The Commonwealth Fund Fellowship in Minority Health Policy at Harvard University

PREPARING TOMORROW’S LEADERS IN HEALTH

2021/2022
ABOUT THE FELLOWSHIP

Based at Harvard Medical School, the Commonwealth Fund Fellowship in Minority Health Policy at Harvard University is a one-year, full-time, academic degree-granting program designed to prepare physicians, particularly physicians from groups underrepresented in medicine, to become leaders who improve the health of disadvantaged and vulnerable populations through transforming healthcare delivery systems and promoting innovation in policies, practices and programs that address health equity and the social determinants of health. Fellows will complete academic work leading to a Master of Public Health degree at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health or a Master of Public Administration at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. The program incorporates the critical skills taught in schools of public health, government, business, and dental medicine with supervised practicum, shadowing, mentorship, leadership forums and seminar series conducted by Harvard senior faculty and nationally recognized leaders in healthcare delivery systems and public policy.

Up to five one-year, degree-granting fellowships will be awarded per year. Each fellowship provides: $60,000 one-year stipend, full tuition, health insurance, books, fellowship travel and other program related expenses, including financial assistance for a practicum project.
The Commonwealth Fund Fellowship in Minority Health Policy at Harvard University welcomed its inaugural class in 1996. To date, 142 fellows have been trained, including those funded by the California Endowment Scholars Program and the Oral Health Fellowship Program (funded by The California Endowment, HRSA, the Dental Service of Massachusetts/Delta Dental Plan and Harvard School of Dental Medicine).

67% have been invited for interviews on TV, radio and newsprint to discuss public health and minority health issues.

72% have published their research work in peer-reviewed journals. Between 1997 and 2020, approximately 1475 peer-reviewed articles, book chapters and other forms of publication have been published.

100% engaged in policy, research and/or service delivery related to minority health and vulnerable populations.

79% have held academic appointments at schools of public health and/or medicine.

25 YEARS OF FELLOWSHIP 1996-2020

Advisory Committee/Board & Recognitions

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awards &amp; Honors</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Committee/Boards Assignments</td>
<td>94%</td>
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**THE COMMONWEALTH FUND FELLOWS’ EXPERIENCES AT HARVARD**

**Leadership & Policy Training**

“The Commonwealth Fund Fellowship was a career altering experience. The one-year journey taught me how to be a critical thinker and how to ask the most pertinent questions. I learned about public health issues, leadership skills, and health disparities. I returned to clinical work as a public health practitioner with the goals of bringing about social change to improve women’s health.”

**Nawal Nour, MD, MPH – 1999**
Chair, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology; Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer for Faculty and Students; Director, Ambulatory Obstetrics Practice; Director, African Women’s Health Center, Brigham and Women’s Hospital; Associate Professor, Harvard Medical School

“The Fellowship was an incredible, transformative experience that changed my career trajectory forever. Prior to the fellowship I had little understanding of the inner workings of leadership, minority health, and health policy. After my fellowship training, I felt equipped to create a path focused on leading efforts to address racial/ethnic disparities in health and healthcare.”

**Joseph Betancourt, MD, MPH – 1998**
Vice President, Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer; Founder, Senior Advisor, and Faculty, The Disparities Solutions Center, Massachusetts General Hospital; Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School; Co-Founder, Quality Interactions, Inc.

**Networking**

“I would not be where I am today without the Fellowship. The Fellowship prepared me to be a physician leader and policymaker. The fellows that I have gotten to know through the fellowship have been my most trusted friends and colleagues.”

**Quyen Ngo-Metzger, MD, MPH – 1999**
Professor, Department of Health Systems Science, Kaiser Permanente School of Medicine

“I came to Boston with my wife. No family. No familiarity with Boston. I knew what to expect from conversations with prior fellows, but was unsure how the fellowship would work out for me. However, in reflecting back on the year, I now have a large extended family in my cohort of fellows and in the Reede Scholars across the nation. I also now recognize how participating in this fellowship was undoubtedly the best way I could have spent this year.”

