



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration



2021 Minority Summit

The Power of Collaborating with VA



For 75 years, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has partnered with the nation's medical schools and health professions programs to train the next generation of health professionals for VA and the nation. Throughout our history, VA's commitment to building a health professions workforce that reflects the Veterans it is privileged to serve, while providing the highest quality health care, has guided our academic partnerships. Today, approximately 120,000 health professions trainees in over 40 professions train at VA each year. Of those, more than 20,000 attend Minority Serving Institutions. We have made strides in broadening diversity in our workforce and our trainees, but there is more to be done. The Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) is excited to explore new opportunities with each organization represented, and to partner with you in our shared passion to learn and power to heal.

2021 Minority Summit: The Power of Collaborating with VA

Date: Wednesday, June 9, 2021

Time: 1:00 pm – 4:30 pm EDT

Location: Virtual Platform

1:00 pm Opening and Welcome

Marjorie A. Bowman, MD, Acting Assistant Under Secretary for Health, Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks, VHA

Welcome from the Secretary

The Honorable Denis Richard McDonough, Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs

Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Paul B. Greenberg, MD, MPH, Acting Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, Office of Academic Affiliations, VHA

1:15 pm Keynote Speaker

Kameron Matthews, MD, JD, FAAFP, Assistant Under Secretary for Health, Clinical Services, VHA

1:35 pm Introductions

Martin Eason, MD, JD, Acting Deputy Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, Office of Academic Affiliations, VHA

1:40 pm Panel Overview

Terry Allbritton, Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office, VHA

1:45 pm Academic Affiliations Panel

Moderator: Jennifer C. Thompson, MD, MPH, Associate Chief of Staff for Education, Orlando VA Healthcare System

- Willie Capers, II, PharmD, MBA, Assistant Dean of Student Services and Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice, Texas Southern University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
- Alfreda Harper-Harrison, EdD, Associate Professor and Director of the Advanced Nurse Educator Program, Winston-Salem State University
- Vilma Davis, PhD, Assistant Director and Assistant Professor, Department of Nursing, Lincoln University
- Olga Rodriguez de Arzola, MD, FAAP, Professor of Pediatrics and Dean, Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine
- Ezer Kang, PhD, Associate Professor of Psychology and Interim Director, Clinical Training, Howard University
- Jorge Falcon-Chevere, MD, Emergency Medicine Program Director, University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine Residency Program

2:35 pm Video Break

2:40 pm Scholarships Panel

Moderator: Robert Oh, MD, Associate Chief of Staff for Education, VA Puget Sound Health Care System

- Patrick Youngblood, DBA, Program Manager, Health Professional Scholarship Program and VA Learning Opportunity Residency, VA Office of Workforce Management and Consulting
- Erron Fritchman, DO, Oklahoma Army National Guard and Emergency Department Resident, Medical City Arlington
- Shirley Simpson, DNP, Program Director, Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency Program, Program Coordinator for Evidence-Based Practice and Research, Malcom Randall VA Medical Center
- Scot Burroughs, DMSc, PA-C, Executive Director, Physician Assistant Program Office, VHA

3:30 pm Research Partnerships Panel

Moderator: Gaurav Choudhary, MD, Associate Chief of Staff for Research, VA Providence Healthcare System

- Jose Garcia, MD, PhD, Clinical Investigator, Associate Director for Clinical Research, Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center and Director, Clinical Research Unit, VA Puget Sound Health Care System
- Rolando Rumbaut, MD, PhD, Deputy Associate Chief of Staff for Research, Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center
- Hadiyah-Nicole Green, PhD, Assistant Professor of Surgery, Morehouse School of Medicine
- Cendrine Robinson, PhD, MPH, Scientific Program Manager, Behavioral Health and Reintegration, VHA
- Mark Roltsch, PhD, Health Science Officer, Office of Research and Development, VHA

4:15 pm Closing Remarks and Next Steps

Paul B. Greenberg, MD, MPH, Acting Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, Office of Academic Affiliations, VHA

The Honorable Denis Richard McDonough was nominated by President Biden to lead the Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. McDonough's nomination was confirmed by the United States Senate on February 8, 2021, and he was sworn in the following day as the 11th Secretary of Veterans Affairs.



On January 27, 2021, during his confirmation hearing, Secretary McDonough testified to Congress, "I will work tirelessly to build and restore VA's trust as the premier agency for ensuring the well-being of America's Veterans. After all, there is no more sacred obligation nor noble undertaking than to uphold our promises to our Veterans, whether they came home decades ago or days ago."

