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2025 Research Symposium

Translating Science into the Community

March 4, 2025, K-State Olathe campus

Keynote Speaker



Tabia K. Henry Akintobi, Ph.D., MPH, is a distinguished Professor and Chair of the Department of Community Health and Preventive Medicine at Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM). She is a globally sought-after social behavioral scientist and public health practitioner, leading community-driven translational research and programs aimed at eradicating health disparities and advancing community health. Henry Akintobi earned her PhD in Public Health with a focus on Social Sciences and her Master of Public Health in Maternal and Child Health from the University of South Florida. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Miami. At MSM, she serves as the Principal Investigator for the Prevention Research Center funded by the CDC, dedicated to advancing community-based participatory research that matters. She also holds key roles in various centers and networks funded by the NIH and other prestigious organizations. Her contributions to public health are recognized through numerous awards, including the American Public Health Association's Dr. John W. Hatch FLAME Award and the Rotary Women of Impact Award for Wellness Advocacy. Dr. Henry Akintobi is an extensively published author, contributing to significant texts such as "The Morehouse Model" and "Community-Centered Public Health." As Associate Dean for Community Engagement, she facilitates community-centered, equity-driven partnerships that advance health equity and justice. Her research interests include community-based participatory research, health disparities, and social determinants of health, ensuring her work has a tangible impact for and with communities.



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Additional Speakers and Panelists:



Cole Bird is a rising third-year medical student at the University of Kansas School of Medicine and a TL1 Scholar pursuing a master's in clinical research. With a strong foundation in otolaryngology and dysphagia research, he is particularly interested in song-based therapies as an innovative approach to rehabilitation. His work is driven by a commitment to developing patient-centered interventions that enhance quality of life for individuals with dysphagia. Through interdisciplinary research and translational science, Bird aims to bridge the gap between traditional speech-language pathology and novel therapeutic strategies.



Matthew J. Byerly, M.D., is a board-certified psychiatrist who has broad expertise in clinical and translational mental health research, which he applies to projects related to suicide prevention/mental health promotion and schizophrenia. For 18 years, he directed the Schizophrenia and Adult Fragile X Research Programs at UT Southwestern Medical Center where he became a leader in research related to medication adherence, having developed the internationally recognized Brief Adherence Rating Scale (BARS). From 2015-2018, Byerly steered the Center for Mental Health Research and Recovery at Montana State University where he focused on addressing suicide and mental health challenges in rural communities. He has led or co-led more than 45 clinical trials funded by the NIMH, and state, and industry sponsors. He has served on multiple Scientific Advisory Boards including the Food and Drug Administration Psychopharmacologic Drugs Advisory Committee and the NIMH CATIE Trial. As an educator, Byerly has mentored many clinicians and early psychiatric researchers. For 10 years, he served as a NIMH-funded Psychiatric Research Education Program (PREP) Director and Associate Residency Training Director for Didactics and Research. He currently trains students and residents in supervised care and through didactics and conducts research at the University of Kansas Medical Center - Wichita.



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Ashley Carlson (she/her) is Director of KU Medical Center Research Administration's Research Training and Communications department. Over the past two decades she has worked in higher education, nonprofit and research administration, specializing in program development and management, communications, training, proposal writing, and operations. She holds a Master of Liberal Arts with an emphasis in creative arts and a Master of Science in psychology with an emphasis on research design and analysis. She has focused her work on applying creative methods and evidence-based techniques to help diverse audiences navigate complex information for improved learning, performance, and engagement.



Mario Castro, M.D., M.P.H., is the L. E. Phillips and Lenora Carr Phillips Professor of Medicine, Vice Chair for Clinical and Translational Research, Department of Medicine, Chief, Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine at University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC), and Director of the Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute at the University of Kansas and Adjunct Research Professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine. He has been a leader of the CDC Controlling Asthma in American Cities, American Lung Association Airway Clinical Research Centers, and NHLBI Asthma Clinical Research Network, Severe Asthma Research Program, AsthmaNet and PrecISE research networks. His translational research projects in the Asthma and Airway Translational Research Unit (AATRU) are focused on the pathogenesis of asthma and treatment of asthma, especially in severe disease. Recently, Castro has spearheaded several initiatives to combat the COVID-19 pandemic: Lead investigator for NIH/NIAID-funded COVID-19 Prevention Trials Network (CoVPN trial), ACTIV-2 trial and the PCORNET HERO HCQ trial. He is the author of over 30 chapters/books and over 300 peer-reviewed articles; over the past 25+ years, Dr. Castro has trained over 40 junior clinical & translational scholars. He is widely recognized as an expert clinician, an excellent mentor, and skilled educator with a significant commitment to the development of young investigator's careers.



