

# NIMHD

National Institute on Minority Health  
and Health Disparities

## **NIMHD Climate Change, Health, and Justice Workshop Speaker Biographies**

### **Section I: Moderators and Planning Committee**





## Arielle Gillman, Ph.D., M.P.H. Workshop Chair

Dr. Arielle Gillman is a Social and Behavioral Sciences Administrator (Program Officer) in the Division of Integrative Biological and Behavioral Sciences at NIMHD. Dr. Gillman is trained as a social health psychologist. Her research focuses on understanding the cognitive and affective psychological processes that influence motivation, decision making, engagement, and maintenance for health-related behaviors. Her work has investigated these processes in several health contexts, including exercise, genetic testing, cancer treatment decisions, risky sexual behavior, and substance use. Dr. Gillman received her Ph.D. in Social Psychology from the University of Colorado Boulder in 2018, with a Certificate in Quantitative Methods for the Behavioral Sciences, and her M.P.H. from Johns

Hopkins University, with a concentration in biostatistics and epidemiology, in 2019. She earned a B.A. in neuroscience and art history from the University of Southern California in 2013. Prior to coming to NIMHD, Dr. Gillman completed her postdoctoral training as a Cancer Prevention Fellow at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), where she worked within the Basic Biobehavioral and Psychological Sciences Branch (BBPSB) of the Behavioral Research Program (BRP).



## Julie Postma, Ph.D., RN Workshop Chair

Dr. Julie Postma is a Professor in the Department of Nursing and Systems Science and the Associate Dean for Research at Washington State University College of Nursing. She worked clinically as a cardiothoracic nurse before studying occupational and environmental health and earning a Ph.D. in nursing science at the University of Washington. She has over 15 years of experience working alongside community partners to promote environmental health and justice in Hispanic communities, primarily in terms of the impact of housing on asthma. With the arrival of significant, hazardous, and disruptive wildfire smoke in 2015, her program of research shifted to reducing risks from wildfire smoke exposure on outdoor workers in agricultural communities. Her scholarship reflects the importance of community engagement and cultural humility in assessing environmental health risks, designing and testing risk reduction interventions, and implementing locally relevant strategies

to reduce risks. Dr. Postma is the 2023-2024 Climate and Health Scholar for the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD). She served on the 2023-2024 National Institute of Nursing Research's (NINR) Climate Change and Health Working Group. Dr. Postma teaches graduate courses and mentors students within and outside of Washington State University in environmental health in her role as a co-investigator on the Environmental Health Research Institute for Nurse and Clinician Scientists (EHRI-NCS), funded by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).



## Shilpa H. Amin, M.D., M.B.Sc., M.J., CAQ, FAAFP

Dr. Shilpa H. Amin's clinical focus areas and extramural research interests include: girls to women's health, preventive care, health communications, care coordination across the life course with an interest in issues related to reproductive health menstruation to post menopausal years, cardiovascular and endocrine disorders and health issues unique to Asian-American populations of Indian origin. Dr. Amin has interests care coordination (principles of patient safety, risk management, and quality assurance interventions), sex as a biological variable, gender-based medicine across the life course. Dr. Amin has held a range of clinical and administrative leadership roles and served in an advisory capacity in various private and public health settings, from internal medicine and family medicine practice groups, community clinic/health department, continuity care retirement communities, telehealth, emergency/urgent care/occupational health, concierge to corporate health and payor health-care organizations. Dr. Amin's federal career began as an NIH junior federal fellow, medical officers for the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's (AHRQ) and Occupational Health Medical Director for the U.S. Postal Service. She has served as a health disparities/health equity panelist clinical grant reviewer at the Patient-Centered Outcome Research Institute.



## Crystal L. Barksdale, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Dr. Crystal L. Barksdale is a program director in the Division of Community Health and Population Science at NIMHD, where she manages a diverse research portfolio related to community-, social-, and structural-level determinants and interventions. Prior to joining NIMHD, Dr. Barksdale was the Acting Deputy Director and Chief of the Minority Mental Health Research Program in the National Institute of Mental Health, Office for Disparities Research and Workforce Diversity. She has previously worked in federal and academic positions providing program evaluation leadership and subject matter expertise on children's mental health projects focused on depression and suicide, disparities in child-serving systems, and culturally and linguistically appropriate interventions for at-risk youth and their families. A licensed clinical psychologist, Dr. Barksdale received her doctorate in clinical psychology from George Washington University, her master's degree in public health from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.





## Angela Fernandez, Ph.D., M.P.H., LCSW

Dr. Angela Fernandez is a Social and Behavioral Sciences Administrator (Program Officer) in the Division of Community Health and Population Science at NIMHD. A citizen of the Menominee Nation, Dr. Fernandez's research has focused on community-based prevention involving protective factors, cultural practices, place, and the natural environment among primarily American Indian and Alaska Native and other Indigenous Peoples, as well as Latinx populations. Dr. Fernandez received her Ph.D. in social work, her Master of Public Health, and Master of Social Work from the University of Washington, where she also taught and worked on several NIH-funded research studies with the Indigenous Wellness Research Institute. She also completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Michigan School of Social Work. Her research experience is in the areas of HIV and sexual risk prevention, substance use disorders, obesity prevention and physical activity promotion, diabetes, cardiovascular health, and mental health and wellness. Prior to coming to NIMHD, Dr.

Fernandez worked as an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Nursing. Dr. Fernandez is a licensed clinical social worker who has worked in inpatient, outpatient, academic and community-based settings, and has served in the Peace Corps (Costa Rica).



