Professional Summary

Dynamic and results-oriented health communication professional and academic with 15+ years of experience driving transformative health equity initiatives through interdisciplinary research, strategic partnerships, and scalable program development. Proven track record of leading strategic partnerships, high-impact teams, securing multi-sector funding, and designing evidence-based interventions that address social determinants of health and diverse diseases and illnesses. Adept at organizational development, strategic planning, and aligning organizational mission with community health needs. Passionate about fostering inclusive cultures and mentoring emerging health professionals. Recognized for advancing health equity education and research and translating research into actionable health outcomes.

Expert Skills

Social Determinants of Health
Community Engaged Interventions
Behavioral/Social Sciences Methods
Multi-Method/Intersectional Health Research
Establishing/Managing Partnerships
Organizational Development/Strategic Planning

Work History

Senior Research Scientist/Director of Programs, 05/2024 to Present

Institute for Health Equity Education & Research (IHEER) – Atlantic City, NJ

- Secure funding, plan, and implement diverse program of community-engaged, health research initiatives and strategic partnerships, serving as training and mentoring platform for high school students, undergraduate and graduate students, and health professionals locally, nationally, globally.
- Lead behavioral and social science research teams in interdisciplinary maternal and reproductive health, infectious disease, nicotine product use, resilience, biopsychosocial and cardiovascular health, and digital health.
- Facilitate medical education curriculum development in partnership U.A.E medical schools and academies, integrating digital innovations, community engagement, research, and post-conflict health professional training.
- Lead on-going assessments and data analytics of student, program performance and organizational impact to increase diverse funding awards for center, program, and outreach sustainability.
- Educator for medical student elective session at School of Medicine & Health Sciences, George Washington University.
- George Mason University affiliate graduate research faculty in Department of Health Administration and Policy.

Assistant Professor, 08/2021 to 05/2024

George Mason University (GMU) - Fairfax, VA

- Engaged with improvement process and strategies across GMU to enhance student diversity in faculty research and integrate research training, mentoring, and teaching, effectively aligning with GMU's objectives.
- Developed and administered a funded research program in behavioral, social science research, leading to interdisciplinary internal and external faculty and community partnerships (VA, DC), conference presentations, and peer-reviewed publications.
- Founded *Communicating Equity and Healing Justice* (CEHJ) research lab to engage underrepresented undergraduate and graduate students (n=13) teams in scientific research mentorship, increasing participation in interdisciplinary research, academic-community partnerships, co-authored peer-reviewed journal articles, and application to advanced health and medical degrees.
- Funded research mentor in anti-racist medical education, leading to co-authored publications outlining reforms and leading to collaborative international medical curriculum development.

- Exceled on diverse departmental committees and as faculty representative to Board of Visitors in strategic planning in implementing change management processes at relational and individual levels, enhancing familiarity with reporting mechanisms and increasing personal awareness of inclusive pedagogical and research practice.
- Invited speaker to GMU student organizations on topics including abortion crisis, campus-related mental health disparities and solutions.
- Educator for medical student elective session at School of Medicine & Health Sciences, George Washington University.
- External leadership roles as co-chair of NAACP health committee and INOVA Health Systems Maternal Health Equity Initiative.

Interim Program Manager/Consultant, 06/2023 to 08/2023

Center for African American Health – Denver, CO

- Led organizational multi-method impact analyses, including change readiness among navigators, significantly enhancing strategic planning and implementation of SMART goals in change management activities.
- Implemented methodologies to drive relational and individual change strategies for 10 direct reports in navigation, resulting in increased individual productivity, more effective program evaluation and reporting, improving organizational outcomes.
- Conceptualized and implemented robust community health navigation policies, procedures, and digital reporting systems, significantly boosting transparency, accountability and information sharing across organization.
- Established safe environment for navigators to voice concerns through expert ability to establish strong relationships, demonstrate flexibility, and employ exceptional communication and active listening skills, effectively preventing issue escalation.
- Trained and mentored navigators with clearly articulate messages on utilizing system improvements and provided both individual and group coaching sessions focused on professional growth, increasing their capacity to thrive.

Community Health Consultant, 02/2020 to 05/2021

Center for African American Health – Denver, CO

- Led a collaborative community-based social marketing campaign to boost COVID-19 vaccine uptake through theoretically based logic model processes, activities, evaluations, and outcomes to assist in campaign planning, implementation, management, outcomes evaluation, and reporting.
- High proficiency in ability to communicate to team of 6 members by providing clear goals, strategies, and timelines, enhancing the success of the campaign.
- Led assessment of state-wide COVID-19 data analytics for trends to conceptualize a targeted approach
- Directed community-engaged data collection and data analytics to make recommendations integrated in message design and social media dissemination.
- Designed evidence-based and culturally targeted COVID-19 prevention messages, increasing vaccination rates by 20% at center events.
- Conceived evaluation strategy and developed data capture measures.
- Strengthened team's professionalism and sustained collaboration during time of crisis.

