the nonprofit community on all things AdWords and won’t rest until every nonprofit is using the grant effectively.



**Chris Jennings** leads Jennings Policy Strategies, a nationally-respected health care consulting firm committed to assisting foundations, purchasers, health systems, and other aligned stakeholders develop policies to ensure higher quality, more affordable, and sustainable health care. Mr. Jennings is an over three decades-long health policy veteran of the White House, the Congress and the private sector. In 2014, he departed from his second tour of duty in the White House where he served President Obama as Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy and Coordinator of Health Reform. He served in a similar capacity in the Clinton White House for nearly eight years. Outside of government service, Mr. Jennings has been a senior health policy advisor to seven Presidential campaigns, the 2008 and 2016 Democratic Platform Drafting Committees, and multiple gubernatorial and Senate candidates.



**Marcus Johnson** is Vitalyst Health Foundation’s Director of State Health Policy and Advocacy. Mr. Johnson is responsible for initiatives regarding access to care and coverage, workforce development and advocacy efforts. His work focuses on achieving Vitalyst Health Foundation’s policy goals at a state and federal level. His responsibilities include convening and engaging the community to identify or advance public policy goals, analyzing and educating the community on state and federal health policy issues, writing or overseeing policy-related research or publications, and managing grants or contracts aimed at achieving Vitalyst Health Foundation’s policy objectives. Mr. Johnson also oversees efforts aimed at strengthening the analytic infrastructure for policy analysis in the state, and provides support to bolster advocacy capacity among community partners. He has significant experience addressing systemic issues that ultimately affect health. His contributions have led to numerous policy and systems changes in health care, behavioral

health and public health, including the building of effective partnerships between the health care and public health sectors.



**Patricia Mathews** is the first President and CEO of Northern Virginia Health Foundation, a private foundation created in 2005 whose mission is to improve the health and health care of residents of Northern Virginia, with particular emphasis on the health of the uninsured. In addition to grantmaking, Ms. Mathews' role at the foundation includes developing coalitions and collaboratives. Prior to joining the foundation, Ms. Mathews served for more than seven years as Executive Director, Community Relations at Kaiser Permanente—Mid-Atlantic States, where she managed more than \$12 million annually in charitable assets and oversaw programs that provided charitable health care to more than 5,000 uninsured adults and children, and helped to develop a strategic framework for addressing the issues of healthy eating/active living in the region. During her career, Ms. Mathews has held a variety of senior-level positions including Vice President for Programs, National AIDS Fund; President, National Bank of Washington Foundation; and Editorial Writer, The Washington Post. Ms. Mathews received a bachelor's from George Washington University, and completed two years of the master's program in urban planning at Howard University. She is also a graduate of the Advanced Leadership Program at the Kenan-Flagler School of Business at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.



**Ann McMillan** is a Program Director at Grantmakers In Health (GIH) with a primary focus on health reform. Prior to joining GIH, Ms. McMillan was a Senior Program Associate at the Michigan Public Health Institute in Okemos, Michigan, where she served as Project Coordinator for Covering Michigan's Kids and Families, part of a national health access initiative funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to improve outreach, simplification, and coordination to low-income, uninsured children and their families. She has also held positions as Program Associate at the Center for Effective Public Policy and as a Crisis Area Manager and Counselor at a domestic violence shelter. Ms. McMillan received both her bachelor and master's degrees in social work from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan.



**Faith Mitchell** is President and CEO of Grantmakers In Health (GIH). Previously she served as Vice President for Program and Strategy at the organization. Before joining GIH, Dr. Mitchell was Senior Program Officer at the Institute of Medicine (IOM) where she was responsible for the health disparities portfolio. Dr. Mitchell spent 12 years at the National Academies, both at the IOM and as a Center Director in the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Education. She has also held leadership positions at the U.S. Department of State, The San Francisco Foundation, and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Throughout her career, Dr. Mitchell has worked on the application of social science to domestic and international public policy, health policy, and programs. She has written numerous blog

posts on health-related topics, coauthored the article *Philanthropy And Disparities: Progress, Challenges, And Unfinished Business*, and coedited several reports, including *Examining the Health Disparities Research Plan of the National Institutes of Health: Unfinished Business; Multiple Origins, Uncertain Destinies: Hispanics and the American Future; Hispanics and the Future of America; Terrorism: Perspectives from the Behavioral and Social Sciences; Discouraging Terrorism: Some Implications of 9/11; America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences; Governance and Opportunity in Metropolitan America; and Premature Death in the New Independent States*. Dr. Mitchell holds a doctorate in medical anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley.



