

PUBLIC HEALTH MATTERS

People
Purpose
Progress



**Connecticut
Public Health
Association**

2026



Welcome to CPHA's 2026 Annual Conference

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to CPHA's Annual Conference. We are so glad you are here.

This year's theme, Public Health Matters: People. Purpose. Progress, speaks to the heart of why this work exists and why each of you has chosen to be part of it. Public health matters because people matter. Because communities matter. Because the conditions in which we live, learn, work, and age shape what is possible for our health and our futures.

At its core, public health is a collective endeavor. It is built through relationships, sustained by trust, and strengthened by the willingness to listen, learn, and act together. Across Connecticut, public health professionals and partners are responding to immediate needs while also working toward long-term solutions that address the root causes of inequities. That balance—between urgency and vision—is reflected throughout today's program.

Purpose gives meaning to our efforts. Whether you work in government, academia, healthcare, community-based organizations, advocacy, or another setting, you bring a shared commitment to improving lives and expanding opportunity. This conference is a space to reconnect with that purpose, to exchange ideas, and to be reminded that none of us carries this responsibility alone.

Progress is rarely simple or linear. It is made through persistence, creativity, and collaboration. It is seen in new partnerships, stronger systems, more inclusive policies, and in the growing leadership of the next generation of public health professionals. Each conversation, presentation, and connection today contributes to that forward movement.

Thank you for being part of CPHA and for investing your time, expertise, and energy in this community. We hope you leave today feeling inspired, supported, and ready to continue the important work ahead.

With appreciation,

Pareesa Charmchi Goodwin, Chloe Johnson, and Elizabeth Schwartz

The CPHA Presidential Trio

CPHA Board of Directors

President – Pareesa Charmchi Goodwin
President-Elect – Chloe Johnson
Immediate Past-President & Executive Director – Elizabeth Schwartz
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APHA Affiliate Representative

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Academic Advisory Council

Anuli Njoku

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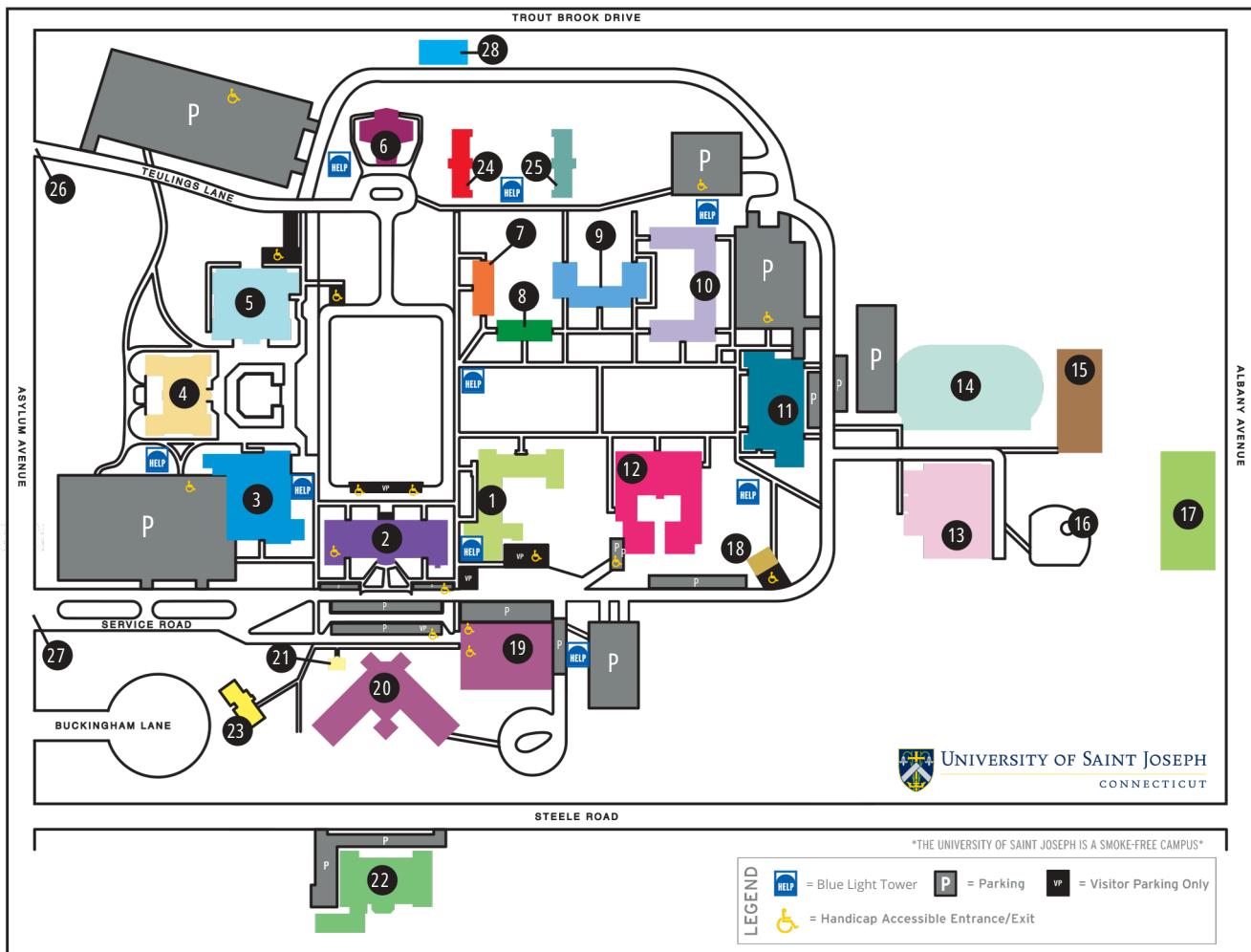
Schedule of Events