Kameron Matthews, MD, JD, FAAFP, is the Assistant Under Secretary for Health (AUSH) for Health, Clinical Services, as well as the Chief Medical Officer of the Veterans Health Administration. She formerly served as the AUSH for Community Care where she was responsible for the community-based provider network that expanded Veteran access to care. Dr. Matthews is a board-certified family physician, advocate and policy maker with a career focused on underserved patient populations. She joined VA in 2016 after multiple leadership roles in Chicago in correctional medicine, federally qualified health centers, and managed care.



Marjorie A. Bowman, MD, MPA, is the Acting Assistant Under Secretary for Health, Discovery, Education and Affiliate Networks, the office that includes the VHA Offices for Academic Affiliations, Research, Innovation and Learning, and Healthcare Partnerships. Dr. Bowman is certified in family medicine and in preventive medicine, and has held leadership roles in four different universities prior to coming to VHA in 2018.



Paul B. Greenberg, MD, is the Acting Chief Academic Affiliations Officer for the VHA Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA), and past Acting Deputy Chief Academic Affiliations Officer. Dr. Greenberg is a board-certified ophthalmologist and medical retina specialist with a faculty appointment at the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University. He has over 20 years of experience in health professions education and healthcare administration. As the Acting Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, Dr. Greenberg oversees the largest health professions education program in the United States, including nearly 120,000 trainees annually in more than 40 different health professions.



Martin Eason, MD, JD, is VHA's Acting Deputy Chief Academic Affiliations Officer, overseeing operations and strategies for the nation's largest health professions education program. He continues to serve as the Director of the Oversight and Compliance Unit for the Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA), VHA where he provides oversight and guidance on VHA academic policies to ensure VA's mission to educate for VA and the Nation.



Terry L. Allbritton is the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Health, VHA in Washington, D.C. Mr. Allbritton comes to VHA from the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he served as the Chief Diversity Officer for the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equal Opportunity. He served as the Senior Advisor, Consultant to the Superintendent, Chief of Staff, and as liaison to top management officials, non-governmental organizations, and institutions on matters of diversity and inclusion. Mr. Allbritton was responsible for the development, advancement and promulgation of diversity and inclusion strategies; training; enlightenment to drive cultural shifts in the Academy's approach; and application of diversity principles.



ACADEMIC AFFILIATIONS PANEL

The Academic Affiliations Panel will discuss opportunities for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions to partner with VA to educate future health professionals. The panelists will discuss the history of their partnership with VA, their current partnership and developing the future workforce pipeline to provide care for Veterans. The discussion is moderated by Jennifer C. Thompson, MD, MPH, Associate Chief of Staff for Education, Orlando VA Healthcare System.

MODERATOR:

Jennifer C. Thompson, MD, MPH, currently serves as the Associate Chief of Staff for Education at the Orlando VA Healthcare System in Orlando, Florida. In that role, she oversees the training and clinical learning environment, to include the training programs that are sponsored by the Orlando VA, as well as the trainees from affiliate institutions that rotate through the facility. Dr. Thompson is an infectious diseases physician, and she practices clinically in infectious diseases and internal medicine.



PANELISTS:

Willie Capers, II, PharmD, MBA, is the Assistant Dean of Student Services and Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice at Texas Southern University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences in Houston, Texas. He has served nationally as the Chair of the American Society of Health Systems Pharmacists Commission on Affiliate Relations and on the Section Advisory Group for Pharmacy Informatics and Technology. Dr. Capers is also a founding PGY1 Residency Program Director and has taught pharmacy residents and students for over 15 years. He earned his MBA from Arkansas State University and PharmD from Texas Southern University. He completed his PGY1 and PGY2 in Health-System Pharmacy Administration residencies at Aurora Health Care in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



Alfreda Harper-Harrison, EdD, is an Associate Professor and Director of the Advanced Nurse Educator Program at Winston-Salem State University. With over 30 years of nursing experience and 21 years of academic experience, she has developed a strong background in adult education, classroom facilitation using innovative teaching strategies, curriculum, and program design as well as research among African American women. She received awards for education and training nursing students including the Distinguished Master Teacher Certificate, The Center for HBCU Media Advocacy, Inc. Female Faculty of the Year, the Albany State University 50 under 50 award and the Winston-Salem State University John Fountain Master Teacher Award.



