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**BCBSMA Foundation Announces 2023-24 Class for Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership**

*Program Focuses on Addressing Structural Racism and Health Inequities*

**BOSTON (Sept. 28, 2023)** – The [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation](http://bluecrossmafoundation.org/) today announced the Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership (MICHL) 2023-2024 class, a group of 18 health professionals who will gather and collectively work to advance their individual leadership capabilities, enhance their organizations’ influence in public and private health settings, and contribute to building a more equitable health care system.

MICHL has helped develop more than 190 emerging leaders since it started in 2005. The current cohort of participants will be guided by a new program director, Sharon Bueno Washington, an organizational development consultant with more than 30 years of experience in the public and private sectors, with clients from more than 35 countries.

“MICHL is an immersive, highly collaborative learning experience where an already talented group of individuals gather to advance their skills and expertise in becoming the health care leaders of tomorrow,” said Audrey Shelto, President and CEO of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. “The program will continue to place an emphasis on structural racism and how effective leadership can make a difference in reducing disparities and inequities in our health care system.”

The 18-day educational and experiential program is presented over the course of nine months, beginning this month and closing with a graduation celebration next May. The Foundation underwrites the majority of costs associated with the program, which provides ongoing learning and networking opportunities after the initial nine-month program experience.

MICHL brings together emerging leaders who currently direct or manage programs at a variety of health care organizations across Massachusetts for a series of classroom, peer-to-peer and professional learning opportunities. The 2023-24 MICHL participants are:

* **Lola Akintobi**, Community Engagement Consultant, Community Catalyst
* **Leena Aurora**, Manager of Health Equity, Population Health, Boston Medical Center
* **Gretta Buckley**, Manager of Value Based Contract Operations, Community Care Cooperative (C3)
* **Divya Chaturvedi**, Executive Director, Found in Translation
* **Ana Cristina Luna**, Chief of Behavioral Health, NEW Health Center
* **Karen Duby**, Vice President of Behavioral Health, Open Sky Community Services
* **Heather Fineberg**, Program Manager, Caring & Social Justice, Combined Jewish Philanthropies
* **Claudia Fontes**, Behavioral Health Integrated Program Manager, Brockton Neighborhood Health Center
* **Timothy Hesselton**, Project Director, Boston Public Health Commission
* **Emily Hildebrant**, Quality Improvement Manager, Duffy Health Center
* **Jessica Isom**, Psychiatrist, Codman Square Health Center
* **Yemisrach Kibret**, Community Advocate/Educator, Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee
* **Debbie Lay**, Project Manager, Boston Children’s Hospital
* **Maile Panerio-Langer**, Senior Manager, Parent, Child and Family Policy, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
* **Sarah Primeau**, Director of Programs, Health Leads
* **Christian Tejeda**, Research Project Coordinator, Brigham & Women’s Hospital
* **Samantha Veseskis Kramer**, Director of Performance Analytics and Data Integrity, Vinfen
* **Phyllis Williams-Thompson**, Director of Local Public Health Workforce Development, Mass. Department of Public Health

MICHL was developed in 2005 by Michael McCormack, who recently retired and transitioned the program leadership to Bueno Washington. She had previously served as co-director with McCormack since 2018. Daniel Michaud Weinstock will now serve as co-director of the program.

Bueno Washington has been an adjunct professor and a member of the coaching team supporting doctoral students at Harvard University’s T.H. Chan School of Public Health and with Harvard’s Graduate School of Education. She is a certified executive coach and a trained mediator, with extensive group and process facilitation experience.

“We are excited to have Sharon leading the program into the future with tremendous energy, a broad worldview, and deep expertise in executive coaching and leadership development,” Shelto said.

*For more information about MICHL, please visit:*

<https://www.bluecrossmafoundation.org/programs/massachusetts-institute-community-health-leadership>

**About the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation**

The mission of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation is to ensure equitable access to health care for all those in the Commonwealth who are economically, racially, culturally or socially marginalized. The Foundation was established in 2001 with an initial endowment from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. It operates separately from the company and is governed by its own Board of Directors. For more information, visit [www.bluecrossmafoundation.org](http://www.bluecrossmafoundation.org).

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