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Ana Cohen, Ph.D., FACMG is a board-certified clinical laboratory geneticist focusing on the analysis and interpretation of genomic variants detected among pediatric rare disease patients. As part of the “Genomic Answers for Kids” (GA4K) research program at CMH, Cohen is able to explore and develop additional strategies for diagnostic success and improving access to testing, particularly for rural populations. In addition, she is an assistant professor in pathology at the University of Missouri Kansas City.



Lisa Sanderson Cox, Ph.D., is a Professor of Population Health at the University of Kansas School of Medicine, Associate Director of the Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute at the University of Kansas, a Member of Cancer Prevention and Control within the University of Kansas Comprehensive Cancer Center, and an Adjunct Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Kansas. She leads the NIH-funded Kick It at Swope (KIS) tobacco treatment clinical trials for African American adults in collaboration with Swope Health Central, a Federally Qualified Health Center, and was the founding Research Director within the Juntos Center for Advancing Latino Health. Cox has led clinical trials funded by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to improve tobacco use treatment for African American and Latino smokers and has contributed to the development of treatment programs for American Indians, rural smokers, and patients with cancer. With over 100 scientific publications, this work contributes to advancing health equity. She enjoys collaborations with international colleagues through the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco (SRNT), served as co-chair of the Health Disparities Network, and was a leader in the development of SRNT-University.



Jeni Cross, Ph.D., is the Director of Research for the Institute for the Built Environment and Associate Professor of Sociology at Colorado State University. She earned a bachelor's degree from Colorado State University and received her Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of California at Davis. Her areas of expertise include conservation, community development, professional social networks, social norms, and behavior change. Cross' passion is applying the tools of social science (theory and research methods) to help communities and



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organizations create meaningful change. For example, she has created social marketing projects to improve radon mitigation, reduce substance use, and increase energy conservation. Her current research projects focus on how social norms influence energy conservation and how inter-organizational social networks contribute to innovation and sustainability. She joined Frontiers External Advisory Committee in early 2022.



outcomes.

Alexandra Prosser-Dombrowski, M.D. is a pediatric hematologist/oncologist and Frontiers TL1 postdoctoral scholar at Children's Mercy. For her research, she has focused on studying an inherited bone marrow failure syndrome that causes a severe anemia, beginning in infancy. Her primary mentors for this project are John Perry, Ph.D., from Children's Mercy and Jennifer Gerton, Ph.D., from Stowers Institute for Medical Research. With future plans to primarily practice oncology with a focus on leukemia, she also has a project to study infant leukemia, representing a very high-risk group of patients with inferior



Linda D'Silva, Ph.D., PT, NCS, is currently an assistant professor in the Department of Physical Therapy, Rehabilitation Science, and Athletic Training at the University of Kansas Medical Center. She is a board-certified specialist in neurologic physical therapy. Her primary teaching responsibilities in the doctoral program in physical therapy include interventions and modalities used in physical therapy practice and ethics in physical therapy practice. She belongs to the Vestibular Special Interest Group and is a member of the Vestibular Hypofunction CPG Taskforce with the Academy of Neurologic Physical Therapy. D'Silva studied physical therapy in Mumbai, India, where she earned a master's degree from the All-India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and bachelor's degree from King Edward Memorial Hospital. She earned her doctorate from KU in rehabilitation science in 2016. Her doctoral project examined the impact of type 2 diabetes on the vestibular system in people with benign paroxysmal positional vertigo. D'Silva's research interests are aimed at understanding the role of the vestibular system in healthy aging as well as the impact of vestibular dysfunction on physical function, to develop rehabilitation interventions to improve mobility. Currently she is examining the vestibular and cognitive deficits after mild traumatic brain injury and resulting consequences on mobility and balance.



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Andrea Bradley-Ewing, MPA, MA, serves as the Research Diversity and Inclusion Officer for the Children's Mercy Research Institute (CMRI). As Senior Director of Community Engaged Research in Health Services and Outcomes Research at Children's Mercy Kansas City, Bradley-Ewing has extensive experience in community-engaged and patient-centered outcomes research. These experiences include collaborating with diverse research teams as well as patients, families, and community stakeholders to design, implement, and disseminate large-scale interventions to improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities. Her work has included directing comparative intervention studies to promote medication adherence, smoking cessation, vaccination uptake, HIV prevention, and diabetes, and heart disease prevention in historically underserved communities. Bradley-Ewing brings her robust research experience to her leadership role at CMRI, having served as a co-project lead on a proposal project that engaged key stakeholders in developing a research agenda to increase vaccination rates. This work led to an extramurally funded award to test the comparative efficacy of two interventions to increase HPV vaccination rates. In addition, she collaborated with patient and family stakeholders on a project comparing the effectiveness of two interventions to reduce inappropriate antibiotic prescribing and improve shared decision making. Among her current research efforts, Bradley-Ewing is working to engage patients, their parents, clinicians, and research to identify shared research priorities for children living with rare diseases. She is also continuing her research efforts related to vaccine screening and interventions. In addition to her research experience, Bradley-Ewing serves as the director of CMRI's Community Advisory Board, which collaborates with research teams to ensure input from patients, families, and the community is incorporated in research activities. She is also Chair of the Inclusion and Diversity in Research Workgroup whose goal is to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion among research participants, investigators, and staff. Bradley-Ewing earned her bachelor's degree and dual master's degrees in psychology and public administration from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.



