

Meet the Speakers

Children's Healthy Weight CoIN

Bethesda, MD

January 9-10, 2018

Kinkini Banerjee

Kinkini Banerjee is the Coalition Relations Director of the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee, leading USBC's capacity building support for the network of state, local, tribal, territorial and cultural breastfeeding coalitions, to increase and enhance their participation in state and national level strategic collaborations in maternal and child health efforts generally and breastfeeding initiatives specifically. She facilitates the design and planning of USBC's virtual learning collaborative with four webinar series and learning communities, and the Annual National Breastfeeding Coalitions Conference. She is involved in strategy development and policy advocacy, and represents USBC in an advisory capacity on a number of national initiatives.

Kinkini has more than 20 years of experience working closely with social services agencies, public health organizations, policy advocates, and academic partners to build and sustain strong multi-objective initiatives impacting public health outcomes. She began her career in clinical practice, as a Dietitian specializing in pediatric nutrition. She partners with coalition leaders to strengthen their governance and leadership capacity, and increase organizational transparency and accountability. A core component of her work is helping move USBC's equity mission forward. The best part of her work is fostering transformational partnerships to build strategic visions to advance community health and resiliency. Kinkini is a Trustee on the Board of her county's health system ([Alameda Health System](#)). She is the Past-President of [Building Futures with Women and Children](#), a county agency providing Housing and Domestic Violence prevention and support services.

Diane D. Boas, MS

Diane D. Boas is the Project Manager for the Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) project at Let's Go! , [Let's Go!](#) is a national obesity prevention initiative at MaineHealth, based in Portland, ME. Ms. Boas recently developed the Let's Go! Toolkit for Children with I/DD and provides trainings and technical support to health care providers, educators and other professionals to help them include children with disabilities in their obesity prevention efforts.

Prior to joining Let's Go!, Ms. Boas worked for over twenty-five years in school, out-of-school and community settings to improve health, education, and quality of life outcomes for children with disabilities and other at-risk populations. Ms. Boas led projects for the Maine Developmental Disabilities Council, Prescription Policy Choices and currently serves as an advisor for the Health Weight Research Network at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

As the parent of an adult son with developmental disabilities, Ms. Boas is actively engaged in state and national efforts to improve services for individuals with disabilities. Ms. Boas holds degrees from Smith College, Columbia University and recently completed the Leadership in Neuro Developmental Disabilities (LEND) Program at the University of New England.

Anna Corona, MHP

Anna Corona, MPH is the program analyst on the child and adolescent health team. In this role, Ms. Corona provides needed support and quality improvement expertise to her team members on several key projects, including the AYA CoIIN, Children's Healthy Weight CoIIN and the current Action Learning Collaboratives lead by this team. Ms. Corona previously served as a senior public health nutritionist and site supervisor for a local WIC program under the Virginia Department of Health. She also has experience in program planning, analysis, and evaluation through her previous stints with the Florida Department of Health, particularly in the area of tobacco prevention and cessation. There, she was instrumental in collaborating with state managers to evaluate statewide data, refine data collection tools, and facilitate training on refined tools. Ms. Corona received a dual Bachelor of Science in human nutrition, food, and exercise and in biological sciences from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, followed by her MPH in social and behavioral sciences from University of Florida.

Virginia L. H. Crowe, RN, Ed.D.

Virginia (Ginna) Leigh Hamilton Crowe, RN, Ed.D has over 30 years' experience in many areas and levels of healthcare and quality management ranging from front line care delivery to management and international consulting. This experience combined with education in nursing, business, adult and organizational learning provides a unique perspective that serves her well as a quality consultant and practitioner of learning and improving. She has worked with multiple organizations and government agencies who desire to improve the delivery, efficiency, safety and experience of healthcare. Dr. Crowe founded Hamilton Consulting, LLC in 2001. Her practice centers on facilitating learning and improving for organizations, teams, and individuals.

Pam Eidsen, MEd, PAPHS

For 25 years, Pam Eidson has applied systems thinking to health behavior. She has been the state health promotion director in Georgia, a tobacco control field director in West Virginia, and a super-commuter to Washington, D.C. She spent 11 years with the Directors of Health Promotion & Education, from which she directed staffing for the first five years of the National Physical Activity Society's history. Now as the Society's executive director, she synthesizes members' expertise, partner programs, and needs assessments to connect people with resources and training opportunities. Connecting people with training and resources to do their jobs, Pam uses her background in state public health, national nonprofits, and systems change to address physical activity.