8:00am		Registration, Breakfast, and Networking (Bruyette Building Foyer)
8:30am		Welcome (Bruyette: Hoffman Auditorium) <i>Pareesa Charmchi Goodwin, MPH</i> <i>Kaydian Reid, DrPH, MA</i> <i>Carolyn Alessi, MBA</i>
9:00am		Keynote Address (Hoffman Auditorium) <i>Jeffrey F. Hines, MD</i>
9:45am		Concurrent Breakout I (Bruyette, McDonough, Mercy Hall)
11:00am		Expo & Lunch (McGovern Hall)
-1:00pm		<i>Opportunity to view and engage with Student Posters & Exhibitors</i> 11am Lunch Wave A 12pm Lunch Wave B
1:00pm		Concurrent Breakout II (Bruyette, McDonough, Mercy Hall)
2:15pm		Concurrent Breakout III (Bruyette, McDonough, Mercy Hall)
3:30pm		Awards (Bruyette: Hoffman Auditorium) <i>Karl Minges, PhD, MPH</i> <i>Nikole Allen, MPH</i>
4:15pm		Closing (Bruyette: Hoffman Auditorium) <i>Carolyn Alessi, MBA</i>

Share with us!

Use #CPHA2026 and #CPHACommunity





Rev. 3/2020

University of Saint Joseph Campus Map

1678 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, Conn., 06117

1. MERCY HALL Lower Level:

Faculty Offices, Mail Room, Admissions Operations and Communications, Campus Ministry, Classrooms, Counseling and Wellness Center

First floor:

President, Provost, Business Office, Human Resources, Office of Admissions, Enrollment Management, Crystal Room, Provost's Conference Room, Guardo Conference Room

Second floor:

Institutional Advancement (IA) and Alumni Relations, Student Financial Services, Faculty Offices, IA Conference Room

Third floor:

Institutional Research and Planning, Faculty Offices, Campus Ministry Multi Faith Prayer Room, Classroom

2. MCDONOUGH HALL

Lower Level:

Public Safety, Information Technology, Network Center, Classrooms, Faculty Offices, Vending Machines

First floor:

Laboratories, Registrar, Bursar, Faculty Offices, Alumni Hall, Classrooms, Student Lounge/Study Space, Blue Jay Café

Second floor:

Classrooms, Laboratories, Nursing Learning Center, Nutrition Lab, Faculty Offices

Third floor: Laboratories, Classrooms, Faculty offices

3. POPE PIUS XII LIBRARY

First floor: Library, Teaching and Learning Center, Collaboration Room, Library Offices

Second floor:

Student Academic and Career Services Center: Academic and Career Advisement, Center for Academic Excellence, Accessibility Services, Office of Part-time and Continuing Studies

4. LYNCH HALL

First and Second floors:

Classrooms, Faculty Offices, Office of Interdisciplinary Writing and Reasoning, Community Engagement, Aurora Foundation

5. BRUYETTE ATHENAEUM – AUTORINO CENTER FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES

First floor:

Art Museum, Frances Driscoll Box Office, Hoffman Auditorium, Winifred E. Coleman Lobby, Dressing Rooms, Green Room, Staff Offices

Second floor:

The O'Connor Archives, Reception Room, A/V Room, Art Room, Faculty Offices, Dance Studio, Print Study Room

6. CONNOR CHAPEL OF OUR LADY

7. ROSARY HALL (residence hall)

8. MCAULEY HALL (residence hall)

9. ASSUMPTION HALL (residence hall)

10. MADONNA HALL (residence hall)

11. MCGOVERN HALL

First floor:

The Jay's Nest, McGovern Lounge, Dining Hall, SGA Office, Student Center Office, Clubs/Orgs Workroom, Campus Store

Second floor:

Division of Student Affairs, Residential Life, Student Activities, Office of Marketing and Public Affairs

12. LOURDES HALL

First floor:

Classrooms, Laboratories, Faculty Offices

Second and Third floors:

Faculty Offices, Office of Diversity and Inclusion

13. O'CONNELL ATHLETIC CENTER

Bruyette Natatorium, Fitness Center, Gymnasium, Indoor Track, Locker Rooms, Athletic Department, Coach and Staff Offices

14. TURF ATHLETIC FIELD

15. TENNIS COURTS

16. SOFTBALL FIELD

17. PRACTICE FIELD

18. HEALTH SERVICES

(the Little Red House)

19. CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH AND EDUCATION (CARE)

20. GENGRAS CENTER

21. GENGRAS CENTER-GREATER HARTFORD JAYCEES GREENHOUSE

22. SCHOOL FOR YOUNG CHILDREN 238 Steele Road

23. PRESIDENT'S HOUSE

24. RESIDENCE HALL SOUTH

25. RESIDENCE HALL NORTH

26. KATHLEEN DRISCOLL AMATANGELO '62 GATES

27. NICHOLAS S. AMATANGELO GATES

28. FACILITIES OFFICE AND GARAGE

DOWNTOWN HARTFORD

UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH

229 Trumbull Street, Hartford, CT 06103



Concurrent Session I

Student Poster Presentations

Location: McGovern Hall, Mercy Hall Crystal Room, and McDonough Lobby

The Connecticut Commission on Racial Equity and Public Health Strategic Plan: The value of resident engagement in state health equity planning *Panel*

Location: Bruyette: Hoffman Auditorium

Climate Resilience: Air, Water, Extreme Heat, and Local Health

Location: McDonough Lower Level Room 7B

Microbial source tracking for recreational and aquaculture water quality intervention Sarah Esenther, Michael Pascucilla

Air Quality Monitoring in South and West Stamford neighborhoods builds community climate resilience Dipika Khushalani, Jody Bishop

The experience of ambient heat in the Dwight neighborhood of New Haven: a quantitative survey Allison Beaulieu, Natasha Zimmerman, Tahnee Cookson Muhammad, Saket Malhotra, Alycia Santilli, Kathleen O'Connor Duffany, Andrei Harwell, Robert Dubrow

Strengthening Connecticut's climate and health readiness: findings from local health departments Anna Price, Sarah Johnson, Elena Grossman

Contraceptive Access and Maternal Health

Location: McDonough Lower Level Room 7A

Pharmacy-Based Contraceptive Access in CT: A Geospatial Analysis Using the Social Vulnerability Index

Marina DiPiazza, Neena Qasba, Shayna Cunningham, Andrea Contreras, Simone Buck, Emil Coman

Pharmacy-Based Contraceptive Access in CT: Findings from A Mystery Caller Study Andrea Contreras, Shayna Cunningham, Simone Buck, Marina DiPiazza, Emil Coman, Neena Qasba

With, Not For: Reimagining Maternal Health with Community Power and Partnership

Indelible Impressions Consulting, Daileann Hemmings, Co-Presenter

Pharmacy-Based Contraceptive Access for Spanish-Speaking Individuals in Connecticut

Simone Buck, Andrea Contreras, Emil Coman, Shayna Cunningham, Neena Qasba

Food Access and Miscellaneous

Location: Bruyette: AV Lecture Room (Upstairs from Hoffman to Right)

Elevating Voices, Empowering Change: The Connecticut Foodshare Neighbor Council Model Chandra Kelsey, Aubrey Roscoe, Olivia Rua, Brittany Cavliere

Co-design and evaluation of a novel produce prescription pilot program at a Federally Qualified Health Center in CT

Katherine LaMonaca, Tomeka Frieson, Dilcia Rodriguez Diaz, Veena Kapadia, Abmaridel Montosa, Marguerite Brainerd, Ayeisha Cole, Mellisa Pensa, Sofia I. Morales, Kathleen O'Connor Duffany

A Qualitative Examination of the Job Resources and Needs of Correctional Workers

Kaitlyn Maggiore, Stan Sudduth, Sara Namazi, Matthew Brennan

From Charity to Circular Economy: Positioning Food Recovery as Sustainable Materials Management

Lori Martin, Emma MartinMooney

Meeting Patients Where They Are: Building Trust and Meeting Needs

Location: Bruyette: Reception Room (Upstairs from Hoffman to Left)

Crafting the Message: A Multi-Jurisdictional Approach to Vaccine Promotion and Public Engagement

Santina Jaronko, Theresa Argondezzi, Susan Jacozzi



Concurrent Session I

Meeting Patients Where They Are: Building Trust and Meeting Needs (Cont.)

Addressing Urgent Specialty Care Needs Reduces Emergency Department (ED) Utilization in an Underserved Patient Population Zihan Diao, Lauren Kelley, Rohini Ghosh, Craig Rothenberg, Peter Ellis, Erica Spatz, Stacy-Ann Walker, Giselle Carlotta-McDonald, Ma'Glinda Ager, Jacqueline Sanchez, Arjun Venkatesh

Epi the Public Health Mascot: Creative Magic for Building Trust and Connection Athalie Bastien, Susan Lonczak

Experiences of Underserved Populations at Free Dental Clinics in CT Terry Cooper, Danielle Cooper, Moushume Chowdhury, Vinaya Samala, DaShawn Robinson

Concurrent Session II

From Silos to Synergy *Academic Advisory Council Presentation*

Location: Mercy Hall: Crystal Room

Achieving Health Equity through Policy & Practice

Location: Bruyette: Hoffman Auditorium

Cultivating Compassion in Connecticut: A Community-Driven Public Health Assessment of Hospice and Palliative Care in Litchfield County Diana Mager, Rich Miller-Murphy, Donald Lasalle, Anthony Santella

How Guaranteed Income Connects to Health: The Connecticut Changemaker Fund Liany Arroyo, Yolanda Caldera-Durant, Judy McBride, Lutonya Russell-Humes

Patient Action Leaders Advancing Novel, Transformative, Equitable (PA'LANTE) Health Care Linda Sprague Martinez, Valen Diaz, Ashley Hernandez, Katia Ruesta-Daley, Hassan Saleheen