## Arundhati (Aruna) Gogineni, Ph.D., LCSW-C

Dr. Arundhati (Aruna) Gogineni is a Social and Behavioral Sciences Administrator (Program Officer) in the Division of Integrative Biological and Behavioral Sciences at NIMHD. Her research focuses on developing and evaluating the effectiveness of innovative motivation-based interventions for alcohol and illicit drug use among disadvantaged and underserved populations. She currently provides expertise in the areas of a) developing effective interventions to modify opioid, alcohol and other substance use, b) evaluating the health and mental health effects of multi-level stressors and stigma, c) HIV/STD risk reduction, d) mental health comorbidities, and e) women's health, obesity and cancer risk. Dr. Gogineni earned a Ph.D. in social work from Washington University in 1995 and completed a postdoctoral fellowship from the Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies at Brown

University in 1998. She subsequently worked as an assistant professor in the Departments of Psychiatry (Research) at Brown University School of Medicine and the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. She has been the recipient of NIH grants from the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism and from the National Institute of Drug Abuse as a principal investigator. Prior to coming to NIMHD, Dr. Gogineni worked in different capacities as the Director of Research at Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, as a Clinical Director at the Anne Arundel Health Department, and as a behavioral health consultant/clinician. She has also served as the Associate Editor for the journal Substance Abuse and has been an ad hoc reviewer on NIH study sections and special emphasis panels.



## Vanessa Marshall, Ph.D.

Dr. Vanessa Marshall is a Social Behavioral Scientist Administrator (Program Officer) in the Division of Community Health and Population Science at NIMHD. She manages and conducts research to advance public health prevention science. Her research focuses on improving health outcomes and promoting research to understand and address the multilevel determinants of factors that play a role in health disparities. She provides expertise in key research areas including minority health, health disparities, health services research, community engaged research, clinical trials, public health, quality improvement, implementation, dissemination and evaluation. She has fostered innovative collaborations and partnerships to promote and support evidence-based research to inform clinical practice and policy. Dr. Marshall's experiences have allowed her to work at local, regional, national and international levels to investigate differences in health status and risk factors among populations to address health disparities. Prior to joining NIMHD, she worked at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Case Comprehensive Cancer Center, University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center, Cleveland Clinic, and Howard University School of Medicine. Dr. Marshall has held federal, academic, clinical instructor, research scientist, and training coordinator positions providing leadership and subject matter expertise. She has organized and conducted numerous public health initiatives designed to promote and advance prevention including those that engage patients through various screening programs and improve access to care. She has conducted research and evaluation projects across the life span of various populations and in the fields of infectious diseases and chronic diseases. She has served and volunteered on many community advisory boards, committees, professional organizations, and agencies. Dr. Marshall received her Ph.D. in public health from Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.



## Karen Marie McNamara, Ph.D.

Dr. Karen Marie McNamara is a Program Director in in the Systems and Models of Care Branch of the Division of Extramural Science Programs (DESP) at the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR). Before joining NINR, Karen Marie was an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science & Technology Policy Fellow in the Office of Health Services Research & Development at the Veterans Health Administration. Her work included supporting projects on Provider Burnout, Pandemic Disrupted Care, and Veteran Engagement in research. She received her Ph.D. in anthropology with a specialization in medical anthropology from Syracuse University. She also completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the National University of Singapore and conducted research at a hospital in South India as a Fulbright-Nehru Senior Scholar. Her research in South and Southeast Asia, explored the social and structural determinants of health in relation to the practice of traditional medicine, the regional medical tourism industry, and equitable access to care. Her work has focused on understanding the lived experiences of patients and their caregivers as they navigate multiple health systems and policies, languages, health beliefs, and geographies of care.



## Ashlinn K. Quinn, Ph.D.

Dr. Ashlinn K. Quinn is a Program Officer in the Population Health Branch of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). She manages a portfolio of research that includes cardiopulmonary epidemiology, household air pollution, and climate-related diseases and health outcomes. She is engaged in the NIH-wide [Climate Change and Health Initiative](#), including serving as the NIH Project Scientist for the [Climate Change and Health Research Coordinating Center \(CAFÉ-RCC\)](#). Dr. Quinn's background is in environmental epidemiology, implementation science, and the health impacts of climate change. She completed her Ph.D. in environmental health sciences at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, with a specialization in climate and health. She also holds an M.A. in sociocultural anthropology from the University of Chicago and a B.A. from UC Berkeley. From 2016-2021, she managed NIH's [Clean Cooking Implementation Science Network](#), led by NIH's Fogarty International Center.

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## Section II: Speakers







## Danielle Arigoni

Danielle Arigoni serves as Managing Director for Policy and Solutions at the National Housing Trust (NHT), where she provides strategic direction for the organization's sustainability and resilience policy efforts, oversight and guidance for state and local advisory services, and leadership for fundraising and communication's teams. She is an urban planner and community resilience expert, and the author of *Climate Resilience for an Aging Nation* (Island Press) which explores the impacts of climate change on a rapidly growing demographic—people over 65—and the need for community-scale solutions to reduce risk for all. Prior to joining NHT in 2022, Danielle served in leadership positions at AARP, HUD and the EPA, leading nationwide efforts to create livable communities and to advance sustainable and resilient disaster recovery. She holds a master's degree in city and regional planning from Cornell University, a bachelor's degree in planning from University of Oregon, and serves as a board member for the League of American Bicyclists and Smart Growth America.