Erin Hemlin

Erin Hemlin is the National Director of Training and Consumer Education at Young Invincibles. In this role, Erin leads all training and consumer education campaigns, most notably, YI's *Healthy Young America & Healthy Adulting* campaigns. These multi-year national campaigns have reached over 25,000 young adults and partners directly and trained dozens more on outreach best practices when engaging young adults in health care. Through this work, Erin has facilitated over 200 trainings across the country, to ACA coalitions, HHS regional staff, local assisters and health care advocates. Additionally, she has worked closely with the external relations staff at HHS and the White House, and lead the implementation of the White House Initiative, *National Youth Enrollment Day*, designing and executing two conferences at the White House, as well as the overall campaign strategy. Five annual *National Youth Enrollment Day* days of action resulted in over 250 events involving hundreds of partners, taking place from Washington DC to Alaska.

Prior to joining Young Invincibles, Erin interned for the Congressional Research Service where she contributed to CRS reports in government operations and other areas of congressional administration. She later worked as a legislative research fellow for The Sheridan Group, where she focused on federal education policy, technology-based economic development, poverty, and other domestic social issues. Erin has a B.A. in Political Science from St. Edward's University ('08), and a M.A. in Political Science with a focus in American Politics and Government from George Mason University ('12).

Laura Kavanagh, MPP

Laura Kavanagh, MPP, became Acting Associate Administrator of the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration, in October 2017. MCHB's mission is to improve the health of America's mothers, children and families. Its Title V Maternal and Child Health Services program serves 54 million mothers and children annually, comprising two-thirds of all pregnant women and half of all infants and children, including those with special health care needs.

Kavanagh oversees MCHB's \$1.25 billion budget, providing strategic vision and ensuring that programs are designed and implemented to achieve sustainable results. Her 30-year career in government and academia demonstrates a clear commitment to improving maternal and child health, with emphases on teaching, mentoring the next generation of MCH professionals, and advancing a diverse array of programs for underserved communities.

Before assuming her current role as MCHB's Acting Associate Administrator, Kavanagh held multiple leadership positions across the bureau. Since 2015, she served as MCHB's Deputy Associate Administrator, where she improved the transparency, accountability, and evidence base of MCHB's programs and initiatives. Previously, Kavanagh led the MCHB Division of MCH Workforce Development; the MCHB Division of Research, Training and Education; and the MCHB Autism Initiative, a cross-division program that included research and training.

Prior to her tenure at MCHB, Kavanagh conducted health policy research at Georgetown University's National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health for 14 years and taught in the graduate public policy program. Research areas include evaluation of the national MCH training program, development of MCH performance measures, effectiveness of outreach strategies for access to children's health services, and evaluation of the Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children program.

Recognitions include the American Academy of Pediatrics Section on Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics Dale Richmond/Justin Coleman Lectureship Award, the National Public Health Leadership Institute fellowship, and the American Public Health Association's Maternal and Child Health Young Professional Award.

Kavanagh earned a Master of Public Policy degree with an emphasis on health policy analysis from Georgetown University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in interdisciplinary studies from the University of Virginia. She enjoys spending time with her husband and two adult children.

Michele Lawler, M.S., R.D.

As Director of the Division of State and Community Health (DSCH), Ms. Lawler provides national leadership, direction and administrative oversight for the State Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant Program. She also provides programmatic oversight for the State Systems Development Initiative (SSDI) Grant Program and three cooperative agreements to advance State and urban MCH leadership. A nutritionist by training, Ms. Lawler served as the Project Officer on Task Orders with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) that produced the 2009 *Weight Gain During Pregnancy: Re-examining the Guidelines Report and Recommendations* and the 2013 workshop summary report on *Leveraging Action to Support Dissemination of the Pregnancy Weight Gain Guidelines*. Prior to coming to Maternal and Child Health Bureau in 1998, she held a nutritionist position in the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. Her previous experience includes work in local public health programs, the private sector and teaching at the university level. She is married and has one son.