**Darrell M. Gray, II, MD, MPH – 2014**
Deputy Director, Center for Cancer Health Equity, The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center; Medical Director, Endoscopy and Gastroenterology Services, Ohio State East Hospital; Director, Community Engagement and Equity in Digestive Health; Associate Professor of Medicine, The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center
Empowerment & Advocacy

“The fellowship taught me more than public health leadership; it showed me how to pursue my passion in life. I am a different, better, stronger, more complete person now because of this life-changing journey. I am ready to change the world!”

**Chandak Ghosh, MD, MPH – 2000**
Deputy Regional Administrator, Region 2, US Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration

Mentorship

“The incredible role models that we have access to during the fellowship, from Dr. Reede to the public health and health policy leaders, allow us to see that there is a myriad of ways that we can effect change to help end healthcare disparities in our society.”

**Ivette Motola, MD, MPH, FACEP, FAAEM – 2005**
Center Assistant Director, and Director, Division of Prehospital & Emergency Training, Gordon Center for Simulation and Innovation in Medical Education; Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine

“This program has been transformative. It has helped me develop a framework, a knowledge base, and leadership tool. The mentorship has been extraordinary...The mentorship of our practicum experiences helped us think about future work in a better way. We learned to ask better questions. The program also helped crystallize a better vision for the future of our career.”

**Jay Bhatt, DO, MPH, MPA – 2012**
Principal, JDB Strategies; ABC News Medical Contributor

Skill Development

“Every day I use analytical skills, negotiating skills, research skills or networking skills, to name a few, that were acquired or strengthened by my fellowship experience.”

**Octavio N. Martinez, Jr., MD, MPH, MBA, FAPA – 2002**
Senior Associate Vice President, Division of Diversity and Community Engagement; Executive Director, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health; Clinical Professor, Steve Hicks School of Social Work; Professor of Psychiatry, Dell Medical School, The University of Texas at Austin

Post-Fellowship Support

“The best thing about the Fellowship has been the people: my co-fellows, the alumni network, Dr. Joan Reede and her staff. It is a privilege to be part of a group of physicians whose common mission is to eliminate disparities, fight inequities and improve access and quality of care for our nation’s most vulnerable populations.”

**Alice Chen, MD, MPH – 2001**
Deputy Secretary for Policy and Planning and Director of Clinical Affairs, California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS); Professor of Clinical Medicine, University of California, San Francisco

“Every day I use analytical skills, negotiating skills, research skills or networking skills, to name a few, that were acquired or strengthened by my fellowship experience.”

**Durado Brooks, MD, MPH – 1999**
Vice President, Cancer Control Interventions, American Cancer Society, Inc.
FELLOWSHIP YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

In particular, fellows report that the fellowship’s unique combination of coursework with site visits, leadership forums, and shadowing activities has proven to be an effective and unique way to bring together academic training with real world experience. The fellowship provides them “excellent opportunities” to network with national health leaders and exposes them to the most fundamental issues in health policy facing this country in the twenty-first century.

Seminar Series on Leadership in Minority Health Policy and Minority Health

The seminar sessions explore the public policy issues impacting the health status of minority and disadvantaged populations.

Leadership Forums and Special Sessions

Leadership Forums and Special Sessions are designed for fellows to interact with nationally recognized physician leaders from the public, private and academic sectors.

Examples of Fellows’ Practicum Projects

Access to Quality Cancer Care: Creating an Agenda for Action
LaQuandra Nesbitt, MD, MPH – 2007
Director, DC Department of Health, Washington DC

Health Care Utilization and Cost among Homeless Medicaid Recipients
Monica Bharel, MD, MPH – 2012
Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Reducing Readmissions in the Indian Health Service
Anne Newland, MD, FACP, MPH – 2013
Chief Executive Officer, North Country HealthCare, Flagstaff, AZ

Role of Managed Care Organization in Long-Term Services and Support for Children with Disability in New Hampshire: Policy and Practice Implication of the State Innovation Model
Asare B. Christian, MD, MPH – 2014
Physiatrist and Outpatient Medical Director, Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network, Allentown, PA; Faculty Clinical Associate, Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