## John Balbus, M.D., M.P.H.

Dr. John Balbus is the Director of the new Office of Climate Change and Health Equity within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health and the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Climate Change and Health Equity. A physician and public health professional with over 25 years of experience working on the health implications of climate change, Dr. Balbus has served as HHS Principal to the U.S. Global Change Research Program and co-chair of the working group on Climate Change and Human Health for the U.S. Global Change Research Program since he joined the federal government in 2009. Before coming over to the new Office, Dr. Balbus served as Senior Advisor for Public Health to the Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). Prior to joining NIEHS, Dr. Balbus was the Chief Health Scientist at the Environmental Defense Fund and an Associate Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health at the George Washington School of Public Health and Health Services. He received his M.P.H. from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, his M.D. from the University of Pennsylvania, and his undergraduate degree in biochemistry from Harvard University. He was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2021.





## Shanondora Billiot, Ph.D., M.S.W.

Dr. Shanondora Billiot (United Houma Nation) is an Assistant Professor at Arizona State University. Prior to earning a doctoral degree, Dr. Billiot had 10 years of social work practice spanning from crisis intervention and post-disaster community development to analyzing federal and international health policies. Her research uses mixed methods to address indigenous-specific risk and protective factors of global environmental change exposure contributing to health disparities within Indigenous populations. Dr. Billiot's current project explores resilience, culture, climate, and movement among an Indigenous community on the Gulf Coast. She is committed to ensuring community members have a voice in policies enacted and research conducted in their communities. Her long-term goal is to contribute to the deeper ecological movement

that incorporates Indigenous and other knowledges to restore balance between human and environmental health. To this end, she serves as an author of the first-ever National Nature Assessment and the editorial board of the Journal for Community Practice. Additional national service includes the Board on Gulf Education and Engagement of the Gulf Research Program within the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, the Association for Community Organization and Social Action Board, and the working group for data archiving of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In 2017, she earned a Ph.D. in social work from Washington University in St. Louis and a Henry Roe Cloud visiting doctoral fellow at Yale University.



## Maria Blancas, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Dr. Maria Blancas is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences at the University of Washington. Her background and experience primarily consist of community-engaged public health research and practice. As part of her work in stakeholder engagement and community partnership development, Dr. Blancas has co-developed research instruments, trained community surveyors, provided data analysis support, and supported research translation and dissemination efforts. Additionally, she has extensive experience working alongside Promotoras de Salud/Community Health Workers across Washington state to build capacity and promote development in assessing and addressing health disparities in rural agricultural communities. Dr. Blancas received the prestigious Bullitt Environmental Prize for her dissertation work that focused on empowering farmworkers to tell their own stories. She was recently appointed by Gov. Jay Inslee to serve on the Washington State Environmental Justice Council. As the daughter of farmworkers and former youth farmworker, she is committed to ensuring that farmworkers and their families are safe and healthy. Dr. Blancas earned her

doctorate in environmental and forest sciences from the University of Washington and completed her M.P.H. in the Community-Oriented Public Health Practice program.



## Dan Burger, M.P.A.

Dan Burger is a Senior Program Manager for the Gulf Research Program (GRP) of National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM). Dan leads the work of the Gulf Health and Resilience Board, which funds and supports a portfolio of applied research, studies, projects, and other community-based activities that address the compounding effects of climate change, disasters and environmental quality on human health and community resilience. Prior to joining the GRP leadership team in 2020, Dan worked in Charleston, SC for over 15 years in program leadership roles to advance intergovernmental and cross-sectoral hazard mitigation and resilience planning efforts. Prior to his work in South Carolina, Dan worked to advance environmental public policy and build the capacity of nonprofit organizations in Maryland.

Outside of his work with GRP, Dan volunteers his time as an Advisory Board Member of the College of Charleston Master of Public Administration Program and coach for youth sports and clubs. Dan is an honors graduate of Western Maryland (McDaniel) College with a B.S. in government and industrial sociology and an honors graduate of the College of Charleston with an M.P.A. in urban public affairs.



## Paige Castro-Reyes (she/her/gui')

(Familian Chegando yan Gangocche') Paige Castro-Reyes is the Deputy Director of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH), a national nonprofit that promotes health equity and social justice through community-institutional partnerships. During her 11 years at CCPH, Paige has served and supported multiple multi-partner projects focused on community engagement, community-led research ethics review, and culturally responsive research practices. These projects included planning and facilitating virtual and in-person convenings centered on patient and community engagement in diverse, primarily BIPOC communities, including NHPI. Her work has been funded by both federal and private funders including multiple NIH Institutes (NHLBI, NIEHS, NIMHD), the EPA, the CDC, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Greenwall Foundation, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, and PCORI. Outside of CCPH, Paige serves as a founding board member on the Indigenous Roots & Reparation Foundation (IRRF), a nonprofit based in Wenatchee, WA that focuses on facilitating cultural reclamation spaces for all Indigenous peoples on Wenatchi/P'Squosa Homelands. Paige is also a member of the

Pasifika Village Council facilitated by the Pacific Islander Community Association of Washington (PICA-WA). With deep roots in Guam/Guåhan and into the diaspora, Paige brings her unique lived and learned experience as a mestisa CHamoru woman, artist and mother to her mission-driven work.