Stacy Farr, Ph.D., M.P.H., is a trained health services researcher in health policy, and brings over 15 years of experience managing research and policy projects and conducting mixed methods program evaluations on a variety of health-related topics. She has worked in academia, healthcare, federal contract research, and in federal government. Her education and training include a B.S. from Nebraska Wesleyan University; M.P.H. from the University of Kansas School of



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Medicine; and Ph.D. from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Health Services Research & Policy. Her teaching, research, and policy interests include implementation science; quality improvement and quality measurement; outcomes research; mental health and chronic health conditions; and caregiving burden. She also brings expertise in mixed methods research design; qualitative research; education and outreach; technical assistance; and policy implementation. Farr has presented and published in a variety of national venues. She also participates on various local and national advisory boards.



Jennifer Goldman, M.D., is Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and a member of the Divisions of Clinical Pharmacology, Toxicology and Therapeutic Innovation and Infectious Diseases at Children's Mercy Kansas City (CMKC). Both her research and clinical efforts are centered on working with people across disciplines to improve the lives of children. She serves as principal investigator (R01GM129783) on an interdisciplinary program evaluating the safety of

medications in children and site PI for a multi-center program to optimize pediatric surgical perioperative antimicrobial use (PI Newland; R01HS0267420). Since the COVID-19 pandemic, much of her effort has focused on providing guidance to schools on local and regional levels across Kansas and Missouri. She serves as co-PI of School TLC, a NIH Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostic Testing Initiative (RADx-UP) award (1OT2HD107555-01 and 02). Through School TLC, the research team has successfully implemented COVID-19 screening and surveillance testing in a large, urban school district, enrolling more than 1,000 students and staff to date and performing nearly 3,000 SARS-CoV-2 tests. Serving as an expert on the Missouri Department of Education COVID-19 taskforce and as a team lead on the Missouri Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 & Kids ECHO, which is a weekly educational session offered to schools statewide to provide expert guidance, provide opportunities to stay up to date on the ever-changing landscape of COVID-19 and schools. She also participates in the NIH-funded ABC Science Collaborative led by Duke pairing scientists and physicians with schools and community leaders to help understand the most current and relevant COVID-19 information.



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Aditi Gupta, M.D., MS is a Professor of Nephrology and Hypertension at the University of Kansas Medical Center, Kidney Institute faculty, Associate Director of Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute, Director of Internal Medicine Residency Research, Medical Director of Hoglund Biomedical Imaging Center, Director of Clinical Trials in the Division of Nephrology and Hypertension and is a part of the departments of Internal Medicine and Neurology. Gupta is a transplant nephrologist and physician-scientist, working with patients with kidney disease for their pre-transplant evaluation, manage patients during the peri-transplant period and care for them after their transplant. Her research focuses on geriatric nephrology and hypertension with a focus on cognitive impairment, frailty, and quality of life in aging and in patients with a high burden of vascular disease. Gupta's work has been funded by NIH and PICORI and focuses on early detection and prevention of chronic kidney disease, cognitive impairment, and frailty with a heavy focus on patient centered outcomes. She has served on journal editorial boards, NIH study sections and Data Safety and Monitoring Boards for NIH studies.



Cherayla Haynes is currently the Community Partners Project Manager for Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute at the University of Kansas. As the Community & Collaboration Core Navigator, she has been a driving force in creating a new Frontiers Specific Community Advisory Board, naming and coordinating the Broderick Crawford Community Partnership Award, initiating connections to local and regional health departments, and coordinating the Multi-disciplinary Advocates and Researchers Group. She looks forward to this year's Symposium and learning more about how to translate science to the community.



