



Birth Equity Funders' Summit: It's Time for Collaborative Action on Birth Equity October 25-27, 2022

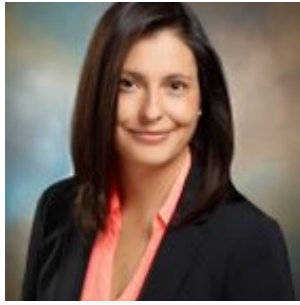
Speaker Profiles



Angela Doyinsola Aina is the Co-Founder and Executive Director of the Black Mamas Matter Alliance, where she works to convene Black Maternal Health professionals and community-based organizations to develop trainings, programs, quality improvement initiatives, research projects, and black feminist advocacy strategies to advance holistic maternity service provision, policy, and systems change in global public health. Previously, Aina served as a Public Health Analyst, Health Communications Specialist, and a Public Health Prevention Service Fellow at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for over 5 years, working on Zika and Pregnancy, scientific program management, and 2014 Ebola response staffing. Aina's expertise and perspectives on Black Maternal Health has been featured in media outlets, including the Huffington Post, The Atlantic, the Root, and HLN/CNN. She holds a Master of Public Health degree in International and Women's Health from Morehouse School of Medicine and a Bachelor of Science degree from Georgia State University in Psychology and African-American Studies.



Kimberly Seals Allers is an award-winning journalist, five-time author, international speaker, strategist, and advocate for maternal & infant health. A former senior editor at ESSENCE and writer at FORTUNE magazine, Allers is a leading voice on the racial and socio-cultural complexities of birth, breastfeeding, and motherhood. She is the founder of Irth, a new "Yelp-like" app for Black and brown parents to address bias and racism in maternity and infant care. Allers also created Birthright, a podcast about joy and healing in Black birth that centers on positive Black birth stories as a tool in the fight for birth justice and reverses the narrative of negative statistics common in mainstream media coverage of Black maternal health.



Monica Beltran supports the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's systems change efforts to promote thriving children, working families, and equitable communities. In that role, she identifies and nurtures opportunities to effect positive systemic change within communities; executes programming efforts aligned with organizational direction; and works closely with other staff to ensure integration and coordination of initiatives, as they relate to the mission of the foundation. More specifically, she focuses on health equity, with an emphasis on maternal and child health. She has worked directly with public health agencies to address inequities in birth outcomes, and her experience in philanthropy is paired with a demonstrated passion for social justice. In 2019, Beltran was honored as a Líderes Fellow by Hispanics in Philanthropy for her commitment to working for racial equity to achieve social justice. Beltran holds a bachelor's degree in international affairs from Rollins College and a Master of Public Health degree in Epidemiology from the University of Florida.



Eurnestine Brown brings a wealth of experience to her roles as Program Director and the first Director of Relational Equity and Belonging at the Brazelton Touchpoints Center and Director of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Access in the Division of Developmental Medicine (DDM) at Boston Children's Hospital. She also serves as the Senior Strategic Advisor on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Anti-Racism (EDIBAR) at the Rosamund Stone Zander Translational Neuroscience Center, all at Boston Children's Hospital. Brown's research background includes examining maternal/paternal depression, infant mental health, childhood resiliency, and mother-child relationships in the context of substance use disorder. She is the co-editor of *African-American Women: An Ecological Perspective* and has published papers in journals such as *Developmental Psychology* and *Development and Psychopathology*. She currently serves on the Editorial Board of the *Infant Mental Health Journal* and is a Board of Directors member for Infant Massage USA.



Lindsay Broyhill is an Impact Advisor at Boldly Go Philanthropy. She has over a decade of experience leading and executing strategies for organizations serving children, women, and families in the U.S., and enjoys finding high-impact opportunities at the intersection of philanthropy, policy, practice, and communications. Broyhill’s work at Boldly Go currently focuses on advancing state-level birth equity in partnership with philanthropy, government, and community; and strategic planning for leanly staffed and family foundations. Prior to joining Boldly Go, Broyhill was the director of a strategic family foundation investing in child and maternal health in North Carolina, where she led strategic planning, program management, and communications strategies with the president and founder. She previously managed communications and supported fundraising and grantmaking at Ascend, a policy program at the Aspen Institute focused on building intergenerational cycles of prosperity for families in the U.S. Lindsay holds a bachelor’s degree in Sociology from Cornell University.