**Karen Pollitz** is a Senior Fellow at the Kaiser Family Foundation. She works on the Program for the Study of Health Reform and Private Insurance, tracking implementation of private market reforms with a focus on consumer protections. Prior to joining the foundation, she worked at the United States Department of Health and Human Services on national health reform and directed research on private health insurance at the Georgetown University Health Policy Institute. She has a master's in public policy in Public Policy from the University of California, Berkeley, and a bachelor's from Oberlin College.



**Trish Riley** is Executive Director of the National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) and President of its corporate board. She helped build NASHP as CEO from 1988-2003. Previously, she was a Distinguished Fellow in State Health Policy at George Washington University and taught in the graduate program at the Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine. She also previously served as Director of the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance, and was the principal architect of Dirigo Health Reform and served as the state's liaison to the federal government and Congress, particularly during deliberations around national health reform. Ms. Riley has also held appointive positions under five Maine governors—directing the aging office, Medicaid and state health agencies, and health planning and licensing programs. Ms. Riley holds a bachelor's and master's from the University of Maine.



**Julie Rovner** is Chief Washington Correspondent with Kaiser Health News (KHN) and the Robin Toner Distinguished Fellow. She joined KHN after 16 years as health policy correspondent for NPR, where she helped lead the network's coverage of the passage and implementation of the Affordable Care Act. A noted expert on health policy issues, Julie is the author of the critically praised reference book *Health Care Politics and Policy A-Z*, now in its third edition. In 2005, she was awarded the National Press Foundation's Everett McKinley Dirksen Award for distinguished reporting of Congress.

Prior to NPR, Julie covered health policy for National Journal's Congress Daily and for Congressional Quarterly, among other organizations.



**Catalina Sol** is Chief Program Officer for La Clinica del Pueblo, leading the development of integrated and culturally responsive programming to meet the needs of La Clínica's patients and the greater Latino community. Ms. Sol has oversight over La Clinica's mental health, language access, and community health promotion departments; program integration; and monitoring and evaluation. Ms. Sol grew up in the United States and El Salvador. She earned a bachelor's degree in history from Georgetown University and a master's degree in public health from Johns Hopkins University. Ms. Sol has worked for over twenty years in the area of immigrant health, including ten years as La Clinica's HIV/AIDS Department Director. In 2011, she received the Linowes Leadership Award which recognizes individuals of creativity, vision and leadership who work in a community in the Greater Washington metropolitan area and who generally are unrecognized.



**Denise Swartz** is Senior Program Officer for the Mid-Iowa Health Foundation, where she is actively involved in a variety of health and philanthropic planning and funding collaboratives, and is skilled in connecting, convening and cultivating beneficial community partnerships within the region. Her experience in private sector, nonprofit, philanthropic, and community building fields informs the foundation's efforts towards promoting system change and improving health in central Iowa.



**Ed Walz** is Partner at Springboard Partners. As a communication consultant, Mr. Walz has helped nonprofits and foundations solve all sorts of communication problems. Among other accomplishments, he led a messaging project that helped state-based advocates make policy gains that covered more than 1.3 million uninsured kids. For 15 years, Mr. Walz worked for Congress, where he helped senior Democratic lawmakers craft and advance their legislative agendas in a Republican-controlled House of Representatives.



**Sheldon Weisgrau** is the Director of the Health Reform Resource Project, an initiative to provide technical assistance and education on health reform in Kansas. Mr. Weisgrau has more than 30 years of experience in health policy. He has worked effectively in the public, private, and non-profit sectors to ensure the delivery of health care services in rural and underserved communities and to enhance the knowledge and engagement of health care consumers, providers, and policymakers. Mr. Weisgrau earned his undergraduate degree from Cornell University and a master's degree in

health policy and management from the Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health.



**Rodney Whitlock** is a veteran health care policy professional with more than 20 years of experience working with the United States Congress, where he served as health policy advisor and as Acting Health Policy Director for Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley of Iowa and, earlier, on the staff of former U.S. Representative Charlie Norwood of Georgia. During his years with Representative Norwood, Mr. Whitlock managed the Patients' Bill of Rights, which passed the House in 1999 and 2001. In February 2005, he left the office of Congressman Norwood to join the Finance Committee Staff as a health policy advisor to Chairman Grassley. In 2007, Mr. Whitlock worked on the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, which passed Congress twice and was subsequently vetoed twice by President George W. Bush. he spent 2009 and 2010 deeply engaged in health care reform legislation. Late in 2010, he became the Acting Health Policy Director for Senator Grassley, and shepherded the Medicare and Medicaid Extenders Act of 2010 into law. Following his tenure in Senator Grassley's Congressional office, he served as Health Policy Director in the Senator's personal office.