Addressing the Role of FQHCs in Caring for Victims of Human Trafficking: Recommendations for Moving Forward
Kimberly S.G. Chang, MD, MPH - 2015
Family Physician and Human Trafficking and Healthcare Policy Fellow, Asian Health Services (AHS), Oakland, California; Vice Speaker of the House, Executive Board, National Association of Community Health Centers; Co-founder, HEAL Trafficking

Incompetent to Stand Trial: Strategies for Jail Release and Community Re-Entry
Morgan M. Medlock, MD, MDiv, MPH – 2018
Chief Medical Officer and Director of Crisis and Emergency Services, DC Department of Behavioral Health; Adjunct Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Howard University Hospital, Washington, DC
ANNUAL MEETING, REUNION OF ALUMNI, AND CURRENT FELLOWS

The annual meeting is held in the spring of each year for current and alumni fellows. The former fellows are expected to assess the relevance of the Fellowship program in terms of their professional experiences of the post-fellowship years, and the current fellows present their practicum projects at the meeting. This annual gathering also provides the opportunity for both current and former fellows to share professional and academic experiences. An alumni annual symposium is held in conjunction with the annual meeting.

Site Visits
The site visits enable fellows to obtain the first-hand experiences of problem-solving and policy-making processes in public health management and afford them an opportunity to network directly with key administrators from federal, state, local agencies and organizations (e.g. NIH, HRSA, FDA, OMH, CMS, PCORI in Washington, DC; Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Institute for Health System Innovation and Policy at Boston University).

Shadowing
The shadowing experience provides fellows a unique opportunity to interact more directly with nationally recognized public health and policy leaders and exposes fellows to the central issues and challenges encountered by public health leaders.

Career Development
Examples of topics covered under career-development include: Self-awareness; Cultivating a network and mentoring; Increasing visibility; Expanding career options; Documenting.
HOW TO APPLY

Deadlines
Application Due: December 1, 2020
Notification of 2021 - 2022 Fellows: March 1, 2021

All inquiries and requests for application materials to both the Fellowship and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health/ Harvard Kennedy School should be addressed to:

Joan Y. Reede, MD, MPH, MS, MBA
Director, The Commonwealth Fund Fellowship in Minority Health Policy at Harvard University, Minority Faculty Development Program Harvard Medical School
164 Longwood Avenue, 2nd floor
Boston, MA 02115-5818

Tel: 617-432-2922
Fax: 617-432-3834
E-mail: mfdp_cff@hms.harvard.edu

For more information, please visit:
https://cff.hms.harvard.edu/how-apply
Application materials and instructions are available electronically.

Review Criteria & Selection
Applications will be reviewed for:

• Academic and training qualifications

• Commitment to a multicultural perspective in program planning, program implementation, and policy analysis

• Experience in projects devoted to increasing quality care and access and improving the capacity of the health care system to address health needs of minority, disadvantaged and vulnerable populations

• Evidence of leadership potential

The Fellowship Advisory Committee, comprised of distinguished faculty, health leaders, administrators, and the program director, will review applications, interview candidates, and select the fellows.

Eligibility
• Physicians who have completed residency and who are either BE/BC. Additional experience beyond residency, such as chief residency, is preferred.

• Experience or interest in addressing and improving the health needs of minority, disadvantaged and vulnerable populations as well as in advancing system change in ways that improve the health for all populations, but with particular emphasis on vulnerable populations.

• Strong evidence of leadership experience or potential, especially as related to community efforts, quality improvement, transformation of health care delivery systems, and/or health policy.

• Intention to pursue a career in policy, public service, and/or academia.

• U.S. citizenship or U.S. permanent residency.