Kristy Klein Davis joined Healthcare Georgia Foundation as its President in June 2022. Prior to joining the Foundation, Klein Davis served as Chief Strategy Officer at Missouri Foundation for Health, where she drove their evolution from traditional grantmaker to an equity-focused, systems-change institution. In this role, Klein Davis provided leadership for the development and implementation of multi-year initiatives that advanced health equity. She is recognized as a thought leader on health equity as well as the role philanthropy can play catalyzing change in communities. In 2017, she was elected to serve on the Board of Education for Parkway Schools, a position she held until 2022. In 2010, Klein Davis was recognized as an up-and-coming leader with a St. Louis Business Journal “30 Under 30” Awards. She earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Kansas and a Master of Social Work from Washington University in St. Louis.



Twylla Dillion is the Executive Director of HealthConnect One. She brings more than 10 years of experience in the nonprofit sector spanning philanthropy, Medicaid reform, maternal-child health, data analytics, and academia. In her prior work at United Way of Greater Rochester, Dillion focused on using data and analytics across the fundraising, grantmaking, and evaluation cycle. Additionally, Dillion has conducted research on breastfeeding, served as program officer for maternal-child health programs, and worked as a research lead on a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), the project focused on collaborating with Black moms better to understand contributors to Black maternal mortality/morbidity and develop strategies for better outcomes. She is a graduate of the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, where she received her doctorate in Health Services Research, Policy and Outcomes, and St. John Fisher College, where she received her Master of Business Administration.



Alexandra Geertz has over a decade of consulting experience working with philanthropic and corporate clients to develop strategies and assess impact. At Afton Bloom, Alexandra has advised leading philanthropists on strategy development, design of innovative funding mechanisms, equitable approaches to partnership engagement, and more. She also supports growing nonprofits with a focus on racial and gender equity to design strategies and build their capacity to grow as critical actors in the field. Her work has specialized in mental health, reproductive health, birth equity, and advancing women in careers in technology and venture capital. Prior to founding Afton Bloom, she served as a Director at FSG where she led their Global Health practice and founded the Gender Equity practice area. She holds a Master of Business Administration from MIT's Sloan School of Management, a graduate certificate from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), and a Bachelor of Arts in Asian Studies and Mathematics from Hamilton College.



Naa Amissah Hammond is a Black, immigrant, queer, femme and serves as the Senior Director of Grantmaking with Groundswell Fund, a public foundation that strengthens U.S. movements for reproductive and social justice. Hammond directs Groundswell's reproductive justice and social justice grantmaking strategy through five funds committed to resourcing gender justice organizers on the ground around the U.S. Prior to joining Groundswell, Hammond worked in research and communications for Funders for LGBTQ Issues. She serves on the Board of Directors of Funders for Reproductive Equity and of the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice. Over the last decade, Hammond has worked at FIERCE, Third Wave Fund, Queers for Economic Justice, and the Sylvia Rivera Law Project. Hammond was born and raised in Zimbabwe, as the child of Ghanaian immigrants. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Social and Cultural Analysis and Urban Design and Architecture Studies from New York University.



Aasha Jackson is the Director of Grantmaking and Strategic Partnerships at SisterSong. She's a third-generation Long Islander and second-generation Barbadian-American currently based in Somerville, Massachusetts. She leads SisterSong's community-centered grants programs, designed to bolster and strengthen the reproductive justice movement, and is developing SisterSong's long-term strategic partnerships strategy. She has experience organizing within mutual aid programs for COVID relief and sex work decriminalization campaigns. She attended graduate school in the UK as a Marshall Scholar and earned her Master in Public Health from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and a Master in Public Policy from the University of Cambridge. She previously worked in a policy and compliance role supporting U.S.-funded sexual and reproductive health programs globally and traveled to provide technical assistance across sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. She earned her bachelor's degree at Brown University.



