

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
POLICY AND MANAGEMENT
ANNUAL REPORT
2022-2023



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UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

Arnold School of Public Health

NAVIGATING SUCCESS

HSPM Year by the Numbers

\$11,731,922

total new research funding

year-to-year
increase in new
funding

186%

22

doctoral students

40

MHA students

24

MPH students

15

primary faculty
members

peer-reviewed
publications

119

45

total research
projects

Letter from the Chair

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

I am delighted to share the Department of Health Services Policy and Management's 2022 – 2023 Annual Report with you! With steady enrollment growth and a record \$50.1 million in extramural funding last year, it is an exciting time for the Arnold School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina and HSPM is no exception.

Since June 2022, I have had the privilege of serving as department chair. My first year was both exciting and challenging as I stepped into a new role at a new institution in a new city. I spent a lot of time listening, meeting 1-on-1 with faculty, and getting up to speed in the face of a steep learning curve. One of my favorite parts of the job is the opportunity it affords me to sing the praises of our world-class faculty, amazing staff, and outstanding students.

In these pages, you will meet a group of people who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of others and creating a better and more equitable world. We do this by studying health care organization and delivery in the United States and around the globe, and educating future generations of public health practitioners, health services researchers, and health care administrators who share our vision of a brighter tomorrow.

While HSPM faculty work on a wide range of research topics, we developed three cross-cutting areas of excellence that succinctly capture the scope of our work: health equity, data science, and health outcomes, policy, and economics (affectionately known as “HOPE”). Our success in these areas was clearly on display last year, as Dr. Elizabeth Crouch won NRHA's Researcher of the Year award, Dr. Peiyin Hung was named a USC Breakthrough Star for her work on inequities in rural maternity care, Dr. Chen Liang joined NIH as a DATA Scholar to advance research in machine learning and AI, Dr. Banky Olatosi and Dr. John Brooks continued making strides using big data to produce real-world evidence, and Dr. Christina Andrews was named scientific lead of USC's new opioid policy center.

Across all our degree programs (MHA, MPH, and PhD) our faculty are continually engaged in quality improvement efforts and our students are excelling and raising the bar for those who come after them. To advance equity, we no longer require the GRE for any of our academic programs. I am also especially proud to share that we now provide all incoming PhD students a competitive stipend plus full coverage of tuition, fees, and health insurance. We have introduced a new departmental seminar series and look forward to welcoming prominent national and international scholars to visit us in Columbia.

In short, this annual report is a testament to the incredible work being conducted by HSPM faculty, staff, and students—along with our numerous collaborators across campus, the nation, and the world. HSPM is a program on the move and our future has never looked brighter.

Sincerely,



Brad Wright, PhD
Professor and Chair



Core Faculty



Christina Andrews, PhD
Associate Professor

Dr. Andrews' research interests include the impact of the organization and financing of substance use disorder treatment on service access, with a particular focus on public insurance coverage for substance use disorder. She is currently Principal Investigator on two R01 grants assessing the effects of Medicaid managed care on access to alcohol use disorder treatment and opioid use disorder treatment. Dr. Andrews is also Director of the Data Analytics Core of the South Carolina Center of Excellence in Addiction.



John Brooks, PhD
Professor and South Carolina SmartState Endowed Chair

Dr. Brooks is a health economist with a focus on estimating treatment effectiveness using observational healthcare databases. He is the Director of the Center for Effectiveness Research in Orthopaedics (CERortho) which is a collaborative effort between USC and Prisma Health to promote comparative effectiveness research (CER) in orthopaedic care. CERortho enables methodologists and clinicians in a large dynamic healthcare system to create prospective data collection platforms and develop innovative methods in treatment effectiveness research.



Brian Chen, JD, PhD
Associate Professor

Dr. Chen's research interest lies in examining the legal and economic influences on healthcare delivery and their ultimate impact on health outcomes. Dr. Chen is particularly interested in investigating how food and drug laws, as well as financial interests from drug prescriptions, influence the quantity and manner in which prescription drugs are prescribed to patients. As prescription medications continue to be a significant part of healthcare delivery, Dr. Chen focuses his research agenda on assessing the choices and consequences associated with explicit and implicit policies surrounding prescription medications.



Elizabeth Crouch, PhD
Associate Professor

Dr. Crouch is the HSPM Program Director for the Master of Public Health (MPH) Program and Director of the Rural and Minority Health Research Center. Dr. Crouch was recognized with the *2023 Outstanding Researcher Award from the National Rural Health Association*.



Theodoros V. Giannouchos, PhD, MS

Assistant Professor

Dr. Giannouchos' s research interests include health services utilization and patient preferences, health outcomes, policy evaluation, and comparative effectiveness. His ongoing research focuses on factors associated with frequent use of emergency services and employs econometric methods to various large healthcare datasets, including electronic claims records, and administrative data.



Nicole L. Hair, PhD

Assistant Professor

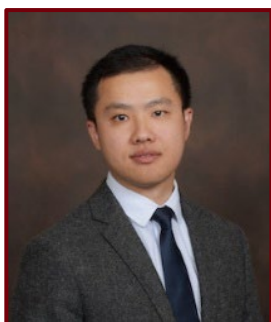
Dr. Hair is an economist whose research focuses on understanding the relationships between poverty, health, and human capital. Her current research examines socioeconomic differences in childhood health and access to health care, programs to improve childhood vaccination coverage, and the potential for public health intervention to promote more equal opportunity for disadvantaged children. Dr. Hair was named a 2022-2023 Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research (RCMAR) Scientist by the University of Southern California Schaffer Center.



Peiyin Hung, PhD

Assistant Professor

Dr. Hung's primary research interests include rural health disparity, quality of care, spatial access to health services, and women health. Her research focuses on geographic disparities in hospital services and quality of health care at the national, state, and institutional levels. Dr. Hung specializes in quantitative methods, using surveys and administrative data, along with econometrics to understand the effects of organizational structure, clinical, and policy intervention. The USC Office of Research honored Dr. Hung with the *2023 Breakthrough Star Award*.



Chen Liang, PhD

Assistant Professor

Dr. Liang's research interest focuses on the development and application of data science, informatics, and artificial intelligence that led to a safe and intelligent health system. His recent work involves heterogeneous health data integration, Electronic Health Records (EHR) based phenotyping and data mining, medical knowledge representation, EHR-based machine learning and predictive modeling, and clinical natural language processing. Dr. Liang was selected to join Data and Technology Advancement (DATA) National Service Scholar Program and selected as a Fellow of the American Medical Informatic Association (AMIA) in 2022.



Melinda A. Merrell, PhD, MPH
Clinical Assistant Professor

Dr. Merrell directs HSPM's MHA program (both traditional and executive tracks). Her research interests include the delivery of health care in U.S. rural communities, with specific focus areas of rural hospital closures and emergency medicine. She also has an interest in the intersection of social determinants of health and health-seeking behaviors among rural populations. Her other areas of expertise are in community health development, program planning and evaluation, and non-profit management.



Nabil Natafji, PhD, MPH, CPH
Assistant Professor

Dr. Natafji is the Associate Director of the USC Patient Engagement Studio (PES). His work is focused on evaluating the effectiveness and impact of telehealth applications on care delivery and outcomes as well as the methodologies of engagement patients in research. Dr. Natafji co-led two PCORI-funded projects that use technology to engage patients and caregivers in the development, implementation, and dissemination of research projects. His research encompasses both quantitative and qualitative analyses, with emphasis on mixed-methods and a special interest in the engagement of patients and stakeholders.



Bankole Olatosi, PhD
Assistant Professor

Dr. Olatosi's research interests are in the fields of Health Analytics, HIV/AIDS, and COVID-19. Currently, he is funded by NIH to study HIV treatment gaps, viral suppression, and the COVID-19 pandemic in South Carolina by applying data science to statewide electronic health records population data. His work in these two areas is instrumental in understanding how big data science can advance important discoveries in disease surveillance, transmission, natural history, and progression important for treatment and necessary for targeted intervention purposes in the state. He co-leads the National Big Data Health Science Center. He is also the incoming Chair-elect of the National Board of the Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME).



Jan Ostermann, PhD
Associate Professor

Dr. Ostermann's research interests are health preferences, improving the wellbeing of children in adversity, estimating the costs of individual health behaviors, and informing health care supply and regulation. Dr. Ostermann has been awarded \$374K from the National Institutes of Health's Fogarty International Center. In collaboration with Bernard Njau (Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre) and Nathan Thielman (Duke University School of Medicine), he will use the five-year R21/R33 grant to test the effectiveness of a new approach to increase HIV testing rates in Tanzania: pairing mHealth technology with social networks.



Lauren Workman, PhD
Research Assistant Professor

Dr. Workman is the Associate Director at the Center for Applied Research & Evaluation (CARE). Dr. Workman is a community engaged researcher and evaluator. She uses qualitative methods, implementation science, and evaluation frameworks to support community partners in improving health. Much of Dr. Workman's funded work is focused on programs to support vulnerable children and families.



Brad Wright, PhD
Professor and Chair

Dr. Wright's research focuses on inequities in health care delivery, with an emphasis on publicly insured populations (i.e., Medicare, and Medicaid), primary care, and emergency medicine. He is one of the nation's leading experts on both federally qualified health centers and hospital observation stays. His additional research interests include health politics and policy, and patient and public involvement in health care. He has received funding for his research from the National Institutes of Health (specifically NIMHD, NINDS, and NIA), the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, HRSA, the Iowa Department of Human Services, and multiple private foundations.



Sudha Xirasagar, MBBS, PhD
Professor

Dr. Xirasagar's research focuses on the impact of health services on patient outcomes, specifically, colorectal cancer prevention, colorectal surgical conditions, acute ischemic stroke, and interventional approaches to universal primary health care use.