The Cost of Suffering: The Financial and Emotional Burden of Dying Paulette Schwartz

Community Partnerships

Location: Bruyette: AV Lecture Room (Upstairs from Hoffman to Right)

Lessons Learned from a Community Health Needs Assessment in West Haven, CT: Why Community Partnerships Matter Alvin Tran, Ichchha Shah, Dora Mensah, Ja'nya Hill, Edith Nkalubo, Theophilus Iloegbu, Quinn Duclos, Yanice Mendez-Fernandez

Advancing Public Health Practice: Health Education, Community Engagement and Partnerships in New Haven Jamie Luckhardt, Reyusha Chalise, Aliyah Wright, Lorenzo Boyd, Karl Minges

Community-Engaged Evaluation of the "Wolf Tracks" Walking Path Program in Danbury, CT Krista Heybruck, Emily Stevens

Shaping Futures: Empowering Young Adults Through Education, Economic Opportunity, and Workforce Development Carmen Williams

Community-Centered Research, Policy and Advocacy

Location: McDonough Lower Level Room 7B

Leveraging University-Community Partnerships to Advance Climate Resilience and Health Equity in Eastern CT Sarah Walters, Abbygail Shaw

Eliminating racial inequities in Connecticut: Policy recommendations for promoting health & wellbeing Monika Doshi, Gillian Betz, Katia Ruesta-Daley, Zaire Bartholomew, Valen Diaz, Trisha Pitter, Emil Coman, Linda Sprague Martinez

Resident-Driven Approaches to Built Environment Inequities: Insights from the CARE Health Leaders Program Isabel M. Alvarez-Diaz, Sofia I. Morales, Faith Bailey, Mark Debrady, Ayeisha Cole, Kathleen O'Connor Duffany, Alycia Santilli



Concurrent Session II (Cont.)

Community-Centered Research, Policy and Advocacy (Cont.)
From Community-Centered Research to Policy: Building Health Equity Leaders with the HEAR Program <u>Linda Barry</u> , Zaire Bartholomew
Housing: Ownership, Advocacy & Inequity Location: Bruyette: Reception Room (Upstairs from Hoffman to Left)
Opportunity to Thrive: A Unique, Effective Community-based Program to Address Frailty in Senior Housing <u>Nicole Fidanza</u>
Empowering Health Promotion through Housing Advocacy in Hartford, CT: A Community Health Worker Training Model <u>Omowunmi Ayodele</u> , Carlton Smith
Advancing Homeownership: A Collaborative Framework from Welcome Home Hartford <u>Omowunmi Ayodele</u> , Carlton Smith
Understanding and Supporting Mental Health Location: McDonough Lower Level Room 7A
Community Matters: Patterns of ACEs in Adolescents Across Urban, Suburban, and Rural Areas in Connecticut <u>Mayte Restrepo</u> , Janice Vendetti, Yang Liu
Association between Social Determinants of Health and Borderline Personality Disorder: a Systematic Review <u>Patrick Guerrero</u> , WENDEMI Sawadogo, Snehal Baviskar, Julie Pham, Nirali Patel, John Cyrus
Promoting Youth Mental Health and Wellness-A Community Centered Approach <u>Jody Bishop-Pullan</u>
Engaging Community Partners to Enhance Student Service Learning and Impact Student Mental Health <u>Deborah List</u> , Nick Marinelli

Concurrent Session III

Mentors on Request Speed Mentoring Location: Mercy Hall: Crystal Room
Advocacy, Academia, and Community Power Location: Bruyette: Hoffman Auditorium
Exploring Paramedics' Perspectives on Gun Violence in New Haven: A Qualitative Study <u>Jhinelle Dawson</u> , Aliyah Wright, Karl Minges, Lorenzo Boyd, Alekyha Gopu, Kalpana Bhattarai
Advocacy in Action: A case study of a public health advocacy leadership program in higher education <u>Jean Breny</u> , Michele Griswold, Alycia Santilli
Defend Public Health: Where Science Meets Community Power <u>Anthony Santella</u> , Robert Dubrow, Omar Aden, Kenny Foscue, Gregg Gonsalves, Heather Dawn Reynolds, Gary Spinner
Progress Starts Here: Photovoice as a Public Health Strategy to Address Racial Discipline Disparities <u>Bianca Shinn-Desras</u>



Concurrent Session III

Beyond Demographics: What We Collect or Screen, and What is Missing

Location: Bruyette: Reception Room (Upstairs from Hoffman to Left)

Community vulnerability and economic well-being: estimates of health disparities effects of federal policies reducing Medicaid coverage on CT’s communities Emil Coman, Sandro Steinbach

Inventory and impact of changes to federal data policy on the availability of LGBTQIA+ data sources in CT Carter Shannon

Beyond Race-Based Demographic Data Carmen Black, Ayesha Clarke

Breastfeeding Support and Maternal Health

Location: Bruyette: AV Lecture Room (Upstairs from Hoffman to Right)

Promoting Equity in Breastfeeding Care: Evaluating a Pilot Training for Healthcare Providers Aimed at Increasing Culturally Relevant Lactation Care for Black Americans Tomeka Frieson, Lena Jones, Sofia I. Morales, Natasha Ray, Kathleen O’Connor Duffany