Cara V. James is President and CEO at Grantmakers In Health (GIH). Prior to joining GIH, she served as Director of the Office of Minority Health at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) where she provided leadership, vision, and direction to advance the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and CMS goals related to reducing disparities and achieving health equity for vulnerable populations, including racial and ethnic populations, persons with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, and persons living in rural communities. Before joining CMS, James served as Director of the Disparities Policy Project and Director of the Barbara Jordan Health Policy Scholars Program at the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation. Prior to joining the foundation, she worked at Harvard University and The Picker Institute. She has published a number of peer-reviewed articles. James holds her doctorate in health policy and her bachelor's degree in psychology from Harvard University.



Raquel Mazon Jeffers is a co-director of The Community Health Acceleration Partnership (CHAP), where she provides strategic guidance to the principal investors on modernizing the public health system. Before joining CHAP, Raquel was a Senior Program Officer at The Nicholson Foundation, where she led \$9 million in grantmaking on population health, telehealth, and maternal and child health. Prior to Nicholson, Raquel served as Deputy Director of the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services for the New Jersey Department of Human Services. Raquel also served as Director of Managed Care for a large network of Federally Qualified Health Centers. In addition to her state-level work, she's influenced health policy for the City of Trenton. On behalf of The Ford Foundation, she facilitated the formation of the first grassroots women-of-color health advocacy organization which is now at the forefront of the birth-equity movement. Raquel holds two master's degrees, one in Public Health and the other in International Affairs.



Danielle Lovell Jones is a Senior Manager at Afton Bloom, where she provides expert guidance to a range of mission-driven organizations on programmatic and organizational strategy, operations, and grant-making strategy. Jones' work crosses a multitude of issues and has a particular focus on racial and gender equity and the intersectional space between them. She graduated from Harvard University with a degree in Biochemical Sciences with a concentration in Health Policy with a focus on racial and gender equity. She also holds a Citation in Spanish from Harvard. She attained her Juris Doctor from Georgetown Law Center where she served as a member of Barrister's Council and President of the Global Race and Identity Project. With both a science and legal background, she comes to every engagement with a sense of curiosity, desire to listen, and a drive for improvements that yield both qualitative and quantitative outcomes for the greater well-being of all communities—particularly those historically undervalued, overlooked, and oppressed.



Jennie Joseph is a health advocate for women and newborn babies. A British-trained midwife, Joseph has become one of the world's most respected midwives and authorities on women's health: healthy pregnancies, healthy deliveries and healthy babies. She's become a true advocate for systematic reform that puts women and babies first in healthcare; before profit, convenience and the numerous reasons America trails other developed nations in healthy births. Joseph is the founder and executive director of Commonsense Childbirth Inc. and the creator of The JJ Way®, a common-sense approach designed for women and children. She has been instrumental in the regulation of Florida midwives since the 1990s and has been involved in midwifery education since 1995. She is the former chair of Florida's State Council of Licensed Midwives. Currently, she owns a Florida licensed midwifery school in conjunction with The Birth Place, her birth center, and maternity medical home in Winter Garden, Florida.



Sumati Joshi is a consultant working with Afton Bloom and Boldly Go Philanthropy. She contributes to projects on gender and racial equity, such as Maternal Health and the increased Power and Influence of Women and Girls of Color in the United States. Previously, she worked with community-based organizations, niche consultancies, and corporate foundations on sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR), water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), menstrual health management (MHM), and gender inclusion. Early in her career, she founded a social enterprise whose work lies at the intersection of MHM programming, policy advocacy on informed product choice, quality standards for products, supply chain models, and supporting sustainable community-led micro-enterprises. Joshi holds a Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science and earned her Master of Arts as a Schwarzman Scholar from Tsinghua University. She is a Resolution Fellow and a recipient of The Diana Award.