## Roxana C. Chicas, Ph.D., RN, FAAN

Dr. Roxana C. Chicas is an Assistant Professor at the School of Nursing, Emory University. Dr. Chicas' research focus is on occupational and environmental health disparities, investigating the physiological effects of heat exposures among farmworkers through community-engaged research. In collaboration with the Farmworker Association of Florida, she has led two intervention studies using real-time biomonitoring equipment among farmworkers. Dr. Chicas' work is shaping the future of climate and occupational health science, two pressing fields of scientific inquiry. Her methodologies are unique and effective due to direct partnership with farmworker communities, who are now bearing the brunt of life-threatening and dehumanizing extreme heat health effects—which more communities will face as climate change worsens. Dr. Chicas' research is creating solutions that are sustainable and grounded in the realities of labor. Her intervention studies are providing relief to workers, collecting critical health data, and informing prevention/intervention

practices in the U.S. and globally. As a bilingual bicultural nurse scientist, she is committed to conducting research that informs policy to advance environmental justice.



## Lauren Clay, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Dr. Lauren Clay is an Associate Professor and Chair of the [Department of Emergency and Disaster Health Systems](#) at University of Maryland Baltimore County. She is a disaster scientist and public health researcher. [Her research](#) focuses on health impacts of disasters. Her expertise is in disaster food and nutrition insecurity. In 2021, she was awarded [NSF CAREER](#) and [NSF Convergence Accelerator](#) awards focused on food system resilience to disasters. Most recently, she served as the inaugural [Climate and Health Scholar](#) with [NIMHD](#). She has a Ph.D. in disaster science and management from University of Delaware and a Master of Public Health from Drexel University.





## Ana V. Diez Roux, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H.

Dr. Ana V. Diez Roux is Director of the Urban Health Collaborative and Distinguished University Professor of Epidemiology at Drexel University's Dornsife School of Public Health. From 2014 to 2023, she was the Dana and David Dornsife Dean of the School. Trained as a pediatrician in Buenos Aires, she completed her public health training at Johns Hopkins University. Before joining Drexel, she served on the faculties of Columbia University and the University of Michigan, where she chaired the Department of Epidemiology and directed the Center for Social Epidemiology and Population Health. Dr. Diez Roux is renowned for her research on social determinants of health and the impact of neighborhood environments on health. Her research encompasses social epidemiology, health disparities, psychosocial factors, environmental health, urban health, and multilevel methods in population health. She has led major research and training programs funded by the NIH and foundations in the U.S. and Latin America. Currently, she is the Principal Investigator of the Wellcome Trust-

funded SALURBAL study and the NIH-funded Drexel Center on Climate Change and Urban Health. Dr. Diez Roux has served on numerous editorial boards, review panels, and advisory committees, including as Chair of the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee of the EPA and Co-Chair of the Population Health Roundtable of NAS. She has received the Wade Hampton Frost Award, the Award for Outstanding Contributions to Epidemiology, and the Rothman Career Award. She is an elected member of the American Epidemiological Society, the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research, and the National Academy of Medicine. Dr. Diez Roux is also an active mentor to doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty from diverse backgrounds.



## Vivian Do, M.P.H., Ph.D.(c)

Vivian Do is a fifth year Ph.D. student at Columbia University's Environmental Health Sciences department. Her research centers on the intersection of climate change-related health exposures and environmental justice. She has specifically focused on power outages, wildfires, and severe weather events (e.g., extreme heat). Using environmental epidemiology approaches and large administrative health datasets, she aims to investigate the ways in which climate change impacts population health and to examine whether such impacts vary across vulnerability characteristics. Her published work includes characterizing the spatiotemporal distribution of U.S. power outages while considering climate events and social vulnerability and examining the spatial heterogeneity of wildfire smoke-related respiratory hospitalizations. Prior to her doctoral studies, she received her M.P.H. in epidemiology with a concentration

in climate and health from Columbia University. She was a 2019-2020 Fulbright scholar at the University of Hong Kong, where she conducted research on the role of temperature variability and ozone on population health.



## Jamie Donatuto, Ph.D.

Dr. Donatuto is a Community Environmental Health Analyst for the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. She has had the honor of working with Indigenous communities for more than 20 years. As a long-standing staff member of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, located in the beautiful Salish Sea in the Pacific Northwest of the United States, Dr. Donatuto leads projects spanning a wide breadth of community environmental health topics. These include studying toxics in local traditional foods, assessing tribal health-related impacts from climate change, developing informal environmental health education based on connections to traditional foods, and creating community-based Indigenous health indicators. She completed her doctoral studies at the University of British Columbia (Vancouver, Canada) in 2008 in the interdisciplinary graduate program of Resource Management and Environmental Studies.



## Heather Sauyaq Jean Kwamboka Gordon, Ph.D.

Dr. Heather Sauyaq Jean Kwamboka Gordon is the Owner and Principal Consultant at Sauyaq Solutions, which promotes Indigenous-led solutions for a sustainable future by empowering Indigenous self-determination through research, evaluation, partnerships, and policy. Dr. Gordon was raised in Homer, Alaska; she is Iñupiaq and a citizen of the Nome Eskimo Community. Named Sauyaq, after the drum used in Iñupiaq gatherings, she also received the name Kwamboka from her Kenyan Kisii family, meaning cultural bridge-crossing. Heather holds a Ph.D. in Indigenous studies with a concentration in Indigenous sustainability. Her work addresses Indigenous cultures as wellbeing, sustainability and justice, connectedness with nonhuman and more than human kin, and speaks about the importance of listening to Indigenous Knowledges. She is a boundary spanner between knowledge systems and a science diplomat to communicate research to policy makers. She has previously served in the federal government and nonprofit world. She is currently an Arctic Fulbright scholar, on the Arctic Research Consortium of the U.S. Board of Directors, co-chair for the International Conferences on Arctic Research Planning IV Sustainable Development priority, adjunct faculty for American University's Measurement and Evaluation Program, and on multiple advisory boards. She co-lead and organized the Global Indigenous Youth Summit on Climate Change in 2023 and served on the U.S. National Academy of Sciences Co-Production of Environmental Knowledge, Methods, and Approaches Committee. In addition to her Ph.D., she has a B.A. in race and ethnic studies and an M.S. in community and environmental sociology.