Emeritus/Emerita Faculty

Roger Amidon, PhD

Distinguished Professor Emeritus

Samuel L. Baker, PhD

Professor Emeritus

Sandra Glover, PhD

Distinguished Professor Emerita

Janice C Probst, PhD

Distinguished Professor Emerita



Departmental Staff



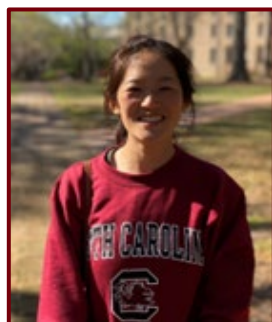
Sharon Gary
Administrative Assistant

Sharon supports the department with tasks that include course scheduling, processing travel, and assisting with coordinating special events. Her most precious time is spent with her family and cooking meals that everyone enjoys.



April Osteen, BS, MEd
Administrative Coordinator, CEROrtho

April is a business operations coordinator for the Center for Effectiveness Research in Orthopaedics (CEROrtho) and the Arnold School of Public Health-Greenville (ASPH-Greenville). Her day-to-day duties focus on accounting operations for CEROrtho, including the oversight of endowment and grant accounts, and serving as a resource for the Arnold School's Greenville presence. She is also responsible for all pre-award and post-award operations associated with CEROrtho. Outside of work, April enjoys spending time with her son, Trace, and her two giant breed dogs, Scar and Motley.



Katherine Tse, BA, MBA
Grants Coordinator

Katherine aids with executing, supporting, and monitoring pre- and post-award functions for HSPM faculty with sponsored projects. Outside of work, she also coaches the University of South Carolina's women's ultimate (frisbee) club team Scorch.



Dantz Woodberry, BS, MBA
Business Manager

Ms. Woodberry is the department's Business/HR manager. She works closely with the department chair to oversee HSPM's budget, accounting, and human resources activities. As business manager, she also over-see's the planning of departmental special events (e.g., the annual James E. Clyburn Health Equity Lecture).

Adjunct Faculty and Instructors

MHA PROGRAM

- ❖ **J. Ira Bedenbaugh, MBA**
Consulting Shareholder / Medical Consulting Practice Chair, Elliott Davis
- ❖ **George Edward (Ed) Bell, Jr, MHA, CCP**
Benefits Manager, AgFirst and Farm Credit Benefits Alliance
- ❖ **Tommy Cockrell, MA, FHFMA**
Retired, Past CFO of SC Hospital Association
- ❖ **Brad Cole, MBA**
Executive Business Director, USC
- ❖ **Cindy Dreher, MPH, MAT**
Retired, Past Program Senior Director, Palmetto GBA
- ❖ **Tim Fitzgerald, MHA**
Assistant Vice President of Perioperative Services, Lexington Medical Center
- ❖ **Jay Hamm, MHA, RN, FACHE**
Vice President of Operations, Lexington Medical Center
- ❖ **Sara McCartha, JD**
Associate General Counsel, Lexington Medical Center
- ❖ **William R. Render, MHA, FACHE**
Partner, RCH Benefits Advisors
- ❖ **Chelsea Richard, PhD, MSPH**
Director of Research and Strategy, South Carolina First Steps
- ❖ **Frank T. Shepke, MBA, MSW**
President and CEO, Lutheran Homes of South Carolina

MPH PROGRAM

- ❖ **Mark Barnes, MBA**
CFO/COO, SC First Steps to School Readiness
- ❖ **Rupinderjit Grewal, JD**
Director of Strategic Planning and Research, South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS)
- ❖ **Eboni Haynes, PhD**
Health Sciences Director, Virginia Union University and CEO, The Mahogany Group
- ❖ **Kelli Kenison, PhD**
Research Associate, USC Center for Applied Research and Evaluation (CARE)
- ❖ **William R. Render, MHA, FACHE**
Partner, RCH Benefits Advisors

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

- ❖ **Kolby T. Redd, PhD, MHA**
Assistant Professor and Program Manager, Anderson University (SC)

Research Associates



Audrey Auen, MPH
Program Coordinator

Audrey Auen earned her bachelor's degree in Exercise Science and her master's in Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior from the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health. She is the Program Coordinator at the University of South Carolina's Big Data Health Science Center. She coordinates the NIH-funded T35 Training Grant on the Application of Data Science to Infectious Diseases, and other NIH-funded grants.



Research Assistants

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Syeda Shehirbano Akhtar
 Daniel Amoatika
 Unum Aslam
 Shanique Blackwell
 Ruilie Cai
 Elizabeth Caulk
 Sunwoo Cho
 Olivia Darr
 Nadia Zulfiqar Ghumman
 Olivia Hinds
 Dakshu Jindal
 Tianchu Lyu
 Yunqing Ma
 Gahssan Mehmood
 Ariana Mitcham
 Melissa Mull
 Zixiao Nan
 Sophia Negaro

Chelsea Norregaard
 Angela Shoulders
 Yi-wen Shih
 Yuqi Wu
 Yuanzhen Yue

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Faith Albertson
 William Byerman
 Rachael Erickson
 Anusha Ghosh
 Carolyn Greene
 Muskaan Makkar
 Samuel Maloney
 Sanskruti Robin Patel
 Karthik Rangavajhula
 Meredith Rhodes
 Sophia Tavakol
 Stephen Zahran



Faculty Partners at USC

The following individuals from other USC units were actively engaged as research collaborators with HSPM faculty during the reporting period.

Arnold School of Public Health

Michael Beets, Professor, Exercise Science

Monique J Brown, Assistant Professor, Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Daniela B Friedman, Professor and Chair, Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

Daniel Kilpatrick, Program Evaluator, Rural and Minority Health Research Center

Xiaoming Li, Professor, Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

Jihong Liu, Professor, Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Christine Pellegrini, Associate Professor, Exercise Science

Dwayne Porter, Professor of Environmental Health Sciences

Shan Qiao, Associate Professor, Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

Stella Self, Assistant Professor, Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Xueying Yang, Research Assistant Professor, Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

Jiajia Zhang, Professor, Epidemiology and Biostatistics

College of Arts and Sciences

Sayward Harrison, Assistant Professor, Psychology

George Khushf, Professor, Philosophy

Zhenlong Li, Associate Professor, Geography

Leah McClimans, Professor, Philosophy

College of Education

Christine DiStefano, Professor, Educational Psychology and Research

Matthew Irvin, Professor, Educational Psychology and Research

College of Engineering and Computing

Jianjun Hu, Professor, Computer Science and Engineering

Neset Hikmet, Professor, Integrated Information Technology

Homayoun Valafar, Professor, Computer Science and Engineering

School of Medicine, Columbia

Berry Campbell, Clinical Associate Professor and Chair, Obstetrics and Gynecology

Sharon Weissman, Professor and Chair, Internal Medicine

Meera Narasimhan, Professor and Chair, Psychiatry

School of Medicine, Greenville

Ann M. Dietrich, Clinical Professor, Emergency Medicine

Ann Blair Kennedy, Assistant Professor, Biomedical Sciences

Ronald G. Pirralo, Professor, Emergency Medicine

Alain Litwin, Professor, Medicine

Phyllis DeAnne MacGilvray, Professor of Family Medicine & Sr. Associate Dean, Academic Affairs

Jeremiah D. Smith, Clinical Assistant Professor, Emergency Medicine

Jennifer Trilk, Professor, Biomedical Sciences

College of Nursing

Lorie Donelle, Professor, Nursing

Laura Herbert, Assistant Professor, Nursing

Phyllis Raynor, Assistant Professor, Nursing

College of Social Work

Teri Browne, Professor and Dean, Social Work

Collaborating Across Borders:

Mapping HSPM's Research Partnerships

The following individuals from other universities around the nation and the globe were actively engaged as research collaborators with HSPM faculty on a variety of projects during the reporting period.

Nationwide Collaborations

Amanda Abraham, University of Georgia

Jennifer Ailshire, University of Southern California

Natoshia Askelson, University of Iowa

Anirban Basu, University of Washington

Joy Noel Baumgartner, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

David Bradford, University of Georgia

Dawn Blackhurst, Prisma Health

Jennifer Candipan, Brown University

Megan B. Cole Brahim, Boston University

Cole Chapman, University of Iowa

J. Michael Collins, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Shanice Criss, Furman University

Peter C. Damiano, University of Iowa

Samantha Eiffert, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Amany A. Farag, University of Iowa

Bianca K. Frogner, University of Washington

Sarah Floyd, Clemson University

Colleen Grogan, University of Chicago

Patricia S. Groves, University of Iowa

Moonseong Heo, Clemson University

Amy Hobbie, Duke University

James F. Howard, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Ben Jackson, Prisma Health

Kyle Jeray, Prisma Health

Meenu Jinhil, Prisma Health

Mike Kissenberth, Prisma Health

Hye-Chung Kum, Texas A&M University

Joshua M. Liao, University of Washington

Karen Joynt Maddox, Washington University in St. Louis

Timothy McHenry, Prisma Health

C. Daniel Mullins, University of Maryland Baltimore

Kevin Murr, Prisma Health

Karen Kemper, Clemson University

Paula Kett, University of Washington

M. Mahmud Khan, University of Georgia

Eun Kyung Lee, Boston University

Brianna Lombardi, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Adam Lutz, ATI Physical Therapy

Elizabeth T. Momany, University of Iowa

Richard Moore II, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Joshua Nardin, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Canada Parrish, University of Washington

William S. Pearson, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Yelena Perkhounkova, University of Iowa

