

Addressing Unconscious Bias and Disparities in Healthcare: A Call to Action
About the Roundtable Faculty



[Marc Cohen, MD, FACC](#), is the Chair of the Department of Medicine at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center (NBIMC) in New Jersey. Formerly, he was Chief of the Division of Cardiology and Director of Cardiology Fellowship Training at NBI for 17 years. Dr. Cohen is currently Professor of Medicine at Rutgers-New Jersey Medical School in Newark, New Jersey. Dr. Cohen has been instrumental in the expansion and enhancement of the Department of Medicine, augmenting an award-winning veteran team. During his tenure, NBIMC has reached a 1,100-heart transplant milestone and 1,000 TAVRs. Dr. Cohen is a diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine, the Board of Cardiovascular Diseases, and the subspecialty Board of Interventional Cardiology. Dr. Cohen is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology, American College of Physicians, and the Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions, and is a member

of the Cardiovascular Health Advisory Panel to the Commissioner of Health of the State of New Jersey. Dr. Cohen has authored or coauthored more than 400 articles including more than 200 peer-reviewed original papers. He has been a member of the editorial boards of *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, *American Heart Journal*, *American Journal of Cardiology*, *Journal of Invasive Cardiology*, and the *Journal of Thrombosis and Thrombolysis*, and *Coronary Revascularization Therapeutics*.



[Joia Adele Crear-Perry, MD, FACOG](#), is a physician, policy expert, thought leader, and advocate for transformational justice. As the founder and president of the National Birth Equity Collaborative (NBECE), she identifies and challenges racism as a root cause of health inequities. Dr. Crear-Perry has twice addressed the United Nations' Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to elevate the cause of gender diversity and urge a human rights framework toward addressing maternal mortality. A proud recipient of both the Congressional Black Caucus Healthcare Heroes award and the Maternal Health Task Force at Harvard University Global Visionary Award for Commitment to Advancing Women's Health, Dr. Crear-Perry's most notable efforts

include the removal of race as a risk factor for illnesses including premature birth. Dr. Crear-Perry currently serves as a Principal at Health Equity Cypher and on the Board of Trustees for Black Mamas Matter Alliance, Community Catalyst, National Clinical Training Center for Family Planning, and the UCSF PTBi.



[Carmen Renee Green, MD](#), is a Professor of Anesthesiology (with tenure), with joint appointments in Obstetrics and Gynecology and Health Management and Policy in the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan's Schools of Medicine and Public Health. Dr. Green is a faculty associate in the Program for Research on Black Americans and the inaugural Associate Vice President and Associate Dean for Health Equity and Inclusion at the UMHS, Executive Director of the Healthier Black Elders Center and Co-Director of the Community Core for the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research. Dr. Green has authored multiple germinal and seminal papers on

disparities, diminished health care quality, limited access to health and pain care for women, minorities, and low-income communities. Notably, Dr. Green's essay on the unequal burden of pain

in Pain Medicine remains one of the most cited articles in the journal's history. Dr. Green's awards, honors, and accolades include U-M Harold R. Johnson Diversity Service Award, John Liebeskind Pain Management Research Award, Elizabeth Narcessian Award for Outstanding Educational Achievements, and MSU CHM Distinguished Alumni Award.



[Hazel Harper, DDS, MPH, FACD](#), is the past President of the National Dental Association, the first African-American national spokesperson for the ADA, and the first Project Director of The Deamonte Driver Dental Project Model, a community- and school-based oral health program for children. She was one of the founders of the Student National Dental Association, longtime editor of National Dental Association (NDA) Journal, and created many NDA programs including: The Women's' Health Symposium, NDA-Corporate Roundtable, and the Eddie G. Smith Leadership Institute. She is currently the Founding Director of the award-winning NDA-HEALTH NOW® Project and architect of the Inter-Professional Student Leaders Colloquium and Summit. Dr. Hazel Harper

maintains a part-time private practice in general dentistry in Washington, DC. She is President and CEO of Hazel J. Harper & Associates, LLC, management consultants and President and Founder of Hear to HEAL, Inc., a non-profit to support interprofessional education, community groups, and student leadership. Dr. Harper lectures and writes extensively on eliminating health disparities, and in 2019, she was lead author of book chapters in Oral Health in America: Removing the Stain of Disparities, published by the American Public Health Association. She is a contributing author for the 2020 Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health.



[Otis Kirksey, PharmD, CDES, BC-ADM](#), currently serves as President-Elect of Health Care and Education for the American Diabetes Association. Dr. Kirksey is a retired Professor of Pharmacy with over 25 years of experience in academia with specific focus in the area of pharmacy practice, diabetes, and primary care. His experience as a practicing pharmacist spans over almost 35 years and encompasses a variety of practice settings including hospital, community, and ambulatory pharmacy practice. Currently, he serves as the Director of Pharmacy Services for Neighborhood Medical Services, a federally qualified health center. Dr. Kirksey was recently awarded with the distinction of Professor Emeritus of Pharmacy Practice by Florida A&M University College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical

Sciences. He is Board Certified in Advanced Diabetes Management (BC-ADM) as well as a Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES). He is also a certified Lifestyle Coach as well as a Master Trainer for the National Diabetes Prevention Program. Dr. Kirksey has received funding for research from federal and private sponsors including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, the National Library of Medicine, and the Minority Health Professions Foundation. Dr. Kirksey has authored or co-authored over 20 manuscripts published in refereed and un-refereed journals and newspapers.