## Alexis Guild, M.P.P.

Alexis Guild is the Vice President of Strategy and Programs at Farmworker Justice (FJ), a national farmworker advocacy organization based in Washington, DC. She has been at FJ since 2011. In her role, she coordinates FJ's policy advocacy and programmatic work and is a member of the leadership team. She works with advocacy organizations, health centers, farmworker community-based organizations, and legal services organizations to improve the living and working conditions of farmworkers and their families in the U.S. Alexis co-authored "Out of Sight, Out of Mind: The Implementation and Impact of the Affordable Care Act in U.S. Farmworker Communities" published in the *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* (2016); and "The Neighbors Who Feed Us: Farmworkers and Government Policy – Challenges and Solutions" published in the *Harvard Law and Policy Review* (2018).

Alexis has extensive experience in public health, policy, and community organizing. She previously worked at grassroots organizations and served as a Health Education Volunteer with the U.S. Peace Corps in Guatemala. She received a master's degree in public policy from the University of Michigan and a B.A. from Wellesley College.



## Kyle X. Hill, Ph.D., M.P.H.

Dr. Kyle X. Hill is an Assistant Professor at the University of Minnesota, School of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health Sciences and adjunct faculty at the University of North Dakota, Department of Indigenous Health. Dr. Hill is Ojibwe (Turtle Mountain Band; Enrolled Citizen), Dakota (Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe), Lakota (Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe). He is active in community-based participatory research with American Indian and First Nations communities in the U.S. and Canada on research projects across social, behavioral, and environmental health. Specifically, Dr. Hill's primary line of research considers the social, political, and ecological determinants of Indigenous health, as well as the intersection of climate justice and Land-based healing within Indigenous communities. Dr. Hill is also developing research exploring how Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledges can function as foundations of climate adaptation and mitigation programs. Dr. Hill has co-authored several manuscripts and book chapters on the impacts of climate change to Indigenous health,

particularly on the impacts to community mental health. He currently lives on his Dakota and Anishinaabe traditional homelands in St. Paul, MN with his family.





## Courtney Howard, M.D., M.P.P.

Dr. [Courtney Howard](#) is an Emergency Physician in Yellowknives Dene Territory in Canada's subarctic, a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Calgary, and a Community Research Fellow in Planetary Health at the Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research. The Vice-Chair of the Global Climate and Health Alliance, Dr. Howard has researched menstrual cups and wildfires, and led policy work and advocacy regarding social tipping points and the health sector, ecoanxiety, vaccine equity, active transport, plant-rich diets, fossil fuel divestment, carbon pricing, coal phase-out, hydraulic fracturing and with regards to Canada's Oil Sands. She led the 2017-2019 Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change Briefings for Canadian Policymakers and was the 2018 International Policy Director for the Lancet Countdown. Dr. Howard was the first woman President of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment, and is the President-Elect of the Northwest Territories Medical Association. She recently completed a Master of Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford University, where she focused on using a planetary health lens to facilitate the transition to economies centered around wellbeing. She is part of the Editorial Advisory Board of the Lancet Planetary Health and the Journal of Climate Change and Health. In 2018, she presented a TED Talk entitled "[Healthy People, Healthy Planet](#)." She has two young daughters and loves to dance.



## Douglas Kowalewski, Ph.D.

Dr. Douglas Kowalewski is the Partnership Strategist at the National Science Foundation Directorate for Geosciences (NSF/GEO). Dr. Kowalewski is leading efforts at NSF linking the academic climate and environmental research community to the climate and health nexus. Dr. Kowalewski has built opportunities, through partnerships, for climate related research delivering use-inspired outcomes related to topics including wildland fire, water and food security, and climate impacts on vulnerable populations. Before his current role at NSF, he served as the NSF Section Head for Antarctic Sciences and was a Program Director for Antarctic Earth Sciences and the Paleo Perspectives on Present and Projected Climate competition. Prior to joining NSF, Dr. Kowalewski was faculty at Worcester State University where he studied the interactions between climate and ice sheet

behavior in Antarctica and built international partnerships to model robust ice sheet loss projections published and highlighted in Nature. Before his academic endeavors, Dr. Kowalewski worked in the engineering sector managing environmental remediation projects across the nation. Dr. Kowalewski earned his Ph.D. in earth sciences from Boston University in 2009 and an undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech in the geosciences.



## Imelda Mariscal

Imelda Mariscal is a community leader and currently serves as a Promotora de Salud for Moses Lake Community Health Center in Moses Lake Washington. Imelda is a pioneer of the Washington Promotores/CHW Network. The Network's goal is to organize statewide efforts of reducing health disparities among the most disadvantaged and needy of our fellow Washingtonians. Imelda's enthusiasm for community work has created an avenue for her peers to also participate and support health outreach efforts. Ms. Mariscal is instrumental in our state's success promoting health to the most vulnerable populations, in particular farmworkers. She understands that health promotion is also about hope for a more humane and just society. Imelda attended Big Bend Community College, in Moses Lake Washinton, and is also a small business owner and has spent over a

decade providing expert tax services and helped build her own office with her father on a farm she owns outside of Moses Lake, Washington.