Stephan Pill, Prisma Health

Andrew J. Potter, California Department of Health Care Services

Julie C. Reynolds, University of Iowa

Felipe Lozano Rojas, University of Georgia

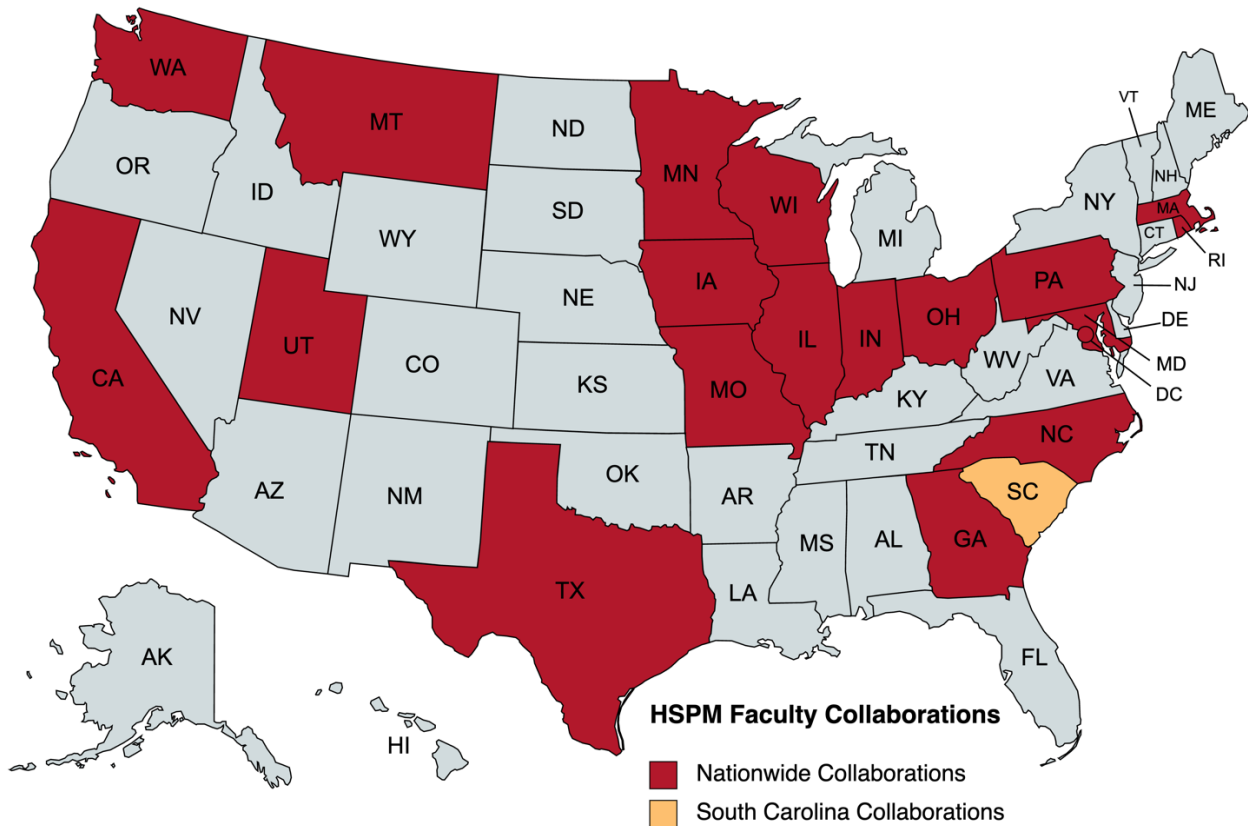
Sara Rosenbaum, George Washington University

Amber Sabbatini, University of Washington

Lindsay Sabik, University of Pittsburgh

Janice Sabin, University of Washington
Prachi Sanghavi, University of Chicago
Ben Schooley, Brigham Young University
Kosali Simon, Indiana University
Phillip M. Singer, University of Utah
Daniel Skinner, Ohio University
Jonathan Staloff, University of Washington
Maureen Stewart, Brandeis University
Shannon Stark Taylor, Prisma Health
Nathan Thielman, Duke University
Chuck Thigpen, ATI Physical Therapy
Rebecca E. Traub, University of North Carolina
 Chapel Hill
Amal Trivedi, Brown University
Benjamin Ukert, Texas A&M University

Carly Urban, Montana State University
Lavanya Vasudevan, Duke University
Katrina Walsemann, University of Maryland,
 College Park
Kevin Walker, Prisma Health
Jermey Warren, Prisma Health
Kristin D. Wilson, University of Iowa
Coady Wing, Indiana University
Matthew J. Witry, University of Iowa
Fredric Wolinsky, University of Iowa
Thespina Yamanis, American University
Whitney Zahnd, University of Iowa
Julie Zissimopoulos, University of Southern
 California



Global Collaborations

Wafa Alnakhi, Dubai Health Authority, *Dubai, UAE*

Ibrahim Demir, Ankara Yildirim Beyazit University, *Ankara, Turkey*

Fatima Mousa Khadadah, Kuwait University, *Kuwait City, Kuwait*

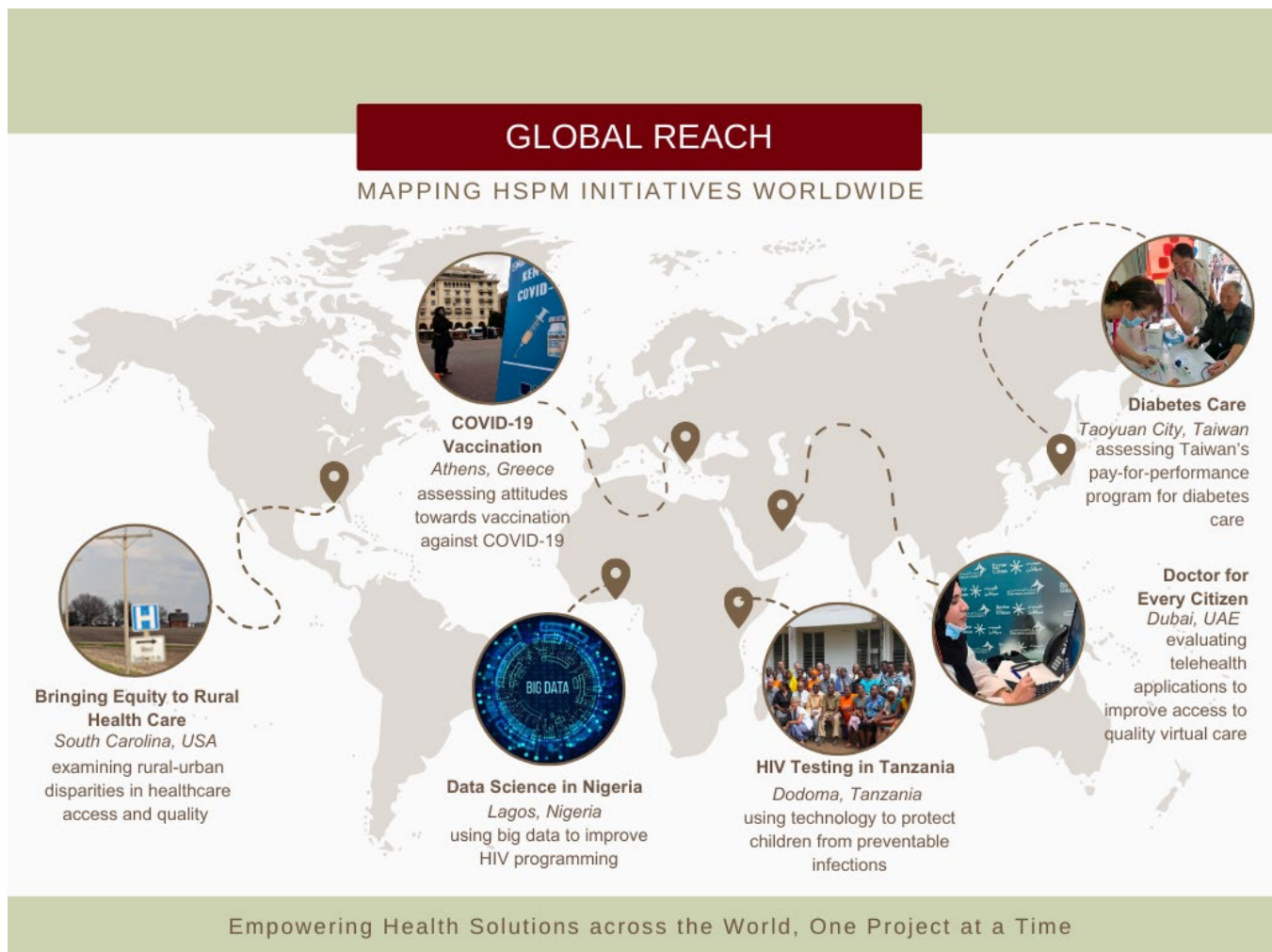
Sayoki Mfinanga, Tanzania National Institute for Medical Research, *Dar es Salam, Tanzania*

Tara Mtuy, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, *London, United Kingdom*

Esther Ngadaya, Tanzania National Institute for Medical Research, *Dar es Salam, Tanzania*

Bernard Njau, Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre, *Tanzania*

Marco van Zwetselaar, Zwets IT, *Netherlands*



Research Projects

This section provides a comprehensive overview of HSPM's research endeavors. Delve into a collection of projects, each a testament to our commitment to pushing the boundaries of health services research and addressing real-world health policy and management challenges. From ongoing investigations to recent grants secured in FY2023 (indicated by an asterisk [*]), explore the breadth and depth of our department's research landscape.