Respectful Breastfeeding Care: Understanding Latina Mothers’ Experiences Sofia I. Morales, Ruqiyah Mukarram, Deanna Nardella, Leslie Brown, Genesis Vicente Roman, Natasha Ray, Rafael Perez-Escamilla, Kathleen O’Connor Duffany, Elizabeth C. Rhodes

Challenges to Change: Community Solutions for Workplace Breastfeeding Support Tomeka Frieson, Tahnee Cookson Muhammad, Monica Belyea, Ayeisha Cole, Natasha Ray, Kathleen O’Connor Duffany

Maternal Health Equity/Policy and Community Building: Black Birth Work in CT Marian Evans, Shannon Knox, Brittany Needham

Building and Supporting the Public Health Workforce

Location: McDonough Lower Level Room 7B

Health Equity Fellowship: A Model for Community Engaged Learning Jason Martinez, Susan Nappi, Kathleen O’Connor-Duffany

What do future health sciences professionals know about disability? A collaborative investigation to drive curricular enhancement Deborah List, Tara Lutz, Mary Beth Bruder

Equipping Students with Skills to Communicate Across Difference: The YSPH Compassionate Dialogue Initiative Susan Nappi, Randi McCray

Building the public health workforce: Preceptor insights from the Connecticut Public Health Fellowship Program Nikole Allen, Katie Hill, Susan Nappi, Evelyn Aviles

The Future of Governmental Public Health: AI, Equity & Shared Decision-Making

Location: McDonough Lower Level Room 7A

Policy pathways to eliminating racial inequities in Connecticut: Housing, environment, and communities Gillian Betz, Monika Doshi, Katia Ruesta-Daley, Zaire Bartholomew, Valen R. Diaz, Trisha Pitter, Emil Coman, Linda Sprague Martinez

Navigating digital transparency in an AI era Jennifer Schindler-Ruwisch

Public Health in the Digital Age: Modern Tools for Local Impact Ruth Quattro, Amy Bethge

Join the Connecticut Public Health Association today!

CPHA Membership Provides Opportunity.

Be part of a statewide community working to improve health, advance equity, and strengthen public health practice across Connecticut. CPHA connects professionals, students, researchers, and leaders who are committed to protecting and improving population health.



Use the QR code to learn more about membership rates and how to join our professional community.

Conference Evaluation

One lucky individual who completes the evaluation will receive a public health gift basket!



15 Questions, Approx. 4 Minutes
to Complete

Keynote Speaker

Jeffrey F. Hines, MD

Vice President, Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights, Univ. of Connecticut & UCONN Health

Dr. Jeffrey F. Hines is the Vice President for the Office for Inclusion and Civil Rights at the University of Connecticut and UConn Health. A proven leader in diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and health disparities, Dr. Hines has developed and implemented effective DEI strategies across health systems, academic institutions, and non-profit organizations at local and national levels.

A native of New York, Dr. Hines attended Brown University as part of the combined Seven-Year Medical Education Program. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Biology, magna cum laude, in 1983, and his medical degree from The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University in 1986.

Dr. Hines completed his Obstetrics and Gynecology residency at Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in Aurora, Colorado. In 1990, he deployed with the First Cavalry Division as a Battalion Surgeon during Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. He later completed a three-year fellowship in Gynecologic Oncology at Georgetown University Medical Center in 1995.

From 2013 to 2022, Dr. Hines served as Chief of the Division of Gynecologic Oncology for the Wellstar Medical Group in Georgia, and from 2020 to 2022 he was the Medical Director of Diversity, Inclusion, and the Center for Health Equity for the Wellstar Health System. He currently holds faculty appointments in the Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Public Health Sciences at the University of Connecticut School of Medicine.

Dr. Hines is a Diplomate of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology with special competence in Gynecologic Oncology. He is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and a Full Member of the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists. He also holds memberships in the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the National Medical Association, and the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education. He serves on the editorial board of the peer-review journal, Gynecologic Oncology, and is a former NRG Oncology institutional investigator. Dr. Hines previously served on the board of directors of the Society of Gynecologic Oncology and chaired its Diversity, Inclusion, and Health Equity Committee.

An accomplished scholar, Dr. Hines has published and presented extensively on papillomaviruses, cervical cancer vaccines, clinical trials, health disparities, undergraduate medical education, health equity, and racism in medicine. His research has been featured at national and international conferences.

Dr. Hines has been recognized with numerous local and national teaching awards. He received two national research awards in 1994 from the Society of Gynecologic Oncologists and the Gynecologic Cancer Foundation. He is also a recipient of the U.S. Army Meritorious Service Medal and was regularly listed among Atlanta Magazine's "Top Doctors" from 2005 to 2022. In 2005, Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue appointed him to the Governor's Task Force for the Elimination of Cervical Cancer.

Dr. Hines currently serves on the Brown University Corporation Board of Fellows, the Board of Directors of the Urban League of Greater Hartford, the Connecticut Comptroller's Health Equity Committee, the Amistad Center for Art & Culture at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and the Connecticut Hospital Association Community Health and Equity Committee.

Beyond his professional achievements, Dr. Hines enjoys collecting African American art and is an avid marathon runner.