Vilma Davis, PhD, works at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania as Assistant Director for the Nursing Program as well as an Assistant Professor. In her present role she impacts the education of future nurses. She oversees the student and faculty development committee, the research and scholarship committee and coordinates the students' clinical experiences. Dr. Davis is also engaged in executing a research grant looking at the effects of mentoring on outcomes of African American nursing students. Dr. Davis has worked in pediatric nursing for 36 years, including 25 years as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner in Primary Care. She has much experience working with and educating the Hispanic population, especially around adolescence obesity.



Olga Rodríguez de Arzola, MD, FAAP, is the Professor of Pediatrics and Dean of the Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine (PHSU-SOM). She is also President of the Regional Academic Medical Center of the Southwest of Puerto Rico. She was Director of Graduate Medical Education for the St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital in Ponce and Director of the Transitional Year Residency Program. Dr. Rodríguez completed her medical education and pediatric residency at the University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus. In April 2012, she completed a Fellowship in Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM) at Drexel University (PA). In 2019 she received a special recognition award from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) for the outstanding work done by the PHSU School of Medicine after the 2017 hurricanes that affected Puerto Rico.



Ezer Kang, PhD, is Associate Director of Psychology and Interim Director of Clinical Training at Howard University, Washington D.C. His research focuses on how individual and community factors interact in the context of poverty to influence the mental and physical health of minority groups living in U.S. cities and low-income and middle-income countries.



Jorge Falcon-Chevere, MD, is the Emergency Medicine Program Director of the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine Residency Program. In 2014, he was appointed as Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Designated Institutional Official. Dr. Falcon-Chevere graduated from Ponce School of Medicine and completed his emergency medicine training at the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine.



SCHOLARSHIPS PANEL

The Scholarships Panel will discuss several opportunities for health professions trainees to receive financial support from VA in pursuit of health professions education. The discussion is moderated by Robert C. Oh, COL (Ret), MD, MPH, CAQSM, Associate Chief of Staff in Education, VA Puget Sound Health Care System.

MODERATOR:

Robert C. Oh, COL (Ret), MD, MPH, CAQSM, is the Associate Chief of Staff in Education at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle, Washington. He is a family physician who has a Certificate of Added Qualifications (CAQ) in sports medicine. He earned his medical degree from Boston University School of Medicine, Massachusetts, and completed a family medicine residency at DeWitt Army Community Hospital, Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Subsequently, he completed a faculty development fellowship at Madigan Army Medical Center in Tacoma, Washington, and earned his Master of Public Health (MPH) degree from University of Washington, Seattle. He is a clinical associate professor at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington. He has held leadership positions as Associate Program Director, Program Director and Chief of the Family Medicine Service and chief of the family medicine service at Tripler Family Medicine Residency Program, Honolulu, Hawaii. Dr. Oh's research has spanned across domains, ranging from nutraceuticals to sports medicine. He has over 20 years of clinical and teaching experience and has written over 30 papers in the peer-reviewed medical literature. His latest endeavors include identifying and quantifying risk factors for exertional rhabdomyolysis and primary prevention of cardiovascular disease through lifestyle.



PANELISTS:

Erron Fritchman, DO, is a Resident Physician in Emergency Medicine at the Medical City Arlington in Arlington, Texas, and serves in the Oklahoma Army National Guard. Dr. Fritchman is from Cedaredge, Colorado. He received his bachelor's degree at Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction and his master's in public health at the University of New England in Portland. Dr. Fritchman attended the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Smith, Arkansas and is now completing this residency program. His professional goal is to be relocated to western Colorado and practices at the Grand Junction VA Medical Center



Shirley Simpson, DNP, is the Program Director for the Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency Program, and Program Coordinator for Evidence-Based Practice and Research at the Malcom Randall VA Medical Center in Gainesville, Florida. She has been continuously involved in the Registered Nurse Transition-to-Practice Residency (RNTTP) and Post Baccalaureate Nurse Residency (PBNR) programs since 2011, where her responsibilities include oversight of the PBNR program, teaching the curriculum for Evidence-Based Practice and facilitating learning experiences and practice development of new graduate nurses. She earned the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the University of Miami in 2016. She holds national certifications in Nursing Education and Nursing Professional Development. Her 31-year career in nursing encompasses a variety of roles including critical care nursing, nursing management and education in the academic and practice settings.



Patrick T. Youngblood, DBA, is the Program Manager, Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) and VA Learning Opportunity Residency (Nurse Internship Program), Office of Workforce Management and Consulting, Department of Veterans Affairs. A retired Air Force Veteran, Dr. Youngblood has over 25 years of experience recruiting, providing scholarships and human resources expertise to provide a pipeline of students to fill critical vacancies in VA. Under his leadership, HPSP awarded over 500 scholarships to date to students pursuing degrees in specialties needed by VA with a commitment to serve as health care providers in VA, thus increasing access to care for Veterans. Dr. Youngblood received his Doctorate of Business Administration from The University of Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas.