***Mitigating effects of telehealth uptake on disparities in maternal care access, quality, outcomes, and expenditures during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Principal Investigator: Peiyin Hung Co-Investigators: Chen Liang
 Funded Amount: \$3,051,433 Funding Period: 2022 – 2027 Mechanism: U01
 Sponsor: National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)/NIH

***Chanjo Kwa Wakati - Leveraging community health workers and a responsive digital health system to improve vaccination coverage and timeliness in rural settings**

Principal Investigator: Jan Ostermann Co-Investigators: Nicole Hair, Chen Liang
 Funded Amount: \$2,957,258 Funding Period: 2022 – 2027 Mechanism: R01
 Sponsor: National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)/NIH

Treatment for alcohol use disorder in Medicaid managed care

Principal Investigator: Christina Andrews
 Funded Amount: \$2,573,343 Funding Period: 2021 – 2025 Mechanism: R01
 Sponsor: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism (NIAAA)/NIH

Medicaid managed care coverage and utilization management of opioid use disorder treatment

Principal Investigator: Christina Andrews
 Funded Amount: \$2,830,847 Funding Period: 2021 - 2025 Mechanism: R01
 Sponsor: National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)/NIH

***The development and evaluation of a patient-centered opioid discharge prescribing guideline within the electronic health record of a health system**

Principal Investigator: John Brooks
 Funded Amount: \$1,551,448 Funding Period: 2022 – 2026 Mechanism: R18
 Sponsor: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)/HHS

Effects of musculoskeletal surgery rate of Medicare costs

Principal Investigator: John Brooks
 Funded Amount: \$1,373,415 Funding Period: 2020 – 2024 Mechanism: R01
 Sponsor: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)/HHS

Patterns and predictors of viral suppression: a big data approach

Principal Investigator: Bankole Olatosi
 Funded Amount: \$1,253,824 Funding Period: 2021 - 2024 Mechanism: R01
 Sponsor: National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases (NIAID)/NIH

***Implementing and evaluating the comprehensive integration of physical activity into a major health system and connecting patients to community-based physical activity programs**

Principal Investigator: John Brooks

Funded Amount: \$640,668

Funding Period: 2022 – 2023

Mechanism: R56

Sponsor: National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute (NHLBI)/NIH

***Curating a knowledge base for individuals with coinfection of HIV and SARS-CoV-2: EHR-based data mining**

Principal Investigator: Chen Liang Co-Investigators: Bankole Olatosi

Funded Amount: \$408,619

Funding Period: 2022 – 2024

Mechanism: R21

Sponsor: National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases (NIAID)/NIH

***Informatics approach to identification and deep phenotyping of PASC cases**

Principal Investigator: Chen Liang Co-Investigators: Bankole Olatosi

Funded Amount: \$398,311

Funding Period: 2022 – 2024

Mechanism: R21

Sponsor: National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases (NIAID)/NIH

Confidential social network referrals for HIV testing (CONSORT)

Principal Investigator: Jan Ostermann

Funded Amount: \$354,461

Funding Period: 2022 – 2024

Mechanism: R21

Sponsor: Fogarty International Center (FIC)/NIH

Big Data Health Science Scholar Program for infectious diseases

Principal Investigator: Bankole Olatosi

Funded Amount: \$304,094

Funding Period: 2021 - 2023

Mechanism: T35

Sponsor: National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases (NIAID)/NIH

An ethical framework-guided metric tool for assessing bias in EHR-based big data studies

Principal Investigator: Bankole Olatosi

Funded Amount: \$267,578

Funding Period: 2022 – 2023

Mechanism: R01 supplement

Sponsor: National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases (NIAID)/NIH

***Sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) measures and viral suppression for people living with HIV (PLWH) using integrated electronic health records**

Principal Investigator: Bankole Olatosi

Funded Amount: \$144,381

Funding Period: 2023 - 2024

Mechanism: R01 supplement

Sponsor: National Institute of Allergy & Infectious Diseases (NIAID)/NIH

***Personalized prediction of virological failure among underrepresented population using All of Us Data**

Principal Investigator: Bankole Olatosi

Funded Amount: \$93,131

Funding Period: 2022 – 2023

Mechanism: R01 supplement

Sponsor: Office of Aids Research (OAR)/NIAID/NIH

***Patient experiences and disparities in telehealth HIV care during the COVID-19 pandemic: a mixed methods study from the southern US**

Principal Investigator: Valerie Yelverton

Funded Amount: \$41,983

Funding Period: 2023

Mechanism: R36

Sponsor: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)/HHS

Featured Project

Ostermann funded to lead study on vaccine uptake among children in Tanzania

by Erin Bluvas, bluvase@sc.edu

Jan Ostermann, associate professor of health services policy and management, is leading a new project to increase vaccination uptake among children in rural and underserved areas. Collaborating with Lavanya Vasudevan (Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University), Nathan Thielman (Duke University), and Ester Ngadaya (National Institute for Medical Research, Tanzania), Ostermann will use a \$3 million grant from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to implement a community-based digital intervention in Tanzania that could be applied in settings around the world.

The study will determine whether a community-based digital health intervention can increase the timeliness of routine vaccinations, thereby reducing the time that children remain vulnerable to vaccine-preventable illness. Though this intervention could be tested in a number of underserved settings, the researchers will implement it in Tanzania, where the research team has had long-standing partnerships with health agencies and providers.



"Timely vaccinations for children are essential to ensure immunity against preventable and potentially deadly infections" Jan Ostermann

"We have chosen to conduct this study in Tanzania, where only 68 percent of children receive all basic recommended vaccines in the first year of life, and there are barriers such as low caregiver knowledge and health system challenges related to service delivery and access," Ostermann says. "However, our findings may be broadly relevant for identifying digital health strategies that can be implemented by nurses or other non-physician health professionals, to bridge vaccination inequities among rural and underserved populations in the United States and elsewhere."

The study will use an implementation science framework to evaluate the intervention, providing rigorous evidence on the effectiveness of a community-based digital health intervention for promoting vaccination coverage and timeliness among Tanzanian children. It will also identify implementation strategies to facilitate the deployment of integrated vaccination interventions in other resource-constrained settings.

Story posted on: July 26, 2023. Available on [ASPH Website](#).

Economic evaluation of the Rescue Program of South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Principal Investigator: Nicole Hair

Funded Amount: \$124,933

Funding Period: 2020 – 2024

Sponsor: SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC)

***South Carolina Center for Excellence in Addiction – BCBS**

Principal Investigator: Christina Andrews
Bankole Olatosi

Co-Investigators: Elizabeth Crouch, Peiyin Hung,

Funded Amount: \$120,600

Funding Period: 2023 – 2024

Sponsor: DAODOS/BCBS

COVID-19-focused Virtual Patient Engagement Studio (CoVIP Studio): using technology to engage patients, clinicians, and researchers to address long-term effects of COVID-19

Principal Investigator: Nabil Natafqi

Funded Amount: \$199,595

Funding Period: 2021 – 2023

Sponsor: Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI)

***Broadband equity, access, and deployment (BEAD) program**

Principal Investigator: Nabil Natafqi

Co-Investigators: Jan Ostermann, Brad Wright

Funded Amount: \$125,000

Funding Period: 2023

Sponsor: South Carolina Broadband Office

***Persistent frequent emergency department users in South Carolina: who are they and how do they use other cross-sector services?**

Principal Investigator: Theodoros Giannouchos

Funded Amount: \$19,994

Funding Period: 2023 – 2024

Sponsor: Prisma Health

A program to enhance teach-back methods in virtual primary care visits (POTENTIAL): building the capacity of medical residents to foster health literacy among patients

Principal Investigator: Nabil Natafqi

Funded Amount: \$19,940

Funding Period: 2021 – 2023

Sponsor: Prisma Health – Upstate

Deep learning assisted opioid use disorder diagnosis using EHR data

Principal Investigator: Chen Liang

Co-PIs: Christina Andrews

Funded Amount: \$19,992

Funding Period: 2021 – 2023

Sponsor: Prisma Health – Upstate

Towards personalized discharge summaries for reducing medication-related harm

Principal Investigator: Chen Liang

Funded Amount: \$19,986

Funding Period: 2021 – 2023

Sponsor: Prisma Health – Upstate

Equitability and health outcomes of telehealth supported HIV care in South Carolina

Principal Investigator: Jan Ostermann

Funded Amount: \$19,976

Funding Period: 2022 – 2024

Sponsor: Prisma Health – Upstate

Identifying preference-relevant features of telehealth supported HIV care in South Carolina

Principal Investigator: Jan Ostermann

Funded Amount: \$19,975

Funding Period: 2022 – 2023

Sponsor: Prisma Health – Upstate

***Broadband equity, access, and deployment (BEAD) program**

Principal Investigator: Nabil Natafji

Funded Amount: \$15,250

Funding Period: 2022 – 2023

Sponsor: South Carolina Digital Equity Office

Consortium Agreements

Positive outcomes for orphans (POFO): HIV risk as young adults

Site Principal Investigator: Jan Ostermann

Funded Amount: \$267,532

Funding Period: 2018 – 2023

Prime: Duke University/NICHD/NIH

JCOIN coordination and translation center - community stakeholder

Site Principal Investigator: Christina Andrews

Funded Amount: \$178,048

Funding Period: 2020 – 2023

Prime: University of Chicago/George Mason University/NIDA/NIH

***Covid-19 health disparities and the economic security of families with children**

Site Principal Investigator: Nicole Hair

Funded Amount: \$83,501

Funding Period: 2022 – 2023

Prime: University of Wisconsin/SSA

Heeding patient voices: patient, nurse, and event characteristics associated with nurse judgments

Site Principal Investigator: Brad Wright

Funded Amount: \$61,152

Funding Period: 2022 – 2024

Prime: University of Iowa/NIH

How changing neighborhood and school contexts shape mental health and educational attainment from childhood to early adulthood

Site Principal Investigator: Nicole Hair

Funded Amount: \$59,868

Funding Period: 2021 – 2024

Prime: Brown University/Spencer Foundation

Alcohol treatment in Medicaid managed care plans: disparities in policies and outcomes

Site Principal Investigator: Christina Andrews

Funded Amount: \$58,683

Funding Period: 2021 – 2026

Prime: Brandeis University/NIAAA/NIH

Using Medicare claims to advance our understanding of Guillain-Barré syndrome

Site Principal Investigator: Brad Wright

Funded Amount: \$39,600

Funding Period: 2022 – 2024

Prime: UNC-Chapel Hill/NINDS/NIH

Featured Project

Natafji, Wright, and Ostermann work with Education, Medicine, and SC Broadband Office to improve broadband access across the State

By Grace Farrar, mrassist@mailbox.sc.edu

From students to senior citizens, access to the internet is essential — but an estimated 450,000 South Carolinians still lack broadband access. The results are damaging. Without access to telehealth, people in rural areas face long drives to the nearest health care provider. Students miss out on important instruction and assignments. Job options are limited for those who can't complete applications online or work remotely.