President & Program Committee Co-Chair

Pareesa Charmchi-Goodwin

Pareesa Charmchi Goodwin is the President of the Connecticut Public Health Association and the inaugural Executive Director of the Commission on Racial Equity in Public Health for the Connecticut General Assembly. She is a public health and public policy professional, focused on the systems that shape our health options and outcomes. Prior to her current role, she served as the Connecticut Oral Health Initiative's executive director, where she advocated for oral health access and equity through advancements in coverage and financing, workforce development, and medical-dental integration. Pareesa has also worked in state-level policy analysis and advocacy at Community Catalyst, in municipal policy and practices to support recovery from substance use disorders for Boston Mayor Marty Walsh, and in health policy research focused on financing strategies for children and youth with special health care needs on public and private insurance. She serves on the Connecticut Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee, the Tobacco and Health Trust Fund Board, the Connecticut Children's Behavioral Health Plan Implementation Advisory Board, and the Capital Child Development Center Board of Directors. She holds a master's in public health with a concentration in epidemiology from Boston University School of Public Health. She lives in Central Massachusetts with her husband, Jamie, and their daughter, Ameera.

Program Committee Co-Chair

Chloe Johnson

Chloe Johnson is an organized, highly driven public health and higher education practitioner with academic interests in research and teaching focused on chronic diseases, including HIV/AIDS, cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. She is deeply committed to student success and wellbeing, health equity, health promotion and education, and social justice. Chloe holds a Master of Public Health (MPH) from Southern Connecticut State University and a Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences with a concentration in Public Health from Eastern Connecticut State University.

She currently works at Yale University in the Internal Medicine Section of Infectious Diseases, where she provides program coordination for Ryan White Part A and Part B grants and supervises MCMs. She currently serves as an Adjunct Professor of Public Health at Southern Connecticut State University. Her previous experience includes conducting HIV and aging research at Yale University.

Chloe is actively involved with the Connecticut Public Health Association (CPHA), where she serves as President-Elect, Website and Database Manager, and Co-Chair of the Program Planning Committee, and previously served as Director of the Board. She is also a 200-hour Certified Yoga Teacher through Yoga In Our City (YIOC), offering free community-based yoga classes in parks across Connecticut.

Welcome Speaker

Kaydian Simone Reid

Dr. Kaydian Simone Reid is an Associate Professor and Director of Public Health Programs at the University of Saint Joseph, where a deep commitment to health equity unites her research, teaching, and practice. As a mixed-methods researcher, she explores how ethnic identity shapes the health practices and outcomes of English-speaking Afro-Caribbean immigrants across generations. Her academic lens is sharpened by over a decade of public health practice, beginning at the New York State Department of Health's Division of Nutrition, where she worked in evaluation and surveillance. This foundation in real-world data grounds her scholarly work in practical application. An Afro-Caribbean immigrant and mother herself, Dr. Reid brings personal insight to her professional dedication. Her excellence in the classroom has been recognized with the 2023 Reverend Stack Teaching Excellence Award, the university's highest teaching honor, and she is also a recipient of a 40 Under Forty community service award. Dr. Reid's career is devoted to advancing sustainable and equitable community and population health through research, mentorship, and service.

Emcee

Carolyn Alessi

Carolyn Alessi, MBA, is Regional Executive Director of Community Health and Well-Being at Trinity Health Of New England, where she leads regional initiatives and strategies that integrate clinical care with community-based solutions to advance health care equity. She also leads and operates the Curtis D. Robinson Center for Health Equity at Saint Francis Hospital, strengthening partnerships that address food, housing, behavioral health, and other social drivers of health. With more than 25 years of experience across healthcare, public policy, nonprofit, and corporate sectors including leadership roles at Alzheimer's Association, American Diabetes Association, Nestle Nutrition and Pfizer, Carolyn is a trusted voice in cross-sector collaboration and community health innovation. Carolyn holds an MBA from Centenary University, a BA in Political Science and International Relations from University of Massachusetts at Lowell and completed executive education certificates in Healthcare Administration and Women's Leadership at the Yale School of Management.

Award Committee Chair

Karl E. Minges

Karl E. Minges, Ph.D., MPH is the Chair of the CPHA Awards Committee. Dr. Minges serves as Dean of the College of Health Professions at Sacred Heart University, which is home to 13 clinical and non-clinical programs, encompassing 100 full-time faculty and staff, and 1,800 students. Formerly, Dr. Minges was associate professor and associate dean for research in the School of Health Sciences at the University of New Haven. He served as chair of the Department of Population Health & Leadership and founding director of the Master of Public Health program, and from 2021 to 2022 he was interim dean of the School of Health Sciences.

Dr. Minges is an expert in improving health systems through clinical decision-making, quality measurement, and evaluation of healthcare interventions. Cited 3800 times with an h-index of 30, Minges has authored over 65 publications in leading journals including JAMA, the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, Circulation, and Health Psychology. He recently completed an NIH

award focused on reducing rehospitalization in skilled nursing facilities. His research has also been supported by the Department of Justice, CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, and the State of CT, with over \$6M secured in grants. His leadership and contributions to public health were highlighted in Connecticut Magazine's "40 Under 40" recognition. Dr. Minges earned his Ph.D. at Yale University in 2016, his MPH degree at Columbia University in 2010 and was a Fulbright Scholar to Australia.