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LaShawn M. Hoffman is a visionary leader at the forefront of civic engagement, community development, and public health. With a career dedicated to fostering safe, healthy, and economically vibrant communities, Hoffman heads a boutique consultancy specializing in smart community development, strategic neighborhood planning, public health advocacy, and innovative nonprofit management. His work bridges public health and community revitalization to create sustainable and equitable solutions. Hoffman has played an instrumental role in numerous initiatives and leadership positions, including serving as Chairperson for the Morehouse School of Medicine Prevention Research Center

Community Coalition Board since 2010. In this capacity, he leads diverse teams of community advocates, academic partners, and agencies in addressing health disparities through community-based participatory research. He also served as Chairperson of the CDC Prevention Research Center Network Community Committee and has been a trusted advisor on national task forces tackling pressing public health challenges. A champion of equity in both public health and community development, Hoffman has spearheaded initiatives addressing oral health, chronic diseases, and the COVID-19 pandemic, often focusing on marginalized and vulnerable populations. His leadership in the National COVID-19 Resiliency Network and other programs highlights his commitment to reducing health disparities and promoting health equity. Simultaneously, he has been instrumental in tackling critical housing challenges. As the former CEO of a community development corporation, he managed over \$5 million in affordable housing initiatives, co-developed strategic property acquisitions using Neighborhood Stabilization Funds, and pioneered a Community Land Trust model to ensure long-term housing affordability. His efforts have strengthened neighborhood preservation and fostered socio-economic and cultural diversity. Hoffman's achievements include addressing the foreclosure crisis, protecting vulnerable homeowners, and fostering socio-economic and cultural diversity through housing and community development. These efforts earned him the prestigious Loeb Fellowship at Harvard's Graduate School of Design in 2015, recognizing his contributions to community economic development. In 2022, he was elected President of the Loeb Fellowship Alumni Association, leading a global network of over 500 professionals shaping the built and natural environment. With more than 15 years of service, Hoffman has a proven track record of leadership in civic engagement and policy development. His publications and presentations on community engagement and participatory research have advanced understanding and practice in these critical areas.



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Stephania Miller-Hughes, Ph.D., MS, MSCI, is responsible for advising on and facilitating TN-CFAR community engagement efforts. She has an overarching interest in translating evidence-based interventions to eliminate chronic disease burdens experienced by racial and ethnic minorities. Her independent research is focused on community-engaged and patient-relevant efforts to reduce the disproportionate diabetes burden experienced by African American women. Locally, she leverages her community-engaged research experience in leading community-engaged research infrastructure efforts at Meharry Medical College and Vanderbilt University Medical Center. Regionally, she represents Tennessee in efforts to address social determinants that negatively impact the health of racial and ethnic minorities. Nationally, she serves as a grant reviewer for various entities, such as the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute and other academic institutions. She joined the Frontiers External Advisory Committee in the summer of 2022. She joined Frontiers External Advisory Committee in spring of 2022.



Rachel Keller, RN, BSN, CCRP, is a Clinical Research Nurse in the Department of Anesthesiology at KUMC with over 10 years of experience advancing healthcare through research. She holds dual bachelor's degrees in journalism and nursing, a unique combination that enables her to effectively communicate complex medical concepts to both patients and interdisciplinary teams. Her research focuses are chronic pain management and perioperative care. Passionate about patient advocacy, she believes that education is a powerful tool for empowering individuals to take charge of their health. This commitment to education drives her work, as she strives to ensure that every patient fully understands their condition and treatment options. Prior to her role at KUMC, she worked for a local public relations firm specializing in health and safety awareness for vulnerable populations.



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Matt Kleinmann is the Director of Community Development at Vibrant Health in Kansas City, Kansas. He leads the development of the Vibrant Health Center for Health Equity, a 50,000-square-foot community health center. With a background in architecture and urban design, Matt co-founded the Dotte Agency at the University of Kansas, facilitating community health design projects in Wyandotte County. He managed the Wyandotte County Health Equity Task Force and contributed to the Kansas City Physical Activity Plan. In 2024, Matt ran for United States House of Representatives, focusing on policies that address community health and development upstream of public health challenges. Matt played on the KU Men's Basketball 2008 National Championship team. He is married to Sangeeta Shastry, and together they have two dogs and live in Kansas City, Kansas.



Kai Ling Kong's, Ph.D., research targets health during pregnancy and infancy in order to identify novel insights into childhood obesity prevention. One premise of her work is grounded in behavioral economics and necessitates valid early measures of food and non-food reinforcement. Based on this framework, an individual's decision to eat or participate in a fun activity, for example, is moderated by their constraints on those options and the presence of alternatives. Another premise of her work is grounded in environmental enrichment and choice architecture. Relevant literature suggests that increasing the availability of options in one's environment can be effective at making a healthy lifestyle more attainable. Within the abovementioned areas, she is intrigued by why a strong motivation to eat arises in some individuals but not others. Through a series of pilot studies, Kong developed a paradigm measuring the reinforcing values of food and non-food alternatives during early life. She discovered that there are individual differences in motivation to earn food vs. non-food rewards as early as infancy, and that lower motivation to engage in non-food activities is associated with a greater weight status. Such findings led Kong to secure an R01 investigating the efficacy of a music program to shift motivation to eat in 9–15-month-olds particularly attracted to food. In the near future, she aims to utilize data collected from this line of research to create unique approaches that enhance traditional strategies for improving infants' energy intakes and expenditures. Rapid weight gain during the first year of life predicts later obesity and is notably prevalent among low socioeconomic status (SES) groups. Kong argues that ecological and economic circumstances experienced by low SES individuals (e.g., lack of eating alternatives, chronic deprivation) augments food reinforcement; therefore,

implementing interventions that promote non-food reinforcement may decrease socioeconomic disparities in obesity.



