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Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation Announces 2018-19 Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership Class

BOSTON (Sept. 26, 2018) – The [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation](#) today announced the 10th group of emerging community health leaders selected for the Massachusetts Institute for Community Health Leadership program. The MICHL program brings together professionals 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 goal for the MICHL program is to help participants increase their own personal impact, strengthen their effectiveness in their organization, and enhance their respective organization’s influence in addressing challenges and opportunities in today’s increasingly complex health care environment,” said Audrey Shelto, president of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation.

The MICHL class of 2018-19 – sponsored in part by a new partner, The Boston Foundation – is comprised of 18 participants from state agencies, hospitals, nonprofit community health centers, mental health providers, and advocacy groups serving low-income and uninsured individuals and families. The participants, selected through an application process, represent the 10th MICHL cohort since the program began in 2006. The program has more than 150 graduates.

In addition to connecting with leaders in community health and local hospitals, MICHL participants gain access to expert and committed faculty who introduce new practices, strategies and leadership skills. In recent years, the MICHL program has explored the impact of racism in the nation’s health care system.

“Being a leader in the United States in the 21st century means understanding the impact of structural and institutional racism on health, health care, and public health,” said Michael McCormack, deputy director of leadership at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health,



who leads the MICHL program for the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation. “Health care and public health improvement strategies often target the symptoms of structural racism, without naming racism, and without the leadership required to change systems that continue to incur advantage and disadvantage based on race – thus the integration of this important issue into the MICHL curriculum.”

The 2018-19 MICHL participants are:

| Name | Organization | Title |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Katie Riconda | AIDS Support Group of Cape Cod | Director, Prevention and Screening |
| Jamie Gaynes | Boston Children's Hospital | Government Relations Specialist |
| Mahader Tamene | Boston Medical Center | Senior Project Manager |
| Mark V. Scott | Boston Public Health Commission | Program Director, Trauma Response and Recovery |
| Niurka Pitts | Boston Public Health Commission | Director of Housing |
| Mary Kate Little | Bowdoin Street Health Center | Program Manager |
| Maria G. Celli | Brockton Neighborhood Health Center | Director of Social Services |
| Josefina Wendel | Cambridge Health Alliance | Director, Population Health Initiative |
| Shannon Merrell | Centering Health Care Institute | Director, Practice Services |
| Mika Cheng | Commonwealth Care Alliance | Program Director |
| Amy Glynn | Commonwealth Care Alliance | Senior Program Consultant |
| Kevin Conner | Community Servings | Director of Food Service |
| Uyen Tran | DotHouse Health | Specialty Practice Manager |
| Stephanie Campbell | Mass. Department of Public Health | Acting Director, Office of Sexual Health and Youth Development |
| Sophie Hansen | National Assoc. of Social Workers, Mass. Chapter | Political Director |
| G. Leo Blandford | Outer Cape Health Services | Director, Community Based Coordinated Care |
| Bethany Allen | Peer Health Exchange | Program Director |
| Kristi Taylor | Vinfen | Program Manager |



About the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation

The mission of the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation is to expand access to health care for low-income and vulnerable individuals and families in the Commonwealth. The Foundation was founded 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.

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