Awards

CEA Winslow Award

Celebrating leadership and achievement in practice, research, or education

**Margaret "Meg" Zayan, EdD, MPH, RDH,
University of Bridgeport**

Ira V. Hiscock Award

Honoring the contributions of Connecticut citizens and organizations

Milagrosa "Millie" Seguinot, CCHW, Community Health Workers Association of Connecticut

Charles G. Huntington III Award

Recognizing public health leadership and dedication in Connecticut health care practitioners

**Peter Ellis, MD, MPH, Yale School of Medicine,
Project Access of New Haven**

Michael J. Perlin Student Award

Celebrating leadership and volunteerism in public health students

Malaika Dewes, MPH, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, New York Medical College

The Beth Weinstein Award

Recognizing excellence and dedication in public health government service

Jody Bishop-Pullan, MPH, City of Stamford

Outstanding Public Health Preceptor Award

Celebrating excellence in practice education
Joan Lane, MPH, Southwestern Area Health Education Center

Poster Presentation Session

TOPIC: 1. Health Policy: Coverage and Cost in Changing Times

Mini Review of Diet and Weight Loss Tea.

Reyusha Chalise, Fouzia Noor, Alvin Tran

Social Factors Shaping Willingness to Engage in Medically Tailored Meal Programs in an Urban Community.

Taiwo Ajibola, Lucia Duenas-Bianchi, Om Ghetia, Josie Ford, Yunqi Wang, Lisbeth Lucas-Moran, Chelsea Erem, Sarah Grady, Wu Helen

Hartford Residents' Perceptions of Potential Medicaid and Medicare Changes on Quality of Life: Evidence from a Rapid Community Survey (Nov – Dec 2025).

Om Ghetia, Lucia Florencia Duenas-Bianchi, Josie Germain Ford, Helen (Zhao) Wu

Strengthening CT Adult HUSKY Dental Through Oral Health Forums: People-Powered Advocacy for Policy Improvement.

Sefali Koirala, Connecticut Oral Health Initiatives COHI, Anna Price

TOPIC: 2. Data: Collection, Transparency & Privacy, Research, and Health IT

Through Our Eyes: Lived Experience of Health Access and Barriers in West Haven

Elnaz Abedinpour Esfehaji, Swetha Sivakumar, Kainat Rehuma Nabila, Dimpal Chovatiya, Kiran Gyawali, Alvin Tran

Influence of Social Media Use on Mental Health among High Schoolers in Connecticut

Yang Liu, Christine Guerette, Janice Vendetti, Jennifer Sussman

Disparity to Directive: Using Disaggregated Race and Ethnicity Data to Reform Health Policy in Connecticut

Victoria Akinlolu

TOPIC: 3. Community: Community Engagement in Research, Decision-Making, and Health Initiatives

A Quality Improvement Project: The Effect of Colorectal Cancer Screening Reminders on Open FIT (Fecal Immunochemical Test) Test Orders from Primary Care Practices.

Wendy Martinson, Beata Labunko, Jan Marie Andersen

Small Steps, Big Strides: A GLP-1 Nutrition and Exercise Resource Guide.

Samantha Strelzer, Jenny Lizarraga, Alannah Sullivan, Chibuzo Ikwuazom, Mitsu Philogene, Khuram Ghuman

Substance Use and Mental Health Disparities among Lesbian and Bisexual Female High Schoolers in Connecticut.

Yang Liu, Christine Guerette, Janice Vendetti, Jennifer Sussman

Examining the Combined Effects of Maternal Nutritional Status and Mental Health on Birth Weight Across Racial Groups.

Jakob Lattanzi, Cecil Tengtenga

Framing Rural Health Equity: A Content Analysis of Policy Narratives and Implications for Clinical Education Placement in Connecticut

Kyle Keegan, Cecil Tengtenga, Helen Wu

TOPIC: 4. What We Do: Education and Economics

Vaping, Stress, and Self-Image: What Drives E-Cigarette Use in Gay and Bisexual Men?

Charmi Bharatkumar Desai, Yunan Zhao, Alvin Tran

Afro-Caribbean Women's Perspectives on Vaccination and Trusted Messengers in an Infodemic Era

Devonish Brown, Kaydian Reid

Mapping Academic Opportunities for Public Health Leadership Development Across R1 Universities in the Northeast

Bruce Scheidemandel Garcia, Jessie Gleckel, David Gregorio

TOPIC: 5: Other Public Health Topics

Breaking It Down: An Evaluation Case Study of Community-Based Organizations' Implementation Models for Gun Violence Prevention in Adolescents

Cassidy Irwin, Sara Carroll

"Going to the Doctor is a Vulnerable Thing" - The Illness Narratives of East Asian Americans in St. Louis

Rani Huo Washington University in St. Louis

Menstrual Equity in Action: An Evaluation of Menstrual Health Interventions in Urban Youth Settings

Kelly Kiremidjian, Julia Prescott, Helen Bian,
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Megan Loflin, Sarah Walters

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Rose Karvandi, Nivedha Natchiappan, Jeffrey Pella, Jennifer Jorgensen

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Nicholas Zeleny, Regina Kostyun, Peter Canning,
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Sandra Anioke

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Katherine Bohner, Kristen Volz-Spessard, Shane Sacco, Steven Rogers

Improving Influenza Vaccination Uptake: An Initiative Analyzing Vaccination Clinic Attendance Trends and Outreach Effectiveness

Jana Patel, Amir Mohammad

Sex-Specific Characterization of Genetic Risk for Alcohol Use

Anna Efstate, Brenda Cabrera-Mendoza, Renato Polimanti

Implementing a Systems Based Approach to Intimate Partner Violence in Norwalk, Connecticut

Emily Baker

The Legacy of Historic Redlining in Connecticut; Concentrated Disadvantage and Mental Well-Being.