Julius Leary, Ed.D., is the Executive Director of Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) at the University of Kansas. In this role, Leary is responsible for the planning, management, and coordination of all CTSI operations. He provides administrative and fiscal oversight, support of programs, and direction for the processes and communications of Frontiers. He holds an Ed.D. in Interdisciplinary Leadership from Creighton University, MBA in Operations Management and Change Management from the Kellstadt Graduate School of Business at DePaul University, and a Bachelor of Science in Finance and Economics from Elmhurst University.



J. Steven Leeder, PharmD, Ph.D. is the Executive Vice President/Chief Scientific Officer at Children's Mercy Kansas City; Marion Merrell Dow Endowed Chair in Pediatric Precision Therapeutics at Children's Mercy Kansas City; Associate Chair for Research, Department of Pediatrics; Deputy Director, Children's Mercy Research Institute; Professor of Pediatrics, University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Medicine; Research Professor of Pediatrics, University of Kansas School of Medicine; and, the co-PI of Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute, and shares responsibility for the vision and direction of Frontiers CTSI with Mario Castro, M.D., spanning early lifespan through adulthood, having served as co-Director of the TL1 program for Frontiers 2.0. Leeder's research focuses on characterization of the relative contributions of ontogeny, genetic variation, and disease to observed variability in drug disposition and response in children. Over the years, these research activities have coalesced into the GOLDILOKs initiative: Genomic- and Ontogeny-Linked Dose Individualization and clinical Optimization for Kids funded as one of four Specialized Centers for Research in Pediatric and Developmental Pharmacology supported by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. Leeder has been recognized for his contributions to pediatric clinical pharmacology and pharmacogenetics with awards from the American Society for Clinical Pharmacology and the Pediatric Pharmacy Association.



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LaTanya Pitts-Lipprand is the Founder and President of Marlene's Kaleidoscope, a nonprofit Lupus advocacy organization serving the Greater Kansas City area. La Tanya was born and raised in Kansas City and is a lupus survivor of 27 years. After a high-risk pregnancy, her health spiraled, and she was given only three years to live. She is even more committed to growing awareness, improving the quality of life for survivors, and ultimately finding a cure.



Dan Nguyen, M.D., is a Cardiovascular Fellow at Saint Luke's Health System. He graduated from the University of Colorado Medical School and completed his residency at the University of Washington. Nguyen's research interests include heart failure/critical care cardiology, interventional cardiology, regional systems of care in cardiogenic and AMI, patient-centered outcomes, risk-averse/risk-tolerant physical treating patterns.



Nicole Nollen, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Department of Population Health at the University of Kansas School of Medicine, co-leader of the Cancer Prevention and Control program within the University of Kansas Cancer Center (KUCC), and PI of the KL2 training program within Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute. She received her Ph.D. in counseling psychology from the University of Missouri at Kansas City and was a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health at the University of Kansas School of Medicine before joining the faculty. Her career is focused on understanding social and behavioral determinants of health and health behaviors among vulnerable populations. Nollen has maintained a continuous stream of funding in this area since 2002. The long-term goal of her research is to reduce tobacco-related morbidity and mortality for low income and racial/ethnic minority populations. Her specific research interests are in eliminating tobacco-related health disparities in low income and racial/ethnic minority communities by evaluating promising behavioral and pharmacotherapy treatments for racial/ethnic minority adult smokers interested in quitting and examining novel electronic nicotine delivery products for adult smokers unwilling or unable to quit combustible cigarettes. Current relevant projects as PI will generate important evidence on the short- and long-term impact of e-cigarettes on health in



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adult combustible smokers who switch (R01 MD018123); the efficacy of varenicline in helping dual users quit combustible cigarettes (R01 MD018123); the impact of menthol flavoring in helping adults in the US who smoke menthol cigarettes switch to e-cigarettes (R01 DA055999); and if changing pharmacotherapy when it is not working leads to better treatment outcomes for African American smokers compared to continuing with a single pharmacotherapy throughout the duration of treatment (Quit2Live3) (DA-046576). Findings from this work have resulted in over 105 peer-reviewed publications and many important contributions to the field, including generating the first-known data on nicotine salt-based electronic cigarettes as an effective harm reduction strategy in Black and Latinx adult smokers who are not ready to quit smoking combustible cigarettes, informing the FDA's proposed ban on menthol cigarettes, informing clinical practice for treating Black adults in the US who are non-daily or light daily smokers, and helping elucidate the role of nicotine metabolism, tobacco use, and cessation specific to Black adults in the US who smoke.