Access to the internet would improve health and educational outcomes for thousands of South Carolinians, so the University of South Carolina is teaming up with the state Broadband Office to help fill this gap.

“We’re trying to help individuals to avoid some of those costs, whether actual costs in terms of money or even indirect costs related to convenience,” says Nabil Natafji, an assistant professor of health services policy and management in the Arnold School of Public Health.



The GetConnectedSC campaign was officially launched by Gov. Henry McMaster and U.S. Rep. James Clyburn in February. This initiative will provide data for state agencies to improve internet access in the areas that need it most. Researchers from the Arnold School of Public Health, the College of Education and the School of Medicine Greenville have developed a Better Internet Survey to gauge broadband access and need across the state. The survey assesses citizens' broadband access — or lack thereof — and its implications on health and childhood education.

“I am so proud that the University of South Carolina is taking such a strong role in ensuring our neighbors throughout the state can access the connectivity they need to accomplish the important tasks of life — completing schoolwork, attending telehealth appointments and keeping in touch with the people they care about most, among so many other things,” says associate vice president for research operations Lumi Bakos.

“In 2023, broadband internet service is a necessity, not a luxury.” **Lumi Bakos**

The survey data can be used to inform future policy to improve the lives of South Carolinians through internet access. “If we have that type of data, we can create policies related to internet access that would help individuals to secure better health outcomes through telehealth, better education through K-12 education interventions and even help them secure better employability,” Natafji says.

Story posted on: March 22, 2023. Available on [USC Website](#).

***The role of health centers in reducing disparities in potentially-preventable hospital-based care among dual eligibles**

Site Principal Investigator: Brad Wright
 Funded Amount: \$38,113 Funding Period: 2023
 Prime: University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill/NIMHD/NIH

Hybrid type 1 effectiveness-implementation trial of a proactive smoking cessation electronic visit for scalable delivery via primary care

Site Principal Investigator: Brian Chen
 Funded Amount: \$29,116 Funding Period: 2022 – 2023
 Prime: Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)/NIH

***Observation stays and readmissions for older adults: implications for Medicare policies**

Site Principal Investigator: Brad Wright
 Funded Amount: \$28,700 Funding Period: 2022 – 2024
 Prime: University of Washington/NIA/NIH

***Long-term effects of measles vaccine mandates on educational attainment and cognitive function**

Site Principal Investigator: Nicole Hair
 Funded Amount: \$27,000 Funding Period: 2022 – 2023
 Prime: University of Southern California, Alzheimer's Disease Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research (ADRCMAR)/NIA/NIH

***Childhood measles exposure and later-life cognition: the mediating role of education**

Site Principal Investigator: Nicole Hair
 Funded Amount: \$24,996 Funding Period: 2023 – 2024
 Prime: University of Maryland/National Institute on Aging (NIA)

***Cooperative agreement for a regional center for health workforce studies**

Site Principal Investigator: Brad Wright
 Funded Amount: \$20,954 Funding Period: 2022 – 2023
 Prime: UNC at Chapel Hill/HRSA/HHS

Internally Funded Projects

***Predict the occurrence of postpartum cardiovascular disease and assess the impacts of structural disparities among a national cohort of pregnant women using electronic health records**

Site Principal Investigator: Tianchu Lyu
 Advisor: Cheng Liang
 Funded Amount: \$5,000 Funding Period: 2023 – 2024 Mechanism: SPARC
 Sponsor: University of South Carolina Office of Research

The role of structural racism on the association between maternal obesity and severe maternal morbidity in South Carolina

Site Principal Investigator: Chelsea Norregaard
 Advisor: Peiyin Hung
 Funded Amount: \$4,998 Funding Period: 2022 - 2023 Mechanism: SPARC
 Sponsor: University of South Carolina Office of Research



***Impact of telehealth and obstetrics capacity on maternal health outcomes & user satisfaction: a mixed methods approach**

Principal Investigator: Shanikue Blackwell

Advisor: Nabil Natafqi

Funded Amount: \$4,983

Funding Period: 2023 – 2024

Mechanism: SPARC

Sponsor: University of South Carolina Office of Research

***An analysis of the association between state direct access laws and physical therapy use, and the effect of change in physical therapy use on subsequent healthcare costs and opioid use**

Principal Investigator: Dakshu Jindal

Advisor: Brian Chen

Funded Amount: \$3,459

Funding Period: 2023 - 2024

Mechanism: SPARC

Sponsor: University of South Carolina Office of Research

***Understanding the barriers and facilitators for perinatal substance use treatment in the United States**

Principal Investigator: Sophia Tavakol

Advisor: Peiyin Hung

Funded Amount: \$2,999

Funding Period: 2023

Mechanism: Magellan

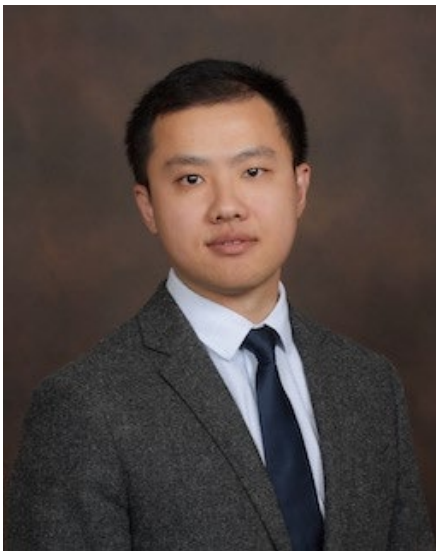
Sponsor: University of South Carolina Honors College

Achievements in the Spotlight:

Recognizing HSPM Faculty Excellence

Chen Liang named DATA Scholar by National Institutes of Health by Erin Bluvas, bluvase@sc.edu

The Office of Data Science Strategy (National Institutes of Health) has selected **health services policy and management assistant professor Chen Liang** to join the **Data and Technology Advancement (DATA) National Service Scholar Program**. Highly selective (only seven researchers were chosen from across the country), this program is designed to support data/computer scientists/engineers who improve public health by tackling challenges related to biomedical data.



As a biomedical informatics researcher, Liang extracts data from the growing number of electronic health records (EHR) available to learn existing patterns and trends and inform solutions to address public health challenges. He uses novel methods (e.g., EHR modeling, artificial intelligence, machine learning) for bringing this data to the surface and revealing the trends and insights concealed within – all while maintaining confidentiality/anonymity of patients.

“I am committed to making a significant contribution to the field of data-driven health science research.” **Chen Liang**

“I am committed to making a significant contribution to the field of data-driven health science research, particularly in the application of data science and artificial intelligence for infectious diseases, maternal health, and systemic diseases,” Liang says. “I look forward to gaining insights about national research priorities and how data science can better aid health sciences.”

Liang joined the Arnold School in 2019 and has since been awarded \$10 million, together with colleagues, in competitive funding. He currently leads two NIH R21 grants – one as part of a nationwide effort to identify and characterize long COVID and another aimed at understanding HIV and COVID-19 coinfection.

Liang studied electrical and information engineering at Soochow University, where he also completed a master’s degree in psychology. He earned a Ph.D. in Biomedical Informatics at the University of Texas Health Science Center. In 2022, he was **selected as a fellow** in the American Medical Informatics Association.

Story posted on: February 10, 2023. Available on [ASPH Website](#).

Hung named Breakthrough Star by USC, awarded \$3 million to study how uptake of telehealth mitigated maternity care disparities during COVID-19
by Erin Bluvas, bluvase@sc.edu

Peiyin Hung joined USC's Arnold School of Public Health in 2018 after a postdoctoral fellowship at Yale University. An assistant professor of health services policy and management, Hung explores maternal health and rural health disparities.

Big picture. About 60 million people live in rural America, where many residents suffer disadvantages in access to health care, have higher mortality risk and lower quality of life.

Research background. Hung's dissertation was motivated by the decline in access to obstetric care and looked at nationwide hospital-based obstetric unit closures and how that affected maternity care access, quality and outcomes.

Modus operandi. As a health services researcher, she is driven to advance health equity through productive, insightful research collaborations by using administrative health records, survey data and stakeholder interviews.

Breaking it down. Hung's work integrates three aspects: building statistical models using Big Data Science to simulate health care delivery processes; investigating the underlying mechanisms of spatial-temporal differences in health care access and health outcomes; and identifying effective health policy interventions to address health disparities.

Policy and progress. Hung's studies in rural maternal and birth outcome disparities have been cited to help the movement of a White House Maternal Health Blueprint and Rural Action Plan, as well as bipartisan legislation, "Improving Access to Maternity Care Act."

"While I have explored rural health issues across the age spectrum, publishing on issues examining both the beginning and the end of life, I have developed a particular specialty in maternal health and policies that can affect perinatal care access, quality and outcomes. I started with maternal and child health because I believe that the process of childbirth is fundamentally important to one's health and well-being. What has kept me in rural maternal health research with an unwavering determination is the eagerness to know and to eliminate rural maternal health disparities."



Story posted on: April 11, 2023. Available on [USC website](https://www.usc.edu).