## Marion Mollegen McFadden, J.D.

Marion Mollegen McFadden is the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS) for Community Planning and Development (CPD) in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In this role, she oversees the administration of federal financial assistance to assist communities in ending homelessness, creating, and preserving affordable housing, strengthening local economies, and disaster recovery and mitigation. Before joining the Biden-Harris Administration, PDAS McFadden served as Senior Vice President for Public Policy and Senior Advisor for Resilience at Enterprise Community Partners, where she led affordable housing policy development, research, and advocacy to create healthy, green affordable housing and to support natural disaster resilience planning. Previously, PDAS McFadden served as

CPD's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grant Programs, overseeing affordable housing and community development programs, including the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, the Housing Trust Fund, the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) and CDBG Disaster Recovery funds. In this role, she formed and facilitated multiple public-private partnerships, including the award-winning Rebuild by Design initiative and the National Disaster Resilience Competition. Earlier in her career she served as Chief Operating Officer and Acting Executive Director of the federal Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force and as program counsel for CPD and Native American programs.





## Gillian Mittelstaedt, Dr.P.H., M.P.A.

Dr. Gillian Mittelstaedt is an air quality and environmental health professional who leads the Tribal Healthy Homes Network, addressing indoor air hazards through Tribal training, research, and design of culturally tailored interventions. Dr. Mittelstaedt also directs the Partnership for Air Matters, providing low-cost toolkits to environmental justice communities to help mitigate the indoor impacts of climate events. In her advocacy work, Dr. Mittelstaedt recently co-chaired EPA's Clean Air Act 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report, advised the White House on indoor air quality and infectious disease transmission, and served on a National Academies of Science workgroup on Indoor Air Chemistry. She co-chairs the National Safe and Healthy Housing Coalition and is past chair of the Washington Asthma Initiative and the Washington Leadership Council for the American Lung Association.



## E. Benjamin Money Jr., M.P.H.

E. Benjamin Money Jr. is the Senior Vice President for Population Health at the National Association of Community Health Centers serving as executive lead for value-based care, care transformation, social drivers of health, and environmental health. Mr. Money's 40+ year career includes serving as the President and CEO of the North Carolina Community Health Center Association and an appointment as Deputy Secretary for Health Services at the NC Department of Health and Human Services. Ben received his M.P.H. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a certificate in Health and Climate Change from the Yale University School of Public Health.





## Gila Neta, Ph.D., M.P.P.

Dr. Gila Neta is an epidemiologist and program director for Implementation Science in the Division of Cancer Control and Population Sciences at the National Cancer Institute. Dr. Neta serves as the NCI scientific lead for the NIH-wide funding announcements in Dissemination and Implementation (D&I) Research in Health. She also leads the NIH D&I working group, an NIH-wide initiative providing leadership and vision for implementation science across the NIH. Dr. Neta also develops training activities related to implementation science, both global and domestic, across the NCI and NIH. Dr. Neta is co-chair of the NIH-sponsored Annual Conference on the Science of Dissemination and Implementation. She also newly co-chairs the NIH Climate Change and Health Working Group. She has a secondary appointment within the Epidemiology and Genomics Research Program.



## Marysel Pagán Santana, Dr.P.H., M.S.

Dr. Marysel Pagán Santana serves as Migrant Clinicians Network's (MCN) Director of Environmental and Occupational Health. She is also the Senior Program Manager of the Caribbean Office, where she leads and coordinates MCN's current climate-related projects. In this role, Dr. Pagán Santana provides technical assistance, training, and tool development for community health centers and community residents to address disaster-related issues and target health-related outcomes. In addition, she is the principal investigator in various projects exploring natural disasters in agricultural communities in Puerto Rico. She also fosters MCN's network of organizations working on climate and health initiatives in Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. Dr. Pagán Santana has extensive experience training

high-risk and vulnerable worker populations and conducting community-based projects. She also has more than eight years of experience in the private sector as an industrial hygienist. Previous work areas include developing and implementing occupational and environmental health training, emergency preparedness, and business continuity planning programs. Dr. Pagán-Santana has a master's degree in industrial hygiene and a doctorate in public health with an emphasis on environmental health from the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus.



## Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, M.D.

Dr. Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable is Director of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He earned his B.A. in chemistry in 1974 and M.D. in 1978 from the University of Miami. He then completed his primary care internal medicine residency and a research fellowship in general internal medicine at University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) before joining the faculty as an assistant professor in 1983. Dr. Pérez-Stable practiced primary care internal medicine for 37 years at UCSF. His research interests have centered on improving the health of individuals from racial and ethnic minority communities through effective prevention interventions, understanding underlying causes of health disparities, and advancing patient-centered care for underserved populations. Recognized as a leader in Latino health care and disparities research, he spent 32 years leading research on smoking cessation and tobacco control in Latino populations in the United States and Latin America. Dr. Pérez-Stable has published more than 300 peer-reviewed papers.



## Ana G. Rappold, Ph.D.

Dr. Ana G. Rappold is a statistician and Chief of EPA's Clinical Research Branch in the Office of Research and Development. She conducts clinical and epidemiological research on the health effects of air pollution. She has published over 40 manuscripts on health effects of wildland fire smoke exposure.