Jannette Berkley-Patton, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Biomedical and Health Informatics and the Merle and Muriel Hicklin Endowed Chair (Internal Medicine) in the School of Medicine at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC). She is the director of the UMKC Community Health Research Group and the director of the UMKC Health Equity Institute. As a behavioral psychologist, her expertise is in using tailored community-engaged approaches to develop, implement, and evaluate health screening and linkage to care interventions that have focused on HIV/STI, mental health, dementia, diabetes, and COVID-19 with underserved populations, including African Americans, in collaboration with faith, community, and health agency partners. As principal investigator, she has completed two NIH-funded culturally-tailored clinical trials with African American churches. One focused on increasing HIV/STI testing (*Taking It to the Pews*; 16 African American churches). The other focused on increasing COVID-19 testing and linkage to care (*Faithful Response to COVID-19*; 16 African American churches) as part of NIH's national Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics-Underserved Populations (RADx-UP) initiative. She is currently the PI of a 2nd RADx-UP trial focused on increasing rapid COVID-19 testing and treatment (*Faithful Response II*; 10 African American churches). She is also the PI of a community-based, NIH-funded clinical trial focused on culturally tailoring CDC's evidence-based Diabetes Prevention Program to reduce diabetes risks and address social determinants with African American pre-diabetic patients from a safety net hospital. Additionally, she is the Co-PI of a NIH-funded naturalistic experiment examining Kansas City's unique zero bus fare policy and its health impacts on residents in urban low-income areas. Additionally, she is the PI of two phases of Jackson County (MO) funding that mobilizes a county-wide initiative to increase access to health vaccinations and screening services with over 70 faith, business, neighborhood, youth and health organizations in socially



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vulnerable communities. She also serves as a Co-Investigator of several grant projects. Over the past 20 years, Berkley-Patton has secured nearly \$30 million in extramural funding focused on health disparities and preventive health services research in underserved Kansas City communities. Among her national and local awards, she has been honored with the University of Missouri System Cross-Cultural Community Engagement Presidential Award, an appointment as the UMKC School of Medicine Merle and Muriel Hicklin Endowed Chair in Internal Medicine, and induction into the University of Kansas Women's Hall of Fame. Most recently, she led the UMKC School of Medicine in receiving national recognition with receipt of the American Association of Medical Colleges Spencer Foreman Community Engagement Award.



Clara Pelfrey, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine serving as Director of Program Evaluation for the Clinical and Translational Science Collaborative (CTSC) in Cleveland, Ohio. Her experience includes 19 years in translational research studying the immunology of Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Pelfrey has served as a PI on her own RO1 grant and as a reviewer on NIH study sections. She is co-inventor on a patent

and has been involved in clinical trials on MS. This has provided her with a thorough understanding of clinical and translational research. She served as a Scientific Review Officer for the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program and the Institute for Educational Sciences, where she ran peer review panels for biomedical and educational research and prepared scientific summary statements to communicate with principal investigators. Pelfrey's other experience includes serving as Program Officer for a Cleveland Clinic pilot grant program and teaching in the graduate and medical schools at CWRU. She served as the Chair of the Translational Research Evaluation Topical Interest Group within the American Evaluation Association in 2016-17 and again in 2019-20. Since 2016 she has been an active member of, and currently leads, the Retrospective Translational Science Case Study Workgroup. This group has published a detailed protocol for conducting successful TS case studies and in 2021, published the first TS Case Study in the JCTS. She joined the Frontiers External Advisory Committee in spring of 2023.



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Sandy Snook holds a master's degree in advocacy and administration, and she has over 20 years of experience facilitating effective community collaboration and leading creative teams that include numerous & diverse individuals, neighborhoods, disciplines, organizations & cultures in a grassroots environment. As the former chair of the Capacity Building/Education Subcommittee of Kansas City Regional Community Health Worker Collaborative, she oversaw the educational and training opportunities for Community Health Workers.

Currently, she manages a highly attended quarterly meeting called “Community Together” where all members of the health care community are welcome to make announcements and network. A longtime supporter of the Heartland Conference, she is a staple in the Wyandotte County Community. She is also a member of the Frontiers Community Advisory Board.



Jennifer Whitaker is the Administrative Director for Frontiers Clinical and Translational Science Institute, a role she has held since 2017. In this role, she oversees the Institute’s finances, human resources, and additional administrative tasks. Whitaker joined Frontiers in 2013 and can be considered its historian with the retirement of William Brooks, Ph.D. Originally from Chicago, she grew up in Oklahoma, where her dad was stationed at the Air Force Base. Whitaker graduated from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. She is the mother of five (ages 5 to 30), and her oldest daughter also graduated from the University of Science

and Arts of Oklahoma.