Crouch receives 2023 Outstanding Researcher Award from National Rural Health Association

by Erin Bluvas, bluvase@sc.edu

More than a thousand rural health professionals were on hand at the **National Rural Health Association's** annual conference this month to honor **Elizabeth Crouch's** contributions to rural America. The **health services policy and management (HSPM)** associate professor and **Rural and Minority Health Research Center** director was recognized with one of the Association's top honors: the 2023 Outstanding Researcher Award.



This award is designed to celebrate an individual's health services research, which has the potential to make long-lasting contributions to rural health. Crouch was selected for her examination of health disparities experienced among rural and other vulnerable populations across the lifespan, from adverse childhood experiences to Medicare utilization in older adults.

"Dr. Crouch is a committed rural health researcher and educator, whose research has advanced the field while her teaching and her sponsorship of graduate students within the Rural and Minority Health Research Center has helped foster the next generation of rural researchers," says **Jan Probst**, former director of the Center and the 2008 recipient of the award. "Her scientific work and her expertise at

communicating findings to the health care community make her more than deserving of this award."

Crouch's connection to rural America began when she was a kid. While spending much of each summer with her grandparents in Kentucky, she accompanied her grandfather – a large animal vet – on his visits to rural farms. A knack for numbers led to a financial economics degree from Centre College, followed by master's (applied economics and statistics) and doctoral (policy studies) degrees from Clemson University.

In 2017, she was selected to join the 2018 cohort of the National Rural Health Association's **Rural Health Fellows Program**. The following year, she was invited to serve a three-year term for the organization's Journal of Rural Health. By 2020, Crouch had been elected to its Board of Trustees, where she currently chairs Rural Health Congress efforts.

On campus, her leadership activities have grown as well. 2018-2022 saw Crouch serving as deputy director for the Rural and Minority Health Research Center, which she has led as director since 2022. Around this time, she also took on the role of graduate director for the **Master of Public Health in HSPM** program.

Story posted on: May 22, 2023. Available on [ASPH Website](#).

Publications by HSPM Faculty

Bolded indicates author is a HSPM Faculty Member

Underline indicates author is a HSPM student

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3. Alnakhi WK, Mamdouh H, Hussain HY, Mudawi MS, Ibrahim GM, Al Balushi AJ, Al Zarooni N, Elnaeem A, **Natafqi N**. Doctor for every citizen: Telehealth visits at Dubai Health Authority during COVID-19 pandemic in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Healthcare (Basel)*. 2023 Jan 18;11(3):294.
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Featured Article

Andrews *et al.* publish impactful study on variation in Medicaid coverage for opioid use disorder treatment in *JAMA Health Forum*

by Erin Bluvase, bluvase@sc.edu

New research published in **JAMA Health Forum** has found that opioid use disorder treatment coverage and prior authorization varies widely from state to state for individuals insured by Medicaid. The research was led by **health services policy and management** associate professor **Christina Andrews** (HSPM), **Amanda Abraham** (School of Public and International Affairs, University of Georgia) and **Colleen Grogan** (Crown School of Social Policy and Practice, University of Chicago), who are co-principal investigators on two R01 grants from the **National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism** and the **National Institute on Drug Abuse**. Together, this \$5 million in NIH funding is aimed at investigating Medicaid-covered treatment for alcohol and opioid use disorders.

“Opioid-related mortality reached an all-time high in 2021, exceeding 80,000 deaths,” Andrews says. “In 2020, approximately 2.5 million people met the criteria for opioid use disorder, but only 11 percent received any FDA-approved medications.”

These approved medications include buprenorphine, methadone and injectable naltrexone and have been proven to reduce opioid use, fatal overdoses and related health care visits while increasing treatment retention rates. Expanding access to treatment remains a public health priority, and Medicaid coverage is a key policy lever for achieving this goal. Approximately 40 percent of Americans who have opioid use disorder are covered by Medicaid, yet little is known about coverage and prior authorization policies for covering FDA-approved medications for treating the condition.



“Left unaddressed, prior authorization policies are likely to remain a barrier to opioid use disorder medication access in the midst of the deadliest drug epidemic in the nation’s history” **Christina Andrews**

For this study, the researchers compared coverage and prior authorization policies for opioid use disorder medications in 266 managed care organization plans and 39 fee-for-service programs during the first half of 2018. Approximately 70 million Medicaid beneficiaries were represented by these plans/programs.

Story posted on: December 5, 2022. Available on [ASPH Website](#).

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Featured Article

Brooks leads team using big data approach to model effectiveness of early surgical intervention, informing patient-centered care plans

by Erin Bluvase, bluvase@sc.edu



Image Source: Dimensional Insight®

Members of the South Carolina SmartState Center for Effectiveness Research in Orthopaedics (CERortho) have completed a study where they assessed the ability of machine learning approaches to find patient-specific evidence of the effectiveness of early surgery as a treatment for shoulder fracture injuries. They published their findings in [BMC Medical Research Methodology](#).

“Policy makers want patients to have personalized evidence when clinicians are making treatment decisions,” says **health services policy and management** (HSPM) professor and SmartState Endowed Chair of

CERortho **John Brooks**, who led the study. “Randomized control trials are the gold standard for generating evidence, but it’s difficult to produce personalized evidence for many patients. In contrast, observational data provide the perspective of real-world practice and a diversity of patients well beyond those evaluated in randomized control trials. Machine-learning algorithms have been proposed to analyze large observational databases to develop patient-specific evidence, but the properties of these algorithms have not been fully assessed using real-world clinical scenarios.”

In recent years, scientists like Brooks have begun conducting comparative effectiveness research using large observational databases. This big data approach offers an alternative way to develop personalized evidence using a practice-based approach.

*“Using big data and machine learning have tremendous potential in focusing treatment effectiveness evaluation in healthcare.” **John Brooks***

With funding from the **UofSC Big Data Health Science Center**, which is led by **health promotion, education, and behavior** professor **Xiaoming Li** and HSPM assistant professor **Bankole Olatosi**, the researchers employed a novel machine-learning method (Instrumental Variable Causal Forest Algorithm) to estimate patient-specific early surgery effects (both positive and adverse) for more than 72,000 Medicare beneficiaries. The team focused on the consistency of the estimates from this method in producing personalized treatment effect evidence when varying the key algorithm parameters.

Story posted on: August 22, 2022. Available on [ASPH Website](#).

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MHA Program Showcase:

Shaping Healthcare Leaders of Tomorrow

Dear Friends of HSPM,

It is hard to believe I have already completed my first full academic year as Director of our Master of Health Administration (MHA) program—and what a great year it has been! Our students and faculty continue to demonstrate exceptional health care leadership both locally and abroad. Our alumni's accomplishments continue to impress me as well. What a great foundation we have to build upon as we continue to grow our networks and focus on our newly revised mission: *to prepare health care administrators and leaders to have the competencies required for effectively managing health systems and the proficiencies for strategically addressing the social and population health responsibilities of health care organizations.*

When I began my role in January 2022, we were preparing for our accreditation site visit from the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME). Last November we were informed that we were successful in receiving our renewal for another seven years, with our next visit scheduled for Spring 2029. Experiencing this process as a new faculty member in the department, I saw firsthand the dedication of our faculty, staff, and students in preparing to put our best foot forward. It was truly a team effort! We also had great leadership from Drs. Banky Olatosi and Nabil Natafqi, the Director and Associate Director of the program during our self-study year.

Speaking of leadership, I absolutely must recognize the wonderful organizations and preceptors who sponsor our traditional track students through graduate assistantships during the program. We could not provide the educational experience that we do without leaders who commit to supervising and mentoring our students. A list of this year's residency projects and sponsoring organizations is provided on page 44.

Overall, we had 19 students graduate from the program this past May, which represented a 100% on-time graduation rate. Five of our students began post-graduate Administrative Fellowships this summer. Of our graduates actively seeking employment, 100% were employed at least part-time at the time of graduation. We recognized five students at graduation for their achievements during the program: Abby Edwards (Susie B. Yates Award), and Anna Dunbar, Nadia Ghumman, Chase Jourdain, and Nick Shiver (AUPHA Foster G. McGaw Scholarships).



We also were fortunate to travel quite a bit this year! In October we headed to New Orleans to compete in the National Association of Health Services Executives' (NAHSE) Case Competition, followed by a trip to Birmingham in February to compete in the UAB Case Competition. Our team placed as semi-finalists at the highly prestigious UAB competition with their presentation of solutions focused on providing holistic long-term care services for senior adults. In March, a group of 17 students and two faculty members were able to attend the ACHE Congress in Chicago.

In April, we traveled to Minneapolis as an interdisciplinary team alongside colleagues from USC's School of Medicine, College of Pharmacy, and College of Social Work to participate in our first-ever national CLARION case competition. I also presented at this year's National Rural Health Association and Association of University Programs in Health Administration's annual meetings on how the program and department incorporate knowledge and skill development regarding rural health care administration in the curriculum. We capped off a busy year with our professional-executive track students' residency trip to Switzerland as a part of their comparative global health systems course.

As we begin a new academic year, we are excited to welcome 13 new students into our program. This year we will continue to focus our efforts on new student recruitment, providing excellent learning and networking opportunities for our existing students, and ensuring our faculty have top notch resources to provide an excellent educational experience. Our health care industry continues to evolve and expand as we move into a post-pandemic world. I am confident that here at USC we are preparing the leaders we need to ensure that organizations are able to maintain and grow our capabilities to provide high quality, efficient health care services that improve people's health and quality of life.

Forever to Thee,



Melinda Merrell, PhD
MHA Program Director

MHA Students at ACHE Annual Congress and National Case Competitions



HSPM Celebrates Our 2023 MHA Graduates!