Matthew Dworkowitz, Patricia Lewis

The Impact of Food Insecurity on Healthcare Utilization Among U.S Adults

Ashley Hernandez, Jacqueline Vernarelli, Anna Price

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Sheryl John, Mayte Restrepo-Ruiz, Amy Hunter,
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Brain Injury in Intimate Partner Violence: A Silent Epidemic

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Healthcare Needs, Barriers, and Facilitators among Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers in Connecticut

Maria Guerrero, Sara Rodonis, Andres Torres,
Lucia Rubio, Mayra Vasquez, Hassan Saleheen,
Angela Bermudez-Millan, Andy Beltran, Kimberly N. Doughty

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Theophilus Iloegbu, Mabintou Darboe, Yunan Zhao, Alvin Tran

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Soren Saggi, Gabriel del Carmen, Ya-Wen Chen,
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TOPIC: 5: Other Public Health Topics (continued)

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Catherine Hastings, Kristin Guertin

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Catherine Hastings, Kristin Guertin

From Trauma to Transformation: Connecticut Children's Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Program (HVIP)

Ella Schaffer

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Malia Hunt, Trisha Pitter, Linda Sprague Martinez

Faith and the Body: Higher Religiosity Associated with Increased Disordered Eating Among Men

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Nicotine and the Mind: How Nicotine Product Types Impact Cognitive Outcomes in the All of Us Research Program.

Heather Murphy, Erin Mead-Morse, Misti Zamora, Doug Brugge

Intersecting Clinical Factors Shaping Willingness to Engage in Medically Tailored Meal Programs in an Urban Community

Lucia Duenas-Bianchi, Om Ghetia, Josie Ford, YunQi Wang, Sarah Grady, Lisbeth Lucas-Moran, Taiwo Ajibola, Chelsea Erem, Mahima Gulati, Helen Wu

Analyzing Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Obstetric Emergency Department Visit Outcomes Before and During the Coronavirus Pandemic

Anusha Attre, Andrea Shields, Amy Hunter

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Chelsea A. Erem, Pablo Kokay Valente

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Josie Ford, Lucia Duenas-Bianchi, Om Ghetia, Lisbeth Lucas-Moran, Sarah Grady, YunQi Wang, Kyrinda Richardson, David Hopkins, Helen Wu

Assessing Nutrition Knowledge, Food Insecurity, and Food Habits among Children in Hartford: Insights from a UConn JUMP Community-Based Nutrition Education Program

Chelsea Erem, Lisbeth M. Lucas-Moran, Sneha Rath, Taiwo F. Ajibola, Lucia F. Duenas-Bianchi, Dashun Liu, Helen Wu

Improving Program Evaluation of Nutrition Programming by the Mattapan Food & Fitness Coalition

Sara Ho, Shavel'le Olivier, Laura Senier

From Prescription to Plate: Redefining the Pharmacist's Role in Food is Medicine Initiatives

Aleena Thomas, Chinenye Anyanwu

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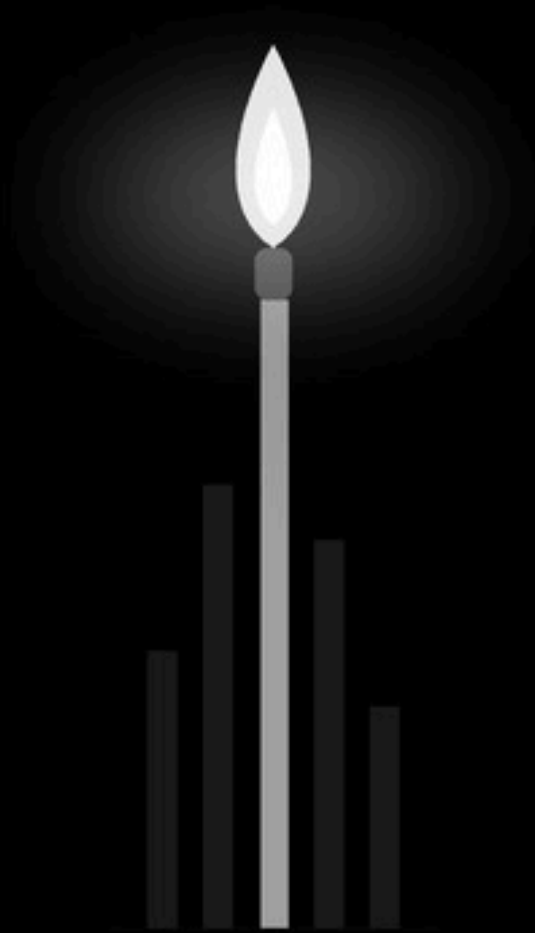


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