Steve Owens, MD, MPH

Steven Owens, MD MPH is a consultant for the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN), and a seasoned family medicine and public health trained physician with expertise in minority health issues – health equity and disparities, and public health workforce recruitment and development. As the former Associate Executive Director for the Directors of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE), he led DHPE strategic functions and provides technical assistance to state, territorial and local departments of health to address health inequities through using public health systems, environmental change tools, and geographic analyses of market research data to plan and inform effective health programs. With an emphasis on health equity, he provided health department staff trainings on integrating social determinants of health into projects and activities addressing chronic disease prevention and health promotion.

Dr. Owens received a master's in biology from Hampton University, a master's in public health with a focus on international health policy and management from Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University and a doctor of medicine degree from the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.

Sandy Perkins, MS, RD/LD

Sandy Perkins is a Public Health Nutrition Consultant and the Director of Program Development for the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN). In this position she serves as the project manager for both the Children's Healthy Weight CoIIN and the Pediatric Obesity Nutrition mini-CoIIN. Sandy has over 25 years experience in the field of public health nutrition specializing in the maternal and child population. Sandy has experience coordinating nutrition services for various programs serving maternal and child populations at the state and local agency levels, including WIC, Maternal and Child Health, Children with Special Health Care Needs, and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. She holds a master's degree in food science and human nutrition from Colorado State University and BS from Kansas State University.

Karen L. Probert, MS, RDN

Karen is the Executive Director of the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN). Founded in 1952, ASPHN is a non-profit membership organization that provides state and national leadership on food and nutrition policy, programs and services. She has worked in this position for nine years supporting the work of public health nutritionists located throughout the U.S. Before ASPHN, Karen worked for a health planning organization in rural Kansas to recruit and retain medical providers and facilitate collaboration among health organizations. She started her career in Washington, DC in food and agriculture policy and even worked as ASPHN Executive Director in the mid 1990s.

Karen lives in Tucson, AZ and loves the variety of outdoor activities and local foods available in the Southwest. She has served on nonprofit boards at the local and national level. Karen has a Master of Science in Nutrition from Tufts University and is a registered dietitian nutritionist.

Bonnie A. Spear, PhD, RDN

Dr. Spear is currently a Professor Emerita of Pediatrics at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She has had over 35 years of experience working in adolescent health, pediatric nutrition and public health nutrition. She is widely published in the field of adolescent and pediatric nutrition. Until retirement she served as Project Director for two MCHB-funded Leadership Education in MCH Nutrition and Leadership Education in Adolescent Health (LEAH). She has been involved with the MCHB Bright Futures initiative and the *Expert Committee Recommendations for the Treatment of Child and Adolescent Obesity*. Dr. Spear co-chaired the Alabama State Obesity Task Force development, and served as chair board member.

Marsha Spence, PhD, MPH, RDN, LDN

Dr. Marsha Spence is an Associate Professor in the Department of Nutrition at The University of Tennessee and is the Director of the Public Health Nutrition Graduate Program. In addition, she is the Director of the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Public Health Nutrition Leadership Education and Training Program, a federally funded program dedicated to providing leadership training to public health nutrition graduate students, consultation and technical assistance to Title V and other MCH agencies, and continuing education for public health nutritionists and other health professionals. She received all of her degrees from the University of Tennessee, including dual MS-MPH degrees with concentrations in Public Health Nutrition and Health Planning and Administration, respectively and a PhD with a cognate in Public Health. She has been a Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist for nearly 20 years. Her research interests include school and community-based interventions to prevent childhood overweight/obesity and to promote healthy nutrition and physical activity environments through positive youth development and community-based participatory action research.

Jane Taylor, Ed.D.

Jane Taylor, Ed.D. is an Improvement Advisor, Learning Designer and Program Evaluator. She advises learning collaboratives, networks, and innovation projects. Jane is a compulsive improver and committed to advancing improvement science by integration of adult learning principles and practices. She has advised over 75 learning collaboratives in education, healthcare and government.

Dr. Taylor is an experienced qualitative researcher and has published articles on improvement, transformative learning, and patient and family centered care. For fun she plays the violin, and is a competitive amateur ballroom dancer. She is a loving wife, daughter, sister, friend and generous colleague to many.