Jordan Abramczyk
Daniel Bishop
Anna Dunbar
Abby Edwards
John Garvey
Sona George
Nadia Ghumman

Lauren Howell
Emma Jackson
Ana Jaramillo
Chase Jourdain
Julie Norwood
Andy Phillips
Amanda J Pillow

Nick Shiver
Kelsey Underwood
Marianna Wilbur
Halle Williams
Sterling Windham



2023 MHA Residency Projects

MHA Residency Location	MHA Residency Project Title/Concept
Bella Health + Wellness	Designing a Curriculum for Opening and Operating Faith-Based Private Practices
Columbia Eye Clinic	Business Plan and Implementation Timeline for a New Phone System
Dorn Research Institute	Implementation and Effectiveness of Technology to Enhance Communication with Veteran Patients in Research Studies
Lexington Medical Center ED	Creation of a Transitional Decision Unit in the Emergency Department
Lexington Medical Center ED	Recreating the Emergency Department Waiting Room Experience at Lexington Medical Center
Lexington Medical Center Peri-Op	Operational Strategic Planning: Perioperative Services
Lexington Medical Center Physician Network	Increasing Access to Primary Care for Established Patients through Optimized Scheduling
McLeod Health	Standardizing the Supply Chain Procurement Process across McLeod Health Primary Care Practices
MUSC Health Columbia Medical Center	Compass One FNS and EVS: A Six-Month Review
MUSC Health Columbia Medical Center	Improving Communication Access to Ambulatory Healthcare Services for MUSC Health Midlands-Columbia Patients
MUSC Health Columbia Medical Center	Reducing CHF Readmissions through Improved Patient Education
Plastic Surgery Consultants	Comprehensive Financial Analysis of the Implementation of Nicotine Cessation Protocol in an Ambulatory Care Setting
Prisma Health Primary Care	Improving Quality of Pediatric Care through Identifying & Addressing Barriers to Well-Child & Adolescent Well-Care Visits
SC Institute of Medicine and Public Health	Evaluating and Standardizing Components of the South Carolina Institute of Medicine and Public Health's Taskforce Process
South Carolina Office of Rural Health	Analysis & Recommendation for Innovation Opportunities through Rural Hospital Models
The Heritage at Lowman (Lutheran Homes)	Implementation of a Mentorship Program to Increase Retention and Decrease Turnover in a Long-Term Care Facility

MHA Executive Students Go International

Every year our MHA professional / executive track students participate in an international site visit as part of their residency course Health Systems of the World: A Comparative Analysis. The purpose of this course is for students to develop proficiency in all five MHA program competency domains through the study of the structure and functioning of various global health systems. The site visit associated with the course allows students to gather firsthand knowledge regarding the assets and challenges faced by different stakeholders in a selected country's health system. Our trip in summer 2022 was to the United Arab Emirates, where students and faculty spent time in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Sharjah visiting with officials representing governmental and private health care institutions.



In May 2023, five students, three faculty, and one MHA Advisory Board member traveled to Switzerland to visit with local, national, and international stakeholders for a more in-depth look at the country's health care system. Over the course of 10 days and two cities (Geneva and Bern), the group was able to visit with representatives of several public and private Swiss hospitals (Hôpitaux Universitaires de Genève, Inselspital [University Hospital Bern], and Hôpital de La Tour) and training institutions (University of Geneva and Bern University of Applied Sciences).

In addition, the Swiss Federal Office of Public Health met with the group to provide an overview of the regulatory and planning aspects of their health system. Meeting with international organizations were also a highlight of the trip, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Hospital Federation, and the Swiss Institute for Translational and Entrepreneurial Medicine (sitem-insel). Finally, the group made time to visit the International Museum of the Red Cross and Red Crescent as well as the United Nations Palais des Nations.

Below are a few key takeaways from student feedback regarding their experience. We look forward to many more opportunities to learn from our colleagues across the globe as we explore additional health systems on future trips! If you are interested in participating as an alumnus and/or advisor on a future trip, please reach out to Melinda Merrell (mmerrell@mailbox.sc.edu) for more information.



"I felt the trip was even more beneficial than initially expected. The experience helped me realize and understand there is no perfect system."



“One of the most important lessons that I learned is to reinforce that perception is not always reality. How a health system may appear in a textbook is not always how the end user experiences it.”



“Overall, my visit to Switzerland enriched my understanding of health systems of the world and their impact on population health. It provided a valuable opportunity to see theory and practice in action, and to learn from best practices in healthcare delivery.”



MPH Program Spotlight:

Advancing Public Health Initiatives

HSPM alumni and friends,

I am delighted to have just finished the first year as Director of the Master of Public Health Management (MPH) programs in HSPM. We have students currently enrolled in both our traditional and distance programs, as well as our two dual degree programs with the Master of Public Administration (MPA) / Master of Public Health (MPH) and Master of Social Work (MSW) / Master of Public Health (MPH). Alumni know how our program prepares graduates to manage public health programs and direct population-based health improvement, through training in operations management, budgeting and public health finance, health economics, public health law, and health policy development.

This was evident in the broad scope and location of practicum experiences undertaken by our spring 2023 graduates (see below). Practicums were located locally in Columbia, as well as across the country from California to New Jersey, with a broad range of public health topics. Graduates were interested in rural health, access to care, cancer prevention, and nursing, to name a few.

We are so grateful to the organizations and practice experience preceptors who hosted our students at their practicum sites. We would be unable to have such a wonderful practice-based curriculum without these real-world experiences provided by outstanding organizational partnerships. Thank you to our trusted partners!

The MPH program, both at our departmental level and college level, is currently preparing for reaccreditation from the Council on Education and Public Health (CEPH), with the next reaccreditation site visit occurring from October 7-9th, 2024. The self-study process for reaccreditation began in November 2022 and our final self-study report will be due in September 2024. Bimonthly reaccreditation steering committee meetings began in Fall 2022 to prepare for the reaccreditation. This process is led by Dr Myriam Torres, Dr Lee Pearson, and Kollette Clark, with strong leadership ensuring a healthy future for the MPH program at the college level.

We had twelve graduates from our program for the spring 2023, and one graduate from summer 2023. All graduates that wanted graduate assistantships during the program had them, as some of the graduates listed were in the distance program and working full-time during the program. All graduates are employed post-graduation. One of our graduates, Hannah Price, was recognized at the spring HSPM reception with the Michael D. Jarrett Scholarship Award and was hired by the Veterans Administration post-graduation in a fellowship role in Charleston, SC.



For Fall 2023, there were 44 applicants, with thirty-nine accepted applicants. We are delighted to welcome thirteen new students to the MPH program this fall- with two students in the MPH/MPA dual degree, 1 in the MSW/MPH dual degree, and the other ten incoming students in either the traditional or distance MPH programs. They join our twelve current students. This year we will continue to recruit outstanding students, both traditional and those working while earning their degree in our distance program.

Please share our program information with colleagues and friends who are interested in earning their MPH!

All the best,



Elizabeth Crouch, PhD
MPH Program Director



HSPM Celebrates Our 2023 MPH Graduates!

Lee Augenblick
En-Ping Chen
Olivia Darr
Dayna Ducote
Jenifer Mejia

Katelyn Morris
Mark David Perez
Kenzie Poncy
Hannah Price
Sherry Linne Price

Michael Priestler
Justice Sheehama
Jessica Thompson



2023 MPH Practicum Sites & Experiences

Pharmacy Quality Alliance

Practicum Project

Alexandria, VA

Houston Health Department

My Brother's Keeper Houston Program

Houston, TX

Greer Relief

Greer Relief and Resource Agency Center

Greer, SC

New Jersey Office of the First Lady

Practicum Project

Trenton, NJ

Melanoma Research Foundation

Melanoma Research Foundation Advocacy Days

Washington, DC

Partnership HealthPlan of California

Transitional Care Services Strategy

Fairfield, CA

Camp Friendship

Nursing Assistant

Palmyra, VA

Cancer Prevention and Control Program

Colorectal Cancer Prevention and Research

Columbia, SC

South Carolina Office of Rural Health

Community Health Transformation Team

Lexington, SC

Center for Community Health Alignment

Enhancing Equity through Meaningful Community Engagement Project

Columbia, SC

Wholespire

Connecting Grant Applicants to South Carolina Funders

Columbia, SC

USC College of Social Work

Practicum Project

Columbia, SC

PhD Program Insights:

Fostering Research and Scholarship

Dear Friends:

The Department of Health Services Policy and Management's (HSPM) doctoral program seeks to advance the provision of effective, efficient, and equitable health services by preparing individuals for positions in health services research and education. In 2022, the program was pleased to welcome our new department chair, Dr. Brad Wright, who has initiated a long-term vision to build upon and strengthen our doctoral curriculum to provide students with a robust theoretical and methodological foundation to conduct rigorous health services research designed to inform policy and practice and advance public health. For the first time in our program's history, we are offering all incoming students two years of guaranteed financial support that includes full coverage of tuition, fees, and health insurance, as well as a generous and competitive stipend to cover living expenses.



HSPM's PhD program is designed as an apprenticeship model. Students are matched with an advisor with whom they work closely on research from day one in the program. And as this annual report makes clear, our faculty are highly engaged in research, providing doctoral students with ample opportunities to apply the skills they are learning in the classroom. Our faculty received over \$11.7 million in extramural funding in FY2023 to support a wide variety of health services research focusing on health equity, outcomes research, comparative effectiveness, and policy evaluation. This approach to doctoral training also ensures that our students begin publishing and presenting research early and often—helping them to build their professional network and begin the process of developing a national reputation. In FY2023, our faculty collectively published 119 peer-reviewed articles in high-impact journals, many of which included students as lead or co-authors. Finally, our faculty and students presented at national and international conferences including AcademyHealth, American Public Health Association, and the Annual Consortium of Universities for Global Health Conference.