Acceptance to graduate school and the Fellowship is necessary for program participation. Applicants not accepted to the Fellowship will still be eligible for admission to the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health or the Harvard Kennedy School.
Magdala Chery, MBS, DO
Magdala Chery, MBS, DO was most recently an Assistant Professor of Medicine at Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Stratford, NJ. Named one of South Jersey Magazine’s Top Docs in 2018 and 2019, Dr. Chery is among South Jersey’s leading physicians making a noticeable impact in the health care world. She was selected to be an Albert Schweitzer Fellow in 2010 as well as a New Leaders Council Fellow for the New Jersey Chapter in 2018, which shows her long-standing dedication to public health and service. Outside of the office, she is an in-demand motivational speaker who has delivered many keynotes at events across the nation. Most recently, she has suffered the loss of her father to COVID-19. Through this tragic experience, she personally witnessed the impact of injustice and racism in our healthcare system. Realizing that her father’s story was simply an amplified narrative that exists in our communities, she turned her pain into purpose and created the #NotJustABlackBody campaign. This platform is dedicated to honoring the Black lives cut short by COVID-19, while equipping the community with knowledge about the injustice and racism embedded in our healthcare system.

Yamicia Connor, MD, PhD
Yamicia Connor, MD, PhD was most recently a Chief Resident Physician at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston, MA. She has a diverse training background in medicine, science and engineering. Yamicia received a dual SB degree in Biology and Chemical/Biomedical Engineering and a minor in Biomedical Engineering from MIT in 2007, where she developed research interests at the intersection of medicine, engineering, and science. She further cultivated these interests in graduate school, where she obtained a PhD in Health Sciences and Technology: Medical Engineering and Medical Physics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 2013 and a medical degree from Harvard Medical School in 2016. She was recognized as a 2019 STAT Wunderkind, a cohort of the best young researchers in health and medicine in North America as chosen by STAT’s editorial staff. Dr. Connor founded Tech Tutors, an educational services provider that specialized in technical fields. She was also featured in the “I Am a Scientist” Campaign aimed at providing tools to make STE(A)M careers technically and psychologically accessible to all students. Dr. Connor hopes to use her passion for science, engineering, and medicine to promote the health of all women. She is interested in developing a comprehensive and generalizable approach to incorporate disparities into the quality improvement process; she proposes that we change the way we think about health care disparities and manage these issues with the same scientific rigor that we approach any other problem in medicine.

Carine Davila, MD
Carine Davila, MD was most recently a Palliative Care Clinical Fellow through Harvard’s Interprofessional Palliative Care Fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, and Dana Farber Cancer Institute. In three separate years, Dr. Davila was recognized as a Young Scholar in SGIM (Society for General Internal Medicine), a national award presented to a group of 25 promising young scholars based on academic achievement and research interest, and she presented her work at the SGIM annual meetings. For the presidential election in 2016, Dr. Davila mobilized resources to bolster the voting rights of patients in a safety-net hospital; she expanded those efforts to reach an even greater number of patients for the election in 2018. Dr. Davila seeks to gain the skills and experience necessary to narrow disparities in serious illness and end-of-life care for Latinx patients and families. Dr. Davila received her medical degree in 2016 from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, and completed her internal medicine residency at University of California, San Francisco in 2019, where she received the Keith Johnson
Award, given to the second-year resident who best exemplifies the personal and professional qualities of a UCSF physician.

Frinny Polanco Walters, MD

Frinny Polanco Walters, MD is currently an attending physician in the Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine Division at Boston Children's Hospital. She is passionate about promoting health education, safety, and violence prevention for all adolescents and young adults, especially those with developmental disabilities, and about advocating for policies that support greater access and better quality services to the underserved, including racial/ethnic minorities and those impacted by food insecurity. As a Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Fellow, she worked with health policy experts on issues affecting disadvantaged communities. While in the DC area she worked at the National Institutes of Health doing research on the importance of minority populations’ involvement in clinical trials. Dr. Polanco Walters received her medical degree in 2014 from New York Medical College, Valhalla, NY, completed her pediatric residency at Floating Hospital for Children at Tufts Medical Center in Boston in 2017, and completed her fellowship in Adolescent Medicine at Boston Children's Hospital in 2020.