Public Health Consultant, 04/2019 to 08/2019

New Jersey Department of Health – Trenton, NJ

- Led development of reporting metrics for Centers for Disease Control sub award grantees (i.e., public health centers) across the state, and designed metrics to assess physicians bias in cancer care plans, advancing internal efforts to evaluate patient quality of care and public health outreach.
- Designed and facilitated dynamic virtual continuing education for healthcare professionals to increase patient quality of care.
- Expedited the development of the Diabetes Action Plan Report, gathering health outcome data from 23 federally subsidized health centers, focusing on evidence-based Diabetes Self-Management and Lifestyle Programs.

Executive Director, 06/2017 to 08/2022

Center for African American Health Disparities Education & Research (501(c)(3) – Atlantic City, NJ.

- Led an award-winning nonprofit research center and consultancy efforts that significantly advanced knowledge of SDOH, maternal health and cardiovascular disease disparities, and infectious disease prevention nationally and abroad.
- Established and facilitated partnerships with Bangladeshi Universities, Historically Black Universities and Colleges, Land Grant and Ivy League Universities to implement an educational pipeline program and practicum opportunities to increase diversity in medical, biomedical, and public health workforces, resulting in students' (n=30) successful health research, intervention design and implementation, and program entrance across the United States.
- Led program and student teams through multi-method research, intervention development and implementation, and education mentorship, increasing participant's understanding, knowledge, rigor, scholarship, and leadership capacity in implementing inclusive health science and population/public health research and practices.
- Collaborated with University of Kentucky School of Health Professions faculty and Kentucky-based public housing communities in community-based research to evaluate barriers and solutions to cardiovascular health.
- Led collaboration with Sierra Leone communities to address Ebola infectious disease prevention and education across the diaspora through expert facilitated social media dialogues, increased health practitioner social media outreach, familial involvement, and reduction awareness associated job discrimination and school-based bullying.
- Led multi-neighborhood efforts to evaluate association among health and housing for residents of Trenton Housing Authority in collaboration with University of Kentucky School of Health Professions faculty.
 - Conducted funded rigorous and data analytics quantitative intersectional health assessment with senior citizen residents and those with mental health challenges.
 - Facilitated health education meetings and discussion groups to evaluate barriers in access to nutritious food and safe walkable areas.
 - Spearheaded development of actionable insights, resulting in structural modification and partnership engagement processes that increased access to nutritional food and walkable area for 3,200 residents.
- Collaborated with University of California faculty, New Jersey prevention organizations, and Pennsylvania safety net health centers, leading qualitative data collection and analysis to implement onsite digital education to increase Human Papillomavirus vaccination among lower-income women.
- Collaborated with Family Health Initiatives (NJ) in development of digital perinatal education and assessment platform for Medicare recipients.
- Collaborated with Vocational Arts, Science Training Center developed grant proposals to facilitate training programs for underrepresented communities, increasing funding streams and organizational capacity to recruit and training individuals transitioning from social services to employment.
 - Created and facilitated of memorandums of agreement with partners, ensuring understanding procedures, practices, and outcomes related to vocational programming.
 - Developed a Health Certification Program, including Community Health Worker, Behavioral Health Technician, and Pharmacy Technician aligned with to state regulation protocols and compliance with New Jersey Board of Education standard, increasing attendee participation by 60%.
- Developed dynamic continuing education courses for public/health practitioners and New Jersey Hospital Association affiliated physicians.
- Led on-going assessments and data analytics of student, program performance and organizational impact to increase diverse funding awards for center, program, and outreach sustainability.

Assistant Professor, 08/2009 to 06/2018

Rutgers University – New Brunswick, NJ

- Participated on president's committee to develop four pillars of excellence to drive transformational change across Rutgers, substantively contributing to strategic priorities and initiatives foundational to Rutgers's continued success.
- Prioritized strong commitment to community-engaged health research, increasing experiential teaching courses for student growth and contributing to funding submissions/awards, scientific dissemination, and college, university, and local community.