I am excited to serve as the PhD Program Director beginning in Fall 2023. Dr. Sudha Xirasagar's three-year service as PhD Program Director concluded in May 2023. HSPM thanks Dr. Xirasagar for her unwavering devotion to student needs throughout her tenure, and particularly during the difficult pandemic years. As I inherit leadership of the program from her, I am committed to building upon our past success and working with our new department chair and my fellow faculty members and program directors to advise and mentor our next generation health services researchers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Chen".

Brian Chen, JD, PhD
PhD Program Director

HSPM Celebrates Our 2023 PhD Graduates!

Asma Alzahrani
Shamika Jones
Kaji T. Keya-Korotki

Chelsea Norregaard
Jessica Purser
Yi-Wen Shih

Eunika Simmons
Yuqi Wu
Valerie Yelverton



Doctoral Student Recognitions and Awards



Shanikque Blackwell, MPH

Shanikque is a recipient of the AcademyHealth 2022 Diversity Scholars Program. Shanikque Blackwell is a doctoral student in the Health Services Policy & Management department. She received her MPH from the Rollins School of Public Health – Emory University and her BS in Biology and Sociology from Furman University. She is a Grace Jordan McFadden Professors Program Scholar and a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES). Shanikque is a mixed-methods researcher whose focus areas include health disparities, rural health, maternal and child health, and telehealth. Additionally, she has worked in Public Health for six years at the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control focusing on community engagement, chronic health conditions, diversity, equity, and inclusion.



Yi-Wen Shih, MD, MPH

Dr. Shih is a recipient of a 2023 AcademyHealth Alice S. Hersh Student Scholarship for the Annual Research Meeting. Her research focuses on mental health, health disparities, and substance use, particularly opioid use. She has been engaged in various research projects – funded by the NIH, HRSA, FORHP, and NIMH – including examining racial disparities in several maternal mortality during the COVID-19 pandemic; exploring social determinants of health and structural racism on adverse birth outcomes; assessing rural-urban disparities in quality of mental health care; as well as studying the use of nonpharmacologic treatment among adults with chronic noncancer pain with opioids.



Valerie Yelverton

Valerie Yelverton has been recognized with a 2023 Breakthrough Graduate Scholar Award. Yelverton is a Norman J Arnold Doctoral Fellow, a SPARC Award winner and the recipient of the Outstanding Research Award. For her dissertation research on patient experiences and disparities in telehealth HIV care during the COVID-19 pandemic, she received an R36 research grant from AHRQ. She has spent two years as a Junior Scholar with the South Carolina SmartState Center for Healthcare Quality, where she researches telehealth in HIV care in South Carolina and how the legal environment impacts HIV prevention and care for sexual and gender minorities in Zambia. Yelverton has been selected for a T32 Post-doctoral Fellowship Program at Duke University and will join the Duke community in late 2023.



Salome-Joelle Gass

Salome-Joelle Gass was awarded the Best Poster Award during the 4th Annual Big Data Health Science Conference held February 2023. Salome-Joelle is a second-year PhD student in the Health Services Policy and Management Program. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry and a Master's degree in Infectious Disease Epidemiology with a focus on quantitative analysis and modeling. Her previous research experience has focused on HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa, where she contributed to the implementation of several large-scale studies. She continues to pursue research in HIV while at USC, both in South Carolina and Sub-Saharan Africa, while also gaining additional expertise in other areas such as childhood vaccination.



Featured Program


Olatosi lead a T35 Big Data Health Scholar Program for Infectious Diseases

The T35 Big Data Health Scholar Program for Infectious Diseases incorporates didactic learning, seminar discussions, research, professional development, bonding activities, workshops, presentations, and collaborative activities throughout the summer, with research interests spanning a wide range of fields. Each year, a diverse group of eight predoctoral students from the physical and quantitative sciences across the US are recruited to participate in this 10-week intensive summer research training program. [The following is a snapshot of our 2023 summer cohort](#) and their respective projects:


- **Areyona Wilson**, *University of North Carolina*; Risk Factors for Urinary Tract Infections (UTI) in Women with Dr. Mufaro Kanyangarara
- **Katie Bond**, *University of Denver*; Examining how trust and household finances impact healthcare utilization and health behavior during COVID-19 and the present period, with examination of differential effects across race, ethnicity, gender, age, and rurality. With Dr. Caroline Rudisill
- **Eric Inman**, *California Polytechnic State University*; Analysis of the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on HIV PrEP Users at the County Level with Dr. Zhenlong Li
- **Giovanna Leone**, *University of South Carolina*; Machine Learning to Assess the Long-Term Impacts of COVID-19 on Physical Activity and Physical Fitness Levels in a Senior Military College with Dr. Neset Hikmet
- **Giangvuthanh Nguyen**, *Old Dominion University*; Machine learning prediction of low birthweight baby and preterm baby born to mothers with opioid use disorder with Dr. Dezhi Wu
- **Yasmin Keyghobadi Nia**, *Old Dominion University*; Examining the effect of activation functions on the optimization of neural networks with applications to chemistry & bioinformatics with Dr. Forest Agostinelli
- **Katheryn (“Kat”) Perea-Schmittle**, *New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology*; Predictive Analysis of Social Vulnerability Factors on Major Depressive Disorder with Dr. Qian Wang

Big Data Health Science in Infectious Diseases Summer Research Program


The 2023 Cohort




Katie Bond
University of Denver




Eric Inman
California Polytechnic State
University




Giovanna Leone
University of South Carolina




Giangvuthanh Nguyen
Old Dominion University



Yasmin Keyghobadi Nia
Old Dominion University




Katheryn Perea-Schmittle
New Mexico Institute of Mining
and Technology




Areyona Wilson
University of North Carolina

This summer research program is supported by a grant from the
National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases.



National Institute of
Allergy and
Infectious Diseases



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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

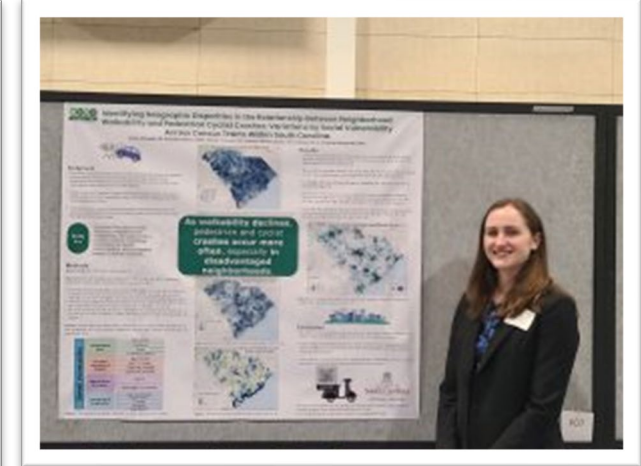
14th Annual James E. Clyburn Health Equity Lecture



The **James E. Clyburn Health Equity Lecture Series** was created to honor Congressman James E. Clyburn for his support and partnership in advancing health equity in South Carolina and across the nation. This prestigious lecture series is hosted by the Arnold School's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Department of Health Services Policy and Management along with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's Office of Health Equity and the USC Office of Civil Rights History and Research.

This year's lecture was held May 2, 2023, at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. Keynote speaker, **Dr. Davene Wright**, assistant professor and associate director of Child Health Research and Policy at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute and Harvard Medical School, delivered a lecture entitled "Health Inequity by Design: The Interplay of Public Policy, Public Image, and Profit."





2023 Clyburn Lecture Leadership Award Winners

- **Lisa Davis**, District 122 Representative, Health Policy Leader in Public Health
- **Patricia W. Witherspoon, MD**, Health Care Leader in Public Health
- **Eric Bellamy**, Community Leader in Public Health
- **Brie Turner-McGrievy, PhD**, Leadership in Public Health and Health Disparities Research
- **Jillian B. Harvey, PhD**, Emerging Leader in Public Health and Health Disparities Research
- **Erin Looney**, Investigator Award
- **Ebony Allen Toussaint**, Investigator Award
- **Yi-Wen Shih**, Poster Session Award
- **Jessica Edler Nye**, Poster Session Award



Nexus of Innovation:

Interdisciplinary Centers led by HSPM Faculty

Rural and Minority Health Research Center

The Rural and Minority Health Research Center's (RMHRC) mission is to illuminate and address the health and social inequities experienced by rural and minoritized populations to promote the health of all through policy-relevant research and advocacy. *The RMHRC is co-led by Dr. Elizabeth Crouch (Director) and Dr. Peiyin Hung (Deputy Director).*

RURAL & MINORITY Health Research Center

The SC Center for Effectiveness Research in Orthopaedics SmartState Center

CERortho includes academic faculty, clinicians, industrial researchers, graduate students, medical residents, and orthopaedic fellows engaged in advancing orthopaedic health and wellness through research, education, outreach, and clinical translation. Areas of expertise in the Center include basic orthopaedic science and engineering, exercise science and physical therapy, epidemiology and patient population studies, surgery, rehabilitation, and creation of new biologic products for clinical use. *The CERortho is led by Dr. John Brooks (Director).*

CERortho

The Patient Engagement Studio

The University of South Carolina's Patient Engagement Studio (PES) brings together patients and caregivers, community groups, health system innovators and clinicians, and academic researchers to produce meaningful research and innovation that advances health and research outcomes. The studio's purpose is to revolutionize science so that it serves the patient. It is a resource for all through research, continuous quality improvement and innovation that impacts patients and other stakeholders. *The PES is co-led by Dr. Nabil Natafji (Associate Director).*



Patient Engagement Studio

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Big Data Health Science Center

A University of South Carolina Excellence Initiative, the USC Big Data Health Science Center (BDHSC) serves as a campus-wide interdisciplinary enterprise that conducts cutting-edge research and discovery, offers professional development and academic training, and provides service to the community and industry. *The BDHSC is co-led by Dr. Banky Olatosi (Co-Director).*



Big Data Health Science Center

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA



Arnold School of Public Health

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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