[Jason Knutson, DO](#), is a family practice provider with 12 years' experience working for Avera Medical Group. Dr. Knutson has a full-time family medicine practice in Sioux Falls, SD, as well as numerous additional roles, including Medical Director for AveraNow, a virtual care program. For many years, Dr. Knutson led the Avera team to prepare it for a world where health care was in the palm of a hand. With Dr. Knutson's help, Avera successfully integrated virtual care. This positioned the program well for Covid – a great accelerator of virtual care. Professionally, Dr. Knutson is most proud of helping lead Avera's response to Covid and creating the Covid hotline.



[Jenna Lester, MD](#), is a graduate of Harvard University and The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. She completed residency training in dermatology at the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) and is board certified in dermatology. Dr. Lester is an Assistant Professor of Dermatology at UCSF, where she practices and teaches general dermatology, and is the Founding Director of the Skin of Color Program. She has a particular interest in health care disparities in dermatology and improving access to specialty care for all patients. She was recently named a TED Fellow, where she continues her work to promote equity in dermatology education.



[Monica E. Peek, MD, MPH, MS, FACP](#) (roundtable moderator) is an Associate Professor at the University of Chicago, where she provides clinical care, teaches and does health services research, with a focus on health disparities. Dr. Peek is the Associate Director of the Chicago Center for Diabetes Translation Research, the Executive Medical Director of Community Health Innovation and the Director of Research (and Associate Director) at the MacLean Center for Clinical Medical Ethics. Her research pursues health equity and social justice, with a focus on promoting equitable doctor/patient relationships among racial minorities, integrating the medical and social needs of patients, and addressing healthcare discrimination and structural racism that impact health outcomes (e.g., diabetes, COVID-19). Dr. Peek has authored over 100 peer-reviewed research papers and publications, and has served as the principal investigator of multiple grants from institutions such as NIH/NIDDK, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the Merck Foundation. Dr. Peek is a Senior Associate Editor for the journal *Health Services Research* and a recent member of the National Advisory Council (NAC) for the Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality (AHRQ) and the National Council for the Society of General Internal Medicine (SGIM). Dr. Peek was named one of the “Top 40 under 40” in Chicago by Crain’s Business Magazine and has been ranked among Chicago’s Top Female Physicians. She has been featured in national media outlets such as NPR, CNN, Democracy Now, CBS, ABC, TIME Magazine, the Melissa Harris Perry show, The Chicago Tribune and The Huffington Post.



[Monica Vela, MD, FACP](#), is Professor of Medicine and Associate Vice Chair for Diversity within the Department of Medicine as well as Associate Dean for Multicultural Affairs at the Pritzker School of Medicine. Dr. Vela directs coursework designed to promote 1) the advocacy efforts of medical students interested in ending health disparities and promoting health equity, and 2) physician communication skills across cultures. Her coursework is the only course in the extant literature shown to improve diversity of medical school applicants and improve the cultural climate among medical students. She has traveled across the country teaching educators to establish such coursework at medical schools and undergraduate campuses. She has been selected by Pritzker students for a Favorite Faculty Award ten times since 2010 for her teaching. Dr. Vela’s research spans medical education on health disparities and care of limited English proficiency patients as well as diversity in the medical profession. She maintains a clinical practice in the Primary Care Group, where she also precepts medical students and residents. Dr. Vela mentors junior faculty, addressing disparities in health on the south side of Chicago. Dr. Vela serves as the Chair of the AAMC’s Nickens Award Committee for Medical Students and is a board member of the National Latino Medical Students Association (LMSA) Faculty Board. Most recently, she was awarded both the LMSA’s National Mentor of the Year Award and the 2019 University of Chicago Diversity Leadership Award, and was honored during the University’s annual Martin Luther King, Jr. commemoration.



[Augustus A. White III, MD, PhD](#), is an internationally-known, widely published authority on biomechanics of the spine, fracture healing and surgical and nonsurgical care of the spine. He has authored or co-authored more than 200 scientific and clinical publications, including chapters, books and articles — among them the book *The Clinical Biomechanics of the Spine*. Dr. White served as orthopedic surgeon-in-chief at Harvard Medical School for 13 years. Since his retirement from the operating room in 2001, White has focused on how prejudice can get in the way of good medicine, and in 2011, he wrote the memoir, [*Seeing Patients: Unconscious Bias in Health Care*](#), which addresses the injustice of bias in medical treatment and draws upon his own experiences growing up in Jim Crow-era Tennessee and teaching at disproportionately white medical institutions. Dr. White has committed himself to issues of diversity and is nationally recognized for his work in medical education and issues of health care disparities. He is the founding President of the J. Robert Gladden Orthopaedic Society, a multicultural organization, and is committed to the society's mission to eliminate musculoskeletal health disparities. He is a member of the National Advisory Board of the Stanford University Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity and the Brown University Advisory Committee on Diversity. Dr. White was guest Editor of the journal *Clinical Orthopaedics and Related Research*, which published a symposium on "Issues of Minorities in Medicine and Orthopaedics." He was the co-chair of the *Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons* supplement, "Professionalism, Diversity and Health Disparities." In 2006, Dr. White was awarded the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons Diversity Award for his life's work and his contributions to his field.