- Collaborated in prevention campaign for undergraduate students and support for students living in recovery housing on campus.
- Developed and facilitated the participatory community-engaged participatory research and practice course for health professionals engaging University of Minnesota's Summer Public Health Program.
- Designed and facilitated *Public Health Leadership and Stakeholder Engagement* course for Anschutz Medical Campus (CO) Preventive Medicine Residency Program in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, leading to the effective implementation of the Health Equity Committee mandated by the Affordable Healthcare Act.
- Served as adjunct at Icahn School of Medicine and Public Health Program (NY) responsible for the design and facilitation of a socio-biobehavioral course and served on the Public Health Program curriculum committee.
- Led collaboration with Hennepin County (MN) childcare centers to implement and evaluate community-based participatory research informed peer-to-peer education intervention to increase parental health knowledge of environmental tobacco smoke harms and implementation of smoking restrictions for asthmatic infants and children up to 5 years.
- Collaborated with and led student teams' evaluation, data analytics of New Jersey Department of Health's *Healthy Communities* and *ShapingNJ Program* implementation of state-endorsed healthy eating policies and mobility accessibility to community farming across state identified sites.
- Led collaboration with Blue Cross and Blue Shield Minnesota, ClearWay Minnesota, and a community stakeholders board of advisors to evaluate, analyze, and translate multiple community-engaged participatory research project of perceptions of Minnesota's smoking policies into comprehensive white paper report, driving organizational policy and practice reforms in combustible-smoking cessation programs.

Education

Post-Doctoral Associate	Program in Health Disparities Research and Community Engagement Core (NIMHD P60MD003422, PIs: Jasjit Ahluwalia, MD, MPH, Kolawole Okuyemi, MD, MPH), NIH Clinical and Translational Science Institute, Department of Family Health, University of Minnesota Medical School.
	<i>Research areas:</i> Cancer/Tobacco Control and Prevention, Behavioral Health, Cessation Pharmacotherapy, Clinical Trials, Community-Campus Engagement, and Digital Health Development/Usability.
Doctor of Philosophy	Communication Arts and Sciences, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA.
	<i>Research area</i> s: Health Communication, Behavioral Health and Social Sciences Research, Digital Health Prevention/Usability, Health Campaign and Message Design
Master of Arts	Media Ecology, New York University, New York, NY. <i>Research areas:</i> Mediated Ecosystems and Identity, Community Informatics
Bachelor of Science	Culture and Communication (Minor: Anthropology), New York University, New York, NY.

Professional Development

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH PROGRAMS

2022-2033 Cohort Six. Enhanced Grant Writing Coaching Intervention for a Diverse Biomedical Workforce (NIGMS 1U01GM132366) PI: Kola Okuyemi, MD, MPH, Professor/Chair Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, University of Utah. Competitive Application. 2022-2023Fellow. Science Communication (SciComm). University of Rhode Island, Metcalf Institute,
Providence, RI. Competitive Application.

CERTIFICATIONS AND TRAININGS

2021 2020 Expired	CDIL: Certified in Diversity and Inclusive Leadership, University of Colorado. CCPHC: Certified Chronic Care Professional Health Coach, Health Sciences Institute.
2011 Expired	Tobacco Treatment Specialist (CTTS): University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Tobacco Dependence Program.
2024	Narrowing the Maternal Health Gap: Training. Center for Maternal Health Equity, Morehouse School of Medicine.
2024	Change Management Skills: Training. Project Management Institute, LinkedIn Learning
2023	Obstetric Racism. Training. Columbia University Medical School, NYC.
2020	Family Self-Sufficiency Credential: Dept. of Housing and Urban Development.
2019	Infection Prevention and Control, Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19): Training. World Health Organization.
2019	Adverse Childhood Experiences/Trauma: Training. London, England.
Volunteerism	
2024-Present:	Workshop Facilitator Family Success Center, Atlantic City, NJ
2024-Present	Graduate Research Faculty Affiliate. Department of Health Administration and Policy, School of Public Health, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA.
2023-2024:	Maternal Health Equity Advisor Inova Health Systems, Fairfax, VA
2022-2024:	Co-Chair Health Committee. NAACP, Fairfax, VA
2021-Present	Member Public Health Education & Health Promotion, American Public Health Association Learning and Professional Development Committee' (LPDC)
2019-2021:	Member Community Advisory Board. Trenton Health Team, Trenton, NJ.
2018- 2019:	Member Community Stakeholders for Public Education, Trenton, NJ
2015-2019:	Co-Director Task Force for Housing and Senior Health, Trenton, NJ
2012- 2014:	Commissioner Trenton Housing Authority, Trenton, NJ