Scot Burroughs DMSc, PA-C, is the Executive Director of the Physician Assistant Program Office, VHA. Dr. Burroughs graduated from the Des Moines University Physician Assistant Program and received his Doctorate of Medical Sciences from Lynchburg University. While working as a Physician Assistant, he was actively involved in the passage of federal VHA legislation for PA pay reform and securing scholarships for Veterans to become physician assistants in VHA. Dr. Burroughs has been with VA for 20 years and currently resides in Iowa City, Iowa.



RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS PANEL DISCUSSION

The Research Partnerships Panel will discuss opportunities for underrepresented health professionals and health professions trainees to pursue research projects in VA. The discussion is moderated by Gaurav Choudhary, MD, Associate Chief of Staff, Research, Providence VA Medical Center

MODERATOR:

Gaurav Choudhary, MD, is the Associate Chief of Staff, Research and Staff Cardiologist at the VA Providence Healthcare System. He is a Professor of Medicine at the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University. He has been with VA since 2004 and has an active research program in lung vascular biology that includes preclinical, clinical and epidemiological research and is based at the Vascular Research Laboratory located at Providence VA Medical Center. Dr. Choudhary's research is supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and VA. He has over 90 peer-reviewed publications and served on study sections for NIH, VA, and the American Heart Association. He is a trainer of several training grants including one targeted towards underrepresented minority students and has mentored individuals at various stages of career development from students to junior faculty. He is a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, Fellow of the American Heart Association, and was recently recognized by the Rhode Island Disabled Veterans of America with the Physician of the Year Award for 2020. He is a member of the VA Office of Research and Development's Field Research Advisory Committee and Non-Profit Oversight Board.



PANELISTS:

Jose M. Garcia, MD, PhD, is the Clinical Investigator, Associate Director for Clinical Research, Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center and Director, Clinical Research Unit, VA Puget Sound Health Care System. He serves as Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine. Previously, Dr. Garcia was Associate Professor at the Baylor College of Medicine's Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism and Co-Director for the Center for Translational Research on Inflammatory Diseases at Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston, Texas. Dr. Garcia received his medical degree at Universidad Catolica de Cordoba in Argentina. He is board certified in Internal Medicine with a subspecialty in Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism.



Rolando E. Rumbaut, MD, PhD, serves as the Deputy Associate Chief of Staff for Research and Director of the Center for Translational Research on Inflammatory Diseases at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston, Texas and professor and Vice Chair for Research, Department of Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. Rumbaut is a physician-scientist with a primary research interest in the role of platelets as links between inflammation and thrombosis, particularly in microcirculation in the context of critical illnesses.



Hadiyah-Nicole Green, PhD, a VA Historically Black Colleges and Universities Career Development Award Recipient, is one of the first African American women to earn a PhD in Physics. She developed laser-activated nanotechnology that eliminates cancer in mice without observable side effects, and she is pursuing funding to begin human trials. Her story has been featured on The History Channel, PBS and NPR. Dr. Green was named as Pioneer of the Year by the National Society of Black Engineers, Top 30 Under 40 in Healthcare by Business Insider, and 100 Women of the Century by USA Today. Dr. Green is currently an Assistant Professor of Surgery at Morehouse School of Medicine.



Cendrine Robinson, PhD, MPH, is the Scientific Program Manager for Behavioral Health and Reintegration in the VA's Rehabilitation Research & Development Service (RR&D), Office of Research and Development (ORD). Her work focuses on stimulating research on interventions that enable Veterans with physical or psychological disabling conditions to function more fully in society, embrace social situations, return to school, and find gainful employment. Dr. Robinson is Co-Chair of the Office of Research and Development Diversity Equity and Inclusion Working Group. Dr. Robinson holds a PhD in Clinical Psychology from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences and a Master of Public Health from Harvard School of Public Health.



Mark Roltsch, PhD, is a Health Science Officer for the Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Research and Development (ORD) Clinical Science Services, managing reviews related to lung, skin, and other cancers. He leads the review of the Barnwell Award and is co-chairing the ORD Diversity Equity and Inclusion Working Group. Dr. Roltsch received his PhD in exercise physiology from the University of Maryland. As a post-doctoral student at Howard University Cancer Center, he investigated the physiological and biochemical mechanism by which regular physical activity interventions reduce cancer risks.





For further information, visit
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