## Nicole Redvers, N.D., M.P.H., D.Phil.(c)

Dr. Nicole Redvers is a member of the Denínu Kúę First Nation (Northwest Territories, Canada), and is an Associate Professor, Western Research Chair, and Director of Indigenous Planetary Health at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry at Western University. She also currently serves as the and is Vice President Research at the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC). Dr. Redvers has had previous appointments in both the Department of Family and Community Medicine and the Department of Indigenous Health at the University of North Dakota where she helped co-develop the first Indigenous health Ph.D. degree program in North America. She has been actively involved at regional, national, and international levels promoting the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in both human and planetary health research and practice. Dr. Redvers sits on the Canada Research Coordinating Committees' Indigenous Leadership Circle in Research (ILCR), the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health advisory committee (NCCIH-AC), and is a commissioner on the Lancet Commission on Arctic Health as well as the Lancet Commission on the Prevention of Viral Spillover. She additionally sits on the steering committee for the Planetary Health Alliance (PHA) based out of John

Hopkins, and is an advisory member to the World Health Organization (WHO) Technical Advisory Group on embedding ethics in health and climate change. Her scholarly work engages a breadth of scholarly projects attempting to bridge gaps between Indigenous and Western ways of knowing as it pertains to individual, community and planetary health.



## Claire Richards, Ph.D., RN

Dr. Claire Richards is an Assistant Professor of Nursing at Washington State University. Dr. Richards' research interests include energy, climate change and health, spatial equity and community-engaged public health bioethics. Her ongoing research is focused on how to incorporate social and physical vulnerability data into spatial tools for wildfire mitigation planning by utilities and to foster cross-sectoral collaboration across emergency management stages. Additionally, she is interested in how to incorporate community values and moral judgments related to energy justice and health equity into resource planning efforts. Dr. Richards graduated with a B.S. in chemistry in 2003 from University of California, Berkeley. Following experiences working in a federally-qualified community health center, she earned a B.S.N. in nursing science from Duke University in 2009. She received her Ph.D. in nursing science from University of Washington in 2015, before joining as a postdoctoral fellow in health services research and development at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center of Puget Sound. In the summer of 2024, she attended the Yale Interdisciplinary Center of Bioethics summer institute, focusing on energy justice.





## Irene Ruiz, M.A.

Irene Ruiz is the Executive Director of the Idaho Organization of Resource Councils. She is the daughter of Mexican Immigrants. Irene grew up in Hazelton, ID, where she worked in the fields with her family. She received her Master of Arts in Hispanic Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago and her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from Boise State University. Irene currently lives in Boise, ID. Irene has been an activist for over 20 years. She is a board member for the ACLU of Idaho the Stay at School Quinceñera Program, and Indigenous Idaho Alliance. Irene also co-founded and organized a coalition of 10 non-profit organizations to support the Latinx, immigrant, and farm-working community called the Idaho Immigrant Resource Alliance (IIRA) that started in 2020 to support those communities around climate change. IIRA won the 2022 Humanitarian of the Year Award from the Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs for their work. Irene was selected as one of 28 women to be a part of the U.S. Grassroots Accelerator Program from the Women's Earth Alliance in 2022, which will support her work on environmental justice while building alliances with other powerful leaders working to protect the environment. Irene is a

Resilience in Climate Equity Award (RICE) winner, an award given to Women and Femmes of Color doing expectational work in climate justice.



## Ashley Schmidt, M.S.N., RN

Ashley Schmidt, a Tsimshian Alask Native, is the interim Director of Nursing for the Tulalip Health System. Her Tsimshian name is Galtsoo Goot, "very strong heart." Ashley has spent her life in the Pacific Northwest Coast Salish land and has served the Tulalip Tribes of Washington as a Community Health Nurse since 2019. To her, there is a great intersection between culture and health. Through her work as a Community Health Nurse, Ashley guided and assisted Tribal Members in achieving their highest goals of wellness through outreach, health education, and community engagement. Driven by an overall goal of building strong tribal health systems that serve with equity and compassion, she is dedicated to breaking silos, bridging resources and information sharing. Ashley began her work addressing access to culturally relevant health services on a

population level, while obtaining her undergraduate degree from the University of Washington in medical anthropology and global health in 2011. Since then, she has served diverse communities in different capacities at the Urban Indian Health Institute, Seattle Indian Health Board and Harborview Medical Center. She went on to pursue her Registered Nurse license and obtained her master's degree in community health nursing in 2018 from Seattle University College of Nursing. Ashley also serves on multiple local community advisory boards addressing housing crises and youth access to equitable health care.



## June Spector, M.D., M.P.H.

Dr. June Spector is an Occupational Research Physician and occupational disease lead at the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries' Safety & Health Assessment & Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program. She is also a Research Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences (DEOHS) at the University of Washington, where she has collaborated with the CDC/NIOSH-funded Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety & Health (PNASH) Center. Her research focuses on occupational climate-related hazards, including the prevention and management of occupational heat stress, using community-engaged, interdisciplinary, and work equity approaches and epidemiologic, field exposure assessment, and intervention evaluation methods.