Anna King is a licensed clinical social worker and certified perinatal mental health specialist. King currently serves as Clinical Training Specialist with Maternal Mental Health NOW where she creates training events, conferences, and curricula to educate providers on perinatal mental health. Previously, she served as a full-time social worker in the emergency department and later transitioned to serving in the hospital birth center and the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). She has served as a subject matter expert with Postpartum Support International (PSI) to write and review items for the national perinatal mental health certification (PMH-C) exam. She currently serves as an inaugural Health Advisory Board member for Babylist and is an active member of The Blacker The Brain™ cohort for decolonizing mental health. She is also a part-time psychotherapist with ARC Counseling and Wellness and a doctoral student in the Integral and Transpersonal Psychology program at the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS).



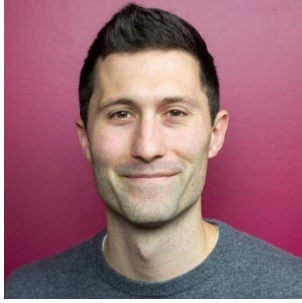
Betsy McNamara is Principal of Full Circle Consulting, serving as lead consultant to Funders for Birth Justice and Equity, a group she helped start in 2013 as the Midwifery Funders Group. From 2007 to 2019 Betsy served as lead consultant to the Transforming Birth Fund, awarding \$7 million in funding in support of making the midwifery model of care the norm in the US maternity care system. McNamara has also served as consultant program manager to the Bean Foundation and the Alexander Eastman Foundation, both in New Hampshire. When not working in philanthropy, Betsy's consulting practice focuses on fundraising for non-profit organizations. McNamara lives and works in Concord, NH and serves on the boards of the NH Community Loan Fund and Community Bridges and is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, the NH Center for Nonprofits, and Board Source.



Inas Mahdi is the Vice President of the Equity-Centered Capacity Building team with National Birth Equity Collaborative where she oversees anti-racism trainings and health system assessment. Mahdi received her Master of Public Health in Epidemiology and Global Health from the University of Alabama-Birmingham and is currently a fourth-year doctoral student at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health within the Health Equity and Social Justice program. Throughout her career Mahdi has worked across sexual and reproductive health and held roles in HIV prevention, intimate partner violence prevention, and global maternal and child health. Mahdi is particularly interested in research related to anti-black racism, human rights, obstetric violence and trauma-responsive care. Mahdi also serves on the research working group of the Black Mamas Matter Alliance, where she helps expand maternal health research using health equity, Black feminist-womanist theory, and social epidemiology concepts.



Aza Nedhari brings over 18 years of experience in community organizing, reproductive justice, and program development. She is a mother, licensed Certified Professional Midwife and Therapist, and the co-founding Executive Director of Mamatoto Village. Nedhari is a fiercely dedicated woman who believes that by promoting a framework of justice and liberation, the barriers that impede optimal maternal and child health begin to dissipate, giving rise to healthy individuals, families, and communities. Nedhari is a doctoral candidate specializing in Organizational Leadership and Management with an eye toward the sustainability of Black-led organizations and cultivating innovative models of perinatal care delivery and workforce development.



Josh Nesbit is a founding member of Widespread Care, a nonprofit that builds community-owned technology for collective care. In collaboration with birth, postpartum, and full-spectrum doulas, Widespread Care and its partners have built a platform for mutual support. Nesbit was recently an Entrepreneur in Residence at Emerson Collective, where he explored the role of technology in community organizing. He also co-founded Medic and served as its CEO for 11 years before transitioning to the organization's board. He served on the Board of Directors for Developing Radio Partners and IntraHealth International. Nesbit was selected by Devex as one of 40 Under 40 Leaders in International Development, received the Truman Award for Innovation from the Society for International Development, and was named by Forbes as one of the world's 30 top social entrepreneurs. Nesbit studied global health and bioethics at Stanford University, where his qualitative research focused on pediatric HIV/AIDS in Malawi.



Andrea Palmer is a Program Officer with the Pritzker Family Foundation's Children's Initiative (PCI), supporting work with states and communities across the country to meet PCI's goals related to expanding equitable access to high quality services and supports to at least one million infants and toddlers and their families by 2023. With a public health lens, and over 30 years of experience in Illinois state government, Palmer has a wealth of expertise in the development, implementation and administration of systems, services, and supports for families at risk for poor health, educational, and economic outcomes. While with the state, she managed the Teen Parent Services, Healthy Families, and Parents Too Soon programs. She also played an integral role in the development and implementation of Illinois' Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation program (MIECHV). Prior to leaving State Government, Palmer served as the Chief of the Illinois Department of Public Health's Division of Maternal, Child, and Family Health Services.