Heather Wilkins, Ph.D., earned a Microbiology degree at Kansas State University in 2008. Following completion of her undergraduate degree she joined a research laboratory at the University of Denver for Ph.D. training. The focus of her dissertation was mitochondrial oxidative stress in Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. Wilkins received a distinguished thesis award and earned her Ph.D. in 2013. Upon receipt of her Ph.D., Wilkins joined the KU Alzheimer's Disease Research Center as a postdoctoral fellow in August 2013. Dr. Russell Swerdlow was her mentor. She transitioned to faculty at the University of Kansas Medical Center in 2019.

Her research interests are centered on understanding how brain energy influences Alzheimer's disease pathology. She uses induced pluripotent stem cells from human subjects to develop



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neurons, glia, and cerebral organoid models ("mini brains in a dish") of sporadic Alzheimer's disease. Wilkins is an assistant director of the KU Alzheimer's Disease Research Center Biomarker core. Her role in this core is to direct new biomarker development for Alzheimer's Disease.



Rev. Eric Williams was born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri, and has invested tirelessly in many civic and philanthropic endeavors. As chief servant of the Calvary Temple Baptist Church for over 30 years, Pastor Williams views ministry as an opportunity to be used by God to bring healing to a hurting world. According to Pastor Williams, "Our task is to present Christ to people to bring them to a true relationship with Him. As our relationship with Christ flourishes, the total society benefits." An outspoken advocate for the less fortunate, Rev. Williams

is a strong community leader and has been recognized locally and nationally for his outstanding community engaged work and research. He has been a powerful voice for persons living with HIV and other health conditions.



Benjamin Wolfe, Ph.D., is the dean and CEO of K-State Olathe, serving in the role since June 12, 2022. As CEO, Wolfe is responsible for overall program leadership, strategic direction, fiscal stewardship, fund development, policy formulation, impact assessment and aligning the efforts and strengths of K-State Olathe with those of K-State. Wolfe, who has extensive knowledge about the Kansas City region and workforce, works with university and regional stakeholders to maintain

a strategic focus for K-State Olathe consistent with the strategic directions of the university and to build continued excellence and growth in education, research, and outreach programs through the Olathe campus. Before coming to K-State Olathe, Wolfe was the associate dean of the School of Professional Studies and the KU Edwards Campus in Overland Park. In that role, he helped facilitate development of more than 20 new degree and certificate programs and oversaw JCERT-related academic programs. He also was a faculty member in the environmental studies program at KU in addition to teaching geoscience-related courses for more than 20 years. Prior to joining higher education, he worked as an environmental project geologist. Wolfe holds a bachelor's degree, with distinction, in geology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; a master's degree in geology from the University of Alaska, Fairbanks; and a doctorate in educational leadership and policy studies from the University of Kansas. He is a published researcher in geoscience education and higher education policy and has presented at national



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conferences and workshops on the topics of workforce development, strengthening regional partnerships between higher education institutions and broadening participation in the sciences. Originally from Lincoln, Nebraska, Wolfe has been a resident of Olathe since 2001 with his wife and their four children.



Alice Zhang, Ph.D., BCBA-D, LBA is a KL2 Scholar at the University of Kansas Medical Center, diving into the innovative world of feeding intervention in children with autism. With a focus on developing a telehealth-delivered, parent-mediated feeding intervention for children with autism, she is addressing an area of gap in evidence-based practices in autism feeding treatment. This research is essential, as it seeks to improve access and effectiveness of feeding interventions for children with autism, particularly through telehealth platforms in children's natural settings. By employing a mixed-method approach, she aims to uncover insights that could enhance caregiver involvement and optimize feeding strategies for children with autism. Driven by a passion for autism research and behavioral health, she aspires to bridge gaps in care by integrating technology with intervention practices to support children with autism and their families.

Poster Session

Presenter - Institution – Poster Title

Omowumi Akinjole, Ph.D. – Children's Mercy Kansas City - Antihistamine Effects on Allergic Cytokine Levels in Children with Allergic Asthma

Sarah Berens, Ph.D., LMSW – University of Kansas Medical Center – Assessing Impact & Adaption Needs in Language Promotion

Cole Bird – University of Kansas Medical Center - Dissonance in distributions: a computable phenotype for vocal nodules and the gaps that persist

Amy Bodde, Ph.D. – University of Kansas Medical Center - Dementia caregiving in Down syndrome: family and caregiver perspectives

Jordan A. Borrell, Ph.D. – University of Kansas Medical Center – Phantom Limb Intervention in Persons with Limb Loss and Targeted Muscle Reinnervation



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Mariah Brewé – Children's Mercy Kansas City - CHOICE-AYA: Adapting an evidence-based contraceptive counseling intervention for adolescents and young adults experiencing homelessness