## Lisa M. Thompson, Ph.D., M.S., RN, FNP, FAAN

Dr. Lisa M. Thompson is a Professor in the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, with a joint appointment in the Gangarosa Department of Environmental Health, Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. The focus of her research is to evaluate effective behavioral change interventions to reduce maternal and infant exposures to household air pollution from solid cooking fuels using implementation research. For the past 20 years, she has worked on intervention trials related to household air pollution, starting as a graduate student on a landmark study, the first randomized stove intervention study on infant pneumonia in Guatemala (RESPIRE trial). She is a co-investigator on the Household Air Pollution Intervention Network (HAPIN) stove intervention trial. She is a principal investigator of a cluster randomized trial in rural Guatemala (ECOLECTIVOS), an implementation science study to develop and evaluate community-level interventions that aim to reduce household burning of plastic waste. She is the Program Director for a mentored K12 career development program entitled "Pediatric and Reproductive Environmental Health Scholars-Southeastern Environmental

Exposures and Disparities (PREHS-SEED)."





## Nelson Varas-Díaz, Ph.D.

Dr. Nelson Varas-Díaz is a social-community psychologist and Professor in the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies at Florida International University. His current research addresses the intersections of communal health, oppression, resistance, and the arts, in the context of coloniality. His health-related research funded by the National Institutes of Health explores how communities experience the collapse of health care systems and subsequently engage in collective strategies to protect their health. Specifically, his ongoing research studies aim to: 1) document the process of medical migration and its impact on health care systems, 2) the role of energy independence via solar panels in managing chronic diseases, and 3) communal acupuncture as a collective health-sustaining strategy.



## Melissa Vera, Ph.D., RN

Dr. Melissa Vera is an Assistant Professor at Washington State University's College of Nursing and the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine. She is a citizen of the Tsm'syen and Yaqui First Nations and her research uses Indigenous methodologies to focus on the intersections of Indigenous and planetary health. Before becoming an Assistant Professor, Dr. Vera practiced as a registered nurse for four years in the hospital and clinic setting, while also working as a medical writer and editor. She earned her B.A. in English/creative writing from Seattle University, her B.S.N. from Boise State University, and her Ph.D. in nursing science from the University of Washington.





## Elizabeth Walker, Ph.D.

Dr. Elizabeth Walker is a Strategic Adviser to Clean Air Methow and Okanogan Clean Air, and Principal of Smoke Ready Solutions. She has led coalitions seeking change throughout her career as a public health professional. She has a strong commitment to health equity and environmental justice; strengthening health systems and capacity-building; forming and managing effective collaborations; and enabling community-based solutions. As a toxicologist and specialist in risk assessment and communication trained at the University of Washington's Department of Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences, Liz is committed to both practice and research to better prepare rural populations for the health impacts of the climate crisis. Her work in the last decade has focused on building community resiliency to wildfire smoke and heat in fire-adapted ecosystems such as North Central Washington, where she resides. Her practice-based areas of interest and research include applications of low-cost air quality sensors; risk perception of wildfire smoke and exposure reduction interventions such as indoor air cleaners; public health disaster preparedness and

response; wildfire smoke and schools; enhancing public health protections while increasing prescribed fire use for land management; and biomarkers of wildfire smoke exposure. She leads and contributes to a number of local, state and regional forums to help build "smoke-ready" communities, routinely speaking to a variety of audiences. She advises and mentors undergraduate and graduate students and collaborates on a variety of wildfire smoke-related research topics.



## Sacoby Wilson, Ph.D., M.S.

Dr. Sacoby Wilson is a Professor in the Department of Global Environmental and Occupational Health at the University of Maryland School of Public Health. With 25 years of experience as an environmental health scientist, his expertise spans environmental justice, health disparities, community-engaged research, air quality studies, and sustainability. As Director of the Center for Community Engagement, Environmental Justice and Health (CEEJH), Dr. Wilson leads initiatives addressing environmental injustice and health disparities. He also directs the Mid-Atlantic Climate Action Hub and co-directs the U.S. EPA Region III Thriving Communities Technical

Assistance Center. Dr. Wilson has partnered with numerous community organizations to study environmental justice issues across the United States. His work includes projects on air pollution, water quality, and environmental health risks in various communities. Dr. Wilson serves on the EPA Science Advisory Board and the National Academy of Science Board on Environmental Studies and Toxicology. He is Editor-in-Chief of Environmental Justice and has received numerous awards for his contributions, including the 2022 Sierra Club Robert Bullard Environmental Justice Award. Dr. Wilson holds a B.S. in biology/ecotoxicology from Alabama A&M University, an M.S. from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a Ph.D. from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His career is dedicated to translating research into action and empowering communities to address environmental and climate justice issues.



## Mary Jo Ybarra-Vega, M.S., LMHC

Mary Jo Ybarra-Vega is proud of being a former migrant seasonal farmworker, as it allows her to be a better-informed Outreach/Behavioral Health Coordinator for Moses Lake Community Health Center in Quincy Washington. The Promotor de Salud Program, which she coordinates, has received numerous state and national awards for her work with farmworkers, innovation in outreach practices, dedication to youth, and to her lifetime service to her home community of Quincy WA. Mary Jo is a co-founder of the Washington State Promotores/Community Health Workers Network. Her passions include social justice for the poor, research for migrant seasonal farmworkers, climate justice and elevating the Promotora workforce. Ms. Ybarra-Vega attended Gonzaga University, in Spokane WA and received a Bachelor of Arts in clinical psychology with minors in Spanish and sociology. She later attended Central Washington University as a Patricia Harris Fellow and received her Master of Science in

counseling psychology and acquired an ESA School Counseling Certificate K-12. Mary Jo is a WA State Licensed Mental Health Counselor, a Neuroscience-informed Certified Therapist, and is recognized as a migrant health subject matter expert.