Kyle Peterson is the Co-Founder and Managing Partner at Boldly Go Philanthropy, a philanthropic advisory firm that brings innovative strategies, practical approaches, trusted advice, and world-class programmatic support to philanthropists, foundations, corporate givers, wealth advisors, and community foundations. Before launching Boldly Go Philanthropy, Peterson led all philanthropic activities on behalf of the multi-generation Walton family, including serving as the Executive Director of the Walton Family Foundation. Prior to the foundation, Peterson helped to launch, lead, and build FSG, a global consulting firm. Prior to FSG, he was a country director in Zimbabwe and Rwanda for Population Services International, a consultant with Monitor Consulting, and a Peace Corps volunteer in Sierra Leone. Peterson holds a Master of Business Administration from the McCombs School of Business and a Master of Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, and a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies from the American University.



Carol Sakala, is senior director for maternal health at the National Partnership for Women & Families and a nationally-recognized thought leader on solutions to the nation's maternal health crisis. Her work advances equitable, high-quality care, experiences, and outcomes for the nation's childbearing families. She develops and fosters solutions to mitigate severe inequities and other pressing harms and works for fundamental transformation of the maternity care system. Sakala is a respected and experienced leader in such areas as delivery system and payment reform, performance measurement, consumer engagement, and workforce composition and distribution. She advises congressional offices on maternal health legislation, serves on national policy advisory bodies, and develops foundational resources for the field. She has been an investigator on all national and state *Listening to Mothers* surveys. For two decades, these surveys have illuminated the experiences and views of childbearing women and informed policy, practice, and research.



Monique Shaw is a program officer at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. A committed public health practitioner, she draws upon her prior work in community health education, health policy research, program coordination, and community outreach to transform systems and build a Culture of Health. She views her work as enabling health care, public health, and social service systems to work closely together to disrupt systems of oppression by centering communities most impacted by inequity. She strives to leverage philanthropic resources to support systems change, power building strategies, and transformative leadership to advance racial and health equity. Shaw is a trained full spectrum doula supporting and advocating with birthing people of color. Shaw earned her doctorate in health policy from the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, a Master of Public Health from Drexel University with a focus on community health and prevention, and a Bachelor of Science in psychology from Howard University.



Meredith Shockley-Smith served as Director of Equity and Community Strategies for Cradle Cincinnati. During her tenure in this role, she founded Queens Village, a community of Black women who work towards self-healing and systems change in the medical space. Currently the Executive Director of Cradle Cincinnati, Shockley-Smith is committed to building on the substantial reductions in infant mortality with a sustained focus on health equity and the elimination of the racial disparities of birth outcomes that still plague our community. In addition, she is a Field Professor at the University of Cincinnati Medical School in the department of Pediatrics.



Sona Smith is currently the Birth Justice Program Officer at the Ms. Foundation for Women. She has been working in nonprofit and movement spaces for over 15 years. She is a Black birth worker/doula and has served as Executive Director of Chicago Volunteer Doulas and Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health. She brings her lived experiences as a Black woman and mother who has experienced reproductive oppression and harm firsthand to all that she does. In her current role, she leads the Birth Justice Strategy at the Ms. Foundation for Women, which aims to mobilize financial and capacity building resources to grassroots Birth Justice organizations and leaders implementing strategies rooted in movement building and organizing to advance more equitable outcomes and experiences across the spectrum of Birth and Reproductive Justice issue areas.



Joshua Sparrow is executive director of the Brazelton Touchpoints Center (BTC) in the Division of Development of Medicine at Boston Children's Hospital, where he also holds an appointment in the Department of Psychiatry. Sparrow's care in the 1990s for children hospitalized for severe psychiatric disturbances prompted his interest in the social, economic, and racism-related determinants of health and mental health, and in community self-strengthening, community-based prevention, and health promotion. He has led numerous governmental and philanthropic research, training, and technical assistance grants, lectured nationally and internationally, written numerous scholarly papers, as well as books and articles for the general public, and advised government agencies, nonprofits, academic centers, and philanthropies. BTC provides professional and leadership development, community and systems capacity building, organizational learning and change, program evaluation, research (including community based participatory research and community-based inquiry) for family-facing professionals in perinatal, pediatric and mental health, early childhood care and education, home visiting, and child welfare.