Sarimer Margarita Sánchez, MD

Sarimer Margarita Sánchez, MD is a Research Fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital. Dr. Sánchez recognizes the importance of public policy in the control of emerging infectious diseases, particularly among vulnerable communities. She aspires to implement policies that strengthen outbreak preparedness and response and effectively address social determinants in health to improve health care outcomes in minority populations. Dr. Sánchez received her medical degree from the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine in 2015. She completed an internal medicine residency at the University of Pennsylvania in 2018 and a Fellowship in Infectious Diseases, with a focus on Infection Prevention, Hospital Epidemiology, and Antibiotic Stewardship, at Massachusetts General Hospital in 2020.

Carmela Socolovsky, MD

Carmela Socolovsky, MD is a Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine Fellow at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School in Boston. Dr. Socolovsky is interested in restructuring health care delivery to reduce the impact of social determinants of health. She aspires to develop expertise evaluating health outcomes in underserved communities to inform data-driven policy initiatives, and she has a specific interest in the impact of environmental and psychosocial exposures on pulmonary disease disparities. As a medical student, Dr. Socolovsky helped develop workshops highlighting the clinical consequences of insufficient communication with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) patients, presenting this work at the Medical Education forum at the University of Chicago and at the American Medical Association national conference. She also collaborated on the pilot implementation of Project ECHO, a “telementoring” initiative to improve subspecialty care on Chicago's Southside, a program that persists today. During residency, Dr. Socolovsky was a founding member of the Women In Medicine Trainees Council and studied readmissions amongst ICU survivors with Medicaid insurance, work for which she was awarded Best Abstract at Resident Research Competition at MGH. Dr. Socolovsky received her medical degree from The University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine in 2014 and completed her Internal Medicine residency at Massachusetts General Hospital in 2017.
“Consider the fellowship if you are interested in policy and healthcare delivery systems dealing with vulnerable groups. This is a window of opportunity.”

Siobhian Sprott, DDS, MPA

Siobhian Sprott, DDS, MPA was most recently Chief Resident in Pediatric Dentistry at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine in Boston, MA. Previously, she worked as a general dentist in Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia for 10 years. Dr. Sprott strives to make public health an integral part of her clinical practice; she has a strong motivation for understanding oral health care delivery from an organizational management perspective that engages the community. She has been affiliated with the DC Pediatric Oral Health Coalition, an alliance that strives to improve oral health access and care for children in Washington, DC. Dr. Sprott received her dental degree from Howard University College of Dentistry in 2008 and completed her residency in general dentistry at Howard University Hospital in 2009. She also earned both her BS and Master of Public Administration degrees from Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge, LA, in 2002 and 2004 respectively.

Shelly Taylor, DMD

Shelly Taylor, DMD is presently the Dental Director of Uphams Corner Health Center in Dorchester, MA. Prior to moving to Massachusetts, Dr. Taylor served as the Dental Director of Broward Community & Family Health Centers (BCFHC) in South Florida. Through these roles, she has demonstrated her commitment to public health and dedication to caring for underserved communities. In her present leadership role, she has oversight of the day-to-day operations of the oral health program and provides clinical and preventative dental care to patients of the health center. Additionally, she serves as a clinical preceptor to fourth-year dental students who rotate through the clinic. Dr. Taylor values volunteerism and has taken an active role in developing programs within the community. She has an interest in designing programs that will help integrate care between medical and dental departments within the healthcare system. Dr. Taylor was a recipient of the Outstanding Leadership Award at BCFHC and received the Young Alumni Gator Great Award for her impactful work in the South Florida community. Dr. Taylor earned her Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Dental Medicine degrees from the University of Florida in 2011 and 2015 respectively. She also earned an Advanced Education in General Dentistry Certificate from the University of Tennessee College of Dentistry in 2016.
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Harvard Medical School
164 Longwood Avenue, 2nd Floor
Boston, MA 02115-5818

Phone: 617-432-2922
Fax: 617-432-3834
E-mail: mfdp_cff@hms.harvard.edu
Web: https://cff.hms.harvard.edu
Twitter: twitter.com/fellowship_fund