Anna Burns – Children's Mercy Kansas City - Meeting Randomized Control Trial Recruitment Milestones in an Academic Center: A Data-Driven, Visual Approach

Storm Dial, MS2 – University of Kansas Medical Center - Pharmacotherapy for Pediatric Patients Who Use E-cigarettes: Provider Perspectives and Prescribing Practices

Alexandra Prosser-Dombrowski, M.D. – Children's Mercy Kansas City - Stem Cell Model of Novel RPL30 Variant in Diamond Blackfan Anemia with Downregulated HSP70 in Early Red Blood Cell Progenitors

Trenton Edwards – University of Kansas Medical Center, Wichita - Multiomic Analysis of KMT2A-r Pediatric Acute Myeloid Leukemia Reveals Novel Genes and Proteins of Interest

Amanda Emerson, Ph.D., RN & OWLHART Team – University of Kansas Medical Center – Older Women Leading Healthy Aging Research Together: Research In, With, and By the Community

Kelsey Gardiner, Ph.D., Janet Rhone, MA, Raquel Garcia, BSN, RN, Amanda Grimes, Ph.D., Jennifer Allsworth, Ph.D., Krystal Towne, BS, Fardowsa Ahmed (BS student), Claire Covert (BS student) – University of Missouri Kansas City, University Health - Early Insights: Preliminary findings of a 12-Month Food is Medicine Intervention for Food Insecure Adults

Annie Goikhman – Kansas City University - Optimization of Human Plasma Derived Exosome Storage Under Cryoprotection Conditions

Hannah Hancock, MS – University of Kansas Medical Center, Wichita - Recruiting Rural Research Participants: A Case Study on the Effect of Implementing Community-Engaged Recruitment Strategies

Carrie Wendel-Hummell, Ph.D.; Jennifer Babitzke, MA – University of Kansas - Barriers and Opportunities for Strengthening the Direct Support Workforce in Kansas

Lisette Jacobson, Ph.D. – University of Kansas Medical Center – eMOMS: A Feasibility Randomized Controlled Trial Using a Digital Intervention to Improve Weight and Breastfeeding Among Women with Elevated BMI

Abby Kietzman, MS, ACRP-CP – Children's Mercy Research Institute - Facilitators, Barriers & Recommendations for Pediatric Research Sites Conducting Decentralized Clinical Trials (DCTs)



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Danya Pradeep Kumar, Ph.D., - University of Kansas Medical Center – Association Between Cerebral Blood Flow and Cognitive Performance in Individuals with Chronic Kidney Disease

Hanluen Kuo – Frontiers CTSI - Frontiers Navigators: Connecting Services and Cores

Rebecca Lepping, Ph.D. – University of Kansas Medical Center – Music Use for Dementia Care in Urban Elder Care Communities in Northeast Kansas

Alesia Lokshina – Kansas City University - Laparoscopic Management of Fundal Intramural Ectopic Pregnancy

Brittany Martinez, Ph.D. – University of Kansas Medical Center - Investigating Maternal Nutrient Signaling Changes in a Mouse Model of Cleft Palate Rescue

Arjun Mahajan – Kansas City University - Prevalence of Stereoblindness Among School-Aged Children in Joplin and Kansas City, Missouri

Kathleen Parens – Kansas City University - Student Refugee Health Navigators Hypertensive Crisis and Education

Hrithik Ranganathan, Nixon Banister, Zander Gluckman, Drake Heimsoth, Anay Chatterjee, Harpuneet Virk - Medical Professions Academy, Olathe North High School - Examining Structural Differences and Conserved Regions of Programmed Cell Death Protein 1 Across Species

Olivia Sours – University of Missouri Kansas City - Charitable Food & Healthcare Industry Partnership Efforts Against Food Insecurity: A Mixed Methods Programmatic Evaluation

Mason Tuttle, OMS II & **Pooja Gunnala**, PMS II – Kansas City University - Naloxone Training following PRN Opioid Prescription to Newly Arrived Refugee with Toddler at Home: A Case Report

Aishani Vengala – University of Missouri Kansas City - Parent Participation in Family Centered Rounds by Language and Health Literacy

Heather Wilkens, Ph.D. – University of Kansas Medical Center - A Novel Blood Based Mitochondrial Biomarker for Alzheimer's Disease

Amy Wilson, MA, MT-BC – University of Kansas - Preliminary Results of Hope Outcomes from a Feasibility Investigation of the EMPOWER Singing Intervention

Colette R. Worcester – University of Kansas Medical Center – Investigating STING Activity and the Role of Sphingosine Kinases in Triple-Negative Breast Cancer



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E (Alice) Zhang – University of Kansas Medical Center - Caregiver Perspectives on Feeding Challenges and Intervention Development for Children with Autism

**A special thank you to Ben Wolfe, Ph.D., and the entire staff at Kansas State's Olathe campus for their hospitality.*