Nan Strauss is the Managing Director of Policy, Advocacy, and Grantmaking for Every Mother Counts, where she leads the organization's efforts to advance policies and programs expanding access to quality, respectful, and equitable care for all. As the Director of Maternal Health Research and Policy at Amnesty International USA, she co-authored the groundbreaking report, *Deadly Delivery: The Maternal Health Care Crisis in the USA*. Strauss has led extensive policy work, including the development and implementation of legislation and policy strategies to advance maternal health, human rights, and birth justice. As a staff attorney at the Center for Reproductive Rights, Strauss litigated cases in federal court, including a successful challenge to the U.S. FDA's refusal to make emergency contraception available over the counter, as well as challenges to abortion bans.



Jamila Taylor is Director of Health Care Reform and Senior Fellow at The Century Foundation (TCF), where she leads TCF's work to build on the Affordable Care Act and develop the next generation of health reform to achieve high-quality, affordable, and universal coverage in America. Before TCF, Taylor served as Senior Fellow and Director of Women's Health and Rights at the Center for American Progress (CAP). Prior to CAP, she was a senior policy advisor at Ipas. She started her career as a congressional staffer in the office of Rep. Robert "Bobby" Scott (D-VA), and she has also worked for the Virginia General Assembly, the AIDS Institute, the National Network of Abortion Funds, and the Center for Health and Gender Equity. Taylor graduated from Hampton University with a Bachelor of Arts in political science. She also holds a master's degree in public administration from Virginia Commonwealth University and a doctorate in political science from Howard University.



Melissa Thomasson serves on the Board of Trustees for bi3. As Associate Dean for Faculty Excellence and Professor of Economics at Miami University, she studies the economic history of health insurance and health care. Thomasson is a Research Associate for the National Bureau of Economic Research, serves or has served on the editorial boards of four journals in her field, and is on the Board of Trustees of the Economic History Association. Thomasson has testified before Congress, and her findings have been cited in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the *Yale Law Journal*, in reports prepared for the U.S. Senate and the United Nations, and by former Rep. Paul Ryan (R, WI). Thomasson's work has been featured on "This American Life" and "All Things Considered," and in articles in *The New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, and a *Washington Post* podcast in addition to numerous other outlets.



Kiana Trabue currently serves as Vice President, Strategic Partnerships for bi3, a philanthropic initiative to transform the health and well-being of all people in Greater Cincinnati. In this role Trabue uses a deeply collaborative and equity-centered approach to cultivate bi3's internal and external partnerships and co-design innovative initiatives to achieve bi3's goal of solving Greater Cincinnati's deep-seated health issues. Trabue previously served as Executive Director, Population Health Strategies for The Health Collaborative. She currently serves as a Vice Chair of the Board for Planned Parenthood of Southwest Ohio Board and is a Board member for the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati and Produce Perks Midwest. Trabue is also a founding partner of Transformational Advancement of Black Leadership and Excellence (TABLE), an organization whose vision is for Cincinnati's Black community to change systems and achieve greater economic status, connectedness, and overall well-being. She received her Bachelor of Arts from The Ohio State University and her Master of Public Health from Wright State University.



Michael Warren is the Associate Administrator of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). MCHB's mission is to improve the health and well-being of America's mothers, children, and families. Before assuming his current role as MCHB's Associate Administrator, Warren served in various roles at the Tennessee Department of Health. Prior to joining the Department of Health, he served as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at Vanderbilt and as Medical Director in the Governor's Office of Children's Care Coordination. Warren graduated with a degree in psychology from Wake Forest University and earned his medical degree from the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. He completed his pediatrics residency, Chief Residency, and fellowship in Academic General Pediatrics at Vanderbilt, where he also obtained a master's degree in Public Health.